



Naperville Area Humane Society

A better home. A better life. A better future.

Dear NAHS Volunteer!

We are delighted to welcome you to **Naperville Area Humane Society**. We have many volunteers doing a variety of jobs and we are pleased you will be joining us. Volunteers are our most valuable asset. **Everything you do here will help save the lives of hundreds of homeless animals!**

Naperville Area Humane Society was established in 1979, working out of foster homes to place adoptable dogs and cats until February 1988, when our shelter at 1620 West. Diehl Road opened to the public. We are a private, not-for-profit organization and rely solely on donations. As a not-for-profit organization we depend on the help of volunteers like you. The attached is provided to offer you the guidance and information necessary to become a successful volunteer. Please read this before you begin volunteering.

We encourage feedback from all of our volunteers! With your help, this program can provide you with a really great experience. Please contact Andrea Cios, Volunteer Program Manager, with your comments or to learn about other volunteer opportunities with **NAHS**.

Please consider this a greeting from all of us at **Naperville Area Humane Society**. We hope your volunteer time with **NAHS** will be happy and fulfilling.

Sincerely,

Andrea M. Cios
Volunteer Program Manager
(630) 420-8989, ext. 113
acios@napervilleareahumanesociety.org



Naperville Area Humane Society

A better home. A better life. A better future.

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote the humane treatment of companion animals and create lasting human-animal bonds.

Our Vision Statement

Engaging people to compassionately and responsibly create a more humane world.

Our Values

We strive to deliver services to our community that reflects our integrity, respect, compassion and joy for all people and animals.

Our Strategies

In order to achieve our vision we will strive to achieve these strategic objectives:

- 1) To improve the quality of life for animals through relationships with people
- 2) To improve the quality of life for people through relationships with animals

What is the Difference Between Kill and No-Kill organizations, and What is NAHS?

The definition of a **No-Kill** shelter is very broad in the animal sheltering industry. It is mostly defined as an organization that does not euthanize adoptable animals. Under that broad umbrella, NAHS is a no-kill shelter because we euthanize only those animals that are aggressive or have highly debilitating or highly contagious diseases. **Kill** shelters may have to euthanize healthy animals usually because of space constraints. These types of organizations are usually Animal Controls funded by the county government and are mandated to accept all animals needing shelter.

NAHS chooses to call itself a **Limited Admission** shelter, meaning we do not euthanize for time limits or cage space and put all adoptable pets up for adoption. We also limit the number of animals in the shelter to the available cage space and prefer animals under eight years old. Older animals tend to stay at the shelter much longer taking space that could otherwise help many. The shelter environment is very stressful for animals of all ages, especially older or senior pets.

Volunteer Requirements

We require the following to join the NAHS Volunteer Program:

- Must be at least 16 years of age to volunteer on your own.
- If you are ages 10 to 15, you must volunteer with an adult 18 years or older at all times.
- Submit an application when accepted into the volunteer program.
- Attend the training session(s) pertaining to the position you select.
- Take and pass the performance evaluations related to your position.
- Volunteer for a minimum of four hours per month for one year (at least **48 hours a year**).
- Sign up and help with activities throughout the year.
- Read, understand, and abide by NAHS policies and procedures.
- Have a genuine concern for animal welfare consistent with NAHS' philosophy.
- If you cannot make your shift, please call the shelter at (630) 420-8989

There is a \$25 volunteer program fee your first year and \$10 each year thereafter you choose to renew. This fee helps us to underwrite the materials needed to provide a quality and successful volunteer program. The fee also helps to pay for training time and the tools you will be using to help NAHS save the lives of homeless pets. Upon joining the program you will receive a nametag and a t-shirt that you are required wear while volunteering.

Please take a moment to review the information in this handbook. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any staff member.

We encourage you to expand your knowledge of and participation in the animal welfare area. We have literature, films and information on many behavior issues. Please ask a staff member for the location of these materials. We also encourage you to visit the website of the Humane Society of the United States at www.humanesociety.org.

Volunteer Commitment

- Choose the volunteer job(s) that interest you and sign up for the appropriate training sessions.
- The animals depend on you! Please be on time and complete your scheduled hours. If you must arrive late for your shift, leave early, or cannot come at all, please contact a staff member at (630) 420-8989 as soon as possible in advance of your scheduled time.
- We ask that you volunteer at least four hours per month. These hours can be done in one to two hour increments. Please pre-schedule all visits with the Volunteer Program Manager. It is very important for us to know when you are coming so we know your volunteer position for that day will be filled.

