



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE



Cal OES

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA BEST PRACTICES FOR ALLOWING PETS ON PUBLIC TRANSIT

PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE 99166



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Introduction

People with pets evacuating during a disaster or emergency and relying on public transit, quickly discovered that their options are limited or nonexistent. Some people with pets often refuse evacuation orders or are unwilling to leave their pets behind, while others left their pets behind and would attempt to re-enter vacated sites illegally to rescue or care for their pets. Whatever the reason, when people choose not to comply with evacuation orders, they put themselves, their animals, and emergency responders at risk. An evacuation order means the threat is imminent, and people should leave immediately.

Local governments are the first line of defense in emergencies and disasters and are primarily responsible for managing the response to and recovery from those events.

When a local government receives a warning that an emergency could be imminent, its initial priority is to alert and warn citizens and take whatever actions are needed to protect life and property and minimize damage. If necessary, local emergency management officials may order an evacuation. Vital services, including transportation and shelter, must be provided by local government. Public transit agencies, which includes bus, rail, and ferry vessels, now have a role, under the law (PUC 99166), in assisting local government with the transportation of owners and their pets under an evacuation order.

Public Utilities Code 99166

Senate Bill 397 was approved by Governor Gavin Newsom on October 9, 2019 becoming law and known as Public Utilities Code (PUC) 99166. Public Utilities Code 99166 requires the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), in consultation with public transit operator's¹ and county emergency management officials to develop best practices for allowing pets on public transit vehicles serving areas under an evacuation order. [PUC 99166](#) reads as follows:

(a) If an evacuation order is issued that covers all or a portion of a public transit operator's service area, the public transit operator shall authorize passengers to board public transit vehicles with their pets in the area

¹ [Public Transit Providers/Agencies](#) list created by [Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation](#) & [UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies](#); and/or [American Public Transportation Authority](#)

covered by the evacuation order, consistent with best practices developed pursuant to subdivision (b).

(b) The Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with public transit operators and county emergency management officials, shall develop best practices for allowing pets on public transit vehicles serving areas subject to an evacuation order. The best practices shall not prohibit a public transit operator from enacting policies that ensure the safety of transit riders.

(c) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Evacuation order" means an order from the Governor, or a county emergency management official, county sheriff, chief of police, or fire marshal, under which persons subject to the order are encouraged to relocate outside of the geographic area covered by the order due to an imminent danger resulting from an earthquake, fire, flood, riot, or other natural or manmade disaster.

(2) "Pet" means a cat or a dog as those terms are defined in Section 1799.109 of the Health and Safety Code."

This document outlines best practices and guidance for local government emergency management and public transit operators (hereafter referred to as transit agency or transit agencies) to initiate discussion to fully meet the intent of the law at the local government level. Local government emergency management and transit agencies should consider developing or revising emergency response plans, procedures and/or protocols jointly for their respective areas. California is a large and diverse state; one local emergency plan may not be the appropriate plan for another jurisdiction. Advance planning, established lines of communication between agencies and jurisdictions, and written agreements are vital components to an effective emergency response.

To develop the best practices, a working group was convened with members from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), and various California transportation and transit agencies and reviewed by local government emergency management. This best practice document was also reviewed by transit associations/commissions and local government emergency managers.

The committee also consulted with a licensed veterinary behaviorist to recognize animal behavior for a transit vehicle driver's safety and the safety of all passengers. Although pet owners are ultimately responsible for their animals, a situation may arise in which the vehicle driver may need to intervene for the safety of other passengers, so understanding animal behavior is essential.

These best practices include topics for discussion at the local level that can be expanded further amongst agencies. Consulting with transit agencies policy makers and/or legal counsel to determine legal obligations under the transit agency's authority and limitations to evacuate people and their pets is advised. The handling of household pets and services animals could be addressed simply by reviewing information on subject related websites², or a brief training from the local animal services agency, non-governmental organizations, or humane society, as well as [veterinarians board-certified in animal behavior](#).

Planning and Preparedness

Standardized Emergency Management System and National Incident Management System

It is imperative that emergency response agencies operate within a clear and consistent organizational structure. California uses the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) as the organizational structure to ensure effective and successful emergency response operations. In addition to the SEMS, the State and its political subdivisions have adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as defined in the Homeland Security Presidential Directives to enhance emergency management effectiveness.

California Emergency Support Functions

California Emergency Support Functions (CA-ESF) provide the structure for coordinating State mutual aid for emergency response during a disaster. Each CA-ESF represents an alliance of stakeholders who possess common interests and share a level of responsibility for emergency management. The CA-ESFs bring together State agencies, departments, and others to collaboratively prepare for, cohesively respond to, and effectively recover from an emergency. A single state agency is assigned to lead each CA-ESF based on its authorities, resources, and capabilities.

² National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs – [Read Dog Body Language](#) ; Animal Handling Webinar: American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)/Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) [Safe Animal Handling](#) ; Animal Humane Society (AHS) – [Pet Behavior](#)

Each CA-ESF member agency is responsible to assist in coordinating the state’s response to emergencies, including provision of mutual aid and the allocation of essential supplies and resources. Table 1 below lists the lead agencies assigned to CA-ESFs and the roles and responsibilities of the primary and supporting CA-ESFs related to transportation, mass care, public health, evacuation, and animals in disasters.

Table 1. CA-ESFs

CA-ESF	California (CA) Lead Agency	Federal ESF
CA-ESF 1 Transportation	CA Transportation Agency (Caltrans) Assists in the management of transportation systems and infrastructure during domestic threats or in response to incidents.	ESF 1 Transportation ³
CA-ESF 6 Care & Shelter	CA Department of Social Services (CDSS) Coordinates actions to assist responsible jurisdictions to meet the needs of victims displaced during an incident including food assistance, clothing, non-medical care and sheltering, family reunification, and victim recovery.	ESF 6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services
CA-ESF 8 Public Health & Medical	Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) CA Department of Public Health (CDPH) Coordinates Public Health, Environmental Health, and Emergency Medical Services activities statewide in support of local jurisdiction resource needs for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation from emergencies and disasters.	ESF 8 Public Health & Medical Services
CA-ESF 11 Food & Agriculture	CA Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) Supports the responsible jurisdiction and coordinates activities during and immediately following a disaster, impacting the agriculture and food industry, and supports the recovery of impacted industries and resources post disaster. CDFA California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES) – supports the animal preparedness and response.	ESF 11 Agriculture & Natural Resources

³ According to the Federal National Response Framework (NRF), ESF #1 is not responsible for movement of goods, equipment, animals, or people.

