

Common Questions

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Q: How do I report stray animals, nuisance animals, or animal cruelty situations?

Call the Animal Control Unit between 8am and 5pm Monday through Friday to report stray, loose, or nuisance animals. We will need a description of the animal(s) causing the problem, a description of the problem, and your name, address and phone number so we can get back in touch with you if necessary. The owner's name and/or address can be very helpful, but not required.

For example: "My name is John Smith and I live at 123 Pine Street. My phone number is 555-1234. There's a large, brown dog running loose on our street. I think it might belong to the family at 135 Pine Street. I'm worried because it's barking at the kids getting off the school bus."

Cruelty and neglect complaints, dog fights and cockfights can be reported anonymously, but it's important for you to provide as much information about the problem as possible. For example: "There is a very skinny black dog tied to the front porch on the northwest corner of Oak Avenue and Pine Street. I don't know the address, but it's a blue house with white trim. The dog has no food, shelter or water."

Dog fights and dangerous animal situations may be reported 24 hours a day, and a serious cruelty complaint may also be reported outside of normal business hours. Call the Police Emergency Communication Center at 913-596-3000 or 911 at night, on weekends or holidays for these situations.

Remember, the more information we have about an animal problem, the better we are able to help. If you witness someone causing deliberate harm to an animal, you can report them to us. Try to have as much information as possible. Photos or videotape of the abuse is even better. Be sure to use the time-date feature on your camera if this is possible.

If you think someone is neglecting an animal, let us know. According to law, animals must be provided with adequate food, water and shelter, adequate space, clean living conditions and basic veterinary care. "Shelter" means an actual dog house—being able to duck under a porch, car, or boat doesn't count. If a dog is kept on a chain, the chain must be at least five times the length of the dog (not counting the tail) and it must be set up so the chain doesn't get tangled on bushes, posts, etc.

Animal fighting is considered cruelty to animals. Even if no other evidence of cruelty or neglect is present, animal fighting is illegal on its own. Drugs, gambling, prostitution and other illegal activities are often present at human-induced animal fights—fights set up by people to challenge one dog against another. You may report dog fights or cock fights either to Animal Control or directly to the police.

It is against the law to allow dogs to run loose in Kansas City, Kansas. Dogs must be in a yard, in a pen, or on a chain. Dogs walked on a leash must be under the direct control of their owner at all times.

Cats are not required to be on a leash or under the direct physical control of their owners, but they are not allowed to leave their owners' property. If your wandering cat causes a nuisance for your neighbors, the neighbors have the right to humanely secure the cat and ask us to pick it up. You may place the animal in a cage, secure it on a screen porch, or use a humane trap. If you don't own a humane trap, you can rent one from area hardware stores or borrow one from the Animal Control Unit for a period of seven days after leaving a deposit.

If loose animals are causing a problem in your neighborhood, simply call the Animal Control Unit at 913-321-1445 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. Be able to give the dog's location and a good description. If you think you know who the dog might belong to, tell us.

We do not give out information on the scene or over the phone about the person who made the complaint.

Q: How do I get help with an animal problem at night, on weekends, or on holidays?

We have an officer available for animal emergencies during these times. We consider it an emergency when:

- an animal has bitten someone,
- an animal is trapped,
- injured or otherwise in serious danger,
- wildlife has wandered indoors,
- an animal is loose on the Interstate, or on a major street,
- Other situations in which an animal is in distress or a human being is in danger of being harmed by the animal.

Barking dogs, stray cats, and raccoons in your garbage can are not emergency situations. Please notify us of these situations during regular business hours. If your problem is an emergency, call the police 911 and they will alert the Animal Control Officer on call.

Q: How do I adopt a pet? How much does it cost?

Just show up during regular business hours and you can choose from the available dogs, cats, puppies and kittens in our adoption program.

Payment must be by cash, check or credit card for adoptions. Be sure to bring proper valid identification—your current driver's license or state ID card.

