



**STANDARDS & GUIDELINES FOR BEST
PRACTICE
RETAIL STORES**

Version 3

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Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication are the Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice as defined by the Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA). Users are reminded that compliance with these Standards & Guidelines is a requirement of Membership of the PIAA.

New versions of these Standards & Guidelines may be issued from time to time. It is the responsibility of users to ensure the version of the Code on which they rely is current by checking it is the latest version available on the PIAA website.

Compliance

Compliance of the Association's National Code, Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice does not remove the need to abide by the requirements of all local, state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice including the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Acts and any other laws such as Local Government Acts and National Parks and Wildlife Acts in all States and Territories.

WARNING: Some animals/ fish are illegal to be traded in some States and Territories. Please check with your State's authority for clarification.

Note: These PIAA Standards and Guidelines have been written by various industry experts. Should you have any feedback or recommendations, please forward the details in writing including page numbers and specific references to ceo@paaa.net.au for consideration.

1. Introduction

The PIAA Standards & Guidelines set the standard of care and management of all species kept in retail stores for the purpose of sale. Compliance with the Standards will ensure the care, management and welfare of all species kept is of the highest calibre.

All local, state and territory and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Species may include but are not limited to:

- Dogs and puppies
- Cats and kittens
- Guinea Pigs
- Rabbits
- Ferrets
- Rats and mice
- Fish and aquatic animals
- Amphibians
- Birds
- Reptiles
- Poultry
- Insects
- Native mammals
- Livestock kept as pets

The sale or keeping of an animal or animals in the following circumstances is governed by local, state or commonwealth legislation and/or codes of practice and therefore may be exempt from some requirements of these Standards. Operators of such businesses should make themselves aware of any legislations or codes of practice relevant to the keeping of these animals.

- Where the animal is part of a competitive display of domestic farm animals
- Where the animal is sold or offered for sale in the course of carrying on the business of animal research, or in the course of carrying out animal research, without contravening relevant State or Commonwealth Legislation
- Where the animal is a domestic farm animal intended for commercial use as part of a farming enterprise
- Where the animal is at an agricultural show or show parade such as those conducted by a member of an Agricultural Society
- Where the animal is kept by an agricultural college or school
- Where the animal is a fish that is kept at a fish hatchery, or a fish farm for the purpose of commercial food production, or re-stocking of lakes, dams or waterways
- Where the animal is a lawful captive

2. Definitions

Animal – for the purposes of these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice means any physiological stage of a dog, cat, rabbit, guinea pig, ferret, rat, mouse, bird, reptile, amphibian, or other land based vertebrate species.

Authorised Euthanasia Technician - person who has acquired competency (through training, qualifications and/or experience and is appropriately approved or licensed in the relevant state or territory) in humanely destroying dogs and cats.

Behavioural enrichment - also called **environmental enrichment**, is an animal husbandry principle that seeks to enhance the quality of captive animal care by identifying and providing the environmental stimuli necessary for optimal psychological and physiological well-being. The goal of environmental enrichment is to improve or maintain an animal's physical and psychological health by increasing the range or number of species-specific behaviors, increasing positive utilisation of the captive environment, preventing or reducing the frequency of abnormal behaviours and increasing the individual's ability to cope with the challenges of captivity. Environmental enrichment can be beneficial to a wide range of vertebrates and invertebrates such as land mammals, marine mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and spiders.

Emergency Management Plan - document that details the response to an actual or imminent event or situation that endangers, or threatens to endanger, the safety or health of persons and animals and that may destroy or damage, or threaten to destroy or damage, property.

Fish - water dwelling cold blooded aquatic vertebrates (cartilagenous or bony) of the superclass Pisces, usually having scales and breathing through gills.

Manager - person, including an owner, who directly or indirectly controls a retail store (Person in Charge).

Market – place where people meet to sell and buy goods, including animals, and at which animals are kept for short periods. This includes the selling and/or buying of animals at demonstrations, shows and educational events.

On-Line Trading – Dogs, puppies, cats & kittens - the practice of advertising of animals for sale on the web.

On-Line Trading – Animal Supplies & Accessories – the practice of advertising animal supplies and accessories on the web. This may include food, bedding, enclosures and pet accessories etc.

Owner – Animal Owner - person to whom the animal belongs (in the sense of property belonging to a person), or the person by whom the animals is ordinarily kept, or the registered owner of the animal.

Person in Charge - person who has overall legal responsibility for the retail store, market, or other premises where animals or fish are sold and all the animals/fish therein. Note that while ultimate legal responsibility rests and continues to rest with this person, they may delegate activities, processes or supervision in relation to a particular animal or facility.

Note: that the licensee, owner, manager, or authority holder (depending on the state) will most often be the Person in Charge of the store.

Puppy Farm - The RSPCA defines a puppy farm as 'an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dog's behavioural, social and/or physiological needs'.

Retail Store - shop or any place used for the conduct of a business or other legally recognised entity, in the course of which an animal is kept for the purposes of sale as defined by these

Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice. This includes markets, registered breeders and holders of fauna trading licenses (or similar).

Socialisation - positive interactions with people of all shapes, sizes, ethnicity, uniform, and physical disabilities and other species will generate foundations for safe and pleasant relationships throughout the animal's lifetime. In particular, puppies and kittens should be exposed to as many different sounds, smells, people, objects and situations as possible in early months of their lives.

Staff - employees and volunteers who work in a pet shop. May include the owner or Person in Charge.

Veterinarian – person who is registered under the Veterinary Surgeons Act (or equivalent).

Volunteer – unpaid member of the public who works, supervises or provides information to consumers in a retail store or other facility. May include the owner or Person in Charge and those taking part in work experience.

Zoonosis - any disease that is communicable to humans from an animal species.

3. Non-Livestock Retail Operations, Agencies and Sub-Contractors

Non-Livestock retail operations are required to comply with all elements of these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice except those directly related to the sale and management of animals. This includes retail stores who undertake on-line trading of pet accessories and supplies via the web.

Staff knowledge of animals is a requirement in non-livestock stores as staff are required to advise customers on situations that could be potentially dangerous for those animals.

Businesses, proprietors and staff acting as agents for the sale or care of animals (i.e. the animal is not owned by the business but the business is responsible for facilitating sale or care) must ensure that all individuals or businesses from which these animals are obtained comply with these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice as well as compliance to all local, state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice in their state or territory.

Businesses, proprietors and staff of companies that act as offices for sub-contracted animal carers or other subcontractors must ensure that all sub-contractors under their direction comply fully with these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice.

4. Person In Charge

Standards

Each store must have a Person in Charge for the duration of the opening hours of the store. This may be the owner, manager or appointed Person in Charge

The Person in Charge is responsible for compliance of all relevant local, state/territory and commonwealth legislation regarding retail stores

The Person in Charge must ensure a copy of these Standards & Guidelines are accessible to all staff at all times. All documentation regarding day to day operational procedures, emergency situations and evacuation must be readily available to staff

The Person in Charge must ensure that all staff are trained in Health & Safety and are aware of the public and occupational health risks associated with the care and management of animals and of the appropriate steps that must be taken to reduce or eliminate these risks

Where the Person in Charge is not the same person in charge of the animals there must be a clear understanding by both parties as to who has responsibility for the welfare of the animals at each moment in time. In the event of a dispute, the Person in Charge of the store will be held accountable

The Person in Charge must have sufficient staff available to assist in the care and management of the animals in their care. This may include animals from responsible shelters and rescue organisations

The Person in Charge must ensure each employee is trained in caring for the individual needs of all species in their care. All staff with duties in relation to the care or treatment of animals must be appropriately supervised at all times

The Person in Charge must ensure all staff are trained to give advice to customers about the animals, products and accessories sold by the store

The Person in Charge must ensure all staff are trained in Zoonotic Disease management and control for each of the species kept in the store. This training must include handling, isolation and vet care and medication where necessary. A list of symptoms of common zoonotic diseases and treatments must be displayed in a prominent position for the use of all staff. A protocol must be documented to ensure the correct handling of these animals to prevent the cross-contamination of disease between animal and human. This must include personal protective clothing, handling and veterinary consultation.

