

Standard Operating Procedures For
Marshall County Animal Shelter

Adopted: _____

FORWARD

The Marshall County Animal Shelter (“ANIMAL SHELTER”) will comply with the Alabama applicable statutes, ordinances and regulations. In the event there appears to be a conflict in the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures for Marshall County Animal Shelter contained in this manual with Alabama law, the applicable law will take precedence

HOURS OF OPERATION

1. The hours of operation are designed to ensure that all animals in the shelter are properly and humanely cared for and that the public has adequate and ample opportunity to conduct adoptions at the Marshall County Animal Shelter. Special events requiring hours other than those listed below may be approved by the Animal Control Supervisor.
2. Hours of operation 10am-4pm for dropping off or picking up animals. (Rescue Groups can pick up animals 10am- 4pm beyond those hours will require approval of the Animal Control Officer) Monday – Friday 10am-4pm for viewing the animals. The shelter is closed to the public during 8am- 10am to allow cleaning of the shelter and animal care. Saturday and Sunday the shelter hours are 10am-2pm.
3. Marshall County sets the holiday schedule annually. The Animal Shelter will follow the same holiday schedule as the Marshall County Courthouse. The holiday cleaning and feeding schedule will be the same as the daily schedule. The shelter will only be staffed for cleaning and feeding on holidays, and the shelter is closed to the public and all rescue groups on these days as well. Animal procedures are the same for the Holidays and Weekends. All animals are to be fed adequate food and given fresh water daily. Animal Control staff will observe that animals are eating regularly, their urine and bowel movement conditions, symptoms of illness or injury and any unusual behavior, and report to the Animal Control Supervisor if there are any irregularities. Animal enclosures are cleaned 3 times on normal working days and once on holidays. Failure to follow procedures for feeding/watering animals will not be tolerated. Disciplinary actions will be taken if procedures are not followed up to and including dismissal.
4. The shelter promptly responds to animal emergencies during non-business, holiday and weekend hours. Any situation in which a domestic or non-domestic are creating a danger to the public is considered an emergency. Stray animals are not considered an emergency unless the animal is creating a danger to the public.

5. The ANIMAL SHELTER office will be staffed from 8am-4:30 pm Monday – Friday, holidays excluded. Non-emergency messages and notifications will be responded to on the next day the office is open.
6. Holidays are mandatory overtime of two- hours for cleaning and feeding.

DISPOSITION OF ANIMALS

1. An aggressive animal must be held for seven (7) days unless at least one of the two conditions are met:
 - 1) The animal is seriously ill or injured and the shelter manager determines and documents in writing that it is appropriate to euthanize the animal due to this condition; or
 - 2) The animal has been surrendered by the owner who has provided proof of ownership and has given written consent for the early disposition.
 - 3) Animals that are being held that have an owner will be kept for 10 days and owner will be liable for all incurred fees with housing, feeding and vet services.

After the seven (7) days hold period an aggressive animal may be euthanized without being offered for adoption if the operator director of the shelter finds the animal to be unadoptable due to injury or defects of health or temperament.

2. Animals that are not aggressive, which are housed at the Marshall County Animal Shelter or at an overflow shelter paid for by Marshall County leave in one of four ways: they're adopted, returned to owner, released to a rescue or foster group, or euthanized.
3. The descriptions of stray animals brought to the shelter by persons, or traps, are cross-checked with any lost animal reports. If a possible match has been made, potential owners will be promptly notified of the process involved for the release of the animal. Care should be taken in exploring possible matches to evaluate the distance between the place of disappearance and the location where the animal was found against the time missing. Potential owners should be advised they will be required to provide proof of ownership (pictures, vet records etc.) should the distance be unreasonable under normal circumstances.
4. Any stray animal brought into Marshall County Animal Shelter will be available for adoption providing they have been held for seven (7) days. Animals who are eligible for adoption, that have not been adopted after 60 days will be euthanized.
5. Owners that have been called and can provide proper documentation of the animal belonging to them, and Rabies tag, will be allowed to take their animal. If the owner does not have proof of rabies there will be an additional \$ 25.00 charge for the rabies vaccine and parvo shot
6. Animals deemed inappropriate for adoption due to age, medical condition or space

limitations may be rescued to approved groups. Animals who have been at the shelter and who we have not been successful in getting adopted are also candidates for rescue by approved groups.

7. When deemed necessary for medical, behavioral, or space reasons, animals will be euthanized. Unweaned, critically ill, or seriously injured domestic animals may be euthanized prior to conclusion of the holding period to prevent additional suffering. If an animal requires Euthanasia prior to the seven (7) days holding period, it will be approved by the Animal Control Supervisor. The reasons for the shelter manager's determination for euthanasia prior to the seven (7) days holding period must be documented in writing.

ANIMAL CONTROL & WELFARE

1. Animal Control General. The animal control officers of Marshall County are empowered to enforce all laws and regulations in Marshall County pertaining to dogs running at large without rabies tag, potentially dangerous and dangerous dogs. Animal Control Officers respond to medical emergencies involving domestic and stray animals. Animal Control Officers are available to respond to animal control issues from 8:00 to 4:30 pm Mon - Fri.
2. Between 4:30pm to 8am weekdays and on Saturdays and Sundays and Statutory Holidays, one Animal Control Officer is available on an emergency, on-call basis. Calls for animals running at large are not responded to during "emergency" operations unless the dogs or humans are in immediate danger.

