

RULES OF MANAGEMENT FOR CAT BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS

**RULES IN FORCE 1ST JANUARY 2002 WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT
OF CAT BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS**

CAT BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT LICENSING
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INTRODUCTION

Local authorities issue licences to proprietors of boarding catteries under the provisions of The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963. The licence can stipulate a number of conditions to secure the following objectives:

- i) that the cats are kept in accommodation suitable in respect of construction, size, temperature, ventilation and cleanliness;
- ii) that boarded cats are adequately supplied with food and drink, and are visited at suitable intervals;
- iii) that the cats are kept secure;
- iv) that reasonable precautions are taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases;
- v) that appropriate steps be taken in the event of an emergency;
- vi) that a suitable consistent level of management is maintained.

LICENCE CONDITIONS

1. LICENCE DISPLAY

- 1.1 A copy of the licence and its conditions must be suitably displayed to the public in a prominent position in, on or about the boarding establishment.

2. CONSTRUCTION

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The establishment must, at all times, be laid out and operated in accordance with an approved plan, to be attached to the licence. Before carrying out any alterations, plans must be submitted to and approved by the licensing officer of the local authority.

- 2.1.2 All new units must be built on a concrete base with a damp proof membrane to Building Regulation standards. This should have a minimum fall of 1 in 80. (See 2.3.2).

- 2.1.3 All exterior wood must be smooth and properly treated against wood rot. Only products, which are not toxic to cats, may be used.

- 2.1.4 All internal surfaces used in the construction of walls, floors, partitions, doors and door frames to be durable, smooth and impervious. There must be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury.

- 2.1.5 Sleeping areas of units must be so insulated as to prevent extremes of temperature.

- 2.1.6 Fencing material must be secure and safe.

- 2.1.7 The construction must be such that the security of the cat is ensured.

- 2.1.8 All areas to which cats have free access must be roofed. (See – 2.4.2).

2.2 Walls

- 2.2.1 The walls with which cats may come into contact must be of smooth impervious materials, capable of being easily cleansed. Where concrete or other building blocks or bricks are used, they must be sealed so as to be smooth and impervious, and resealed as necessary.

- 2.2.2 Junctions between vertical and horizontal sections should be coved. If impractical in existing premises, all joints must be sealed.

- 2.2.3 Full length sneeze barriers must be provided where the gap between units is less than 625 mm (2 ft).

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2.3 Floors and Concrete Bases

2.3.1 The concrete base and floors of all buildings and units, must be of smooth, impervious materials, capable of being easily cleansed. In new catteries, this must incorporate a damp proof membrane.

2.3.2 Floors of all units and individual exercise areas must be constructed and maintained in such a condition as to prevent ponding of liquids. (See Condition 2.1.2).

2.4 Ceilings and Roofing

2.4.1 Ceilings must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected.

2.4.2 All exercise areas and the safety passage should be covered with mesh and impermeable material, a proportion of which must be translucent.

2.5 Doors

2.5.1 Doors must be strong enough to resist impact and scratching and must be fitted to be capable of being effectively secured.

2.5.2 Where metal edging is used, this must not present a risk of injury to the cat.

2.5.3 Adequate constructional precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease particularly by droplet infection.

2.6 Windows

2.6.1 All windows, which pose a security risk, must be escape proof at all times.

2.7 Drainage

2.7.1 Kitchens must be connected to mains drainage or an approved, localised sewage disposal system.

2.8 Lighting

2.8.1 During daylight hours light must be provided to exercise and sleeping areas so that all parts are clearly visible. Where practicable this must be natural light.

2.8.2 Adequate supplementary lighting must be provided throughout the establishment.

2.9 Ventilation

2.9.1 Ventilation must be provided to all interior areas without the creation of excessive, localised draughts in the sleeping area.

3. NUMBER OF ANIMALS

3.1 Number of Cats Permitted

3.1.1 The maximum number of cats to be kept at any one time is
[TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY].

3.1.2 Each cat must be provided with a separate unit except that cats from the same household may share a unit of adequate size with the written consent of the cats' owner.

3.1.3 Holding units may be provided for temporarily boarding a cat for not more than 24 hours. Existing holding units must have a minimum floor area of 9 sq ft. In new construction the floor area must be a minimum of 12 sq ft. Holding units must have a minimum height of (0.9m) 3ft.

3.1.4 No animals other than cats are to be boarded within the licensed facilities without the written approval of the local authority.

3.1.5 Where stray cats are accepted by the cattery they must be kept in a separate area away from boarded cats.

3.2 Unit Size, Layout and Exercise Facilities

3.2.1 In new construction each unit must have a sleeping area, and an adjoining exercise area which is exclusive to that unit.

3.2.2 In new construction each unit must be provided with a sleeping area of at least 0.85 sq m (9 sq ft) for one cat, 1.5 sq m (16 sq ft) for two cats, 1.85 sq m (20 sq ft) for up to four cats.