The fees for animals adopted from the Animal Control Unit cover the animal's rabies vaccination, City license, and a percentage of the required spay or neuter surgery. Here's how it works:

You will also receive a yellow receipt that serves as a pre-paid voucher for your pet's rabies shot and tag. These pre-paid vouchers help us assure that pets adopted from the Animal Control Unit get their rabies shots (as required by law), and assure that each new owner begins a relationship with a veterinarian for their pet's continued health care.

All pets adopted from the Animal Control Unit must be spayed or neutered before they leave the shelter. Spayed or neutered animals do not create even more unwanted animals. They are also

calmer, easier to control and healthier than their fertile counterparts, and, statistically, they live longer, healthier lives. If you want more information about why it's important for pets to be spayed or neutered, call and ask for a brochure, or read the information on the website.

Q: My pet is missing! What should I do?

Call the Animal Control Center during normal business hours as soon as you notice your pet is missing. Please give us as much information about your pet as possible: the date your pet went missing, along with its age, sex, color, breed (if known), weight, and important distinguishing features such as a stub tail. It's important for us to know if your pet was wearing its tag and collar.

Remember, the people answering the phones are not in the kennels looking at the animals. They are in an office looking at the impoundment information. So, if you call looking for a gray tabby cat, they will be unable to see minor details about your pet's color pattern, etc. If the people answering the phone say that we've picked up a dog or cat anywhere close to your pet's description, you need to come identify it in person as soon as possible.

The City ordinance allows us to keep stray dogs and cats for three (3) working days and five (5) working days (will not include weekends or Holidays) if it is reasonably determined the pet is owned (collars, well groomed, tags, tattoos, or identification chip). If they are unclaimed after that time, they are evaluated for health, age, personality, behavior etc. Those not suitable for adoption are humanely euthanized.

Make up flyers right away, and post them at gas stations, grocery stores and other neighborhood gathering places. Check with local vet clinics, too: sometimes, kind people find an injured pet and bring it to the neighborhood veterinarian.

Run a lost ad in the paper, and check the found ads every day.

For other information about locating a lost pet utilize the following websites

Internet resources:

These links are directed specifically to Lost and Found information in the Kansas City area.

<http://www.lostdogregistry.com/> Lost and Found **database**. This is the best place to start.

<http://www.kcpetconnect.com/> - Lost and Found in the **Kansas City area**.

[Petfinder Lost Pets](#) - Lost and Found **search/post** by state

[Criticter connection lost/found KC area](#) - Lost and Found **search/post**, Kansas City area. Follow the links to Lost & Found

[Westwood Animal Hospital](#) - **Phone numbers** of area shelters and helpful **suggestions**

[AWOLpet.com](#) - National **search/post** and registration

[Petrescue.com](#) - Good **information** on how to find a lost pet

[Kansas Humane Society](#) - **Information** on what to do if you've lost your pet

[Animal Haven](#) - Lost pet **procedures** and **phone numbers** of area shelters

Q: Animal Control picked up my pet. What do I do now?

Call the Animal Control at 913-321-1445 and we will explain any fines or other charges over the phone.

If you have received a warning notice, have it handy when you call us. You may need to refer to it.

In most cases, your fine will be based on the schedule of fees located on the Animal Control Fee PDF attachment.

The license fee is separate from the pre-payment for your pet's rabies shot. You can take the receipt directly to your veterinarian and receive a rabies vaccination.

If your pet is up-to-date on its shots, but the tag has been lost, bring your vet's receipt when you pick up your pet. Or call your vet and ask for that information to be faxed to the Animal Control Unit. Our fax number is 913-551-0440.

If your pet has stayed with us for one or more nights, you may also have to pay:

Kennel boarding fee (per night), animal pick up fees, vaccination (if no valid veterinarian certificate shown upon reclaim) and

All fines must be paid in full at the Animal Control Unit during normal business hours

Even if you are not certain we picked up your pet, call Animal Control Unit as soon as you notice your pet is missing, and call every day to see if we have picked it up.

Q: What should I do if I find a stray pet?

