



CHAPTER 8B

SPECIES-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES DOMESTIC CAT GUIDELINES

8-11.1 American Humane Society's *Guidelines for the Safe Use of Animals in Filmed Media* apply to anyone bringing an animal to the set, including members of the cast or crew. When applicable, producers shall distribute in advance the Advisory on "Special Requirements for Extras/Others Who Supply Animals."

ADVISORY: In accordance with federal requirements, to exhibit a cat in filmed media, the owner or exhibitor may be required to have a USDA Exhibitor's Permit from the USDA prior to filming.

ADVISORY: To protect the health and safety of kittens, American Humane Society recommends the use of kittens that are at least 16 weeks of age at the start of filming process. Should younger kittens be requested, please CONTACT American Humane Society EARLY IN PRE-PRODUCTION. All veterinary records indicating their age and vaccination history may be requested.

8-11.3 For safety and efficiency, American Humane Society recommends that producers hire animal handlers experienced in motion picture production to supply all cats for production. However, if production chooses to obtain cats from private owners - including cast and crew - all requirements of the *Guidelines* must be implemented.

8-11.4 When applicable, producers shall distribute in advance the instruction sheet on "Special Requirements for Extras/Others Who Supply Animals."

ADVISORY: The less experienced the animals and the owner/handlers are with working on productions, the more important it is to have American Humane Society's oversight. American Humane Society does not condone the use of private pets for production work, whether it is an extra's pet or a reality show contestant's pet. However, ALL animals deserve humane treatment and a high standard of care, whether or not they are professionally trained. American Humane Society recognizes that productions may use private pets that are not trained for production work, but encourages producers to choose these animals with consideration for the animals' temperament, health, and condition.

- Animals should be chosen for calm, socialized temperaments.
- The owner's stress compounds the animal's stress. An unqualified animal trainer/owner can have a negative effect on an animal
- Animals need prior conditioning to perform in the environment of a
- Production.
- Do not expect untrained animals to perform tricks or stunts that are unnatural behaviors for the average pet.

8-11.5*.... For all cats (pets, cats brought by extras or crew, and cat actors) on set, except for kittens under the age of 16 weeks, the following requirements apply: (See below for requirements for Kittens)

- a. The cats must have been vaccinated for rabies, feline leukemia (FPV), feline herpesvirus-1 (FHV-1), and, feline calicivirus (FCV) at least two weeks prior to coming onto set. Proof of vaccination and the name and phone number of the veterinarian who vaccinated the cats must be provided to the American Humane Certified Animal Safety Representative™ upon request.
- b. American Humane Society may request proof of health certificates where applicable.
- c. Animal handlers (including cast, crew and extras) must bring the necessary documentation to the set.

ADVISORY: Animal handlers (including cast, crew and extras) should be aware of locations where ticks, fleas and mosquitoes are found and should take appropriate measures, such as tick, flea and heartworm prevention, to prevent disease and intestinal parasites.

8-12*..... When filming scenes involving the birth of kittens or the use of kittens under the age of 8 weeks, prior written approval from the USDA and American Humane Society is required. Per the USDA, kittens may not be transported or sold in commerce until they are 2 months old and fully weaned. (Also see *Guideline 2-8.*) This means that if you plan to use kittens in a film production (for commerce), you cannot relocate them earlier than 8 weeks of age.

8-12.1 Only healthy kittens should be used for filming. Should very young kittens be requested, please contact American Humane Society for prior approval. When necessary, the filming location should be controlled by the following measures to prevent the spread of disease:

- a. No other animals should be present when filming with kittens.
- b. American Humane Society discourages the mixing of litters or kittens from different households. Kittens should not mix with other cats/ kittens until at least two weeks after their second vaccination.
- c. Hard, non-porous surfaces that can be adequately sanitized should be used for kittens, and the surfaces should be sanitized prior to each such use.
- d. Production and the animal handler should provide appropriate foot baths at the entrance of the set for all cast and crew entering the area. Areas where kittens (especially under 16 weeks old) will be housed or perform should have disinfectant foot baths at the entrances and exits for all cast and crew entering the area to prevent the introduction of infectious bacteria.
- e. Production shall limit cast and crew in areas where kittens are being used.
- f. Production and the animal handler shall limit the handling, petting and touching of kittens to only necessary individuals.

8-12.2 To protect the health and safety of kittens, American Humane Society recommends the use of kittens that are at least 16 weeks of age at the start of the filming process. Should younger kittens be requested, please contact American Humane Society for approval.

8-12.3 No kitten under 12 weeks will be allowed on a set. Any kittens under 16 weeks of age need prior approval from the American Humane Society. All veterinary records indicating their vaccination history may be requested.

8-12.4 All kittens (brought by extras or crew, and dog actors) should have the appropriate number of vaccinations based on age. Please consult a veterinarian. Proof of vaccinations may be requested by American Humane Society. Please ensure that these records are available for inspection.



