

REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
LAW
ON WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF ANIMALS

6 November 1997 No VIII-500

Vilnius

(Last amended on 3 October 2012 No XI-2271)

SECTION I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Purpose of the Law

1. This Law shall lay down the remit of state and municipal authorities in ensuring the welfare and protection of animals as sentient beings, the responsibilities of natural and legal persons and other organisations and branches thereof (hereinafter: the ‘person’) in the area of animal protection and welfare, the welfare and protection of homeless animals, measures to reduce the population of stray animals, requirements for the humane treatment of animals to protect animals against cruel treatment, torture and other adverse impact and to ensure human safety.

2. Where any international treaties ratified by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Seimas’) set out other terms and conditions of animal welfare and protection, such terms and conditions of international treaties shall apply.

3. The provisions of this Law shall apply to welfare and protection of wild animals to the extent that these provisions are not regulated by the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Wild Fauna.

Article 2. Definitions

1. **Experimental animal** – an animal bred, grown, used or to be used for experimental or other research purposes.

2. **Homeless animal** – an animal not taken care of by the animal keeper and present outside a residential or non-residential building or beyond another territory owned by the animal keeper.

3. **Stray animal** – an animal that has no owner or whose owner is not known or has abandoned the animal without transferring it to another owner.

4. **Animal** – a domestic or wild animal of any species or pet.
5. **Pet** – an animal kept to meet aesthetic and social needs.
6. **Pet identification** – marking of a pet with an external mark, tattoo or microchip.
7. **Animal keeping** – creating conditions for an animal's living, nutrition and animal hygiene.
8. **Animal keeper** – a person who is the owner of an animal or keeps the animal for or without consideration.
9. **Putting down of an animal** – killing of an animal using veterinary medicines.
10. **Killing of an animal** – depriving an animal of its life.
11. **Registration of an animal** – entering of an animal's data into a registry database of certain animals.
12. **Owner of an animal** – a person whereto an animal belongs by the right of ownership.
13. **Animal protection** – measures to ensure animal welfare.
14. **Breeder of pets** – a person holding a permit to breed pets for commercial purposes issued in accordance with the procedure laid down by the State Food and Veterinary Service.
15. **Animal welfare** – meeting of physiological and ethological needs of animals in an optimum manner.
16. **Animal care** – activities of a person to ensure animal welfare and protection.
17. **Animal carer** – a person meeting requirements set forth by legal acts and providing care and/or temporary care for homeless and stray animals.
18. **Pet shelter** – a person holding any premises meeting requirements set forth by legal acts where animals are kept until they die (unless they must be put down for reasons related to their health or aggressiveness), stray and homeless animals until new owners are found for them and injured or ill wild animals until they are ready to be set free.
19. **Crossbreed fight dog** – a crossbreed dog at least one of the parents whereof is a fight dog.
20. **Fight dog** – a dog bred for fighting that is on the List of Fight Dog Breeds approved by the head of the State Food and Veterinary Service.
21. **Temporary animal care** (hereinafter: '**temporary care**') – activities of a person ensuring the welfare and protection of stray or homeless animals until their owner or keeper is identified, in accordance with the time limits set out in Article 4.61(3) of the Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the '**Civil Code**').

22. **Wild animal** – an animal which is a member of a wild species living in natural conditions or in captivity at any stage of biological development.

23. **Dangerous dog** – a dog of a dangerous breed that is on the List of Dangerous Dog Breeds approved by the head of the State Food and Veterinary Service.

24. **Crossbreed dangerous dog** – a crossbreed dog at least one of the parents whereof is a dangerous dog.

25. **Animal trader** – a person holding a permit to trade in animals issued in accordance with the procedure laid down by the State Food and Veterinary Service.

26. **Slaughter** – killing of a stunned animal for food by bleeding it.

27. **Domestic animal** – an animal kept or bred for producing food, skin or fur, medicines and other products and for labour and other farming purposes.

28. **Commercial pet breeding** – reproduction of pets for commercial purposes in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts.