Hours available to volunteer:

Monday & Thursday: 8am to 7:45pm

Tuesday, Wednesday: 8am to 5:45pm

Fridays: 8am to 6:45pm

Saturday & Sunday: 8am to 4:45pm

Holidays: 8am to 3:45pm

The animal care and cleaning is done from 8am to 11am each day.

Dog socializing/enrichment and cat socializing begin at 11am.

Our adoption hours (when we're open to the public) are:

Monday & Thursday: 5pm to 8pm

Tuesday, Wednesday: 1pm to 6pm

Fridays: 1pm to 7pm

Saturday & Sunday: 12pm to 5pm

- Dress code: You are required to wear your Volunteer t-shirt, name tag, and presentable pants, jeans, or shorts of respectable length while you are volunteering. You **must wear closed-toe shoes** to work with the animals. It is for your protection and the protection of the shelter dogs. You can't be stable on your feet with a big strong dog in flip flops.
- The success of our shelter depends on you! There are many different areas of volunteer work available to you at **NAHS**. Please, if you are not happy in the area you originally selected, ask the Volunteer Program Manager to place you in a different type of job. We need help in all areas, and we want you to be happy doing your chosen job.
- Upon leaving the program, for whatever reason, please contact the Volunteer Program Manager. This is important for us in maintaining continuity and is a courtesy we appreciate. We also value any feedback from you on your volunteer experience at **NAHS**.
- Please be aware that failure to abide by **NAHS** policies and procedures, inappropriate behavior, lack of supervision, and/or intentional mishandling of any animal may result in termination of your participation in the **NAHS** volunteer program through an official and documented process.

Expectations

NAHS will provide you with animal handling training to allow you to work safely and effectively with the animals. We will also provide training on our philosophies that you can speak intelligently about the organization. We will always treat you with respect and offer avenues for conflict resolution should it arise.

To be the most helpful and effective at NAHS we ask that you:

- Have good attendance and be punctual.
- Learn the policies, procedures and philosophies of NAHS so you can provide the public with accurate information.
- Get to know your coworkers and treat all people with respect.
- Show compassion to all the shelter animals. Please do not discriminate by breed.
- Respect the chain of command by working well with your direct staff supervisor.
- Have fun!

Safety

Please remember that you are working with live animals. These animals may be stressed and/or scared by the shelter environment. Safety is our number one concern. Our job as staff and volunteers is to make sure the dogs and cats in our care feel as comfortable as possible. If there are animals you are uncomfortable handling please leave those animals alone. Another volunteer or staff member will handle that animal. In some instances you may be seeing an animal that has just entered the shelter and is very scared of this new environment and people.

If an incident/issue/concern arises:

- Tell a staff member right away
- Fill out an NAHS incident report
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible
- Follow up with NAHS staff with what has happened and any continuing care required

Again, safety is our number one concern. We need to know everything that has happened and any concerns you may have. If an animal has behaved in a way to hurt a person, we need to know this information to make the best decision for the animal and its well being. Please speak with a staff member if there is ever a concern. The more information we have the better decisions we can make.

General Shelter Policies

What kind of animals does NAHS have?

NAHS shelters cats, kittens, dogs and puppies only. All other kinds of animals are referred to other shelters or species/breed rescue groups.

Where does NAHS get the animals?

Many of the animals we receive are pets that are being given up by their owners. The most common reasons for surrender include: the family is moving; changes in the family situation, such as a new baby; allergies; not enough time; too many animals in the household; or the landlord does not allow pets. We also transfer animals from open-admission shelters to help alleviate the need to euthanize for cage space. As a guideline, we accept animals that are eight years old or younger. Older animals find it very hard to adjust to shelter life and occupy precious space that could otherwise help many.

Do the animals have a time limit at the shelter?

No. The adoptable animals we shelter will stay with us until we find them a good home, regardless of how long it takes. Since we do not have time limits, we can only bring in animals as fast as we can adopt them out. Therefore, we almost always have a waiting list that is from one week to six months long, depending on the type of animal and time of year. People trying to drop off animals will be directed to Animal Control if they cannot wait for their turn on the list. Any animal we fear will be abandoned will be immediately accepted and then transferred to Animal Control.

Does every animal that comes to NAHS get adopted?

