**Shelter Operations 000-02**

**June 1, 2016**

# DISPOSITION OF ANIMALS AND ANIMAL INTAKE PROCEDURE

# DISPOSITION OF ANIMALS

**General**

Domestic and exotic animals housed at the Portsmouth Humane Society leave in one of following ways: they’re adopted, returned to owner, euthanized, or transferred. We do not accept wild animals.

**Adoption**

Information about animals adopted from the Shelter must be recorded in Shelter Buddy. This includes the date of adoption and the name, address and telephone number of the adopter. Completed adoption files are stapled and filed appropriately.

**Return to Owners**

Owners claiming a stray animal as their own must provide evidence of ownership such as a bill of purchase, pictures that document ownership over time, proof of rabies or licensing, and/or medical records.

The owner's name, address, telephone number, and the date of return should be noted in Shelter Buddy. Completed RTO files are stapled and filed appropriately.

If someone claims an animal after the stray hold date or there is a lack of proof of ownership, the Portsmouth Humane Society can choose to follow standard adoption protocols. The prospective adopter will pay standard adoption fees and the animal must be spayed or neutered prior to adoption.

**Euthanasia**

When deemed necessary for medical or behavioral reasons, domestic animals may be euthanized. Critically ill or seriously injured domestic animals may be euthanized prior to the conclusion of the stray holding period to prevent any additional suffering (only with the recommendation of the veterinarian). Animals will not be euthanized for behavior reasons prior to the conclusion of the stray hold period.

The date of and reason for euthanasia, the dosage and drugs used, and the technician's initials are recorded in the euthanasia log.

**Transfer**

Animals are released to shelter and rescue partners, if the receiving agency is approved by the Portsmouth Humane Society. In order to be approved, a transferring organization must hold 501(c)3 tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. Animals are typically selected for transfer based on breed, rather than any other criteria.

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# Animal Intake Procedure

The Portsmouth Humane Society is an open admission shelter in that we will never turn away an animal.

If people ask if the shelter is ‘Full’ they can be informed whether or not the shelter is at capacity so they can determine if they still wish to leave the animal at the shelter or make other arrangements. It is our mission and mandate that we accept every animal. We evaluate each animal individually and will make decisions regarding adoption, transfer, foster or euthanasia based on the animal and his or her ability to be safely re-homed.

**Animal Process**

Greet the person: “Is this your animal?” “Where is the animal?” if it is in the car – ask if the animal is on a leash or in a carrier?

If the animal is not on a leash or carrier –and the animal belongs to the person, provide the owner with a leash or transfer cage for the animal. Instruct the owner to secure the animal in the car with the doors shut – i.e. dog on the leash or cat in the carrier before they open the car doors.

If the animal is a stray, follow them to the car and escort them and the animal to the front desk of the shelter – if staffing allows. You may need to get the assistance of an animal care technician if the animal is fractious or you feel that you cannot control the animal.

If the animal is a feral cat, see the Intake Procedure for Feral Cats.

Dogs and cats are placed in the appropriate kennel or cage spacegesiate kennelmporary type for that species.

If a person bringing in a stray refuses to sign intake paperwork– just write in the signature area “refused to sign” and your name. The animal will be reflected as a stray and held for the stray period.

**State Hold Policies**

The State of Virginia requires stray animals and found animals showing indication of ownership be held to allow their potential owners to locate them prior to being adopted, transferred, or euthanized. Portsmouth Humane Society’s hold policies exceed the state requirements and are as follows:

* Stray Animal with no ID or sign of ownership – Shall be held for 5 days, not to include the day the animal is brought in. On the 6th day, it is evaluated and becomes the property of PHS.
* Stray Animal with ID or signs of ownership – Shall be held for 10 days, not to include the day the animal is brought in. On the 11th day, it is evaluated and becomes the property of PHS. Signs of ownership include collars, tags, harness, leash, microchip, clothing, or painted nails.

**Court Hold**

If Portsmouth Animal Control or Portsmouth Police Department brings an animal which is to be held on court hold it will be noted on the intake form by the officer. In Shelter Buddy, the status will be Court Hold. The date available will be left blank until we have a court date. If Animal Control releases an animal from court hold, they must write ‘released from court hold’ on the intake form and sign. At this time, front desk staff will change the status in Shelter Buddy.

**Bite Quarantine**

PHS accepts animals that will be placed on a quarantine period that have bitten a person or attacked and severely injured another dog. We accept these animals through PAC and through citizens of Portsmouth.

The following steps must be taken if the animal is received by a citizen:

* If the bite occurred on PHS property, verify with a manager that a bite report has been filed and record the date of the incident, name of the victim, the circumstances of the incident, and treatment facility the victim was seen by.
* Fax the report to the Portsmouth Health Department and file the report in the rabies log.
* Notify a manager so that he/she can place a Bite Quarantine tag on the animal’s kennel or cage.
* Place the animal’s status to Bite Quarantine in Shelter Buddy. This is a ten day hold starting the date of the bite incident.
* If the report was filed outside of PHS, contact the Portsmouth Health Department at 757-393-8585 to ensure they are aware of the quarantine. Write the animal’s info in the bite log.
* File the record in the stray hold drawer in the folder labeled bite quarantine.

**Microchips or Tags**

If an animal comes in with a microchip or tags, the front desk staff will make every effort to find and notify the owner that we have their animal. This will be recorded on a contact log sheet and placed in the animal’s record as well as in Shelter Buddy. If the owner is contacted and no longer wants the animal, ask them if there is anything that PHS can help with and if not, then ask them if hem to come to the shelter to sign ownership over to PHS. with the animal to come to the shelter to sign ownership over to PHS. If the owner says they gave the animal away, ask if they will provide this persons information so we can contact them to help reunite them with the animal.

**Intake Procedures for Feral Cats**

PHS will accept feral cats from citizens and from Portsmouth Animal Control. PHS will hold the feral cat for 3 days at which point we will spay/neuter/vaccinate and test the animal and subsequently find appropriate placement for the cat.