29. Other concepts used in this Law shall be understood in the manner they are defined in other laws and legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

Article 3. Remit of State and Municipal Authorities

1. Animal welfare and protection shall be ensured, within their remit, by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Government’), the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of Environment’) or institutions authorised thereby, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of Health’) or institutions authorised thereby, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of Transport and Communications’), the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of Education and Science’), the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of the Interior’) or institutions authorised thereby, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: the ‘Ministry of Agriculture’) or institutions authorised thereby, the State Food and Veterinary Service and municipal administrations.

2. The Government or an institution authorised thereby shall:

1) coordinate the drafting of and approve national animal welfare and protection strategies and programmes;

2) enter, in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws, into and enforce international treaties on animal welfare and protection;

3) set out the procedure for registration of keeping places for domestic animals and for accounting and identification of domestic animals kept therein;

4) carry out other functions specified by laws.

3. The Ministry of Environment or institutions authorised thereby shall:

1) shape, within their remit, national policy in the field of wild animal welfare and protection and help the authorised institutions to implement it;

2) approve, in conjunction with the State Food and Veterinary Service, the Rules for Using Wild Animals;

3) approve the Rules for Hunting in the Republic of Lithuania setting out: the list of species of hunted animals and hunting seasons for these animals; hunting methods prohibited and allowed and seasons thereof, hunting tools prohibited and allowed and other hunting requirements;

4) approve, together with the Customs Department under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania and the State Food and Veterinary Service, the Rules for Trading in Wild Animals;

5) inform and consult stakeholders on the issues of wild animal welfare and protection;

6) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

4. The Ministry of Agriculture or institutions authorised thereby shall:

1) shape, within their remit, national policy in the field of welfare and protection of domestic animals and pets, delegate the implementation thereof to the authorised institutions and organise, coordinate and control the implementation thereof;

2) inform and consult stakeholders on the issues of welfare and protection of domestic animals and pets;

3) set out the procedure for identification and registration of cats, dogs, ferrets and other pets;

4) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

5. The Ministry of the Interior or institutions authorised thereby shall, within their remit, ensure that animal keeping requirements are met.

6. The Ministry of Transport and Communications shall set out the rules for carrying animals by public transport.

7. The Ministry of Education and Science shall:

1) include topics on animal welfare and protection in general curricula of formal education;

2) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

8. The Ministry of Health or institutions authorised thereby shall:

1) collect and summarise data on persons having received medical treatment due to animal bites or other contact with animals;

2) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

9. The State Food and Veterinary Service shall:

1) implement, within its remit, national policy in the field of animal welfare and protection;

2) approve requirements for the keeping of domestic animals and control the implementation thereof;

3) set out requirements for the protection of animals slaughtered or otherwise killed and control the implementation thereof;

4) approve requirements for the keeping and use of experimental animals and control the implementation thereof and issue permits for experiments with animals;

5) approve the lists of fight and dangerous dog breeds;

6) approve the requirements for entry, purchase, breeding, training, trade in and keeping of dangerous dogs and the requirements for keeping fight dogs, crossbreed fight dogs and crossbreed dangerous dogs;

7) approve requirements for animal carers, pet shelters and pet breeders and control the implementation thereof;

8) approve requirements for trading in domestic animals and pets and control the implementation thereof;

9) approve the procedure for issuing permits for animal carriers and certificates of competence for supervisors of animals during transport;

10) approve a list of veterinary procedures that may be performed by specially trained individuals and establish a procedure for performing them;

11) draft a procedure for animal keeping in municipal residential areas;

12) organise registration and identification of cats, dogs and ferrets and, where appropriate, other pets;

13) approve requirements for the use of substances stimulating the capabilities of animals and increasing animal productivity, performance and achievements in sports;

14) control the implementation of the requirements for protection of animals during transport;

15) inform and consult stakeholders on the requirements for animal welfare and protection;

16) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

10. Municipal administrations:

1) shall, within their remit, participate in implementing animal welfare and protection programmes, inform and encourage the public to take care of animals, except for wild animals;

