

Official Translation

REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

LAW ON THE CARE, KEEPING AND USE OF ANIMALS

November 6, 1997. No. VIII-500

Vilnius

ARTICLE 1. Purpose of the Law

1. The Republic of Lithuania Law on the Care, Keeping and Use of Animals, shall establish the general principles of behaviour of natural and legal persons towards domesticated, designated for economic purposes, decorative, laboratory, captive and wild animals, in order to protect them from suffering, cruel treatment and other negative pressures.

2. The Republic of Lithuania Law on Wildlife regulates protection and use of wild animals existing freely in their natural state on land, in water and soil.

3. In instances when international agreements ratified by the Seimas, shall stipulate other conditions of animal care, keeping and use, the conditions of international agreements shall be applied, provided they do not contradict the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania.

ARTICLE 2. The Basic Definitions in This Law

1. **Animals** denotes all types of wild animals, including the animals whose raising and keeping entail human care.

2. **Wild Animals** denotes vertebrate and invertebrate animals living constantly and freely in their natural state, and their populations.

3. **Domesticated Animals** denotes all of the traditionally tamed (domesticated) animals.

4. **Economic Purpose** - designated animals, kept and bred for food, fur, medication and other products, home guarding, labour and other purposes.

5. **Decorative Animals** denotes all tamed (domesticated) in the process of being tamed wild animals, kept in order to satisfy people's aesthetic, training or instruction needs. Wild animals kept in zoological gardens, aquariums, terrariums, oceanaria and nature centres, should also be attributed to this category.

6. **Laboratory (experimental) animals** denotes all animals, specially raised or selected for laboratory research and experimentation.

7. **Homeless Animals** denotes domesticated or previously tamed wild animals, who have lost contact with their owners.

8. **Wild Animals who Live in Captivity** denotes animals for whom artificial conditions are created, in order that man may affect them directly. Animals who are held in zoological gardens, aquariums, terrariums, oceanaria and at home, or are linked with man due to injuries or other causes.

9. **Dangerous Animals** denotes animals, who because of their biological characteristics pose constant danger to the life and health of people or animals.

10. **Human Behaviour Towards Animals** denotes direct or indirect human actions which may be useful, harmless or harmful to an animal.

11. **Harmful Treatment of Animals** denotes beating, deliberate injury, kicking, death by torture, teasing and frightening of animals, or inducing other types of stress to animals, forcing them to work excessively, baiting, fight organising, failure to provide veterinary care in illness, or sustained injury by an animal, transporting and holding under conditions unfavourable to that species, operating without anaesthetics, zoophilous and sadistic actions and also permission of the animal's owner to perform actions directly harmful to the animal.

12. **Useful and Harmless Behaviour Towards Animals (Animal Care)** denotes a human action, which has a direct positive effect on the physical and emotional state of animals or does not give rise to any negative consequences.

13. **Keeping an Animal** denotes a human action, on which depend the conditions of zoo hygiene, comfort or discomfort of the animal's existence.

14. **Owner of an Animal** denotes every natural or legal person over the age of 16, who is constantly or temporarily raising an animal.

Article 3. Activities Prohibited by This Law

This Law shall prohibit:

- 1) to injure, frighten or kill an animal without due cause;
- 2) to kill an animal by drowning, strangling or burying, and to use medicines or methods the effects whereof can not be controlled.
- 3) to use animals as targets in training;
- 4) to organise animal fights or fights featuring animals;
- 5) to abandon an animal whose existence depends on human care, and to leave it without any care in order to rid oneself of it;
- 6) to employ substances that stimulate natural animal capacities for the purpose of augmenting animal productivity, work capability and sport results with the exception of those materials, the use whereof is regulated by the Government or an institution authorised by it;
- 7) to transport animals by use of transport means which have not been adapted or are not suitable for this kind of animals, and also to transport the animals without a permit (certificate) issued by the Government or institutions authorised by it, allowing transport of animals;
- 8) to keep more animals than projected in the design of the building, barn, open air enclosure or fencing of territory;
- 9) to teach or train animals by constantly stimulating them in a negative manner (punishing).

ARTICLE 4. Conditions for Raising and Keeping Animals

1. Animals must be kept and raised under such conditions, which would not be harmful to the animal;
2. The conditions for raising and keeping must be selected in consideration of the characteristics of the kind and breed of animal.

ARTICLE 5. The Raising and Keeping of Animals

1. Local authorities shall approve regulations regarding animals to be kept in cities, districts and city type settlements and control how these are adhered to.

2. Owners must guarantee that the keeping of animals and dangerous animals shall not pose a threat to people's tranquillity, health, life and property and shall not violate the rights and interests of other persons.

