

Responsible Pet Ownership

CARE, LICENSING, AND BYLAW





Introduction

Dogs and cats can be an amazing addition to your family! They become important family members who provide healing and love for you just as much as you love and care for them.

The bestest pet parents make their furry family member’s health and happiness a top priority.

This brochure, the Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw, and your pet parenting skills work together to keep all animals in Sylvan Lake safe, healthy, and happy.

Please join us to make sure all our Sylvan Lake animal residents are treated humanely, responsibly, and with respect!



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ANIMAL WELFARE⁸

Let’s work together to create loving homes for animals, protect animals from harmful situations, make sure lost animals get home safe, and make sure abandoned animals find forever homes.

Animal welfare refers to the quality of life experienced by an animal and encompasses how well the animal is coping with his or her current situation and surroundings.

- **Nutrition:** factors that involve the animal’s access to sufficient, balanced, varied, and clean food and water.
- **Environment:** factors that enable comfort through temperature, substrate, space, air, odour, noise, and predictability.
- **Health:** factors that enable good health through the absence of disease, injury, impairment with a good fitness level.
- **Behaviour:** factors that provide varied, novel, and engaging environmental challenges through sensory inputs, exploration, foraging, bonding, playing, retreating, and others.
- **Mental State:** by presenting positive situations in the previous four functional domains, the mental state of the animal should benefit from predominantly positive states, such as pleasure, comfort, or vitality while reducing negative states such as fear, frustration, hunger, pain, or boredom.

Are you Ready?

Sylvan Lake’s responsible pet parents carefully research before getting a cat or dog.



Start here before applying²:

Commit

- » Avoid impulsive decisions when selecting a pet.
- » Select a pet that’s suited to your home and lifestyle
- » Keep only the type and number of pets for which you can provide appropriate food, water, shelter, health care and companionship
- » Commit to the relationship for the life of your pet(s). Cats and dogs may live 10 - 15 years or more
- » Provide appropriate exercise and mental stimulation
- » Properly socialize and train your pet

Invest

- » Recognize that pet ownership requires an investment of time and money
- » Make sure your pet receives preventive health care (vaccinations, parasite control, etc.), as well as care for any illnesses or injuries
- » Budget for potential emergencies

Care for your pet and community

- » Clean up after your pet
- » Obey bylaw, including licensing, leash requirements and noise control
- » Don’t allow your pet to stray or become feral
- » Identify
- » Make sure your pet is properly identified (i.e., tags, microchips, or tattoos) and keep its registration up-to-date

Limit

- » Don’t contribute to Sylvan Lake’s pet overpopulation problem. Spay/neuter your pets

Prepare

- » Prepare for an emergency or disaster, including assembling an evacuation kit
- » Make alternate arrangements if you can no longer provide care for your pet
- » Recognize any decline in your pet’s quality of life and make timely decisions in consultation with a veterinarian

Responsible Pet Ownership

It’s Bylaw⁴: Items 1 - 8 are simplified from the bylaw. See the bylaw for full details.

1. When do I have to license a cat or dog?

- » When do I have to license a cat or dog?
- » All cats and dogs six months of age or older must have a license
- » Renew every year. Licenses are valid from January 1 - December 31 of the purchase year
- » To discourage animal hoarding and to discourage puppy/kitten mills

2. How Much are Licenses?

- » Intact male or female animal \$60
- » Altered male or female \$30
- » Aggressive animal license \$125
- » Did you know you can pay your license online? sylvanlake.ca/option-pay

3. First Ride Program

- » The first time your cat or dog is picked up by Municipal Enforcement Officers for being at large:
 - They receive a Free Ride Home
 - The running at large fine is waived.
- » To qualify:
 - Your pet’s license must be current
 - Valid for first offences only



Why does the Town require cat and dog licenses?