2) shall, pursuant to the Procedure for Animal Keeping in Municipal Residential Areas as approved by the State Food and Veterinary Service, approve rules for animal keeping in municipal residential areas and control the implementation thereof;

3) shall organise activities to reduce the number of stray pets in a municipality, temporary care for homeless and stray animals and return of homeless animals to their owners;

4) may establish pet cemeteries and organise the maintenance thereof;

5) shall issue permits for entry, purchase, keeping and breeding of and trading in dangerous dogs and carry out controls of keeping of fight dogs, crossbreed fight dogs, dangerous dogs and crossbreed dangerous dogs in a municipality;

6) shall organise the capture of and temporary care for fight dogs, crossbreed fight dogs, dangerous dogs and crossbreed dangerous dogs;

7) carry out other functions specified by legal acts.

Article 4. Cruel Treatment and Torture of Animals

1. Cruel treatment and torture of animals, any direct or indirect promotion and encouragement of cruel treatment and torture of animals and instigation of violence against animals shall be prohibited.

2. The following actions shall constitute cruel treatment and torture of animals:

1) deliberate rendering of animals stray or homeless;

2) failure to provide veterinary assistance where animals need it;

3) frightening, injuring or killing of animals, except for the cases provided for by legal acts;

4) use of animals as targets;

5) organising of animal combats or combats involving animals and training of animals for combats;

6) zoophilic acts with animals;

7) slaughter of animals without stunning them, except for the cases provided for by legal acts;

8) surgery on animals without anaesthetics, except for the cases provided for by legal acts;

9) veterinary procedures aimed at altering the appearance or physiological functions of an animal (clipping of ears, jowls, crests, beaks and tails, mutilation or removal of vocal chords, horns, claws, wings, hoofs and tusks, plucking or other removal of feathers, etc.) altering the structure of animal body parts, soft tissue or bones, except for neutering of animals and other cases provided for by legal acts or veterinary procedures performed by a decision of a veterinarian due to health concerns of the animal;

10) use of substances stimulating the capabilities of animals and increasing animal productivity, performance and achievements in sports, except for the use of legally allowed substances or other cases provided for by legal acts;

11) use of chemical substances and other means and devices detrimental to animal health or having an irritating effect, causing fear, stress, suffering or harm to animals, their health and welfare;

12) training of animals by causing them pain and fear and using mutilating tools or tools causing pain or suffering;

13) encouraging animal aggression against other animals or people when training animals, except for training of animals for service;

14) breeding of animals causing detrimental effect on animal health and welfare;

15) keeping of animals under statutory conditions unsuitable for their species, age, physiology and behaviour;

16) use of unsuitable and harmful animal keeping, care or labour facilities;

17) providing insufficient amounts of feed or water for animals;

18) failure to ensure resting periods for animals given their physiological needs;

19) use of live animals for feeding other animals, except where such animals must be fed other animals due to their biological characteristics and cannot be fed otherwise (use of pets for feeding animals shall be prohibited in all cases);

20) transport of animals in breach of requirements of legal acts regulating animal welfare during transport;

21) use of animals for advertising, filming, photography, exhibitions and other events causing animals pain, fear or suffering or where animals are forced to go beyond their inherent capabilities or are maimed;

22) setting free of wild animals cared for by people, unless such animals are properly prepared for living in the natural environment;

23) consent of the animal owner or keeper to performance of actions listed in points 1 to 22 or creating conditions for such actions to be performed;

24) other actions causing the death of animals, pain, suffering or threatening the animal's health or life, except for the cases provided for by legal acts.

3. Cruel treatment and torture of animals shall be subject to administrative or criminal liability.

4. Subject to a court judgment and in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws of the Republic of Lithuania, animals may be taken from animal owners or keepers torturing or cruelly treating them and transferred for slaughter, sale, to another animal keeper (including transfer to an animal carer) or for putting down.