CA-ESF	California (CA) Lead Agency	Federal ESF
<p>CA-ESF 13 Law Enforcement</p>	<p>CA Governor’s Office of Emergency Services Law Enforcement Branch</p> <p>Evacuation Support – Supports local law enforcement emergency evacuation operations; Supports local and regional traffic control and evacuation route coordination; Supports local and regional emergency medical patient movement and evacuation; Supports public information regarding evacuation routes, safety consideration.</p>	<p>ESF 13 Public Safety and Security</p>

Public Transit Agency Planning Considerations

Federal law requires local government emergency management planning officials develop emergency plans that include provisions for evacuation and mass departure routes and, since 2006, “account for the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals before, during, and following a major disaster or emergency” under the [Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards \(PETS\) Act](#). Typically, transportation and transit agencies play a supporting role in an emergency incident. Local emergency managers have the primary responsibility for managing and coordinating the response to an incident. The extent to which transit can be a successful partner in an evacuation depends on local government emergency managers and transit agencies holding planning and preparedness discussions leading to inclusion in local emergency response and evacuation plans. It is vital for local government emergency managers and transit agencies to establish good working relationships to jointly plan for emergencies. Planning and preparedness considerations include:

- Assess hazards or risks to determine what types of incidents an area is most likely to experience. The risk each hazard poses depends on both the probability of its occurrence and the likely level of its impact. One of the most difficult challenges in emergency management is to determine what scale of emergency to plan for. Transit agencies should review local emergency management and hazard mitigation plans.
- Participate in all four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery). Transit agencies have a role to play in mitigation by protecting its own assets and establishing redundant communications systems to help ensure continuity of service. Transit agencies should also be part of preparedness plan development. They are a vital partner during the response phase, both in supporting evacuations by providing transportation of people and pets, and by bringing emergency responders and equipment to the incident site.

Transit agencies can be involved in recovery, by re-establishing normal transit operations, and bringing evacuees back to the area if necessary.

- Review and update emergency plans to include pet/animal policies, protocols and procedures and any related Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA).
- Review insurance policies covering pets/animals' aboard transit vehicles for compliance, although not required per PUC 99166. Some insurance companies may have breed restrictions. If this is the case, consider planning for evacuations with local government emergency managers.
- Develop and/or participate in emergency management training and exercises with a focus on the evacuation of people and their pets. Transit agencies should work with their respective [Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)⁴ (MPO) by conducting regional exercises.
- Provide training to staff to support pet evacuations including recognition of key signs of animal behavior that might pose a threat to the safety of the transit vehicle driver and passengers.
- Develop a cooperative outreach program/public information campaign with the local animal service's department to convey pet owner responsibilities and transit agency requirements, or at a minimum post owner and transit agency responsibilities on their respective websites.
- While PUC 99166 cites an evacuation order, transit agencies and local emergency managers should consider planning for an [evacuation warning](#), which includes people with pets and livestock.
- Consider that Temporary Evacuation Points (TEP) may be established early in the disaster before shelters are set up. TEPs act as reception and staging areas for evacuees. If implemented, evacuation orders would include instructions directing evacuees to a TEP. TEPs allow for the controlled flow of evacuated persons and their pets to identified shelter sites. These TEPs may require additional stops or longer waiting periods between stops because of their locations.
- Identify and train reserve drivers, with an appropriate commercial license, to ensure continued operations or fulfill requests for service from local government emergency management.

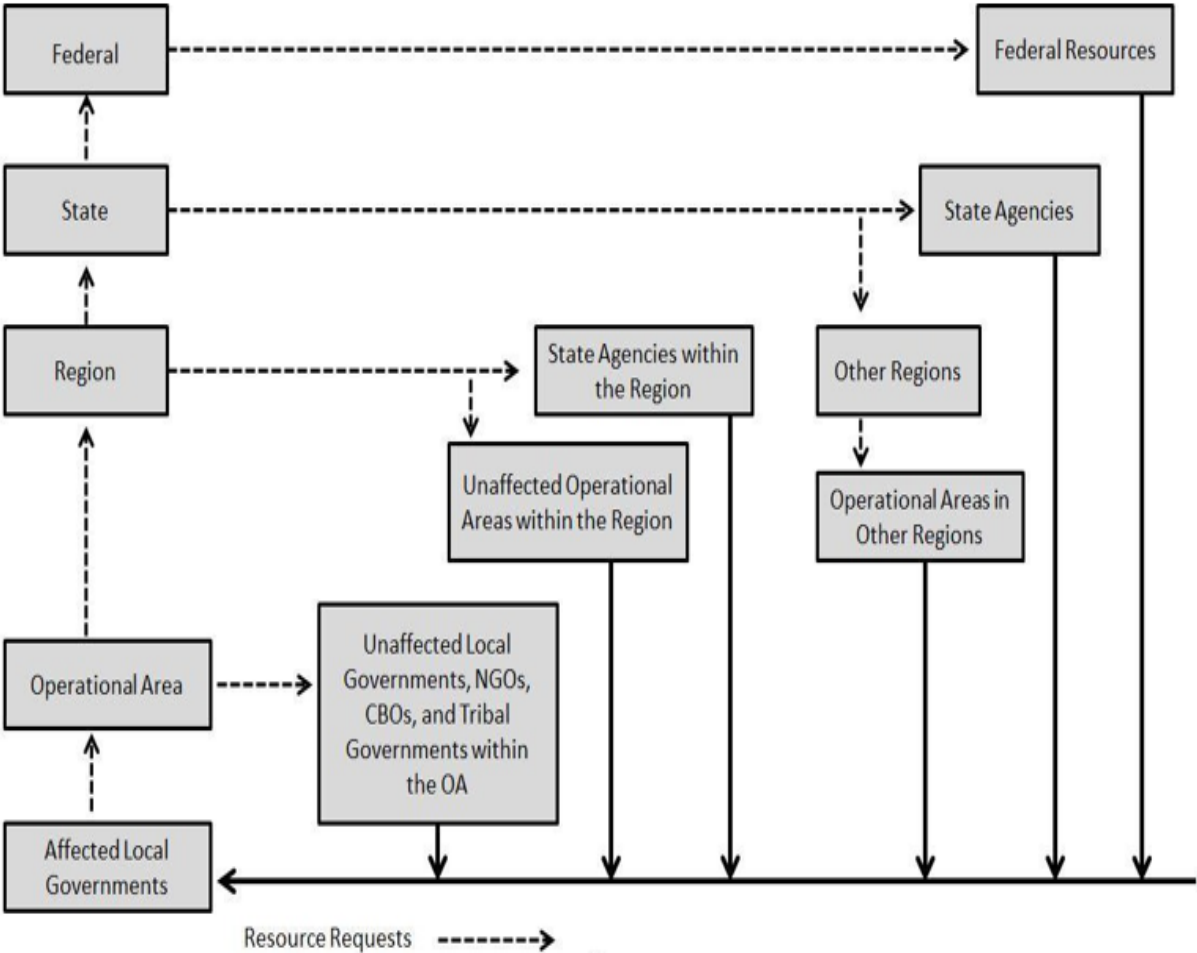
⁴ A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census. MPOs are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population (including the largest incorporated city, based on population) or in accordance with procedures established by applicable state or local law. [Caltrans Map of MPOs/Regional Transportation Agencies](#)

- Consider designating a coordinator, representative, or liaison from the transit agency to co-locate at the local government emergency operations center (EOC) to receive information. This working relationship can provide information related to estimated number of evacuees especially those with pets, pick-up and drop-off points, road conditions, shelter locations, and other information pertinent to transit agencies.

