

ANIMAL BIRTH CONTROL (DOGS) POLICY 2021



**GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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ANIMAL BIRTH CONTROL (DOGS) POLICY 2021

1. BACKGROUND.- Stray and feral dogs pose serious human health, animal health and welfare, socio-economic, political and religious problems in many countries. Pakistan is also facing the same problem as stray or street dogs are a constant source of nuisance because they attack humans. A vast number of cases of dog attacks, with or without an owner, are reported in the Punjab. However, at the same time, traditionally, stray dogs have been treated with cruelty in our society which needs to be addressed.

The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has recognized the importance of controlling dog populations without causing unnecessary or avoidable animal suffering while preventing Zoonotic diseases notably rabies, and acknowledged human health as a priority.

Thus, there is a dire need to address the human health as a priority as well as to mold the human behavior and instill empathy towards poor animals (dogs) by taking initiatives to prevent excesses against them. Hence, the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Policy 2021.

2. OBJECTIVES.- The objectives of this policy are to, *inter alia*, promote responsible dog ownership to significantly reduce the numbers of stray dogs and the incidence of Zoonotic diseases through veterinary services; reduce dog population, if required, by techniques involving chemicals or surgical procedure; reduce incidences of dog bites and rabies; and promote changes in human behavior towards stray dogs.

3. DEFINITIONS.- In the Policy:

"Animal Welfare Organization" means and includes the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) or any entity with similar objectives;

"capturing authority" includes a concerned local government or any other authority for the time being entrusted by law with the control and administration of any ancillary matter within a specified local area;

"carrying capacity" means the upper limit of the dog population density that could be supported by the habitat based on the availability of resources (food, water, shelter) and human acceptance;

"Dog Population Control Program" means a program with the aim of reducing stray dog population to a particular level or maintaining it at that level and managing it in order to meet a predetermined objective;

"owned dog" means a dog with a person that claims its responsibility;

"responsible dog ownership" means the situation whereby a person accepts and commits to perform various duties according to the legislation in place and focused on the satisfaction of the behavioral, environmental and physical

needs of a dog and to the prevention of risks (aggression, disease transmission or injuries) that the dog may pose to the community, other animals or the environment;

"Stray dog" means a dog without an owner and includes:

- (a) free roaming owned dog not under direct control or restriction at a particular time;
- (b) free roaming dog with no owner; or
- (c) feral dog or domestic dog that has reverted to the wild state and is no longer directly dependent upon humans for successful reproduction.

4. IMPLIMENTATION AND MONITIORING MECHANISM

4.1. Provincial Steering Committee (PSC):

The Provincial Steering Committee (PSC) shall consist:

(a) Additional Chief Secretary, Punjab	Chairperson
(b) Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department	Member
(c) Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Local Government and Community Development Department	Member
(d) Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department	Member
(e) Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Livestock and Dairy Development Department	Member
(f) Vice Chancellor, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore	Member
(g) Honorary Secretary Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)	Member
(h) any person co-opted by the Committee	Member

The Committee shall monitor the implementation of the policy and take policy decisions. The Committee shall meet bi-annually or as and when required.

4.2. Provincial Monitoring Committee (PMC).- The Provincial Monitoring Committee (PMC) shall consist:

(a) Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Livestock and Dairy Development Department	Chairperson
(b) Representative of the Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department	Member
(c) Representative of the Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Local Government and Community Development Department	Member
(d) Representative of the Secretary, Government of the Punjab, Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department	Member
(e) Vice Chancellor, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore or his representative	Member
(f) Honorary Secretary, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)	Member
(g) Director General (Extension), Livestock and Dairy Development Department	Member
(h) any person co-opted by the committee	Member

- (i) Deputy Secretary (Technical), Livestock and Dairy Secretary
Development Department

The Committee shall:

- (a) monitor the performance of the Districts;
- (b) give appropriate directions, and provide technical advice or solutions to the DSCs and TICs;
- (c) advise the PSC for any change in the policy;
- (d) remove the bottlenecks in the implementation of the policy;
- (e) prepare an online management information system through Punjab Information Technology Board for updating and monitoring the progress of TICs;
- (f) establish a viable system for:
 - (i) collecting baseline data of stray dogs through Bureau of Statistics or any other method;
 - (ii) registration and identification of owned dogs (licensing) which may include granting license to the owners and breeders within next three years;
- (g) keep a watch on the national and international development in the field of research pertaining to street dogs control and management, development of vaccines and cost effective methods of sterilization, vaccination, etc.;
- (h) prepare and execute a training module through UVAS and SPCA for all stakeholders; and
- (i) meet on quarterly basis or as and when required.

