



Visiting Animals Policy and Procedure

Created: March 15, 2016

Revised: October 17, 2017, May 22, 2019, May 5, 2020, March 9, 2022, September 23, 2025

Reference: Toronto Public Health Guidance Document 2017,2019

Approved by Board of Directors: November 15, 2017

Policy

Orde Day Care believes that animals provide a valuable learning opportunity for children. However, sometimes, bringing young children and animals together has potential risks. Allergies, injuries and infections are associated risks of animal contact. Children under the age of five are more likely to develop serious illnesses from infections due to microorganisms, such as Salmonella and E. coli. Animals such as reptiles and amphibians are known carriers of Salmonella, while tropical birds are carriers of psittacosis. The intent of this policy is to ensure that staff are educated as to which animals are permitted to visit, or be visited, the need to teach children proper ways to handle animals, and hand hygiene after handling pets. Orde Day Care does not permit animals to be cared for on a continuous basis, and only allows certain animals to visit or be visited, based on the ages of the children.

Procedure

In order to allow exposure to these animals while ensuring a number of precautions are met to maintain the health and safety of the children, a list of responsibilities was devised. Staff, students and volunteer must review this policy upon hiring/unpaid placement and yearly thereafter, or whenever changes are made.

Program staff will: ensure that

- there are no children or adults on site with related allergies
- only all dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, rodents (e.g. mice, hamsters, rats, gerbils, guinea pigs) are allowed to visit
- **Pet birds are not allowed to visit**
- Cats and dogs
 - a. Shall be fully immunized against rabies and all other applicable immunizations- a copy of this documentation is to be posted on the door of the program room prior to the visit
 - b. **must be on a flea, tick and internal parasite program**
 - c. wear a collar with license id tags
 - d. must be in good health and show no sign of illness
- Staff will have discussion with the owner of the pet to ensure that the animal's temperament is suitable to interact with children
- Staff will inform the supervisor of their intention to have a pet visit or animal show at least one week prior to the visit
- A notice will be posted for parent to inform them of the visiting animal or animal show.
- Staff will indicate the visiting animal or show on their program plan.
- Staff will oversee all interaction between children and the animals
- Children will not be allowed to eat or drink in front of the animal nor feed the animal
- Children will avoid contact with animal food or feces
- Animals must be kept away from any food preparation area
- Children will wash their hands after coming in contact with the animals



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- Children **over the age of 5** are allowed to interact with reptiles, amphibians, live poultry, ferrets and farm animals with appropriate staff supervision.
- Animals would not be allowed in facilities that share the space or programming areas (gymnasium/ foyer) with children less than five years of age
- Record the following information (to be kept for 1 year)
 - Date of Visit
 - Name of animal owner and contact information
 - Animal name and species
 - Proof on animal documentation
 - Description of the group/room who participated and any additional guests (parents)

In the event of an incident i.e. bite by an animal the staff will do the following

1. Administer first aid measures as required
2. Contact the parent/guardian of the child
3. Provide the immunization record of the animal to the parent, or have the organization the provide this information to the parent

Animals not allowed to visit

- Exotic animals (hedgehogs, monkeys)
- Wild/stray animals (e.g. bats, raccoons, stray dogs, cats or squirrels)
- Inherently dangerous animals (e.g. lions, cougars, bears)
- Venomous or toxin producing animals (e.g. venomous or toxin producing spiders, insects, reptiles, and amphibians)
- Ill animals or animals under treatment
- Young animals (e.g. puppies and kittens under 1 year of age)
- Animals that have been fed raw or dehydrated foods, chews, or treats of animal origin in the last 90 days
- Birthing or pregnant animals
- Animals from shelter, pounds unless they have been in a stable home for at least 6 months
- Aggressive animals
- Animals in heat
- Rabies reservoir species (i.e. bat, skunks, racoons, foxes)

Policy Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees before recommencing, commencing employment, and at any time changes are made.

I acknowledge receipt of Orde Day Care **Visiting Animal Policy and Procedures**. I understand it is my responsibility to read, understand, and comply with the **Visiting Animal Policy and Procedures**. I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the **Visiting Animal Policy and Procedures**. I will consult with my immediate supervisor.



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Please read the **Visiting Animal Policy and Procedures**. carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this document.

Staff Name	Supervisor Name:
Staff Signature:	Supervisor Signature:
Date:	Date:

