
Overview

This standard is about assessing the condition of animals that have been abused, harmed or neglected. This may include stray, abandoned or owned animals that have been mistreated.

It requires liaison with the animals' keeper, (if known), the provision of veterinary care, where this is needed, the organisation of safe accommodation and the necessity of working within the limitations of the Veterinary Surgeon's Act.

The term "keeper" is used to denote the individual responsible for the control and welfare of the animal, this may or may not be the owner.

This standard is suitable for individuals who are responsible for the enforcement of the relevant animal welfare legislation by investigating reported abandoned, abused, harmed, neglected, or stray animals, as well as those working with the relevant law enforcement agencies to support the prosecution of those who have abandoned, abused, harmed or neglected animals.

Individuals who undertake this role are likely to be working for a recognised body that has responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of animals.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with handling abused, harmed or neglected animals and complete a risk assessment, where required
2. assess the behaviour of the abused, harmed or neglected animals, this can include stray, abandoned or owned animals
3. identify where the condition of the animal requires the attention of a qualified practitioner and seek assistance
4. advise the keeper, if known, of their legal rights and responsibilities, and obtain the required consents and waivers where abused, harmed or neglected animals are removed to safe accommodation
5. give relevant instructions and advice to the keeper, if known, regarding the reasons for concern and the remedial course of action to be followed, where an animal remains with the keeper
6. handle and restrain the animal in a manner that promotes animal welfare, avoids behaviour giving rise to welfare concern and maintains health and safety
7. place the abused, harmed or neglected animal, where necessary, in an environment that minimises distress and the possibility of injury to the animal, yourself and all those involved in, or affected by, your work
8. obtain, label and securely store records, samples and information that may provide evidence of abuse, harm or neglect
9. confirm that records relating to the animal's condition and progress are maintained and stored as required by the relevant legislation and organisational policy, and are passed to the relevant authorities

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards, assess risks and complete risk assessments, where required, which relate to the assessment of the condition of abused, harmed or neglected animals
2. the relevant legal requirements and duties relating to the removal of abused, harmed or neglected animals to a place of safety
3. how to assess the behaviour of abused, harmed or neglected animals to determine the required action
4. the indicators of abnormal behaviour and conditions in the animal which requires attention of a qualified practitioner
5. how to recognise when the condition of the animal requires the attention of a qualified practitioner
6. how to obtain, where required, the relevant consents and waivers where animals are removed to safe accommodation
7. the relevant legal requirements and duties relating to the care of abused, harmed or neglected animals in a place of safety
8. the different types of remedial courses of action a keeper may have to follow in order for the abused, harmed or neglected animal to remain with the keeper
9. the types of environments in which to place the abused, harmed or neglected animal in order to minimise distress and possible injury to the animal, self and all those involved in or affected by your work
10. how to modify your behaviour, or the behaviour of those involved in or affected by your work, to reduce distress and fear in abused, harmed or neglected animals
11. the importance of obtaining, labelling and securing records, samples and information that might provide evidence of abuse, harm or neglect
12. the records that need to be kept in relation to assessing abused, harmed or neglected animals and the importance of completing these in accordance with the relevant legislation and organisational policy
13. the importance of passing records to the relevant authorities

Glossary

****Communicate advice could include:****

- medication and treatment
- behaviour
- diet
- environment

****Qualified practitioners:****

- veterinary surgeon
- farriery
- podiatrist

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