- » To keep pets safe and out of animal shelters and to discourage animal hoarding and puppy/kitten mills
- » A license can be the difference between reuniting with your lost pet, or your pet not making it home

Are you ready for time commitments?¹

It isn't hard to see why people compare owning a dog or cat to having children. Once you've met their health and wellness needs, the most precious commodity you can give them is time. Unfortunately, time is a commodity that people often overlook when they decide to bring a dog or cat into their lives.

There are many questions to ask before getting a pet, but the following should be the first: Do you have the time to devote to your pet? If you have just enough spare minutes in a day to fill a bowl with food, splash some water in a dish and pat your cat on the head or rush your dog outside to do his business once or twice, then the answer is probably no.

How much time do you need? The best answer is, as much time as your pet needs and this can vary wildly with the breed of pet. Here are just a few of the things you should think about when answering that difficult question.

DAILY CHORES

Expect to spend a minimum of 1 hour per day.

- » For dogs, at the bare minimum, plan on at least three walks a day, each lasting 15 to 20 minutes
- » Grooming, 5 minutes
- » Training, 15 minutes per session. High energy or working breeds may require a significantly higher investment in training time
- » They poop you scoop, or clean cat litter box, 10 minutes
- » Playtime for both cats and dogs, minimum 15 minutes

WEEKLY CHORES

Expect to spend a minimum of 1 hour per week.

- » Clean and disinfect water/food bowls
- » Inspect your yard or patio for any needed repairs, then make the repairs so your pet cannot escape

SEASONAL CHORES

Expect to spend a minimum of 3 hours per year

- » [Veterinary check-ups](#). Follow your veterinarian's advice for check-ups and healthcare, typically check-ups at least every 6 months

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4. How many pets are allowed?

- » Maximum of three dogs and three cats, for a total of 6 animals per property

5. Poop

- » There is no poop fairy! Owners must immediately pick up their animal's waste from any public or private property
- » Owners must keep private property well maintained to prevent excess accumulation and odour

6. Supervision

- » Don't leave me: Don't leave your pet unattended outdoors or in vehicles without proper protection or ventilation. It only takes minutes for your pet to go into distress from heat or cold

Cats Take Care of Themselves, Right?³

No! Dog owners have to walk their dogs, right? Cat guardians, you must play with your cats every day! This is a necessity. If you only have 10-15 minutes, that works (but of course your cat would love more time than this if you have it).

Remember, cats are motivated by their primal instincts to hunt, catch, kill, and eat. They need to release this energy, and if they don't, that's when some pesky behaviour can start (scratching furniture or your legs, knocking things off the shelves, etc.).

Don't just place an interactive toy on the floor in front of them and or toss a ball with a bell down the hall while you scroll on your phone. Be fully engaged. Take on the role of the bird, be the mouse, be the prey and run around with them. This is what you have to do to bring out their raw cat hunting mojo. If you want to really see that cat mojo going, playing is the way to go!

So when you're playing, the best game plan is a short burst of time, then let them simmer down, then bring them up to a boil again (and so-on). Now your cat should be tired-out.

Is your cat scratching furniture, attacking legs, or knocking things off the shelves? [Read this!](#)



Provide the Five Freedoms¹

Freedom from hunger or thirst:

By providing ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.

Freedom from discomfort:

By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.

Freedom from pain, injury, or disease:

By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.

Freedom to express normal behaviour:

By providing sufficient space, proper facilities, and socialization with the animal’s own kind.

Freedom from fear and distress:

Providing living conditions and treatment to prevent mental suffering.



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7. Quiet and Calm

- » Keep the peace: Dog owners must ensure their dog does not disturb the peace of residents.
- » A barking dog needs the attention of its hooman, so give them the love they deserve by attending to their distress and quieting them down. Talk to your veterinarian if you are unable to resolve the barking on your own.

Excessive Barking?⁵

When dogs bark excessively this usually indicates an underlying issue and they can become a nuisance to their owners and the neighbourhood. Before you can successfully manage a barking problem you will need to determine the cause of the barking. Your neighbours may be able to tell you how often your dog barks in your absence.

