

Media Statement – 15 October 2025

Sixty-one reports of alleged fall-from-height cases received since implementation of Animals and Birds (Licensing and Control of Cats and Dogs) Rules 2024 to further safeguard animal health and welfare

The Animals and Birds (Licensing and Control of Cats and Dogs) Rules 2024 ('the Rules') came into effect on 1 September 2024.

It sets out rules for pet owners, such as Rule 20 which states that the owner of a cat or dog must take reasonable steps to protect their cat or dog by preventing it from being in any place which exposes it to the risk of falling from height, whether from within the premises where it is kept by the owner or elsewhere.

In the first year since the implementation of the Rules (as of 31 August 2025), NParks has received 61 reports of alleged fall-from-height cases involving 55 cats and 6 dogs.

Following investigations, NParks found 21 cases involving pet cats or dogs falling from height and took action against the pet owner in all these cases. Depending on the facts of the case, the range of actions taken may include letters of advisory, letters of warning, composition offer or prosecution.

There was no offence found under the Rules for around half of the cases, as they involved either:

- community animals (i.e. no owners for the Rules to apply to)
- cats/dogs whose cause of death/injury was likely not due to a fall from height
- cats/dogs with insufficient information to establish ownership

Another 11 cases are still undergoing investigation.

Risk of falling from height for cats and dogs

High-rise syndrome in cats refers to the phenomenon where cats fall from a height, and can result in serious injuries such as broken bones and internal injuries.

For community cats, as they live in the open and move about freely, they may face challenges such as living conditions that are not optimal and compared to pet cats, they are also at greater risk of injuries or death from conflict with other animals, traffic accidents, falls from height, or diseases.

Dogs can also be at risk of falling from height if they are kept in premises that are not properly secured. An example would be the recent case of a husky confined to a service balcony of a 35th floor HDB unit in Toa Payoh. Given the unsafe housing conditions and concerns over the dog's welfare, NParks seized the dog and took it under our care. The dog has since been put up for fostering. Investigations into the case are ongoing.

Responsible pet ownership

Being a pet owner is a lifelong commitment, and pet owners must be responsible and provide appropriate care throughout their pet's lifetime. Pet owners can refer to the Code of Animal Welfare for Pet Owners at go.gov.sg/animal-welfare-code-petowners to learn more about the minimum standards expected for animal housing, management and care.

Responsible pet owners should secure their house to keep their pet cat or dog safely indoors, and prevent them from escaping or falling from height. Windows or gates should be secured with mesh or grilles with gaps small enough to contain the pet indoors and prevent it from squeezing through. This not only ensures their safety and welfare, but also prevents disamenities to neighbours and the community. They are also required to microchip and license their pet cat or dog.

Under AVS' Cat Management Framework, cat owners must license their pet cats by 31 August 2026, and comply with pet cat licensing rules, such as ensuring that their cats are kept in a safe environment and taking reasonable steps to protect their cats from hazards, including but not limited to installing mesh, grilles, screens or other barriers to prevent their cats from roaming or falling from height.

Supporting NParks' investigations by reporting suspected cases

Safeguarding animal welfare is a shared social responsibility. To support NParks' investigations, members of the public are reminded to promptly report suspected animal welfare cases, such as animal cruelty or neglect, or cats or dogs falling from height, to NParks at www.avs.gov.sg/feedback, or call our 24-hour Animal Response Centre at 1800-476-1600.

NParks takes all feedback received from the public seriously, and investigates them thoroughly if there is substantive information provided. As with all investigations, all forms of evidence are crucial, and photographic and/or videographic evidence provided by the public will help.

Ms Jessica Kwok
Group Director
National Parks Board

Examples of fall-from-height cases where enforcement action was taken

Date	Case Details
April 2025	An injured pet cat was found at a void deck at Yishun Street 11. It was taken to a veterinary clinic and later died from its injuries. NParks' investigation found that the cat had likely fallen from height from a seventh-floor residential unit. While the cat's owner had installed mesh on some of the living room windows, the kitchen windows were unmeshed. Hence, NParks concluded that the cat had likely fallen out of one of the unprotected openings in the unit. NParks took enforcement action and issued a Letter of Warning against the pet owner for contravening Rule 20 of the Animals and Birds (Licensing and Control of Cats and Dogs) Rules 2024.

June 2025	A pet dog was found dead at the ground level of a residential apartment in Marine Parade. NParks' investigation found that the dog had likely fallen from height from a third-floor unit, where its owner had left it alone with the living room window open. Based on the investigation findings, NParks concluded that the dog had likely stepped onto a couch next to the open window and fallen out. NParks took enforcement action and issued a Letter of Warning against the pet owner for contravening Rule 20 of the Animals and Birds (Licensing and Control of Cats and Dogs) Rules 2024.
June 2025	A pet cat was found dead at the foot of a staircase at Yishun Street 51. In thoroughly investigating the case, NParks reviewed CCTV footage, spoke to the cat owner and relevant persons who might have information on the case, and carried out a post-mortem examination on the carcass. We also found that while the house was meshed, the owner regularly allowed the cat to roam freely outside of the house. The main findings of the post-mortem examination are that the cat had a serious underlying chronic health condition and had injuries involving a few ribs and the lungs. There is no other overt evidence of fractures or trauma of the other bones, and no visible external injuries.

Based on the investigation findings, post-mortem examination, and the location where the cat carcass was found, NParks assessed that the cat had likely sustained its injuries from an external traumatic incident, of which a fall is a likely consideration. There was no evidence to suggest a deliberate act of animal cruelty, as there would likely be external signs of lesions if it were the case.

NParks took enforcement action and issued a Letter of Warning against the pet owner for contravening Rule 20 of the Animals and Birds (Licensing and Control of Cats and Dogs) Rules 2024.