

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: JUNE 6, 2017

NUMBER: 6.29 - PATROL

SUBJECT: HANDLING OF ESCAPED ANIMALS FROM THE SAN DIEGO ZOO OR THE SAN DIEGO ZOO SAFARI PARK

RELATED POLICY: 6.09

ORIGINATING DIVISION: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERSEDES: DP 6.29 – 8/08/2014

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for handling escaped animals from the San Diego Zoo and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

The Zoological Society of San Diego (ZSSD) operates the San Diego Zoo and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. Animal escapes from the San Diego Zoo or San Diego Zoo Safari Park require a coordinated response to ensure successful resolution while protecting the public. This procedure outlines the anticipated duties of police and ZSSD responders.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. The welfare of park patrons, employees, and citizens within the surrounding community will be given first consideration when an animal has escaped its enclosure.

B. Internal Escapes of Animals

1. If an animal escapes its enclosure and is contained within the boundaries of the San Diego Zoo or the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, ZSSD security will have primary responsibility for containing the escaped animal. ZSSD security may request assistance from the San Diego Police Department. When requested, officers shall respond directly to the parks' security department office for instructions. ZSSD security will advise what additional assistance they require.
2. Officers may be requested to assist with evacuations of the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park to ensure the safety of visitors and employees.
3. If evacuations are deemed necessary, responding officers shall evaluate the need for pedestrian and traffic control to expedite the safe egress of visitors from ZSSD facilities and vehicles from the parking lot.

C. External Escapes of Animals

1. If an animal escapes the outer boundaries of the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park, ZSSD officials will immediately notify the San Diego Police Department. Officers will immediately respond and make contact with the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park personnel at the security office.
2. Officers will work in conjunction with ZSSD security officials to locate the escaped animal.
3. ZSSD security personnel are trained with .308 rifles and .458 rifles, "elephant guns", which are available at each park site. The Zoo and Zoo Safari Park's policy is "shoot to kill" any carnivorous animal that escapes the outer boundaries of the park.
4. The park also employs veterinarians who have tranquilizer darts used to sedate animals. Only a trained veterinarian may use a tranquilizer gun.
5. If the escaped animal is non-carnivorous, ZSSD security officials, along with a veterinarian, will attempt to sedate the animal with dart guns to apprehend and return the animal to the ZSSD Facility.
6. Officers shall not attempt to shoot the animal unless it poses an immediate threat to the officer or any other person.

D. Wild Animals Discovered Outside the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park

1. If the San Diego Police Department receives notification that a suspected Zoo or Zoo Safari Park animal has been sighted outside of the park, Communications Division shall immediately notify the ZSSD at the facility nearest the sighting and request an animal count to determine if the sighted animal has escaped from one of the parks.
2. If the animal is determined to have escaped from the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park, security staff will respond and coordinate with the responding units to locate and capture or dispatch the animal, if appropriate. ZSSD security officials are available 24 hours per day at the following numbers:
 - a. San Diego Zoo
 - (1) Emergency/After Hours/Security Office (619) 339-8414
 - (2) Emergency/Day/Security Manager (619)744-3321
 - b. San Diego Zoo Safari Park
 - (1) Emergency/After Hours (760) 802-8301
 - (2) Emergency/Day/Security Manager (760) 738-5010
3. If it is determined the animal is wild and not from the Zoo or Zoo Safari Park, County Animal Services shall be notified. Animal Control officers are in the field every day from 0600 to 2230 hours. At all other times, an Animal Control officer can be called out by calling (619) 236-2341 (police only). Callouts should be made through Communications Division.