Dogs bark for a variety of reasons and it is important to work out why your dog is barking excessively. Once the underlying cause and ‘triggers’ for the barking are identified, training techniques can be used to treat the excessive barking in a humane way.

Talk to your veterinarian who can provide behaviour advice and a full health check to make sure there are no medical reasons for the excessive barking.

Bringing dogs into the house may reduce barking ‘triggers’ as this can remove the visual or auditory trigger stimulus.

Some of these reasons for excessive barking include:

- » Being anxious when left alone
- » Fear
- » Territorial behaviour
- » Attention-seeking behaviour
- » Boredom

Help your unhappy doggo feel safe and secure.



Responsible pet parents save animals from suffering!
Spay and Neuter!⁷

- » As good pet parents, we never want to be the cause of unwanted fur babies ending up in animal shelters, or pets passing away due to preventable diseases. Protect them and save money on vet bills by spaying and neutering.
- » A handful of studies may appear to challenge the health benefits of widespread spaying/neutering of companion pets by raising concerns that these surgeries may predispose some altered dogs to certain orthopaedic conditions and cancers. As a result, they have caused some pet owners to question altering their pets at an early age or altering them at all. However, on closer examination, the results of these studies pertain specifically to male dogs of certain giant breeds (dogs typically weighing 90-100 pounds or more) and their conclusions should not be generalized to other breeds of dogs, or to other species, including cats.⁷



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8. Animal at Large: Cats & Dogs

You can get a \$91 first offence fine up to a \$260 repeat offence fine if your animal is at large:

- » Not on an owner (or caretaker's) property
- » Not on a leash or in a carrier
- » Not under the control of someone with the capable strength to manage the animal
- » Leashes must be strong enough to not break
- » Leashes may not be longer than two metres. The longer the leash, the less control you have over your dog or cat
- » Cats must be tethered in your yard or stay in your house

How do I report a dog or cat at large?

- » For routine, non-urgent animal calls:
403 858 7280 | enforcement@sylvanlake.ca
sylvanlake.ca/reportit
- » If the animal requires immediate attention due to injury, or risk of injury, call:
403 858 7280 (after-hours: 403 887 3333)
- » If the animal is aggressive and poses a threat or danger to public safety, call 911



Canada 2019 Humane Society: Cats in shelter 78,000, dogs in shelter 28,000



Love 'em and leash 'em! We know your pet is the best "goodest pet" ever, but leashes are not just to prevent pets from running away. Leashes:

- » Protect from other, less social or unhealthy cats or dogs, as well as from wildlife
- » Provide a sense of security to members of the public less comfortable around pets
- » Prevent your pet from running off. Your pet could be scared by a noise, stung by a bee, or enticed by a good smell
- » Protect your pet from eating something that could make them sick
- » Prevent running into the road, causing an accident, and injuring themselves and others



Lost or Found a Pet?

- » Leave a message:
Municipal Enforcement,
403 858 7280
- » Stray pets are kept under
our supervision for up to
72 hours before we release
them to the Central
Alberta Humane Society
for re-homing.
- » Visit: www.cahumane.com



The Beach & Waterfront

- » Dogs are only allowed on the paved sidewalks at the beach. They are not allowed in the water or on the grass
- » Dogs must be leashed at all times
- » This is to prevent fecal matter from contaminating the water and beach areas where families and children play

Off-Leash Dog Park 4051 60 Street

- » This park is the ONLY location in town where dogs are permitted off-leash.
- » Off-leash park rules:
 - Have control of your dog at all times
 - Ensure your dog is well socialized with other dogs and people before bringing them to the park
 - Pick up after your dog
 - Please ensure that your dog is on a leash until safely inside the park fence, and
 - Please respect the private property of homeowners adjacent to the park

