

Shelter Operations- 000-11

INTAKE AND DISPOSITION

The Louisa County Animal Shelter 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 there 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 health and ability to be safely re-homed. We will be honest with the person surrendering about the risk of euthanasia, space, illness, animal stress and behavior are things that should be discussed prior to taking in the animal. We often simply offer assistance with spay/neuter/food/training and people are able to keep their pets. Sometimes people can wait until we have space or wait until we have disease under control to make a safe environment for the animal to come in to.

Animal Intake Process

Every animal requires a Custody Record. This must be filled out completely at time of intake and be placed on the clipboard of the cage the animal is housed in.

As soon as possible after intake the animal should be examined for injury or illness, officially weighed, scanned for microchip, vaccinated, dewormed, checked for fleas and ticks and treated appropriately.

Feral cats brought in over the front counter or from an animal control vehicle should be transported in a wire transfer cage or trap already covered with a towel or sheet to minimize stress.

Strays

- If a person brings in a stray and has interest in adopting the animal, explain the stray hold Laws. County stray hold is 7 days with no identification or 12 days with identification. (Identification includes: collar, tag, license, tattoo, or other form of identification.) Ask them to leave their name and contact info. This info should be on a sticky note securely fastened to kennel card with a note that states 'finder wants to adopt'.
- We do not call people with the animal's final disposition, we do not know their intentions (ie neighbor who wants the dog gone)
- **NEVER** give out rescue group information after an animal has been rescued. This info requires a formal request or permission from the rescue group. This includes naming rescues when multiple may be interested. Simply said, never name rescues.
- When strays enter with collars, any ID, rabies tag, license information on the collar or the tags are entered on the Intake form and this information shall be used to find the owner. Stray animal collars are kept on or with the dog until stray hold is over then the collar is trashed or sent to laundry.

Counseling Owner Relinquished Intakes

- We must do everything we can to help keep the pet in its home. We can offer spay/neuter assistance, food, behavior and training help...
- Always recommend, if the animal is spayed/neutered, to rehome using our facebook page and use the Rehome.adoptapet.com website.
- If the animal is obviously not adoptable (animal is sick, cat that has a long history of not using the litter box, animal has bitten people, etc.) the person handling the intake must inform the owner that the animal is unlikely to be placed for adoption and could be euthanized. We do not want to give people a false sense of what we can do. This will give them an opportunity to take the animal somewhere else.
- When owner relinquished animals come in with collars, the collars are to be removed and discarded or sent to laundry.

Animal Disposition

Adoption

- Adoption application is filled out completely, including all signatures. A **copy** is made for the adopter and the vaccine sticker is placed on their copy. The **original** is stapled to the animals intake form and disposition is logged on the intake form.
- ALL animals must be spayed/neutered prior to going home. If animal is in foster to adopt, adoption paperwork is not done until the animal is s/n. Animals diagnosed as unable to have surgery due to age or medical condition may be adopted at Managers discretion.

Return to Owner

Our mission is to GET THE ANIMAL HOME. Therefore the following guidelines have been put into place. Proof of ownership can be determined in many ways:

- ID tag, rabies tags or license tags
- Veterinary records
- Pictures

If the above are lacking, take into consideration:

- Where the animal was lost compared to where found
- Description, identifying markings
- Coordinating dates
- How the animal reacts to the person

Animals are personal property and cannot be withheld from an owner without due cause.

Persons claiming a stray animal as their own must provide proof of ownership (see above). Pet owners have to pay certain fees to reclaim the animal. If there are vet fees the owner will be responsible for those fees.

- Fees are \$15 Animal Control Officer pick up fee and \$5 per day in shelter.
- Return to Owner form must be filled out completely. If they do not have proof of rabies and dog license a copy of Driver's license is **required**, this will be our way of enforcement. Attach a copy of State ID (Driver's License) to Custody Record.
- If someone claims an animal after the stray hold date or there is lacking proof of ownership, the Louisa County Animal Shelter can choose to adopt and the animal will be spayed or neutered prior to going home. After stray hold we can enforce spay/neuter with adoption because the animal is legally ours.
- Return to Owner is critical to space. At times we may waive fees for the dog to go home.
- Owners of unsterilized pets are to be encouraged to spay or neuter their animals, but not encouraged so much to turn them away from trusting us.
- Upon the approval from the Manager, impound and boarding fees may be reduced.
- Explain the importance of identification, caution about leaving outside unattended, offer a collar and leash, and cheap ID information.

Transfer

- Animals are released to shelter and rescue partners, if the receiving agency is approved by the Louisa County Animal Shelter. Rescues must provide proper paperwork for our files. 501c3 non-profit status, Mission Statement (usually from their website), VDACS reporting or Out of State forms completed.

Rehabilitation

- Animals in a rehabilitation program may be adopted or fostered after proper training/education with the adopter/foster.

Euthanasia

- When deemed necessary for medical or behavioral reasons, domestic animals may be euthanized. Unweaned, critically ill, or seriously injured domestic animals may be euthanized prior to conclusion of the stray hold period to prevent any additional suffering.
- The Recommendation for Euthanasia form must be filled out and attached to the intake form. The date, dosage and type of drugs used, and the technician's signature are recorded on the Custody Record.
- All euthanasia should be approved by Manager.