The Person in Charge must ensure adequately qualified and experienced staff are available **at all times** to provide appropriate services to the public and the animals in their care. This includes adequate product knowledge to avoid inappropriate sales

Depending on staffing levels, there must be the appropriate number of properly trained staff members to meet particular State and Territory requirements for first aid, fire and emergency situations. Please refer to State and Territory regulatory bodies to determine appropriate levels.

Guidelines

The Person in Charge should ensure all staff undertake additional training to ensure they are up to date with changes to industry trends, scientific information and new product information

The Person in Charge should implement management practices to ensure that, where

appropriate staff, volunteers and people undertaking work experience are trained and experienced in:

- the behaviour and social needs of all animals and fish species kept at the facility
- acquisition and sale of animals and fish; and record keeping
- housing and husbandry of animals and fish kept at the facility
- handling and control of animal and fish species kept at the facility; including movement, transportation and capture
- identifying signs of health and ill health in animals and fish; including symptoms of stress when prompt veterinary care is required; understanding procedures for the care of sick and injured animals; disease, parasite control and prevention
- emergency management procedures including regular and random evacuation practices E.g. fire drills

The Person in Charge of the facility is encouraged to employ staff who have formal training or qualifications in animal care and management, or who are in the process of completing such training.

The Person in Charge of the facility should ensure the implementation of policies, procedures and staff training that eliminate the sale of animals to inappropriate purchasers.

Note For information on nationally recognised animal services qualifications, see: www.ntis.gov.au. For other courses, contact your local TAFE or industry association.

5. Staff

Standards

(Includes paid staff, volunteers and persons undertaking work experience)

Members of staff must be aware of their responsibilities as defined within the provisions of these Standards & Guidelines; local, state/territory and commonwealth animal welfare legislation and codes of practice; and any other relevant legislation.

Members of staff must comply with the conditions of their employment.

Members of staff must undertake training as and when required by the Person in Charge.

Guidelines

(Includes paid staff, volunteers and persons undertaking work experience)

Members of staff should be knowledgeable and experienced in the care of all species of animals and fish kept for sale at the store.

6. Health and Safety

Standards

The store must undertake all reasonable measures to ensure staff health and safety, and manage all relevant workplace risks, including the risk of contracting zoonotic disease by those in direct contact with animals. Any injured or ill staff members must seek appropriate medical attention.

In order to provide a safe and healthy environment, each store must have the following processes and procedures in place to comply with relevant state and territory legislation:

Health and Safety Documentation

- Work / Occupational Health and Safety (WHS) Policy
- WHS Program, outlining implementation of the policy
- Safe Work Method Statements / Job Safety Analysis templates
- Injury and Incident Management and Registers
- Hazardous Substance Management and Registers
- Risk Assessment and Risk Control templates
- Training Registers and Toolbox Talk templates
- Safety Inspection Checklist Template
- Fire Safety, Evacuation and Emergency Procedures
- Other relevant documentation according to your state or territory

Depending on staffing levels, there must be the appropriate number of properly trained staff members to meet particular State and Territory requirements for first aid, fire and emergency situations. Please refer to State and Territory regulatory bodies to determine appropriate levels.

Guidelines

Adequate ongoing training should be provided to ensure optimal animal and staff health and welfare. This includes induction training and ongoing staff and proprietor training.

Adequate systems and processes, written procedures and record keeping should be in place to demonstrate the above without ambiguity.

In order to provide for the health protection of animal handlers in retail stores the following additional safeguards should be included in adherence to HS legislation:

- adequate hand washing facilities available
- staff should be immunised against tetanus
- staff should be aware of the risk of tetanus
- provision of personal protective equipment e.g. disposable gloves

7. Emergencies

Standards

Functioning fire-fighting equipment must be readily available and staff trained and practiced in its use. (Note: some fire retardants may be toxic to animals)

Each facility must have a documented procedure for the management and/or swift removal of all animals from the premises in the case of emergency, where it is safe and reasonable to do so. This document must be kept in a prominent place on the premises. All staff must be able to produce the document and must be familiar with its content. Any methods detailed in the emergency plan must allow for ready access to animals and ready exit for staff and animals from the premises in the event of an emergency.

Emergency procedures must include a plan to deal with a situation where staff are not allowed back into the facilities for up to a week (for example in flood or fire), in particular if staff have not been able to ensure exit of all animals at the time of the initial emergency.

Guidelines

Design and construction of enclosures should incorporate features that enable the enclosure to be easily moved outside the store premises in the event of an emergency.

8. Security

Standards

Premises and animal enclosures must be secure against ingress of unwanted animals, persons or pests.

The store must be able to be reasonably secured to prevent access to the premises outside trading hours, including outdoor cage and run areas.

Enclosures must be securely fastened outside trading hours to the extent required to avoid escape.

All external openings must prevent escape of animals or easy removal of products or equipment without authorisation.

Adequate security must be in place to ensure the safety of staff, the public and all animals on the premises.

Guidelines

Every effort should be made to recover escaped animals.

Member stores should wherever possible install security systems to ensure the safety of all animals and staff in the store.

9. Sourcing Animals

Standards

The Member Owner and the Person in Charge of the store must ensure that all animals purchased/acquired for sale in the store are sourced from reliable, responsible animal breeders/suppliers.

The Member Owner and Person in Charge must ensure that animal breeders/suppliers fully comply with all relevant state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice relating to the breeding of animals. (See special conditions for Sourcing Puppies and Kittens)

Sourcing Puppies and Kittens

When Members are purchasing/ acquiring puppies or kittens, the name, address and a contact number of the breeder/supplier must be recorded in the Store records together with details of the animals purchased (date of birth, sex, dam, sire, microchip number if applicable). This must be done even if the puppy or kitten was acquired at no cost.

Kittens

Member stores who purchase/acquire kittens from breeders must ensure the following process is adhered to prior to taking delivery of any kittens:

- Member stores must only purchase/acquire kittens that have been microchipped prior to purchase/acquisition in the breeders name to ensure traceability to the source. The only exception are kittens/ cats that are surrendered or from a rescue organisation.
- The PIAA retailer must obtain identification from the provider of Kittens/ cats that are being surrendered or from a rescue organisation.
- Kittens must be purchased/acquired directly from the breeders and not via an agent, broker or trader. The only exception are kittens/ cats that are surrendered or from a rescue organisation
- Kittens must not be acquired under 8 weeks of age regardless of which State/Territory the shop/ breeder is located in
- It is best practice to purchase/acquire kittens that have been vaccinated at 6 to 7 weeks of age

Puppies

Association members are to reject animals from “Puppy farms/ Mills/ Factories”, or sources that fail to provide appropriate care of breeding animals.

The RSPCA defines a puppy farm as ‘**an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dog’s behavioural, social and/or physiological needs**’.

Member stores who purchase/acquire puppies from breeders must ensure the following process is adhered to prior to taking delivery of any puppies:

- Their Breeders must have completed and passed the PIAA Dog Breeder Veterinary Report (at the breeder or retailers cost) to ensure they comply with all the relevant state/territory legislation and codes of practice for breeding dogs.
- A PIAA Dog Breeders Veterinary Report must be completed by the inspecting veterinarian either recommending or rejecting the breeder. Completed inspection forms must be returned to PIAA within 7 days of inspection for final approval.

