DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number:	**204.110**
Title:	**Offender Animal Programs**
Effective Date:	**5/21/19**

PURPOSE: To provide procedures for offender animal programs in order to offer offenders an opportunity to give back to the community, improve offender behavior, and increase the offenders' sense of responsibility and care toward others, and to increase placement of animals available to qualified recipients.

APPLICABILITY: All facilities

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

A. Each facility may establish an offender animal program. Programs focus on socialization and basic training for dogs (cats allowed at Shakopee only) to increase adoptability and/or on therapy and/or service training for animals to provide assistance for program clients.
   1. Animal programs must be operated in partnership with an organization that is a nonprofit corporation with experience in animal care, training and adoption.
   2. Each facility must have a written contract in place with the partner organization operating its program. The facility program coordinator retains copies of the written contract with the partner organization according to retention schedules.

B. Partner organizations are responsible for the acts and omissions of its staff and volunteers while they are participating in or representing the animal program in the facility.

C. Partner organization staff and volunteers must follow Policy 300.030, "Volunteer Services Program." Partner organization staff and volunteers must be entered into the Controlled Access Tracking System (CATS) per Policy 103.0131, "Controlled Access Tracking System (CATS)."

D. The warden/designee designates a program coordinator responsible for day-to-day program operations at the facility. The program coordinator:
   1. Ensures compliance with policy by facility employees, offenders involved with the program, and program staff/volunteers;
   2. Coordinates program implementation and operation, including program training schedules, curriculum, and activities;
   3. Maintains safety and security procedures governing offender participants and program animals; and
   4. Is active in program development, delivery and daily activities.

E. The program coordinator ensures an emergency contact list is maintained, kept up to date at all times, and easily accessible. The list must include:
   1. Emergency and/or after hours veterinary service phone number, address and directions.
   2. Contact information for the program coordinator/designee, partner organization, trainer, and program staff/volunteers.

F. Each facility program must have established written procedures and retain the records for the care and hygiene of program animals; the facility program coordinator retains the documentation. The written procedures must include:
   1. Each animal must be provided with a crate to ensure its safety and limit damage during the offender's sleep hours;
   2. Cells/rooms where an animal is housed must be clearly identified and caution used when entering;
   3. Feeding and food storage;
   4. Medication;
   5. Grooming and bathing;
   6. Laundry procedures;
   7. Designating exercise, training, and break areas;
   8. Equipment and supply accountability;
   9. Cleaning up of any animal waste accidents inside the facility; and
   10. Disposal of animal waste.

G. Each program must have written procedures, and retain records, on the following:
   1. Injury to any individual (offender, contractor, visitor, or staff) by an animal;
   2. Health-related emergencies involving an animal;
   3. Temporary removal of an animal from a unit;
   4. A full evacuation of all animals from the facility; and
   5. The process for managing animal narcotics, if applicable, including the retention of logs and records identifying the type of narcotic and the distribution schedule for each animal requiring narcotic medication.

   The facility program coordinator retains all documentation.

H. Offenders who wish to participate in the program must apply using the program application established by facility staff, which outlines the program criteria and rules.
   1. The screening process is required for all offender participants regardless of position (e.g., primary handler, secondary handler, dog walker, alternate, etc.)
   2. In the event there are numerous, equally-qualified applicants, the facility program coordinator must make an effort to maximize the number of offenders participating.

I. Offenders accepted into the program are required to comply with the terms of the facility's contract with the partner organization and any other program rules published by the facility.
   1. In the event of mistreatment of an animal, the animal may be removed from the offender's care for examination by partner organization staff or volunteers to determine the animal's physical injury and mental stress.
   2. If an investigation concludes that the complaint was unsubstantiated or unfounded, the facility program coordinator may reinstate the offender into the program and return the animal to the offender's care.
   3. If the investigation concludes that misconduct occurred, the offender:
      a) Is immediately terminated from the program;
      b) May be restricted from participating in department offender animal program(s); and
      c) Is subject to infraction per Policy 303.010, "Offender Discipline," as well as referred for prosecution if appropriate.

J. In the event an animal damages state-owned property, the state assumes the cost of replacement or repair.
   1. Facility discipline staff may seek restitution for damage resulting from offender negligence, through the disciplinary process.
   2. Offender participants are responsible for all personal property within their living areas.

3. Staff must report all injuries caused by an animal and complete all appropriate notifications and reports per Policy 300.300, "Incident Reports."
    a) Injured offenders must seek medical attention through Health Services.
    b) Injured employees and program staff and volunteers may seek medical care through workers' compensation, using the forms in Policy 103.241, "Workers' Compensation." Volunteers complete all forms except the Leave Supplement form.
    c) In the event of an animal bite, the program coordinator must file any necessary reports, notify the partner organization, and review the incident. The animal must be removed from the program immediately. Based on the findings of the investigation, the animal may be allowed back into the program per facility review.

K. All animals entering the program must be the property and responsibility of the partner organization.
1. Partner organizations may not provide training to privately-owned animals through any facility program.
2. The department is not responsible for any injury to the animal while on facility grounds.
3. All animals must be in the possession and control of the partner organization for at least three days before transfer to a facility.
4. The partner organization is responsible for all costs associated with acquiring animals for the program.
5. Before entering the facility, each animal must be screened for:
    a) Health and physical condition: all animals must be free of parasites and current on all required vaccinations; documentation must be included;
    b) Special Needs: animals with special needs must be approved in advance by the program director/coordinator;
    c) Temperament, including issues that might cause injuries to department employees, program staff/volunteers, or offenders;
    d) Ability to accept socialization and training; and
    e) Adoptability after program completion.
6. The warden or facility program coordinator may approve, deny, and/or remove any animal entering or participating in the program.

L. The partner organization may have sole responsibility for the placement process.
1. All adoption materials must list the partner organization as the official contact. Adoption materials must not include department phone numbers or e-mail addresses.
2. The final placement of the animals must not take place within the secure perimeter of the facility.
3. Program animals must not reside permanently within the facility.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. The facility program coordinator retains copies of the written contract with the partner organization, the program procedures, records, and other documentation according to retention schedules.

B. Medical/Narcotic logs are retained by the host facility's program coordinator identifying the type of narcotic and the distribution schedule for each animal requiring narcotic medication, if applicable.

ACA STANDARDS: None

REFERENCES: Policy 103.0131, "Controlled Access Tracking System (CATS)"
Policy 300.040, "Volunteer Services Program"

Policy 303.010, “Offender Discipline”
Policy 300.300, “Incident Reports”
Policy 103.241, “Workers’ Compensation”

REPLACES: Policy 204.110, “Offender Animal Programs,” 3/6/18
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: None

APPROVED BY:
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