

NBSPCA Code of Practice for the Care of Dogs in New Brunswick 2018



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Foreword

NBSPCA Mission Statement: *We exist to provide province wide leadership in the humane treatment of animals, enforcement of relevant legislation, public education and advocacy and to ensure shelter for neglected or abused animals.*

The New Brunswick *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* specifies in section 19 that “a person who has ownership, possession or care and control of an animal shall provide the animal with food, water, shelter and care in accordance with the regulations.” The *General Regulation* then further elaborates on standards for animal care.

In consultation with various stakeholders, this Code of Practice has been developed by the NBSPCA to provide additional education and assistance to those responsible for the care of dogs in New Brunswick. It outlines a set of *Required Standards of Care*, as well as a set of *Best Practices* which provide a superior standard of care for dogs. This Code of Practice will be utilized by NB SPCA Animal Protection Officers in determining whether a dog is being provided proper food, water, shelter and care. It will be reviewed for changes and updates a minimum of every 5 years.

Approved by the NBSPCA Board of Directors April 18, 2018.

1. Outdoor Protection and Safety

Required Standards:

- 1.1 A dog that is kept outside for a period of time in weather conditions that might reasonably be expected to threaten the animal's health or well-being, given its physical characteristics and apparent breed or breed mix, must be provided with:
 - (a) a structurally sound shelter for its use at all times, that
 - (1) is constructed with non-toxic materials; is weather-proofed, water-proofed, equipped with adequate dry and clean bedding; is insulated and off the ground to ensure the floor is kept dry, and is sufficient to provide protection from inclement weather;
 - (2) is large enough to allow the dog to stand up to its full height, turn around easily and be able to lie down in a fully extended position, but small enough to retain the animal's body heat;
 - (3) has a weather proofed entrance that must be just large enough for the dog to enter easily, or is constructed with a entrance and hallway that are separated from the sleeping area;
 - (4) has the entrance kept clear of the accumulation of snow and ice;
 - (b) access to an adequate amount of clean, fresh, unfrozen drinking water (in a dish that prevents spillage/tipping) as required given weather conditions, and not less than once a day;
 - (c) access to shade (which does not include the doghouse) when required, in order to protect from the heat and sun;
 - (d) a shelter area that:
 - (1) is kept in a clean and sanitary state with regular removal of pet waste;
 - (2) is in a place which does not pose a high risk of injury to the dog; and
 - (3) is in visual range from a dwelling house occupied by a person who has ownership, possession or care and control of the dog.
- 1.2 If a pen is provided for the dog while outdoors, the pen must
 - (a) have a minimum height one metre greater than the height of the tallest dog in a standing position and have an adequate amount of floor space for the dog to be able to walk and turn around easily; if more than one animal is kept in a pen, the pen area must be large enough to provide all animals with adequate space for all of the following:
 - (1) feeding, resting, urinating, and defecating;

- (2) engaging in species-typical behaviours and maintaining adequate social distances;
- (b) be in a good state of repair and made of materials not toxic to the dog and does not have a floor which consists of wire mesh, metal, or wood, unless the wood is covered with an impervious non-toxic coat or cover;
- (c) placed in a properly drained area;
- (d) cleaned regularly. For cleaning and sanitizing purposes, dogs and puppies must be removed from the area while it is being cleaned and returned only after the area is dry. Also, dogs and puppies shall be protected from contact with injurious cleaning substances.

Best Practices:

- 1.3 The size of a doghouse and its construction should conform to the Shelter Guidelines included in Appendix A.
- 1.4 Females in heat should not be housed in primary enclosures with males.
- 1.5 Penning of a dog is not recommended as a permanent method of confinement.

2. Tethering – Physical Requirements and Restrictions

Required Standards:

- 2.1 No dog may be tethered between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. for more than 30 minutes (*Note: this is a regulatory prohibition in the Province of New Brunswick*);
- 2.2 A dog that is tethered must be tethered in a way that:
 - (a) does not endanger its health, safety, or well-being;
 - (b) its tethering area is cleaned regularly to prevent the accumulation of pet waste;
 - (c) the tether used
 - (1) must be of appropriate length (a minimum of 5 times the entire length of the dog) and keeps the dog within the confines of the property;
 - (2) allows the dog to move safely and unrestricted (except by its length);
 - (3) is equipped with a swivel at both ends;
 - (4) allows the dog access to food, water, shelter, and shade;

- (5) within visual range and/or close proximity of a person who has ownership, possession or care and control of the dog.

