




Animals in Film Guidelines

 BRITISH COLUMBIA
FILM COMMISSION

Animals in Motion Picture Production

DRAFT GUIDELINES

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I. Introduction

The BC Film Commission is committed to promoting guidelines that safeguard the welfare of animals involved in motion picture production in British Columbia.

The information and best practices contained in this publication are provided as general advice only.

This document aims to provide resources for the responsible care and use of animals before, during and after production. They ensure BC's motion picture industry meets the duty of care obligations established by federal and provincial animal welfare legislation.

The BCFC would like to express its appreciation to the individuals and organizations that contributed ideas and advice during the preparation of these guidelines.

II. General Guidelines

- Personnel designated as being responsible for the management of animals used on film sets have a duty to consider the welfare of the animals under their control. This care should be separate from the interests of the film production.
- Only qualified animal trainers and/or wranglers should be allowed to work with animals on productions.
- No animal shall be treated cruelly to induce it to perform. Animals must not be overworked or caused to suffer pain for motion picture production.
- Patience and effective communication are essential when filming with animals.
- All animals are to be transported safely, humanely, and in accordance with applicable laws, including
 - Federal Government: Criminal Code; Health of Animals Act; and CITES
 - Provincial Government: *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*; the *Wildlife Act of British Columbia*; and the *Controlled Animal Species Regulation*.

- An easily accessible area shall be available for loading and unloading animals.
- The trainer or person supplying the animal shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations, permits, applicable licenses and medical safeguards.
- A qualified veterinarian is the only person able to prescribe necessary medication. S/he should examine all animals prior to use to ensure their good health and that the animals have received all appropriate inoculations and medication.
- Basic animal safety equipment should be available (i.e. fire extinguishers, fire hose, nets, etc.)
- Every effort should be made to establish clear and constructive communication between the animal trainer and the various departments involved in the filming process.
- It is the responsibility of the trainer to convey to the cast and crew specific safety concerns relative to the animals being used (e.g., maintain a safe distance from wild and exotic animals, no personal pets, no feeding, no running, escape routes, etc.)
- When animals are on set, the animal supervisor should have direct liaison with the First AD and the stunt/ special effects coordinators.
- Notice should be given on the call sheet that animals are working. A “closed set” notice should also be posted on all stages where animals are working and every effort should be made to maintain a closed set when animals are working on location.
- Animals should be allowed adequate time to become familiar with the set, and only essential personnel should be permitted during rehearsal and filming.
- Animals should be provided with adequate space, rest, air, light, water, exercise opportunity, etc. while on set.
- Adequate pre-production time must be allowed for training and familiarization of animals and performers for the particular sequence involved.

- Animals should be kept away from exposure to loud noises or light flashes whenever possible to ensure the animals will not be injured or become unmanageable.

III. Legal Considerations

A. Federal

There are two key Federal Acts that safeguard the welfare of animals, including those animals used in motion picture production. These include:

- Section 446 of the federal ***Criminal Code*** prohibits anyone from wilfully causing animals to suffer from neglect, pain, or injury. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or police officers investigate complaints of non-compliance.
- The ***Health of Animals Act***, Part XII Regulations, defines conditions for the humane transportation of all animals in Canada by all modes of transport. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is responsible for administration and enforcement. These regulations:
 - Prohibit overcrowding, transportation of incompatible animals in the same stall, transportation of animals unfit to travel; and;
 - Specify appropriate conditions for loading and unloading of animals, adequate feeding and watering regimes, maximum transit times, minimum rest periods, bedding requirements and states that animals that become compromised while in transit must not be transported beyond the closest area where they can receive proper medical care.
- Under the National Animal Health Program, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency establishes import requirements for all animals and animal products entering Canada-including domestic pets. The Agency can refuse entry to any animal presented for importation. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency enforces the regulations through routine inspections, unannounced site inspections and response to reports of non-compliance.

In addition to federal legislation, there are also international regulations. ***The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)*** sets controls on the international trade and movement of animal and plant species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive

commercial exploitation. Environment Canada (EC) is the lead agency responsible for implementing CITES on behalf of the federal government. Within EC, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) administers CITES and interacts with provincial, territorial and other federal agencies.

B. Provincial

At the provincial level, the key legislation safeguarding the welfare of animals is the ***Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act***, the ***Wildlife Act of British Columbia*** and the ***Controlled Animal Species Regulation***.

