**Mount Vernon Animal Rescue (MVAR) Animal Intake Policy**

*MVAR is a home-based animal rescue group that provides veterinary care and foster homes for strays and surrendered pets with the goal of finding all animals in our care loving forever homes.*

**Stray Animals**

Any animal caught as a stray is immediately evaluated for any obvious signs of illness or injury. Animals that show any evidence of a potentially life-threatening illness or injury are taken as soon as possible to an emergency veterinary hospital.

Animals that do not require emergency veterinary care are evaluated and the following questions are answered:

Canine/ feline/other, i.e., rabbit, bird, etc.

Adult dog/cat/puppy/kitten?

Approximate age?

Part of a litter? If so, how many?

If puppy or kitten, is it too young to be weaned?

Description:

Health evaluation:

Document any signs of illness or injury, such as an eye infection, limp, wound, etc.

Behavioral evaluation:

Describe the animal’s behavior, such as friendly, timid, feral, etc.

If possible, unless the animal was clearly born outside to a stray, it will be scanned for a microchip. If a microchip is identified, MVAR will attempt to contact the owner if listed. If not, MVAR will proceed with treating the animal as a stray.

All animals taken in by MVAR will be quarantined until they go to our veterinary clinic, with the goal being no longer than three days. Unless a cat is considered feral, all animals caught outside will be vaccinated, dewormed, checked for ear mites, treated for fleas, spayed/neutered and microchipped. The goal is to socialize all cats and kittens if possible, but if a cat is clearly feral, it will receive the same veterinary services, except it will not be microchipped and will be ear tipped.

After the veterinary appointment, animals will be placed in foster homes. Puppies or kittens requiring bottle feeding will be placed with specialized fosters.

Animals in need of socialization will be given to fosters along with cages and supplies to assist with their socialization.

**Surrendered Animals**

Every owner surrendering an animal should provide answers to the following questions:

What age is the animal?

Where did you originally get your animal?

How long have you owned the animal?

Why are you surrendering?

If the surrender is due to the owner having short-term financial or housing difficulties and based on the evaluation of the owner by MVAR, the rescue may offer to provide foster care for the animal to help the owner with the goal of reuniting the owner and the animal. MVAR may also offer to help with veterinary care if that is the reason for the surrender.

Are there any behavior or medical issues?

Has the animal ever bitten anyone or another animal?

Can the owner provide vet records? If not, ask if they have a rabies certificate or any record of vaccinations?

Surrendered animals will be evaluated with the same criteria as a stray animal and given the same veterinary services unless veterinary records are provided.

**Wildlife**

MVAR does not rehabilitate wildlife, but will triage wildlife and take an orphaned or injured animal to a specialized veterinary hospital, or a certified wildlife rehabilitator.