3. The keeping of cats and dogs in a private house, where several families are in residence, shall be permitted only by having a written approval of all adult members residing therein.

4. Special legal acts, which shall be approved by a Government authorised institution, shall establish the number of animals permitted to be kept in a multi-flat building.

5. It shall be permitted to transport dogs, cats and other animals not intended for economic use, on public transport vehicles (suburban and inter-city buses, trains, planes and boats), in accordance with the Passenger and Baggage Regulations in effect. The municipalities shall establish the procedure of transporting animals by city and regional transportation. An owner who travels must be in possession of the dog's passport or a certificate from the veterinary service, indicating the dog's health status and vaccination.

6. All dogs and other animals who are potential spreaders of rabies, must be annually vaccinated. If a dog, cat or another animal, has bitten, scratched or otherwise injured people or animals, the owner must inform the health and veterinary services, without delay.

7. Animal owners shall compensate for all of the expenses incurred in connection with the damage inflicted upon people's health and property by their animals.

ARTICLE 6. The Raising and keeping of Dangerous Animals

Dangerous animals may only be kept and raised in accordance with the regulations, established by the institutions authorised by the Government.

ARTICLE 7. Transporting of Animals

1. Animals must be transported according to transportation regulations, which shall be approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest Economy along with the State Veterinary Service.

2. Animals may be transported only by means of specially - equipped transportation means (ships, airlines, autos), in order that the animals might not be injured and be subjected to stress, in the course of transportation. Animals must be regularly fed and treated during periods of extended transportation.

3. Animals of different kinds as well as those which are ill or injured, must be transported separately.

4. During extended journeys on land, breaks must be taken in order to care for and feed the animals.

5. To transport economic purpose-designated animals from the Republic of Lithuania or to bring such into the Republic of Lithuania, shall be permitted only through border posts approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, which have the conditions to transport live animals in a separate line and have state veterinary control facilities.

6. Legal or natural persons, engaged in international transportation of animals or in their transportation in Lithuania, must be in possession of licenses (permits) issued according to the procedure established by the Government, and some transportation means intended to be used for this purpose.

7. Transportation of animals shall be permitted public transport means (suburban and inter-city buses and trains, as well as airlines and ships), according to the Passenger and Baggage Transport Regulations in force. Municipalities shall establish the procedure of city and regional transportation.

ARTICLE 8. Domesticated Animal Trade

Trade in domesticated and decorative animals shall be permitted in areas designated by municipal institutions and in observance of the requirements of trading in domesticated animals according to the Trade in Domesticated Animals regulations approved by an institution authorised by the Government.

ARTICLE 9. Slaughtering of Animals

1. Animals must be anaesthetised and slaughtered by the means approved by the State Veterinary Service, using instruments adapted for that particular kind of animal.

2. Only the persons trained by veterinary specialists shall have the right to engage in anaesthetisation and slaughter of animals in slaughterhouses.

3. An institution authorised by the Government shall approve the regulations governing the keeping, feeding and watering of economic use designated animals prior to slaughter and during slaughter.

4. Slaughter of animals in accordance with religious rituals, without prior anaesthetisation shall be permitted by having a license issued by the veterinary service.

ARTICLE 10. Providing Medical Treatment for Animals

1. Veterinarians and specially - trained persons shall have the right to treat animals and perform surgery on them.

2. The veterinary service alone shall have the right to engage in training and issuance of licenses for the purpose of performing animal surgery. The State Veterinary Service shall approve the lists of operations which may be performed by specially-trained persons.

3. All of the painful surgery shall be performed under anaesthesia only.

ARTICLE 11. Protection of Animals

1. Every animal shall be kept, fed and cared for under conditions in keeping with his kind, age, physiology and behaviour.

2. The owner of an animal must constantly be mindful of the animal's health and feeding and also of the facilities where animals are kept and exploited.

ARTICLE 12. The Catching, Keeping and Taming of Wild Animals

1. Legal and natural persons may catch, keep and tame wild animals only upon obtaining a licence from the Environmental Protection Ministry and by observing the established procedure thereof.

2. Wild animals which have been captured accidentally must be returned to freedom, and if this is not possible, cared for in accordance with the requirements of this Law.

ARTICLE 13. The Use of Wild Animals in Zoo Collections

1. Legal and natural persons may establish zoo collections (zoological gardens, oceanariums, terrariums, also those having stuffed animals and others) only upon obtaining a license from the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

2. According to established requirements, hunt and fishing trophy collections may be collected without a separate licence.

3. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and State Veterinary Service shall approve the procedure of taking wild animals from their environment for zoo collections and also regulations of keeping animals in captivity.

