

# Animal Protection and Control Act

## Quick facts

- The *Animal Protection and Control Act* was passed in the fall 2022 sitting of the Legislative Assembly and will come into effect when the regulations are complete.
- The Act will replace old legislation, including the *Dog Act*, the *Animal Protection Act* and the *Pounds Act*.
- The Department of Environment developed the *Animal Protection and Control Act* jointly with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and it will be implemented and enforced jointly.

## Prior engagement

Feedback gathered during public engagement in 2018 and 2019 is reflected in the new Act, including:

- A territory-wide requirement for owners to control their animals at all times;
  - Higher standards of care for animals than what previously existed; and
  - More effective enforcement tools for local governments in communities.
- The what we heard report is available here: <https://yukon.ca/en/what-we-heard-review-animal-protection-and-control-laws-yukon>

## Changes to Yukon's animal protection and control laws include:

### 1. Regulating the ownership of exotic species

- Some species will now require a permit to be owned in the Yukon.
- Permits may include conditions (require vaccination, neutering, or specific housing) so these species can be safely kept.
- Owners of animals requiring permits will have one year from the date that the regulation comes into force to obtain a permit under the Act.
- Species such as large carnivores or venomous reptiles that are a threat to public safety, or the integrity of the environment, will be prohibited from being owned in the Yukon.
- This framework is not created to ban particular breeds of an animal, such as dogs.
- We do not suspect that any animals intended to be prohibited are currently owned in the Yukon.

### 2. Establishing tools to address animal hoarding

- We can now apply to a Justice to obtain an order limiting the number and species of animals a person may care for at any given time to immediately address animal hoarding situations.

### **3. Increasing enforcement of animal control**

- The new legislation empowers Animal Protection and Control Officers to issue orders or tickets. The enforcement goal is to educate animal owners and promote compliance with the Act, rather than escalate to prosecutions or apprehension of animals.

### **4. Establishing higher animal welfare standards**

This includes:

- Referencing national standards of care;
- Establishing acceptable means of killing animals humanely;
- Prohibiting animal fighting; and
- Prohibiting specific cosmetic surgeries

### **5. Regulating animal-related organizations**

- Pet stores, boarding facilities and animal rescue organizations will require a permit to operate, which may have specific conditions. They will have one year from when the law comes into force to obtain the permit.
- Animal Protection and Control Officers will have the power to enter and inspect these operations to ensure they are complying with the Act and their permit.

### **6. Establishing control requirements and containment standards**

- Owners must control their animal so they do not harm people, property (including owned animals) or the environment. This does not mean they must be on a leash at all times - if your animal responds well to recall, that is considered under control.
- Species specific containment standards may be established in the regulations, such as fencing guidelines for livestock.

### **7. Empowering local governments to enforce animal control**

- The Government of Yukon may now enter into agreements at the community level to help support enforcement of the Act.
- Deputy animal protection and control officers can be appointed in communities with limited powers to enforce the Act.
- The primary responsibility for enforcement rests with the Government of Yukon, however we know a local response is required to improve community safety especially when a community lacks bylaws.

### **8. Creating tools to manage feral and high-risk animals**

- There is now a framework for responding to feral animals or high-risk animals that pose a threat to public safety, property or the environment, including wildlife populations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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