

Response to EC6.9 - Incident and Operational Review of Serious Dog Attacks

Date: February 5, 2024

To: Economic and Community Development Committee

From: Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards

Wards: All

SUMMARY

On September 21, 2023, the Economic and Community Development Committee adopted [EC6.9](#) - Incident and Operational Review of Serious Dog Attacks. The item included a letter from Councillor Paula Fletcher in response to a serious dog attack occurring on July 30, 2023. Staff were directed to review the specific incident, as well as procedures and processes of Toronto Animal Services (TAS) for the compliance and enforcement of Dangerous Dog Orders, including in the immediate aftermath of a serious dog attack. The Committee also requested staff review relevant Toronto Public Health (TPH) processes and procedures, as well as options to make dangerous dog charges known to the public.

TAS within Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) investigates dangerous acts committed by a dog. TAS enforces requirements under [Chapter 349, Animals](#) (the Animals By-law), which requires owners to take reasonable precautions to prevent their dog from engaging in a dangerous act. The By-law also sets out criteria for when a Dangerous Dog Order may be issued and outlines associated conditions a dog owner must comply with. TAS may also commence proceedings under the provincial Dog Owners' Liability Act (DOLA), which states that dog owners are liable for any damages resulting from a bite or attack by their dog.

TPH investigates dog bites or attacks that could be conducive to the transmission of rabies to people. Investigation processes are dictated by the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, its regulations, guidelines, and protocols from the Ministry of Health specific to the prevention of rabies.

This report summarizes results of operational reviews undertaken by MLS and TPH, as well as actions staff have completed and work that is currently underway to improve processes to support effective and timely dog investigations and enhance public safety.

This report was developed in consultation with TPH, Legal Services, and Strategic Public and Employee Communications. Legal Services is preparing a supplementary report for this item.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards recommends that:

1. City Council amend Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349, Animals to include a provision that the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards is to create and maintain a public record listing information (including the dog owner's Forward Sorting Area (first three digits of the postal code), ward number, the dog's name, breed and colour, and the date of the dangerous act) of all served Dangerous Dog Orders, which is to be posted in a manner available to the public.
2. City Council request the Mayor to include resources in the 2025 Budget (up to \$500,000) for the Municipal Licensing and Standards Division to implement a proactive communication strategy and public education campaign to support compliance and enforcement with the goal of reducing the occurrence of dangerous dog acts.
3. City Council request the Government of Ontario consider amendments to the Dog Owners' Liability Act (DOLA) to provide an expeditious process to hear DOLA proceedings, as well as an explicit mechanism for municipalities to recover costs incurred by the municipality when it holds an animal pursuant to a warrant or interim control order under DOLA.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from this report.

Staff are proposing that MLS request funds up to \$500,000 as part of the 2025 budget for a proactive communication strategy and public education campaign to support compliance and enforcement with the goal of reducing the occurrence of dangerous dog acts. There is a need to change public behaviour and increase awareness of why dogs need to be leashed, how owners can prevent dangerous dog acts and how people and children can safely interact with dogs. Staff will consider opportunities to partially offset costs through an expected increase in pet licensing revenues as part of the request, if approved.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

EQUITY IMPACT

The identified improvements to procedures and processes for the compliance and enforcement of Dangerous Dog Orders have been analyzed for potential equity impacts on Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving communities.

Through this review it was identified that in some cases owners of dogs who have been issued a Dangerous Dog Order are unable to comply with the requirement that their dog receive socialization/obedience training, as they cannot afford the expense. Staff are exploring opportunities to provide access to discounted training to reduce the financial barrier. In addition, TAS is committed to continuing to build partnerships with community groups to strengthen its ability to address issues with animals before conflict situations arise, and to reframe the ways in which residents interact with animal life in the city.

DECISION HISTORY

On September 21, 2023, the Economic and Community Development Committee adopted Item 2023.EC6.9: Incident and Operational Review of Serious Dog Attacks, requesting staff to review procedures and processes for the compliance and enforcement of Dangerous Dog Orders and to report back in the first quarter of 2024. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EC6.9>

COMMENTS

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349, Animals requires that dogs must always be kept on a leash when off the property of their owner (except in designated off-leash areas in parks) and under the control of their owner (which includes a person in possession or custody of the dog). Every owner must take reasonable precautions to prevent their dog from engaging in a dangerous act (any bite, attack, act of menacing behaviour or any combination thereof). Ultimately, dog owners are responsible for their dog's actions and dangerous dog incidents can be prevented when proper precautions are taken.

