

HUMAN RESOURCES

Equity and Diversity

HR 4.4 Access for Animals Accompanying Visitors



1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the access rules for animals including Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals accompanying visitors to Taronga Zoo (TZ) and Taronga Western Plain Zoo (TWPZ).

2 Policy Statement

Quarantine is for the purpose of preventing the introduction of infectious disease into an animal population. The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) is the government agency responsible for administering Australia's quarantine legislation. AQIS allows the importation of animals from overseas into Quarantine Approved Premises (QAP) such as TZ and TWPZ under section 46A of the Quarantine Act 1908.

The Taronga Conservation Society Australia (Taronga) have QAP within the boundaries of TZ and TWPZ which are registered with AQIS to maintain imported exotic animal species and their progeny for quarantine.

To ensure the effective management of these QAPs, TZ and TWPZ are premises that Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals are not permitted to enter with the exception of those areas designated in clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of this policy.

Consequently, Taronga retains the right to refuse access to Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals at any time on either site.

3 Definitions & Background

3.1 Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals

A Guide Dog is a registered and trained dog used by a person with vision impairment.

A Hearing Assistance Dog is a registered and trained dog used by a person with a hearing impairment to assist the person where hearing is required.

An Assistance Animal is a registered animal, including a dog, trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect(s) of the person's disability.

3.2 Quarantine Approved Premises

AQIS allows the importation of animals from overseas into QAP in accordance with the Quarantine Act 1908. The approval process associated with TCSA QAP applies to specific areas and for specific importations, and quarantine restrictions apply only to animals within the approved area for the duration of the post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) period.

At TZ the quarantine section of the Taronga Wildlife Hospital, the reptile quarantine room in Wildlife Intensive Care Building, Den 1 and adjacent outdoor area with pool are permanent QAP. At TWPZ the Wildlife Hospital and Quarantine Facility are QAPs, From time to time, other areas of the Zoos may be approved as QAPs for specific importations.



3.3 Taronga Quarantined Animals

A Taronga quarantined animal has undergone a period within the TCSA QAP and has been subject to testing for diseases relevant to that species, and has been found to be free of disease or of no risk to the TCSA collection animals.

4 Policy Practice and Procedure

4.1 Access guidelines for Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals at Taronga Zoo

Visitors to TZ with Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs or other Assistance Animals on arrival to Taronga Zoo are required to leave their animals at the Taronga Wildlife Hospital whilst they are on site which is to be pre-arranged through the Taronga Wildlife Hospital (Tel: 02 9978 4785) prior to the intended visit to ensure they are prepared for the visit.

If a request is received for a Guide Dog, Hearing Assistance Dog or an Assistance Animal to attend a function at the Taronga Function Centre, other than the designated areas (ie in the Zoo grounds), permission will be at the discretion of the Senior Veterinarian. If approved by the Senior Veterinarian is provided, these animal/s must not leave the confines of the Taronga Function Centre or enter the Zoo grounds.

4.2 Access guidelines for Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals at Taronga Western Plain Zoo

Visitors to TWPZ who arrive with Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs or other Assistance Animals must inform the gate-house upon entry to the zoo. There are currently no facilities on site to accommodate with Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs or other Assistance Animals temporarily under any circumstances. However, visitors will be provided with a list of local kennel providers (see Appendix 1) at which they may temporarily accommodate their animal at their own cost. Visitors with assistance animals should phone TWPZ in advance (Tel: 02 6881 1400) for this information. Visitors are not permitted to leave their animals in their cars on zoo premises.

If a request is received for a Guide Dog, Hearing Assistance Dog or other Assistance Animal to attend a function at TWPZ, other than the designated areas (ie in the Zoo grounds), permission will be at the discretion of the Senior Veterinarian. If approval by the Senior Veterinarian is provided, these animal/s must not leave the confines of the Function Centre area or enter the Zoo grounds.

4.3 Control of Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs and other Assistance Animals

Where Guide Dogs, Hearing Assistance Dogs or other Assistance Animals have been approved to be on site at TZ or TWPZ Function Centres as permitted by a Senior Veterinarian (see clauses 4.2 and 4.3), they must at all times remain under the effective control of the person to whom it provides assistance including secure waste collection and disposal, water and food provision.

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5 Accountability

5.1 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- complying with this policy;
- educating and informing visitors of this policy; and
- assisting visitors with animals to comply with this policy.

5.2 Human Resources

Human Resources are responsible for:

- providing advice, assistance and training to managers and employees on this policy, as necessary.

5.3 Senior Veterinarian (or delegate)

The Senior Veterinarians at TZ and TWPZ are responsible for:

- making decisions about requests for animal access as per clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of this policy;
- Regularly reviewing the list of kennel providers in Dubbo;
- Safely containing a Guide Dog, Hearing Assistance Animal or other Assistance Animals in a QAP.

6 Reference

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*
- *Companion Animal Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *SRWC 2.2 TSCA Quarantine Policy*
- *Quarantine Act 1908 (Cth)*
- *Quarantine Regulations 2000 (Cth)*
- *The Access Rights of Guide Dog Users – Guide Dogs Association of NSW & ACT*
- *Zoological Parks Board Act 1973 (NSW)*
- *Zoological Parks Regulation 1999 (NSW)*

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7 Approval

Cameron Kerr

Director and Chief Executive

8 Appendix

Appendix 1 – Dubbo Kennels

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Appendix 1

The two local Dubbo kennels are:

Rovers Run Bed and Bone

105 R Minore Road

Dubbo NSW 2830

Phone: 02 6887 2310

Mobile: 0414 333210

Pinecrest Boarding Kennels and Cattery

28R Minore Road

Dubbo NSW 2830

Phone: 02 6882 1842

Mobile: 0428 821 842