

Public Encouraged to Provide Homes for Dogs

The Ministry of Agriculture is calling on interested and willing members of the public to adopt and provide homes for dogs caught during the current Stray Dog Control campaign.

As part of its attempts to address the number of stray dogs on our streets, the Ministry of Agriculture and stakeholders are welcoming members of the public who are willing to pay the required license fee and can become responsible pet owners.

Animals that will be released to potential pet owners will have already been neutered (de-sexed) and assessed to be of good temperaments and are suitable for the adoption/rehoming option.

Members of the public who can provide

basic animal welfare and care for these dogs are strongly encouraged to show their support towards this national initiative by adopting and providing suitable homes for these animals.

Though circumstances which led to the current 8-week intensive stray dog control campaign is unfortunate, stakeholders believe that by providing a stable loving environment conducive to healthy people-pet relationships, the issue of stray dogs can and will be addressed.

Should you wish to adopt a released stray dog, please visit any Agriculture office in major towns and municipalities to register your interest.



Pet Lovers taking initiative to re-home dogs

Strategies to Curb Stray Dog Numbers Adopted by Stakeholders



De-sexing of stray dog caught during the Stray Dog Campaign

The Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with Animals Fiji and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (S.P.C.A.), will be conducting desexing of all suitable trapped dogs during the intensive 8-week stray dog control campaign that is currently underway.

The Ministry of Agriculture is adopting two strategies after the desexing of these dogs. 1) To re-home or adopt these dogs to interested responsible members of the public and 2) release as part of the Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program.

All trapped dogs shall be assessed to ascertain their suitability for rehoming/ adoption or for the TNR program. This assessment shall be carried out by a qualified veterinarian or a competent Ministry of Agriculture staff.

The assessment shall be based on the animals' health status, any major animal welfare issues that may lead to poor quality of life, and temperament (if the dog is aggressive or not). This will also help alleviate the public safety risk for any dogs

released as part of the TNR program. Regrettably, any dogs that do not pass the assessment shall be humanely euthanized.

All desexed animals under this program shall be tattooed on their ears to ensure that they can be identified as being trapped as part of this program.

Due to the expected increased number of dogs that will be trapped under this campaign, members of the public that are willing to pay the required license fee and are willing and have the means to be responsible pet owners are strongly encouraged to adopt and re-home these desexed dogs.

For those dogs that have not been claimed or rehomed within a certain period of time, the Ministry of Agriculture shall be releasing these dogs back into the areas they were trapped in, as part of the TNR program.

A TNR program is a long-term, scientifically proven, humane and sustainable management strategy that is often adopted in overseas countries to control increasing

stray animal populations. Holland/Netherlands is the first country in the world to not have stray dogs after adopting a TNR approach.

TNR programs prevent the increase of the stray dog population by preventing them from reproducing and allows the stray dog population to die out naturally over time. By releasing these desexed dogs back into the same location, these dogs will also keep other stray animals out of their territory. These released dogs would have also been initially screened for aggressiveness prior to desexing.

Members of the public are still strongly advised to be cautious in any interactions and not to needlessly provoke any stray dogs they encounter.

In conjunction to the trapping campaign, door-to-door licensing enforcement, registration, awareness on stray dogs and the related laws shall be simultaneously conducted in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

Dog Ownership

Dog Ownership

Any person in whose custody, charge or possession or in whose house or premises any dog be found or seen, unless the contrary is provided, be deemed to be the owner of the dog.

Dog License

All dog owners must license their dogs. Dog license is \$13.20 per year paid on yearly basis.

Any owner who keeps a dog more than 6 months old without holding a license in respect of such dog shall be guilty of an offence and be liable for conviction or fine.

Dog Licensing Authority

The dog License can be purchased from Agriculture Offices and from SPCA for Suva area. Dog license is valid until 31st of December each year and is not transferable.

Dog owners are required to provide details such as the name, address and description of the dog and number of dogs owned.

Any person(s) who has dog license must produce it on demand to the Inspector or Police Officer. Failure to produce dog license on demand is an offence and the person shall be liable for conviction or fine.

Collars and Registration labels to be worn by Licensed dogs.

Dog license owners shall at his or her own expense be responsible for affixing a collar with registration label at all times.

Any owner of a dog who fails to comply shall be liable for conviction or fine. Owner liable in Damages for injury by dog

The owner of every dog shall be liable in damages for any unprovoked injury done by his or her dog.

Penalty for NOT muzzling dangerous dogs

Any owner who permits a dog which he or she knows to be dangerous or to have injured any person or livestock or any kind of domestic animal without being properly muzzled shall be guilty of an offence and liable for conviction or fine.

Any person who sees a dog being at large attacking any person(s) or attacked by such dog may destroy the same without being answerable to the owner of the dog.

Seizure of Stray dogs

Any dog not wearing a collar which is not being in charge or controlled, suffering from disease or neglect may be seized and handed over to the Licensing Officer.

Any dog which has been seized under the provisions of this Act will be detained for 12 daylight hours for Owners to claim with the necessary charges.

Magistrate may order destruction or control of dangerous dog.

If it appears to the Magistrate that such dog is dangerous, he or she may make an order directing either that the dog be destroyed in a manner to cause little pain as possible or it be kept under proper control by the owner.

Important Message:

Ensure to have your dogs licensed as keeping dogs without license is an offence.

Dogs to be kept or confined to owners compound with proper feeding and shelter. Proper disposal of household rubbish so that it does not attract dogs. A dog owner must keep a minimum number of dogs that he/she can take care of.