2.3 No dog may be tethered using a device that ;

- (a) is a choke collar, prong type collar, head halter or no-pull harness, or which does not allow two adult fingers to be inserted between the collar and the dog's throat;
- (b) has weights attached or contains links that are too heavy or large for the dog.

Best Practices:

2.4 No dog should be tethered :

- (a) unattended, if in heat or nursing, except to relieve herself;
- (b) for an extended period of time if the dog is under six months of age, aged or infirm;
- (c) unattended from dusk to dawn as they are more vulnerable to predators or theft in the dark.

2.5 Because of their innate social instincts and needs, dogs kept mainly as companion animals should be housed primarily in a dwelling house.

2.6 Any dog not primarily housed in a dwelling house should be housed in an outdoor pen or fenced area that is provided with a suitable shelter or dog house and conforms to the required standards of care. Areas equipped with invisible fences or electronic constraint devices should not be regarded as pens for this purpose.

3. Social Enrichment and Exercise

Best Practices:

3.1 Dogs should be

- (a) exercised by a human daily;
- (b) provided with toys, balls, objects to chew so that a dog has enough to do so that it does not become distressed or bored; and
- (c) properly socialized for the well-being of the dog and the people around it, using training methods based on positive reinforcement and the avoidance of methods involving fear, distress, pain, or anxiety.

4. Temperatures considered to be injurious

In deciding whether protection from inclement weather is required, the ‘Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) weather and safety scale for dogs’ prescribed under Appendix B may be utilized by Animal Protection Officers when assessing dogs for both injurious heat and cold situations.

Required Standards:

- 4.1 All dogs kept outdoors in winter for any period longer than thirty minutes must be provided with access to a weather-proof shelter which conforms to the required standards described in Section 1.1. Similarly, all dogs kept outdoors in summer for any period longer than thirty minutes must be provided with adequate access to shade.
- 4.2 Regardless of size or breed or acclimatization, all dogs must be brought into a protective environment on every occasion in which Environment Canada has issued an Extreme Cold, Heat, or Weather Alert for the area, or is showing signs of a threat to its health and well-being due to adverse weather conditions. In injurious cold, a heated environment is defined as a dwelling house, a heated shed, or cattle barn warmed by the body-heat of livestock.
- 4.3 Dogs shall be kept in temperatures as close as possible to the comfort zone of the breed, considering age and health status. Older, infirm dogs and puppies require a warmer and more comfortable environment. Consideration should be given to the individual dog, taking into account factors such as age and overall health.

5. Standards of Care – Miscellaneous

Required Standards:

- 5.1 Dogs must be fed, at least once daily, a diet suitable for their individual needs to maintain a healthy weight.
- 5.2 Dogs must be provided with prompt veterinary care in case of sickness or injury.
- 5.3 Dogs must be groomed regularly (including keeping nails adequately trimmed), especially breeds with a long or thick coat. Severe matting of the coat is not acceptable and may require a veterinarian or experienced groomer to deal with this.
- 5.4 A dog’s owner or caretaker must ensure that a collar or restraining device that is used on the dog must
 - (a) be well-fitted;
 - (b) be appropriate to the age and size of dog;
 - (c) not hamper the dog’s ability to breathe;

- (d) not cause trauma or injury to the dog.
- 5.5 If a dog is housed primarily in a dwelling house or other building, and that dog is confined in a cage, indoor pen, or other enclosure inside that building, then the cage, pen, or enclosure should be sufficient in size and height:
- (a) to permit the dog to stand normally to its full height;
 - (b) to permit the dog to turn around easily;
 - (c) to permit the dog to move about easily for the purpose of posture adjustments;
 - (d) to permit the dog to lie down in a fully extended position;
 - (e) to permit additional space for each nursing puppy.
- 5.6 If a dog is housed primarily in a dwelling house or other building, and is confined in a cage or pen in that house or building, time for the animal to be out of the cage or pen must be provided for the purpose of exercise and socialization as per the recommendations outlined in the latest version of the *A Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operation*.

Best Practices:

- 5.7 Cages or pens in dwelling houses or other buildings should not be used as permanent confinement for dogs.
- 5.8 Cosmetic procedures such as tail-docking, ear-cropping, or vocal cordectomy should not be carried out on dogs.
- 5.9 In an effort to control over-population, spay and neutering of all dogs is strongly encouraged. Early spaying and neutering may affect the health and behaviour of a dog, and therefore dog owners should consult with a veterinarian in making the decision.
- 5.10 Breeding and whelping, as well as the care of puppies and nursing females, should conform to the recommendations of the latest version of *A Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operations*, published by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. (*Note: A Pet Establishment License is required by law in NB to sell puppies*)
- 5.11 Euthanasia of dogs should be performed humanely and by a licensed veterinarian except: (*Note: humane euthanasia is a statutory requirement in New Brunswick.*)
- (a) under emergency circumstances;
 - (b) if it is unlikely that the animal will recover from its injuries; or
 - (c) it would be inhumane to allow the continued pain and suffering of the animal.
- 5.12 Dogs should receive regular veterinary examination and care, including all recommended inoculations, including rabies. (*Note: vaccination against rabies is a regulatory requirement in New Brunswick.*)

- 5.13 All dogs should be microchipped to ensure they are permanently identified, and owner contact details need to be kept up to date with the microchip registry.
- 5.14 Prospective owners should choose a breed/type most suitable to their lifestyle and circumstances.
- 5.15 A regular health check should be conducted that includes the dog's physical condition, signs of ill health, and that the dog is eating, drinking, toileting and behaving normally.
- 5.16 Dogs should not be allowed access to poisons or chemicals used in the house, garden, or workplace. These substances should be stored away from areas to which a dog may have access as these can be attractive to dogs.
- 5.17 Dogs should be adequately restrained when travelling inside a vehicle. Unrestrained dogs can cause accidents and should never be allowed in the vicinity of the driver. In the case of an accident, an unrestrained dog may become a projectile and can damage itself and/or the occupants of the vehicle. (*Note: It is prohibited by statute to transport a dog unrestrained in the back of an open truck in New Brunswick.*)
- 5.18 Dog collars should be examined daily for any sign of rubbing or injury. A collar needs to be tight enough that it cannot easily slip off but not so tight that it rubs or chokes the dog.
- 5.19 There should be active supervision when around young children – both for the safety of children and dogs. Family, friends, and children should be taught how to interact with the family dog. This includes teaching children to leave dogs in peace when the animal is eating, sleeping, or sick or injured.
- 5.20 Dogs should not be left unattended in vehicles especially during extreme temperatures. If a dog is unattended in a vehicle for any period of time, the vehicle should be properly heated or air-conditioned.