ADOPTIONS

1. Guidelines for adoption procedures and the handling of adoption applications ensure that potential adopters are given an equal opportunity to adopt from the Marshall County Animal Shelter. Marshall County Animal Shelter employees are responsible for adhering to all Alabama Laws regarding sterilization and adoption procedures. A key component for successful adoptions is to consider that virtually every individual who enters our shelter could potentially adopt an animal. Staff should be readily available to answer any questions the public might have. Staff will interact in a positive and forthright manner with individuals seeking information or wishing to dialogue about any animal. Our attention to the needs of our public will generate returns for our animals to get adopted. All animals will be spayed or neutered before leaving the shelter unless the age of the animal is too young; in which case a voucher will be given to complete the surgery at the appropriate age. It is a requirement that the new owner complete this process.
2. Adoption Fees may be paid in cash or check, debit or credit card. The fees will be approved from time to time by the Marshall County Commission and will be posted when approved.

RESCUE GROUPS

1. The Animal Control Supervisor may choose to release/adopt suitable animals to rescue groups. These groups will be approved after checking that all documentation has been turned in.
2. The Animal Control Supervisor will designate a rescue group coordinator who will serve as a liaison between ANIMAL SHELTER and all rescue groups. ANIMAL SHELTER is committed to working with all certified rescue groups to find home for its animals. The liaison appointed may be either an ANIMAL SHELTER employee or a volunteer.

VOLUNTEERS

1. Volunteers may be used to assist with animal caretaking. Their special skills and talents make a positive difference in the lives of shelter animals, and their recruitment is essential for good shelter operation. It is important that everyone involved in the shelter make volunteers feel welcome, provide helpful guidance and insight to enhance the volunteer experience and utilize the time the volunteer spends in the shelter to improve the experience of our animals.
2. Most volunteers are individuals who have visited or adopted from the shelter, have been referred by community service agencies or are student interns. The shelter prefers volunteers to be at least 18 years of age, although exceptions can be made with the approval of the individual's parent or guardian. Parents/Guardians must sign the minor volunteer form before anyone under 18 may begin volunteering.
3. Individuals wishing to become a part of the shelter's volunteer team are asked to fill out a volunteer application. Any volunteers 17 years old or younger are asked to get their parent or guardian to fill out a volunteer release form for minors in addition to the application forms.
4. Final decisions about acceptance and placement of volunteers are made by the Animal Control Supervisor or the ANIMAL SHELTER Volunteer Coordinator. This individual is responsible for the effective deployment of volunteers, both inside and outside the shelter. The Animal Control Supervisor will review general rules of behavior and conduct and establish a working schedule with each volunteer.
5. All medical treatments of animals must be approved by the Animal Control Supervisor. Initiation of any non-approved medical treatment by a volunteer shall be grounds of removal of volunteer status and result in the individual being banned from the facility. Volunteers who see an animal that appears sick or in distress should notify the Animal Control Officer as quickly as possible.
6. As with staff members at the shelter, volunteers are expected to adhere to certain rules of conduct and behavior in order to provide a safe and productive work environment. These rules will be explained to the volunteers at their orientation review.

ANIMAL BITES

1. Domestic animal bites: Marshall County Animal Shelter will respond to all bite calls and to any calls where police require assistance.
2. Bite reports are filled out by a Marshall County Deputy as an Incident and Offense for dogs, cats, or non-domestic animal that bite or scratches a person. If the Animal Control Supervisor determines that the biting animal remains at large, he/she should respond by attempting to locate the biting animal to complete the bite report. If, at the scene, the owner of the biting animals can be located, the owner and the individual who was bitten should be advised to seek medical attention. Contact information for all individuals involved as well as whether the animal is current on its rabies vaccination should be detailed in the report or should start rabies vaccinations. All animal bites are reported to Marshall County Health Department.
3. Safety, caution and proper animal control equipment should be used when apprehending vicious animals.

The Marshall County Commission should provide rabies immunization to its employees.

Pet owners are responsible for paying the reclaim fee for expenses incurred at the animal shelter while their animal is housed.

ANIMAL MAINTENANCE

1. Not only does a thorough and effective cleaning of the animal shelter prevent the spread of communicable diseases, but also it creates a better environment for the animals, staff, and visitors. It is never acceptable to leave anything in hallways, on the floor of the pen areas, or on the floor in the cat rooms, this includes empty cat traps. It takes someone else much more time to pick up after you than it does for you to put an item in its proper location initially.
2. Dogs displaying aggressive characteristics should always be identified and care taken that support is available when they are handled.

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS

The State of Alabama requires that information on each shelter be provided on an annual basis. Marshall County requires the same information be compiled on a both a monthly and an annual basis. The Animal Control Supervisor, or their designee, will compile both of these reports. The Animal Control Supervisor shall sign off on these reports and have them delivered to the applicable party.