- A copy of the completed approved PIAA Vet Report must be kept onsite and presented on request to an approved PIAA staff member or any relevant Authority such as RSPCA or AWL.
- All breeders must comply with the PIAA Standards & Guidelines for Breeding Dogs within 12 months of finalising a PIAA Dog Breeder Veterinary Report.
- Puppies must be purchased/acquired directly from approved breeders and not via an agent, broker or trader.
- A PIAA retail member store may transfer their puppies to another PIAA retail member store provided that a hard copy of a current and approved PIAA Dog Breeder Veterinary Report is also supplied at each transaction showing full breeder details.
- Member stores must only purchase/acquire puppies that have been microchipped prior to purchase/acquisition in the breeders name to ensure traceability to the source.
- Puppies must not be purchased/acquired under 8 weeks of age regardless of which State/Territory the shop/ breeder is located in.
- It is best practice to purchase/acquire puppies that have been vaccinated at 6 to 7 weeks of age

Accidental Litters

The PIAA will allow the purchase/acquisition of a 'one-off litter' of puppies, allowing an individual to transfer the progeny of an accidental mating once in the life of a bitch. The member store must not purchase/acquire the puppies from the breeder/supplier until such time as they have completed a signed "PIAA Accidental Litter Declaration" which has been verified by their veterinarian

Accredited Breeders

Breeders who comply with the stringent PIAA Standards and Guidelines for best practice for Breeders are eligible to apply for PIAA breeder membership and may be eligible to become known as a PIAA Accredited Breeder (PAB). Stores who purchase or acquire their puppies from a PAB will be encouraged to promote this, thus enabling recognition for going above and beyond industry standards.

Shelter Dogs and Cats

Shelter or rescue animals must be acquired from recognised animal shelters (Council Pounds, RSPCA, Animal Welfare League); or from an individual who due to certain circumstances must rehome an animal; and not from hoarders representing themselves as animal shelters. For the avoidance of doubt, members should visit the shelter and assess quality of shelter care and conditions prior to taking animals for sale/rehoming. A health and behavioural assessment must be completed by a qualified person before re-homing any dog/puppy or cat/kitten. Newly introduced animals must not be mixed with existing stock until they are health checked, preferably by a veterinarian and quarantined for an appropriate period.

Micro Chipping

Puppies, dogs, kittens and cats must be microchipped prior to acquisition by the Retail Store and transferred into the stores name prior to sale

The Person in Charge and/or staff must ensure the microchip details are transferred into the new owner's name, once puppies or kittens are sold.

The Person in Charge and/or staff must ensure the animal is registered in those States/Territories where legislation and/or codes of practice exist.

10. Transportation

10.1 Pre-Sale: Transporting Animals from Breeder/Supplier

Standards

Legislation and codes of practice for the transportation of animals are applicable in some States in Australia and must be complied with when transporting animals.

When transporting animals to and from the store, staff must ensure that the animals are contained safely within appropriate enclosures so as to reduce any injury to the animal.

Different species must be housed separately and out of eyesight of other species.

Animals being transported by road must have sufficient fresh air and not be left unattended in closed/locked vehicles. On longer journeys, animals must be checked and given water or exercise if needed every two hours.

Member stores who are required to transport animals by air must use a recognised pet/animal transport agent complying with IAATA regulations for the transport of animals.

Transportation vehicles and transport enclosures/crates must be washed and sanitised after each use to prevent disease.

Guidelines

Like species (litter mates) may be carried together as long as overcrowding does not occur.

10.2 Post Sale: Transportation of Animals

Transport may cause distress to some animals and should be kept to a minimum.

Standards

All animals and fish sold must be contained, bagged or suitably restrained at the point of sale to ensure their security and protection for the expected period and mode of transport.

The container, bag or animal restraint must protect the animal or fish from injury, other animals, extreme temperatures and excessive stress. Information on the period and mode of transport provided by the buyer.

Appropriate ventilation must be provided in the bag, restraint or container (with exception of fish).

For more information about the standards for animal transport refer to the publication titled 'The Care and Management of Animals by Companion Animal Transport Agencies' and similar documents.

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/animal-welfare/codes/aw-code-1>

Guidelines

Fish should be provided with sufficient air to allow for at least twice the expected duration of transportation.

11. Management of Animals in Store

Standards

Animals must be protected from distress or injury caused by other animals.

In the event that an animal shows aggression to one or more of the other animals in an enclosure, the aggressor must be removed and placed in a separate enclosure so as not to injure any other animals.

Animals must be protected from distress or injury caused by interference by people.

Different animal species (except those fully compatible) must not be housed together.

Adult cats should not be group housed unless known to be siblings or if they are compatible.

Any animal that has become stressed by excessive viewing or handling must be removed from public view/access and monitored and treated as necessary.

Animals known to be or suspected of being sick or injured must be removed from public view/access and located in a quiet enclosure back of house and treated as necessary.

Procedures must be in place to ensure that all animals receive the appropriate level of daily attention/inspection, feed and exercise over non-trading days.

To ensure good psychological health, animals must be provided with behavioural enrichment, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species.

Animals that are unable to feed themselves must be kept only where adequate facilities and expertise are available for artificial rearing.

Deceased animals must be removed from display immediately, stored and disposed of in compliance with local government legislation.

Guidelines

All equipment used around animals should be designed and maintained to minimise the risk of illness or injury.

Positive efforts should be made to socialise animals to humans and other animals. Animals that have been well- socialised when young generally make better pets.

12. Enclosures / Housing

Standards

NOTE: For animal enclosure sizes for individual species, please refer to Section 23: Special Requirements for each species in this document.

Enclosures for each species must comply with state codes of practice or in the absence of a state code the Victorian Code of Practice should be used as a guide for size and number of animals per enclosure.

All solid surfaces of animal enclosures must be impervious or painted, to facilitate cleaning and disinfection.

All enclosures must meet the minimum requirements provided in the Appendix of this document. The minimum requirements set out in the Appendix do not remove the need for animals to have sufficient space to rest, stand, stretch, swim, fly or move freely, as appropriate to the species.

Different animal species must be housed separately with the exception of compatible species.

Adult cats should not be group housed unless compatible.

Animals must be able to withdraw, where appropriate, to a quiet, dark and well-ventilated area within their enclosure to allow them to take sleep breaks.

Enclosures must be maintained to minimise the risk of injury to animals and humans.

Enclosures must prevent access to animals by unauthorised people, unless under the direct supervision of a staff member.

Enclosures must be positioned in the store to prevent touching/handling of the animals by customers or children.

Stores must take all reasonable measures to prevent animal theft from enclosures.

Guidelines

Stores should be located away from sources of excessive noise or pollution that could stress or injure animals.

Enclosures should be designed for ease of cleaning, feeding, watering/water testing and the regular inspection of species being kept.

Animal placed on display in shop windows should be monitored and supervised at all times.

Retail stores should design their enclosures to be aesthetically pleasing, maintained in good condition and should reflect the professionalism of the industry.

13. Environment

Standards

State and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice outlining the environmental needs of different species must be complied with at all times.

Enclosures in which animals are kept must be maintained at temperatures and humidity levels that minimise distress and suit the needs of the species.

Where distress is observed, mitigation measures to ensure a suitable microclimate must be instituted.

Fish enclosures must be maintained so that fish are not showing signs of distress, including gulping or sitting at the water surface with minimal movement, unless this is normal behaviour for the species. Water temperature must be within the normal range for the species kept.

Enclosures must be placed out of strong draughts and have adequate shade and temperature control when exposed to direct sunlight.

The duration and intensity of artificial lighting must be as close as possible to natural conditions and must allow for diurnal light cycles with excess light subdued, particularly at night.

Enclosures constructed of solid material that do not allow natural air movement must be artificially ventilated.

If artificial heating devices are used, they must be thermostatically controlled to provide safe optimum temperatures for that species. Some species such as reptiles, require a thermal gradient with the enclosure be positioned so that parts of the enclosure are not heated, thereby providing a range of temperatures.

Guidelines

It is best practice to promote the enhanced features of an enclosure using signs and verbal communication for customers to elevate any perceived welfare issues e.g. use signs to show that enclosures are air-conditioned/ventilated and contain a thermometer. Signs on tanks containing Siamese Fighting Fish should indicate that these fish prefer small tanks as their natural habitat is a puddle or hoof print in the mud.

Loud or sudden noise which may distress animals, should be avoided.

Animals and fish should be screened from excessive noise and vibration and buffered from the public by barriers or signage, for example: 'Quiet Please', or 'Do not Tap on Glass'.

Lighting should be sufficient to enable thorough inspection of animals.

Lighting should not generate excessive heat except where it is deliberately used for this purpose E.g. reptiles.

