**Section 2.0**

**Animal Intake**

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**Policy: Animal shelter staff will follow all Virginia Department of Agriculture regulations and the Code of Virginia as it relates to the care of companion animals.**

A. ‘Owner’ surrendered animal:

1. Owner defined: Section § 3.2-6500 of the Code of Virginia defines "Owner" as any person who:

a. Has a right of property in an animal;

b. Keeps or harbors an animal. A person who has kept or harbored a stray animal for at least thirty (30) consecutive days shall be deemed the owner for purposes of surrender, provided the animal does not fit the description of a lost or missing animal reported to the Shelter or can otherwise be identified as belonging to another person by means of a microchip, tattoo or other means of identification.

c. Has an animal in his care; or

d. Acts as a custodian of an animal.

2. When an animal is delivered to the shelter and surrendered by the owner, the receiving employee shall advise the owner that there is no minimum holding period for pets surrendered by the owner. Virginia Department of Agriculture regulations shall be followed, which state that the animal is available for immediate disposition which includes adoption, transfer and euthanasia of the animal. Only an owner can surrender an animal. Other animals brought to the shelter by someone other than the Owner shall be treated as stray animals.

3. Staff shall obtain positive identification from individuals delivering animals to the shelter and maintain a record of the identity of the person delivering the animal to the Shelter.

4. Provisions shall be made for the separation of animals according to species, sex, age, and temperament in accordance with section 2VAC5-110-40 of the Virginia Administrative Code.

5. Any citizen desiring to surrender their animal shall submit a form relinquishing all rights to the animal, and transfers ownership of the animal to Giles County Animal Control.

6. Although efforts will be made to find another owner for the animal, staff should advise the owner to read the form carefully as the owner acknowledges that the animal may be euthanized.

7. Staff shall inspect surrendered animals for tattoos and scanned for identification chips upon entry into the shelter.

8. Upon intake, staff will complete the required forms and checklists and enter that information on the applicable documentation. All available information will be documented.

9. Only animals of Giles County residents will be accepted as surrendered animals.

10. The Shelter Manager shall have the right to refuse an owner surrender when it is unlikely that the animal can be adopted, the surrender is for the purpose of euthanization of the animal without cost to the owner, or when the owner is unwilling or unable to provide for necessary medical care for the animal.

B. Stray Animals:

1. All incoming animals shall be inspected for tattoos and scanned for identification chips upon entry into the shelter.

2. Animals bearing any form of collar, tattoo, or chip will be held a minimum of 12 days in accordance to § 3.2-6546 of the Code of Virginia prior to disposition.

3. Provisions shall be made for the separation of animals according to species, sex, age, and temperament in accordance with section 2VAC5-110-40 of the Virginia Administrative Code.

4. Rescue agencies may not be given possession of a stray animal for purposes of foster care until the state mandated holding period has expired (unless medically necessary, for example small kitten or puppy or needs extensive medical care (but doesn’t need to be at a vet), provided however that information regarding a stray animal may be provided to a rescue agency prior to the expiration of the holding period.

5. Staff should obtain positive identification from individuals delivering stray animals to the shelter and maintain a record of the identity and contact information for such individual.

6. Staff should obtain an address of where the pet was found and the date found if the pet is brought in by a citizen.

.7. Stray animals not bearing identification shall be held for a minimum of 7 days in accordance to 3.2-6546 of the Code of Virginia prior to disposition.

8. Upon intake, staff will complete the required forms and checklists and enter that information on the applicable documentation. All available information will be documented.

9. Only animals found in Giles County will be accepted as stray animals.

C. Impounded animals:

1. Animals classified as unadoptable shall not be held for a period of more than 10 days past their disposition date unless used as evidence in a court case or exemption is granted by the shelter supervisor or his designee.

2. Upon intake, staff will complete the required forms and checklists and enter that information on the applicable documentation. All available information will be documented.