Call the Animal Control Unit. If the animal is wearing a rabies tag or City license on its collar, you can read the tag number to us over the phone and we can trace the animal's owners so you can contact them.

If the animal is not wearing tags, you may want to take care of the animal for a few days while you run a "found" ad in the paper. Check local newspapers for their standards and fees for such "found" ads.

You may also want to post "found" flyers in your neighborhood and in adjacent subdivisions. It's a good idea to place a few flyers at local gas stations, veterinary hospitals, grocery stores, etc.

If you can't find the owner or if you are not able or willing to try, just give us a call during normal business hours and we will pick the animal up.

If you have kept the animal for more than thirty (30) days and continue to provide for its care, the Kansas Attorney General has ruled that you are now considered to be the owner.

Q: What about pet licenses, and how many pets may I keep?

When your dog or cat receives its rabies shot and gets its tag at a licensed veterinarian's office, it also needs an official City license in Kansas City, Kansas. City Ordinance requires all dogs and cats to be vaccinated for rabies, then once a year afterwards, and to wear a rabies tag on the collar. Even if you think your full-time indoor pet will never get out, accidents can happen. The serial number on your pet's rabies tag and City license will trace it back to you. Be sure to save your vet's certification receipt—if your pet loses its rabies tag, you will be able to prove it is up-to-date on its shots.

Ferrets are also required to have annual rabies shot.

If you've just moved to Kansas City, Kansas, you must have your pet licensed and vaccinated.

Most birds, reptiles and other small animals commonly available in pet shops require no license or permit, but some do. It is illegal to keep certain wild or exotic animals as pets in Kansas City, Kansas.

If you have an unusual pet, or if you think you might want to get one, contact Animal Control Unit to find out if your pet is allowed in the City of Kansas City, Kansas or if any special permits are required. Some of this information may also not be available in the online copy of the ordinances.

We require that a person keeping more than five (5) animals over four months of age apply for and obtain a kennel permit. Five animals can be both cats and dogs in combination, but no more than two (2) dogs in any combination (2 dogs & 3 cats; 5 cats; 1 dog & 4 cats, etc).

FOR YARD PETS

Details on the requirements for animal pens, cages, and electric fences may be obtained from the Animal Control Unit, or by reading the ordinance posted elsewhere on this website

FOR PETS KEPT INDOORS

Details on the requirements for animal pens and cages may be obtained from the Animal Control Unit, or by reading the ordinance posted elsewhere on this website

FOR LIVESTOCK ANIMALS

Contact the Animal Control Unit, or read the online ordinance for details about keeping livestock animals in the City limits of Kansas City, Kansas.

The number, size and type of pets allowed by your landlord, mobile home park or subdivision rules may differ from the laws set by the Animal Control Center.

Because rental leases and residential neighborhood agreements are private contracts, these situations do not fall under our jurisdiction. We suggest that you contact an attorney if a dispute arises over the pet restrictions in your rental lease or subdivision restrictions.

Q: Raccoons are getting into my garbage. What can I do?

Many problems with raccoons, opossums and other wildlife often can be solved simply by building an enclosed pen for your garbage cans. It should have a top and four sides. Use a spring-type latch--this lets the garbage collector in but keeps raccoons out. You can also buy ready-made, raccoon-proof pens at some feed stores.

Tamper-resistant garbage cans are another good solution. Or you could try stretching a piece of bungee cord across your garbage can lid. Just anchor the bungee cord to the handles.

It's also important to avoid leaving pet food out at night.

If raccoon and opossum problems persist after you've removed food sources and secured your garbage, you can rent a humane box trap from the Animal Control Center. A \$25 deposit is required. This allows you to keep the trap for one week (7 days). Your deposit is returned when you return the trap. When you check out the trap, you will be given detailed instructions on setting it up and baiting it.

Please do not feed raccoons. Sure, raccoons are cute. But rabies isn't. Raccoons can carry rabies, which is transmittable to humans, pets and livestock. Raccoons also carry distemper, a serious disease which can be transmitted to dogs and cats if not up-to-date on their shots. If a raccoon bites a human, a doctor must be called immediately. Treatment may be needed for exposure to rabies and other diseases. If a raccoon bites a pet, take the pet to a veterinarian right away.