4.3. District Monitoring Committee (DMC).- The District Monitoring Committee (DMC) shall be notified by the Livestock and Dairy Development Department as follow:

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|--|-------------|
| (a) Deputy Commissioner of the concerned District | Chairperson |
| (b) District Police Officer of the concerned District | Member |
| (c) Chief Executive Officer, District Health Authority | Member |
| (d) Deputy Director, Local Government and Community Development Department | Member |
| (e) two representatives from Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) | Member |
| (f) a representative from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (SPCA), if available | Member |
| (g) any person co-opted by the committee | Member |
| (h) Additional Director, Livestock and Dairy Development Department | Secretary |

The Committee shall:

- (a) monitor and supervise the functions of TICs;
- (b) implement the directives of the PSC and PMC;

- (c) give appropriate directions to the TICs;
- (d) advise the PMC for any change in the policy;
- (e) remove the bottlenecks in the implementation of the policy;
- (f) monitor the online management information system for updating and monitoring the progress of TICs; and
- (g) meet on monthly basis or as and when required.

4.4. Tehsil Implementation Committee (TIC).- The Tehsil Implementation Committee (TIC) shall be notified by the Livestock and Dairy Development Department as follow:

(a)	Assistant Commissioner of the concerned Tehsil	Chairperson
(b)	Sub-Divisional Police Officer of the concerned Tehsil	Member
(c)	Deputy District Health Officer	Member
(d)	Assistant Director, Local Government and Community Development Department	Member
(e)	two representatives from the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)	Member
(f)	a representative from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (SPCA), if available	Member
(g)	any person co-opted by the committee	Member
(h)	Deputy Director, Livestock and Dairy Development Department	Secretary

The Committee shall:

- (a) be responsible for planning and management of dog control program in accordance with the policy;
- (b) establish sufficient number of dogs pounds as a long-term strategy, if fiscal space is available;
- (c) provide land exploring all options available in the Tehsil and utilize the dog pounds in shorter period as and where available under control of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) or Animal welfare societies or philanthropists;
- (d) establish sufficient numbers of dog pounds including animals kennels or shelter which may be managed by animal welfare organization or through other means;
- (e) issue instructions for catching, transportation, sheltering, sterilization, vaccination, treatment and release of sterilized vaccinated or treated dogs;
- (f) authorize veterinary doctor to decide on case to case basis the need to put to sleep critically ill or fatally injured or rabid dogs in a painless method by using sodium pentathol (any other method is strictly prohibited);
- (g) create public awareness, solicit co-operation and funding without incurring any liability on the exchequer;

- (h) provide guidelines to pet dog owners and commercial breeders from time to time;
- (i) get a survey done of the number of street dogs;
- (j) take such steps for monitoring the dog bite cases to ascertain the reasons of dog bite, the area where it took place and whether it was from a stray or a pet dog;
- (k) enter the data on the provincial MIS on daily basis;
- (l) submit monthly progress report to DSC;
- (m) take decisions regarding all ancillary matters; and
- (n) meet on monthly basis or as and when required.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMPETENCIES.

5.1 Role of Commissioners.- The commissioners of the respective Divisions shall be responsible to ensure implementation of the policy in their Divisions through meetings, inspections, visits and encouraging Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Philanthropists or donors to participate in this noble purpose.

5.2 Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropists or donors.- It has been observed that some Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Philanthropists or Donors are contributing significantly in preventing cruelty to animals especially dogs. They are potentially important partners of the veterinary services in contributing to public awareness and understanding and helping to obtain resources to contribute in a practical way to the design and successful implementation of dog control programmes.

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Philanthropists or Donors may supply knowledge on dog populations and features of ownership, as well as expertise in handling and kenneling dogs and the implementation of sterilization programmes. Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) can also contribute, together with veterinarians and the authorities in educating the public in responsible dog ownership.

