

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures



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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
MISSION	3
HOURS OF OPERATION	3
ATTENDANCE.....	3
CODE OF CONDUCT/WORK ENVIRONMENT.....	4
SAFETY/RISK MANAGEMENT	4
WORK ATTIRE	5
CONFIDENTIALITY	5
ANIMAL INTAKE.....	5
ANIMAL CONTROL.....	6
OWNER SURRENDER.....	6
QUARANTINE	6
HANDLING OF ANIMALS	6
DAILY OPERATING PROCEDURES	7
MANDATED HOLD PERIODS.....	7
SHELTER ADOPTIONS, RESCUE “PULLS”	8
RECLAIMED ANIMALS	8
SHELTER CAPACITY	9
EUTHANASIA/ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES.....	9
CREMATION AND DISPOSAL OF ANIMAL REMAINS.....	10
VOLUNTEER SUPPORT PROGRAM.....	10
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	12

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to serve as the primary source of information on general policies and procedures under which the county animal shelter is operated. It is subject to periodic revision and updates as deemed necessary by the Shelter Director or County Mayor. Guidance and clarification on all matters pertaining to shelter operations is provided to staff and the public by the Shelter Director, who may delegate certain responsibilities, where appropriate, to assigned staff and/or a volunteer coordinator. All staff and volunteers are to be familiar with this manual and any changes and/or additions as those occur. The Director and all full and part-time employees should read and follow the countywide personnel policy for all personnel issues. A copy of this manual shall be maintained in both the intake facility and the adoption center for review by staff, volunteers and the public.

MISSION

The Crossville-Cumberland County Animal Shelter operates to provide for the housing of stray animals within the City of Crossville (a municipal corporation) and Cumberland County (a political subdivision of the State) boundaries that are impounded by Animal Control Officers.

The purpose is to reduce general animal control problems in the County including, but not limited to, protecting its citizens from the dangers and problems associated with free-roaming animals (domesticated dogs and cats).

HOURS OF OPERATION

- Staff Work Hours – The Shelter Director shall establish such work hours as are necessary to enable the adoption center to be open to the public during normal business hours and to meet the needs of the animals in both the adoption center and intake facility on a daily basis.
- Public Hours – Normal business hours during which the adoption center is open to the public are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The shelter is closed on Wednesday and Sunday.
- The shelter is closed to the public (and adoption center volunteers) on all holidays observed by the county for this department.

ATTENDANCE

Animal Shelter employees must follow Cumberland County personnel policies.

- Employees are expected to be punctual when arriving to work daily. If for any reason an employee expects to be late for his or her shift, the shelter director should be notified immediately by phone or text message. In the event the director is unreachable, the employee is to leave a message on the animal shelter office line at 931-484-8525.
- An employee must notify the shelter director no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of a shift if unable to work. Repeatedly missing scheduled shifts may result in disciplinary measures and or termination of employment.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Any employee that is ill for three consecutive days will be required to provide a doctor's excuse to return to work.
- All full-time employees must have prior approval of the shelter director before accruing any compensatory time.
- Any employee desiring particular days/times off may submit requests to the shelter director prior to posting of the next work schedule. While the requested time off cannot be guaranteed, every reasonable attempt will be made to accommodate employee requests.
- Any employee needing to schedule more than three consecutive days off, must give at least 2-week notice to the shelter director for prior approval.
- As an employee of Cumberland County Animal Shelter, it is expected and essential that we work together as a team, in the spirit of continuous improvement. Disrespectful comments and behavior undermine the goals of this organization and will not be tolerated.

CODE OF CONDUCT/WORK ENVIRONMENT

For the good of the organization, standards are required.

- All staff is required to conduct themselves in a manner at all times that is professional and reflects favorably on the animal shelter and Cumberland County.
- Staff shall treat the public, the volunteers and one another with courtesy and respect at all times without regard for a person's race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin or other protected category.
- No member of the general public will be permitted to conduct themselves in any manner toward staff and volunteers that is disruptive to the shelter's operations or causes staff to become concerned for their safety or the safety of the animals.
- If staff determines that the conduct of someone on the shelter grounds is serious enough to pose a threat of harm to other people or the animals, staff shall first attempt to make the Shelter Director aware of the situation and respond as directed.
- In the event the Shelter Director is not immediately available, staff shall notify the Sheriff's Office of the action by the individual(s) causing concern.
- Staff will be responsible for preparing a written record of the situation and submitting it to the Shelter Director as soon after the incident as possible, but before leaving for the day.

SAFETY/RISK MANAGEMENT

Safety is everyone's concern and responsibility.