Note: More information on how to humanely discourage wildlife found in the attached PDF file

Q: Who do I call to help me with a dead animal?

There are special laws concerning the disposal of most deceased pets on your own property

The law does require that large livestock animals must be removed by a rendering company and not buried. Some veterinarians offer burial and cremation services, or they will refer you to someone else who can help. Look in the Yellow Pages under "veterinarians" and "pet cemeteries, crematories and supplies."

Another way to dispose of a dead animal is simply to wrap it neatly in paper, a plastic bag or an old T-shirt and deposit it at the curb in a closed garbage can or in a sturdy box you've taped shut (this will prevent scavengers from disturbing the remains).

It's better to avoid wild animals found dead on the road. Rabies can survive in the corpse of a dead animal, and rabies is often the reason the raccoon was out in the road in the first place. If you have an urgent reason to remove a road kill, use plastic or latex gloves, put the dead animal in a plastic bag, and secure it in the garbage as described above. Be sure to dispose of the gloves and to wash your hands thoroughly after attempting this. Never touch a road-killed animal if you have an open cut or abrasion on your hands.

Dead animals on the Interstate or on a state highway should be reported to the Kansas Department of Transportation.

For dead livestock, contact the Animal Control Shelter

Q: Someone has been bitten by an animal. What needs to be done?

Because of the danger of rabies which is always fatal if untreated, animal bites must be reported to the Animal Control Unit. A bite report will be taken, and every effort will be made to find the animal, quarantine it, and observe its health for ten (10) days. Anyone who has been bitten is safe from rabies if the dog or cat which bit them is still alive ten days later.

If you, a family member, or a visitor to your home was bitten by your own pet, if it is up-to-date on its rabies vaccination, and if it was not running loose or otherwise in violation of the animal control ordinance at the time the bite occurred, you must report the bite, but you may be allowed to keep your animal confined in your own home and examined by your own veterinarian after ten (10) days have passed. The animal must not be allowed to run loose or make contact with other animals or human visitors for ten (10) days. You may also choose to kennel your pet at your veterinarian's office during this time. If the animal dies for any reason during this time, you must contact the Animal Control Unit so your pet's remains can be examined for rabies. Please call us at 913-321-1445 or read the online ordinance for details on what criteria must be met for the animal to be allowed to remain at home.

If the dog or cat **was not** up-to-date on its rabies vaccination, or if it was running loose or otherwise in violation of the ordinance at the time the bite occurred, the animal will be impounded in our kennel here at the Animal Control Unit for ten days. The owner may reclaim the animal after ten days have passed, and must be ready to pay any fines (such as failure to vaccinate against rabies) that may apply. In some cases, you may pay your fines at the Animal Control Unit and then we will transfer your pet to your own veterinarian's office for observation.

If you are bitten by a wild mammal, such as a fox or raccoon, notify Animal Control immediately and we will make every effort to capture the animal and examine it for rabies. Birds, reptiles, fish, and other animals do not carry rabies. If you are not sure whether or not the animal which bit you is a mammal, please call Animal Control and we can help identify it for you.

Due to risk of infection from bacteria, and due to the risk of dangerous venom from a snake or spider bite, you should see a physician if you have been bitten by a bird, reptile, spider, or any other non-mammalian animal for medical treatment, but the animal does not need to be impounded or quarantined.

If the Animal Control Unit is unable to locate the animal which bit you, you must go through a series of post-exposure anti-rabies injections to protect you against the rabies virus. While the risk of rabies is very small in the case of dog and cat bites, the virus is always fatal if untreated. However small the odds are, the risk is almost always too great to gamble on.

If you have been bitten by a wild animal which got away, you must have the injections to protect your health. Consult your physician for medical advice (on any type of animal bite) as to whether or not you should have the injections in situations where a dog or cat got away.