

MEMORANDUM TO: All Chiefs of Police and
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Chairs, Police Services Boards

FROM: Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

SUBJECT: Responding to Animals Left in Hot Motor Vehicles

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As you are aware, the Ministry of the Solicitor General has been undertaking work to enhance the response to animals in critical distress in motor vehicles. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your submission of occurrence data in response to All Chiefs Memo 21-0058, which has provided further insights into the frequency and outcomes of occurrences involving animals left in motor vehicles across Ontario.

The Ontario government strongly urges everyone to take the necessary precautions to keep their pets safe and protected during the hot summer months, including making sure that pets are not left unattended in a vehicle. Animals can be put at risk of serious illness and possibly death as a result of being left in a vehicle during hot weather

Temperatures inside a vehicle can quickly become much hotter than the temperature outside. The most dramatic rise in temperature occurs within the first 10 minutes that a vehicle is idle. Even at an outdoor temperature of only 25°C, the inside temperature of a car can reach 34°C in as little as 10 minutes and up to 50°C by the time an hour has passed.

The public are advised to call 911 if they see an animal in a hot car and are concerned that the animal's life is in immediate danger. Members of the public are advised not to attempt entering a vehicle in these situations.

Pursuant to the *Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019* (PAWS Act), police officers, First Nations Constables, and animal welfare inspectors may enter motor

vehicles to remove animals in critical distress. Where they have reasonable grounds to believe that an animal is in critical distress, police officers and First Nations Constables have the authority under section 29 of the PAWS Act to enter places including motor vehicles. Critical distress is defined in the PAWS Act as “distress requiring immediate intervention in order to prevent serious injury or to preserve life”.

Should an animal be removed from a motor vehicle and taken into possession by a police officer or a First Nations Constable, section 60 of the PAWS Act applies and notification to an animal welfare inspector must occur promptly. Police officers and First Nations Constables may do so by contacting the Ontario Animal Protection Centre at 1-833-9-ANIMAL (1-833-926-4625) and requesting to speak with the inspector on call.

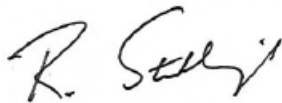
You may be aware that the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* also provides authority for firefighters to enter motor vehicles to rescue and remove animals in distress, noting that municipal councils set the levels of fire protection services which may include the rescue of animals in motor vehicles.

Firefighters, in accordance with their fire department’s Standard Operating Guideline, may contact the local police service of jurisdiction for assistance when rescuing and removing animals from motor vehicles (e.g., assistance in determining if charges should be laid).

I ask that you share this memorandum with police officers and First Nations Constables who may be exercising powers under the PAWS Act and communications and dispatch personnel in your respective public safety answering points regarding 911 calls for service in relation to animals in hot cars.

We appreciate your continued partnership to help safeguard animal welfare in Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Stubbings".

Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

c: Mario Di Tommaso, O.O.M.
Deputy Solicitor General, Community Safety