- It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure that obvious safety issues and items in need of repair to protect the public and the animals are brought to the attention of the appropriate county staff.
- Staff is responsible for keeping appropriate records of safety issues they observe and/or that are brought to their attention by the volunteers and the general public.
- Staff shall notify the Shelter Director or other designated county employee of safety issues requiring immediate repair or remediation and document when the scheduled repairs are anticipated to be made.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- When required, staff shall provide visible barriers around such health and safety problem areas as necessary to protect all personnel and the public until such repairs can be safely made. (e.g. “wet floor” signs)

WORK ATTIRE

For the health and well-being of all; for the order of the organization.

- Attire will provide staff with protection from possible bites and scratches.
- Since the apparel worn by employees is subject to cleaning chemicals and animal waste during the cleaning process and throughout the intake and adoption process, no staff will be expected to wear new clothing or office type clothing to perform their daily tasks.
- Staff may be required to wear sufficiently strong footwear that will protect their feet from work-related chemicals and the animals.
- The Shelter Director shall have final authority as to what is acceptable work wear and foot wear for both shelter staff and volunteers.
- All staff and volunteers are encouraged to remove their shoes, change their clothing and wash thoroughly after leaving the shelter on their assigned days to help reduce the transmission of infectious diseases.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Shelter Director is the animal shelter Public Information Officer (PIO).

- Only the Shelter Director is authorized to give confidential information about any shelter animals to the public.
- The Shelter Director may designate assigned staff to provide information to those who have a legitimate, legal and verifiable need to any information.
- In conformance with laws, local ordinances, and/or pending investigations including, but not limited to, the location where animals have been picked up by animal control officers, the names of owners who have surrendered their animals, the details of pending court cases related to animals held in impound status and other information related to animals’ condition and medical treatment may not be released by any staff member or volunteer to anyone without the Shelter Director’s express permission.
- All information related to adoptions is deemed confidential whether or not those adoptions are to an individual, a family, or a rescue group including those animals that are adopted and leave the shelter via a transport to another adoption center at a near or distant location.

ANIMAL INTAKE

In keeping with its Mission statement:

- The County reserves the right to limit the acceptance of stray animals to those brought in by the City and County Animal Control Officers.
- The County may change its practice to accept or not accept strays from the public at any time without notice.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Staff will establish whether a stray brought to the shelter by a resident was found within the county's boundaries and make a determination as to whether or not there is room to house the animal on-site.
- The Shelter Director has the discretion to schedule the date/time people may bring in stray/surrendered animals due to lack of space at the shelter and to avoid overloading its capacity and staff.
- The Shelter Director may advise staff to coordinate a day and time with such persons when the shelter is expected to be less full due to a pending transport, thus providing room for more incoming animals.
- The Shelter Director is responsible for developing procedures for processing and evaluating every animal approved for intake to the shelter.

ANIMAL CONTROL

All animals brought to the shelter by Animal Control will be placed in appropriate shelter dog pens/kennels or cat cages/condos.

- The officer or animal control officer who brings an animal to the shelter after hours is responsible for placing the animal in appropriate kennel/pen and providing food and water.
- Said officer or animal control officer is also responsible for leaving sufficient information pertaining to the animal's pick-up location and condition to enable staff to complete appropriate records upon their arrival each day.
- Staff will determine the appropriate hold period for the incoming animals based on applicable city, county and state guidelines and make appropriate notes on the intake log and kennel card.

OWNER SURRENDER

The animal shelter is not required to accept animals surrendered by county residents.

- For those owner-surrendered animals that are accepted, the staff should make every effort to obtain necessary records from the owner to verify spay/neuter status, vaccine records, and any health issues of the animal.
- If necessary, staff will attempt to contact the veterinarian of record for the animal(s) to verify the owner(s) statements related to the animal(s)' spay/neuter status and vaccine record.
- Appropriate fees shall be required to be paid by the person surrendering the animal(s) based on the county's approved fee schedule.
 - Exceptions to the required fees shall be at the discretion of the Shelter Director when it is determined that there would be considerable hardship to the person surrendering the animal(s).

QUARANTINE

The determination to place an animal in quarantine shall be made based on the judgment of the Shelter Director and/or staff and the reasons shall be noted on the intake logs and kennel/cage into which the animal is placed.

HANDLING OF ANIMALS

Humane Standards:

- Animals shall be handled in a humane manner at all times. Staff recognizes that animals coming into the shelter environment are stressed and in need of careful handling.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Staff shall use only approved physical force necessary to restrain the animal for its safety and the safety of humans and other animals.
- Whenever possible, staff shall use approved leashes, muzzles, collars, poles, gloves, and any other devices/equipment and tools for which they have received proper training, in the care and handling of stressed or aggressive animals.

