



Government
of South Australia

South Australian
Code of Practice for the
Care and Management of
**Animals in
the Pet Trade**



Second edition



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
1. Definition	2
2. Objects.....	2
3. Basic Requirements.....	2
HOUSING FACILITIES	3
4. Cage Design.....	3
5. Cage Sizes	3
6. Temperature	3
7. Sale of Animals in High Temperatures	3
8. Ventilation.....	4
9. Lighting	4
EQUIPMENT.....	5
10. Feeding and Watering Equipment	5
11. Disposal of Wastes	5
12. Animal Restraints	5
13. Emergency Equipment.....	5
STAFF	6
14. Training	6
15. The Manager.....	6
ANIMAL HEALTH.....	7
16. Feeding Procedures.....	7
17. Hygiene	7
18. Introduction of New Animals	7
19. Handling of Animals.....	8
20. Sick and Injured Animals	8
21. Parasite Control.....	8
22. Disease Prevention.....	9
23. Age of Animals	9
24. Disposal of Dead Animals	9
INSPECTION	10
25. Management Responsibilities	10
TRANSPORT	11
26. Containers.....	11
27. Provision of Food and Water	11
28. Collection of Transported Animals	11
AFTER SALE CARE	12
29. Printed Information	12



Introduction

1. DEFINITION

For the purposes of this Code of Practice, a person or persons, incorporated association or company is trading in pets if they procure and sell companion animals for financial gain.

2. OBJECTS

- (a) This Code of Practice sets standards for the care and management of animals by those persons who operate or work in premises established or designated for the purpose of selling companion animals as a business for profit and reward.
- (b) It is applicable to the general welfare of those animals normally sold through wholesale or retail trade, and includes dogs, cats, goats, guinea pigs, rats, mice, birds and reptiles or any other companion animal.
- (c) This Code has been developed to cater for the welfare of those animals held in the short term prior to sale. It is recommended that animals are not kept in a confined area for more than 21 days.

3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Managers and those responsible for the day to day operation of such premises have the duty to provide for the needs of the animals under their control including:

- (a) Accommodation and equipment designed to suit the physical and behavioural requirements of the species.
- (b) Protection from the elements, natural and artificial environments.
- (d) Space to stand, move around, stretch and rest.
- (e) Appropriate food and water to maintain health.
- (f) Protection from disease.
- (g) Clean and hygienic conditions.



Housing Facilities

4. CAGE DESIGN

- (a) Housing for all animals must be designed and maintained to minimise the risk of injury, disease and escape.
- (b) All surfaces of cages, containers or pens must be made of non-toxic materials that can be cleaned and disinfected effectively.
- (c) The surrounds of all cages must be regularly cleaned to minimise dirt, animal litter and faeces.

5. CAGE SIZES

- (a) Animals kept either in groups or individual confinement must have space to feed, sleep, sit, stand, lie with limbs extended, stretch and move about.
- (b) Special provision must be made to prevent the young of any species being overlain.
- (c) Notwithstanding the above, dogs and puppies must be exercised according to breed and age, but for a minimum of ten minutes, at least three times daily.
- (d) Dogs and cats of any age must not be left unattended for more than sixteen hours.

6. TEMPERATURE

Premises in which caged animals are kept must be maintained at temperatures and humidity levels which minimise stress. The room temperature may not exceed 30 degrees Celsius and may not fall below 15 degrees Celsius.

7. SALE OF ANIMALS IN HIGH TEMPERATURES

Animals must not be removed into the open from their controlled environment when the outside temperature exceeds 33 degrees Celsius.



8. VENTILATION

- (a) The premises must provide adequate exchange of air to ensure that the atmosphere is constantly fresh and clean.
- (b) Caged animals must be protected from strong draughts.
- (c) Effective shelter must be provided for those animals which may be exposed to direct sunlight.

9. LIGHTING

- (a) Sufficient lighting must be available to enable the proper inspection of animals.
- (b) The light to which animals are exposed for lengthy periods must be appropriate to the maintenance of their well-being.