5. Until a court passes a judgment concerning an animal that may be maimed or die as a result of cruel treatment or torture, a person authorised by the head of the municipal administration must, in presence of a veterinarian of the State Food and Veterinary Service and a police officer, where public order must be ensured, remove such an animal and transfer it to an animal carer.

Article 5. Actions Not Constituting Cruel Treatment and Torture of Animals

1. The following actions shall not constitute cruel treatment or torture of animals:

1) catching of aquaculture animals in accordance with requirements set forth by legal acts;

2) hunting of animals in accordance with requirements set forth by legal acts;

3) setting free of stray cats captured and neutered in accordance with cat neutering programmes coordinated with the municipal administration;

4) neutering of animals;

5) unpremeditated injury or killing of an animal;

6) killing of animals to eradicate infectious animal diseases and for purposes related to public health, animal health and welfare and environment protection in accordance with requirements set forth by legal acts;

7) killing of animals in urgent cases, where an end must be put to the suffering of a severely injured animal;

8) use of other impact measures on or killing of animals with a view to eliminating a threat where a human being or another animal is in real danger;

9) putting down of animals using only veterinary medicines, while other methods of putting down shall be prohibited;

10) eradication of rodents, harmful insects and ticks by employing appropriate eradication methods and tools;

11) carrying out experiments with animals subject to a permit issued by the State Food and Veterinary Service.

2. Animals may be put down only by a veterinarian holding a licence for veterinary practice or a veterinary paramedic on the assignment by the veterinarian.

3. Under the circumstances listed in paragraphs 1(7) and (8) of this Article, where no veterinary assistance is available or in other special cases provided for by laws, animals may be killed by other persons.

4. In the cases provided for in this Article and other legal acts, an animal shall be killed so as to endure as little physical and mental suffering as possible. Preference shall be given to an animal killing method which:

- 1) would quickly cause unconsciousness and death of the animal;
- 2) would begin with a strong general anaesthetic effect and finish with a procedure causing definitive and absolute death.

5. Before removing the carcass, one must make sure that the animal is dead.

SECTION II

KEEPING, REGISTRATION, IDENTIFICATION AND MEDICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Article 6. Keeping of Animals

All animals must be kept and cared for under conditions suitable for an animal's species, age, physiology and behaviour in accordance with the legal acts regulating animal keeping, ensuring that the animal's freedom of movement is not constrained and that the animal is not subjected to discomfort, pain or suffering.

Article 7. Registration and Identification of Animals

1. Animals of certain species must be registered and identified in accordance with the requirements of the legal acts regulating animal registration and identification.

2. Cats, dogs and ferrets must be identified with microchips and registered in the Pets Registry.

3. Other pets may be identified with microchips and registered in the Pets Registry.
4. The Pets Registry shall be administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and managed by the State Enterprise Agricultural Information and Rural Business Centre and the State Food and Veterinary Service.
5. The data of the Pets Registry shall be provided to municipal administrations free of charge and to other entities – in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws and other legal acts.

Article 8. Entry, Purchase, Keeping, Breeding, Registration, Identification and Training of and Trading in Fight and Dangerous Dogs

1. No fight dogs and crossbreed fight and dangerous dogs shall be allowed in the Republic of Lithuania.
2. Dangerous dogs shall enter, be purchased, kept, bred, registered, identified, trained and traded in in the Republic of Lithuania in accordance with the provisions of this Law and other legal acts.
3. The persons willing to bring, purchase, keep, breed and sell dangerous dogs must hold permits issued in accordance with the procedure specified by the head of the administration of the municipality of permanent residence.
4. No such permits shall be issued to:
 - 1) persons under 18 years of age;
 - 2) persons registered with a health care institution due to alcoholism, drug addiction or a mental disease;
 - 3) persons convicted for premeditated violent crimes, unless such previous conviction has not expired or has not been expunged;
 - 4) persons residing together with the persons listed under points 2 and 3 of this paragraph.
5. The owner of a dangerous dog must ensure that the keeping of such a dog is not entrusted to the persons listed under paragraphs 4(2) and (3) of this Article.
6. In the event of any breach of the requirements set forth for the entry, purchase, keeping, breeding and sale of dangerous dogs in this Law and other legal acts, the municipal administration having issued a permit referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article must, in accordance with the procedure laid down by the head of the municipal administration, take the dangerous dog and transfer it for temporary care to an animal carer until the breach is remedied.

