**Intake Policy**

“To assist the public in making decisions in the best interest of animals in their care by providing a caring, supportive environment to explore all available options and opportunities for placement.”

**Stray Animals**

Stray animals found by the public within the MHC (Martinsville Henry County) service area will be scanned for microchip (125kHz frequency) identification, searched from tip of noise to tip of tail for identifying markers such as (but not limited to) tattoos, collars, tags etc. The animal will be behaviorally evaluated by MHCSPCA staff and accepted in shelter pending room/behavior evaluation. We will make reasonable efforts to contact the owner of any identified stray animal, as well, instruct those surrenders of stray animals we are unable to intake, to directly take animal to Henry County Animal Control Center (HCACC) or Martinsville City Animal Control Center (MCACC) after we have complete a stray notification, including the “finder’s” address/phone and immediate contact information. Any stray brought into the MHCSPCA will held for proscribed stray period.

**Owned Animals**

Housing resources available pending on behaviorally evaluated animals, owned cats and dogs, relinquished by their owners would be admitted by MHCSPCA and scanned for microchip (125kHz frequency) identification. These animals will not undergo stray holds and will be made available directly for adoption pending the spay/neuter procedure. If an animal is identified by microchip or other means as a regulated animal, SPCA staff will make every attempt to contact owner (if other than surrender) and will then treat animal as a STRAY for mandatory period.

Any owner inquiring of MHCSPCA about relinquishment of their pet will first be asked to secure and complete a questionnaire regarding the pet’s history. The questionnaire is age and species specific and will be available to the owner at the front counter. Once the completed questionnaire is returned to MHCSPCA, an appointment will be made during the SPCA’s regular business hours. The owner should allow up to 45 minutes for the scheduled counseling session, and the pet should be present.

Provided that housing resources are available, “walk-ins” will be accommodated and the owner will be asked to complete the questionnaire while waiting for the next available opening in the relinquishment schedule. If the owner is unable or unwilling to wait, the SPCA will direct the owner to HCACC or MCACC.

If an owned animal is brought to MHCSPCA after/before the SPCA’s regular hours but at a time when staff may still be on site, the owner will be asked to contact MHCSPCA staff during the SPCA’s regular business hours to make a relinquishment appointment.

If the pet is determined to be adoptable/healthy or within the means of provisional care, the pet will be admitted to MHCSPCA.

If the pet is determined to be treatable, i.e., either rehabilitate or manageable, several options will be discussed with the owner, including the possible acceptance of the pet into MHCSPCA limited rehabilitative or management programs. The owner will also be provided information on maintaining the pet in the home or contact information for other rescue or pet adoption programs that might be available.

For pets that are found to be behaviorally manageable, owners will be offered a behavior consultation intended to assist the owner in the development and implementation of a management plan. This management plan may be utilized to assist in establishing a permanent maintenance plan in the home or admission to MHCSPCA adoption program. The private consultation, with trained behavior staff, will be offered by separate appointment for a fee equivalent to a private training session by the MHCSPCA behavior volunteers/staff.

If the animal needs treatment or intervention for a behavior and/or medical condition that requires resources not available to MHCSPCA or owner, a list of other possible resources will be provided as an alternative.

If the pet is determined to be unhealthy/untreatable, counseling will be offered to assist the owner in making a well-educated decision in the best interest of the pet, family, and the community. Pet Loss counseling and additional information will be offered to the owner to provide supportive assistance during this difficult time.

In the event, any pet is admitted to the MHCSPCA, the owner will be asked to leave a minimum donation of $20.00. This is not mandatory, rather suggested for care of the released animal.

If an owner relinquishes a litter, participation in the MHCSPCA Litter Abatement Program will be discussed.

**Alternatives When Housing is at Capacity**

During certain periods, especially the summer, animal-housing resources for owner relinquished cats, may be unavailable. During these periods, affected owners will be provided alternative options including contact information for other local private animal shelters and rescue groups that may be able to assist in re-homing their pet.

**Options Include:**

If the animal is adoptable/healthy:

* The owner will continue to maintain the animal temporarily and check back periodically with MHCSPCA to determine when housing resources become available.

If the animal is treatable (i.e., rehabilitate/manageable) OR unhealthy/untreatable:

* The owner will obtain necessary veterinary or behavioral treatment and continue to maintain the animal temporarily until the condition is resolved, or until SPCAMHC housing resources become available.