Equipment

All equipment which may affect the welfare of animals must be designed and maintained to minimise the risk of injury and disease.

10. FEEDING AND WATERING EQUIPMENT

- (a) Feeding and watering equipment must be readily accessible by animals. The equipment must be stable, non-toxic if ingested, and of a material and construction which can be cleaned and disinfected, or replaced, efficiently.
- (b) Water containers must be positioned so as to minimise the risk of spillage and faecal contamination.

11. DISPOSAL OF WASTES

- (a) Equipment must be provided to ensure the sanitary disposal of animals' wastes, food scraps and similar materials.
- (b) Cats must be provided with litter trays and the litter replaced at least once daily.

12. ANIMAL RESTRAINTS

Restraints must not cause injury to any animal.

13. EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

- (a) Appropriate working fire fighting equipment must be installed in animal holding areas and staff trained and practiced in its use.
- (b) Provision must be made where practical, for the swift removal of animals from the premises in the case of fire or other emergencies.
- (c) BCF fire extinguishers must not be held on the premises.
- (d) All premises must be fitted with operative smoke detectors and earth leakage safety switches.

NB Warning: Some fire retardants may be toxic to animals.



Staff

14. TRAINING

The Manager shall ensure that:

- (a) At least one full time member of the staff must possess sufficient demonstrable knowledge in the care of animals handled or have completed successfully an appropriate course of training.
- (b) All employees involved in the care and handling of animals must be fully instructed and competent in appropriate methods of safeguarding the welfare of animals.

15. THE MANAGER

The Manager of any premises is responsible for the overall management and conduct of business. In particular:

- (a) The supervision of employees.
- (b) The supervision and maintenance of relevant records.
- (c) The supervision of adequate and appropriate feeding, watering and inspection of animals in accordance with this Code of Practice.
- (d) The provision of prompt veterinary or other appropriate treatment in cases of injury or suspected disease.
- (e) The overall level of hygiene of the premises and health of the animals held.



Animal Health

16. FEEDING PROCEDURES

- (a) All animals must be provided with freshly prepared food in sufficient quantity and frequency to ensure optimal health and growth of the individual. Puppies and kittens must be provided with fresh food at least three times daily. The diet of debilitated animals must be at the direction of a veterinary surgeon or a person of acknowledged experience in their care.
- (b) Water must be available in sufficient quantities and for sufficient time to meet the animal's physiological needs.
- (c) Food and water supplies must be kept clean and palatable.
- (d) Animals must be fed under supervision to ensure that each animal gets the required amount of food.

17. HYGIENE

- (a) Premises in which animals are held must be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- (b) All cages, containers and pens must be maintained to ensure clean and hygienic conditions and must always be cleaned and disinfected prior to the introduction of a replacement animal into individual housing.
- (c) The disinfection of all pens, containers and cages with effective and appropriate disinfectants must be carried out at least weekly.

18. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ANIMALS

- (a) Puppies and kittens should not be held in isolation where any practical alternative is available.
- (b) Newly acquired litters of puppies and kittens must not be mixed with existing stock until they have been health checked by a veterinarian.
- (c) Except for the circumstances outlined in (a) and (b) new introductions must not be housed with existing litters.
- (d) Cages, containers and pens must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after the removal of puppies and kittens, before placing replacement litters in them.



19. HANDLING OF ANIMALS

- (a) Animals are to be protected against stress or injury from other animals, particularly larger or predatory species, or from excessive handling or interference from adult customers and children.
- (b) Notwithstanding (a), it must be recognised that handling is important to the social development of puppies and kittens and is desirable in moderation.
- (c) Any animal that is distressed by excessive viewing or handling must be removed from public view and reach.

20. SICK AND INJURED ANIMALS

The manager and employees responsible for animal care must be familiar with the signs of those diseases which are common in the species of animal held.

