**01/01/13 Prince George County Animal Services and Adoption Center**

**Animal Intake Procedure**

***\*\*\*All Animals must be scanned for a microchip upon entry\*\*\****

The PGAS is a managed open admission center.

If owners ask if the center is ‘Full’ they can be informed whether or not the center 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 in need. We evaluate each animal individually and will make decisions regarding adoption, transfer, foster or euthanasia based on the individual animal and its 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 in a 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 center – if staffing allows. You may need to get the assistance of an animal services staff 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 healthy holding or new arrival runs or cages 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. All persons dropping off animals must provide a legal photo ID.

**Intake Procedures for Feral Cats**

Feral cats brought in over the front counter or from an animal control vehicle should be transported in a wire transfer cage (animal control) or the trap (front office) already covered with a towel or sheet to minimize stress. The cat will then be brought to the animal holding room for stray hold. These cats are to be held the state mandated hold period to determine if they are truly “feral”.

**Counseling Owner Relinquished Intakes**

Only the legal owner of an animal may legally surrender it:

Appointments are to be made by the front desk and pets will be taken in on Tuesday, unless other arrangements are made. Refer to Policy.

* We must have the owner at the time of relinquishment sign a written release, located on the rear of the impound card. We also must write on the intake slip the name and driver’s license number of the person who did bring in the animal.
* If the animal is obviously not adoptable (animal is sick, 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 a person who relinquished their animal calls wanting the animal back:

This is a situation that must be handled by the Front Office, or if necessary, the Animal Control Supervisor.

* Check to see if the animal is still here, and if so, put an immediate Supervisor Hold on that animal’s computer record and cage card.
* If the animal has an adoption application, list the previous owner as a backup pending approval of the first adoption application.
* Ask why the person wants the animal back, what has changed, what is the reason?
* If the situation appears ok for the animal, place a hold in the animal’s computer record. The previous owner follows the adoption process as all potential adopters do.
* If the situation is acceptable and there is a first hold on the animal, inform the owner that they will be placed as a back-up pending the outcome with the first hold.
* The animal must be spayed or neutered before release.

When someone brings in a stray and wants it back after the stray period:

* Explain the stray hold state law. Ask them to fill out an adoption application on the animal and inform them of the next steps.

**Completing the Front Desk Intake Process:**

After creating a record in the computer for the animal, take a photo of the animal. See *Photographs for animal record*. If the animal is frightened or you cannot safely control the animal, do not try to take a picture at this time. Print out the cage card and place the cage card and the original paperwork in the plastic sleeve on the cage into which the animal is placed.

When owner relinquished animals come in with collars, the collars are to be removed and discarded.

When strays enter with collars, any ID, rabies tag, license information on the collar or the tags are entered into the computer and the front office staff then starts tracing the information to find the owners.

If the animal appears sick or injured it is then taken to the veterinarian for the complete physical exam. Preventive treatments, such as treatments for parasites and vaccinations should be done at the time of impound of healthy animals. All pets must be scanned with a microchip scanner upon entry and again before they are released or euthanized.

**Center Operations- 000-4**

**03/01/13**

**Photographs for animal record**

A good photograph of each animal is necessary for matching animals in the center with owners looking for their lost pets.

To help ensure that the animal is readily identifiable in the photo, check to be sure that:

* Animal is sideways and picture includes the feet and tail
* Person holding animal does not block body of animal
* Picture is properly lit and animal can easily be seen

Please take time to be sure the picture is in focus. Check the printed cage card picture and if necessary re-take pictures. Look at the photo CRITICALLY, as though you are an outside critic of the agency reviewing the animals on our site.

Also if an animal came in on a control pole or you must leash muzzle the animal, or the animal is fractious at the time of intake, do not attempt to take the picture at this time. Enter intake information for the animal in the computer and print out a cage card with a sticky to take the picture of the animal after he/she calms down or is in the cage.

These photos will be used to market our pets or adoption etc. Photos should be uploaded and placed on the Animal Shelter Net software. This allows the software to upload the pictures on Petfinder.com and Adopt-A-Pet, make cage cards.

The front desk and volunteers should make sure that all animals in need of photos have their picture taken within 3 days of arrival, if possible.

**Center Operations- 000-5**

**03/01/13**

**HOUSING DECISIONS AFTER INTAKE**

**Housing Areas**

There are four different areas in the center for housing animals.

**Holding area** isfor dogs/cats - spaces for dogs or cats when these animals first arrive at the center. These are temporary runs/cages for the animal to wait until it receives preventive healthcare treatments. Animals placed in these areas should not be handled by anyone except the staff. – these runs/cages house healthy dogs or cats that are either strays in their hold period or owner-relinquished animals who need time to calm down and time for a behavior evaluation. The public is not allowed in this area unless escorted by a staff member.

**Adoption** area (dogs and cats) – these are the areas where the animals that have been deemed adoptable by the organization are housed. The public can visit these areas without being escorted by the center staff. This area also includes the front puppy room.

**Animal Holding**– these runs house bite case animals, confiscated animals, and aggressive animals. Animals in this area should not be handled by anyone except experienced staff. When animals that are acting aggressive relax and calm down, they are moved to Healthy Hold. The public is not allowed in this area unless escorted by a staff member. **Feral Cat Area –** this room is designed specifically for feral or fearful cats. The cages are set up with Feral Cat Handling Cages, which provide extra quiet and safety for the cats and the staff. This room is kept calm and lights low to minimize stress for these fearful cats

**Isolation Area**- these runs house sick and injured animals away from the general population to help prevent the spread of disease. It is very important to strictly follow our protocols for preventing the spread of disease because the animals housed here are identified as sick by the vet staff. The public is not allowed in this area unless escorted by a staff member. Please refer to the State regulation 2VAC5-111-30.

**Decision Process**

After the physical exam and preventive healthcare, all animals are housed in Isolation, Quarantine, Feral Cat, or Healthy Hold. After the animal is placed in the appropriate cage, the staff person who housed the animal will update the computer record with the location of the animal. The Animal Services Supervisor, Shelter Attendant and Front Office will decide during the daily walk through whether animals are to be moved to another area.

The person conducting the daily walk through will have a cart with a clipboard so each animal’s record can be accessed and notes made regarding that animal and any decisions. During this walk through, decisions will be made as to how animals are routed. Animals will be listed as:

* “Behavior Hold”— Put on behavior evaluation status, meaning they are ready for evaluation.
* “Kept in Hold Status”— being held through stray hold only.
* “Ready for Spay or Neuter” — Animals who are considered candidates for adoption based on behavior and health evaluation and are scheduled for spay/neuter.
* “Adoptable” Hold —after an animal is spayed or neutered and waiting for move to adoption area.
* “Consider for Foster” — Animal should be move into foster care.

**Immediately notify the AS supervisor or the veterinary staff of any animal who shows any signs of illness so that the animal** **can be moved to the isolation area. We cannot house sick animals in the healthy sections as this puts healthy animals at risk of disease exposure.**

Decisions about euthanasia are made by the Animal Services Supervisor and the shelter veterinarian and take into consideration:

* The behavior evaluation or the animal’s situation prior to arrival (aggression, bite history)
* How the animal is handling the center environment (self-mutilation)
* Medical prognosis of the animal
* Behavior of the animal