

POLICY 19. EMERGENCY EUTHANASIA OF INJURED ANIMALS

A. Overview

1. Deputies may confront situations involving seriously injured animals that require immediate medical attention. If there is no response from a responsible party/animal emergency response agency, euthanasia of the animal may be the only humane option. The euthanizing of an animal should be undertaken only as a last resort. The euthanasia should only take place if the animal poses a real threat to the safety of humans or if it is appropriate to humanely end the suffering of the animal.

B. PROCEDURE

1. When possible, notify a supervisor before prior to euthanizing an animal.
2. If possible, the owner's permission to euthanize the animal should be obtained and recorded on Body Worn Camera.
3. Move all bystanders to a safe area and out of view if possible.
4. The area behind and to the sides of the animal should be protected in the event of over penetration or ricochet of the bullet. The preferred method is to select a location that provides a dirt embankment or other suitable backstop.
5. Extreme caution must be used when approaching an injured animal. When in pain, animals become vicious and may attack.
6. Generally, the best place to aim is the chest area of the animal. Shooting at the head/brain of a large animal is generally discouraged since the skull could deflect a bullet not aimed properly.
7. In the case of a bite inflicted on a human by a suspected rabid animal, a head/brain shot should be avoided. The animal's brain should be preserved in an undamaged condition for a reliable rabies test.
8. As soon as possible, but no later than their end of shift, the deputy must notify their supervisor and the Communications Center of the animal euthanasia.
9. The deputy must complete a Miscellaneous Report in NetRMS documenting the incident, prior to their end of shift.

References: Dept. P&P Section 8.1 - Use of Firearms/Deadly Force,

Dept. P&P Section 8.2 – Firearms: Discharge During Performance of Duty