



Animals/Pets in the Client's Environment/Home

Animals/pets in Client's homes can be unpredictable and pose a risk to our homecare staff. The WRHA OESH Operational Procedure "Animals/Pets in the Client's Environment/Home was created to identify known and potential hazards to workers through the use of the **Safety Assessment Form Toll (SAFT)**, assess the risks, implement control measures to reduce or control these hazards, and communicate this information to staff through the **Safe Visit Plan (SVP)**.

Identifying the Hazards and Assessing the Risk - SAFT

The following information is gathered using the Safety Assessment Form Tool (SAFT) related to Animals/Pets

- Type, breed, number and names of animals
- Evidence of current or past aggression
- Client's ability to secure animal
- Client's willingness to follow SVP
- If the animal is a service animal
- Frequency and type of aggression
- Issues related to feces/urine
- Issues related to equipment and animals

Determining the Risk – SAFT

Based on the information gathered above, a risk level of low, medium or high is determined. Excluding service animals, every effort must be made and documented to contain or secure all low, medium and high risk animals/pets, however, it is recognized that some clients may not be physically able to isolate animals and this must be addressed in the Safe Visit Plan.

Creating a Safe Visit Plan - SVP

Medium and High Risk animals require a Safe Visit Plan which must be communicated. The Safe Visit Plan must alert workers to the hazards such as type and frequency of aggression possible and what type of controls are in place such as include isolating animals from workers by using a kennel, door, baby gate, or secured outside. If clients are physically unable to isolate medium and high risk animals then an alternate SVP must be created.

Communication of Hazards and Safe Visit Plan

In all cases (even if the risk is low and no safe visit plan is required) the type of animal(s), breed (if known), and name must be communicated to the worker. The details of the Safe Visit Plan must be communicated to workers prior to visiting the client's home.

Worker Responsibilities

Follow the Safe Visit Plan. Notify your supervisor if the client is not in compliance with the Safe Visit Plan or if the plan needs to be updated (new animal or change in behavior of animal).

**For further information contact your Supervisor or OESH.
Scan the QR code for Safety Tips: Dogs in Client's Homes.**