Ventilation should be adequate to avoid dampness and draughts and minimise noxious odours

In enclosed rooms ventilation air changes should allow 6 to 12 air changes per hour, or as many as are required to maintain animal health, may be needed. In some States ventilation is covered in legislation or codes of practice and must be complied with.

Clients should be encouraged to acclimatise the animal or fish to its new environment on arrival, to minimise the risk of bad outcomes when the animal or fish is exposed to local climate and humidity conditions. This is especially important for fish or in very hot, humid or cold climates.

14. Food and Water

Standards

Animals must receive a balanced and complete diet that allows them to maintain good health and growth, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species.

Clean, fresh water must be available for all animals at all times at a temperature and quality that meets the animal's physiological needs.

Dogs and puppies that are co-housed must be monitored during feeding to ensure that all animals are eating.

Cats and kittens that are co-housed must be monitored during feeding to ensure that all animals are eating.

Cats, kittens, dogs and puppies must not be fed a purely vegetarian diet.

Cats must not be fed dog food as it lacks nutrients that cats require.

Food and water containers must be cleaned daily, and must be cleaned and disinfected before transfer to another enclosure.

Food and water containers must be readily accessible to animals and positioned to avoid spillage or contamination by spoiled food, urine or faeces.

Contaminated food and water containers must be removed immediately. Replacement containers must be utilised and then checked at least hourly for further contamination.

Food must be stored in a way that prevents its deterioration or contamination or access to pests.

Food must be of the finest quality and prepared in hygienic conditions.

Fish must be fed at least once per day with food suitable for species.

Fish must not be overfed.

All other animals must be fed with the appropriate food specific to their individual needs.

Guidelines

Puppies from 8 weeks to 12 weeks of age should be fed a minimum of 3 meals per day. Puppies and kittens

Kittens from 12 weeks to 6 months of age should be fed a minimum of 2 meals per day. Puppies and kittens

Cats should not be fed a diet consisting purely of fresh meat (including fish).

All animals (except fish) should be given regular treatment to control parasites as prescribed by a veterinarian.

Healthy immature animals should be fed twice a day or more frequently according to their needs.

Sick animals should be fed in accordance with veterinary advice.

Food and water containers which are not disposable should be stable, non-toxic and easily cleaned/disinfected. Stainless steel and glazed ceramic containers are preferable.

15. Animal Health Care

Standards

The Person in Charge and all staff must be familiar with the signs of common diseases in the animals being kept. Zoonotic diseases must be treated in accordance with the instructions referred to under Staff Training.

All animals must be inspected at least once daily to monitor their health and well-being. Records must be kept for animals recording eating and drinking habits, defecation, unusual behaviour and signs of ill health. Any animal suspected of deteriorating health must be reported to the Person in Charge immediately and if necessary removed to a quiet back of house enclosure to be monitored and undergo a veterinary examination if necessary.

The person checking the animals must record all adverse observations; except in the case of cryptic (hidden or camouflaged) and nocturnal animals; where an animal is:

- not eating
- not drinking, or drinking excessively
- not urinating (not reptiles or birds)
- not defecating normally
- not behaving normally
- not able to move about freely
- is showing any obvious signs of illness or distress
- is showing any obvious signs of parasitism

Animals in quarantine or isolation, very young, or ill/distressed animals must be inspected more frequently, to ensure the animals are suitably cared for.

Any changes in health status must be promptly reported to the Person in Charge for appropriate action.

All fish must be inspected prior to the store opening and periodically (e.g. every 2 hours) throughout the day to monitor their health and wellbeing. The person checking the fish must record all observations where a group of fish is:

- not eating
- not defecating normally
- not behaving normally
- showing any obvious signs of illness, parasitism or distress

Fish in quarantine or ill/distressed fish must be inspected frequently, to ensure the animals are suitably cared for.

Any changes in health status must be promptly reported to the Person in Charge for appropriate action.

Isolation – animals suspected of contagious diseases must be isolated in a separate back of house enclosure well away from other species likely to contract the disease.

Removal of deceased animals – In the case of fish, sick and dead fish must be removed from their enclosure as soon as possible.

Sick fish must be isolated in a separate back of house tank for treatment. Moribund fish will be euthanised humanely using techniques available in the document entitled Humane Euthanasia Techniques for Ornamental Fish, which is available on the PIAA website. Dead fish should be disposed of as soon as removed from the tank.

Guidelines

Removal of sick animals – animals suspected of ill health should be removed from their enclosure and isolated in a quiet back of house enclosure.

Where possible, newly acquired animals should not be mixed with existing stock for a minimum of 48 hours or until they have been health checked, ideally by a veterinarian.

16. Hygiene

16.1 Cleaning and Disinfection

Standards

All animal enclosures must be checked and cleaned daily. This may mean more than once per day depending on the species.

Cleaning and disinfection chemicals and materials must be chosen on the basis of their suitability, safety to humans and animals, and effectiveness. They must be used only in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Some common disinfectants, particularly those derived from or containing coal or wood tar products (such as pine oil, phenol, cresol and chloroxylenols) are toxic to cats and should not be used.

Enclosures for puppies, dogs, kitten, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, mice, ferrets and birds must be cleaned daily.

At the completion of cleaning, animal enclosures must not be allowed to remain wet, except where this is normal for the species e.g. frogs.

Food preparation and storage areas must be cleaned daily after feeding. Food spills in the preparation area must be cleaned immediately.

Before new animals are introduced, vacant enclosures must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

The Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals held must be available to staff.

Guidelines

All waste products, including faeces, bedding, food wastes and deceased animals, should be disposed of promptly and hygienically, and in accordance with the requirements of the local government authority, relevant government department or other authorities.

Reusable bedding must be washed, disinfected and dried as required.

Staff should be aware of the risks of transfer of infectious diseases and microbial contamination when handling animals or cleaning enclosures, as well as of practices that will reduce these risks.

16.2 Pest Control

Standards

A program to control parasites must be in place.

Pests including fleas, flies, lice, mosquitoes, cockroaches and wild rodents are all a potential health hazard to staff and animals and must be controlled. On request, details of the pest control program must be provided.

Guidelines

Specialist advice should be sought before pest control operations are conducted, in order to protect the health and safety of staff and animals being kept.

Chemicals used for pest control should be registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994 (Commonwealth)* and used only in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

16.3 Waste

Standards

All waste products including faeces, litter, uneaten foods, bird seed waste, disposable food containers and bedding, aquarium waste water, uneaten foods, disposable bedding must be disposed of promptly and hygienically in accordance with requirements of local government authorities.

Deceased animals must be disposed of in accordance with local government requirements and regulations.

Guidelines

Animal waste and cleaning waste should not be disposed of in human waste bins or into the sewerage system.

17. Record Keeping

Standards

General for All Groups

- date of cleaning and disinfection for all enclosures
- feeding and watering records
- health observations

Records must be kept for a minimum of 5 years with at least the previous 12 months' records (or for the period of statute of limitations under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals legislation or other local, state or commonwealth laws) kept on site. The Person in Charge of the facility must be able to produce these records within 24 hours.

Records for Dogs, Cats and Regulated Species

Records for dogs, cats and regulated species must also include the following:

- the acquisition/breeding of these species including the date of birth (only for dogs and cats) or an approximation if possible where this is not known, sex, colour, details of the parents, date of acquisition and the name address and a contact telephone number of the supplier /breeder of the animals
- animal is spay-neutered or entire
- microchip and registration details as per state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice
- the sale of these animals, including the date of sale, name, address and telephone/email contact details of the new owner, transfer documentation for microchip and registration
- the death or euthanasia of these species at the retail store, including the date of death and, where known, the circumstances surrounding the death or euthanasia
- veterinary treatment of these species before (where known) and while on the premises, including routine husbandry procedures such as worming or parasite control

Records for All Other Animals

Records for all other animals must also include the following:

- the numbers of these animals acquired and date of acquisition
- name, address and contact number of the supplier/breeder
- the date of sale and numbers sold
- numbers died or euthanased and (where known) the circumstances surrounding the death or euthanasia
- veterinary treatment before (where known) and while on the premises including routine husbandry

Records for Fish

Records for fish must also include the following:

- date of delivery, supplier, species and numbers as stated on the delivery docket or as identified on arrival (it is recognised that for some species delivery docket numbers are approximate)
- dates of death and (where known) the circumstances surrounding the death or euthanasia in any instance where more than 10% of fish in any tank die in any 24 hour period
- veterinary treatment of any fish while on the premises including routine treatments

Guidelines

The use of stock books, enclosure labels and daily cleaning/feeding/watering/health observation record sheets is encouraged.

