Alexandria’s Animal Services

Animal Services is a branch of the AWLA, contracted by the City of Alexandria, with the goals of educating the community about animal welfare; protecting human and animal health and safety; and enforcing Alexandria code and Virginia law pertaining to animals. But Animal Services does so much more to help animals and people within Alexandria. Read more about how they are working for you, your pets and your animal neighbors below.

If you have any concerns related to wild or domestic animals, please call the Animal Services Dispatch at 703-746-4444.

Protecting Animals

- Rescuing Sick and Injured Animals
- Lost Pets
- Found Animals
- Stray Animal Listings
- Animal Abuse Tipline
Assisting Citizens

- Rabies Prevention
- Pet Licensing
- Dog Bites

Living with Wildlife

- Animal Services and Wildlife
- Wild Animals and You
- Common Virginia Wildlife
Alexandria’s Animals and the Law

- Assisting Our Community
- Animal Abuse and Neglect
- Dangerous/Vicious Dogs
- Alexandria Animal Ordinances

Animal Services works closely with many entities to fulfill their duties, including the Alexandria Police Department, the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office, the Commonwealth’s Attorney for Alexandria, the Alexandria City Attorney, the Alexandria Health Department, Alexandria Code Administration and the Virginia Department for Agriculture and Consumer Services. We thank these entities for everything they do to make Alexandria a safe home for animals and people!
Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I have to license and vaccinate my dog or cat? He never leaves the house.

State and local laws require that all domesticated animals be vaccinated against the rabies virus as well as licensed. The primary reason is to prevent the spread of rabies. Although not currently widespread, rabies can be found in Virginia’s wildlife population and can be a threat to domesticated and companion animals. Animals that transmit rabies, like raccoons, skunks and bats, or even infected cats and dogs can get into a home or make contact with your pet despite your best efforts to prevent it. Licensing your cat or dog shows that he is vaccinated against rabies. It also serves as an integral form of identification in case your animal becomes lost or escapes.

Can I bury my dog/cat within the city limits?

Unfortunately, you cannot bury a companion animal within the city limits of Alexandria, according to Alexandria codes 5-1-32 and 11-6-10. To learn more about private cremation, please speak with your veterinarian or contact the AWLA by calling 703-746-4774 or via email.

What do I do if a wild animal is living in my house?

Animal Services can assist when a wild animal is posing an immediate threat to humans or other animals, or if the wild animal is sick/injured, too young to survive on its own or stuck in an outdoor structure. Since a variety of wild animals are common to Alexandria (read more about Virginia wildlife), Animal Services cannot respond to reports of wildlife simply roaming or “loose.” For safety and insurance reasons, Animal Services cannot remove wildlife that is found in your attic, inside your walls/vents, unfinished basements, in your chimney flue or on your roof; we strongly suggest contacting humane wildlife removers who are licensed to assist with these issues. Animal Services can assist if wildlife is loose in your living quarters. For additional assistance, you can call the Virginia Wildlife Hotline at 1-855-571-9003.
What should I do if I have a problem involving bees, insects or rodents?

Animal Services is not licensed to remove bees, insects, rats or mice from public or private property, and we strongly recommend that you do NOT attempt to remove bees yourself, as it can be unsafe for you and others in the vicinity. Please contact a private company or Alexandria City General Services to remove the beehive.