Mutual Aid Agreements (MMAs)

Mutual Aid Agreements can provide an extra assurance of assistance before, during, and after an emergency event to facilitate the rapid mobilization of personnel, equipment, and supplies. Local governments may enter into MAAs, either formal or informal, with transit agencies to augment their resources. If local resources are likely to be reasonably exhausted in a major emergency, local government officials will call for assistance from transit agencies, invoking such agreements. If an emergency involves an entire region, local officials can request state assistance when resources are

Figure 1. Flow of Requests and Resources



reasonably exhausted. Figure 1 – *Flow of Requests and Resources* depicts the resource management process for the State under SEMS.

It is recommended that transit agencies consider establishing a MAA with local emergency management in their service areas. MAAs are created in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and should be established well before a disaster. These agreements indicate the level of support transit agencies can provide/support during a disaster, when and how resources will be mobilized, outline the costs associated with the services provided, and describe the terms of cost reimbursement. For an example of a MOA/MOU refer to Appendix D.

During a disaster, local governments may utilize or invoke an established MAA. It is imperative that transit agencies know that if they have entered into agreements in multiple service areas, they may be requested to provide evacuation support to each area. Because emergency support services may be deployed across more than one service area, it is critical to ensure there are enough personnel, supplies, and equipment. Additionally, contingency plans should be developed to render services if the transit agency is also be affected by the disaster. The transit agency may need to assess their functionality before they can respond to a request for service.

Transit agencies should deconflict possible duplicate mutual aid requests with the local emergency management and the MPO that serves your area. The MPO may have established MAAs with the transit agencies for the purpose of voluntarily sharing resources among the transit agencies, therefore communication is essential.

Evacuations

California Standard Statewide Evacuation Terminology

Cal OES has developed, in close collaboration with its public safety partners statewide and pursuant to Government Code section 8593.7(a) (9), clear and consistent alert and warning protocols. This resulted in recommended standardized evacuation terminology for the State of California but not all jurisdictions have adopted the recommendation. It is highly encouraged that those responsible for issuing evacuation orders use this terminology in their evacuation protocols. The following terms simplify and standardize evacuation terminology statewide. A copy of the definitions can be found at [California Emergency Alerts](#) (Cal Alerts).

- Evacuation Warning: Potential threat to life and/or property. Those who require additional time to evacuate and those with pets and livestock should leave now.

- Evacuation Order: Immediate threat to life. This is a lawful order to leave now. The area is lawfully closed to public access.
- Shelter-in-Place: Go indoors. Shut and lock doors and windows. Prepare to self-sustain until further notice and/or contacted by emergency personnel for additional direction.
- Evacuation Order(s) Lifted: The formal announcement of lifting evacuations in an area currently under evacuation.
- Hard Closure: Roads closed to all traffic except Fire and Law Enforcement.
- Soft Closure: Roads closed to all traffic except Fire, Law Enforcement, and critical incident resources (e.g., utility, Caltrans, city/county roads, etc. or those needed to repair or restore infrastructure).
- Resident Only Closure: Soft closure of roads with the additional allowance of residents and local government agencies assisting with response and recovery.

Who Has the Authority to Issue an Evacuation Order?

Pursuant to California Penal Code 409.5(a), state, county, and city peace officers, and other designated officials, are vested with the authority to close public and private lands and order evacuations.

Four (4) government officials may exercise authority for issuing an evacuation order of a natural or man-made disaster, they include the:

- Local governing body of counties, or whomever is authorized to act on their behalf;
- Local governing body of cities, or whomever is authorized to act on their behalf;
- Statutorily designated law enforcement officers; and
- The Governor.

The local jurisdiction's designated authority is primarily responsible for ordering an evacuation. This authorization can be in the form of an ordinance, resolution, or order that the local governing body has enacted.

Alerts and Warnings⁵

During a disaster, local governments will broadcast messages through various means to the public related to the disaster. Transit agencies should be aware of these broadcasts to maintain safe operations. You can [sign-up](#) for jurisdiction specific notification system alerts that will promptly alert and warn of local emergencies and actions to protect lives and property. Emergency management officials should coordinate with transit agencies to ensure vehicle drivers know route conditions, pick-up and drop-off points, and other relevant safety information. Likewise, transit agencies should coordinate with local emergency management officials at the city/county EOC for periodic updates to ensure the vehicle drivers have the most up-to-date disaster information. As the situation evolves, transit agencies should begin reviewing their plans for the possibility of transporting people and their pets out of the transit agency's service area covered by an evacuation order. It is imperative in this stage that transit agencies develop messages, jointly with local emergency management and/or the joint information center (JIC), with clear, plain language and terms understandable by transit passengers.

Shelters

At the local government level, different types of shelters may be established such as an animal-only shelter, co-located with a human shelter, or co-habitated shelters where both owners are housed in the same area as their pets. Animal facilities or fairgrounds may be designated for use as a shelter. Generally, local fairgrounds are reserved for emergency sheltering of large animals and livestock. These facilities may also be used to shelter both people and small pets in separate areas. Local governments, during a disaster, will generally have pre-designated shelter locations. As the situation evolves, these locations may move at the needs of the government to improve life safety throughout the disaster.

It is important for the transit agency to be aware of not only the estimated number of possible evacuees, but also their pre-designated shelter locations in order to plan for the appropriate number of personnel, assignments, equipment, and supplies to meet the expected services. This may help ensure that residents remain safe during an incident and that jurisdictions can allocate resources appropriately to conduct an efficient response to an incident.

⁵ Alert and Warning Systems: [California Earthquake Early Warning and Wireless Emergency Alerts](#); [Emergency Alert System](#); [Wireless Emergency Alerts Fact Sheet](#); [Integrated Public Alert and Warning System \(IPAWS\)](#); [State of California Alert and Warning Guidelines 2019 ed.](#); [Regional County Emergency Alert System Plans](#)

De-Escalating Conflict in Public Transit

Passengers

There is no simple guaranteed approach to diffusing conflict between passengers and/or the vehicle driver and aggressive pets toward passengers and other animals. Devastating natural disasters such as earthquakes, fires, and floods can lead to significant emotional distress not only in humans but in animals. Human emotion in times of extreme stress can be unpredictable. The potential for conflict can increase. All passengers aboard a transit vehicle are expected to act with restraint and courtesy toward other passengers. Passengers evacuated with their pets are ultimately responsible for their pet's behavior. This is especially important when a cat or dog becomes loose or shows aggression. Owners must maintain effective control of their pet and take precautions to ensure that no one's harmed. Any misconduct that may be construed as interfering with the comfort or safety of other passengers or the vehicle driver could be grounds for removal from the vehicle. Having to operate a vehicle while managing conflict only makes things dangerous. It is recommended that the vehicle driver refer to the transit agency's policies and procedures for guidance.