Units may be designated as suitable for a specific number of cats, greater than 4, at the discretion of the licensing authority.

3.2.3 Units must have a minimum internal height of 1.8m (6 ft).

3.2.4 The height of the sleeping area must be at least 3 ft (91 cm) in existing and 4 ft (1.22 m) in new build.

3.2.5 Suitable bedding must be provided which allows the cat to be comfortable and which is capable of being easily and adequately cleaned and disinfected. Such equipment must be sited out of draughts. Bedding material must be checked daily and must be maintained in a clean, parasite-free and dry condition.

3.2.6 In new construction each unit must be provided with an exercise area of at least 1.7 sq m (18 sq ft) for a single cat; 2.23 sq m (24 sq ft) for two cats; 30 sq ft for up to 4 cats.

3.2.7 Units must open onto secure corridors or other secure areas so that cats are not able to escape from the premises.

3.2.8 Exercise areas must not be used as sleeping areas.

3.2.9 There must be direct and voluntary access to the exercise area.

4. MANAGEMENT

4.1 Training

4.1.1 A written training policy must be provided. Systematic training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out.

4.2 Temperature in Units

4.2.1 Heating facilities must be available in the unit and used according to the requirements of the individual cat.

4.2.2 There must be some part of the sleeping area where the cat is able to enjoy a temperature of at least 10 °C (50°F).

4.2.3 In isolation units, there should be a means of maintaining the temperature at a level suitable for the conditions of the cat and dependent on veterinary advice.

4.3 Cleanliness

4.3.1 All units, corridors, common areas, kitchens etc must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in such a manner as to be conducive to maintenance of disease control and cat comfort.

4.3.2 Each occupied unit must be cleansed daily. All excreta and soiled material must be removed from all areas used by cats at least daily and more often if necessary.

4.3.3 All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.

4.3.4 Suitably sited litter trays, which are easy to clean and impermeable, must be provided at all times. These must be emptied and cleansed at least once a day and as necessary at any time during the day if found to be unduly soiled. A suitable material for litter must be provided.

4.3.5 Each unit must be thoroughly cleansed, disinfected and dried upon vacation. All fittings and bedding must also be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected at that time.

4.3.6 Facilities must be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of all waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising from the treatment and handling of cats with infectious diseases. The final disposal route for all such waste must be incineration.

4.3.7 Measures must be taken to minimise the risks from rodents, insects and other pests within the establishment.

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4.4 Food and Water Supplies

- 4.4.1 All cats must be adequately supplied with suitable food. At least two meals a day must be offered at approximately 8 hours apart. Wholesome water must be available at all times and changed daily.
- 4.4.2 Eating and drinking vessels must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected and must be maintained in a clean condition. Disposable eating dishes may be used.
- 4.4.3 Eating vessels must be cleansed or disposed of after each meal.
- 4.4.4 Drinking vessels must be cleansed at least once a day.

4.5 Kitchen Facilities

- 4.5.1 Exclusive facilities, hygienically constructed and maintained, must be provided for the storage and preparation of food for the cats.
- 4.5.2 Where fresh and cooked meats are stored, refrigeration facilities must be provided, and food contamination must be avoided.
- 4.5.3 A sink with hot and cold water must be provided for the washing of food equipment and eating and drinking vessels. A separate wash-hand basin with hot and cold water must be provided for staff use.
- 4.5.4 Containers must be provided for the storage of foods and shall be so constructed and kept in such good order, repair and condition as to be proof against insects and other pests.

4.6 Disease Control and Vaccination

- 4.6.1 Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst the cats, staff and visitors.
- 4.6.2 Proof must be provided that cats boarded or resident have current vaccinations against Infectious Feline Enteritis, feline respiratory disease and other relevant diseases. The course of vaccination must have been completed at least four weeks before the first date of boarding or in accordance with manufacturers instructions. A record that this proof has been supplied must be kept on-site throughout the period that the cat is boarded.
- 4.6.3 Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any cat is sick or injured any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon must be strictly followed.
- 4.6.4 A well stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on cats must be available and accessible on site.

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4.7 Isolation

4.7.1 Isolation facilities must be provided.

4.7.2 In existing catteries these isolation facilities must be in compliance with the other boarding requirements but must be separate and physically isolated from the main units. This must be a minimum 3m (10 ft). (See also temperature control).

4.7.3 Adequate facilities to prevent the spread of infectious disease between the isolation and other units, must be provided.

4.7.4 Hands must be washed after leaving the isolation facilities before visiting the other units.

4.8 Register

4.8.1 A register must be kept of all cats boarded. The information kept must include the following:

- date of arrival
- name of cat, any identification system such as microchip number or tattoo.
- description, breed, age and gender of cat
- name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper
- name, address and telephone number of contact person whilst boarded
- name and address and telephone number of cat's veterinary surgeon
- anticipated and actual date of departure
- health, welfare and nutrition requirements.