18. Veterinary Care

Standards

The Person in Charge must establish an agreement with one or more local veterinarians and any other suitably qualified person who is able to attend to sick animals as required and in emergencies, to advise on management and disease prevention measures.

For the benefit of staff, the contact details for the emergency veterinarian or animal expert must be displayed in a prominent position within the shop or facility.

First aid and/or veterinary treatment must be promptly provided for animals and groups of fish that have minor or routine conditions. Where a severe illness occurs, veterinary advice and treatment must be sought as necessary.

Sick or injured animals or fish must be kept isolated, kept away from public view and not offered for sale.

Guidelines

The Person in Charge should ensure that at least one staff member is trained in animal first aid.

19. Euthanasia

Standards

Where treatment to restore the health of an animal or group of fish while in the store is impractical or unsuccessful, and where euthanasia is recommended by a veterinarian or an approved/licensed Inspector (appointed under a Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act or similar legislation), the animal or fish must be humanely destroyed.

Euthanasia of dogs and cats must be performed only by a veterinary surgeon or a person who is an authorised euthanasia technician.

Euthanasia must be conducted in an area that is separated from animal accommodation at the store and must not be carried out in view of any other animals, or members of the public or other staff.

For further information please contact PIAA or other references listed below;

info@paa.net.au

www.theaquariumvet.com

20. Sale of Animals

Standards

Dogs and cats must not be sold to people less than 18 years of age unless in the physical presence of their parent or guardian.

Where no other regulatory control exists, other animals must not be sold to people aged 16 or younger unless in the physical presence of their parent or guardian; or the client and the parents/guardians are known to the business.

Dogs, puppies, cats and kittens must have current vaccination certificates and must be microchipped prior to acquisition and sale.

No animal suspected of being sick, injured or diseased may be sold under any circumstances.

All animals sold must be fully weaned and independent at time of sale.

The minimum age of animals that can be displayed, advertised or offered for sale is:

- Dogs 8 weeks
- Cats 8 weeks
- Rabbits 6 weeks
- Guinea pigs 4 weeks
- Mice & Rats 4 weeks
- Ferrets 8 weeks

Birds must be fully weaned and independent at the time of sale.

When purchasing an animal new owners must be given written information on the care and welfare of their new animal. Depending on the type of animal, it could include:

- Species specific information
- Registration/microchipping (copies of documentation)
- Vaccinations (copy of vaccination certificate)
- Exercise
- Socialisation
- Feeding
- Grooming
- Internal and external parasite control
- Ongoing veterinary care
- Going of holidays
- Legal requirements of owning an animal and penalties for non-compliance
- Water quality for fish

The Member store must strongly advise the new owner to have their animal's microchip details recorded on a recognised microchip registry to ensure traceability should the animal become lost, stolen or abandoned.

Guidelines

Pre-Sale

Many new owners are unaware of the commitment having a pet brings and stores should talk through the commitment with prospective owners prior to them purchasing the animal. Staff may get a better understanding of the new owner's lifestyle by discussing their family and work commitments, how they intend to contain and house the animal and the time they will have available for exercise and enrichment of the animal.

Point of Sale

The active promotion of desexing for cats and dogs at the point of sale is strongly encouraged. Stores should advise all new owners about the desirability and advantages of desexing their new puppy or kitten as soon as possible after they purchase the animal. If the new owner wishes to breed from the animal, they should be advised that in some States/Territories in Australia it is a requirement to have a license to breed animals and be registered with the appropriate government department.

New owners should be given information which explains how to identify and appropriately manage common diseases.

Information should be provided to new owners, advising how to seek emergency treatment for the animal, and the value of establishing a relationship with a veterinary practitioner and/or animal behaviourist or other experienced persons.

All advertisements for dogs and cats for sale should include the animal's microchip number and registration status; and the vaccination status of the animal, as required under local, state or commonwealth legislation or codes of practice.

Advertising of animals and fish with the intention of putting client's names on a waiting list is permitted.

After Sales Service

New owners should be encouraged to keep in contact with the store to ensure the animal is being cared for correctly or if the new owner has any questions to ask about the animal.

21. Online Trading

Online Trading – Dogs, Puppies, Cats & Kittens

It is the retail stores responsibility to screen all potential new pet owners with regards to suitability. Should a retail store wish to trade online, they must adhere to these same principles as for a bricks and mortar store to minimise the risk of a mismatch. Technology such as Skype/ emails/videos can be used to clearly communicate and educate.

The terms/conditions and guarantees must be the same for online sales as for bricks and mortar stores and be clearly communicated to the customer, particularly when it comes to cooling off periods, guarantee's and should any health issues arise. The transportation of pets must be carried out as per legislated guidelines. It is a requirement that any return costs to be covered by the retail store. Any pets with known health issues must not be allowed to travel unless with written veterinarian advice.

Online Trading – Animal Supplies & Accessories

Retail stores who advertise animal supplies and accessories online must ensure the products they advertise for sale meet Australian safety regulations for animal products, are safe and do not cause harm to the animal or have an adverse effect on the animal's welfare.

22. Shelter Animals

The Person in Charge of the store is encouraged to develop relationships with pounds and shelters to undertake the sale of these animals through their store. This could be through the provision of noticeboards, posters or interactive displays, or the hosting of events at which shelter animals visit the business.

Some stores do not sell livestock (in particular puppies, dogs, kittens and cats) but allow responsible rescue organisations and shelters to display and promote the sale of their animals through their store.

A written agreement should be undertaken between the rescue organisation/shelter and the store outlining the arrangement for these animals. This agreement should include the following:

- Transportation of animals to and from the shelter to the store
- Is the animal to be left with the Member Store for the duration of its stay?
- Is the animal to be taken back to the shelter at the end of each day?
- Is the store Person in Charge allowed to take the animal to their own home at the end of each day?
- How long should the animal stay in the store if it is not finding a home?
- Rotation of stock of other shelter animals
- Special needs for the animal
 - Feeding requirements
 - Exercise and enrichment
 - Grooming
 - Medication
- Sale of the animal
 - Does the full amount from the sale go to the shelter?
 - Is a percentage given to the store and the balance given back to the shelter?
- Veterinary treatment - who is responsible for payment of veterinary treatment for a shelter animal if it becomes ill?
- Return of an animal by the new owner – do they return the animal to the store or to the shelter?

The agreement must also include the process for people who wish to return the animal for whatever reason.

Housing of the shelter animal whilst in the store – keeping these animals in enclosures, separate from other animals in the store. Signage should be prominently displayed on shelter animal enclosures stating that the animals are shelter animals and naming the shelter/rescue organisation.

NOTE: It is not recommended to have shelter animals in close proximity of store puppies or kittens as this may significantly increase the risk of spread of disease. Consult your veterinarian for specific advice in this regard.

23. Return Policy

Standards

Stores must have a written return policy which sets out the process that applies should a new owner wish to return the animal they recently purchased and include the store's policy with regard to reimbursement of veterinary bills. A copy of the policy should be given to the new owner and explained verbally at point of sale. The policy should include a "Cooling-off Period" and any refunds given. The policy should include the period of time allowed for the return of an animal, the percentage of the refund (if any) and if there can be an exchange or replacement of an animal. Animals with life threatening illnesses must be refunded in full. It is also recommended that a 'dispute resolution' clause be included in the policy.

If an animal (except fish) is returned within 3 days of the date of purchase and is not acceptable to the purchaser for any reason, the retail store Person in Charge is required to take the animal back and refund a m i n i m u m o f 50% of the amount paid at the point of sale for the animal.