- 8-12.5 American Humane Society requests breeder/animal supplier information and all health certificates before filming. Health certificates will indicate that the kittens are free from infectious diseases and current on all vaccinations. They will need to indicate that the kittens are in good health for required animal action. American Humane Society strongly recommends that an actual physical examination be conducted by a qualified veterinarian. The health certificates must:
- a. Be an official interstate health certificate
 - b. Be issued and signed by a licensed veterinarian
 - c. Include each kitten's actual date of birth
 - d. Include clear identification of each individual kitten
 - e. Include the actual date of vaccinations and deworming
 - f. Be issued and dated not more than 10 days prior to transport date
 - g. State that the animal is free from infectious disease or physical abnormalities that would endanger the animal, other animals, or the general public
- 8-12.6 When using kittens for more than one day and/or multiple litters of kittens:
- a. A schedule should be developed that allows ample rest for kittens. Please be aware that scheduling kittens to work every day could lead to sick kittens.
 - b. For the first two weeks the kittens are there, kittens are not housed with adults or other litters of kittens unless they come from the same kennel.
 - c. The housing facilities should be on a strict cleaning and disinfecting regimen to lessen the potential for bacterial and viral infection and/or spread.
 - d. Kittens should have their own quarantine facility. If you will have multiple litters from different breeders/animal suppliers, only kittens from the same breeder/animal supplier should be in the facility at the same time.
- 8-12.7 Environmental conditions can affect kittens, whether too hot or too cold. Kittens under 16 weeks old cannot work in snow and subfreezing temperatures, extreme heat, or inclement weather. Kittens do not tolerate the cold as well as adult cats. If kittens are under 16 weeks, there is the potential that vaccinations have not taken the full effect. Sick kittens are much more sensitive to the cold weather as well as extreme high temperatures. If the kittens wear protective clothing, this may help resistance to the cold. Any kitten that shivers needs to be warmed immediately.

ADVISORY: Kittens being brought to the set should be examined by a veterinarian, tested for feline leukemia, be free of parasites, and have received core vaccines in accordance with AAFP (American Association of Feline Practitioners).

Although vaccination helps reduce the risk of cat flu, this disease can still occur in vaccinated cats. Kittens are more likely to develop severe disease and die as a result of the flu. Any kittens that show signs of flu shall be removed from the set and examined by a veterinarian.

- 8-13* Pursuant to USDA regulations, anyone who sells or acquires a dead dog or cat from a private, unlicensed source is required to obtain a USDA license (see Chapter 1) and provide that documentation to American Humane Society.
- 8-14 When cats are working with other cats or other species of animals, in addition to production and the animal handlers ensuring the safety of the animals, the cat must be trained and prepped to work with the animals so that the work is not stressful. (Also see *Guideline 1-28.2.*)
- a. When predator/prey relationships are to be depicted, animals must be trained or conditioned to accomplish the action, or the action must be simulated.
 - b. Predator/prey situations can be a threat to one or more of the animals, as well as to cast and crew.
- 8-14.1 Animals should never be left unattended or unsecured in a manner that would be unsafe or uncomfortable for the animals. Animals shall not be left in the care of any person who is inexperienced in the care of those types of animals.
- 8-14.2 Care must be taken to ensure that animals do not escape the set or location. Production and the animal handler must also have a safety plan in place that will prevent the escape of an animal from the set or location and provide for an animal's safe recapture should an accident or escape occur. (Also see *Guideline 1-36.*)
- 8-15 Domestic cats that are underweight, overweight or otherwise not in appropriate physical or behavioral condition to perform the required work shall not be used. An animal shall not be used if, in American Humane Society's judgment, the animal is not in appropriate condition.
- 8-15.1 Although the special requirements apply to extras and owners, production is always ultimately responsible for the safety of the animals and people on the set. The precautions necessary to ensure human and animal safety include:
- a. **Water:** Extras/owners shall bring a water bowl that is heavy enough to prevent overturning and large enough to satiate a cat's thirst. Water should be available to the cat as needed.
 - b. **Control:** Cats shall be controlled by using a crate, cage or secure pen. When working outdoors, only cats trained and handled by professional trainers should be used. Cats shall not be left unattended at any time or in the care of an unqualified person. If a cat exhibits any aggressive or fear behaviors, such as threatening, scratching or biting any person or animal, it may be removed. Improper chains and tethers are prohibited.
 - c. **Cats in Heat:** Cats should not be on set if they are in their heat cycle.
 - d. **Housing/Comfort:** Extras/owners shall arrive with the cat secured in a crate. Extras/owners shall coordinate with production to address considerations for protecting the cats from weather, including heat or cold, wind, rain, etc. This should happen prior to the cat's arrival on set.