

Urbana Welfare Association
Policy on Pets
03.08.2021

Background

- The issue of Pets (mainly dogs) has been a “Bone of contention” between those who have pets and those who don’t.
- Some incidents in the recent past have perpetuated the need to revisit the existing understanding,
- A Draft Policy was circulated on Wednesday 28.07.2021 and again on 31.7.21.
- It was based on the Guidelines issued by the “Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) Dated 26th February 2015, the existing Policy issue by the UFM, inputs received from residents and other sources.
- There were many inputs and comments received after the drafts were circulated and inputs are still being received.

Next Step

- Since this is a final policy the same will be deliberated upon and circulated for implementation.
- We will however request residents to keep sending suggestions.
- All the suggestions which have been received and will be received will be deliberated and incorporated in this policy when we review it after some time (3 to 6 months) depending on the experience during this period.

FOR URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
[Signature]
President
[Signature] Secretary
[Signature] Treasure

General

We live in a civilized society and hence there are guidelines on social behavior. They may not be enforceable as per law but are for all people to follow for a healthy social order. This Proposed policy / guidelines – is accordingly to help promote harmony amongst all the residents.

- Pet owners are NOT – Anti Non pet owners.
- Non-Pet Owners are NOT – Haters of pets. It is only that they are apprehensive / scared of animals about whom they do not have much idea.

Onus

- The law has given enough protection to the stray animals, pets, and pet owners.
- As responsible pet owners, it is the onus of pet owners to ensure that the pets are well controlled and ensure the safety of all.
- As we live in a society it is the onus of the pet owners to ensure that the area used by the pets is clean and walk the extra mile to help the people who do not have pets to feel safe.

Law

No policy / guidelines can step beyond the boundaries set by Law

Following are established as per law

- Ban of pets is illegal.
- No discrimination allowed - A housing society cannot ban pets/dogs based on their breed or size.
- Use of common facilities - A housing society cannot ban a pet from using common facilities like lifts and parks or impose a fine or special charge for the same.
- Imposing the use of leashes/muzzles - A society cannot ask the pet owner to keep their pets on a leash or use muzzles on their dogs.
- Cruelty is punishable - Society cannot create dog harassment laws.
- No ban on feeding - No resident can be barred from feeding stray dogs/cats in the locality.
- The owner of a pet is responsible for any act of a pet. So, if the pet causes any harm to any other resident, the resident is free as per law to take appropriate legal (including filing a criminal case) against the pet owner.

Based on the above – the following guidelines are finalised.

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION

President Secretary Treasure

Guidelines for UWA

- **Keep records.**

The pet owners should submit to the UWA (details of the committee responsible will be announced after this policy is accepted / approved) the details of the pet you have at your home. The format will be circulated. It will include the following details.

- Which Pet
- Which Breed
- Age
- Latest vaccination and sterilization records.
- Any previous history of biting or attacking outsiders.
- List of handlers* and the experience these people have in handling the breed of animal.

The above details are proposed in case issues arise in the future, the same will come in handy.

- **Designate defecation spots.**

The same has been done. The same is well known to all residents. However, the same should be marked more prominently including any additional spaces if earmarked in the future.

- **Designated play area.**

Dogs need to get ample exercise and spend their energy or else they are excessively energetic. Accordingly, there needs to be earmarked area where they can be allowed to play and run to spend their energy. Such areas are prominently marked in all new societies and is informally being used in Urbana. A few such areas are marked in the annexed map. Dog owners are requested to use this area for the exercise of their dogs. UWA and UFM propose to sit with all stake holders and formalize it.

- **Organise and educate.**

UWA should organize sessions to educate the residents on animals, especially strays. The UWA should tie-up with Animal Welfare Organisations to take care of the vaccination and sterilization needs of strays.

- **Breed**

Legally the policy cannot ask anyone what breed to keep. However, the policy does propose to appeal to the pet owners on some issues.

Dogs of larger and temperamentally aggressive breeds need larger space and appropriate handling.

