

Keeping of Urban Hens Procedures & Guidelines

**EDMONTON**

**COMMUNITY STANDARDS URBAN HEN KEEPING PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**



<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b> COMMUNITY STANDARDS BRANCH, CITIZEN SERVICES, COE
<p>The "City" seeks to provide procedures and guidelines to allow for licensed urban hen keeping within city limits. These guidelines will build awareness among citizens with regards to urban hen keeping, mitigate potential public impacts from allowing hens in an urban environment, and will establish processes to deal with complaints and issues that may arise from licensed hen keeping sites and activities.</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC ASSOCIATIONS &amp; STAKEHOLDERS</b>                  EDMONTON FOOD COUNCIL                  PROVINCE OF ALBERTA                  RIVER CITY CHICKEN COLLECTIVE</p>
<b>DATE</b> 2016	
<b>PURPOSE</b>	

These procedures and guidelines establish the regulatory framework for the keeping of urban hens within the municipal boundaries of the City of Edmonton. This document will provide guidance for the selection of appropriate sites, the application processes, and enforcement procedures to ensure successful urban hen keeping. Best practices, communication plans, outcomes, and mitigation strategies of other municipalities who have made allowances for urban hen keeping were considered in the development of these procedures and guidelines. Zoning Bylaw requirements, potential health concerns, and provincial legislation were also carefully considered.

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### APPLICATION

To ensure consistency, all applicants will:

- 1) Obtain a copy of the Urban Hen Site regulations and guidelines from the City.
- 2) Make application for a development permit for urban outdoor farming pursuant to the *Zoning Bylaw 12800*. Applicants will be required to submit a site plan showing the actual dimensions of the rear yard of the property, and the proposed location and dimension of the chicken coop.
- 3) Once a development permit is obtained, apply on the City of Edmonton website for an urban hen keeping licence.
- 4) Set up the site in accordance with the submitted site plan and the City procedures and guidelines document once reviewed and a temporary Urban Hen Keeping licence has been issued by the City.
- 5) Notify the City once completed. City Animal Control Peace Officers will inspect the site to ensure that all guidelines/requirements have been followed and are in place prior to the issuance of a permanent Urban Hen Keeping licence.

### CITY ENFORCEMENT POLICY

- Poultry keeping is enforced under Section 27 of the *Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw, 13145*.
- Animal Control Peace Officers will respond to all complaints and initiate investigations when warranted.
- When enforcement or other husbandry issues arise, City Administration will work with hen keepers, neighbours, and other external stakeholders, to ensure they are addressed and resolved in a timely manner.
- Egg production is for self-consumption. No sale of eggs is permitted.
- All public complaints shall be directed through 311; this reporting approach is consistent with the City of Edmonton bylaw complaint process.

### LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES

- *Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw, 13145*
- *Municipal Government Act*

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## PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

### A. Site Requirements for Hen Coop

- i. Coops may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secured. During the application process, some properties, due to the smaller size of a backyard or other situational factors, may be deemed unsuitable for urban hen keeping and may not be licensed.
- ii. Coop sites should take into consideration backyard locations that would minimize impact to adjacent neighbours (away from bedroom windows, furthest point from building, etc.).
- iii. Each approved site can house only one coop and it must be in compliance with *Zoning Bylaw 12800*, Section 12.2 for Accessory buildings. Coops that are designed in accordance with Section 12.2 will not require a development permit. Consultation with a Development Officer/Planner is recommended before purchasing or installing an accessory structure.

### B. Number of Hens and Coop size

- i. The breed and number of hens will be recorded during the application process; as well, sites shall not exceed eight hens per site (less than three hens is not recommended). **Roosters are not permitted.**
- ii. For each hen, a minimum coop space of 0.37 square meters is required, as well as a minimum of 0.93 square meters of secured, covered space.
- iii. All coops must contain sufficient perch locations, have adequate ventilation, as well as be weather and predator proof.
- iv. All hens on site shall be banded and documented with the City for identification purposes.
- v. All hens must remain in the coop or an enclosed run at all times unless directly supervised, in which case they must remain on the licensed property.

### C. Nuisance Conditions

- i. The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise.

### D. Standard of Care

- i. Hen sites shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices; maintain hens in such a condition so as to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues. Hens require appropriate food, water (unfrozen), shelter, light, warmth, ventilation,

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veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, pecking, dust-bathing and roosting in order to be comfortable and healthy.

- ii. Animal Control must be notified immediately of any disease or welfare issues arising that may affect the public, and the steps that have been taken to resolve them.

### E. Waste & Disposal

- i. Manure must be removed, discarded, and/or properly composted to prevent nuisance odours.
- ii. Hens may not be slaughtered within the City. Removal methods include (but are not limited to) humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocating to a farm, or taking hens to a licensed abattoir. Deceased birds should be double-bagged and placed for garbage collection or taken to a veterinarian for disposal. As a licence requirement, all changes to flock size must be reported to Animal Control.

### F. Training/Mentor

- i. Each site owner must complete an accepted urban hen keeping course. It is also recommended that each site obtain support and assistance from a recognized mentor for the first year. This condition must be met, or reasonable steps toward meeting the requirement must be made prior to a permanent licence being issued.

### G. Inspections

- i. Upon reasonable request from Animal Control Peace Officers, Hen site owners shall make themselves available and provide access to the coops for inspection.
- ii. An initial inspection of the coop, hens, and site, will be conducted prior to final site approval and a licence being granted by the City of Edmonton.

### H. Registration

- i. Site owners must comply with all Provincial regulations around the keeping of hens. The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number. In case of potential disease outbreak, the PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations. The Province will maintain communication with site owners should any information or incidents occur that would require site owners to take action.
- ii. Flock owners shall provide proof of completion of a training course recognized by Animal Control as comprehensive and specific to the Alberta climate.

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### STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Information, which aided the development of the procedures and guidelines, was gathered through best practice research and engagement with external stakeholders including the River City Chicken Collective.

The City intends to continue regular and ongoing reviews of these procedures and guidelines to ensure hen keeping is a positive addition to the community, citizen complaints are reduced, impacts on neighbours are minimal and to provide a simple and successful program for all hen keepers to follow within the City of Edmonton. Mitigation measures, management plans, and communication efforts will be part of this annual review to enhance the program.

### COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Information will be made available through the City's website to provide citizens with information on best practices, site application processes, and guidelines for licensing of sites. The City of Edmonton will work with local subject matter experts and make referrals to existing stakeholder groups as required to enhance public education on urban hen keeping.