

**Ministry of the Solicitor General**

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**MEMORANDUM TO:** All Chiefs of Police and  
Commissioner Thomas Carrique  
Chairs, Police Services Boards

**FROM:** Stephen Waldie  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division

**SUBJECT:** Update on Animal Welfare Calls

<b>DATE OF ISSUE:</b>	<b>August 19, 2019</b>
<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	<b>General Information</b>
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As you are aware, Ontario's interim animal protection model came into effect on June 29, 2019. The government passed legislation that enables the interim Chief Inspector to appoint inspectors to ensure animals remain protected during the interim period.

The Chief Inspector has appointed inspectors employed by certain local humane societies and/or SPCAs to deliver enforcement services at the regional level. The province has entered into agreements with the following thirteen local humane societies/SPCAs:

- Lincoln County Humane Society
- Kingston Humane Society
- Hamilton/Burlington Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Sarnia and District Humane Society
- Windsor Essex Humane Society
- Humane Society of London and Middlesex
- Oakville and Milton Humane Society
- Guelph Humane Society
- Thunder Bay and District Humane Society
- Northumberland Humane Society
- The Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth
- Humane Society of Kawartha Lakes
- Timmins and District Humane Society

Additionally, specialized inspectors with subject matter expertise in livestock and agriculture, horses, zoos, and aquariums have been appointed to provide support to police services and other inspectors.

Police continue to have the authority to enforce animal welfare legislation across the province.

A dedicated, toll-free number has been set up for the public to report animal welfare concerns: 1-833-9ANIMAL (1-833-926-4625). The call centre triages calls to the organization responsible for enforcing animal welfare based on the location and nature of the incident, which could be a provincial inspector, local humane society/SPCA or a police service. During this interim period, police services may be contacted if the matter is criminal in nature, and/or there is an emergency.

For example, when police services receive calls related to dogs in hot cars, we expect police services to respond. **These calls should not be routed back to the animal cruelty hotline.** In the event that an animal requires removal, police services should use the appropriate resources to remedy the emergency. Under the *Ontario Society of Prevention and Cruelty to Animals Act (OSPCA Act)* the owner is responsible for any costs incurred in respect of providing food, care or treatment to an animal.

Inspectors are available to provide support to police services when responding to calls related to animal cruelty matters. Police services are also encouraged to use other local resources, including municipal by-law officers, animal control, local humane societies and animal rescues, including:

- To find a veterinarian, the College of Veterinarians of Ontario offers the following tool: <https://onlineservice.cvo.org/webs/cvo/register/#/>
- If specialized veterinary expertise is required, you may contact the Office of the Chief Veterinarian for Ontario, OMAFRA: 519-826-3577
- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) can provide advice or connect police services to agricultural sector stakeholders who have specific expertise and offer education and guidance to owners of livestock.

Should you have any further questions, be seeking further clarity on the interim model or further information who your local humane society may be, please contact Chief Inspector, Paula Milne at [Paula.Milne@ontario.ca](mailto:Paula.Milne@ontario.ca).

We appreciate your support during this time and will continue to engage police services in the development of the long-term model for animal welfare.

Sincerely,



Stephen Waldie  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division