



City of Arlington Animal Services
Coyote and Bobcat Mitigation Plan for Encounters

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for responses to interactions with coyotes and bobcats, particularly to resolve and reduce human-coyote/bobcat interactions in a consistent and expedient manner. Public safety is the number one concern of the City, and coyotes/bobcats will be managed with human safety as a priority. While the City employs educational outreach tools as the primary tool in managing human-coyote/bobcat interactions, the City recognizes that there are situations where other management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.

In addition, this protocol provides general guidelines for City personnel who receive calls about all other wildlife concerns and for law enforcement personnel who may be dispatched to respond to these situations.

Definitions:

Coyote/Bobcat Observation - The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat or vocalizations.

Coyote/Bobcat Sighting - A visual observation of a coyote(s)/bobcat(s).

Coyote/Bobcat Encounter – An unexpected direct meeting between a human and a coyote or bobcat WITHOUT incident

Pet Attack - Is a situation where a coyote/bobcat or coyote(s)/bobcat(s) attacks, injures, or kills a pet animal.

Coyote/Bobcat Incident - A interaction between a human and a coyote/bobcat where a coyote/bobcat exhibited behavior creating an unsafe situation for the human. This category will only include pet attacks when the pet owner is in the immediate area of the attack and the coyote/bobcat is undeterred by the presence of the human – thereby creating an unsafe situation for the person.

Attack with NO BITE – An encounter where the animal charged or exhibited aggressive actions but did not bite a human.

Attack with BITE – An encounter where the animal charged or exhibited aggressive actions and bit a human.

Nuisance – Animals that have become habituated typically through intentional or unintentional feeding whose daytime activities are increased and/or the animal has lost its innate fear of humans.

Habituated - A coyote/bobcat that appears to frequently associate with humans or human related food sources and exhibits little wariness of the presence of people.

Depredating - A coyote/bobcat that is preying on pets or livestock.



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Menacing - A coyote/bobcat that exhibits aggravated territorial or predatory behavior toward people, but that does not qualify it as a dangerous coyote/bobcat. This may include coyote/bobcat incidents and/or encounters that were serious in nature or a coyote/bobcat

Breeding Season – Mid-January to Early-March, gestation of coyotes is typically 63 – 65 days and bobcats is 60 days.

Home Range – approximately 2 – 3 square miles

Aggressive Action – Similar to actions shown by aggressive dogs. Includes: agitated (unprovoked) barking, raised heckles, snarling, growling, lunging, and charging.

Dangerous Coyote/Bobcat - A coyote/bobcat may be defined as dangerous using the following guidelines:

1. A coyote/bobcat that has attacked a person.
2. A coyote/bobcat that exhibits aggressive behavior towards a human(s) and/or poses a significant threat to human safety.
3. A coyote/bobcat or group of coyotes/bobcats that Arlington Animal Services believes may be dangerous based on a totality of behaviors and/or locations.

Hazing – is an activity or series of activities that are conducted with the intention of changing behavior of habituated coyotes and/or to re-instill a fear of people in the local coyote population.

Low Level – Consists of directly facing the coyote and being “big and loud” by waving your arms over your head, making loud noises or squirting the coyote with water until the coyote(s) chooses to leave. Using a variety of different hazing tools is critical because coyotes can become desensitized to the continued use of just one technique, sound or action. Can include throwing small rocks and sticks, noisemakers, air horns, yelling, clapping, garden hoses, water guns, banging pots and pans, and deterrent sprays.

High Level – Consists of approaching the animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, paint balls, pepper balls, sling shots, clay pellets or pepper spray at the coyote. High-intensity hazing should only be carried out by trained professionals such as animal control and police officers. High-intensity hazing should be used in specific areas and only in response to more egregious incidents.

Responsibility:

Arlington Animal Services will be the repository for coyote/bobcat reports in the territorial limits of Arlington and will record and map reports of coyote/bobcat activity and interactions. Animal Services will distribute this information online at arlingtontx.gov/animals.



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Arlington Animal Services will provide guidance and education to citizens and groups with managing nuisance coyotes/bobcats. Arlington Animal Services officers will respond either by phone or in person to reports of dangerous coyotes/bobcats and make a management decision based on the interest of public safety.

Arlington Parks Department will monitor coyote/bobcat activity in city parks and will report encounters, human – coyote/bobcat incidents, and pet attacks to animal services so that the information can be captured in the database and investigated.

Arlington Police Department may assist as needed out of an abundance of caution.

Arlington Animal Services Bite Investigator will follow up on coyote/bobcat encounters that are considered a possible rabies exposure.

City Response:

Observation and Sighting:

1. Arlington Action Center will record the information to AMANDA and the information will be transferred to the mapping program within 24 hours.
2. Arlington Action Center will provide the reporting party with general coyote/bobcat information and refer them to the animal services web page.

Encounter:

1. Arlington Action Center will place a call into AMANDA for an officer to respond. Animal Services will record the encounter on the animal services database / website.
2. The Animal Services Officer will evaluate the situation and provide education information (including suggestions for low-level hazing) and email information to the reporting party.

Pet Attack:

*If the owner of the pet animal is in the immediate area of the attack and the coyote/bobcat is undeterred by the presence of the human – thereby creating an unsafe situation for the person, the situation will be categorized as an **incident**.*

1. Arlington Action Center will place a call into AMANDA for an officer to respond. Animal Services will record the encounter on the animal services database / website.
2. The Animal Services Officer will evaluate the situation and provide education information (including suggestions for low-level hazing) and email information to the reporting party.



