

## Pet Limit Bylaw: Additional Regulations

### Explanation

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) suggests the following additional regulations and bylaws to help address the concerns people might have about removing and/or increasing the numbers of companion animals allowed in London homes. These regulations and bylaws also provide effective ways to increase the level of responsible pet guardianship. Animals kept by those who are unable or unwilling to provide a reasonable and compassionate degree of care are frequently the same animals abandoned, neglected and/or surrendered to city shelters. This creates financial burden to the City via animal services costs.

Pro-active and specific bylaws that regulate care can better mitigate problems than simply limiting numbers of animals per household. It only takes one poorly treated dog to create excessive noise, fecal contamination and distress to neighbours who witness an animal's poor treatment.

Proposed Regulation	Recommendations and Rationale
<p>1 <b>Regulate the tethering/chaining of dogs while outdoors.</b></p>	<p><b>AWAC recommends the following:</b>            That dogs must not be tied or chained outdoors:            -for longer than periods of 60 minutes at a time,            -for more than 3 periods daily, each of a maximum of 60 minutes a time,            -on a lead/chain less than 12 feet in length.</p> <p>Tethering and chaining refers to the practice of tying a dog to a stationary object so the dog cannot escape – not dogs being walked on a leash or temporarily tied outside of a store while his/her guardian/owner is inside. Our concern is for the dogs that are made to live most (or all) of their lives outside tied to a dog house, tree or other object as a regular way of life. These dogs are given little-to-none exercise and social contact.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Chaining dogs can lead to aggression due to the frustration of being tied. Chaining also makes the dog vulnerable to attack from free-roaming animals. Evidence points to an increased risk of bites from dogs routinely tied out, or forced to live much of their lives chained, posing a threat to human safety. It is natural for animals to respond with a ‘fight or flight’ response to stress or threat. Because a tied/tethered dog has lost the capacity for ‘flight’, they are left with an increased instinct to ‘fight’.</p> <p>Leaving a dog outside for much of his/her time and denying them exercise and social contact will often result in excessive noise from the dog. Such a life is inhumane and creates loss of enjoyment for the dog and the neighbours who live near.</p> <p>Dogs kept in an unsocial environment are often frustrated and can be a greater bite risk. It is in the best interest of the City to protect the comfort and safety of its citizens by ensuring that dogs are housed in ways that do not cause the dogs predictable and preventable distress.</p> <p>Dogs forced to live tethered/chained can be more likely to bite humans, and to be surrendered to city shelters due to aggressive behavior issues. Once surrendered, these aggressive and poorly socialized dogs are at higher risk of being deemed unadoptable and destroyed.</p> <p><b>According to the American Humane Association and the University of Minnesota, chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to bite humans:</b>  <a href="http://www.americanhumane.org/animals/stop-animal-abuse/fact-sheets/dog-bites.html">www.americanhumane.org/animals/stop-animal-abuse/fact-sheets/dog-bites.html</a></p>

		<p>The Humane Society of the United States says: “Numerous attacks on people by tethered dogs have been documented. Tragically, the victims of such attacks are often children who are unaware of the chained dog's presence until it is too late. Furthermore, a tethered dog who finally does get loose from his chains may remain aggressive, and is likely to chase and attack unsuspecting passersby and pets.”</p> <p><b>Chained dogs can cause distress to neighbours:</b> Excessive barking and howling are more common in cases of dogs forced to spend much of their time tied out, chained or penned without sufficient social contact or exercise. This creates a nuisance for neighbours.</p> <p><b>Chained dogs create extra burden on Animal Services budgets:</b> When surrendered, a dog that is aggressive and poorly socialized requires much more rehabilitation to become adoptable, thus placing strain on city shelters and rescue groups. Poorly socialized dogs displaying aggressive tendencies are also at greater risk of being classified as unadoptable, resulting in being destroyed when they are taken into pounds and shelters. A dog that has lived a large part of his/her life outdoors being chained or penned would most likely fall into this category.</p> <p>Living chained outdoors must not be the primary way of life for any dog within our city. This applies to dogs kept for any reason, including breeding, hunting, guarding or any other use. In all instances, a dog is still a dog – a highly social being – regardless of how that dog is viewed or valued by the guardian/owner.</p> <p><b>Educational Component:</b> It is preferable for dogs to be confined while outdoors behind fencing as opposed to being on a chain or ‘tie-out’. However, ‘penning’ behind fencing should not be simply substituted for chaining. It is therefore recommended that when Animal Control Agents encounter dogs living on tethers and chains, that the dog’s guardian/owner be advised of the social needs of dogs and the need to bring the dog inside to share the companionship of the guardian/owner. When enforcing the anti-tethering/chaining bylaw we recommend that Animal Control Agents advise that simply substituting a life behind a fence as opposed to on a chain is not in the best interests of the dog or the neighbourhood. Permanently ‘penned’ dogs (dogs who live primarily outside behind a fence) often suffer the same lives of loneliness, boredom, lack of exercise and vulnerability to attack as chained dogs do. These unhappy dogs are also prone to being poorly socialized, and can create noise to disturb neighbours. The outdated idea of a dog living a lifetime alone in a yard (as opposed to being a companion) is now widely recognized as inhumane. Therefore, any interaction with an Animal Control Agent can be an ideal opportunity to receive education and encouragement to provide a more humane quality of life for these owned dogs.</p> <p><b>Public Education:</b> When the anti-tethering/chaining regulation becomes an approved bylaw, we recommend that the City engage in a campaign to educate the public about this new law. Londoners will need to know about this new regulation, so a wide-spread publicity campaign will be beneficial.</p>
2	<p><b>Regulate shelter and sufficient provisions for dogs/companion animals while outdoors.</b></p>	<p><b>AWAC recommends the following:</b> Dogs and other companion animals must have adequate shelter from the elements during all seasons.</p> <p>When dogs or other animals are left outdoors alone (not in the present company of the guardian/owner) for longer than 30</p>