5.3 Local Government and Community Development Department.- The local government shall provide:

- (a) support to TICs as and where required;
- (b) requisite number of dog suitable vehicles (vans or rikshaws) with ramps for the capture and transportation of street dogs with the technical advice of PMC;
- (c) one driver and two trained dog catchers for each Tehsil; and
- (d) community awareness.

5.4 Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA):

- (a) Be active member of dog catcher squad to take care of pregnant, sick or injured dog;
- (b) Treatment of sick and injured dog;

- (c) Implementation of animal health and animal welfare legislation, in coordination with other competent government agencies and institutions;
- (d) Coordination with rescue 1122;
- (e) Coordination with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in animal welfare;
- (f) Sterilization, Neutralization and immunization of dogs; and
- (g) Community awareness.

5.5 Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department:

- (a) Inoculation of anti-rabies vaccination to staff of Local Government and Community Development Department, Livestock and Dairy Development Department, and SPCA;
- (b) Keep the record of all dog bite cases;
- (c) Keep the record of rabies positive cases;
- (d) Treatment of dog bite cases; and
- (e) Community awareness.

5.6 Dog owners.- When a person takes the ownership of a dog there shall be an immediate acceptance of responsibility for that dog, and for any offspring it may produce, for the duration of its life or until adopted by someone. The owner shall ensure that the welfare of the dog, including behavioral needs, are respected and the dog is protected, as far as possible, from infectious diseases (e.g. through vaccination and parasite control) and from unwanted reproduction (e.g. through contraception or sterilizations).

Owners shall ensure that the dog's ownership is clearly identified (preferably with permanent identification such as a tattoo or microchip) and, where required by legislation, registered on a centralized database. All reasonable steps shall be taken to ensure that the dog does not roam out of control in a manner that may pose a problem to the community or the environment.

- 6. CAPTURING OF DOGS.-** Capturing of dogs shall be based on:
- (a) receipt of specific complaint about nuisance or dog bite; and
 - (b) such dates and time to be specified by the TIC.

The complaint shall be attended on priority basis, irrespective of the area from which it comes. On receipt of such complaint the details such as name of the complainant, his complete address, date and time of complaint, nature of complaint etc. shall be recorded in a register to be maintained for permanent record.

The dog capturing squad shall consist of:

- (a) driver;
- (b) two or more trained employees for capturing the dogs; and
- (c) one representative of any of the animal welfare organization, where available.

The members of the dog squad shall carry a valid identity card issued by the TIC.

On receipt of specific complaint or for capturing dogs, in normal course, the dog squad shall visit the concerned area, capture the dogs identified by the complaint in case of complaint-oriented capturing and other dogs in case of general capturing. The captured dogs shall be tagged for identification purposes and to ensure that the dogs are released in the same area after sterilization and vaccination. Only stipulated number of dogs, according to the Animal Birth Control Program target, if available, shall be caught by the van.

A record of dogs captured shall be maintained in a register, mentioning therein the name of the area or locality, date and time of capture, names of persons in the dog squad on that particular day and details about dogs captured such as number of male dogs, number of female dogs, number of puppies etc.

While the dogs are being captured in any locality, the representative of the local authority or of the animal welfare organization or philanthropists accompanying the dog squad shall make announcements on a public address system that dogs are being captured from the area for the purpose of sterilization and immunization and shall be released in the same area after sterilization and immunization. The announcement may also briefly educate the residents of the area about the dog control programme and solicit the support of all the residents reassuring them that the local authority is taking adequate steps for their safety. The rabid dogs may be rendered unconscious through use of stun guns or taser guns.

The captured dogs shall be brought to the dog kennels or dog pounds managed by the Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs). On reaching the dog pounds, all the dogs shall be examined by the veterinarians and healthy and sick dogs may be segregated. Sick dogs shall be given proper treatment in the hospitals run by Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) or other institutions and only after they are treated, they shall be sterilized and vaccinated. The dogs shall be sterilized or vaccinated under the supervision of the veterinarians of the hospital run by the Livestock and Dairy Development Department, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), Animal Welfare Organization or other dog shelters. After necessary period of follow up, the dogs shall be released at the same place or locality from where they were captured and the date, time and place of their release shall be recorded. The representative of Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs) shall accompany the dog squad at the time of release also.