FOR URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Shyam Sundar Santh
President Secretary Treasurer

Is it not a cruelty to keep such dogs in smaller flats, which is against their natural environment and hence likely to make them temperamental?

Do not some breeds need professional handlers (where even owners are not able to handle their pets).

Accordingly, the policy appeals to the pet owners to keep these issues in mind when selecting a breed. It is not only cruel to the pet but also if handled inappropriately – risky for other residents.

- * *Handlers for the purpose of this policy are persons who are responsible for the welfare of the animal. A handler here need not be a professional trainer / handler. It can be the owner and his family and staff. However, the UWA discourages regular maids and servants being used for taking the pet out in common areas.*

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
[Signature]
President Secretary Treasurer

Responsibility of Pet Owners

A responsible pet owner is crucial to peaceful community living. While it is important for the pet owner to be aware of the dog laws that keep them safe, they should also be aware of their responsibilities of keeping a pet as a resident in a community. These suggestions should be kept in mind when using common facilities.

- **Share all details with UWA**

The UWA will prepare a format on the details of the pet. The same may be shared with the indicated committee of the UWA so that a central data base can be always maintained. In case of developments (like – if a booster dose of vaccine is administered etc) may kindly keep the UWA updated.

- **Dog License**

Kolkata Municipal Corporation Issues Dog License – Owners are advised to consider getting a dog license.

- **Train your pet**

Ensure you give your pet ample obedience training, so that the pet / dog does not behave untowardly in common areas or gets provoked when amidst other residents.

- **Familiarize your pet**

Society is home to many unfamiliar faces. Make sure your pet knows the surroundings he / she reside in and does not harm a stranger or cause a nuisance.

- **Vaccinate on time**

All vaccinations must be administered on a timely basis. Medications must be administered in case your pet is suffering from any illness.

- **Leash**

Pet owners are advised to keep their pets on a leash in all common places. Pet owners are requested to voluntarily muzzle the dog for the duration of the lift ride esp if the pet dog has a history of aggressiveness or unpredicted behaviour.

- **Clean up after**

The main concern that most people have is cleanliness, so make sure your pet is toilet trained. It is advisable for pet owners to clean up after their furry pal if he/she has an accident inside the society premises. It is also advisable to maintain the hygiene of your pet for their own well-being and so no one is inconvenienced.

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Shyam Sundar Sankar
Resident Secretary Treasurer

- **Supervise your pet**

- Even if your pet is well-trained, it is necessary to supervise your pet when in common spaces. Ensure your pet is not aggressive or hostile towards strays or other animals in the vicinity.
- *Take an informed call of sending dog with house support staff because if you do please be sure and confident that the dog will listen / obey the house support staff and if the dog can actually be controlled by them in any unwanted situation. This is very important as in many cases owners are sending their pet in common areas with the full-time maid who are unable to control the pet. Pet in most cases look much stronger raising concern about the ability of the maid/dog walker to control the pet in a situation. Many times, the so-called dog trainers are seen with more than one dog. Again, this raises doubts on the ability of the person to handle dogs if anyone chooses not to behave.*
- *As noted, the UWA discourages using full-time and other such staff for purposes as major complains on cleanliness, defecation on roads and common areas, leaving back of pet poop stems from carelessness of such staff.*

- **Use of lift**

- If any lift is found already occupied, *the pet owner should seek the permission of the occupants before entering. If denied the pet owner should wait for the next lift.** (There will be innumerable situations / permutation & combinations like a pet with its owner coming down a lift. In that case the call to enter or not is that of the person outside the lift. As noted, all these are issues of general curtesy which the residents may amply exercise).
- Argument that a pet cannot hold his bladder should not be accepted. In that case pet owners can schedule their outing earlier.
- *All pet owners must wait at a distance from the lift door (which will give an extra time to control the pet / dog if the pet / dog becomes violent as soon as the door opens).*

- **Be a responsible pet owner**

Make sure your pets get ample exercise, so they are not excessively energetic. If your pet is alone for long hours, make sure she/he has ample food, water, and toys. Make sure they do not create a nuisance in your absence.