		<p>minutes during a day, they must have access to an overhead shelter, both in sunshine and rain. They must also have a resting board or matting that gives them a resting surface which remains dry and comfortable.</p> <p>A guardian/owner being inside the dwelling while the animal is outside does not constitute being in the presence of the animal. This means that during times when the person is in the yard with the animal that the shelter provision is not required as the person is present to bring the animal inside when the weather requires this. When the person is not in direct contact with the animal, even if the person is inside the dwelling, then the animal must have a means of finding protection from the elements.</p> <p>If any companion animals are outside for longer than 60 minutes, a dry four-sided shelter house must be provided. The opening of a dog house must be big enough to allow the dog to enter, but also small enough to prevent wind and rain from entering. The dog house must be elevated enough to keep it from collecting water or snow and must contain appropriate bedding such as straw (a preferred choice of bedding). If blankets are used, they must be checked daily to ensure they remain dry. Wet blankets in a dog house should be deemed a violation.</p> <p>Clean water must be available at all times to all dogs, cats and other animals while outdoors for longer than 60 minutes. During winter months, heated water bowls are required.</p>
3	<p><b>Limit the outdoor housing of domestic Rabbits to daytime hours only.</b></p>	<p><b>AWAC recommends the following:</b> Rabbits can only be housed outdoors during daylight hours and in appropriate housing. Domestic rabbits, kept for any purpose, must be brought indoors during non-daylight hours.</p> <p>Further, Rabbits must not be exposed to temperatures of 24 degrees Celsius and above, or 10 degrees Celsius and below.</p> <p>Rabbit housing must be of appropriate size and design:  Size: The outdoor housing must be at least '3 hops' in length, and tall enough for the rabbit to stand up.  Design: Wire bottoms must be prohibited.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b>  Outdoor housing can put rabbits at risk from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heat (temperatures above 30°C pose risk of heat stroke)</li> <li>• Cold</li> <li>• Predators (animals can break into the enclosure and even an attempt can cause great stress, including causing the rabbit to have a heart attack)</li> <li>• Being neglected (out of sight, out of mind.) Rabbits are highly social animals.</li> </ul> <p>Most outdoor housing units are either hutches or wire cages. Hutches provide very little space for a rabbit to move (the 'golden rule' is <i>at least</i> 3 hops long) and often have wire bottoms in at least half of the cage.</p> <p>Wire flooring damages the rabbits' feet and can be difficult to clean (urine, feces and fur stick to the wire). Other designs and types of flooring exist to prevent the rabbit from digging out.</p> <p>Rabbits are often under-socialized when in outdoor housing because they are social animals, and have similar social needs to dogs and cats. It is inhumane to keep them isolated in impoverished surroundings.</p>

### **Additional Resources**

To better understand the chaining and tethering of dogs – and why this practice should be banned – please view these resources\*:

- An educational PowerPoint presentation: [www.unchainyourdog.org/Laws.htm](http://www.unchainyourdog.org/Laws.htm)
- A PDF containing an introduction: [www.unchainyourdog.org/documents/Chaining\\_QA.pdf](http://www.unchainyourdog.org/documents/Chaining_QA.pdf)

\* The above materials are posted with this permission: *“Please use any of the following materials as needed; you do not need my written permission.”*

## **Encouraging harmonious relationships: Community & the City** **Regulation and/or Registration of Foster Homes**

AWAC recommends that the City of London *not* regulate, or register, foster homes.

We do not find it common practice for municipalities to regulate and register rescue group foster homes, including large urban centres like New York City. We believe rescue groups have a proven track record of managing their foster homes appropriately.

The problems of pet over-population and stray, abandoned, neglected and/or surrendered dogs and cats are not caused by the activities of rescue groups. Rescue group volunteers and foster homes instead provide solutions to all of these problems. Their activities are altruistic and serve the greater community.

The numbers of animals going into the city shelter and requiring care by the city would be far higher if not for the work of rescue groups. Rescue groups and foster homes deserve commendation rather than regulation and should be left to continue their work without oversight from the City. They should not be subject to a greater level of scrutiny than the average home owner.