Wags’n’Whiskers

Veterinary Emergency & Incident Procedure

Effective Date:10 November 2026

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the action to be taken if an animal becomes injured, unwell, distressed or involved in an incident while attending Wags’n’Whiskers Pet Grooming Salon.

The priority is to protect the animal’s welfare, prevent further harm and obtain appropriate veterinary assistance.

2. Immediate Response

If an animal is injured or becomes unwell, staff and students must:

1. 1. Stop grooming immediately and make the area safe.
2. 2. Inform the supervising groomer or salon manager.
3. 3. Keep the animal calm and minimise unnecessary handling.
4. 4. Assess whether urgent veterinary assistance is required.
5. 5. Contact the owner using the details provided at booking.
6. 6. Seek veterinary advice and follow appropriate instructions.

Only people with suitable training should provide first aid, and only within their level of competence. Staff must not attempt to diagnose or treat medical conditions beyond their training.

3. Veterinary Assistance

If the animal requires veterinary attention, the owner should be contacted promptly and arrangements made with an appropriate veterinary practice.

In a serious or life-threatening emergency, veterinary assistance must be sought immediately. If the owner cannot be reached, staff must act reasonably to protect the animal’s welfare, including contacting a veterinary practice for advice and arranging urgent care where necessary.

The salon must not delay emergency action while waiting for the owner to respond.

4. Owner Consent and Costs

Clients should provide an emergency contact number and relevant veterinary details before grooming begins.

Where possible, consent must be obtained before arranging non-emergency veterinary treatment. In an urgent situation, staff must prioritise the animal's welfare and follow veterinary advice.

Any arrangements concerning transport, treatment costs and payment must be handled transparently with the owner or appropriate decision-maker.

5. Specific Incidents

The following actions should be taken where applicable:

- **Cuts, bleeding or other injuries:** Stop grooming, seek appropriate first aid and veterinary advice where necessary.
- **Breathing difficulties, collapse or suspected heat-related illness:** Seek emergency veterinary assistance immediately.
- **Severe distress or aggressive behaviour:** Stop the groom, make the environment safe and avoid actions that could worsen the situation.
- **Escape or missing animal:** Alert management immediately, secure exits where possible and follow the salon's missing-pet response procedure.
- **Bites or scratches involving people:** Stop the activity, provide appropriate first aid and follow the salon's accident-reporting procedure.

6. Incident Recording

All significant incidents, injuries, veterinary referrals and near misses must be recorded as soon as practicable.

Records should include the date and time, animal and owner details, people involved, description of the incident, actions taken, veterinary advice received and outcome where known.

Management must review incidents to identify lessons and any changes needed to prevent recurrence.

7. Staff and Student Responsibilities

Students must immediately report incidents to their supervising professional and must not independently make decisions beyond their competence.

The supervising professional or salon manager must coordinate the response, communicate with the owner and ensure appropriate follow-up.

8. **Review**

This procedure will be reviewed regularly and following any significant incident,

changes to salon arrangements or relevant guidance