

Calgary Humane Society

Improper Environment as a Form of Abuse

Position:

The Calgary Humane Society supports animals being raised and kept in an environment that promotes and maintains their emotional and psychological needs, in addition to their physical needs. Animals can only be free from distress and in a state of “well-being” if their emotional, psychological and physical needs are met.

'Psychological' well-being is a state in which an animal is free from distress most of the time, is in good physical health, exhibits a substantial range of the species-typical behaviours, and is able to deal effectively with environmental stimuli.

Rationale:

- Animals need companionship (human and/or animal, depending on the species), care, exercise, and attention.
- Animals whose emotional, psychological and physical needs go unmet can exhibit signs of distress (e.g., behavioural issues, depression).
- Although current Animal Protection laws do not allow the Calgary Humane Society to charge owners for psychological abuse, the CHS considers failure to care for an animal's psychological and emotional well-being as a form of abuse.