Simcoe County Emergency Animal Response

Response Volunteer Rules & Regulations

Effective Date: January 1st, 2025

Applies To: All response volunteers, trainees, and members representing the organization

1. Purpose

These Rules and Regulations are established to ensure the safety, professionalism, legal compliance, and effectiveness of all response volunteers representing Simcoe County Emergency Animal Response (SCEAR). All volunteers are required to read, understand, and comply with these rules at all times while acting on behalf of the organization.

2. Volunteer Status

- Volunteers are not employees and do not receive financial compensation unless explicitly authorized.
- Volunteers must act within the scope of their training and authorization.
- Failure to follow these rules may result in suspension or removal from the organization.

3. General Conduct & Professionalism

- Treat all members of the public, partner agencies, property owners, and responders with respect and professionalism.
- Do not argue, threaten, or engage in confrontations.
- Maintain a calm and compassionate demeanor, especially in emotionally charged situations.
- Follow all instructions provided by SCEAR leadership, dispatch, or scene leads.

4. Identification & Representation

- Volunteers must clearly identify themselves as SCEAR volunteers when responding or arriving on a scene.
- Wear approved SCEAR apparel, identification, or vehicle markings when available.
- Volunteers must not misrepresent themselves as police, firefighters, by-law officers, veterinarians, wildlife rehabilitators, or government officials.

5. Response Authorization

- Volunteers may only respond to calls that have been officially assigned or approved by SCEAR management.
- Self-dispatching to incidents is strictly prohibited unless expressly authorized.
- Volunteers must notify dispatch or leadership when en route, on scene, and clear from calls.

6. Safety First (Zero-Tolerance Policy)

Safety is the top priority.

- Volunteers must never place themselves or others in danger.
- If a scene is unsafe, do not engage and request appropriate authorities.
- Follow all road safety, traffic, and environmental hazard precautions.
- Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when required.
- Volunteers under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or impairing medications are strictly prohibited from responding.

7. Roadside & Traffic Scene Rules

- Obey all traffic laws at all times (no speeding, no emergency driving privileges).
- Use hazard lights and approved safety equipment when stopped roadside.
- Park vehicles safely and legally; do not obstruct traffic.
- Never direct traffic unless authorized by emergency services personnel.
- High-visibility clothing must be worn when working near roadways.
- Contact local police or road authority to request additional visibility.

8. Animal Handling & Care

- Only handle animals within your training and comfort level.
- Do not attempt captures or interventions beyond your qualifications and comfort level.
- Wildlife, livestock, and domestic animals must be treated humanely and respectfully.
- Follow all applicable provincial, municipal, and federal laws.
- Never administer medications unless authorized and trained to do so.

9. Interaction with Authorities & Partner Agencies

- Cooperate fully with police, fire, by-law, wildlife agencies, veterinarians, and other responders.
- Follow the lead of the authority having jurisdiction.
- Do not interfere with official investigations or operations.

10. Property & Trespassing

- Do not enter private property without permission or if directed by lawful authority.
- Respect property owners and their instructions unless animal welfare or legal obligations require otherwise.
- Any disputes must be referred to SCEAR leadership.

11. Confidentiality & Privacy

- Do not share personal information of callers, victims, or property owners.
- Do not share incident details publicly unless authorized.
- Protect sensitive information at all times.

12. Media & Social Media Policy

- Volunteers may not speak to the media on behalf of SCEAR unless authorized.
- Do not post photos, videos, or details of incidents without approval.
- Social media posts must be respectful, factual, and aligned with SCEAR values.

13. Documentation & Reporting

- Complete all required incident reports accurately and promptly.
- Response reports are to be completed within 12 hours of the response.
- Report injuries, near misses, or safety concerns immediately.
- Any equipment damage or issues must be reported.

14. Equipment & Vehicles

- Use SCEAR equipment properly and return it clean and undamaged.
- Personal vehicles are used at the volunteer's own risk and under their own insurance policy.
- Volunteers are responsible for ensuring their vehicle is roadworthy and insured.
- Volunteers may use personally purchased equipment if approved by management.

15. Training & Compliance

- Volunteers must maintain required training and certifications.
- Attend mandatory meetings, briefings, or training sessions as required.
- Acknowledge that protocols may change and must be followed as updated.

16. Discipline & Enforcement

Violations of these rules may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Temporary suspension
- Permanent removal from SCEAR

Serious violations may be reported to appropriate authorities.

17. Availability & Commitment

- Volunteers are expected to maintain a reasonable level of availability to respond to emergency calls on an ongoing basis.
- While SCEAR understands that volunteers have personal, family, and work commitments, members should communicate availability changes to leadership or dispatch.
- Volunteers who are unable to respond for extended periods must advise SCEAR leadership.
- Consistent lack of availability without communication may result in a review of active volunteer status.

18. Acknowledgement

By volunteering with Simcoe County Emergency Animal Response, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to comply with these Rules and Regulations.

Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

These rules are designed to protect volunteers, animals, and the communities we serve.