

Rehoming & Adoption of Animals from the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling & Impounding Facility | POLICY – GC-CP-702



Directorate	Executive Services	
TRIM Ref	14/15205	
Status	Current	
Adopted	23/02/2016	Minute No: 16/046

Policy Objective

This policy will provide clear protocols for the rehoming and adoption of companion animals which are impounded or surrendered to the Griffith City Companion Impounding Facility Animal Handling & Impounding Facility (“the Facility”).

The objectives will be to:

Manage Council’s requirement to impound stray companion animals, and provide secure holding facilities pending;

1. The return as many microchipped and/or registered companion animals (“animals”) as possible to their original owners and enable pet owners to reclaim lost animals.
2. The rehoming of as many as possible unclaimed suitable Companion Animals from the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling & Impounding Facility (“the facility”) through either the sale (adoption) of the companion animal to the general public or by the use of approved rehoming/rescue agencies for the animal’s further care and rehoming process.
3. The reduction of euthanasia rates of animals suitable for rehoming and adoption as much as possible by actively promoting the availability of these animals.
4. The provision of euthanasia services in the event that Items 2 & 3 are not able to be achieved.

Policy Scope

The policy applies to all companion animals impounded or surrendered to the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling & Impounding Facility.

The Griffith City Companion Animal Handling & Impounding Facility is an impounding facility established under the provisions of the Companion Animal Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008. The Facility is committed to the responsible rehoming and minimal euthanasia of companion animals and cannot be viewed as an animal shelter for companion animals to inhabit for indefinite periods of times.

Policy Statements

At all times, the capture and hold procedures set by the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008 shall be observed.

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The only times that Council Compliance Staff will not take a found animal directly to the Facility is when it can be readily returned to its residence and owner in the field, or when the animal is injured or considered too sick to enter the facility. In these cases, the animal will be taken to a Griffith veterinary hospital for assessment and treatment. A sick or injured companion animal which has been surrendered to the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling Facility (either directly to staff or deposited at the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling Facility after hours) may also be transferred to a Griffith veterinary hospital.

1. Un-Microchipped Companion Animals

1.1 Holding Period

When Compliance staff locate or retrieve a stray, seized or unwanted companion animal, the animal is scanned for a microchip. If the companion animal is not microchipped or has no other distinguishing mark, collar, tag or the like, it will be taken to the Facility where it will be held for **7 days**, after which it can be legally sold, rehomed or euthanised.

Council may hold any companion animal for up to 48 hours in excess of the minimum legislated hold periods if likely rehoming or sale is foreseeable.

1.2 Advertising

A companion animal suitable for adoption or rehoming will be advertised as soon as practicable after entering the facility to ensure maximum exposure and increased chance of rehoming or adoption. Advertising will include the gender, best estimation of breed and age and date of availability.

2. Microchipped Companion Animals

1.1 Holding Period

If an animal is identified as having a microchip number, staff will attempt to contact the owner to arrange return of the animal to its home. This may attract a release fee under Councils fees and charges and any fines as may be applicable.

Staff may also advise the owner via by writing or telephone calls that the animal is in the Facility.

After being held in the Facility for **14 days**, the animal becomes the property of Council, ceasing to be that of the registered owner. The animal can then be legally sold, rehomed or euthanised.

Council may hold any companion animal for up to 48 hours in excess of the minimum legislated hold periods if likely rehoming or sale is foreseeable.

1.2 Advertising

A companion animal suitable for adoption or rehoming will be advertised as soon as practicable after entering the facility to ensure maximum exposure and increased chance of rehoming or adoption. Advertising will include the gender, best estimation of breed and age and date of availability.

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3. Surrendered Animals

Animals surrendered by their owners to Griffith City Companion Animal Handling Facility become the property of Griffith City Council. The Facility does not actively seek or encourage the surrender of animals by owners, except for those animals known to have dangerous dog declarations or involvement in recent dangerous activities. These animals will not become available for rehoming or adoption.

Animals surrendered by their owners (either directly to staff or deposited at the Griffith City Companion Animal Handling Facility after hours) that may be suitable for rehoming or adoption will be subject to the same holding periods and rehoming and adoption procedures as for un-microchipped animals.

4. Euthanasia

Companion animals are only to be euthanised if they are not considered suitable for rehoming. In these cases, it is either considered more humane to have the animal euthanised rather than holding indefinitely in the impounding environment when rehoming is not likely or if there has been known dangerous activity presented by the animal.

In accordance with Section 64(2) of the Companion Animals Act 1998, feral and infant companion animals seized or surrendered to Council's facility may be able to be euthanised prior to the standard holding period as set out in Section 64(1) of the Act. (Refer to Council Policy GC-CP-704 - Infant & Feral Animals at Griffith Pound)

Euthanasia procedures will be carried out by either a local veterinarian or Council Compliance staff who are suitably trained and hold certification in this procedure.