Felines and Canines

According to the American Animal Hospital Association, cats, as both predator and prey animals, will often show fear or defensiveness in unfamiliar environments or with unfamiliar people. Removal of a cat from its familiar environment is an ideal situation to cause fear and stress and may elicit unwanted behaviors. Cats in such a state express an array of behaviors including cowering, vocalizing, and aggression. The best way to prevent any of this from occurring is to keep the cat in its crate at all times and simply place a towel over the crate to reduce external stimuli. This will prevent the need for the vehicle driver to have to intervene with the owner. The vehicle driver, however, should be trained to recognize feline body language and facial expression and other cues as to guide owners and prevent any behavior from escalating to fear aggression such as biting and scratching other passengers or cat-to-cat aggression.

According to the American Medical Veterinary Association, anxiety is defined as a feeling of intense worry or fear, which usually stems from an anticipated or perceived threatening situation or stimuli. Dogs also feel stressed and become nervous when introduced to new environments, people, and events. Anxiety can cause an animal to display aggression if the animal perceives there is no way out of the situation such as on public transport. Aggression is one of the most dangerous signs of dog anxiety.

Although Appendix E: Animal Behavior provides guidance, it is recommended the vehicle driver refer to the transit agency's policies and procedures for guidance. The vehicle driver should assess on a case-by-case basis and decide whether a passenger and their pet can remain on the vehicle or should exit the vehicle.

Recommended Best Practices

General Best Practices During Transport

The committee conducted extensive research resulting in some common best practices listed below for consideration by transit agencies.

- The agency has discretion to prohibit specific passengers, with pets, from their vehicles due to safety considerations (i.e., animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; demonstrates aggressive behavior towards other passengers or animals; or is out-of-control) and may prohibit them from boarding the vehicle or direct that they be removed. Questionable unsafe or out-of-control animal behavior may include, but is not limited, to the following:
 - Out-of-Control Behavior: An owner may be directed to remove an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., uncontrolled barking, growling at others, damaging property, running around or away from the owner, jumping on people, lunging toward other passengers and pets, exhibiting aggressive behavior such as conflicts between animals) if the owner is unable or unwilling to take effective action to control the animal.
 - Conflicts between animals aboard.
- The agency is likely to prioritize passengers with service animals over passengers with household pets, especially when space is limited.
- Neither pets nor their carriers should interfere with the operation of the vehicle.
- Travel kennels and pet carriers, when available, should be used to safely confine small pets and a single pet per carrier/container is recommended.
- Consider instructing owners to place identifying information on the travel kennel or pet carrier to ensure reunification of animals with their owners in case of separation.
- Provide safety instructions and assist to disseminate information to all passengers with or without pets to include safe pet/animal handling, owner responsibilities, transit agency responsibilities.
- When evacuating on a ferry vessel, if traveling by passenger vehicle, passengers should remain with their pets in the vehicle.

- Pets should remain secure if in a carrier while in transit and/or dogs can be on a non-retractable six foot maximum leash.
- Keep pets spaced apart (socially distanced) as much as possible.
- Increase the number of transit vehicles engaged in evacuations to allow for extra space required to safely transport people and their pets.
- Consider transporting large pets in their individual carriers, in a separate vehicle that will follow the transit vehicle with the pet owners to the drop-off point or shelter. Owners may need to be reassured that they will be reunited with their pets. Animals can also experience anxiety when they are separated from their owners.
- Strongly recommend that all passengers avoid approaching or thinking of petting any animal that does not belong to them.

Small Pet Recommendations:

- Small pets⁶, other than cats, could be evacuated by their owners. Possible carriers for other small pets include a compact travel terrarium, carry pouch bag, carrier with escape proof slits, fabric-covered carrier, portable bird travel bag/carrier, or fish in plastic bags with water. Carriers should be spill proof, leakproof, well ventilated, and pet friendly.
- The carrier should fit on the lap of the person carrying the pet and other small pet carriers can be strapped to the owner's body.
- The carrier should not occupy a seat or block walkways.
- Passengers must clean up after their pet(s).

ANNOTATION: Although research results indicated transit agencies best practices for small pet carriers to be placed “under the passenger’s seat” and “may not occupy a seat”, the veterinary behaviorist consulted by CDFR, stated it is not advisable to place a carrier housing a cat under a seat since this may cause a negative behavioral response from the cat. It is best to consider placing the carrier on the seat and cover the carrier with a cloth/towel, being careful not to hinder ventilation, to reduce environmental stimuli. Ultimately the final decision is based on the agency’s internal protocols.

Large Pet Recommendations:

- Pets should be transported in a spill proof, leakproof, well ventilated, and pet friendly carriers. Consideration: An adult dog is measured nose to tail plus 2-4 inches to

⁶ Small pets include cats and other small pet examples include, but are not limited to rodents (gerbil, rat, mouse, hamster, guinea pig, chinchilla, hedgehog), ferrets, rabbits, birds, reptiles (turtle, lizard, snake), hermit crabs, and fish.

determine the appropriate length and size of a carrier. Carriers range from small to extra-large sizes and measure 24 inches to 42 inches in length and can hold dogs weighing from 20-30 pounds to 70-90 pounds. It is recommended that you refer to the transit agency's internal policy to determine the carrier and size allowed on the vehicle.

- Neither the pet nor its carrier may interfere with the operation of the vehicle.
- Neither the pet nor its carrier may occupy a seat or block walkways.
 - While federal law does not require school buses to be universally accessible, public transit is required by law to have certain accessibility features. Many of these features work to the advantage of people traveling with large service animals, and this case serves a dual purpose, to potentially accommodate an evacuated large pet. One such feature is floor space, which will provide ample space to accommodate large pets. Many seats on transit buses have room underneath for a service animal to sit, lay, or to place the carrier to avoid blocking the aisle. Safety on bus floor surfaces comes into question during the actual bus ride with all the stops and acceleration. Experts in this area have varying opinions. Some suggest not making any provisions or modifications to the floor surface, while others recommend that a non-skid rug be placed on the floor to minimize the possibility of the dog slipping during the ride.
- Avoid more than two large, leashed (non-retractable six foot maximum leash) pets aboard the vehicle to avoid negative encounters between dogs. The number of allowed leashed pets is ultimately based on the provider's protocols and the occupant vehicle capacity.
- Typically, large pets are allowed in designated areas on deck aboard ferry vessels. Pets on deck must always remain on a nonretractable 6-foot maximum leash.
- Passengers must clean up after their pet(s).