7. Where a dangerous dog taken in accordance with paragraph 6 of this Article poses a real threat to people or other animals, it may be put down.

8. Where, in accordance with paragraph 6 of this Article, a dangerous dog is taken for temporary care or put down, the owner of the dog must bear the expenses of taking, keeping and/or putting down of the dog.

9. Dangerous dogs may be trained only by persons holding a certificate of trainer qualifications issued by an appropriate association of animal keepers.

10. No fight dogs, crossbreed fight and dangerous dogs (where such dogs are not prohibited by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania) and dangerous dogs shall be allowed in multiple dwelling buildings.

Article 9. Medical Treatment of Animals

1. Animals may be subject to surgery, medical treatment or other veterinary procedures only by veterinarians unless otherwise provided for in legal acts.

2. Certain veterinary procedures may be performed by specially trained individuals in accordance with the procedure set out by the State Food and Veterinary Service.

3. Surgical and all other pain-inflicting veterinary procedures shall be performed on animals only after administering anaesthetics, except for the cases specified by legal acts.

SECTION III

BREEDING AND TRANSPORT OF AND TRADE IN ANIMALS

Article 10. Breeding of Animals

1. Pet breeding must be targeted, planned and intentional.

2. The persons breeding pets for commercial purposes must ensure the observance of requirements set forth by legal acts and hold a veterinary certificate when so required by legal acts.

3. Pet owners, except for the persons breeding pets for commercial purposes, must ensure that their pets would not reproduce unless they ensure the transfer of pet offspring to new owners (except for their transfer to an animal carer) or take care of them themselves.

4. When transferring cats, dogs or ferrets and offspring of these animals to another owner, these animals must be identified with a microchip and registered in the database of the Pets Registry.

5. The breeding of genetically inferior pets with evident genetic diseases, malformations or pathologies shall be prohibited.

6. The crossbreeding of wild animals of different species and species of wild animals and pets shall be prohibited, except where such crossbreeding takes place in accordance with approved experimental research programmes.

7. Other animals shall be bred in accordance with requirements of legal acts regulating breeding thereof.

Article 11. Transport of Animals

Animals must be transported so that they would not be injured and would not endure unnecessary stress and would remain safe during transport. Transport containers used to transport animals must be of sufficient surface area and height corresponding to the kind and size of animals and the nature of the scheduled journey.

Article 12. Trading in and Other Transfer of Animals

1. Trading in animals of certain species must be carried out in accordance with requirements of the legal acts regulating trade in such animals in the places specified by a decision of the head of the municipal administration.

2. Traders in animals and the premises used for trading in animals must have a veterinary approval where so required by law.

3. Animals may not be sold or otherwise transferred into the ownership of persons under 16 years of age without the consent of parents (guardians) thereof.

4. The animals which are subject, according to the procedure laid down by legal acts, to mandatory identification and registration, but which are not identified and not registered may not be sold.

SECTION IV

STRAY AND HOMELESS ANIMALS

Article 13. Stray and Homeless Animals

1. In the territory of a municipality, temporary care of captured stray and homeless animals and stray and homeless animals reported by persons who capture, but cannot keep them shall be organised by the municipal administration in accordance with the procedure specified by the head of the municipal administration.

2. In accordance with the procedure set out by the head of the municipal administration, the municipal administration shall, within its remit, participate in implementing stray cat neutering programmes drafted by animal care organisations.

3. When catching stray and homeless animals, animals caught must be subjected to as little physical and mental suffering as possible.

4. Neutered and externally marked stray cats caught must be immediately released, except where they are suspected to be ill or are maimed.