DAILY OPERATING PROCEDURES

- Each morning, designated county pens and log sheets will be checked for animals that may have been brought after hours. These animals will be relocated to appropriate holding pens and the proper intake paperwork is to be filled out completely by shelter staff.
- All exterior pens, bowls, and dog houses will be cleaned with water hoses, then disinfected. Hoses must be picked up before the public is allowed into the building for viewing.
- All communal areas will be cleaned and disinfected daily prior to opening.
- All interior pens and bowls will be cleaned and disinfected daily prior to opening.
- All cat litter and garbage will be taken outside and put into the dumpster daily before opening.
- All animals will be fed and watered daily during operating hours, and checked again prior to closing to ensure all animals have sufficient water for the evening.
- County pens will be checked periodically throughout the day and animals will be transferred into holding pens as needed. All intake paperwork will be filed at that time.
- County pens are to be checked again at closing to ensure the availability of at least two pens for county use after hours.
- Lost and found animals reported are to be recorded into the appropriate log and reviewed daily for possible matches.
- Answering machine is to be checked daily and messages dealt with accordingly.
- Laundry is to be kept in laundry baskets and should be done continuously throughout the day by all employees.

MANDATED HOLD PERIODS

State and Local Laws apply

- There is no hold period for animals surrendered by their owners.
- Surrendered animals may be made available for immediate adoption, placed in quarantine, placed in general intake for observation, or euthanized at the Shelter Director's discretion based on the animal's condition and any other circumstances or factors in support of the shelter's overall mission and goals.
- City and/or County Stray Animals: Stray animals brought to the shelter will be held for those minimum hold periods established separately by the City Council and County Commission depending on where each stray animal was found.
 - Notwithstanding the above, the Shelter Director, with or without input from local veterinarians, shall make the necessary determination as to whether the condition of a stray animal brought in from either jurisdiction is in a physical condition that warrants immediate humane euthanasia.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

SHELTER ADOPTIONS, RESCUE “PULLS”

- Adoption fees are as follows:
 - Cats: \$50; includes first vaccination, deworming, and spay or neuter
 - Dogs: \$80; includes first vaccination, deworming, and spay or neuter
 - All adopters will be required to pay for rabies vaccination at the vet clinic when picking up their adopted animal
 - All fees will be waived for animals transferred to an approved animal rescue organization with 501(c)(3) status
- All adopted animals will be altered prior to the adopter receiving the animal. Animals will only be released to other animal rescue organizations with a 501(c)(3) status and those that sterilize prior to adoption. All rescue organizations must be pre-approved by the shelter director before release of any animal.
- Notwithstanding an animal’s general health condition and minimum hold requirements, the Shelter Director shall make the final determination as to an animal’s overall suitability for adoption to the public or a rescue group.
- The Shelter Director has the final say as to the suitability of a prospective adopter for an individual animal.
- As a courtesy, County adoption fees are waived to legitimate (501(c)(3)) animal rescue groups previously approved by the Shelter Director, subject to:
 - The Shelter Director’s receipt of a copy of paperwork demonstrating that the group has met the Tennessee state nonprofit incorporation requirements and for which the group’s stated mission or purpose is animal rescue.
 - A signed copy of the animal shelter’s “pull” paperwork for approved groups acknowledging that they will ensure the animal is spayed or neutered prior to re-adoption to the public.
 - Notwithstanding the above, the Shelter Director may deny groups to “pull” animals for any reason including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Information the Shelter Director may possess that the group is no longer able to meet its stated purposes;
 - That the group is failing to adequately care for the animals in its care;
 - Animals are not being spayed/neutered prior to re-adoption;
 - The group has pending legal actions against it that likely would render it incapable of meeting the animals’ needs.

RECLAIMED ANIMALS

The Shelter Director shall make the final determination as to whether or not to return an animal to an owner who has come to reclaim it.

- All animals being reclaimed by the owner will be assessed a ‘running at large’ fee, as well as a \$5/day boarding fee. At large fees are as follows:
 - First offense - \$20
 - Second Offense - \$50

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Third Offense - \$100 and possible confiscation of animal per animal control discretion
- Any owner unable to provide proof of rabies vaccination for their animal will be charged a \$15 deposit and given 10 days to provide proof of such vaccination, or forfeit the deposit
- Occasionally animals may be placed in foster care for various reasons (ex: special needs of animal, awaiting adoption/rescue transport, etc.). Any individual wishing to foster MUST be pre-approved by the shelter director
- Staff refers all non-routine animal reclaims to the Shelter Director for final determination.
- Factors the Shelter Director may consider include, but are not limited to:
 - How long the animal has been at the shelter;
 - Whether or not the animal has already been placed in the adoption facility;
 - Satisfactory proof that the animal in question is the claimant's;
 - Documentation that old or recent injuries or medical conditions received prompt treatment by a licensed veterinarian;
 - The animal's overall condition when found and brought to the shelter and/or the animal's current medical state; and
 - Any legal, court-ordered holds placed on the animal in question.
- Owners will be required to provide the Shelter Director with satisfactory evidence of ownership of each animal to be reclaimed including veterinary records, photographs, microchips and any collars with identifying tags that were on the animal at the time it was brought to the shelter.
- Owners will be required to pay all fees associated with the animal's stay at the shelter.
- The Shelter Director shall have the discretion to waive the fees associated with a stray animal being reclaimed and permit an owner to adopt the animal and pay those fees based on an independent assessment of all circumstances of the impound, the owner's cooperation/behavior and the animal's condition.

