

## Standard of Care

This document, laying out the City of Greenbelt's Animal Control Standards of Care, is an attempt for the shelter to become more transparent in its operations. It is important to note, this document will be ever evolving as more tools become available to staff and volunteers. We strive to enrich the lives of all animals in our care. The original vision for the Greenbelt Animal Shelter was to house animals that were found running at large until the owner was located, then to be transported to the County for adoption, or disposal. Our program has evolved into a full functioning shelter with an adoption, volunteer, and animal control programs. This has been accomplished solely through the hard work of past and present animal control officers. With the help of volunteers and WAGS the Greenbelt Animal Shelter is continually working to expand and/or update our holding areas to improve the long term holding of animals.

The City of Greenbelt Animal Shelter adheres to the Five Freedoms as defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council 2009.

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from fear and distress

All animals that enter into the shelter are placed in isolation. They are off limits to public, volunteers, and kept separate from other animals unless the animal came to the shelter with another animal. This animal is kept in isolation until the animal can be taken to a veterinarian for an exam. For cats, the exam must include a FIV/FeLuk test in order to release the animal into the general population. The animal must be appropriately vaccinated and sterilized prior to adoption, unless health or age prevents. The period of which an animal is in isolation is considered short term and so the housing of such animals is not focused on enrichment but rather health and the spread of disease.

Once an animal is deemed healthy enough for the adoption program, that animal is placed in a general population. The primary focus of that space is enrichment. Animals are encouraged to interact with each other as well as members of the public and volunteers. If the animal is deemed unsafe for the public or volunteers to interact with, euthanasia will be considered as a humane option as opposed to "warehousing" or passing on an aggressive animal to a rescue group or foster. Special considerations may be made by **staff** depending on the shelter's current situation.

Dogs deemed available for adoption shall have access to the play yard in the rear of the shelter as well as walks, when available, by shelter volunteers. They shall have access to fresh water and fed twice a day as appropriate for their weight (more feedings for underweight animals). A blanket or bed will be

made available for each dog, as well as toys as deemed appropriate for the particular dog. Kong toys are available for feedings for very active dogs. Dogs needing grooming prior to adoption are transported to our groomer for a donated groom (Grooming By Em, Hyattsville, MD).

Cats deemed available for adoption shall have access to a "cat room" with cageless accommodations for all cats being held in that room. They shall have access to fresh water and access to dry kibble at all times (unless it is medically necessary to withhold). Blankets, beds or towels will be made available for the appropriate number of cats being held in that room, as well as toys and engaging activities for the cats.

All animals are cleared by a licensed veterinarian prior to adoption. Should an animal appear to be in distress or pain, that animal will be transported to a veterinarian for necessary medical treatment. If the animal is in extreme distress or pain, the animal may be euthanized if recommended by the veterinarian.

All animals are allowed to speak, defecate, urinate, eat, interact with the same species and/or people as allowed per the animals' temperament, or otherwise express normal behavior. The enclosures in which the animals are held will be cleaned daily, feces and urine will be removed as produced.

All animals appearing to be suffering from fear, a quiet, secluded space will be provided either by hanging of a curtain or towel, or placed in isolation, away from general population.

Feral cats and wildlife are an exception to the protocols as set forth by the shelter for care of animals. Feral cats and wildlife should be handled as little as possible and transported to the appropriate facility as quickly as possible. Feral cats may be held in a trap for a sterilization appointment the following day and kept in a clean trap overnight for recovery. That trap must be covered with a towel or blanket and placed in the quietest location of the shelter. Wildlife must be handled in accordance with state law.

The redemption fee for animals being reclaimed from the shelter is \$25.00, payable by cash. The owner reclaiming the animals must present a current Id with a valid address and proof of ownership as well as proof of current vaccines as required by law. The Animal Control Officer reserves the right to require a home inspection prior to an animals' release. Animals will be held for 5 days before becoming property of the City of Greenbelt, being made available for adoption on the 6<sup>th</sup> day. The shelter is open for redemption 7 days a week from 4-7pm.