

Calgary Humane Society

Keeping Companion Animals as Pets

Position:

Calgary Humane Society maintains the position that responsible pet ownership encompasses the following:

- Conducting research about responsible pet ownership prior to making the decision to acquire a pet, including research into the specific species and breed of pet being considered and its particular temperament and care requirements.
- Ensuring the pet is acquired through an ethical and responsible channel which does not source animals from “puppy or kitten mills” or through other inhumane means. Given the continued level of animal homelessness, CHS maintains the best way to source a pet is through a reputable animal shelter or animal rescue agency such as CHS. When sourcing a pet from somewhere other than a reputable animal agency, such as a breeder, it is important to investigate that the animals are provided with a proper standard of care including, but not limited to:
 - Regular veterinary visits
 - Adequate food and water
 - Clean runs with separate areas for elimination
 - Sufficient socialization, play-time, and outdoor runs
 - Proper bedding
 - Appropriate staff to pet ratio
- Providing the pet with appropriate housing, nutrition, exercise, daily human attention, companionship, grooming, and veterinary care for the duration of its life.
- Ensuring the pet is provided with safe and secure housing in the owner’s home, confinement to the owner’s property, and is kept safe and under control when the pet is off the owner’s property. It has been proven that indoor pets have a much longer life expectancy and enjoy better health than pets allowed to roam.
- Ensuring pets have permanent identification (microchip, tattoo or other forms of permanent ID) and appropriate municipal licenses. The information linking the pet to the owner must be accurate and up to date. These forms of identification ensure the pet can be reunited with its owners in the event it gets lost. On average, cats and dogs experience one loss episode during their lifetimes, which usually occur when the pet is in the care of someone other than its guardian.
- Adhering to all applicable municipal by-laws.

- Ensuring the animal is always under control.
- Using positive reinforcement training methods, ensuring pets are well-socialized and receive appropriate training.
- Providing pets with appropriate grooming and care which enhance the animal-human bond and is required for most companion animals' well-being.
- Should the pet owner no longer be able to care for the pet, re-homing it with a loving, responsible family or surrendering the pet to a reputable humane society or rescue organization.
- Providing required veterinary care throughout the lifetime of the pet, including providing humane euthanasia should the animal lose its quality of life due to illness or disability. The pet owner can determine when the latter is appropriate together with their veterinarian.