If within 7 days of sale an animal (excluding fish) is not acceptable to the purchaser for health reasons, excluding injury; that is traceable to the store or through the store to the source of the animal; and the complaint is supported by a veterinarian; the Person in Charge of the store and the animal owner should negotiate in good faith to achieve an equitable outcome.

The return policy must be displayed in a prominent position on the wall or counter of the facility.

If an animal dies or is euthanased as a result of a disease that is traceable to the point of sale and is verified by an appropriate authority such as a veterinarian, the Person in Charge will refund the purchase price or offer a replacement animal with the same guarantee.

Where an animal is returned and there is a reasonable suspicion of animal abuse, the person in charge must immediately report this to the authorities.

24. Special Requirements

24.1 Dogs and Cats

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to dogs and cats must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Standards

Dogs and cats must not be displayed, offered for sale or sold until they are 8 weeks of age.

Dogs must not be acquired/purchased from a breeder/supplier unless microchipped, vaccinated against Distemper, Hepatitis and Parvovirus, (C3 or C5) and accompanied by a current vaccination certificate.

Dogs must have the opportunity to exercise for at least 20 minutes daily or are provided housing that allows room for exercise. (CAN'T BE CHANGED AS ITS LEGISLATED IN NSW COP, BUT OUR ENCLOSURES ARE LARGER THAN WHAT IS LEGALLY REQUIRED). This can be provided by allowing them access to an exercise area to run freely, or by walking them on a lead.

Whilst in care, dogs must be walked in secured areas unless:

- they are on a lead at all times, and
- they are under the supervision of a competent person, and
- no more than four compatible, suitably aged dogs are being walked by the one person (or according to local regulations)

Any yard for group exercise must be supervised, and care must be taken to avoid mixing of incompatible dogs, fighting and the transmission of infectious disease.

Cats must not be purchased/acquired from a breeder unless microchipped, vaccinated against Feline Respiratory Disease, Feline Chlamydia and Feline Enteritis (Panleucopaenia), (F4) and accompanied by a current vaccination certificate. Cats that are surrendered (without monetary value) must be microchipped in the retailers name and details collected of the person who has surrendered them. (see also section 9 Sourcing Puppies and Kittens)

Cats must be provided with litter trays containing a sufficient depth of suitable clean litter material.

Litter must be changed or scooped daily (or more frequently if required) to avoid odour and infection risk, and litter trays washed and disinfected at least once every 3 days.

Except in exercise areas, floors of animal enclosures must be lined with absorbent disposable material that can readily be removed and replaced.

Bedding must be provided. It must be clean and changed frequently or immediately if soiled.

Dogs and cats must be fed a balanced and complete diet that allows them to maintain good health and growth, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species.

Protocols for Puppy Handling

- Prior to handling any puppy or dog in the store, the customer must be asked if they have other dogs at home and if so, are their vaccinations currently up to date. Prior to handling any puppy or dog in the store, the customer must be asked if they have picked up or handled another dog during the day and if that dog has been in contact with the clothing they are wearing.
- A waterless hand sanitiser must be made readily available (attached to the outside of enclosures) and applied by both prospective owners and staff prior to and after handling each puppy and dog.
- If customers request a 'meet and greet' for any other dog they own to be introduced to the new puppy or dog, they must supply a current vaccination certificate for the dog being introduced prior to introduction to the new puppy or dog.
- Contact areas between customers and dogs must be disinfected daily.

Guidelines

One feeding container should be provided for each dog, cat or puppy. Kittens under 12 weeks of age may be fed three to a bowl.

Dogs and cats should be monitored for health in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice. Signs of illness for which attention is required include, but are not limited to, the following:

- runny nose or repeated sneezing
- runny or inflamed eyes
- coughing
- vomiting
- diarrhoea, constipation or visibly straining to defecate
- lameness, inability to stand or walk
- bleeding or swelling of body parts
- inability to urinate, or straining to urinate, or crying while urinating
- loss of appetite
- noticeable weight loss
- apparent pain
- staggering, convulsions or fainting
- patchy hair loss

Canine Cough (C5) vaccination should be considered where there is a risk to puppies.

Members are required to prepare an infectious disease management plan with their veterinarian to deal with any outbreak of highly infectious diseases such as Parvovirus, canine cough, Corona virus, cat flu etc

Environmental Enrichment

Research shows that all puppies and kittens require environment enrichment. This is particularly important in the early months of their lives as it encourages them to remain physically and mentally alert. Toys, beds, hides and other enclosure structures should be used to provide the environmental stimuli for the animal whilst it is in the Member store. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO VARY THE ENRICHMENT ON A REGULAR BASIS. Any toys should be sterilised between use by groups of pups.

Socialisation

By the time a puppy or kitten is 12 weeks old it has already formed emotional responses and it is important that all of these animals commence socialisation as soon as possible.

It is recommended that stores who sell puppies commence socialisation and training in-store whilst these animals are in care.

Puppies and kittens should experience a range of sounds and be exposed to as many smells, people and objects as possible whilst in care.

Puppy Enclosure size Small to Medium Breeds

Approximate weight range at 8 weeks of age

<1kg	Chihuahua etc.
1-2kg	Maltese x Shih Tzu, Silky, Moodle and similar
2-3kg	Cavoodle, Cocker Spaniel, Cavalier, Begalier, Beagle etc.
3-4kg	German Shepherd, Labradoodle, Aussie Bulldog, Rottweiler etc.
4-6kg	Various large breed puppies (uncommon)
6-8kg	Various large breed puppies (uncommon)

	PIAA Puppy Enclosure size Min floor area 10,350 cm ² Sample size 115cm Wide x 90 cm Deep x 80 cm High (min 80 cm deep)			PIAA Puppy Enclosure size Min floor area 13,000 cm ² Sample size 130cm Wide x 100 cm Deep x 100 cm High (min 90 cm deep)		PIAA Puppy Enclosure size Min floor area 18,000 cm ² Sample size 200cm Wide x 90 cm Deep x 100 cm High (min 90 cm deep)	
Weight	<1kg	1-2Kg	2-3Kg	3-4Kg	4-6Kg	6-8kg	8-10kg
No. of puppies	6	5	4	2	1	2	1
Additional puppies in cm ²	1700	2000	2500	6500	13000	9000	18000

1. Weight of the puppies within an enclosure is an average between litter mates. For example, If 3 puppies weigh 950 grams and 1 puppy (from the same litter) weighs 1050 grams the weight is calculated on the average weight of all puppies in the litter.
2. A variance of 5% will be allowed for **existing** enclosures for the minimum floor area and/or height. All **new** enclosures must comply with the 2015 Code of Practice.
3. All enclosures must be lockable and designed so as to prevent any access to, or handling of puppies by anyone other than staff members.

Quarantine

Members must provide an off display quarantine enclosures to house sick or injured puppies.

It is best practice for Member stores to quarantine new puppies purchased from breeders in an off display quarantine/isolation enclosure for 3-7 days before offering them for sale.

	Minimum Enclosure Height 50cm			Minimum Enclosure Height 70cm		Minimum Enclosure Height 100cm	
	Weight	<1kg	1-2Kg	2-3Kg	3-4Kg	4-6Kg	6-8kg
Number of Puppies	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
Minimum Size	3400	4000	5000	6500	13000	9000	18000
Additional Puppies	1700	2000	2500	6500	13000	9000	18000

24.2 Rabbits, Rats, Mice, Guinea Pigs and Ferrets

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to rabbits, rats, mice, guinea pigs & ferrets must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Standards

The minimum age of animals that can be displayed, advertised or offered for sale is:

- Rabbits 6 weeks
- Guinea Pigs 4 weeks
- Mice and Rats 4 weeks
- Ferrets 8 weeks

Enclosures must be designed to ensure the well-being of the animals, to prevent escape and prevent access by unauthorised persons.

Enclosures must be designed to minimise draughts, disease transmission, and stress and contain an area for the animals to avoid exposure to bright lights.

A secluded, darkened sleeping area must be provided.