No. When animals come in they are given time to relax and adjust to our shelter. After a minimum of three full days, we perform a behavior evaluation on dogs to better understand their personality and to observe for any aggressive behaviors. If a dog exhibits aggression, it will be euthanized (put to sleep). If the animal is not aggressive, he will be examined by a veterinarian and undergo routine blood work. If we find something that is incurable or highly contagious, we will consult with our veterinarians and make decisions based upon what is in the best interest of that individual animal as well as the health of all the animals in the shelter. It is possible that euthanasia may be the most humane and/or safest option for the animals in our care. We don't believe in allowing an animal to continue to suffer. All healthy and non-aggressive dogs and cats are put up for adoption. Our behavior evaluation also supplies us with a profile of the animal's personality helping us find the right home for each animal.

Unavailable Pet Policy

This is very important. Since we don't know if an animal will be made available for adoption until after it is evaluated, we never give out any information on an animal until it actually goes up for adoption. For example, if we take in a litter of kittens or a really cute dog and they are still unavailable to the public, you cannot tell your friends that these animals are at the shelter. This is because someone can get their heart set on an animal they may not have even seen or don't know anything about. If that animal does not go up for adoption because of illness or aggression, that person may become very upset. We are happy to discuss our evaluation policies, but we do not want to upset someone over a particular animal if we don't have to.

If you are walking a dog that is unavailable, and someone stops you and wants information, please say, "I can't give you any information yet because the dog is not up for adoption, but as soon as it is, all of his information will be available." You can also recommend they call or visit in several days to see if the dog is still at the shelter.

What are NAHS' adoption procedures?

- Goals - Our goal is to match the animal's needs with the applicant's needs and wants. For some animals this might mean a situation where someone is home during the day, such as a very young puppy or kitten. We encourage everyone who adopts a dog to enroll in training classes, no matter what the dog's age, and give referrals. Any dog entering his second or even third home could benefit from the bonding experience obedience classes provide. It sets the dog up for success instead of another failure. If anything happens during the entire life of the animal that requires the new family to give up the animal, NAHS wants it returned to the shelter. Once we accept an animal, we are responsible for it for the rest of its life.
- Adoption Profile - Upon arriving at our shelter, visitors are greeted by volunteers and/or staff and are informed of our adoption matching process. They are then walked to the animal viewing areas. If they find an animal they are interested in adopting, they will return to the front desk and will be given a short profile card to fill out. Once a profile card is completed, they will talk with an adoption staff member about their situation and dog or cat they have in mind. They will then interact with the animal. If the match is appropriate, they will be allowed to place a \$10 non-refundable hold on the animal, which will hold that animal until the end of the next business day. Adoption approval is rarely granted within the first 24 hours of application completion and review. This provides an opportunity for the applicant to consider their commitment, discouraging impulse decisions. Naperville Area Humane Society does not grant same-day adoptions.
- Upon approval of an adoption, the new owner will come in to sign the adoption contract. The contract is thoroughly explained, along with the understanding that it is a legal, binding document. It states very clearly in the contract that if they fail to abide by the agreement, the animal may be reclaimed immediately. We reserve the right to make a home visit, if we feel it is necessary. If the animal is not already spayed or neutered, it will go directly to the veterinarian for the procedure and the new owner will pick it up at the vet's office. If the animal is already spayed/neutered, it can go home the same day of the adoption. For safe transport of the animal, the new owner will need to bring or buy a leash for a dog. A cardboard carrier is provided for the cats.

Adoption Fees

Kittens (5 months and younger)	\$125 for single, \$200 for pair
Cats (6 months and older)	\$50
Senior cats (7 years and older)	\$25
Puppies (5 months and younger)	\$275
Dogs (6 months and older)	\$200
Senior dogs (7 years and older)	fee waived

This fee includes the vet exam, appropriate vaccinations, the spay/neuter surgery, a microchip, testing for heartworm (dogs) and Feline Leukemia/FIV (cats), and collar.

- Not every applicant who shows an interest in an animal and completes a profile card is approved for adoption. If someone is denied an adoption it does not always mean it is a bad home. The situation might not be right for that particular animal. For example, a family with a toddler and two cats who like a dog that jumps and chases cats would be directed toward a dog that would be more suitable for that home. Remember, our mission is to find a loving, permanent home for the animal, which takes a good match between owner and pet.

Additional Services Provided by NAHS

- **Humane Education**

Animals & Us Summer Camp for kids 6-12 years old.