Can you afford a pet?^{6,7}

O.M.G. That kitty is sooooo cute! Oh, let's get a puppy, she's so adorable! It's easy to fall in love so quickly that getting a pet comes before considering the short and long-term costs. Each pet is different, and each breed is different, and there are always unexpected expenses. Consider these numbers first:

Cost of Owning a Cat in Canada 2024⁶

1. INITIAL COSTS: \$1,875 - \$3,345

- » Adoption fees: \$60 - \$120
- » Spay: \$755 - \$970 or Neuter: \$605 - \$670
- » Microchip: \$30 - \$150
- » Initial vet exam and vaccinations: \$265 - \$525
- » Pet license: \$30 altered, \$60 unaltered
- » Collar (\$5-\$20), bed (\$20-\$80), food (\$45-\$120), food and water bowls (\$5-\$85), litter box (\$10-\$80), litter (\$15-\$80), scratching post (\$35-\$265), and toys (\$0-\$60), carrier (\$45-\$140), brush (\$15-\$55), nail trimmers to maintain their claws (\$10-\$20)

2. ANNUAL COSTS: \$930 - \$2,400

- » Food: \$520 - \$1,450
- » Litter: \$265 - \$660
- » Toys \$5 - \$115
- » Routine vet visits: \$80 - \$150 per year.
- » Flea and tick prevention: \$115 - \$250
- » Heartworm prevention: \$160 - \$300

3. ADDITIONAL COSTS: \$1,075 - \$3,995

- » Emergency vet: \$0 - \$2,000
- » Teeth cleaning: \$845 - \$1,535
- » Parasite prevention: \$20 - \$140
- » Grooming appointment: \$70 - \$100
- » Litter disposal systems: \$35 - \$45
- » Pet deposit for renters: month's rent
- » Pet insurance: \$15 - \$135 per year
- » End of life care: \$60 - \$4,110 (not included in total)

Cost of Owning a Dog in Canada 2024⁷

1. INITIAL COSTS: \$2,465-\$4,770

- » Spay or neuter surgery: \$755 - \$1,080
- » Microchip and ID tags: \$30 - \$130
- » Initial vet exam and vaccinations: \$225 - \$690
- » Pet license: \$30 altered, \$60 unaltered
- » Collar (\$10 - \$35), harness (\$15 - \$100), leash (\$10 - \$75), food and water bowls (\$5 - \$70), poop bags/holder (\$5 - \$30), crate (\$55 - \$290), bed (\$20 - \$175), grooming items, brush and nail trimmer (\$20 - \$110)
- » Cleaning supplies, stain/odor removers/wipes: \$10 - \$55
- » Potty pads: \$10 - \$65
- » Toys and chews: \$5 - \$55
- » Treats: \$5 - \$90
- » Basic veterinary care: \$370 - \$580
- » Food (wet and dry): \$45 - \$235

2. ANNUAL COSTS: \$965 - \$4,020

- » Food: \$300 - \$2,815
- » Flea and tick prevention: \$200 - \$345
- » Poop bags: \$60 - \$90
- » Treats and chews: \$20 - \$540
- » Toys: \$5 - \$55
- » Annual check up: \$140 - \$175

3. ADDITIONAL COSTS: \$1,525 - \$6,680

- » Emergency vet bills: \$0 - \$4,000
- » Dental cleaning: \$845 - \$1,535
- » Wellness vet bills: \$370 - \$580
- » Dog boarding: \$50 \$50
- » Dog sitting: \$50 - \$50
- » Drop in visits: \$20 \$20
- » Dog walking: \$20 - \$20
- » Daycare: \$40 \$40
- » Training: \$40 - \$160
- » Grooming: \$80 \$150
- » Pet insurance: \$10 - \$75
- » End of life care: \$1,145 - \$4.350 (not included in total)



Need Help?

