

The Center

for Animal Health & Welfare

Finding Forever Homes for Homeless Animals

Euthanasia Policy: The Center for Animal Health & Welfare

No kill, as defined by The Center for Animal Health & Welfare: The Center will strive to save all healthy animals and all those with “manageable” or “treatable” issues: issues that can be addressed within the Center for Animal Health & Welfare’s means.

Humane Euthanasia: Some animals are not manageable or treatable and therefore require humane euthanasia. Euthanasia fluid will be administered via IV or IP route at a minimum of 1 ml/10 lb body weight. If necessary, sedation may be administered intra-muscularly prior to the euthanasia.

Staff Responsibilities

Administrant of Euthanasia Fluid: details of each euthanasia must be entered into the control log within twenty-four hours from the euthanasia and must include: date; animal ID number; name of animal; species of animal; drug name; dosage; reason; signature. Log is kept in manager’s locked desk.

Animal Care Manager: medical notes to be documented in Pet Point.

Staff; committee members: behavioral notes to be documented in Pet Point.

Behavior committee chair: voting results to be documented in Pet Point.

Protocol: Behavioral Issues

Animals must have at least three days from the date of admission to the shelter to acclimate to the shelter environment.

The behavior committee will determine the plan of action for animals with behavior issues.

The behavior committee will be comprised of at least 7 people and will include members of the board of directors and staff responsible for direct care of the animal. Committee members must be excused from voting when there is an emotional attachment to the animal.

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Procedure: Behavior Committee

- Committee chairperson will present case to members of the committee via private conference, email, or phone.
- After careful consideration of the case, but within 48 hours from dissemination of case specifics, each committee member will respond to the committee chair with his or her written vote.
- All committee decisions will be progressional—if committee recommendation cannot be secured or there is no evidence of behavioral progress, we will move to the next option, etc.

Behavior Modification Options

1. Behavior modification program, if applicable
 - Options: foster program or professional trainer
 - Availability status of animal will be determined by staff
 - Decision may be based on plurality
2. Behavior modification is not within our means
 - Available to rescue organization
 - A rescue group must make verbal and/or written claim to the animal within two weeks from decision; this time may vary depending on the safety risks associated with caring for the animal. The rescue group will have two weeks from “claim date” to take physical and legal ownership of the animal; this time period may vary depending on the safety risks associated with caring for the animal.
 - Decision may be based on plurality.
3. Not available for behavior modification plan or rescue—euthanasia
 - Behavior committee majority must approve euthanasia decisions involving behavior.

Bypass Committee: decision may bypass the committee when there is a clear and present danger associated with routine care of the animal or routine care of the animal has resulted in “attack” and/or “serious injury” to a human or another animal.

Privacy: When the decision to euthanize has been reached, dialogue outside of committee is prohibited.

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Terms: Behavior Issues

- Animals that are too aggressive to be handled for routine care, evaluation, medical treatment, or adoption are candidates for behavior committee and/or euthanasia (except feral cats that can safely be released).
- Aggressive animals that have failed attempts at behavior modification will be euthanized.
- Animals that have, without justification, attacked a person or another companion animal causing serious injury will be euthanized.
 - A “canine attack” is “aggressive physical contact initiated by the dog” and “serious injury” is, “any physical injury consisting of broken bones or a permanently disfiguring laceration.” (Journal of The American Veterinary Medical Association, 2001).
 - The standards for feline attacks and subsequent injuries will follow the above.
 - Evidence of attack must be documented. Whenever possibly, photographic evidence should be included.
- Animals that have been deemed dangerous by a judge will be euthanized.

Protocol: Medical Issues

- **Non-Emergency:** the animal care manager or veterinarian must approve shelter animal euthanasia decisions involving health. When the medical prognosis and suffering of an animal is a matter of debate, the veterinarian will make the ultimate decision whether or not to euthanize.
- **Emergency:** animals that are irretrievably suffering, which have poor prognosis, and/or are in severe distress may be euthanized by a qualified staff member without approval; however, the animal care manager, humane police officer, or veterinarian must be informed of the euthanasia immediately after occurrence.

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