

Minimum Standards of Care for Llamas and Alpacas

Minimum Standards of Care are mandatory to llama and alpaca survival and humane treatment. These are the most basic requirements that all llamas and alpacas must have for physical well-being and, as such, define minimum requirements for animal control officers and government officials investigating questionable llama and alpaca care situations.

1. **WATER:** Animals should have continuous access to potable drinking water.
2. **NUTRITION:** Animals should have nourishment adequate to sustain life and health.
3. **SHELTER:** Animals should have natural or man-made shelter that enables them to find relief from extreme weather conditions. The sheltered area must allow for the ability to stand, lie down, rest and reasonably move about.
4. **MOBILITY:** Animals should have a living area through which they can move freely and exercise independently.
5. **SHEARING:** A shearing schedule must be adopted which will prevent excessive fibre growth (to avoid heat stress), yet which will allow sufficient re-growth to protect the animals against adverse winter weather conditions.
6. **NEGLECT:** Animals should have a physical appearance free from signs of serious neglect. Signs of serious neglect may include such things as crippled ambulation due to severely curled toenails, ingrown halters, an excess of fibre, or living conditions not meeting the minimums listed above.
7. **SAFETY:** Animals should be reasonably safeguarded from injury or death within their defined living environment and/or when traveling.
8. **CRUELTY:** Animals should be reasonably safeguarded from cruel treatment and actions that endanger life or health or cause avoidable suffering.
9. **SOCIALIZATION:** Llamas and alpacas are herd animals and should not live alone without a companion animal. A cria (a baby llama or alpaca under six months) should not be raised apart from other llamas or alpacas.