- ***The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*** ensures the humane treatment of animals by providing a legislative mandate for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in British Columbia. The Act outlines the membership, the constitution and powers of the society including the powers of their offices, rights of seizure and disposal or sale of animals taken into custody.
- According to Section 1 of the Provincial Cruelty to Animals Act, an animal is in distress if it is: a) deprived of adequate food, water or shelter b) injured, sick, in pain or suffering, or c) abused or neglected.
- The BC SPCA is responsible for enforcement of the province's Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. BC SPCA constables are also appointed under the Police Services Act and can enforce Section 446 (Cruelty to Animals) of the Criminal Code. Section 15 of the Act authorizes a BC SPCA Special Provincial Constable to enter without a warrant any premises where animals are kept for sale, hire or exhibition for the purposes of determining if an animal is in distress.
- ***The Wildlife Act of British Columbia*** protects the diversity and abundance of BC wildlife populations and helps to ensure the wise management of our wildlife resources and minimize the negative impacts of human activities. The Permit Regulation is the main legal tool that people can use to exercise special privileges under the ***Wildlife Act***.
- ***The Controlled Animal Species Regulation*** states if a Controlled Alien Species resides in B.C., the owner of the animal must apply for, and obtain a Personal Use Permit, and the film industry proponent must apply for, and obtain a Non-Personal Use Permit.

If the Controlled Alien Species does not reside in B.C., the film industry proponent must apply for, and obtain a permit to possess a Transitory Controlled Alien Species Permit. The terms of this permit dictate that the Controlled Alien Species can remain in B.C. only for a short period time, and then must leave B.C. within a specified time frame. For more information, visit <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications/#cas>.

- The Permit and Authorization Service Bureau (PASB) is responsible for the administration of Fish and Wildlife Permits (including CITES) Commercial Licences and BC Parks' Park Use Permits. Permits and commercial licences remain a legal requirement, ensuring that environmental standards are not compromised.

On the U.S. side of the border, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and other Federal agencies regulate wildlife imports and exports. Canadian Customs and Environment Canada deal with wildlife imports and exports in Canada. A complete list of agencies and contact information is provided at the end of this document.

IV. Producer Responsibilities

- To verify the experience and credentials of animal trainers and handlers before they are hired to ensure that they are relevant to the demands of the production. Only animal trainers and handlers who are knowledgeable about, familiar with and have had experience with the species of animal being used should be engaged.
- To consult with the animal trainer during pre-production planning stages to obtain early advice on:
 - The ability and availability of animals to perform.
 - Procedures that should be adopted to protect the health and welfare of animals to be used before, during and after production.
 - The ratio of trainers or assistants to animals so as to ensure the safe control of animals.
 - In some situations, consultation may be required with other persons with recognized expertise; for example a wildlife biologist where filming of wildlife is proposed.
- To provide animal trainers and handlers with details of the script, the location, the types of film sets and environmental conditions to be encountered.
- To ensure that any advice provided by the animal trainer or veterinarian on the management, care and treatment of animals is complied with in all matters relating to animal care,
- To consult with the animal trainer and provide a rest area for animals as well as facilities for loading and unloading animals.

- To ensure that the call sheet indicates that animals are going to be involved in the production and includes safety precautions as they relate to animal action so that everyone involved is aware of safety matters.
- To ensure actors have training and experience in advance with the type of animals to be used on the set.
- To ensure cast and crew be aware that for production involving animals, no pets are permitted on set.
- To ensure all animals to be used are maintained and transported under existing Codes of Practice that provide proper humane care for each type of animal.
- To complete formal contracts specifying fees payable by the film company for services provided by the animal trainers/handlers.
- To authorize all care and treatment deemed appropriate by a veterinarian and to be responsible for all fees incurred in such treatment.

V. Animal Handler Responsibilities

- To examine in detail the requirements of each assignment and to advise the production of the suitability and viability of the assignment with respect to the capabilities and welfare of the animal(s) envisaged.
- To ensure that all animals are appropriately vaccinated and have all the necessary permits, applicable licenses and medical safeguards before coming onto the set.
- To ensure that only animals that are in appropriate condition to perform the work are used and they have been trained and prepared in advance to perform the required action.
- To ensure that all animal handlers engaged are appropriately qualified and knowledgeable about and familiar with the species of animals to be used on the film set.
- To carry out adequate liaison and discussion with all departments (art dept, camera dept, props etc.) so that they themselves are fully prepared for working with animals in such a way as to minimize all potential difficulties during the filming process. Full and proper preparation in all departments is imperative when working with animals.

