

Lincoln County Humane Society

Euthanasia Policy

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The vision of the Lincoln County Humane Society is to inspire and engage the community to end animal suffering. We accomplish this through our mission: The Lincoln County Humane Society is dedicated to the prevention of cruelty and abuse to animals, birds and wildlife.

We strive to maintain a No-Kill facility; a place of safety for healthy adoptable animals; a temporary home for the homeless; a haven for the mistreated, neglected or abused animals of Lincoln County.

Euthanasia will not be our population control, but rather an act of kindness to end an animal's suffering or to ensure public safety and welfare.

It is our pledge to nourish the relationship between companion animals and humans through education, media exposure and readily available information and assistance.

The Humane Society provides a shelter to which the public may bring in stray and unwanted animals. A trained and dedicated staff is at work every day of the year to provide a high standard of care. All animals received at the shelter are examined and given routine health care.

ANIMAL POPULATION CONTROL

To help control pet over-population, all shelter animals are sterilized, or adopters are required to pre-pay a licensed veterinarian for the procedure, prior to adoption. Spaying and neutering also have many other benefits such as eliminating most roaming and fighting in males and less prostate problems and testicular tumors. Studies show most behavior problems and many medical problems in cats and dogs can be eliminated by spaying and neutering.

EUTHANASIA

Euthanasia is not considered for *adoptable* animals that have been relinquished to LCHS, or accepted from the local Police or Sheriff's Department. Our commitment to the adoptable animals in our care means that we are willing to pursue all reasonable efforts in order to provide for their well-being.

For the purpose of this policy, *adoptable* shall include only those animals eight weeks of age or older that at, or subsequent to, the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no signs of a behavioral or temperamental defect that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and have manifested no sign of disease, injury, congenital, or hereditary condition that adversely affects the health of the animal, or that is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future or requiring any medical or behavioral intervention.

Euthanasia because of lack of space is not an acceptable option. Euthanasia is to be considered only after a reasonable and appropriate pursuit of all other viable options. Euthanasia is only performed when there is a consensus that it is the most humane offering for the animal in question or the only reasonable option to ensure

staff or community safety. It is never a decision that is made without the utmost consideration for all of the factors, as we know them.

Animals who are suffering mentally, emotionally, or physically may be candidates for euthanasia. Animals with poor prognosis, protracted painful recovery, incurable illness, are non-responsive to treatment or if treatment is not reasonably available, are candidates for euthanasia. Animals who are deemed to pose an unacceptable danger to other animals, themselves, or the public are candidates for euthanasia. The euthanasia process is initiated by a supervisor of the shelter based on input and discussion with involved staff members.

Each animal admitted to LCHS adoption program will continue to be evaluated in its entirety, taking into account both behavior and medical conditions. A condition that may not necessitate euthanasia on its own, when present in combination with other issues (such as a medical condition occurring with behavior issues), may lead to the decision to euthanize.

Alternative options will always be reasonably explored for animal initially accepted for adoption but that fail to continue to meet the criteria for adoptability.

Some examples of options to pursue include, but are not limited to: cooperating with other placement facilities, assisting with appropriate foster care or adopting the animal with a medical or behavior waiver. In some cases, the manager of the shelter may contact the previous private party owners (unless they have requested that they not be contacted). If the previous owner wishes to reclaim the animal in question, it will be discussed and considered.

Procedure Upon Decision to Euthanize:

Once all reasonable efforts have been exhausted, the euthanasia authorization process is initiated. The date will be scheduled for the process by the shelter manager. This will be the next day our vet comes, or an appointment will be made immediately if the animal is suffering.

The staff member who initiates the request is responsible for completing their portion of the Euthanasia Justification and Authorization Form, including obtaining the signature of the shelter manager. All signatures and supporting documentation will be collected by the end of the next business day following initiation of the euthanasia process.* If there is a difference of opinion between the staff members and the shelter manager (for behavior/temperament reasons), or the veterinarian and the shelter manager (for medical reasons), about whether said animal should be euthanized, it is at the discretion of the shelter manager to resolve the issue. The request for euthanasia is cancelled until the issue is resolved.

If the shelter manager approves the request as the only alternative for the animal, the shelter will proceed with the euthanasia. The manager will then put the animal's paperwork on the euthanasia clipboard to schedule the animal to be euthanized by a veterinarian.

All Animals:

- Will be given special foods and/or treats, as prescribed by the staff or shelter manager.
- Will be given soft, comfortable bedding and toys.
- When appropriate, the animal will receive visits from staff.

- When appropriate, the staff will spend quality time with the animal. This special time may involve going on a long walk (if a dog), playing in the dog pens off leash (if a dog), spending quiet time in the room or engaging in an activity specifically tailored to meet the needs of the animal.

After the euthanasia is performed, the shelter manager will complete the bottom of the Euthanasia Authorization and Justification Form and will update the animal's intake file.

Procedure to Carry out Euthanasia

The safety of the staff, as well as the comfort of the animal, is paramount and will be considered when determining how the procedure is performed. Staff will strive, under the direction of the manager, to use all modalities available to minimize the stress to the animal and to maximize safety to the staff. Pre-tranquilization will be considered in all cases where it will help achieve these stated goals.

When approved by the manager, staff members may be present for euthanasia procedure. Due to space constraints, this may be on a limited basis.

Staff members or the manager will get the animal from its kennel or cage and take the necessary time to calm the animal prior to the euthanasia procedure. The process will be conducted in a manner humane and respectful to the animal. Euthanasia is performed solely by a veterinarian. After the euthanasia is completed, the animal will continue to be handled in an appropriate and respectful manner.

The animal will be placed in a plastic bag, in the freezer in the med room for cremation. All animals will be used for scientific studies or cremated in a communal cremation from Peaceful Pines Pet Memorials. At the discretion of the manager, some animals may be privately cremated.