

# Animal Control

The Township of Haverford and the Haverford Police Department are dedicated to providing the best possible service to the citizens of Haverford. In fact, the Police Department's Animal Control Unit was created as a result of this dedication. Township leaders recognized long ago that without providing local animal care and control services, Haverford residents would be served by a centralized county-wide system that has limited resources to deal with animals across the county, and simply is not able to provide the level of service that Haverford's Animal Control Unit offers.

Staffed with two part-time Animal Control Officers, the Unit responds to calls of animals disturbing, loose animals, animal cruelty cases, injured animals, and a host of other situations involving domesticated and wild animals. Haverford's Animal Control Officers are civilian employees authorized to investigate and enforce the Haverford's Codes pertaining to animals.

Our Animal Control Personnel are dedicated to providing humane treatment for all animals in their care. To contact Animal Control call 610-853-1298 ext. 2205

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Animal Control in Haverford Township is to educate the public regarding responsible pet ownership and enforcing animal ordinances. We perform a variety of services that help animals as well as the public: rescuing injured or sick animals, controlling stray and potentially dangerous animals roaming at large, removing stray dead animals from private and public property and transporting lost pets to the animal shelter where their owners can reclaim them.

Animal Control officers are in action every day, handling many routine, as well as emergency situations with pets and wild animals. One of the most important things that we do is to investigate animal bites. Animals that bite are quarantined and placed under observation to make sure the threat of rabies does not exist. Other situations which we investigate are animal cruelty and abuse, complaints of animal noise annoyance, unsanitary conditions, and abandoned animals.

## **Should I vaccinate my animal?**

Regardless of an animal's lifestyle, Haverford Township require that all dogs, cats over the age of 3 months be vaccinated against rabies. The primary reason is to prevent the spread of rabies. Rabies, while not currently widespread, is still prevalent in the wild and a threat to domestic pets.

### **You've lost your pet, what do you do?**

- The first thing to do is search your surrounding neighborhood.
- Second is to notify animal control.
- It's recommended to contact local veterinary facilities and shelters no less than every other day with proof of ownership to locate your lost pet.

### **What can we do about feral cats?**

Animal Control will no longer pick up or trap feral/free roaming cats from citizens. Instead, the unit encourages citizens with feral cat issues to utilize the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) approach. The change is a cost saving measure, but is also considered a best practice and a more humane alternative to dealing with feral cats.

When a feral cat is permanently removed, nature's tendency is to over-populate the vacancy it creates. By not creating that vacancy, and by preventing the existing cat from reproducing, the feral cat population will decrease over time. The activity of our most frequent trap users supports this claim – some of them have trapped as many as 50 feral cats from the same location, a clear indication that the trap and euthanize approach is not the best solution.

Your favorite search engine will return a long list of hits for “trap neuter return”, and will help identify local programs and provide links to the body of research behind the TNR philosophy.

### **What can the township do about a barking dog?**

The most common animal disturbance that Haverford animal control officers respond to are barking dog complaints. It is a violation of Haverford Township ordinance 1806 for a dog owner to disturb another resident's peace by allowing their dog to bark excessively and unreasonably. It is not a violation for a dog to bark. It is only a violation if the dog is barking excessively and unreasonably.

To report a barking dog, call the hotline at 610-853-1298 ext. 2205. Any Animal Control Officer who personally observes excessive barking can issue a citation to the owner. If our investigation of a barking dog does not result in such an observation, we will continue to respond to subsequent complaints in an attempt to observe the violation.

As an alternative, the complainant can request a form which allows them to provide information about other neighbors who have similar experiences with the same animal and are willing to say so at a court hearing. Once completed, this allows the Animal Control Officer to interview other witnesses and forward a case for prosecution.

**Deceased Domestic Animals:**

Every attempt will be made to contact the owner and we will notify local SPCA'S and Veterinarians.

We will retrieve and transfer the animal to a holding area for 48 hours. If the animal is not claimed it will be wrapped in a plastic bag and the remains will be transported in a humane way to a landfill.

**Running at Large Dogs or Cats:**

Any Dog or Cat, retrieved in Haverford Township, will be held for 48 hours at a local Veterinarian facility. Every attempt will be made to reunite the animal with its owner. All expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the owner. If not claimed, the animal will then be available for adoption. If the animal is not adopted, it will be taken to the Chester County SPCA.

**Rabies Vector (Carrier) Animals:**

**(Skunks, Raccoons, Foxes, Bats, Ground Hogs, Coyotes, Feral Cats)**

Rabies vector animals trapped in the township will be dispatched. Any of these animals found at large in the township that appear to be sick or infected will be dispatched. If a rabies vector animal is suspected of having contact with another animal or human, it will be processed using guidelines from the Health Department.

**Rules and Regulations relating to Animals can be found on the Haverford Township Web Site. ORDINANCE 1806 Chapter 49.**