- To convey to the cast and crew specific safety concerns relative to the animals being used.
- To provide animals with proper care including adequate food and water, daily exercise, sufficient rest and prompt first aid or veterinary attention when necessary.
- To ensure the animal trainer inspect film sets prior to each day's rehearsal/ filming to identify hazards, obstacles, or environmental conditions which may cause injury to animals.
- To use training methods and equipment that does not cause distress, pain or injury to the animals and is appropriate for the species being trained.
- To ensure that animals to be used are maintained and transported under systems that provide proper humane care for each type of animal.
- To remove animals from the set or provide sufficient protection when special effects likely to frighten animals are used.
- To ensure the animal trainer check animals daily for injury and/or illness.
- To ensure that veterinary treatment of sick and injured animals is provided.
- To provide the producer with an incident report within 24 hours of any incident on set where the welfare of the animal was compromised.

VI. Contacts and Resources

American Humane

American Humane is a well-established animal welfare organization with a reputation of dedicated leadership on the issues that matter. American Humane's Film & Television Unit is designated by the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) as the only animal welfare organization with on-set jurisdiction. As such, the Film & Television Office, based in LA, considers animal safety its primary goal.

Tel: 818 501-0123

Fax: 818 501-8725

Website: <http://www.americanhumane.org/about-us/contact-us/>

BCSPCA

The BC SPCA is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the quality of life for domestic, farm and wild animals in British Columbia. The BC SPCA was created under the auspices of the provincial Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and is the only animal welfare organization in BC which has the authority to enforce laws relating to animal cruelty and to prepare cases for Crown Counsel for the prosecution of individuals who inflict suffering on animals.

1245 East 7th Avenue

Vancouver, BC V5T 1R1

Phone: (604) 604-879-7721, or 1-800-665-1868 toll-free within BC

Fax: (604) 879-1498

Website: www.spca.bc.ca

Email: info@spca.bc.ca

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) sets controls on the international trade and movement of animal and plant species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive commercial exploitation. Environment Canada (EC) is the lead agency responsible for implementing CITES on behalf of the federal government. Within EC, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) administers CITES and interacts with provincial, territorial and other federal agencies.

Management Authority

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

Canadian Wildlife Service

Environment Canada

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3

Ph: 1-800-668-6767 (toll-free number in Canada only)

Vancouver Office: 604 664-9100

Website: www.cites.ca

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Under the National Animal Health Program, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency establishes import requirements for all animals and animal products entering Canada-including domestic pets. The Agency can refuse entry to any animal presented for importation.

Fraser West Office

4321 Still Creek Dr., Suite 400

Burnaby, B.C. V5C 6S7

Tel: 604-666-6513

Website: www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/import/importe.shtml

Ministry of Environment: Permit and Authorization Service Bureau

The Permit and Authorization Service Bureau (PASB) is responsible for the administration of Fish and Wildlife Permits, the Controlled Alien Species Regulation Permits, Commercial Licences and BC Parks' Park Use Permits. Permits and commercial licences remain a legal requirement, ensuring that environmental standards are not compromised.

PO Box 9372 STN PROV GOVT

Victoria, B.C. V8W 9M3

Toll free in B.C.: 1-866-433-7272 (1-866-433-PASB)

Outside of B.C.: 250-387-1814

Fax: 250-387-1814

Website: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications>

Actsafe (formerly known as SHAPE)

Actsafe is dedicated to the promotion of workplace health and safety in the motion picture and performing arts industries in British Columbia, Canada. Their mandate includes providing health & safety information, education, and training for the performing arts and motion picture industries in our Province. Actsafe has publications, posters, videos and access to professionals at WorkSafeBC. When the industry perceives a need, Actsafe responds.

280-1385 West 8th Avenue

Vancouver, BC

Tel 604 733-4682

Fax 604 733-4692

Website: <http://www.actsafe.ca/>

Email: info@actsafe.ca

BC Unions Representing Animal Wranglers**ACFC West**

The Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople, Local 2020 Communications, Energy & Paperworkers Union of Canada is a technical film union recognized by the Labour Board of British Columbia. ACFC represents film technicians in 23 departments, including Animal Wranglers.

#108-3993 Henning Drive,

Burnaby, BC V5C 6P7

Phone: (604) 299-ACFC (2232)

Fax: (604) 299-2243

Website: www.acfcwest.com

Email: info@acfcwest.com

Teamster 155

Teamsters is a labour union in BC and Yukon that represents Transportation Drivers, Catering, Security, Animal Trainers and Handlers (dogs, cats, tigers, wolves, etc.), Animal Wranglers (horses, cows and other domestic stock animals), car wranglers, mechanics, body persons, safety divers and Marine Coordinators.

490 East Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5T 1X3

Tel: 604 876-8898

Fax: 604 873-1595

Website: <http://www.teamsters155.org/web2009/index.php>

Email: team155@teamsters155.org