Recommended Supplies and Equipment

Small Pet Carriers

- Collapsible cardboard boxes for use as temporary kennels/containers for pets.
- Portable kennels/cages.

Leashes/Harnesses/Collars (various sizes) – *may be required based on transit agency's policy and in accordance with city/county ordinances.*

- Slip Leashes are recommended.
- Use a slip leash only if dog or animal is aggressive; consider having the owner apply it.
- Harnesses and flat collars should fit snug but not too tight to ensure the dog doesn't slip free. Rule of thumb: two (2) fingers can fit under the straps and the dog, or dog's neck respectively.
- Muzzles should only be considered if the pet is *trained* to wearing one, otherwise there is a possibility the pet could easily remove it or may redirect aggression towards the person applying it.

First Aid Supplies

- Federal Transit Authority (FTA) recommends that all transit vehicles be equipped with the following basic onboard safety equipment:
 - Seat belt/Web cutters
 - Biohazard kit
 - Fire extinguisher
 - First aid kit
 - Triangles
 - Flashlight

Additional Supplies for Consideration

- Leather or abrasion resistant gloves

If transit agencies equip their vehicles with these and/or other items of safety equipment, all vehicle drivers must be trained on their proper use and storage. Pre/post-trip inspections should include verification that safety equipment is aboard and available. First aid and biohazard kits must be kept fully stocked and be matched to the units required by the number of passengers on the vehicle – reference [Title 13 CCR § 1243](#).

APPENDIX A: PUC 99166 WORK GROUP

California Department of Food and Agriculture

- Dr. Gustavo Soberano, Supervising Veterinarian – Emergency Preparedness and Response Section (EPRS)
- Sonia Brown, Program Manager II – EPRS-CARES

California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services

- Lynne Olson, Program Manager II – Planning Division and Preparedness Branch
- Nick Murray, Senior Emergency Services Coordinator – Emergency Functions Planning Unit

California Department of Transportation

- Markus Lansdowne, Division 4 EOC Coordinator

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

- Stephen Terrin, Field Operations and Asset Management

Water Emergency Transportation Authority

- Lauren Duran Gularte

Access LA

- Mike Greenwood, Chief Operating Officer for Access Services

Veterinary Behaviorist

- Dr. Jeannine Berger, DVM, DACVB, DACAW, CAWA
Senior Executive-San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Reviewers

Public Transit

- Access LA (end-user review)
- California Transit Association (collective membership review)
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (collective membership review)

Local Government Emergency Management

- Darrell G. Ray Jr., Acting Deputy Director - County of Santa Clara
- Michael Ramirez, Supervising Emergency Services Officer - County of San Bernardino
- Stacie Silva, Emergency Manager - County of Santa Barbara
- Cindi Duns Moor, Emergency Services Officer - County of Butte

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

- [American Animal Hospital Association](#)
- [California Emergency Support Function 1 Transportation Annex](#)
- [California Emergency Support Function 6 Care and Shelter Annex](#)
- [California Emergency Support Function 8 Public Health and Medical Annex](#)
- [California Emergency Support Function 11 Food and Agriculture Annex](#)
- [California Emergency Support Function 13 Law Enforcement Annex](#)
- [NASAAEP – Species Evacuation and Transport Guide](#)
- [National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs \(NASAAEP\): Animal Evacuation and Transportation Best Practices](#)
- [National Volunteers Active in Disasters \(NVOAD\) Mass Care Committee – Pet and Animal Sheltering Capacity: Facility, Supply and Equipment Requirements](#)
- [State of California Emergency Plan 2017](#)

APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS

Mass Transit – For the purpose of this guidance, mass transit includes, but is not limited to, public transit agencies and their buses, rail lines, and ferry operations, and any other vehicles used by the agency for public transportation.

Public Transit Agency (also called transit system) – An entity (public or private) responsible for administering and managing transit activities and services. Transit agencies can directly operate transit service or contract out for all, or part of the total **transit** service provided.

Public Transit Operator – The public entity or government-approved authority that participates in the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in accordance with the [Federal Highway Administration Code of Federal Regulations](#) Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.), Highways Sections 134 and 135, and Title 49 United States Code (U.S.C.), Transportation – Sections 5303 and 5304, and is a recipient of Federal funds under title 49 U.S.C.

Pets – Public Utilities Code 99166 references [Health and Safety Code 1799.109](#) for the definition of a pet as a domesticated dog or cat. It is up to the discretion of the transit agency and/or the local government to expand past that definition.

Service Animal – Federal law states a service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Different species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability as referenced in [28 CFR § 35.104](#). Under Title II and III of the ADA, service animals are limited to dogs. However, entities must make reasonable modifications in policies to allow individuals with disabilities to use miniature horses if they have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities.

Examples of animals that fit the ADA's definition of "service animal" because they have been specifically trained to perform a task for the person with a disability include:

- Guide Dog or Seeing Eye® Dog is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool for persons who have severe visual impairments or are blind.

- Hearing or Signal Dog is a dog that has been trained to alert a person who has a significant hearing loss or is deaf when a sound occurs, such as a knock on the door.
- Psychiatric Service Dog is a dog that has been trained to perform tasks that assist individuals with disabilities to detect the onset of psychiatric episodes and lessen their effects. Tasks performed by psychiatric service animals may include reminding the handler to take medicine, providing safety checks or room searches, or turning on lights for persons with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, interrupting self-mutilation by persons with dissociative identity disorders, and keeping disoriented individuals from danger.
- SSigDOG (sensory signal dogs or social signal dog) per the ADA National Network, is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the handler to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g., hand flapping).
- Seizure Response Dog is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure or the dog may go for help. A few dogs have learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance to sit down or move to a safe place.

Bus System

Public Transportation (also called transit, public transit, or mass transit) is transportation by a conveyance that provides regular and continuing general or special transportation to the public, but not including school buses, charter or sightseeing service.

Transit agency (also called transit system) is an entity (public or private) responsible for administering and managing transit activities and services. Transit agencies can directly operate transit service or contract out for all, or part of the total transit service provided. When responsibility is with a public entity, it is a public transit agency. When more than one mode of service is operated, it is a multimodal transit agency.

Accessible Vehicles – Transit passenger vehicles that do not restrict access, is usable, and provides allocated space and/or priority seating for individuals who use wheelchairs.

Bus (also called **motor bus**) – Mode of transit service characterized by roadway vehicles powered by diesel, gasoline, battery, or alternative fuel engines contained within the vehicle. Vehicles operate on streets and roadways in fixed-route or other regular service. Types of bus service include local service, where vehicles may stop

every block or two along a route several miles long. When limited to a small geographic area or to short-distance trips, local service is often called circulator, feeder, neighborhood, trolley, or shuttle service. Other types of bus service are express service, limited-stop service, and bus rapid transit (BRT).

