



July 2020

Questions and Answers: Access to Potable Water for Dogs and Cats

Q. What access do animals need to potable water?

A. Dogs must have continuous access to potable drinking water at all times unless restricted by the attending veterinarian. This includes evenings, weekends, and holidays. The regulation for watering cats has not changed. Cats must be offered potable water as necessary to ensure their health and well-being, but not less than twice daily for a minimum of 1 hour each time, unless restricted by the attending veterinarian or an IACUC approved protocol.

Q. Are there any circumstances that water can be restricted?

A. Yes, water restrictions may be approved by your Attending Veterinarian (AV) or an IACUC approved protocol.

Q. What is potable water?

A. The definition of potable water has not changed by the new regulation. Potable water is water that is safe to drink and will not cause illness or injury if consumed. The presence of debris, dirt, algae, animal waste, or other organic matter can be an indicator the water is contaminated. If the water cannot be reasonably assumed to be potable, the water should be replaced with potable water. Other indications of contaminated water include; cloudy or colored water, water giving off an odor, an oil film on top of the water, or if the animals seem reluctant to drink the water. Testing can be performed to determine the safety of the water.

Q. Are there specific ways to provide continuous water as required by the regulation?

A. No, there are no specific watering systems that are required. Any combination of personnel and equipment can be used if the system provides clean, potable water in clean vessels/containers to the dogs or cats. The water must be delivered on demand or at all times, with bowls refilled as needed for dogs. To prevent spilling and empty bowls that might result, licensees and registrants should consider equipment that prevents

tipping of the bowls. Licensees and registrants that utilize an automatic water system, such as the use of a lixit faucet waterer, should check the system regularly to assure that it is working properly and delivering water continually.

Q. If my dog just tipped over and spilled the water bowl and my inspector shows up to conduct an inspection will this be seen as non-compliant?

A. The regulations require that you provide dogs with continuous access to potable drinking water at all times. If during an inspection there are dogs that do not have access to water, this will be considered a noncompliance. There may be circumstances where the water bowl has just spilled, you should discuss options with your inspector.

Veterinary Care Requirements for Dogs

Q. When do I need an Attending Veterinarian?

A. The regulation has not change for Attending Veterinarians. All licensees and registered research facilities are required to have an Attending Veterinarian (§2.40; §2.33)

Q. When do I need a written Program of Veterinary Care?

A. A written Program of Veterinary Care is always needed, and a signed copy should be kept at the licensed or registered facility.

Q. What is required on the written Program of Veterinary Care?

A. For facilities with dogs, written formal arrangements must be made and signed by the Attending Veterinarian that includes the following; regularly scheduled annual visits, complete physical annual exams of each dog by the Attending Veterinarian, a schedule for vaccinations for contagious and/or deadly diseases of dogs (including rabies, parvovirus and distemper), a schedule for sampling and treatment of parasites and other pests (including fleas, worms, coccidia, giardia, and heartworm), and preventative care and treatment for healthy hair coats, nails, eyes, ears, skin, and teeth. Lastly, the written program of veterinary care must address the requirements for adequate veterinary care

for every dealer and exhibitor in § 2.40 of this subchapter and every research facility in § 2.33 of this subchapter, and § 3.13 of this subchapter for dogs. A signed copy of the written program of veterinary care should be kept at the licensed or registered facility

Q. Is a specific form for the written Program of Veterinary Care for Dogs needed?

A. No, however the APHIS Form 7002A, Program of Veterinary Care for Dogs, can be used but is not required. This form is available on-line at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms/pdf/aphis7002a.pdf>. The form is a fillable .pdf file. It can also be printed or downloaded for your convenience. You can use this form or another method that meets the requirements.

Q. How often do dogs need to be examined by the attending veterinarian?

A. According to Section 3.13, dogs must have a complete physical examination not less than once every 12 months.

Q. Must the Attending Veterinarian conduct every head to tail exam on every dog?

A. No, the Attending Veterinarian can delegate authority to another veterinarian to complete this work.

Q. Does the Attending Veterinarian have to come out to my facility?

A. Yes, the Attending Veterinarian has to make regularly scheduled visits not less than every 12 months to all premises where animals are kept.

Q. What does my Program of Veterinary Care have to include if I have dogs and other animals?

A. You have to meet the new requirements for dogs in the Program of Veterinary Care and you still have to meet the requirements under §2.40 for licensees (§2.33 for registrants) for other species.

Q. Do I need to have medical records for dogs?

A. Yes, Medical records are now required for all dogs. Routine husbandry procedures, such as vaccinations, preventive medical procedures, or treatments, performed on all dogs in a group, may be kept on a single record. Copies of the medical records should be kept at the facility for review by the APHIS inspector.

Q. What should be included in the medical records?

A. Section 3.13(b) outlines the minimum information needed in the medical record.

Q. Is there a specific form or system I need to use for the medical records?

A. No, there is no specific form or format required to be used as long as the information requested in §3.13b is used. Records should be logical and legible. Copies of the records should be kept at the facility for review by the APHIS inspector.

Q. Where should medical records be kept?

A. Copies of the medical records should be kept at the facility and be readily accessible for review by the APHIS inspector. Traveling exhibitors should keep copies of the records while in travel status or be able to provide them to the inspector.

Q. How long should medical records for dogs be kept?

A. Medical records for dogs shall be kept and maintained by the dealer or exhibitor for at least 1 year after the dog is euthanized or disposed of, and any period in excess of 1 year to comply with Federal, State, or local law. Medical records for dogs shall be kept and maintained by the research facility for the duration of the research activity, and for an additional 3 years after the dog is euthanized or disposed of, or any period in excess of 3 years to comply with Federal, State or local laws.

Q. What vaccinations are required for the dogs?

A. In §3.13(a)(3) the vaccinations specifically mentioned include rabies, parvovirus and distemper, unless otherwise required by a research protocol approved by the IACUC at research facilities. In accordance with the schedule provided by or any additional vaccines required by the Attending Veterinarian.

Q. Who is required to sign the Program of Veterinary Care for it to be compliant?

A. The Attending Veterinarian is required to sign the Program of Veterinary Care.

Q. What routine preventative care do I need to perform for dogs?

A. Routine preventative care includes maintaining a healthy and unmatted hair coat, properly trimmed nails,

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and clean and healthy eyes, ears, skin, and teeth. In addition, skin must be observed and cared for to address skin conditions and ectoparasites such as fleas and mites. Dogs should be routinely dewormed in accordance with a written Program of Veterinary Care. Heartworm prevention should also be administered as prescribed by the Attending Veterinarian.

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