5. Animal Adoption and Re-Homing and Foster Care – Specific Provisions

For animals identified as being suitable for sale or re-homing, the following procedure will be observed:

5.1 Advertising

- 5.1.1 Council shall regularly publish a list of companion animals held in the Facility that are considered suitable for rehoming. Members of the public wishing to adopt an animal and all rescue agencies wishing to rehome animals held in the facility should utilise this pathway. Publishing of available animals can take place in various forums eg local newspaper, Facebook and website, local newspaper and via other publicly accessible animal rehoming websites.
- 5.1.2 The Griffith City Council Animal Handling Facility Facebook Page will be the default site for all animals available for rehoming from the facility.
- 5.1.3 The Griffith City Council website will maintain a link to a published list of companion animals held in the facility and a link to the Council facility Facebook page.

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- 5.1.4 Animals may, in addition to the above Council managed media forums, be also listed on other social media outlets and websites.
 - 5.1.5 A companion animal suitable for adoption or rehoming will be advertised as soon as practicable after entering the facility to ensure maximum exposure and increased chance of rehoming or adoption.
 - 5.1.6 Advertising will include the gender, best estimation of breed and age and date of availability.
- 5.2 Access to Viewing and Meeting Animals
- 5.2.1 Any person wishing to view/meet an animal that has been identified from the above advertising mediums is able to do so.
 - 5.2.2 Animal viewing or meeting can take place at any time that is convenient to both the prospective adopter or rescue agency and Council Compliance staff.
 - 5.2.3 Due to Work Health & Safety and Public Liability requirements, persons are required to nominate the animal they wish to view/meet, and Compliance Staff will facilitate the viewing/meeting.
- 5.3 Adoption
- 5.3.1 Council will permit the adoption of a companion animal to a member of the public; however that person must sign a waiver and indemnify Council that they take the animal in an “as is” condition. The adoption will require payment of the cost of microchipping and registration if not already applicable to the animal.
 - 5.3.2 New owners are recommended that a vet check, vaccinations, heart and intestinal worming treatment of the animal be undertaken (these all to be paid by the owner). *Council and vets cannot guarantee the animal’s health and behaviour as Council and vets do not know the animal’s background.*
 - 5.3.3 The new owner will be required to pay the appropriate fees for microchipping and registration, if not already done. Under the Companion Animals Act, dogs and cats are required to be microchipped and registered before release. The animal will only be released following the payment of microchipping fees and registration fees at the Council’s main building.
 - 5.3.4 Animals requiring microchipping will be “chipped” by Council Compliance staff.
 - 5.3.5 Registration fees will be reduced if the animal is de-sexed. [Government Circular 15-37]
 - 5.3.6 Payment of Registration fees may be deferred if the new owner undertakes to de-sex an animal and provides proof of payment.

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5.4 Rehoming

- 5.4.1 A rehoming agency will be an organisation approved by Council and will hold an exemption from the Minister under Section 16 (d) of the Companion Animal Regulation.
- 5.4.2 The rehoming agency will provide Griffith City Council with its policy for rehoming and a list of approved persons to act on their behalf. A copy of the rehoming agency's public liability insurance which identifies Griffith City Council as an interested party should be available on request.
- 5.4.3 Council may enter into agreement with more than one rehoming agency.
- 5.4.4 Council will be the sole arbitrator in all rehoming matters and all decisions made by Council will be final.
- 5.4.5 First contact to Council will be the reasonable grounds as to why one person or agency claims an animal over another.
- 5.4.6 In certain circumstances, such as young, aged or frail animals, foster care arrangements may be organised with rehoming agencies. This will be at the discretion of Council Compliance staff who will contact rehoming agencies to seek interim foster care arrangements.
- 5.4.7 All animals leaving the Council facility must be microchipped and registered as per the legislation. Registration is exempted to approved section 16(d) compliant organisations and after claiming the animal, this function becomes the responsibility of the agency prior to adopting the animal out.
- 5.4.8 Griffith City Council reserves the right to not re-home any animal.

5.5 Restrictions to Adoption or Rehoming

- 5.5.1 No animal may be adopted by or rehomed to any person without identification and proof of age to be over 18 years old.
- 5.5.2 No animal may be adopted or rehomed if doing so would be illegal or create undue risks to humans or other animals.

Definitions

Companion Animal – means either a dog or a cat
Infant - very young offspring of a dog or cat

Legislation

Local Government Act 1993
Companion Animals Act 1998
Companion Animals Regulation 2008
Impounding Act 1993
NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 - Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments

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Guideline on the Exercise of Functions under the Companion Animals Act 1998

Related Documents

Council Policy GC-CP-704 - Infant & Feral Animals at Griffith Pound

Policy History

Revision Number	Date of Adoption/Amendment	Minute Number
1	28/09/04	0702
2	14/03/06	92
3	11/05/10	0139
4	09/06/15	15/161
5	23/02/2016	16/046