



You, your pet and us

Draft Animal Management Plan

Finding Solutions



Council By-Laws and related legislation

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The Darwin City Council Animal Management By-Laws are the primary legislation behind the Animal Management Plan. The By-Laws can be viewed or accessed on the internet by following the links on the Darwin City Council website www.darwin.nt.gov.au

Other relevant legislation to the application of the Animal Management Plan include:

- Local Government Act
- Miscellaneous Provisions Act and
- Animal Welfare Act.



Council has well-established processes designed to resolve issues in a manner that takes into account the needs, rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

The general complaints management procedure identifies:

- the steps involved in resolving a complaint
- guidelines for Council staff to effectively resolve issues and
- how the system works.

Council has a process that is specific to resolving complaints associated with dogs and cats:

General complaint management procedure

1. Complaints may be made by phone, email, in writing or in person. They may also be anonymous.
2. When the complaint is received, it will be recorded in Council's database and the appropriate Regulatory Officer will be given the complaint for investigation/action.
3. The Regulatory Officer will contact the complainant acknowledging receipt of their complaint within seven (7) days.
4. The Regulatory Officer will:
 - demonstrate that they clearly understand what the complaint is about
 - explain what will happen with the investigation/action and
 - explain that it will take, at the most, 35 days to finalise the complaint.
5. The Regulatory Officer will investigate the complaint as quickly as possible and use all relevant Council procedures. They will also enforce any relevant legislation.
6. The complainant will be advised within 20 days of the progress of their complaint.
7. All investigations and actions, including what has happened, will be recorded on the Council database.
8. Council will let the complainant know the result of their complaint within 35 days, either in writing or verbally, and will record this on the Council database.
9. If the investigation is to extend beyond 35 days, Council will let the complainant know and update them on progress made.

Anonymous complaints

Sometimes people are more comfortable making an anonymous complaint. Your confidentiality is ensured and Council will not pass on any details that can identify the complainant.

Council will do their best to address anonymous complaints. However, it can be very difficult to resolve these issues, or to enforce legislation, without the ability to thoroughly investigate and gather evidence and witness information.

Complaints associated with dogs and cats

Complaints about dogs and cats can be complex to resolve. More detailed processes, that meet the requirements outlined in the general complaint management process, have been developed to address these complaints.

These are outlined on pages 24 and 29 of this plan.

Mediation

In some instances Council may refer complaints or disputes to the Community Justice Centre (CJC). Council may decide to take this action when complaints are:

- more general in nature
- a neighbourhood dispute, or
- not able to be resolved using Council's general complaints procedure.

Council advises the parties involved about the services the CJC provides and gives them appropriate contact details. Any mediation is independent of Council and Council will be advised of the outcomes so they can be entered onto the database.

Appeals against Council decisions

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If you want to appeal a Council decision there are a number of avenues available to you.

You can either lodge your appeal with Council or with the Local Government Tribunal.

Lodging an appeal with Council

Matters relating to By-Laws:

For matters relating to the application of Council's By-Laws or the Animal Management Plan an application may be made to the Manager of Regulatory Services who will instigate a review of the decision. If a further review is required an appeal may be made to the Director Community Services.

Complaints about Council staff:

Complaints about the behaviour of Council staff or any alleged breaches of the law by Council staff may be made directly to the Chief Executive Officer.

These complaints are investigated in accordance with Council's Dealing With Complaints Policy.

Complaints about Council policy:

Complaints about Council policy relating to the By-Laws and Animal Management Plan should in the first instance be made to the Director Community Services.

Matters of policy may also be raised with elected members. Names and contact details of Aldermen are listed in Appendix A.

Lodging an appeal with the Local Government Tribunal

Under the Local Government Act, appeals against Council decisions may be lodged with the Local Government Tribunal.



Enquiries 08 8930 0606

www.darwin.nt.gov.au