SHELTER CAPACITY

The Shelter Director determines capacity on an ongoing basis.

- The Shelter Director shall provide housing for no more animals than current staffing and City/County-funded resources permit.
- The Shelter Director shall reserve sufficient room at the intake facility to provide for court-ordered holds in pending animal abuse and hoarding cases, as may occur from time to time.

EUTHANASIA/ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

Legal Authority and Local Practice

- Legal Authority to euthanize animals is provided by state law; the requirements of operating a public animal shelter necessitate its use.
- Euthanasia will be performed only by a certified Euthanasia Technician or veterinarian in accordance with state law.
- The Shelter Director has sole discretion in the decision-making process to determine when to implement euthanasia protocols which may include, but is not limited to, the following criteria:

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Over-crowding.
- Major outbreaks of illness among shelter animals due to the spread of specific, contagious diseases.
- Overly stressed animals with compromised immune systems continually being re-infected due to extended stays/overcrowding in banks, cages, condos and cat rooms.
- Aggressive cats and or dogs that pose a risk to the safety of the shelter animals, the staff and/or the public.
- Animals with injuries, illnesses, diseases and/or medical conditions that are life-threatening, and for which they are experiencing significant suffering, and for which the Shelter Director and/or a qualified veterinarian determines that euthanasia is the most humane course of action.
- By order of the court in those legal cases where a judge determines that the animal is vicious and the ordered outcome is euthanasia of that animal.
- Training/Certification Required
 - The Shelter Director is to possess certification as a Euthanasia Technician by an approved, certifying authority.
- Record-keeping
 - In keeping with legal requirements, the Shelter Director shall oversee the maintenance of all records of drugs administered in the performance of euthanasia duties.
 - The Shelter Director shall ensure that all such euthanasia drugs are maintained in a locked cabinet with access available only to certified staff with the specific duty of administering and recording the use of such drugs.

CREMATION AND DISPOSAL OF ANIMAL REMAINS

- All animals euthanized at the shelter or otherwise brought to the shelter for disposal will be placed in cadaver bags prior to being placed in the cooler/freezer
- Any cadavers being disposed of as a service to local veterinarians will be recorded at the front desk in the lobby and submitted for billing to the appropriate agency monthly at a cost of \$35 per cadaver. The public will be required to pay this fee at the time that the cadaver is received by the shelter
- Private cremations with ashes to be returned to owner will be paid for in advance of this service being performed, at a cost of \$85
- The incinerator loading door will be kept padlocked at all times. Employees only are permitted to operate the incinerator
- The appropriate paperwork is to be filled out completely each time the incinerator is used. The operating employee will be responsible for recording this information in the incinerator log book at this time

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

In support of the staff and the shelter's Mission

- The Shelter Director, in consultation with the Mayor, shall determine whether a volunteer program to support the staff is feasible and desirable based, in part, on the shelter's mission and goals.
- Factors to be considered in making the determination may include, but are not limited to:

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

- Locations in the shelter operations where such support have the potential to be beneficial in supporting staff;
 - The availability of a non-paid Volunteer Coordinator who can provide 10-20 hours per week overseeing the program/volunteers and who fully and publicly supports the shelter's specific mission and goals;
 - The added value of such a program when properly administered;
 - The availability of adult volunteers who are willing and able to function as members of the shelter's team and fully support its mission and goals; and
 - The added cost in terms of staff time required to assist in training, supervising, interviewing, monitoring, evaluating and counseling volunteers, and evaluating the program's effectiveness.
- The Shelter Director, in consultation with the Mayor, has the authority to create, modify, suspend and/or dismantle the volunteer program at any time based on any or all of the above factors, changes in shelter operations, and/or changes in the shelter's mission and goals.

Cumberland County Animal Shelter (CCAS)

Policies and Procedures

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Director and all full and part-time employees should read and follow the countywide personnel policy for all personnel issues. As an employee of Cumberland County Animal Shelter, I have read and understand the policies and procedures set forth herein. Further, I understand that it is my responsibility to support and adhere to these policies and procedures. Finally, I agree to conduct myself in a professional manner as a representative of the county in the performance of my duties.

Employee Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date