* *The policy cannot go into the nitty gritty of each scenario as to who came first and then who should have a right to enter the lift first. These are matters of general curtesy which we are sure the residents will amply exercise.*

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Sujan Sarda Lewis
President Secretary Treasurer

Responsibility of All Residents

All residents have a joint responsibility to ensure that all residents *have a strong civic sense and courtesy towards the fellow residents is the most important as most of these recommendations must be implemented willingly and are expected in a civil society and will strengthen the bond among the residents*

- **Grievance Committee**

- It is proposed that in case any resident notices an act which he / she feels is a violation of the policy may report the same to the Grievance committee. The grievance committee would try to resolve the matter.
- Members are requested not to post violations on social media or sham the owner in the WhatsApp groups. This only creates ill feelings.
- However, if it is seen by the Grievance Committee that there is a Willful / repeated case of violation, the pet owner would be warned by written notice and if such incident / violation continues, then the matter will be brought to the notice of all the Urbana Residents.
- Keeping the record of violations will be strong evidence of any noncompliance and thus seeking sympathy of other pet owners.

- **For Stray Dogs**


- Issue of Stray Dogs is dealt with next. However, the responsibility of all in controlling the number of stray dog's rest on all.
- As on date 31.07.2021 there are 19 identified stray dogs inside Urbana Campus.
- All these have been identified and photographed.
- They should also have identification collars soon.
- The zone / area in which they are usually seen is identified and a chart with photos will be shared with the Tower Captains and Security.
- In case a resident notices / identifies a stray, which is not from the dogs as identified, bring it to the notice of security so that steps can be taken to ensure that the stray is returned to where it came.
- In case of a stray dog becoming violent / aggressive, bring it to the notice of UWA which shall coordinate with Aashari foundation so that steps can be taken in line with the law.

for URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION

President Secretary Treasurer

Guidelines with respect to Street Dogs

- As per Indian law, the stray dogs cannot be beaten or driven away or dumped elsewhere or killed. They can only be sterilized in the manner envisaged in the Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules, 2001, vaccinated, and then returned into the same locality/ territory.
- Dogs being territorial in nature, tend to fight off other dogs, and keep them away from entering their territories; and in this manner, the dog population within each locale/ territory stabilizes.
- There is no law that prohibits the feeding of street animals.
- Any aggression or hostility that the dogs may be subjected to may render them aggressive, and hostile to humans. They may then resort to snapping and biting in the self-defense.
- In case, someone feeds that stray, make sure there are no leftovers once the strays have had their fill.
 - As on date 31.07.2021 there are 19 identified stray dogs inside Urbana Campus.
 - All these have been identified and photographed.
 - The zone / area in which they are usually seen is identified and a chart with photos will be shared with the Tower Captains and Security.
- Security has been asked to ensure that no more strays should enter the campus and take steps as required. As the outside strays have left their "territory", the security, should ensure that they are driven out, back to where they came from. (Basically, ensure no more strays enter Urbana campus).
- UWA is requesting Aashari Foundation (through Dr Moon Chattaraj) to ensure that -
 - All the street dogs in the campus are neutered and vaccinated by her.
 - Collars will be put on the dogs again (we are trying to get some cheaper one). So that the ones of this campus are identified.
 - That the foundation sends trainers / dog handlers so that they are here - round the clock to take care of the street dogs so that they can be monitored, and they do not create hassles for the people. Their salaries will be paid by the Aashari foundation however there are some minor issues which need to be resolved with BNRI and UWA. UWA will work that out.

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION

resident Secretary Treasure

Reservation

- Since this is a policy – the cooperation of all residents is solicited.
- It is for all the residents to stay in harmony so due curtesy is expected from all. Esp Pet owners as it is their responsibility to make the non-pet owners comfortable.
- There will still be issues / teething problems. It does not mean that things are failing. It means we must respond more appropriately.
- Do keep highlighting issues to the “Grievances Committee” so that the UWA can fine tune a better response.

For URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Prachi President
Shyam Sunder Singh Secretary
Treasurer



URBANA WELFARE ASSOCIATION
[Signature] Secretary
[Signature] Treasurer