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3. If the animal services officer (or Animal Services Management) believes that the pet attack poses a risk to public safety or if the particular geographic area is an area of increasing encounters or incidents that pose a growing concern for public safety appropriate intervention may be made to mitigate the coyote/bobcat behavior, the following actions may be taken:
 - i. Initiate a hazing program
 - ii. Contact the area neighborhood via email alert, flyers, or other communication to advise them of the situation and provide them information on legal hazing methods to utilize.
 - iii. Determine if other management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.

Incident/Attack with NO BITE:

1. Arlington Action Center will place a call into AMANDA for an officer to respond. Animal Services will record the encounter on the animal services database / website.
2. The Animal Services Officer will evaluate the situation and provide education information (including suggestions for low-level hazing) and email information to the reporting party.
3. If the animal services officer (or Animal Services Management) believes that the incident poses a risk to public safety or if the particular geographic area is an area of increasing encounters or incidents that pose a growing concern for public safety appropriate intervention may be made to mitigate the coyote/bobcat behavior, the following actions may be taken: Initiate a hazing program.
4. Contact the area neighborhood via email alert, flyers or other communication to advise them of the situation and provide them information on legal hazing methods to utilize.
5. Determine if other management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.

Attack

1. 911 or Arlington Action Center will notify the Arlington Animal Services department immediately so that they have an opportunity to respond and determine if immediate management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.
2. Dispatch an Arlington Police Officer and an animal services officer immediately. The animal services officer will take a written report. This information will be added to the animal services database. Animal services will notify the Animal Services Bite Investigator for human bites or pets that were bitten by coyotes/bobcats.



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3. Determine if other management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.
4. Initiate a hazing program if appropriate.
5. Initiate a public information campaign in the area.
6. If multiple attacks occur, or Animal Services is unsuccessful in capturing the animal, Animal Services will contact USDA Wildlife Services and Texas Department of State Health Services for further guidance.

Nuisance Coyote/Bobcat

1. Follow the procedures above for observations, sightings, encounters, pet attacks, and incidents.
2. In situations where public safety is determined to be compromised by coyote/bobcat behavior, consult with Arlington Animal Services Field Operations Manager to see if a public education campaign, hazing, trapping, or lethal control is appropriate for the situation.

Dangerous Coyote/Bobcat

1. Follow the procedures outlined above for an incident or an attack
2. Notify the Arlington Animal Services immediately and dispatch an Animal Services Officer and Arlington Police Officer immediately.
3. An Animal Services Officer dispatched to the scene will take a written report. This report will be added to the animal services database.
4. Determine if other management techniques may have to be used in accordance with City of Arlington Animals Chapter Section 2.03.
5. Initiate a hazing program if appropriate.
6. Initiate a public information campaign in the area

Additional Response and Recommended Actions

Animal Services may offer to loan a live trap (with a damage deposit) to a resident when a coyote(s) is causing damage to crops, real or personal property, pets or livestock. In the event that the landowner successfully traps a coyote, Animal Services will transport the animal and will euthanize the animal with chemical euthanasia.

The Animal Services Manager may also contact USDA Wildlife Services, and/or Texas Parks and Wildlife for assistance in managing the interaction.

If the attack happens on public property Animal Services will recommend the public area be closed while an investigation is underway and until the problem is considered resolved out of an abundance of caution.

Physical removal should only be considered in extreme cases, when a coyote or bobcat is a threat to the safety of the residents.



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Targeted removal is a more promising approach than large-scale removal of local coyote populations. Coyotes are an extremely resilient species, regardless of human attempts to manage them.

Authority:

Ordinances Governing **ANIMALS** in the CITY OF ARLINGTON TEXAS **Section 4.13 Wild Animals** It shall be the duty of the Animal Services Manager, in the absence of action by State or Federal agencies, to take up any and all wild animals that are diseased or which endanger the health of a person or other animal. The Animal Services Manager may at his or her discretion release a wild animal to a State agency, animal rehabilitation center, or an animal refuge.

The Animal Services Manager may also contact USDA Wildlife Services, and/or Texas Parks and Wildlife for assistance in managing the interaction and will defer to their recommendations based on the situation.

Arlington Animal Services will coordinate among other city departments and organizations to ensure effective and productive conflict resolution between wildlife and residents.



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Additional Information:

Yard Checklist for Reducing Wildlife Encounters:

Source	OK	FIX	Mitigation
Food			NEVER hand-feed, or intentionally feed wildlife
Pet Food			Store all pet food indoors, do not leave pet food outside.
Water Source			Remove Water Sources
Bird Feeders			Remove bird feeders, or thoroughly clean fallen seed to reduce the presence of small mammals that predators prefer to eat.
Fallen Fruit			Clean up fallen fruit from fruit bearing trees
Compost			Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents unless fully enclosed and secure.
BBQ Grills			Thoroughly clean up any food and residue from grills after each use.
Trash			Ensure all trash is secured in your trash cart with the lid fully closed. Periodically clean your carts to reduce odor attractants.
Landscaping			Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites. Keep weeds and grass well-manicured and remove brush and debris.
Structures and Outbuildings			Restrict access under decks, sheds, and around woodpiles, or any structure that can provide cover for wildlife.
Pets Outside			Never leave your pets unattended outside
Wildlife/Pet Interactions			Never allow your pet to “play” with wildlife
Outdoor Kennels			Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels to prevent access by coyotes.
Vaccinations			Keep your pets up to date on their vaccinations to create an epidemiological barrier between wildlife and pets to reduce the spread of dangerous disease like distemper and rabies.