Deceased Animals

Animals that are deceased will be accepted by the organization. The individual requesting this service may enter either through the County intake area or side door of the Adoption Center.

Deceased animals found by the public within the MHC (Martinsville Henry County) service area will be scanned for microchip (125kHz frequency) identification, searched from tip of noise to tip of tail for identifying markers such as (but not limited to) tattoos, collars, tags etc. We will make reasonable efforts to contact the owner of any identified stray animal, as well, complete a stray notification, including the “finders” address /phone and immediate contact information.

**Duration of Stay Agreement**

The behavior and medical condition of each animal admitted to MHCSPCA adoption program will be re-evaluated during the animal’s stay. If an animal’s condition changes, the animal may be determined to be rehabilitative, manageable or unhealthy/untreatable (or SPCA’s equivalents).

If an animal housed at MHCSPCA is not meeting the SPCA’s adoption criteria during its stay, it will be placed on the Watch List & Notification Board for review and initiation of appropriate rehabilitation, alternative placement, or euthanasia in accordance with the SPCA Euthanasia Policy.

Alternative options will be reasonably explored for animals initially accepted by MHCSPCA for adoption, but that fail to continue to meet the adoptability criteria. Some examples of options include, but are not limited to: medical or behavioral rehabilitation within the limited resources of the SPCA, cooperation with other placement entities, assistance with appropriate foster care, return of the pet to the previous owner, or adoption of the pet with a medical or behavior waiver.

The MHCSPCA Receiving Manager, or assigned representative, is responsible for making reasonable efforts to contact the previous owner of any relinquished pet admitted to SPCA if, at the time the animal was relinquished, that owner requested to be contacted prior to negative outcomes such as Euthanasia. All findings will be discussed in detail with the owner by appointment with a member/volunteer of either the MHCSPCA Behavior and Training staff, or the Veterinarian when appropriate.

Definitions:

**Healthy animals** are those animals eight weeks of age or older (or, for the purposes of this policy, weaned and eating on their own) that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no signs of a behavioral, or temperamental defect that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and have manifested no sign of disease, injury, congenital or hereditary condition that affects the health of the animal, or that is likely to affect the animal’s health in the future.

**Treatable – Rehabilitate** Those animals under the age of eight weeks (not weaned and eating on their own) or those animals found to have a treatable medical, congenital or hereditary condition that poses no known significant health or safety risk to itself, other animal or the public and that will require treatment that is within reasonable resources of the SPCA or Department and/or the adopting owner within our community; and that would restore the pet’s health to an adoptable/healthy state. The medical prognosis must be fair to good to meet this definition.

**Treatable – Unrehabilitatable** Those animals found to have a manageable behavior condition or medical, congenital or hereditary condition that poses no known significant health or safety risk to itself, other animals, or the public and require long-term or lifelong monitoring for treatment, continued treatment or intervention that is within reasonable resources of the SPCA or Department and/or owner in our community, and allows the pet to maintain a satisfactory quality of life. The medical and behavioral prognosis must be fair to good to meet this definition.

**Untreatable** Those animals either exhibiting or having an established history of a terminal illness, significant combination or chronic conditions (medical & behavioral), a history of aggression to humans, other animals or themselves, or gross under-socialized behavior. The medical or behavior prognosis would be poor, guarded or grave to meet this definition.

Prediction of the probable course of a disease or condition in an individual and the chances of recovery.

1. **Good**: Favorable outcome is expected and/or maybe easily managed.
2. **Fair**: Favorable outcome possible and/or manageable.
3. **Guarded**: Possible outcome is unknown.
4. **Poor**: Non-favorable outcome is expected.
5. **Grave**: Death is imminent.

“Regulated” animals are prohibited or disqualified for adoption by law, regulation, or county/city policy. These include animals that are unlawful to possess, relinquished dogs with a documented history of dangerous behavior, and animals that have been classified by County or City as “dangerous dogs.”

**A dangerous dog is defined as a dog that**:

* Has twice within a 48-month period attacked, bitten, or otherwise caused injury to a person engaged in lawful activity, or
* Has once attacked, bitten, or otherwise caused injury to a person engaged in lawful activity, resulting in death or substantial injury.