

Policy Statement

There is a wide range of benefits to be gained from the use of live animals in museum activities. These include opportunities for visitors to directly experience the behavior of animals, learn first-hand about their biology, behavior, and ecology, and develop an enhanced understanding of and emotional engagement with the importance of animals, natural habitats and ecosystems. In addition, the display and use of animals at Nova Scotia Museum sites provide visitors with opportunities to see and experience animals they may not otherwise experience.

Animals must be cared for and used humanely in ways that maintain a high degree of respect for the welfare of the animals and ensure the safety of the animals, the personnel providing care, visitors, and the public. Animals are not thought of as property or considered disposable.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy shall be:

- To provide opportunities for museum visitors to experience and learn about animals, their behaviors, interactions with people and the natural world.
- To provide the highest practicable standards of care for animals.
- To establish procedures for the use of animals in demonstrations and programs, including direct contact with visitors, while minimizing risks to the animals, handlers, or the public.

Policy Application

This policy shall apply:

- To all provincial civil service staff, volunteers, research associates and curators emeritus associated with the Nova Scotia Museum.
- To the care of all animals held by NSM sites including those used for interpretation, education, demonstrations, or programs.

Policy Directives

At all times, animals shall be housed, cared for, and used in ways that minimize risk to the animals, the personnel providing care and the public.

NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM ANIMAL CARE POLICY

Animals shall be handled and housed in ways that minimize the potential for transmission of zoonoses and other diseases to animals.

Animals shall not be used for entertainment or other gratuitous purposes.

Personnel involved in the management and maintenance of animals must have the physical ability, the knowledge, the access to information, the training, and the equipment necessary to:

- adequately and humanely maintain the animals under the conditions provided.
- provide adequate nutrition, ventilation, and facilities.
- respond appropriately to predictable emergencies.

Training programs must be established to enable staff to conduct their work duties safely and to respond appropriately to predictable emergency situations according to written protocols. Training programs must include information regarding:

- animal husbandry
- emergency response procedures
- animal restraint
- hygiene and zoonoses

Animals shall be housed in secure enclosures that provide:

- freedom from injury and allow full range of body movements.
- furniture or fixtures to enrich the environment and encourage normal behaviors.
- adequate room to exercise natural behaviors to facilitate public education.
- adequate distance from the public to avoid undue stress.

Animal enclosures must be inspected and cleaned daily. All animal waste, soiled bedding and dead animals must be disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

Observation of feeding and records of feeding, health and cleaning shall be maintained daily. These records shall be maintained for each animal or animal group and shall be retained for a minimum of one (1) year.

Feed animals shall be maintained in humane facilities and handled in ways that minimize physical or psychological stress and suffering.

Injured, sick or orphaned animals shall not normally be accepted into the care of the Museum. Those wishing to dispose of such animals shall be directed to appropriate rehabilitation centres or other disposal services.

Policy Guidelines

NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM ANIMAL CARE POLICY

General guidelines for husbandry, nutrition and veterinary care are attached as Appendix A.

Specific guidelines shall be created for each NSM site and reviewed annually outlining:

- the animals and / or species being cared for.
- specific care procedures required for individual animals, species or special circumstances including emergency evacuation.
- the animals and/or species that may be used for museum programs.
- any specific hygiene or health concerns.

Accountability

NSM staff and volunteers shall be responsible for acting in accordance with this policy.

NSM supervisors/ managers / directors shall be responsible for ensuring that staff are informed of this policy and for ensuring its consistent application in their respective worksites. Managers are also responsible for ensuring that staff receive appropriate training related to the application of this policy.

Director, Nova Scotia Museum shall be responsible for ensuring the consistent application of this policy across the Nova Scotia Museum, monitoring its effectiveness, and ensuring its periodic review and revision as required. They may conduct audits from time to time to ensure compliance.

Resources

[Animal Protection Act \(nslegislature.ca\)](http://nslegislature.ca)

[Farm Animal Health & Welfare | novascotia.ca](http://novascotia.ca)

[Farm Animal Welfare | Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement \(novascotia.ca\)](http://novascotia.ca)

[Animal Health and Protection Regulations - Animal Health and Protection Act \(Nova Scotia\)](#)

Glossary

Animal: All forms of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. For the purposes of this policy no distinction shall be made between the standards of care provided to different types of animals, or animals intended for different uses.