Articulated Bus – Extra-long (54 to 60 feet) bus with the rear body section connected to the main body by a joint mechanism. The accordion-like joint mechanism allows the vehicle to bend when in operation for sharp turns and curves and yet have a continuous interior. It can hold about 60 passengers.

Intercity Bus – A bus with a front door only, separate luggage compartments, usually with restroom facilities, and high-backed seats for high-speed, long-distance service. Usually 40-foot or longer, with only forward-facing, reclining seats. They typically hold about 40 passengers

Minibus “Body on Chassis” or “Cut-Away” – These vehicles are wider and taller than standard vans. Like van conversions, they have a walk-in, front entry doors and a center aisle, but they are wider and higher than van conversions, with interiors tall enough to allow a person to stand and four-across seating. Minibuses are made with various wheelbases designed to accommodate 16, 20, 24, or 28 ambulatory passengers (excluding the driver). A school bus may also fit into this definition.

Paratransit and Micro-Transit (also known as **demand response** or **dial-a-ride**) – ADA compliant transit vehicles ranging from small mini-vans, up to full-size heavy-duty buses. Small vehicles include standard 15-passenger vans. Medium vehicles include cutaways also known as a minibus. Large vehicles include cutaways measuring lengths of over 25 feet. The vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule. While these vehicles may not be efficient for large-scale evacuations, they can be helpful in specialized situations, including areas with winding or steep where larger vehicles cannot or should not operate.

School Bus – There are four types of school buses produced by manufacturers in North America. The smallest school buses are designated Type A (based on cutaway van chassis); a larger format (bodied on bare front-engine chassis) are designated Type B buses. Large school buses include Type C (bodied on cowled medium-duty truck chassis) and Type D (bodied on bare "forward control" or "pusher" chassis). Type C buses are the most common design, while Type D buses are the largest vehicles.

All school buses are of single deck design with step entry. In the United States and Canada, bus bodies are restricted to a maximum width of 102 in (2.59 m) and a maximum length of 45 ft (13.7 m). Seating capacity is affected by both body length and operator specifications, with the largest designs seating up to 90 passengers. Seats are spaced closer together, limiting how many adult passengers compared to children may

ride the bus. Depending on the bus configuration, non-ambulatory passengers may have difficulty boarding and sitting in closely spaced seats.

Transit Bus – A with front and center doors, generally with a rear-mounted engine, low-back seating, and without luggage compartments or restroom facilities for use in frequent stop service. This vehicle can usually hold about 42 ambulatory passengers.

Rail System

Commuter Rail (also called **metropolitan rail**, **regional rail**, or **suburban rail**) – Mode of transit service characterized by an electric or diesel propelled railway for urban passenger train service consisting of local short distance travel operating between a central city and adjacent suburbs. Service must be operated on a regular basis by or under contract with a transit agency for the purpose of transporting passengers within urbanized areas, or between urbanized areas and outlying areas. Such rail service, using either locomotive hauled or self-propelled railroad passenger cars, is generally characterized by multi-trip tickets, specific station to station fares, railroad employment practices and usually only one or two stations in the central business district. Intercity rail service is excluded, except for that portion of such service that is operated by or under contract with a public transit agency for predominantly commuter services. Most service is provided on routes of current or former freight railroads.

Heavy Rail (also called **metro**, **subway**, **rapid transit**, or **rapid rail**) – Mode of transit service operating on an electric railway with the capacity for a heavy volume of traffic. It is characterized by high speed and rapid acceleration passenger rail cars operating singly or in multi-car trains on fixed rails; separate rights-of-way from which all other vehicular and foot traffic are excluded; sophisticated signaling, and high platform loading.

Light Rail Vehicle (also called **streetcar**, **tram**, **trolleybus**, or **trolley coach**) – Rail car with motive capability, generally driven by electric power taken from overhead lines, configured for passenger traffic, and usually operating on non-exclusive right-of-way and may have either high platform loading or low level boarding using steps.

Metro Rail Transit – Metro systems are primarily used for transport within a city and have higher service frequencies and substantially higher passenger volume capacities and run on fixed intervals. Motive capability maybe by electric power taken from overhead lines or third rails.

Ferry System

Ferry Boat – Transit mode comprising vessels carrying passengers and in some cases vehicles over a body of water, and that are generally steam or diesel-powered. When at least one terminal is within an urbanized area, it is an urban ferryboat service. Such service excludes international, rural, rural interstate, island, and urban park ferries.

Cable Ferry – Vessel that is guided by a cable across a river or large body of water by cables connected to both shores.

Catamaran Ferry – Multi-hulled vessel featuring two hulls of equal size deriving its stability from a wide beam rather than a ballasted keel.

Vehicle Ferry – Vessel that carries vehicles across water.

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE PRE/POST-EVENT AGREEMENT

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) or
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
BETWEEN _____ (PROVIDING AGENCY/JURISDICTION) AND
THE COUNTY OF _____ (REQUESTING JURISDICTION) PERTAINING TO
ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THIS MEMORANDUM**

NOTE: Use of such an agreement/understanding does not guarantee state or federal reimbursement.

WHEREAS, this event and associated conditions will collectively be referred to as (Name of incident); and

WHEREAS, on (DATE), this declared emergency event consists of (List type of incident, i.e. fire, flood, earthquake, etc.); and

WHEREAS, the following extreme conditions exist: (Briefly describe the incident, i.e. lives threatened, extent of property/infrastructure damaged and/or threatened. List the type of conditions contributing to the disaster such as strong winds and low humidity aiding fires that swept through the region OR outline typical hazards or risks and types of incidents a county is most likely to experience); and

(If applicable) WHEREAS, on (DATE) a Presidential Declaration of Emergency (FEMA-XXXX-DR) was issued; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Management Mutual Aid Plan delineates the current state policy concerning Emergency Management Mutual Aid; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Management Mutual Aid Plan describes the standard procedures used to acquire emergency management mutual aid resources and the method to ensure coordination of emergency management mutual aid planning and readiness; and

WHEREAS, the county emergency manager is the Operational Area Emergency Management Mutual Aid Coordinator; and

WHEREAS, Emergency Management Mutual Aid Plan provides, in pertinent part, “When an emergency develops or appears to be developing which cannot be resolved by emergency management resources within an Operational Area, it is the responsibility of the Operational Area Mutual Aid Coordinator to provide assistance and coordination to control the problem;” and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Management Mutual Aid Plan provides, in pertinent part, “A request for emergency management mutual aid requires the approval of an authorized official of the requesting jurisdiction;” and

WHEREAS, the (*Authorized Official Title*) of the County of _____ (*Requesting Jurisdiction*) requested the mutual aid assistance of _____ (*Providing Agency/Jurisdiction*), pursuant to the Emergency Management Mutual Aid Plan to provide emergency management support in connection with the (Name of incident or Any Incident that may impact the county); and

WHEREAS, _____ (*Providing Agency/Jurisdiction*) provided emergency management mutual aid consisting of emergency management personnel, equipment, and/or materials from (date through date) to assist with emergency management services in connection with the (Name of incident); and

WHEREAS, _____ (*Providing Agency/Jurisdiction*) agrees to document all of its mutual aid assistance costs related to the (Name of incident) as attachments to this MOA and submit to the County of _____ (*Requesting Jurisdiction*) as soon as practicable;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED by and between the County of _____ (*Requesting Jurisdiction*) and _____ (*Providing Agency/Jurisdiction*) that the County of _____ (*Requesting Jurisdiction*) shall reimburse all reasonable costs associated with _____ (*Providing Agency/Jurisdiction*) emergency management mutual aid assistance during the (Name of incident).