Article 14. Temporary Care of Stray and Homeless Animals Organised by Municipal Administrations

1. All stray and homeless pets whose capture is organised by the municipal administration or which are reported by persons who catch stray or homeless pets, but cannot keep them shall be transferred to an animal carer, and stray or homeless domestic animals – to a keeper of domestic animals able to temporarily take care of a domestic animal.

2. Upon the expiry of the period referred to in Article 4.61(3) of the Civil Code and where the animal owner remains unidentified, an animal shall be transferred free of charge to the person having taken care of it.

Article 15. Requirements for Animal Carers

1. Animal carers must meet the requirements set forth by legal acts.

2. In order to keep animals, animal carers may establish pet shelters.

3. Animal carers must:

1) check the condition of health of every animal reaching them, evaluate the possibility to further keep it and ensure the necessary veterinary assistance and vaccination of animals;

2) check the animal's identification to identify the owner of the animal and, where the owner is identified, immediately inform him about the animal found;

3) ensure publication of information about stray and homeless animals kept;

4) search for new owners for animals and provide new owners with all the necessary information about an animal, its health condition and how to keep it and ensure its welfare;

5) create conditions for keeping animals without jeopardising their health and welfare.

4. Animal carers may not breed animals.

SECTION V
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE AND PROTECTION

Article 16. Use of Animals for Experiments and Other Research Purposes

1. Only animals especially bred and raised for experiments and other research purposes may be used for these purposes, except for the cases provided for by legal acts.

2. Experiments with animals may not be carried out where the goals intended can be reached using alternative research methods.

3. Experiments that may cause pain to an experimental animal must be carried out using anaesthetics, except where:

1) anaesthesia has a more negative effect on an experimental animal than the experiment itself;

2) use of anaesthetics is against the purpose of the experiment.

4. Permits for carrying out experiments with animals shall be issued by the State Food and Veterinary Service under a recommendation by the Ethics Commission of Lithuania on the Use of Laboratory Animals under the State Food and Veterinary Service comprising representatives of institutions and organisations authorised by the Government. The breeding, keeping and use of animals for experiments and other research purposes shall be controlled by the State Food and Veterinary Service.

Article 17. Slaughter of Domestic Animals and Killing of Farmed Fur Animals, Chicks and Embryos

1. Domestic animals shall be kept at slaughterhouses, stunned and slaughtered in accordance with the requirements of legal acts regulating the protection of animals for slaughter.

2. Domestic animals may be slaughtered for religious purposes only having properly stunned those animals using methods specified by legal acts and in accordance with the requirements of legal acts regulating the protection of animals for slaughter.

3. Domestic animals slaughtered outside slaughterhouses for own consumption must be slaughtered in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts.

4. Farmed fur animals, chicks under 72 hours of age at hatcheries and embryos must be killed using methods specified by legal acts in accordance with the requirements of legal acts regulating the protection of animals to be killed.

5. Domestic animals must be protected against fear, pain or suffering when transporting them, putting them in stalls, hamshackling, stunning, slaughtering or killing them.

Article 18. Training of Animals

1. When training animals, the provisions of this Law and other legal acts regulating animal protection and welfare must be observed.

2. Animals owned by others may be trained by natural persons holding a certificate of trainer qualifications issued by an appropriate association of animal keepers.

3. The institutions, enterprises and organisations keeping and using animals for service purposes must draft programmes for training of animals used for service purposes taking account of the species and the purpose of use of the animals. The animals used for service purposes must be trained without prejudice to the provisions of this Law.

Article 19. Circus Animals and Use of Animals for Advertising, Entertainment and Other Events

1. Activities of an animal circus must meet requirements set forth by legal acts and any such circus must hold a veterinary certificate issued in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts.

2. Circus managers, creators of films and advertising and organisers of exhibitions, competitions and other events must give a notice of the scheduled events during which animals are to be used to the State Food and Veterinary Service and the administration of a municipality in the territory whereof the events involving animals are to take place.

3. Where animals are used for advertising, exhibitions, entertainment, competitions, circus performances, film-making and other events, the requirements of this Law and other legal acts must be met.

