

## TORONTO AND REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

### POLICY FOR MANAGING DOMESTIC ANIMALS

#### **Policy Statement**

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) recognizes the social benefits that conservation areas provide to pets and their owners. TRCA also recognizes the requirement for responsible pet ownership on all its lands.

This policy pertains to managing domestic animals on TRCA lands as well as provisions of off-leash areas for dogs on Authority owned or managed lands.

Pets must be kept on leash at all times on all properties unless otherwise posted.

#### **General Policy**

Pets are permitted on TRCA managed lands with the exception of Tommy Thompson Park. Pet access is restricted in areas where there are health regulations that prohibit pets, where pets would be a threat to wildlife or for other reasons TRCA deems appropriate.

No person shall bring an animal other than a dog or cat on TRCA managed lands except under a permit issued by TRCA.

No person or family shall bring on TRCA managed lands more than three (3) of any combination of dogs and cats.

**No pet with an order against it under the *Dog Owners Liability Act* or Medical Officer of Health shall be allowed on TRCA managed lands.**

#### **Responsibility of Owner or Person In Charge of any Dog or Cat**

Every owner or person in charge of any dog or cat shall:

- ensure that their pet is secured by a leash or chain that does not exceed two metres in length, except when in a designated off-leash area;
- remove excrement left by the dog or cat;
- provide adequate and appropriate care, food, water, shelter, exercise, attention and veterinary care as may be required to meet the need of the species;
- ensure that the dog or cat has applicable current licenses and vaccination as may be required by law; and
- ensure that the dog or cat is registered with the municipal government in which it resides (where required).

No owner or person in charge of any dog or cat shall, on TRCA lands, permit the dog or cat to:

- make excessive noise or disturb other persons;
- enter water designated for wading, bathing or swimming or be on the beach adjacent to that water;
- be at large (an animal that is secured by a leash more than two metres long shall be considered to be at large), except in a designated off-leash area; and
- leave the dog or cat unattended for extended periods of time.

## **Penalty**

Any person or persons found in violation of this policy or any operating procedures created pursuant to the policy shall be subject to such penalty or penalties as set out in the regulations of TRCA and TRCA shall have the right at its sole discretion to remove or suspend the person or persons in violation from using the property or designated off-leash facility.

## **Procedure for Establishing Off-leash Areas**

Individuals interested in developing an off-leash area must form a dog owners group ("the proponent") with a minimum of 15 members and identify a funding source for covering the costs of designing, developing and operating the facility; then

- requests must follow the TRCA approval process and site selection guidelines;
- if an appropriate site is found, initiate a public consultation process and demonstrate agreement by the general community;
- enter into a one year contract agreement to be reviewed annually;
- the proponent must be willing to take full responsibility for establishing, monitoring and maintaining the site, including insurance coverage satisfactory to TRCA; and
- satisfy such other conditions as TRCA may require.

## **Site Selection For Off-leash Areas**

TRCA has established criteria for determining appropriate sites for off leash areas. Site selection criteria and guidelines are listed in the operating procedures.

## **Rules For Off-leash Areas**

While a dog is in an area designated as off-leash, every owner or person in charge of a dog shall:

- carry a leash while the dog is running at large;
- immediately leash a dog that shows aggressiveness toward people or other dogs or at the direction of a police officer, Provincial Offences Officer, municipal law enforcement officer or employee of TRCA;
- ensure that the dog does not leave the designated area while off leash;
- ensure that the dog, while running at large is under voice control and within visual sight at all times;
- not bring in or permit such dogs to enter onto TRCA managed land if the dog may or does constitute a danger to other users;
- ensure all dogs are licensed and vaccinated, (puppies under 4 months are not permitted as they will not yet be fully vaccinated) in accordance with the provincial/municipal regulations;
- ensure the dog is collared with a tag attached that identifies the dog's name and the telephone number of the owner;
- clean up excrement immediately and dispose of wastes in designated containers;
- not allow the dog to dig holes, chase wildlife, or destroy vegetation;
- have no more than 3 dogs off leash per visit;
- be with an adult at least 18 years of age who is able to control the dog;
- permit children under the age of 12 in off-leash areas **only** when accompanied by an adult;
- take responsibility for the actions of their dogs at all times;
- use at dog owner's own risk.