Enclosures must enable animal's room to move about and rest without disturbance. Nesting boxes must be provided for breeding females.

Litters under one week of age should be disturbed as little as possible and kept in special maternity enclosures.

Suitable non-toxic bedding must be provided and replaced as frequently as necessary to keep it in a sanitary condition.

Wooden or other suitable gnawing blocks should be provided for rodents.

Animals must be fed a balanced and complete diet that allows them to maintain good health and growth, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species. Fresh greens must be supplemented for rodents.

Water must be constantly available and supplied in suitable containers. When using bottles with a nipple drinker the tip must not come into contact with bedding or food.

Animals must be checked at least once daily for any signs of illness or disease and should be wormed before being sold.

Ferrets require adequate handling and socialisation to enable them to develop as a suitable pet.

Ferrets must be vaccinated to the recommended schedule prior to being purchased or acquired from the breeder where possible.

It is best practice to vaccinate rabbits against Calicivirus as recommended by your veterinarian

Guidelines

When using bottles with a nipple drinker for drinking water, the tip should not come into contact with bedding or food

Minimum 'on display' cage sizes

Species	Minimum Floor Area (cm ²)	Minimum Width (cm)	Minimum Height (cm)	Max No. Animals	Increased area for each additional animals (cm ²)
RABBITS					
Young (6-12 weeks)	6000	60	50	5	1200
Adults (greater than 12 weeks)	6000	60	50	2	3000
GUINEA PIGS					
Young (6-16 weeks)	3000	50	40	5	600
Adults (16 weeks +)	3000	50	50	2	1500
MICE					
Young (4-8 weeks)	600	20	20	7	60
Adults (8 weeks +)	600	20	20	4	100
RATS					
Young (4-10 weeks)	2000	50	22	6	300
Adults (10 weeks +)	2000	50	22	3	600

FERRETS Min Size 3600 sq cm (e.g. size 80cm x 45cm x 60cm High)				
Age	8-12 weeks	12-15 weeks	15-18weeks	18 weeks +
No. of Ferrets	5	3	2	1
Additional Ferrets by cm	720	1,200	1,800	3,600

24.3 Fish

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to fish must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Standards

Ornamental Fish

Retailers must not trade in any fish or plant species listed as noxious or otherwise restricted in their state or territory.

Retailers must not knowingly sell illegal or illegally imported species.

Member stores must comply with local, state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice in their state/territory that relate to the operation of aquarium/aquatic outlets.

Fish tanks must be protected from adverse environmental extremes.

Water changes must be adequate to maintain good water quality in relation to population density.

Unless other provisions are made, tank lids or other appropriate devices must be fitted and kept in place to prevent escape of fish.

Water chemistry must be checked a minimum of twice weekly and appropriate measures taken to correct any imbalance. Records will be maintained of the water chemistry results and kept for 12 months.

All electrical equipment such as lights and heaters must be connected to safety switches and regularly checked for correct performance and safety.

Filtration equipment must be adequate for the species and tank/pond population densities, and effective at all times.

Fish must be fed as often as required with appropriate food according to species requirements.

All fish nets must be disinfected after use in each aquarium/tank, or a separate net for each tank must be used.

Fish showing signs of illness must be attended to immediately and where necessary, separated from other fish to prevent the spread of disease or molestation by healthy fish.

The use of medications in the treatment of diseased or injured aquatic animals must be carried out quickly and humanely to provide a cure to the species concerned. Proper prescribed medications for the relevant disease must be used.

Deceased aquatic animals must be disposed of in a manner that does not cause spread of disease or contamination of natural waterways or storm water. These animals must be disposed of in garbage which is used in landfill.

Guidelines

Retailers should suggest their customers advise them of unwanted aquatic animals and aquatic plants with a view to “re-homing” them thus preventing them being dumped into natural waterways. There is no obligation to repurchase, refund or take un-quarantined animals into the shop/aquarium.

Retailers should ensure new owners are given relevant literature and information about the aquatic animals and plants they are purchasing and educate them on responsible aquatic ownership

If manufacturing glass aquaria, separate “Recommendations for Manufacture” MUST be followed. These are to be found on the Association web site.

Stocking Density Guidelines for Fish in Retail Stores

It is impossible to provide a satisfactory stocking density as the critical factor is the water quality. In the past decade, there have been significant advances in the quality of filtration equipment available and the use of sumps. This means that the fish in the display tank may appear to be stocked quite heavily.

Irrespective of the stocking density in a tank, it is considered satisfactory if there is sufficient filtration to maintain the water quality parameters (see below) within the normal levels for the type of fish and water testing records can substantiate this.

Water Quality Criteria		
Cold Water Fish		
Dissolved Oxygen	Min	6mg/litre
*Free ammonia	Max	0.02 mg/litre
Nitrite	Max	0.2 mg/litre
Nitrate	Max	50mg/litre above ambient tap water
Tropical Fish		
Dissolved Oxygen	Min	6mg/litre
*Free ammonia	Max	0.02 mg/litre
Nitrite	Max	0.2 mg/litre
Nitrate	Max	50mg/litre above ambient tap water
Tropical Marine Fish		
Dissolved Oxygen	Min	5.5mg/litre
*Free ammonia	Max	0.01 mg/litre
Nitrite	Max	0.125 mg/litre
Nitrate	Max	40mg/litre
pH	Min	8.1

NOTE: These parameters should be checked first. Only if a problem exists with these tests is it necessary to check nitrite and nitrate levels.

An excellent reference on water quality is available from the Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association (OATA) a UK-based organisation (granted with permission).

Please see:

<http://www.ornamentalfish.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Water-Quality-Criteria.pdf>

24.4 Birds

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to birds must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

The sale of different species of birds varies from state/territory to state/territory. Retail stores must ensure that they comply with all requirements for sale of birds in their state/territory.

Enclosure sizes in these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice are for NSW. In the absence of enclosure sizes for birds in the retail stores' state or territory, the NSW sizes must be used as a guide.

Standards

Hand-reared birds must be fully feathered and independent before sale.

Birds must only be handled by trained or experienced staff.

Birds must be caught by the least stressful method and subjected to minimal handling.

Birds showing signs of illness must be attended to immediately and separated from other birds to prevent spread of disease or molestation by other birds.

Sufficient perches, roosting areas and feed/water stations must be provided to meet the needs of all birds in a cage or aviary.

Perches must be of a diameter, construction and material appropriate to the species held, and must be placed to prevent contamination of food and water containers. Perches must also be positioned to ensure that birds' tails are not in contact with the cage substrate, and to provide easy access to food and water.

Except where it is a species requirement, birds must be fed out of suitable containers and not directly off the floor, and not located below perches.

Birds must be fed a balanced and complete diet that allows them to maintain good health and growth, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species.

In addition to dry feed, fresh fruit, greens, nectar or seeding grasses must be supplied as appropriate to the species to provide variety and nutrient supplementation.

Environmental enrichment must be provided. This may include the provision of cuttlefish, toys, or other enrichment devices.

Pinioning of wings is unacceptable and is defined in most states and territories as an act of cruelty. The clipping of wing feathers is acceptable when undertaken under the guidance of a veterinarian or an experienced bird-keeper.

Guidelines

Each species should be accommodated according to its needs; this includes the provision of nesting sites and materials appropriate to the species for breeding purposes where intended. For indoor cages, birds should be housed in a bird room that is in a separate part of the shop, with an extraction fan system. This is to remove as much feather dander and dust as possible from the premises and thus reduce the potential for the zoonotic diseases, including avian

chlamydiosis (psittacosis).

Outdoor cages and aviaries should be designed and constructed so as to minimise the threat posed to birds by predators. Many species of birds, animals and reptiles are predators of, or cause distress to, aviary birds by day or by night. These include cats, dogs, foxes, birds of prey including owls, butcherbirds and currawongs, snakes and even children.

Enclosures should provide freedom of movement and capacity for exercise or flight, as appropriate to the species.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, pools and ponds should be avoided in sales cages/aviaries.

To maintain hygiene standards where cages and aviaries have solid floors, the floor should be covered with a suitable non-toxic disposable material.