Appendix A – Shelter Guidelines

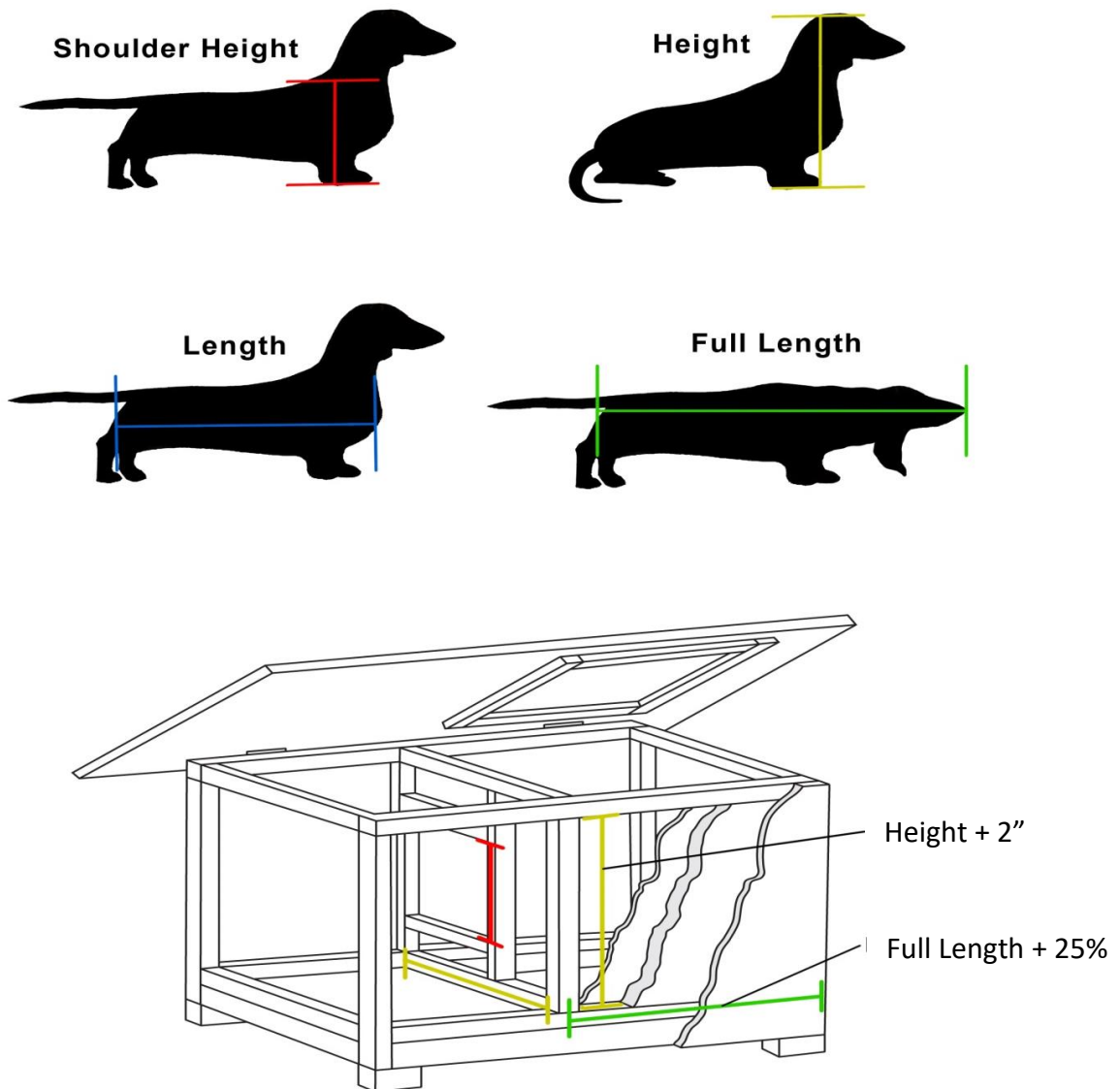
Definitions

“height” measurement from top of the head to ground in sitting position.

“shoulder height” measurement from top of the shoulder to ground in standing position.

“length” measurement from chest to back of hindquarters in standing position.

“full length” measurement from the end of the nose to the back of hindquarters when the nose, the head and the back are align or dog is in sleeping side position.



Appendix B

Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) weather safety scale for dogs*

(adapted for Centigrade temperature scales)

Temperature (Centigrade)	Small Dog	Medium Dog	Large/Giant Dog
30 (86F)	5	5	5
25 (77F)	3	3	3
20 (68F)	2	2	3
15 (59F)	1	1	1
10 (50F)	2	1	1
5 (41F)	3	3	2
0 (32F)	3	3	3
-5 (23F)	4	4	3
-10 (14F)	5	4	4
-15 (5F)	5	5	5
-20 (-4F)	5	5	5

To use the weather safety scale, find the current temperature (including wind-chill factor or humidex), then obtain the preliminary scale value from the table on the right that is appropriate to the animal's size. Then apply the following corrections to the preliminary scale value:

In warm or hot weather:

Subtract 1 point if water is available

Subtract 1 point if the dog is in a shaded area protected from full sun

Add 1 point if dog is brachycephalic

Add 1 point if dog is obese

In cool or cold weather:

Add 1 point if a toy dog

Add 2 points if the dog is out in rain/sleet

Subtract 1 point if the dog is a northern or heavy-coated breed

Subtract 1 point if the dog has good shelter and bedding available

Subtract 1 point if the dog has been acclimated to cold temperatures

In all weather conditions:

Add 1 point if dog is less than 6 months of age or elderly

The corrected value is the *TACC weather safety score*. APOs shall record the score in the case and the coinciding interpretation in the case report, and take the action appropriate under the NBSPCA Act and its Regulations, and the NBSPCA Standard Operating Procedures for APOs.

*A tool developed for veterinarians, animal control officers and cruelty investigators by the Tufts Center for Animals and Public Policy. Published in Patronek, G. J. "Recognizing and Reporting Animal Abuse – a Veterinarian's Guide. Denver, CO: American Humane Association, 1997. Also see Patronek, G.J., "Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) scale for assessing body condition, weather and environmental safety," Canadian Veterinary Journal (2000) 41: 634-635.