Providing Jurisdiction

By _____

(Signature)

Name:

Title:

County:

Date:

Providing Agency *(If different from Providing Jurisdiction)*

By _____

(Signature)

Name:

Title:

County:

Date:

Requesting Jurisdiction

By _____

(Signature)

Name:

Title:

County:

Date:

DEFINITIONS

Authorized Official: A person with expressed authority by a legal governing body to request resources, authorize purchases, and/or enter into contracts on behalf of a Requesting or Providing Jurisdiction during an emergency.

Operational Area (OA): An intermediate level of the state emergency services organization consisting of a county and all political subdivisions within the county area.

Providing Agency/Jurisdiction: The government/public/private/PNP/NGO entity providing resources. The different levels of providing jurisdictions include providing local jurisdiction, providing OA and providing region.

Requesting Jurisdiction: The government entity requesting resources. The different levels of requesting jurisdictions include requesting local jurisdiction, requesting OA and requesting region.

APPENDIX E: ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

Understanding Animal Behavior for Transit Safety

As a transit agency, it is important to understand the differences in animal behavior⁷ and adaptability. Animal behavior is complex and requires specialized training to recognize and interpret. Transit agencies can gain a rudimentary understanding of animal behavior through specific training from local animal services, emergency management agencies, and board-certified veterinary behaviorists. The transit agency's primary responsibility is to identify and prohibit or remove from boarding any pet whose behavior appears to pose a direct threat to the safety of passengers or could cause distraction for the vehicle driver. Vehicle drivers should also be prepared to manage passengers who profess a fear or dislike of animals and are unwilling to share transport with them.

The pet is the ultimate responsibility of the pet owner.

Feline Animal Behavior

A cat's communication style consists of body language, facial expressions, and vocalization. A cat's body language is made up of a cat's body postures, facial expressions, and the position and carriage of certain body parts, like ears, tail and even whiskers. Cat body language is more subtle than dog body language and can be harder for people to interpret.

Cats can react offensively or defensively. It is critical to know that cats may be frightened by unexpected stimuli and become defensive quickly. Most people know when a cat is happy because the cat purrs and wants to rub the head on your hand. A cat that hisses, growls, or spit-stomps wants to be left alone. This is when you should not approach or reach for that cat. In pet cats, aggressive behavior can range from cats who hiss and avoid the target of their aggression to cats who attack. Understanding what cats are communicating through their body language is necessary. It enables you to more accurately "read" the cat's behavior and understand their feelings and motivations for doing what they do. It also helps you respond more effectively to behavior issues like aggression. Threats and aggression can be either offensive or defensive. An offensively aggressive cat tries to make himself look bigger and more intimidating, whereas a defensively aggressive cat adopts a self-protective posture and tries to make himself look smaller. Typical body postures associated with fearful or defensive aggression are a combination of defensive signals (such as crouching,

⁷ [American Kennel Club](#); [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#); [Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\) II](#); [American Animal Hospital Association](#); Veterinarian Behaviorist-Dr. Jeannine Berger, DVM, DACVB, DACAW, CAWA.

flattening the ears, tucking the tail, leaning away or rolling onto the side, and pupil dilation) and aggressive signals (such as hissing and spitting, piloerection, growling, swatting, biting and scratching).

Offensive postures include:

- A stiff, straight-legged upright stance
- Stiffened rear legs, with the rear end raised and the back sloped downward toward the head
- Tail is stiff and lowered or held straight down to the ground
- Direct stare
- Upright ears, with the backs rotated slightly forward
- Piloerection (hackles up), including fur on the tail
- Constricted pupils
- Directly facing opponent, possibly moving toward him
- Might be growling, howling, or yowling

Defensive postures include:

- Crouching
- Head tucked in
- Tail curved around the body and tucked in
- Eyes wide open with pupils partially or fully dilated
- Ears flattened sideways or backward on the head
- Piloerection (hackles up)
- In an anxious cat, whiskers might be retracted. In a fearful cat, whiskers might pan out and forward to assess distance between himself and the danger
- Turning sideways to the opponent, not straight on
- Open-mouthed hissing or spitting
- Might deliver quick strikes with front paws, claws out

Fear aggression can occur when a cat perceives a threat, and it escalates if he can't escape. The more threatening the person, animal, object, or sound seems to the cat, the more heightened the pet's fear reaction will be. Some common triggers for redirected aggression are hearing high-pitched noises, being frightened, or harassed by a dog, being in an animal shelter or vehicle, surrounded by the sight, smell, and sounds of other cats.

Although it is likely most cats will travel in a carrier, some cats are uncomfortable in a carrier when in public or traveling. Due to being in a carrier, it may not be easy to read a

cat's body language accurately. Some cats are more vocal than others. Cat vocalization includes purr, meow, hiss, growl, spit, shriek, chatter, and moan. Cats vocalize, display facial expressions and body postures to express if they are friendly, want to be left alone, or are feeling cornered and may attack. As a transit vehicle driver, it is essential to understand the differences in a cat's communication signals.

Feline Body Language

Posture	Behavior
Back arched, cat's hackles are raised - fur standing on end (aka Halloween cat or Piloerection)	Very frightened, defensive aggression
Lying on back, growling, upset, ready to strike with teeth and claws	Aggression
Fur flat, tail relaxed	Welcoming your touch
Lying on back, purring, relaxed	Happy and welcoming

Head Position	Behavior
High	Neutral, confident, happy, aggressive
Low or backward	Fearful, Submissive

Tail Position	Behavior
Erect, fur flat	Alert, inquisitive, optimistic
Horizontal	Fearful, submissive
Straight up, quivering	Relaxed or unsure
Straight up, tense, fur standing on end	Excited, happy, ready to urine mark
Held very low or tucked between legs	Agitated, frightened, stressed
Thrashing back and forth	Very agitated – watch out!