A dog owner's responsibility to prevent a dog from attacking is also outlined in the provincial Dog Owners' Liability Act (DOLA). As part of DOLA, dog owners are liable for damages resulting from a bite or attack by the dog on another person or domestic animal. DOLA includes a process through which a court can order dog owners to take measures for the more effective control of their dog for the purposes of public safety in situations including where a dog has bitten, attacked or posed a menace to people or other domestic animals.

1. Toronto Animal Services Role in Dangerous Dog Incidents

Toronto Animal Services (TAS) within Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) investigates all reported dangerous acts committed by a dog. As part of the

investigation, an Animal Control Officer will interview the victim, dog owner, and any witnesses, as well as work with partner organizations if applicable, including Toronto Public Health (TPH) and Toronto Police Services (TPS). The Officer will also consider if the dog was acting in self defence. If the Officer concludes that a dog has committed a dangerous act against a person or a pet, education will be provided to the dog owner and TAS may issue a written warning or a Dangerous Dog Order under the Animals By-law and/or commence proceedings under DOLA.

The Animals By-law sets out when an Officer may issue a written warning or a Dangerous Dog Order:

- A written warning may be issued when the dangerous act is not severe, and it is the first act on record.
- A Dangerous Dog Order may be issued:
 - If the dangerous act was severe¹;
 - if the dangerous act was the second or subsequent dangerous act on record with the City; or
 - If the dangerous act occurred where the dog was the subject of a previous order under a City bylaw or the Dog Owners' Liability Act.

The conditions which attach to a Dangerous Dog Order issued under the Animals By-law are limited to those listed in the By-law (which are described in the section below). When TAS issues a Dangerous Dog Order, the dog owner must immediately comply with the conditions. TAS may also commence a proceeding under the provincial DOLA, which may include a request for a control order that prescribes additional measures the owner of the dog must take to support public safety, an order for the destruction of the dog, and/or a prohibition order where the owner cannot own other dogs for a set timeframe. DOLA proceedings take additional time as they occur in the Ontario Court of Justice and the courts determine which measure(s), if any, is appropriate. In cases where a dog is believed to be a threat to public safety, TAS may apply to the courts for a warrant to seize the dog under the DOLA. This process is described in further detail in Section 2 below.

Dog owners may appeal a Dangerous Dog Order to the Dangerous Dog Review Tribunal. The Tribunal has the authority to confirm the determination of a dangerous dog and uphold the Dangerous Dog Order or rescind it and exempt the owner from all requirements. The Tribunal does not have jurisdiction to exempt an owner from some or part of the requirements on a Dangerous Dog Order. Where an appeal is filed, a Dangerous Dog Order remains in effect until the tribunal rules it should be rescinded.

If there was an additional infraction under the Animals By-law in addition to the dangerous act (e.g., the dog was at large or not on a leash) the dog owner may also be charged with the relevant offence.

¹ A severe dangerous act is not defined in the Animals By-law as the designation is context specific and depends on a number of factors, such as extent of the bite (e.g., single wound vs. multiple wounds), and/or extent of the attack injury (e.g., bruising vs. fracture).

2. Toronto Animal Services Processes and Procedures Review

As directed, MLS undertook a comprehensive review of its processes and procedures related to the compliance and enforcement of Dangerous Dog Orders. TAS also routinely updates its internal operating procedures to improve operations. The following sections summarize results of the operational review, as well as identified actions completed and work underway to enhance processes.

Procedure for managing a severe dog mauling incident vs. a dog bite

TAS triages all reports of dangerous dog acts and prioritizes requests involving severe incidents (e.g., multiple bite wounds or other serious injuries to a person or animal). If the dog(s) involved in the incident is still “at large” (i.e. running loose), TAS will respond within two hours. TPS may also be called to the scene in these cases. In cases where the dog is with the owner and under control, TAS will initiate an investigation within 24 hours.