ARTICLE 14. The Use of Animals for Instruction and Research

1. Only animals specifically bred and raised for these purposes may be used for laboratory experimentation. An institution authorised by the Government shall issue a license for the performance of pain-inducing (if necessary) experiments upon economic purpose-designated and other domesticated animals.

2. It shall be prohibited to perform animal experimentation, if the necessary goals may be attained through applying alternative scientific methods.

3. Experiments which may induce pain to an animal, must be performed under anaesthesia except when:

1) the pain occasioned by the experiment is less harmful to the animal than anaesthesia;

2) application of anaesthesia shall not be co-ordinated with experiment goals;

4. The breeding, raising, keeping and use of laboratory animals for experimentation shall be regulated by the rules approved by the State Veterinary Service.

5. The Ethics Commission on the Use of Laboratory Animals, at the State Veterinary Service, comprised of the representatives of interested institutions and organisations and

approved by the institutions authorised by the Government, shall control the use of animals for experimentation. Licenses to perform experiments on vertebrate animals shall be issued by the State Veterinary Service upon the recommendation of the Ethics Commission of Lithuania on the Use of Laboratory Animals.

ARTICLE 15. Putting to Sleep (euthanasia) of Animals

Only a veterinarian or a person designated by him, may put to sleep domesticated and animals designated for economic purposes, except in urgent instances, when one seeks to terminate the suffering of a seriously wounded animal.

ARTICLE 16. Homeless Animals

1. It shall be prohibited to make an animal homeless.
2. Homeless shelters, whose setting up and activity shall be controlled by municipal institutions according to their competence, shall be founded in order to shelter homeless animals
3. The use of homeless animals for experimentation and scientific purposes and their destruction without catching them shall be prohibited, except in cases when an episootic threat shall arise.
4. Municipalities shall organise the catching of homeless animals.

ARTICLE 17. The Rights, Responsibilities and Liability of Natural and Legal Persons

1. Natural and legal persons shall have the right:
 - 1) to care for animals provided this care does not any negative consequences for the animals and people;
 - 2) to propagate animal care;

- 3) to demand that persons intentionally harming animals be held liable;
2. Natural and legal persons must observe this Law and animal keeping norms.
3. Natural persons must:
 - 1) care for wounded animals according to their abilities and inform competent institutions regarding this;
 - 2) animal owners may not violate the rights and lawful interests of other persons;
4. Animal owners must ensure, that the animals owned by them do not injure people or other animals, and cause damage to other owners' property.
5. Following a court decision, animals may be taken from owners who do not abide by the requirements of animal care and protection according to the procedure established by Republic of Lithuania laws, to be slaughtered, sold or transferred to another owner, or to be put to sleep.

ARTICLE 18. Education of the Public

1. Schools and other educational institutions, the Association For the Care of Animals, or other public animal care organisations, young naturalist centres, veterinary associations, municipal governments and public mass media, shall organise education of the public on questions of animal care, keeping and use.
2. It shall be prohibited to propagate through the mass media anti-humane behaviour towards animals.

ARTICLE 19. Control of Implementation of the Law and Liability for Violations Thereof

1. For violations of the requirements of this Law, natural and legal persons shall be held liable according to the procedure established by Republic of Lithuania laws.
2. Natural and legal persons shall compensate for the damage caused by the animals owned by them, in accordance with the procedure established by laws.
3. The institutions authorised by the Government shall implement the compliance with this Law.

4. The officers of institutions supervising the implementation of this Law on behalf of the State shall have the right:

1) to enter barns, other premises and areas where animals are kept;

2) to enter a flat, having a warrant order, if the requirements of this Law and regulations of keeping animals, are not being complied with there;

3) to demand of the owners the required documents, information or explanations relevant to questions of animal protection;

4) to submit reports and acts to law protection institutions in order that criminal proceedings may be instituted against persons for violations in animal care, keeping and use requirements, stipulated in this Law;

5) to submit before the district court a statement of claim that it would receive prompt investigation, if unavoidable death of hunger, thirst, low or high temperature or other circumstances dependent on the animal's owner, shall threaten the animal (animals).

ARTICLE 20. The Procedure of Prompt Judicial Court Examination and Adoption of Decisions

The court, having received the statement of claim from the institutions overseeing implementation of this Law, to the effect that the animal (animals) is facing the threat of death, due to the owner's fault, shall adopt a decision within 3 work days, regarding the fate of the animal (animals). Having decided that the animal must be taken from the owner, the court shall stipulate that the decision be carried out promptly.

ARTICLE 21. Coming into Effect of the Law

This Law shall come into effect from January 1, 1998.

I promulgate this Law passed by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC ALGIRDAS BRAZAUSKAS