Facial Expressions

Eye Position	Behavior
Semi-open and soft blinking	Relaxed
Pupils large and black (dilated)	Nervous, fearful (somewhat dilated) Defensively aggressive and predatory playful (fully dilated)
Pupils constricted	Content or offensive aggression

Ear Position	Behavior
Forward	Alert, interested, happy, relaxed
Erect, swiveled, opening point to the side	Irritable, stressed, aggressive
Flat, backward, sideways	Fearful, frightened, irritable, stressed
Swiveling	Attentive, listening to every little sound, alert

Mouth Position	Behavior
Closed	Relaxed
Open tight and showing teeth; wide open with hissing or spiting	Fearful, aggressive
Open Gape/Flehmen response	Head lifted, mouth open slightly, tongue is flicking, lips curled back slightly, eyes squinting, and inhales with the nostrils usually closed. Response to a strange smell.

Approaching an Unfamiliar Cat

Approach an unfamiliar cat in the transit vehicle only if needed or if it gets loose.

- Speak slowly and softly.
- Approach with your side facing the cat.
- Move slowly.
- Work with a partner or the owner/handler.
- Offer an empty carrier or box for the cat to enter and hide.

Cat Fights

If cats remain in their crates, a cat fight is unlikely to occur. However, if a cat fight appears to be imminent, it is best to prevent cats from fighting with each other by distracting them or interrupting the behavior before it escalates to a fight. Look for signs of aggression. Before the fight starts, you'll typically see one or both cats hissing, growl, with raised hackles and ears pinned down, tail tucked or twitching. At this point, remove the one cat, preferably the less agitated one the situation before a fight begins or escalates. When attempting to break up a cat fight, never use your hands or body because you can get hurt in the process.

Recommended ways to break up a cat fight:

- Water is the best way to break up a cat fight. Using a spray bottle, spray two (2) to three (3) times rapidly from a safe distance. Continue to do so as necessary to end the fight. A good dose of water will separate most cats within a few seconds.
- A blanket, towel or even a large jacket thrown over the cats tends to startle them, redirecting their attention from fighting with one another to escaping the blanket.

The sudden disorientation by the blanket will get the cats to stop fighting and focus on escaping from under the blanket.

- Distract the cats by clapping your hands loudly or shouting at them. This may be enough to get them to stop.

Once you've broken the fight up, you need to separate the cats immediately. Often the best way is to offer each cat a way to retract into a safe space which can be a crate or box.

Canine Animal Behavior

Reading body language, vocalizations and behavior are essential elements to understanding dogs. Indicators such as the look in a dog's eyes, the tone of the vocalization, the position of the ears, and the motion of the tail can provide critical clues that reveal specific intentions. A dog's audible communication consists of vocalizations such as barks, whines, and growls, but more often, dogs rely on nonverbal body language. A dog can express a complex array of temperaments through a constellation of positioning and movement of its eyes, ears, mouth, head, body, legs, and tail. Many nonverbal signals a dog presents can be unfamiliar to or misinterpreted by humans (e.g., a yawning dog may be anxious and stressed). Furthermore, dogs in unusual or restrictive circumstances, such as in a crate or on a lead, may show stressful behavior in response to external stressors. Owners should watch their dogs closely. Most people are not trained in how to properly behave around unfamiliar dogs and assume that dogs generally want to greet strangers. Even dogs that are normally very friendly and well-behaved with strangers can become defensive in certain situations and will bite if threatened or feel threatened.

Sometimes, people are simply unfamiliar with dog body language. At other times, it is in direct contrast with what that same signal means to a human, such as with yawning or looking away. Always look for signs of fear in a dog's body language. If a dog is frightened, it will likely show signs of fear, anxiety, and stress (FAS). With FAS, the dog is more likely to show flight, freeze, or fight behaviors, especially when it cannot escape. Being confined in a stressful situation puts animals and people at higher risk, hence it is critical to read and understand what those signals mean to avoid problems. It is reasonable to say that most dogs in an evacuation situation are stressed and will display some of the following body language.

Canine Body Language

Posture	Behavior
Weight shifted forward	Interested, wants to approach, or may also be a sign of offensive or aggressive actions
Cowering - lowering to the ground or hunched	Fear, anxiety, or stress

Head Position	Behavior
Low	Fear, anxiety, submissive
Raised or Straight Forward	Aggressive
Tilted	Optimizing sound-attempting to hear

Tail Position	Behavior
Tucked	Fear, anxiety, or stress
Wagging	May not be a sign of friendliness; should not be used as a sign to approach or touch the dog.
High and stiff with a forward stance	Offensive aggression

Facial Expressions

Eye Position	Behavior
Hard stare Hard stare with a forward stance	Intense fear and discomfort Offensive aggression
Whites of the eyes showing (aka Whale Eye)	Fear, anxiety, or stress
Avoiding eye contact	Fear, anxiety, stress, or trying to find a place to escape

Ear Position	Behavior
Held back	Fear, anxiety, or stress
Pointed forward	Sign of interest
Shifting position frequently	Looking for an escape

Approaching an Unfamiliar Dog

Approach an unfamiliar dog in the transit vehicle only if needed or if it gets loose.

- Maintain a relaxed posture.
- Avoid direct eye contact.
- Turn your body sideways.
- Lower your body closer to the ground while remaining on your feet.
- Let the dog approach you.
- Talk to the dog in a friendly soft voice.
- Have treats or a toy ready with you.
- Do not lean over the dog.
- Do not reach over the dog.
- Stay away from a dog’s face.
- Always be able to retreat.
- Try to set up the environment.
- Expect the unexpected.

Dogfights

Reading signs of aggression, including fear-related aggression is key before a dog boards a vehicle. When a dog shows aggression before boarding the vehicle, it is best not to allow the owner and their pet to board. It is recommended that the vehicle driver refer to the transit agency’s policies and procedures. However, if dogs become aggressive toward each other while in transit, breaking up a dogfight will put you at risk of serious injury, so it is best to avoid it. Although most experts say that most dogfights only last for a few intense seconds, when the dogfight doesn't seem to show signs of stopping quickly, what do you do? The best approach to a dogfight is to prevent it from happening in the first place. The dog should be in a crate or on a leash. If leashed dogs show signs of aggression and a dogfight erupts while leashed, the owners need to hold on to the leash and move in opposite directions. A solid object can be placed between

the dogs as a barrier (e.g., board, suitcase, anything large and solid). Make noise to distract the dogs, or spray or pour water over the dogs.

Reading signs of aggression is not always easy to do. For instance, a panting dog may look like it's approachable, but it may be fearful and on edge, ready to snap if it feels threatened. Signs to look for include:

- Cowering
- Licking lips
- Exaggerated yawn
- Turning away
- Flattened ears
- Tail tucking, standing straight out, and flickering
- Whale eye (turned head but with an eye still looking at the perceived threat showing the white of their eye)
- Piloerection (hackles are raised – stiffening of hair down the spine)

If you notice these signs, it's important that you remove the dog as quickly as possible to avoid a potential fight. Remember that animal owners are ultimately responsible for their pets.