TAS routinely evaluates and updates this priority response model to ensure that enforcement officers can continue to respond to severe incidents as quickly as possible. It has been identified that TAS receives a high number of requests to investigate relatively minor dangerous dog acts that occur when dogs interact off-leash in designated off-leash areas and in non-designated areas, such as sports fields and school yards. TAS also receives a high number of requests (approximately 20 percent of total dangerous act requests) to investigate acts of dog menacing, where no bite or attack has occurred. TAS is working to operationally de-prioritize these more minor incidents by increasing the service standard time before which an officer will initiate an investigation. Staff are implementing a model where officers will investigate reported acts of menacing within five days, non-severe dog bites and attacks within 48 hours, and severe dog bites and attacks within 24 hours. Under this model, TAS will continue to investigate all reported dangerous acts, and may begin an investigation sooner than the operational service standard. Making these updates is an internal/operational decision. Staff believe the changes will help ensure resources are available to prioritize investigations of severe dangerous dog incidents.

Requirements and conditions of a Dangerous Dog Order

When a Dangerous Dog Order is issued, the dog owner must immediately comply with the following:

- Dog must be muzzled except when on the owner’s premises;
- A warning sign must be posted on the owner’s premises;
- Dog is prohibited from using the City’s dogs off-leash areas in parks;
- Owner must obtain a dangerous dog tag and the dog must wear the dangerous dog tag;
- Dog must be microchipped;
- City keeps a photo of the dog on file; and
- Dog owner must ensure the dog receives socialization/obedience training within 90 days of issuance of the order.

The Order lasts the life of the dog unless rescinded on an appeal to the Dangerous Dog Review Tribunal.

Through this review it was identified that in some cases dog owners are unable to comply with the requirement that their dog receive socialization/obedience training within 90 days of the order issuance as they cannot afford the expense. TAS is currently exploring options for providing access to subsidized or discounted training for these dog owners to support compliance.

Staff also identified that while dog owners are required to post a warning sign, there is currently no standardized requirements for what the sign must look like. TAS has developed a standard sign, as shown in Attachment 1, to increase public awareness of dangerous dogs and support community safety. Anyone approaching a dwelling where a dangerous dog resides will be made aware via the standard sign.

Proactive enforcement and monitoring of dangerous dogs

TAS follows up with dog owners after a Dangerous Dog Order has been issued to ensure compliance with the Order, including confirming that correct signage has been posted, ensuring the owner has a muzzle for the dog, and reviewing microchip medical reporting and training reports. In cases of non-compliance, TAS may take further enforcement action including ticketing. Following the initial compliance checks, enforcement of Dangerous Dog Orders is complaint based. While enforcement officers may informally look to see if dogs with Dangerous Dog Orders are in compliance when driving in the area, proactive monitoring is not feasible within current resources.

Communications and public education

A proactive communication strategy and public education campaign will support enforcement and compliance with the goal of reducing the occurrence of dangerous acts. There is a need to change public behaviour and increase awareness of why dogs need to be leashed, how owners can prevent dangerous dog acts and how people and children can safely interact with dogs.

While the City runs a small annual campaign (i.e., with a budget ranging from \$30 to 60K) to educate people about the importance of keeping dogs leashed and to promote general responsible dog ownership, this review has identified the need for a more robust public education campaign to further support the goal of reducing of dangerous acts. This may include the use of TV, radio and other digital platforms, transit shelter and digital screen advertisement space, sponsored media content and a comprehensive multi-lingual strategy. Strategic Public & Employee Communications has advised the cost of such a campaign would be between \$300K and \$500K annually.

Expedited removal of animals and emergency access to a Justice of the Peace

TAS does not have general authority to enter a dog owner's residence and seize animals. TAS can apply for a warrant from a Justice of the Peace to enter a dwelling and seize a dog under the provincial DOLA where it is in the interest of public safety to seize the dog. DOLA also authorizes TAS officers to seize a dog in a public place in certain circumstances including where the dog has on one or more occasions bitten or attacked a person or domestic animal. TPS also has authority to enforce provisions of DOLA.

TAS has limited facilities to house impounded dangerous dogs. Dogs may be required to wait in a shelter for months to years due to the length of time it can take for DOLA

cases to proceed through the provincial court system. As these dogs have committed a dangerous act and are public safety concerns, protocols do not allow for the common socialization requirements that the species requires. Housing these dogs in solitary pens for this length of time takes a significant amount of City resources.

Staff recommend requesting the Province consider amendments to the DOLA to provide an expeditious process to hear DOLA proceedings, as well as an explicit mechanism for municipalities to recover costs incurred by the municipality when it holds an animal pursuant to a warrant or interim control order under DOLA.

