Chapter 3

Domestic Animal Control

1. Purpose. To provide Marine Corps policy on the control of domestic animals aboard Marine Corps installations.

2. Applicability

a. Animals. This policy applies only to privately owned animals, specifically those pet cats and dogs owned by service members and/or their family members and is not intended to address control of Department of Defense (DoD)-owned animals, e.g. Military Working Dogs, Government-owned (non-Department of Defense) animals, or Non-appropriated Fund-owned animals (NAF-owned animals) such as horses, aboard Marine Corps installations. Control of all other types of household pets (hamsters, guinea pigs, aquarium fish, etc.) should be addressed via local policy as required. Non-domesticated ("wild") animals and farm animals are prohibited in family housing and as such are not addressed in this policy. This policy does not address feral animals, which are covered under installation pest management plans. This policy is applicable to accredited service animals and companion/comfort/therapy (hereafter referred to as "companion animals") animals.

b. Family Housing. This policy pertains to all Government-owned family housing and Public Private Venture (PPV) privatized housing areas located or accessed via the Marine Corps installation. In the case of off-base privatized housing serving Marine Corps families, where the Department of Navy (DON) is a partner, this policy is applicable to the greatest extent possible and will be fully implemented in the next PPV business agreement revision. For those Marine Corps installations where another Service exercises executive agency responsibility for housing (specifically, MCB Camp Butler, Japan, and MCAS Miramar, California), this policy will apply to the greatest extent possible. Local Installation Commanders will work collaboratively with other services exercising executive agency responsibility to ensure compliance by Marines and their families.

c. Bachelor Housing. Unaccompanied residents are prohibited from keeping pets in bachelor housing, but may be authorized, through the waiver process identified below, to keep an accredited service animal.

3. Background Information. Pet ownership for those service members and their families residing in Government-owned or PPV family housing provides a real and tangible benefit and contributes to quality of life for resident families. However, the rise in ownership of large dog breeds with a predisposition toward aggressive or dangerous behavior and the increased risk of tragic incidents involving these dogs necessitates a uniform policy to provide for the health, safety, and tranquility of all residents of family housing areas.

4. Prohibited Dog Breeds. Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, canid/wolf hybrids, and any other canine breed with dominant traits of aggression, present an unreasonable risk to the health and safety of personnel on Marine Corps installations. Consequently, full or mixed breeds of Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, and canid/wolf hybrids are prohibited aboard Marine Corps installations.

a. Requests for Waiver for Accredited Service Animals: Installation Commanders desiring relief from this policy must submit a formal exception to

policy request via the chain of command to Headquarters, Marine Corps, Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics, Facilities for consideration.

b. Requests for Waiver for Companion Animals: Installation Commanders desiring relief from this policy must submit a formal exception to policy request via the chain of command to Headquarters, Marine Corps, Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics, Facilities for consideration. At a minimum, companion animals to be waived under this policy must pass a nationally recognized temperament test, administered and interpreted by individual(s) who have been certified in the technique and evaluation of such test results, at the service member's expense. Such tests include Canine Good Citizen (AKC) and the Delta Test (Delta Society). Questionable animals may be referred to a board certified veterinary behaviorist.

c. When a domestic animal is deemed dangerous or vicious, it will be prohibited from Marine Corps installations. Installation Commanders will establish local policies that address investigation of complaints against dangerous or vicious animals and determination of whether an animal fits the stated criteria above and direct expeditious disposition of such animals. Failure to comply with the procedures and guidelines contained in this policy may result in disciplinary action taken against the sponsor through the appropriate chain of command, involuntary removal and confinement of the animal by proper authority, or serve as grounds for administrative action up to and including eviction from family housing.

d. Visitors, sponsors, and their family members will not bring prohibited canine breeds as defined in paragraph 4 of this chapter aboard any Marine Corps installation at any time. In every case, sponsors are fully responsible for their visitors' pet dogs while aboard Marine Corps installations. However, no provision of this Order is intended to limit authorized patrons' access to services provided by on-base U.S. Army Veterinary Treatment Facilities. Entry of authorized patrons with pets that are otherwise prohibited access aboard Marine Corps installations under this Order will be for the sole purpose to obtain care, involving travel immediately to and from the veterinary treatment facility only, with no other stops aboard the installation authorized.

5. Registration, Vaccination, Identification and Control of Domestic Animals. All dogs and cats, whether a pet, service animal or companion animal, must be registered with the local Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF) or other agency aboard the base as designated by the Installation Commander and proof of registration submitted to the local Family Housing Office prior to entry to family housing units. The Family Housing Office will ensure the animal's information is recorded in the installation's files and provided to the PPV partner, if the member is referred for privatized housing. Proof of registration will consist of civilian or military veterinarian certification of required vaccinations and a functioning microchip identification device. Vaccination and identification services may be offered by VTFs, per SECNAVINST 6401.1B (Reference (o)).

a. Vaccination and microchip implantation services will be procured at the individual owner's expense for all cats and dogs, regardless of breed at the local VTF or via commercial veterinary medical service providers, but certification must be made by the installation VTF or other agency aboard the base as designated by the Installation Commander. Microchips will be

International Standards Organization (ISO) compatible to help facilitate overseas travel.

b. Dogs and cats, whether a pet, service animal or companion animal, will be vaccinated at the individual owner's expense against rabies every one to three years depending upon age, vaccination history, local laws and installation regulations. All owners must furnish proof of current rabies vaccination to the VTF at the time of registration. In the case of animals that are less than four months of age, this information will be furnished before the animal reaches the age of five months.

c. There is no requirement that dogs or cats, whether a pet, service animal or companion animal, be spayed or neutered, but owners are strongly encouraged to pursue this procedure for their animal. Owners of animals that have reproductive organs intact must maintain awareness of the risks of unwanted animal pregnancy. Animals that are "in heat" can induce unwanted behavior in other animals such as increased aggression and produce unwanted puppies and kittens that are often abandoned or subjected to inhumane treatment. Choosing to spay or neuter an animals a responsible and prudent measure that ultimately benefits all residents.

d. All dogs and cats, whether a pet, service animal or companion animal, must wear a collar at all times with a valid current rabies vaccination tag or animal registration tag, which should be in compliance with applicable state and local law, attached to the collar. Upon assignment to family housing, owners will ensure an additional tag with the current address of the owner is attached within 30 days of occupancy in family housing.

e. Owners are responsible at all times for controlling the behavior of their animals. No animal will be allowed to roam free at any time.

6. Breeding of Animals. Breeding of animals, whether intentional or accidental, is expressly prohibited aboard Marine Corps installations.

7. Number of animals Allowed. Residents of family housing will be limited to no more than two animals.