

## **TOWN OF MOREHEAD CITY ANIMALS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY**

### **POLICY:**

The Town of Morehead City workplace is intended to be devoted to the efficient and effective environment conducive to providing public and related services to the citizens of Morehead City. The City is also concerned with security, liability, and health and safety issues for its employees. In order to accomplish this objective, it is necessary to provide, to the best of our ability, a workplace free from unsafe working conditions and conditions that may put the City at a risk of potential liability.

Therefore, it is the policy of Morehead City, to prohibit employees from bringing personal pets or other animals into the workplace. This applies to all City buildings, premises, and vehicles. The factors supporting this prohibition include, but are not limited to:

- Animals can spur allergic reaction among co-workers which can cause interruptions to their ability to work effectively;
- Work is disrupted because of the need to take care of the animal;
- Non-hygienic;
- Genuine fear some employees may have of animals which need to be respected; and
- Concerns of liability for the City should an employee or citizen be bitten or injured by an animal brought to the workplace.

### **EXCEPTIONS:**

The City acknowledges that the following exceptions to this policy may apply due to Federal and/or State laws, City departmental requirements, and promotion of public safety and awareness. For these reasons, the following exceptions include:

- **Service Animal Exception:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), an employee that meets the definition of an individual with a disability, may be permitted the use of an animal in the workplace. The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. A service animal is not a pet.
- **Police K9 Service Dog Exception:** A separate Standard Operation Policy (SOP) has been established by the Morehead City Police Department, which allows for a police K9 animal, and takes precedence over this policy.
- **Animal Control Exception:** Due to the nature and scope of the responsibilities and duties required by the City Animal Control Officer, animals impounded and taken into custody may be held temporarily until animal is transferred to an off-site location or person.
- **Working Animal Exception:** The City realizes that certain departmental City functions may require the temporary inclusion of a working animal for a specific activity or program. To that end, for consideration, a written request must be submitted to the City Manager, and/or his/her designee, who will review requests and approve or decline. If approved, Morehead City Animal Control Officer must verify that animal is current with all required licenses and inoculations prior to program/activity participation. Animals being used under this exception must be restrained by either a leash, that does not exceed 6 feet in length, or in an appropriate animal carrier, crate, cage or kennel when not in direct performance of assigned program/activity.