At a time, only one lot of dogs shall be brought for sterilization and immunization at one dog kennel or dog pound and they shall be from one locality. Lots from different areas or localities shall not be mixed at the same dog pound or dog kennel except through physical barriers.

The dog kennel shall have sufficient space for proper housing and free movement of dogs. The place shall have proper ventilation

and natural lighting and shall be kept clean. Adequate arrangement for drinking water and food shall be made for dogs while in captivity.

Adults and puppies must be housed separately and amongst the adults the males and females also should be housed separately. Furious or dumb rabid dog shall be separately kept.

Female dogs found to be pregnant shall not undergo abortion (irrespective of stage of pregnancy) and sterilization, and shall be released till they have litter.

7. IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING.- Sterilized dogs shall be vaccinated before release and the ears of these dogs shall either be clipped or tattooed for being identified as sterilized or immunized dogs. In addition, the dogs may be given token or nylon collars for identification and detailed records of such dogs shall be maintained. Branding of dogs shall not be permitted.

8. EUTHANASIA OF STREET DOGS.- Incurably ill and mortally wounded dogs, as diagnosed by a qualified veterinarian appointed by the TIC, shall be euthanized during specified hours in a humane manner by administering sodium pentathol for adult dogs and Thiopental Intraperitoneal for puppies by a qualified veterinarian or euthanized or in any other humane manner approved by the PMC. No dog shall be euthanized in the presence of another dog.

9. DISPOSAL OF CARCASSES.- The person responsible for euthanizing shall make sure that the animal is dead, before disposal. The carcasses of such euthanized dogs shall be disposed of through burial.

10. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK.- A regulatory framework that helps the authorities to establish a successful dog control programs shall include the following key elements:

- (a) registration and identification of dogs and licensing of dog breeders;
- (b) vaccination against rabies and other preventive measures against zoonotic disease, as appropriate;
- (c) veterinary procedures (e.g. surgical procedures);
- (d) control of dog movement (national and international);
- (e) control of dangerous dogs;
- (f) regulations on the breeding and sale of dogs;
- (g) environmental controls (e.g. abattoirs, rubbish dumps, dead stock facilities);
- (h) regulations for dog shelters;
- (i) regulations for adoption procedures of dogs available in shelters; and
- (j) Animal welfare obligations of owners and the authorities.

However, absence of any specific regulations shall not hinder the implementation of the policy.

11. BUDGET.- The departments or agencies involved in the implementation of the policy shall utilize their respective budgets as far as possible. However, any additional requirement may be submitted by the departments to the Finance Department for provision of funds in recurrent budgets. Moreover, an umbrella PC-I may be prepared by Livestock and Dairy Development Department after a thorough deliberation with all stakeholders and a scheme shall be included in ADP after approval of relevant forums. The PC-I may cater the quintessential needs only, e.g. procurement of dog catching van or rickshaws, online MIS and other necessary equipment. The demands shall be submitted through the DSCs to Secretary, Livestock and Dairy Development Department duly justifying the needs and avoiding the duplication.

12. STAGE-WISE IMPLEMENTATION.- In the short term, the spaces already available especially with the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) or philanthropists shall be used. However, the requisite facilities shall be made available in public sector wherever required in next ten years depending upon the fiscal space available in the Districts.

The DSCs and TICs shall be encouraged to initiate at least one model animal shelter facility in Tehsils, where dogs shall be kept for the rest of their lives and not released after sterilization or neutralization, save where some responsible person approaches them for adoption for which proper procedure shall be duly notified by Livestock and Dairy Development Department. The model dog pen may also be established with assistance of donors, philanthropists or Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs).

13. AMENDMENTS IN POLICY.- The PSC may make any changes in the policy which shall be necessitated due to any exigencies or to make it more practical, useful and easily implementable. Any suggestion in this regard from any quarter shall be submitted to the Secretary PMC, which, after due deliberation, shall submit the same to PSC for decision.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
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DEPARTMENT**