

Livestock Exemption Permit

Urban Hen Guidelines and Procedures

Purpose:

Bylaw C-1226, the Animal and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw regulates keeping Urban Hens in the City of Grande Prairie. As per Bylaw C-1226, a person cannot have Urban Hens in the Urban Service Areas of the City without a Livestock Exemption Permit. The following guidelines and procedures establish the specific regulatory framework that must be met to successfully obtain and maintain a Livestock Exemption Permit allowing the keeping of Urban Hens within the Urban Service Areas of the City of Grande Prairie.

Legislative Authority:

1. Bylaw C-1226, Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership
2. Bylaw C-1260, Land Use Bylaw
3. Municipal Government Act

Application:

A person seeking a Livestock Exemption Permit for Hens will need to complete the following process:

1. Obtain and review a copy of the Urban Hen Guidelines and Procedures from the City.
2. Submit a Livestock Exemption Permit application to Enforcement Services and submit a site plan showing the actual dimensions of the rear yard of the property, and the proposed location and dimensions of the coop.
3. Upon approval of the application, the applicant may set-up the site in accordance with the submitted plans and the Urban Hen Guidelines and Procedures.
4. When the set-up is complete, the applicant will notify Enforcement Services. A Bylaw Enforcement Officer will inspect the site to ensure compliance with the permit conditions.

Guidelines and Procedures:

SITE REQUIREMENTS FOR HEN COOP AND RUN

- Coops may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secured. Some properties, due to the smaller size of a backyard or other situational factors, may not be deemed suitable for urban hen keeping through the application process.

- Coop sites should take into consideration backyard locations that would minimize impact to adjacent neighbours (away from bedroom windows, furthest point from building, etc).
- An approved site may house only one coop and run, and they must be located:
 - a minimum of 18.0 meters from a front property line,
 - a minimum of 3.0 meters from a dwelling,
 - a minimum of 1.0 meters from the side or rear property lines, and,
 - a minimum of 0.9 meters from any other buildings on the site.

NUMBER OF HENS AND COOP SIZE

- Approved sites shall not exceed four hens per site. **Roosters are not permitted.** Hen Breed and numbers shall be indicated through the application process. Young hens (also called pullets) shall not be younger than 16 weeks old.
- A minimum of 0.37 square meters per hen is required for the coop, along with a minimum of 0.93 square meters per hen for the outdoor enclosure.
- All coops must contain sufficient perch locations, nest box, have adequate ventilation, and be weather and predator proof.
- All hens on site shall be banded for identification and documented with the City.
- All hens must remain in the coop or an enclosed run unless directly supervised by a person at least 14 years old, and they must stay on the permitted property.

NUISANCE CONDITIONS

- The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent negative impacts, including but not limited to: attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise.

STANDARD OF CARE

- Hen sites shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices; maintain hens in such a condition to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues. Hens require appropriate food, liquid (unfrozen) water, shelter, light, warmth, ventilation, veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, pecking, dust-bathing and roosting, in order to be comfortable and healthy.
- Enforcement Services must be notified immediately of any disease or welfare issues that arise that may affect the public and the steps taken to rectify the situation.

WASTE & DISPOSAL

- Manure must be removed, discarded, and/or properly composted to prevent nuisance orders.

- There is to be no on-site slaughter or euthanizing of hens within City limits. Removal methods include (but are not limited to) humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocation 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. All changes to flock size must be reported to Enforcement Services as a permit requirement.

TRAINING & MENTOR

- The permit holder must have completed an accepted urban hen keeping course. It is also recommended that for the first year each site have support and assistance from a recognized mentor. These conditions must be met, or reasonable steps towards meeting the requirement must be made prior to a Livestock Exemption Permit being issued. An applicant shall provide proof of completion of a training course recognized by Enforcement Services as comprehensive and specific to the Alberta climate.

INSPECTIONS

- Permit holders shall make themselves and the coops available for inspection on reasonable request from Bylaw Enforcement Officers.

REGISTRATION

- Permit holders 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. The PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations in case of potential disease outbreak. The Province will maintain communication with site owners should any information or incidents occur that would require site owners to take action.
- A neighbour notification process will be completed and letters submitted back to the City as part of the application submission.

Sale of Eggs and Meat

- Permit holders will not sell eggs, manure, meat or other product derived from an urban hen.