Complaints protocol

Residents can report a dangerous dog act through all available 311 channels 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reports are referred to MLS and/or TPH (when incidents involving dangerous dogs may have been conducive to the transmission of rabies to people) for response. MLS and 311 recently updated the knowledge base and operator script to ensure all relevant information is accurately collected to support investigations and case prioritization.

In the case of a severe dog attack where medical attention is required, or if the offending dogs are at large, residents should call 911. Staff in TAS, 311, TPH, and the TPS are engaging to confirm roles and responsibilities for dangerous dog acts, and align public messaging.

Review of incident occurring on July 30, 2023

A dog attack incident involving two dogs was reported to 311 late on July 30, 2023. TAS Animal Control Officers initiated an investigation as soon as possible after the incident was reported (i.e., within one hour). TAS officers engaged TPS, who had already attended the scene. TAS officers confirmed with TPS that the two dogs involved in the incident had been secured inside the owner's residence. As part of the investigation, TAS contacted the victim and the dog owner. The dog owner expressed the intention to have the dogs immediately euthanized and TAS confirmed that a vet appointment for this procedure was scheduled. The two dogs have since been euthanized. A proceeding has been commenced by the City under the DOLA and charges under the Animals By-Law have been issued associated with non-compliance of previously issued orders.

As the dogs were secured inside the owner's residence immediately following the attack, TAS did not have general authority to seize the dogs. TAS did not initiate the process to apply for a warrant from a Justice of the Peace to seize the dogs since the owner had already expressed the intention to have them euthanized.

As part of the incident investigation, it was identified that witnesses and the victim were given conflicting information on how to report a dog attack when emergency medical services are required, as they were advised to call 311 to report rather than 911. This review has highlighted a need for enhanced coordination between divisions on dangerous dog incidents, including ensuring there is aligned, clear public communications and education about what to do if an incident occurs.

3. Options for Public Sharing of Dangerous Dog Orders

MLS has consulted with Legal Services and reviewed options to make Dangerous Dog Orders available to the public. Legal Services is preparing a supplementary report that provides additional information about this section of the report.

Dangerous Dog Orders are not currently posted on the City's website, and the City does not have a public list of dangerous dogs. Where a municipality posts information to the internet in a public forum, an analysis must be done of the municipal purpose for the creation of the public record along with a weighing of the benefits of disclosure, privacy obligations of the City, and the impacts the disclosure would have on the affected individuals.

The City has an Open Data program where documents and information are posted on its website for public access. Before anything is posted, staff conduct a review of information proposed to be added to the Open Data portal to ensure privacy and other interests are appropriately balanced for the particular circumstance. The City's obligations under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("MFIPPA") are considered as part of this process.

Staff propose Chapter 349 be amended to direct the Executive Director to create and maintain a public record of Dangerous Dog Orders to comply, listing the owner's forward sorting area (the first three characters of the postal code) and ward where the dangerous dog sign will be posted, the dog's name, breed and colour and the date of the dangerous act. Staff are working to post a list through Open Data that includes past orders that are still active (dog is not deceased and still resides with the owner). The list will then be updated monthly to include any new orders.

Publicly posting information about dangerous dogs would serve an important purpose of notifying the public where Dangerous Dog Orders have been issued, and the type of dog the order was issued for. The information is collected for the purpose of a potential order which aims to protect public safety. When coupled with the requirement in section 349-15.1A(4) that the owner of a dangerous dog under Chapter 349 post a warning sign on their property with respect to the presence of a dangerous dog, this helps the public take appropriate action for their safety. Such posting also serves the function of deterrence for dog owners, aiming to make the public aware of City enforcement action and encouraging dog owners to avoid committing similar violations of Chapter 349.

In recommending posting information publicly, staff took into consideration the privacy, security, and safety interests of affected individuals as noted above. While the posting of dog name, breed and colour, date the dangerous act occurred, and owner forward sorting area and ward online serves to make the public aware of City enforcement action and acts as a form of deterrence, the City is further acting to ensure other personal information (such as the owner's name and address) on order forms is protected in an appropriate manner.

If this recommendation is approved, Toronto Animal Services would work to ensure individuals involved in investigations are aware of this requirement and outcome, and that the public is aware of the availability of the information.

