

Application and Information for Animals in Social Care Facilities

The presence of animals in social care facilities can have many positive benefits to children, clients, and staff. However, the health and safety of clients, staff, and the animals themselves may be at risk, if safe practices are not in place. Before introducing an animal into the facility, Environmental Public Health (EPH) approval may be required. An Environmental Health Officer/ Public Health Inspector (EHO/PHI) will assess the animal management and care plan to ensure that measures are in place to reduce the risk of physical injury or disease transmission from animals to humans.

EPH may:

- i) allow the animal in the facility if proper practices are followed, or
- ii) deny the presence of certain animals known to carry certain diseases or if safe practices are not in place.

The goal of EPH is to assist those facilities wanting to have animals in their centre without putting the health of clients and staff at risk.

What Animals Require EHO/PHI Approval?

Type of Approval	Type of Animals
Written approval is not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish • Ant farms
Written approval is not required but must inform EPH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rabbits, gerbils, guinea pigs, or hamsters
Written approval is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cats and dogs • Live poultry, chickens, turkeys ducks, and geese • Birds (all varieties) • Chinchillas, ferrets, hedgehogs, and other animals are known to bite • Reptiles and amphibians • Turtles (all varieties)
Not Permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turtles of the genera <i>Pseudemys</i>, <i>Graptemys</i>, <i>Chrysemys</i>, or <i>Chelydra</i>

Application and Information for Animals in Social Care Facilities | 2

What information does an EHO/PHI require to approve an animal?

Provide a written proposal outlining the procedures for the handling and care of the animals or complete the application form for an animal in a social care facility (see “Application for an Animal in a Social Care Facility”), and submit it to EPH.

Information should include:

- Cleaning and sanitizing times, materials, and procedures for cages, aquariums, and equipment associated with the animal including where cages and materials will be cleaned, and how areas will be cleaned and disinfected
- Specific procedures for cleaning and sanitizing the area outside of cages (where children/clients may have contact)
- Types of animal food, feeding times, and procedures for feeding
- Potential handling of animals by children/clients
- Location of where the animal will be stored
- Location of where all pet supplies, including food, cleaning chemicals, and other supplies will be stored
- Method of containment (full or partial) for the adequate control of animals and their waste products including feathers, food waste, and animal waste
- Details outlining the disposal of animal waste products
- Proper assurance that the animal involved is healthy by including veterinary testing for pathogens or diseases of specific concern with the animal (i.e. psittacosis in birds, salmonellosis in turtles), as deemed necessary by Environmental Public Health

What are some safe practices that need to be in place to have an animal?

- Animals are not allowed in food preparation or food storage areas.
- Animals must be caged or adequately controlled.
- Animal food, supplies, and cleaning equipment must be stored completely separate from foods intended for human consumption.
- Employees and clients must wash their hands immediately after touching an animal, animal waste, or any animal-related supplies.
- Animals must be adequately supervised and managed in all respects to minimize the potential for disease transmission.
- Animals must be healthy, disease free, and have up-to-date vaccinations.

Other measures may need to be implemented depending on the animal.

What are some conditions which may be placed on the facility to ensure that health and safety are protected?

- The handling of reptiles/amphibians by children/clients is prohibited at all times.
- Bird cages are maintained and/or constructed in a manner, so that waste products including food wastes and feathers are fully contained.
- Clients are not permitted to assist in animal feeding and cleaning activities.
- Animals are not permitted in eating areas.
- Adequate supervision is provided when handling animals.
- Children wash their hands immediately after handling or petting an animal.
- Some animals are allowed for observation only (i.e. in an aquarium/terrarium with a screen/cover on top)
- Cleaning and feeding procedures take place only when clients are not present.

Please note conditions will be specific and may vary depending on the animal and the facility.

What happens with my application?

An EHO will review the submitted information and application and will either approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request for the animal. A letter will be sent to the applicant with the EHO decision. You will be notified by the EHO in writing within 7 days of receiving your application.

*****The presence of animals is subject to EHO approval and can be revoked at any time*****

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online](#) at ahs.ca/eph.

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Application for an Animal in a Social Care Facility

Name of Owner/Company	
Address of Facility	

Animal Management and Care Plan

Please provide our office with the following information and all supporting information as needed.

Describe the type of animal you wish to care for	
Describe how, when and who will clean and sanitize the equipment, cages and areas associated with the animal	
Describe what the animal will eat, when and how it will be fed and who will feed it	
Describe if there will be direct handling of the animals by clients and staff, and if so how this will occur and what safety measures will be in place	
Describe where the animal will be kept	
Describe how and where the pet supplies, food, cleaning supplies, etc. will be stored	
Describe how the animal and animal products will be contained	
Outline how the animal wastes will be disposed	
Provide assurance that the animal is healthy by including confirmation of veterinary testing for pathogens or diseases of specific concern with the animal involved (e.g. psittacosis in birds, salmonellosis in turtles)	
Provide any other information that may be relevant to your situation or to your animals	

Application for an Animal in a Social Care Facility| 2

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved

Refused

(Executive Officer)

(Date)

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