- (a) No animal known to be or suspected of being sick, injured or diseased is to be sold.
- (b) When signs of disease or injury are observed, prompt veterinary or other appropriate treatment must be obtained to protect the health of individual animals and prevent the spread of disease.
- (c) Animals suspected to have a contagious disease (and those in the same cage or enclosure) are to be strictly isolated.
- (d) All animals with an incurable disease or painful deformity must be humanely destroyed as soon as possible after the condition is noted.
- (e) Sick and injured animals must be housed in such a way that they pose no risk to other animals and are protected from both other animals and the public.

21. PARASITE CONTROL

- (a) Suitable treatment for the control of external parasites must be provided.
- (b) Suitable treatment for the control of internal parasites must be provided to safeguard the health of the animals and of any children who might handle them. In some cases, this may require veterinary advice.



22. DISEASE PREVENTION

- (a) All purchasers of any animal must be advised of its vaccination status, common diseases of the species and techniques for prevention. This information may be provided in a Fact Sheet or through a contact to a relevant enthusiast group.
- (b) No dog may be sold unless accompanied by a current vaccination certificate.

23. AGE OF ANIMALS

- (a) Unweaned animals must not be sold and may only be accepted by pet shops for subsequent sale where adequate facilities and expertise exist for their artificial feeding and care.
- (b) Puppies and kittens must not be sold until they have reached the age of 7 weeks.
- (c) All animals sold must be able to independently sustain themselves.

24. DISPOSAL OF DEAD ANIMALS

Animals that die must be removed and disposed of immediately except where it is necessary to seek veterinary opinion as to the cause of death.



Inspection

25. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) It is the responsibility of the Manager, or competent employee deputed by the Manager, to inspect all animals held:
- at frequent intervals
 - at least at the opening and closing of the premises
- to confirm the animals' well being and to take immediate and appropriate action in cases of sickness or injury.
- (b) Dogs and cats must be inspected, fed and exercised at least once each day over weekends and public holidays. Puppies and kittens must be inspected, fed and exercised at least three times each day over weekends and public holidays.
- (b) The Manager of the premises must register an up-to-date emergency telephone number with the RSPCA and provide the after hours telephone number of a nominated veterinarian.



Transport

26. CONTAINERS

- (a) All animals sold must be boxed or suitably restrained to ensure their security and protection when handed or sent to the customer.
- (b) The size of containers for the transport of animals by air, road and rail is dictated by the IATA Regulations.
- (c) All animals must be provided with adequate and appropriate food and water for the journey after sale.
- (c) Containers must be sufficiently strong to withstand stacking and general handling and constructed to exclude most light, whilst not prejudicing adequate ventilation.

27. PROVISION OF FOOD AND WATER

- (a) Food and water must be provided for animals undertaking an extended journey. In general, including loading, unloading and waiting time an extended journey is one which exceeds 12 hours, however the requirements of the individual being transported and the journey undertaken must be the primary guide to feed and water provision.

28. COLLECTION OF TRANSPORTED ANIMALS

- (a) The consignor is responsible for any animal in transit until loading onto the transport vehicle. The transporter then accepts responsibility for its care until it is unloaded at which time it becomes the responsibility of the consignee.
- (b) All animals in transit must be clearly labelled with the name, address, and where available, phone number of the consignor and consignee.
- (c) The consignor must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the consignee is aware of the estimated time and location of arrival of the animal.



After Sale Care

29. PRINTED INFORMATION

At the time of sale, the vendor must ask whether the purchaser has expertise in the husbandry of the species purchased. If the purchaser has little or no such experience, the vendor must supply printed information and literature with the appropriate advice on the care and feeding of the animal purchased including:

- (a) the need for follow up vaccinations.
- (b) the desirability and advantages of desexing both male and female dogs and cats acquired as pets.
- (c) the responsibilities inherent in companion animal ownership.
- (d) the general care, housing and management of the animal.
- (e) common diseases, their prevention and management.
- (f) the appropriate diet for the animal (or a diet sheet)
- (g) the legal requirements of keeping the species (including registration of dogs, permits for wildlife etc).