4.8.2 The register must be kept readily available for a minimum of 24 months and kept in such a manner as to allow an authorised officer easy access to such information.

4.8.3 Where records are computerised, a back up copy must be kept. The register must also be available to key members of staff of the establishment at all times.

4.9 Identification of Units

4.9.1 Each unit must be clearly marked (e.g. numbered), and a system in place, which ensures that relevant information about the cat in that unit, is readily available.

4.10 Supervision

4.10.1 A fit and proper person must always be present to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies whenever cats are boarded at the premises.

4.10.2 Cats must be visited at regular intervals, as necessary for their health, safety and welfare.

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4.11 Fire Precautions

- 4.11.1 Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the cats in case of fire or other emergencies.
- 4.11.2 A proper emergency evacuation plan and fire warning procedure must be drawn up and posted on the premises. This must include instructions on where cats are to be evacuated to in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- 4.11.3 Fire fighting equipment must be provided in accordance with advice given by the Fire Prevention Officer.
- 4.11.4 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. There must be a residual current circuit breaker system on each block of units.
- 4.11.5 Heating appliances must not be sited in a location or manner, where they may present a risk of fire, or risk to cats.
- 4.11.6 Precautions must be taken to prevent any accumulation, which may present a risk of fire.
- 4.11.7 There must be adequate means of raising an alarm in the event of a fire or other emergency.

NOTE: ***Unless otherwise stated, these conditions shall apply to all buildings and areas to which cats have access and/or are used in association with the boarding of cats.***

Use of the term 'unit' relates to combined sleeping and individual exercise areas.

OTHER RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

- i) There is a duty on all employers and employees to ensure safety of themselves, workmates and visitors to the site and contractors. This also extends to the self-employed.
- ii) An "accident book" must be provided to record details of accidents and "near misses". An annual review will indicate how to keep staff safer by introducing safer practices based on experience.
- iii) Regard should be had to providing safe systems of work for staff, particularly those involved in handling problem cats.
- iv) An establishment employing more than four people requires a written safety policy.
- v) There is a requirement for a risk assessment to be carried out to identify hazards in the workplace and assess risks, eg number of people affected etc, in order to assess any health and safety risk in an objective manner as far as possible.

Legislation is evolving all the time and reference should be made to enforcement authorities for up to date advice.

More details will be available from your local authority or from Management of Health and Safety at Work-Approved Code of Practice ISBN 0-11-886330-4 available from HSE Books, tel. no. 01787 881165 (mail order), or other HMSO stockists.

Environmental Protection Act 1990

- i) Under section 34 operators have a "duty of care" to ensure that all waste arising from their premises is disposed of without harm to human health or the environment. They may only pass their waste to registered carriers or appropriately licensed or authorised disposal facilities. The definition of waste is currently under review. Reference to the local authority will help clarify the position with regard to waste material generated from boarding establishments.
- ii) Part III of this Act deals with nuisance. When setting up a boarding establishment, it is most important to consider the potential problems of noise and odour nuisance in order to prevent possible legal action which could lead to closure at a later date.

Environmental Health Officers are able to give further advice and guidance on nuisance problems and related statutory provisions.

- iii) The use of incinerators to dispose of animal carcasses may require licensing by your local authority who will advise you regarding the requirements of part 1 of the Environmental Protection Act.

If you use an incinerator you are advised to notify the local authority.

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The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty of care on businesses to ensure that waste is disposed of by a registered carrier to an appropriately licensed or authorised disposal facility. Those wishing to dispose of waste on their premises or operate an incinerator may need planning permission, and a waste management licence or authorisation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. They should seek advice from their Waste Regulation Authority or Environmental Services Department. Cat faeces and "sharps" such as needles, scalpels, etc. constitute "clinical" waste and are likely to be subject to specific disposal conditions.

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Apply to every employer or self employed person, and you therefore have a duty to comply with these Regulations ensuring your electrical fittings and equipment are maintained in a safe condition.

In the event of something going wrong, you will be asked to say why you thought the equipment was safe, which means regular testing of fittings is advisable.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 (COSHH) – as amended January 1997

- i) These are known as the "COSHH" Regulations. They require you to keep chemical substances on your premises in a safe manner, and to review whether you are able to reduce the number of chemicals used and to see if you are able to use chemicals which are less hazardous in order to do the same job.
- ii) They also deal with zoonoses (diseases transmitted from animals to people, such as Salmonellosis, Toxocariasis and Toxoplasmosis) and you should bring suitable advice on risks and precautions to the attention of your staff, and ensure that they are suitably vaccinated.

For further advice, contact your medical practitioner and/or the Environmental Services Department.

Controlled Waste Regulations 1992

The definition of clinical waste in these regulations includes animal tissue, blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs, dressings or syringes, needles or other sharp instruments which unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it. The Health and Safety Commission's guidance document 'Safe Disposal of Clinical Waste' advises on best practice in the handling and disposal of such waste and you can also seek advice from the Environment Agency Regional Office.