4. Animals may not be given as awards during exhibitions, fairs, competitions and other events.

5. The exposition of genetically inferior pets with evident genetic diseases, malformations or pathologies shall be prohibited.

SECTION VI

RIGHTS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS AND SUPERVISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF

Article 20. Rights and Duties of Persons

1. A person must take care or inform competent authorities and animal carers of any injured, ill, stray or homeless animals and inform competent authorities of any cases of cruel treatment or torture of animals known to the person.

2. Animal keepers must:

- 1) continuously ensure animal welfare and protection;
- 2) observe the provisions of this Law and other legal acts regulating animal welfare and protection;
- 3) ensure that animals kept would not pose a threat to life, health or property of people and other animals;
- 4) not violate rights and legitimate interests of other persons.

3. Animal carers shall be entitled:

- 1) to receive information related to animal welfare and protection from state and municipal authorities;
- 2) to require state or municipal authorities to carry out checks and take part therein where any breach of animal welfare and protection requirements is suspected;
- 3) to cooperate with state and municipal authorities in dealing with animal welfare and protection issues and in preventing cruel treatment of animals.

4. In accordance with requirements set forth by legal acts, animal owners or keepers must ensure that cats, dogs, ferrets and other animals susceptible to rabies would be vaccinated against rabies.

5. An animal owner or keeper or an aggrieved person must immediately inform an institution authorised by the Ministry of Health or the State Food and Veterinary Service if a dog, cat or another animal susceptible to rabies bites, scratches or otherwise injures people.

6. Where a pet owner can no longer take due care of a pet, he must transfer the pet to a new owner (including transfer to an animal carer), who must care for the pet in accordance with the requirements of this Law and other legal acts. A pet owner who can no longer take due care of a pet and who has used all means seeking to transfer the pet to another owner and protect its life may request a veterinarian to put down the pet.

Article 21. Supervision of the Implementation of This Law and Liability for Infringements Thereof

1. Any persons who infringe the requirements of this Law shall be held liable in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws of the Republic of Lithuania.

2. Officials of the institutions in charge of supervision of the implementation of this law shall be entitled:

1) to enter residential or non-residential buildings or other territories where animals are kept with the consent of the owner of the building or territory or holding a court authorisation where the requirements of this Law and other legal acts are not met;

2) to request from animal keepers any documents, information or explanations on animal health, welfare and protection issues;

3) to submit notices and reports to law enforcement institutions for the purposes of prosecution of any persons liable for any breach of requirements set out in this Law and other legal acts;

4) to apply administrative sanctions;

5) to transfer animals for temporary care and organise the procedure of taking animals away from animal owners.

Article 2. Entry into Force

1. Prior to the entry into force of this Law, the provisions of Articles 8(1) and 8(10) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law shall not apply to fight dogs, crossbreed fight and dangerous dogs kept to which a municipal administration has issued a permit. Such fight dogs and crossbreed fight and dangerous dogs must be neutered and can no further be bred, purchased and sold. The keeping of these dogs in the territory of a municipality shall be controlled and their transfer and temporary care shall be organised by the municipal administration.

2. Prior to the entry into force of this Law, the provisions of Article 8(10) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law shall not apply to dangerous dogs kept to which a municipal administration has issued a permit.

3. This Law, except for Articles 7(2), 8(10), 10(4) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law and paragraphs 4 and 5 of this Article, shall enter into force on 1 January 2013.

4. Articles 7(2) and 10(4) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law shall enter into force on 1 January 2016.

5. Article 8(10) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law shall enter into force on 1 July 2013.

6. Cats, dogs and ferrets identified with a microchip prior to the entry into force of Article 7(2) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Animal Welfare and Protection amended by this Law shall be registered in the Pets Registry without repeated identification.

7. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania or state institutions authorised by it and other institutions listed in this Law shall adopt implementing legal acts prior to the entry into force of this Law.

I promulgate this Law passed by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

DALIA GRYBAUSKAITĖ