4. TPH Rabies Prevention Program Investigation Review

Toronto Public Health rabies prevention program

TPH (as overseen by the Board of Health) delivers rabies prevention and control programming under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. Requirements for investigating potential rabies exposures are set out in a number of Ministry of Health associated standards, regulations, and guideline documents created under this Act. Rabies vaccine and associated drugs are recommended for use by clinicians and TPH through medical recommendations set out in the Canadian Immunization Guide – Rabies. The purpose of these requirements and protocols is to prevent human cases of rabies through animal management (i.e., observation or testing, and immunization against rabies) and the management of exposed persons.

Recent rabies prevention program process changes

TPH conducts continuous quality improvement for the rabies prevention program. Improvements are made based on changes to legislation, Ontario Ministry of Health requirements, and growing opportunities for modernization. Recent examples of these improvements pertaining to investigations of potential rabies exposures include:

- Using virtual tools to conduct animal health assessments.
- Supporting animal owners facing financial hardship to obtain rabies vaccination for their pets.
- Development of an expedited process for investigations based on a streamlined, risk-based approach.
- Streamlining the enforcement and laying of charges for failing to vaccinate required pets against rabies (required by [Regulation 567 – Rabies Immunization](#)).
- Introducing new online tools to modernize:
 - Rabies exposure reporting to TPH, and
 - Emergency room reporting and post-exposure vaccine requests.

TPH rabies investigations after dog attacks

TPH conducts potential rabies exposure investigations whenever people are victims of dog attacks that could lead to the transmission of rabies (for example, bites and scratches). TPH's role is to prevent the transmission of rabies as per the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and its associated standards, regulations, and guidelines. Public Health Inspectors (PHIs) adhere to the following processes when dogs (or other domestic pets) are involved:

- Determine the priority level of the investigation through a risk assessment.
- Determine the risk of rabies transmission to the person who was attacked by collecting information such as:
 - Immunization status, health status, and reports of changes in behaviour of the biting dog, and any exposures to other animals, including domestic pets. Importantly, a dog's biting history is not a factor in determining the risk of rabies. Dogs that have bitten for the first time or repeatedly are all similar in their risk of being infected with rabies.
- At the earliest opportunity in an investigation, inquire about all animals involved in the exposure, or residing with the implicated animal(s) to ensure the appropriate confinement and observation of the implicated animal(s) and those that reside with that animal. Implicated animals are then required to be confined and

observed for 10 days, usually by the owner, to assess whether they demonstrate signs of rabies.

- Refer appropriate cases and report potential non-compliance to TAS for matters which fall within their jurisdiction.

TPH review of rabies investigation procedures after July 30th, 2023, attack

On July 31, 2023, TPH received a report of a person seriously injured in a dog attack and conducted an investigation. Throughout the investigation, TPH was in close communication with TAS. On September 21, 2023, the Economic and Community Development Committee (ECDC) requested the Medical Officer of Health review the procedures and processes of TPH in relation to investigations in the immediate aftermath of a serious dog attack. TPH then launched a review of the procedures and processes involved when investigating a serious dog attack.

As requested by ECDC, TPH reviewed its processes relating to potential rabies exposure investigations from October through November 2023. It included the following steps:

1. Reviewing relevant procedures and guidance documents,
2. Collecting reports from the investigation conducted for the July 30, 2023, serious dog attack.
3. Conducting interviews with staff involved in the investigation.
4. Assessing the steps taken during the investigation for adherence with the relevant TPH procedure and guidance documents.
5. Using the lessons learned from step 4, to examine the procedure documents to determine where any gaps existed which could improve future investigations.
6. Peer review of the initial review report, followed by review by physician leaders in the program.
7. Development of improvements in the rabies prevention program based on the review findings.
8. Consulting with TPH's legal counsel on the improvements.

Investigation review findings

TPH's review identified that the following actions were taken following to July 30 incident:

1. Delivering rabies post-exposure prophylaxis within 2 hours of the request,
2. Requiring the owner to confine and isolate the implicated dogs immediately, which was complied with. The owner requested to voluntarily euthanize the dogs and did not object to subsequent rabies testing; arrangements for testing the dogs were made immediately. In this case, the grounds for requiring that the dog be confined at a TAS shelter pursuant to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, that the owner is unlikely to confine and isolate the dog or that the dog exhibits symptoms of a disease, were not met.
3. Immediately confining additional dogs living with the implicated dogs as soon as they were discovered, two days after the incident was reported, and immediately requiring their observation and vaccination, which the owner complied with.

TPH's review determined that procedures for investigating this situation are more detailed regarding steps to assess the risk of rabies exposure and handle animals

involved in attacks than the stated requirements of Ministry protocols and guidelines that the procedure is based on.

