

Staunton Augusta Waynesboro Animal Shelter
Standard Operating Procedure

Subject: Animal Intake Policy		Number: S.O.P. 2.1
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Executive Director: Jon Hilbert		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the intake of animals from the public and animal control.

II. POLICY

The Staunton Augusta Waynesboro Animal Shelter (SAWAS) is the municipal animal shelter for the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and Augusta County. The three localities (Stakeholders) each provide appropriate funding to operate the shelter. We are an open admission shelter and accept stray and owner surrender animals from any citizen who resides within the three localities that we serve. Staff offer education and resources to the community as an alternative to surrendering an animal but will accept all surrenders and stray animals. The Shelter has an operational capacity of 46 dogs and 86 cats.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Intake Custody Record – Intake form Surrender Questionnaire, and Health Record

1. Any animal brought into the shelter will have an individual intake form filled out completely by the appropriate staff
 - a. Date and time in which animal was taken into custody,
 - b. Location of custody, either shelter or field,
 - c. Owner name and address, if known,
 - d. Description of animal including species, color, breed, sex, approximate weight,
 - e. Reason for custody,
 - f. Any license of rabies tag, tattoo, collar, or other identification, and disposition of animal,
 - g. Each animal must be scanned for microchip and documented three times during custody

2. An owner surrender questionnaire is completed by the individual surrendering a pet to help provide background information on:
 - a. Animal health,
 - b. Behavior,
 - c. Adaptability with other people or pets
 3. Health assessment / Intake treatment
 - a. The Lead Kennel Attendant or Operations Manager will perform an intake evaluation to determine if additional veterinary care is needed (see policy 2.3)
 - b. Upon intake staff will provide deworming, bathing, flea and tick treatment, and any necessary vaccinations
 - c. Document all medical treatments including vaccines, topical treatments, and oral treatments into the animals health assessment form and enter into the computer record
- B. Stray and Owner Surrender
1. The Shelter will accept any stray or owner surrendered companion animals during open hours
 - a. Appointments are preferred but not required
 - b. Appointments allow for staff to be prepared and allocate resources, and provide census management
 - c. Staff must prioritize asking during intake whether there is a need for the immediate surrender of any animal that poses a risk to the safety of other animals, individuals, or the community
 - d. All citizens surrendering a pet must sign a disclosure form indicating whether or not the animal has bitten someone in the past as required in State Code 3.2 6509
 - e. Citizens must also sign an animal surrender statement that states the following: I hereby relinquish ownership of the above animals to SAWAS. I certify that: I am the owner of these animals; no other person has a right of property of these animals; and I understand that this animal may be immediately be euthanized, adopted, or transferred to another state approved organization

- f. Virginia Code 3.2 6500 defines owner as:

“Any person who (i) has a right of property in an animal; (ii) keeps or harbors an animal; (iii) has an animal in his care; or (iv) acts as a custodian of an animal, however, VA Code 3.2 6546 which governs “County or City public animal shelters; confinement and disposition of animals, affiliation with foster care providers; penalties; injunctive relief” states a “Rightful owner means a person with a right of property in the animal.” The mere presence of an animal on someone’s property for any period of time such as 30 days will not give “rightful” ownership of an animal and allow them to surrender the animal to the Shelter
 - g. In the event that there is a discrepancy of ownership, shelter staff should contact animal control while the animal is onsite to assist
 - h. Any animal found outside of this jurisdiction will not typically be accepted. In cases where the health or life of the animal is at risk the animal may be accepted and/or animal control and the locality with contacted
2. Stray animals without identification
- a. Animals without any form of identification are held for a period of 5 days. On the 6th day, the animal will be considered abandoned per Virginia State Code 3.2 6546 and become property of the shelter
3. Stray animals with identification
- a. Animals with identification are held for a period on 10 days. On the 11th day, the animal will be considered abandoned per Virginia State Code 3.2 6546 and become property of the shelter
 - b. If identification includes a microchip every effort will be made to contact the owner
4. Stray exotic and livestock
- a. The Shelter accepts any abandoned, stray, or surrendered small companion animals or livestock
 - b. Intake procedures and custody records are the same as other animals
 - c. There is no defined holding period for poultry or livestock within State Code 3.2 6546. Animal Control should be contacted for guidance if necessary

5. Lost and Found Reports

- a. The shelter maintains a lost and found file for owners searching for lost or found animals
- b. When a new stray arrives staff will check the file for matching reports and will make every effort to notify the owner

6. Wildlife

- a. The Shelter does not take healthy or injured wildlife. All citizens should be referred to the Wildlife Center of Virginia

C. Fees

1. Owner Surrender Fees

- a. Individuals who meet the requirements to surrender and acknowledge ownership will be asked to pay a surrender fee. The fee schedule is approved by the Stakeholders upon review of this policy annually
- b. If the Director or manager determines that the pet is in danger of being abandoned, or the situation warrants immediate surrender, they may take the animal without any fees

Owner Surrender	Fees
Dog	15.00
Cat	10.00
Small Animal	10.00
Litter of puppies	20.00
Litter of kittens	15.00
Mom with kittens	20.00

D. Procedure for Court Cases

- a. Any animal brought to the shelter for pending court action will be placed in the hold area of the shelter
- b. The hold area is not accessible to the public or volunteers
- c. Staff are not to share pending court case information with the public
- d. Photographs are not permitted except for intake records
- e. Staff must take appropriate precautions in caring for these animals including the use of aides and appropriate gloves if necessary
- f. Animals may not be released without authorization from Animal Control
- g. Intake form will identify any restrictions of the animal

E. Procedure for housing

1. Upon intake staff will determine the best location for housing based on reason custody, vaccination status, and/or illness. All animals will be provided a kennel card that documents location and status
 - a. Only fully vaccinated and healthy animals will be housed in either dog or cat adoption areas
 - b. Animals with illness or suspected illness will be placed in isolation
 - c. Unvaccinated animals will be placed in stray/intake areas
 - e. Animals undergoing behavioral evaluations will be placed in intake or court hold
 - f. Any animals held for court hearings will be placed in court hold
 - g. Animals held for safekeeping will be housed in court hold
 - h. Some animals may be co-housed if they are bonded, are a part of a litter, or nursing mothers with their young
 - i. Unweaned puppies or kittens without a mother need immediate foster placement or assessment from a veterinarian