Animal Care: All activities related to the housing, nutrition, husbandry, transport, and use of animals.

Feed Animals: Any invertebrate or vertebrate animals acquired or produced specifically to be used as feed for other animals.

Nova Scotia Museum: A part of the Archives, Museums and Libraries division of the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage. It is comprised of the Museum of Natural History, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, the Museum of Industry, the 25 rural provincial museum sites and the ICI (Infrastructure, Collections, and Interpretation) unit.

Personnel: All permanent and casual staff, research associates and volunteers involved in providing care to animals, and/or using animals in demonstrations or programs.

Program Animal: Animals (vertebrate or invertebrate) used by staff or handlers outside their normal enclosures for demonstrations, programs or brought in contact with visitors or the public.

Zoonoses: Diseases, conditions or parasites that may be transmitted from animals to humans.

Effective Date: _____

Approved by Director: _____

Date Approved: _____

Date of Last Revision: _____

Nova Scotia Museum Animal Care Policy

Appendix A: General Guidelines

Husbandry

1. All animals must be observed by animal care staff at least once daily and as often as required given the circumstances of the environment, animal condition and behavior of the animal or group.
2. Hibernation and periods of sensitivity such as those associated with reproductive activity of some species, may preclude daily observation, care activities, or use in programs.
3. Reference materials regarding the husbandry of animals shall be available to all personnel involved in animal care.
4. Animal care staff shall be knowledgeable of the husbandry and biology of the animals in their care including the reproductive behavior, physical characteristics, abilities, and limitations.
5. Animal care staff shall be knowledgeable of the safe use of equipment, chemicals and procedures utilized in the care of animals for which they are responsible.
6. Animal care staff shall have knowledge of the physical capabilities of the animals in their care to enable them to work safely and ensure the safety of these animals.
7. Animals may be physically altered to restrict some physical activities (e.g., pinioning) only where an environment can be provided in which the alteration does not cause predictable physical or psychological stress.

Nutrition

8. Food materials shall be wholesome and shall not be contaminated with organic, inorganic, or chemical materials that may adversely affect the animals.
9. Food materials shall be stored in a manner which preserves the nutritional integrity, prevents contamination by organic, inorganic, or chemical contaminants, and prevents access by pest species.
10. A source of potable water for animal maintenance must be available to all specimens.

Veterinary Care

11. Veterinary services shall be available, including 24-hour emergency services, through a licenced veterinary clinic.
12. Equipment required for the handling, restraint and treatment of animals must be always available to animal care staff
13. Only licensed veterinarians shall perform veterinary procedures on animals in the care of the Nova Scotia Museum.

Appendix B: Use of Animals in Film / Video Production

The Nova Scotia Museum film agreement document requires that any producer using animals shall ensure that:

- A. All activities involving animals will be conducted to ensure the welfare and well-being of the animals and to minimize the risk of injury or undue stress to the animals or people on the premises and the risk of damage to the premises.
- B. All uses of animals in the production will be carried out in a humane manner in accordance with current requirements of the Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NS-SPCA) for non-farm animals and the National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice ([Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farm animals \(nfacc.ca\)](#)).
- C. All animals brought to the Site for use in the Production shall be in good health and free of zoonotic diseases or other contagious diseases such as rabies, ORF Virus ([Infection in Animals | Orf Virus \(Sore Mouth Infection\) | Poxvirus | CDC](#)) and Caseous Lymphadenitis ([NADIS - National Animal Disease Information Service](#)).
- D. All animals will be confined and/or under the restraint and control of experienced handlers for the entire time that they are present on the Premises,
- E. All transport of animals at the premises will be conducted by experienced handlers using containers and vehicles appropriate for the type of animals. Such transport of animals must be conducted in accordance with the National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice ([Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farm animals \(nfacc.ca\)](#)).
- F. When not involved in filming, all animals will housed or under restraint in a manner that is appropriate to the type of animal and in accordance the National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice ([Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farm animals \(nfacc.ca\)](#)).