Following this review, TPH identified opportunities to further improve the ability of TPH procedures to meet operational needs, improve collaboration, and reduce the risk of rabies transmission:

- Collaboration between TPH and TAS is essential to ensure timely and consistent communication during investigations. Further formalizing this collaboration, building on improvements made in 2022, improves consistency, ensures that each team is meeting their requirements, and is working together seamlessly as procedures evolve. This is particularly important during more serious attacks.
- TPH's procedures lacked specific instructions for investigators to ask about additional animals living with implicated animals in the initial owner interview, and the fields for information collection in the relevant information system were not explicit enough to ensure this information is collected in standard format for sharing with TAS.
- Clearer instructions to owners regarding confinement steps are needed to describe best practices for observation and handling of pets during the period when normal practices may need to be curtailed or altered.

5. Actions to Improve Processes and Procedures

Based on the operational reviews undertaken by TAS and TPH, staff have initiated the following program improvements and are actively working on implementation.

TAS improvements

- TAS is working to post a public list of dangerous dogs through Open Data that includes the dog owner's Forward Sorting Area (first three digits of the postal code), ward number, the dog's name, breed and colour, and the date of the dangerous act. The list includes past orders that are still active (dog is not deceased and still resides with the owner). The list will then be updated monthly to include any new orders. TAS recommends that City Council amend Chapter 349, Animals to include a provision that the Executive Director, MLS create and maintain a public record listing information from all served Dangerous Dog Orders to comply.
- TAS developed a standard format dangerous dog warning sign, as included in Attachment 1. This sign is being shared with dog owners when a Dangerous Dog Order is issued and must be posted on the dog owners' private property.
- TAS is exploring opportunities to provide access to subsidized and/or discounted socialization/obedience dog training for owners of dangerous dogs that cannot afford to comply with the training requirement of a Dangerous Dog Order.
- TAS proposes that City Council formally request that the Province consider amendments to the DOLA to provide an expeditious process to hear DOLA proceedings, as well as an explicit mechanism for municipalities to recover costs incurred by the municipality when it holds an animal pursuant to a warrant or interim control order under DOLA. Engagement with the province on this request is underway.
- TAS is working with Strategic Public and Employee Communications to plan for public education and communication campaigns in 2024 and 2025 to support

enforcement and compliance with the goal of reducing the occurrence of dangerous dog acts. Staff will request funds (up to \$500K) as part of the 2025 budget process for a robust 2025 campaign with high exposure advertisements to support behaviour change towards consistent responsible dog ownership.

- TAS is updating how dangerous dog act investigations are operationally prioritized to reduce focus on minor incidents by increasing the service standard time before which an officer will initiate an investigation. These changes will help ensure resources are available to prioritize investigations of severe dangerous dog incidents.
- TAS is engaging with TPS, 311, and TPH to confirm the respective mandates, roles, and responsibilities for each organization as it relates to dangerous dog acts, as well as to ensure clear, coordinated public communication and education on how to report dangerous dog incidents.

TPH improvements for the rabies prevention program

- TPH and TAS are enhancing cross-divisional partnership and information sharing at routine, structured intervals in addition to existing, automatic digital information sharing during investigations.
- TPH and TAS are initiating a new dedicated table to support a coordinated response while investigating serious dog attacks where there is a possibility of rabies transmission.
- TPH has communicated with staff modifications to the procedures for collecting information on animals in the home of an implicated animal and initiated work with TPH's Information Technology team to make associated changes in the relevant information systems to ensure information regarding total numbers of animals in homes is consistently collected and recorded.
- TPH is enhancing written instructions which supplement currently provided explanations to pet owners on how to successfully comply with confinement requirements pursuant to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, based on case-specific rabies exposure risks and observation practice constraints (for example, animal living arrangements, euthanasia, vaccination).

CONTACT

Esther Attard, Director, Toronto Animal Services, Municipal Licensing & Standards, 416-338-1476, Esther.Attard@toronto.ca

Joanna Hazelden, Manager, Policy and Strategic Support, Municipal Licensing and Standards, 416-392-9830, Joanna.Hazeldon@toronto.ca

Dr. Michael Finkelstein, Deputy Medical Officer of Health, Toronto Public Health, 416-392-1784, Michael.Finkelstein@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Carleton Grant
Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Format of Standard Dangerous Dog Warning Sign