Grit and other vitamin/mineral supplements should be available to reduce the potential for nutrient deficiencies.

Adequate food suitable for the needs of each particular species of bird should be readily available. Most species of birds should have access to food at all times.

Birds show ill health or stress in a great variety of ways. Careful observation is needed as sick birds are able to suppress some signs of illness. Signs requiring urgent attention include, but are not limited to, the following:

- changes in appearance of droppings
- changes in food or water consumption
- changes in attitude or behaviour e.g. inability to fly
- changes in appearance or posture, ruffled feathers, tail pumping
- changes in weight
- enlargements or swelling
- regurgitation, injury, sores, bleeding or lameness
- discharge from nostrils, eyes or beak
- excessive loss of feathers
- overgrown beak or nails
- stains or scabs around feet, eyes or nostrils

A heated hospital cage should be provided for the isolation and treatment of sick or injured birds away from view to minimise stress.

Care should be taken with new equipment. New galvanised wire may be toxic, especially for parrots. The risk of 'new wire disease' can be reduced by allowing the wire to be weathered for 4 to 8 weeks or by washing with a mild acidic solution e.g. vinegar and rinsing with water.

The Person in Charge of the facility and/or their staff should be aware of any responsibilities under wildlife licensing systems in relevant states and territories.

The application of rings for identification purposes requires careful selection of the appropriate ring and its application. Some species, especially as adults, should not be ringed because of the risk of self-mutilation. Special care is needed should a ring require removal, for example, to attend to a leg injury.

Overgrown beaks should only be carefully trimmed by experienced staff.

Excessively long nails should be trimmed by experienced staff only without drawing blood.

Bird Enclosures - See Appendix 1

Bird enclosure sizes may vary from State to State and Territory to Territory. Retail stores must firstly comply with all local, state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice. In the event that no legislation or code of practice is in force, the retail stores must comply with the NSW Bird Enclosure Sizes as shown in Appendix 1 or these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice.

24.5 Reptiles and Amphibians

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to reptiles & amphibians must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Standards

At least one staff member must be knowledgeable and experienced in the care of each species in store at all time.

The Person in Charge of a store must be fully compliant with the wildlife licensing system operating within their state/territory legislation and relevant codes of practice.

Reptiles/amphibians are very sensitive to vibration and noise. Display, housing and hospital enclosures must be positioned to minimize vibration and disturbance.

Reptile/amphibian enclosures must be lockable and tamper proof.

All reptiles/amphibians require external sources of heat to maintain body temperature. Temperature requirements vary between species. Reptiles must be kept at a suitable temperature for proper food digestion.

Amphibians require continuous sources of water to maintain hydration, appropriate to the species. Fresh water must be available at all times in suitable containers.

Heat sources must be on a thermostat to regulate cage heat. Thermometers must be placed in the enclosure to monitor thermostat performance and gauge temperature gradient.

All enclosures must have vents to allow air circulation.

UVA and UVB must be provided for those species for which this is essential. Globes must be changed regularly as per manufacturer's guidelines.

Records must be kept of feeding behaviour and dates of feeding.

Dietary requirements vary with the species. Correct diets must be used.

Overcrowding of juveniles must be avoided.

All facilities must provide an adequate hospital enclosure for sick or injured animals.

A veterinarian or other expert with reptile/amphibian experience must be consulted in the case of illness or injury of housed reptiles.

Stock should only be sourced from suitably qualified or experienced outlets as governed by state and territory laws.

Guidelines

Appropriate care sheets containing specialist information for the species should be provided with each animal sold. These must contain specific information on feeding, heating, lighting, housing requirements. It should suggest appropriate information sources for clients to expand their knowledge.

Glass aquariums lose heat readily. Heating system should be adequate to provide the environmental requirements of each species.

UVA and UVB are essential for some species and will benefit all reptiles. UV lights should be on timers set to daylight hours only. UVA and UVB tubes are not heaters. Globes must be changed regularly as per manufacturer's guidelines.

Avoid placing enclosures in direct sunlight as sunlight through glass may cause overheating.

Some species require water misting to allow skin absorption of moisture.

Feeding behaviour – feeding in groups may lead to dominant behaviour patterns causing sub-dominants to miss feeds. Be aware of the behaviour patterns of each species housed.

Feeding Time – reptiles are usually shy feeders and may need to be fed outside normal shop opening times unless the animal has a special requirement.

Juveniles require special attention in food selection and provision. Requirements vary greatly between species. Housing and heating requirements also differ from those suitable for adults and individual housing may be necessary.

A quarantine and preventative treatment program should be designed in conjunction with a veterinarian or other expert experienced with reptiles/amphibians.

Retailers should consider a "take back" or "rehoming" facility to minimise the risk of inappropriate outcomes for reptiles and amphibians.

Reptiles Approved for Sale in Retail Stores in Australia

Licensing requirements and lists of species vary widely from State to State and Territory to Territory. The following links give information on licencing and species that State by State.

New South Wales

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildlifelicences/ReptilesforLicenceFaunaDealer.htm>

Queensland

http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/information_sheets.html

South Australia

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/plants-and-animals/Permits_licences

Victoria

<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/wildlife/keeping-and-trading-wildlife/private-wildlife-licences>

Western Australia

<http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/licences-and-permits/134-fauna-forms?showall=&start=4>

Tasmania

<http://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/wildlife-management/living-with-wildlife/reptiles-in-captivity/herpetology-in-tasmania>

ACT

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/parks-recreation/plants_and_animals/animal_licensing/do_i_need_a_licence/reptile_policy

Northern Territory

http://www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/permits/wildlife#.VPP_TdH9mcO

24.6 Invertebrates

All local, state and territory, and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice that apply to invertebrates must be complied with by retail stores in their respective state or territory.

Standards

At least one staff member must be knowledgeable and experienced in the husbandry of each Invertebrate species in store at all times.

Handling must be kept to a minimum.

Handling must only be done by experienced staff with suitable tongs, tweezers or hands with species such as hermit crabs and phasmids.

Invertebrate enclosures must be lockable, tamper proof and must have vents to allow air circulation. Temperature, humidity and lighting must be provided correctly to appropriate species.

Dietary requirements can vary depending on the species. Correct diets must be used.

Water must be provided in the correct method according to the species.

All invertebrates are to be mist sprayed with water daily.

Records must be kept of feeding behaviour and dates of feeding.

Social species must be housed together but overcrowding should be avoided.

Solitary species must not be housed together.

Guidelines

WARNING - Correct techniques must be used by experienced staff when handling tarantulas, scorpions and centipedes as the venom, pinch, sting or bite from one of these can affect each individual differently.

Appropriate care and fact sheets containing relevant information specific to the species should be provided with each invertebrate sold. These must contain detailed information on the husbandry of that Invert including everything from feeding, heating, lighting, cleaning and minimum housing requirements.

Customers must be fully informed of the risks involved when purchasing potentially **dangerous** species such as spiders, scorpions and centipedes. Fact sheets containing a warning declaration are essential.

All small temporary Invertebrate enclosures housing tarantulas, scorpions and centipedes must be inside a cabinet or larger enclosure that is lockable and only accessible by experienced staff.

No customers are to hold or touch these species.

Avoid placing enclosures in direct sunlight.

Feeding – Feeding of tarantulas, scorpions and centipedes must be done appropriately with a set of

tongs or tweezers and by experienced staff only. Handling of these species should be avoided unless completely necessary.

Feeding – Feeding of phasmids and hermit crabs must be done when required. Fresh leaves for phasmids and fresh fruit and vegetables for hermit crabs, roughly, every second to third day.

Customers should be encouraged to keep in contact with the staff after the purchase of the Invertebrate.

Invertebrates: Housing & Care – see Appendix 2

4.7 Native Mammals

Special requirements for native mammals are currently under review

24.8 Livestock Kept as Pets

Special requirements for livestock kept as pets are currently under review

Appendix 1

Birds: Complete Trading List NSW and Recommendations for Enclosures

Appendix 2

Invertebrates: Housing & Care