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MEMORANDUM TO: All Chiefs of Police and
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Chairs, Police Services Boards

FROM: Marc Bedard
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division

SUBJECT: *Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019*

DATE OF ISSUE:	December 19, 2019
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Further to All Chiefs Memo #19-0081, issued on October 29, 2019, regarding the introduction of the *Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019* (PAWS Act), I am writing to advise that the PAWS Act has received Royal Assent and will come into force on **January 1, 2020**.

Thank you once again for providing input to inform the development of the new long-term animal welfare system which includes the PAWS Act and a provincial enforcement team consisting of a Chief Animal Welfare Inspector, locally deployed provincial inspectors and specialized inspectors for agriculture, zoos, aquariums and equine.

To facilitate implementation of the new model by January 1, 2020, regulations have been made to ensure animals are protected. The regulations are as follows:

Standards of Care and Administrative Requirements

- Contains basic standards of care applicable to all animals that fall under the Act and standards of care specific to dogs that live primarily outdoors, wildlife kept in captivity, captive primates, and marine mammals kept in captivity.

Disclosure of Personal Information

- The regulation sets out the conditions that outline when the Chief Animal Welfare Inspector (or designate) may disclose personal information about an individual.

Exemptions

- The PAWS Act prohibits causing or permitting distress to an animal. The regulation exempts “hunting or permitting hunting of wildlife not found in the wild in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997” from that prohibition. Note that hunting wildlife in the wild is exempt under the PAWs Act.

Code of Conduct

- The PAWS Act sets out that any persons can make a complaint about an inspector’s conduct. The code of conduct regulation provides the basis of which public complaints can be made about an inspector’s conduct.

Ministerial Prescriptions

- Prescribes various miscellaneous matters related to periods of time to support implementation of key provisions in the PAWS Act (e.g. number of days to appeal an inspector’s order).

The ministry intends to consult further regarding the regulations, including through a multi-disciplinary table that will be established.

The legislation and the transitional regulations are available on [e-laws](#). The ministry has also issued a news release and backgrounder on the new animal welfare system which can be accessed [here](#).

In addition, effective January 1, 2020, the ministry will roll out its new animal welfare enforcement model, with more inspectors to provide provincewide coverage, including those with specialized expertise in livestock, zoos, aquariums and equines. The ministry will continue to hire and train inspectors throughout spring 2020.

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and police services have legislative authority under the PAWS Act to exercise the powers of an animal welfare inspector in relation to animals in distress and the investigation of offences under the Act.

Under the new model, the OPP and police services will be requested to respond in cases where criminal charges may be laid. Animal welfare inspectors will continue to work in partnership and offer support to the OPP and police services, when required and requested.

The ministry looks forward to your continued input as we implement the new animal welfare model. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact animalwelfareservices@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Bedard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Bedard
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division