PALS PROGRAM (Prevent Another Litter Subsidy - Low Income Spay Neuter Service)

Details: 403-342-7722, or cahumane.com/low-income-services

- » The PALS program helps to reduce the number of homeless pets in our community by assisting people who do not have the financial ability to spay or neuter their animals
- » Central Albertans with approved low income can apply to have their dog or cat spayed/neutered and pay only the administration fee

CALICO (Caring About Low Income Cat Owners Subsidized Spay/Neuter Program)

Details: whiskerrescue.com/programs

- » Cat owners truly needing help can apply to have their cat spayed/neutered and pay only the administration fee

COMPLAINT OR CONCERN?

Submit online: sylvanlake.ca/municipal-enforcement | Leave a message: 403 858 7280

If an animal is threatening public safety, or poses as a danger that needs immediate action, call 911.

ABSPCA Pet Safekeeping Program

The Pet Safekeeping Program helps victims of family violence leave abusive situations by providing temporary care for their pets. The Pet Safekeeping Program bridges the gap between animal services and human services to maximize the effectiveness of family violence prevention.

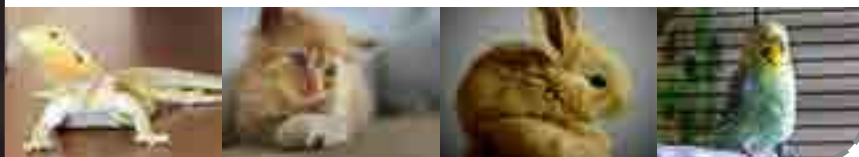
In addition to providing short-term housing for pets belonging to individuals who are leaving a situation of family violence, the services provided by the program include:

- » Customized safety planning for individuals staying in or returning to a violent relationship, companion animals included.
- » Crisis intervention for individuals victimized by family violence.
- » Referrals to supporting agencies and community resources.
- » Collaborative case management to reach personal goal outcomes, companion animals included.
- » Educational outreach focusing on the cruelty connection and the Pet Safekeeping Program.

Get help today, call or email:

T 780-447-3600 Ext 3750

E petsafekeeping@albertaspca.org



Learn More!

This list should help you get started with pets, or to learn more about caring for your pet! Keep in mind that online resources may not comply with the Town of Sylvan Lake Responsible Pet Ownership bylaw³, and that the Town bylaw takes precedence over material that is not issued by the Town of Sylvan Lake.

Cat Care and Behaviour

- » www.youtube.com/JacksonGalaxy

Cat Breed Picker

- » www.vetstreet.com/breed-finder

Cat Care

- » www.asPCA.org/pet-care/cat-care

Cat Behaviour Problems

- » www.asPCA.org/pet-care/cat-care/common-cat-behavior-issues

Dog Behaviour Problems

- » www.asPCA.org/pet-care/dog-care/common-dog-behavior-issues

Dog Breed Picker with Filter

- » www.akc.org/dog-breeds

How Long Can I Leave My Dog Alone?

- » www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/alone-time-dogs-much-much

Free Pet Planning Package

- » secure.asPCA.org/take-action/order-your-free-pet-planning-packet

References

1. From: www.petplace.com/article/dogs/pet-care/the-time-of-your-life-do-you-have-enough-for-a-dog
2. From: www.avma.org/resources-tools/pet-owners/responsible-pet-ownership
3. From: www.jacksongalaxy.com/blog/resolutions-for-a-healthy-cat-play-therapy/
4. Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw: www.sylvanlake.ca/en/public-services/animal-control-and-services.aspx
5. From: kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/what-causes-dogs-to-bark-excessively/
6. From: www.rover.com/ca/blog/cost-of-owning-a-cat/ AND www.rover.com/ca/blog/cost-of-owning-a-dog
7. From: www.humanesociety.org/resources/why-you-should-spayneuter-your-pet
8. From: www.worldanimalprotection.org.nz/news/animal-welfare-and-why-important



FOR THE LOVE OF ANIMALS

**KEEP THEM HAPPY,
HEALTHY, AND SAFE**

For more information contact:

Municipal Enforcement

T 403 858 7280

www.sylvanlake.ca/municipal-enforcement