

LANAnC41 - SQA Unit Code HA80 04

Investigate animal related incidents



Overview

This standard covers the investigation of animal related incidents. This would include suspected failure to meet the welfare needs of animals, including abuse, harm or neglect.

It includes receiving and investigating reports, gathering information and taking appropriate action. Where necessary, you will also need to involve the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

The term "keeper" is used to denote the individual responsible for the control and welfare of animals, this may or may not be the owner.

This standard is suitable for those who are responsible for the enforcement of animal welfare legislation by investigating reported abuse, harm or neglect of animals, and working with other law enforcement agencies to support the prosecution of those that have failed to meet the welfare needs of animals.

Those who undertake this role are likely to be working for a recognised body that has responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of animals.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 receive and record reports of **animal related incidents**
- P2 ascertain ownership of the animal and identify the individual responsible for its control and welfare
- P3 select investigation methods that take account of all the **relevant factors**
- P4 investigate and gather relevant **information** regarding the reported animal related incident and individuals concerned
- P5 seek additional material and clarification from appropriate sources, where information or evidence is incomplete, vague or ambiguous
- P6 immediately issue a caution and inform the individual responsible of their legal rights where there are grounds to suspect an offence has been committed
- P7 summon assistance without delay to prevent injury or harm to self, members of the public and animals, where the behaviour of individuals suggests the possibility of aggressive or abusive behaviour
- P8 carry out your work in accordance with the law
- P9 involve law enforcement agencies and/or other specialists as required
- P10 produce investigation reports and findings that are accurate and complete, and pass them to the appropriate authority
- P11 store information relating to the investigation securely and confidentially

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 methods to determine the identity and ownership of an individual animal
- K2 methods of obtaining accurate and precise information from individuals following a reported animal related incident
- K3 the importance of a full and fair investigation and how to encourage co-operation
- K4 questioning techniques and how they can be applied
- K5 the importance of completing records accurately and contemporaneously
- K6 the range, application and relevance of legislation relating to failure to meet the **welfare needs of animals**
- K7 your own responsibilities under relevant legislation
- K8 sources of specialist information
- K9 techniques to minimise and manage aggressive and abusive behaviour
- K10 law enforcement agencies and the powers and interests of each (including police, local and national government, voluntary sector)
- K11 other specialists that may be required e.g. veterinary surgeon, animal rescue centre
- K12 signs of normal health and behaviour in animals
- K13 how to recognise abnormal states in animals
- K14 how failure to meet welfare needs can affect the health and behaviour of animals
- K15 legislation relating to the collection, storage and disclosure of information

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Scope/range

Relevant factors to consider:

- 1 the urgency of action
- 2 cost
- 3 the seriousness of the allegation
- 4 the effect of delay on the welfare of the animal

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Glossary

Current animal welfare legislation:

- England and Wales, Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Scotland, Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006
- Northern Ireland, Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Welfare needs of animals:

- suitable environment (place to live)
- suitable diet
- ability to exhibit normal behaviour
- protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- housed with, or apart from, other animals (where applicable)

Animal related incidents:

- abuse
- harm
- neglect
- abandonment
- straying
- nuisance

Information could include:

- visual media e.g. photographs, CCTV
- specimens
- veterinary records
- written statements
- physical items
- records relating to animal's behaviour and training history
- behavioural assessment
- intelligence

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