Pets & People After School program for kids 8-12 years old.

Spring Break Internship for teens 13-17 years old.

Seminar Series for adults.

Paws for Tales Reading Program

Classroom Presentations

- **Pet Therapy:** We have volunteers who take their own dogs or, if available, a shelter dog to area senior centers to visit. We believe this is very therapeutic for the seniors and the program is very well received. You may participate in the Pet Therapy program if you have a dog whose behavior would be appropriate for a senior center or if you complete the necessary training to take a shelter dog as a Dog Outing Volunteer.
- **Safe Pets Program:** NAHS offers a safe haven for the pets of domestic abuse victims and other individuals in crisis situations. If someone needs to remove themselves from an abusive situation, NAHS will house their pets until they can eliminate the abusive situation and find a safe place to live.

Dealing with the Public

Courtesy is of utmost importance. You are a representative of our organization and a person's impression of NAHS will be based on their visit to our facility and/or interaction with you. We want that impression to be a POSITIVE one! This includes the cleanliness of our facility, the health and appearance of our animals, and, most of all, our attitude and sincere desire to assist them. Remember, the more people impressed with our organization, the better chance we have of adopting out MORE homeless animals! All volunteer positions require you to successfully complete an assessment of general knowledge of NAHS, its mission, goals, and policies.

Here are some guidelines to help you deal effectively with the public:

- Confidentiality: Other than the information supplied on the cage card, any further details about the animals is to be given by staff members only. Previous owner information is never given out. Please send the potential adopter to the front desk for further information.
- Answering the telephone: Only trained Office or Adoption Greeter volunteers are to answer the phone. If you answer the phone when such a person is not available, please take a message.
- Showing animals: If someone is interested in interacting with an animal, send the potential adopter to the front desk. There, the person will be asked to complete a profile card and participate in a conversation with a staff member or volunteer adoption counselor. A staff member will coordinate the showing of the animal.

Tidbits to remember:

- Only NAHS policies are to be given to the public, not your own personal opinion if it differs from NAHS policies.
- Never try to sell an animal. If the home is inappropriate for that animal, the person may feel misled.
- Never talk as if a person has already been approved.
- Never misrepresent an animal.
- Never discriminate based on breed. We re-home adoptable animals and that includes breeds labeled as bully breeds such as American pit bull terriers. All of our animals are treated equally and must pass our behavior evaluation. All breeds have the same chance of success or failure.

Why Is Spaying and Neutering So Important?

Does NAHS mandate the spay or neuter of all animals upon adoption?

Yes. All animals go from our facility to the veterinarian's office for the spay/neuter procedure if it has not already been done. The new owner will then pick up the pet and take him home to recuperate.

The Harsh Reality

- ◆ 10,000 puppies and kittens are born every hour.
- ◆ 3 to 5 million cats and dogs are euthanized each year in the U.S.
- ◆ A dog can have two litters a year.
- ◆ A cat can have 3 litters a year.
- ◆ Dogs and cats can become pregnant while nursing.

In addition, spaying or neutering has major health benefits. Not only does it reduce the risk of infections to the reproductive organs, but it also can increase the life expectancy of the animal. It may also eliminate undesirable behaviors.

With your help, we can make a difference in these overwhelming numbers and health risks. By teaching responsible pet ownership and encouraging the spaying and neutering of pets, we will help to stop the suffering before it starts. We have many excellent articles regarding spaying and neutering available to you and the public. Please ask!

Naperville Area Humane Society Position Statements

Companion Animals

NAHS believes that since companion animals provide people with joy and friendship, and are completely dependent on human care, all members of the household should carefully and in full agreement decide to adopt an animal. Ownership carries the responsibilities of meeting the physical and social needs of the animal including food, shelter, safety, veterinary care, and companionship. The owner should be familiar with the existing laws relating to animals such as licensing, leash regulation, rabies vaccination and waste disposal. All animals should be under proper restraint or control at all times. We discourage the subjection of animals to cosmetic surgery, e.g., cropped ears, tail docking or declawing unrelated to their health and well-being.

Declawing

NAHS discourages the declawing of cats. We would prefer people train their cats to use a scratching post or utilize products like Soft Paws to cover the nail. NAHS will allow an adopter to declaw a kitten that is 5 months or younger but not an adult cat and never on the back paws. Declawing a cat is amputating the top digit of its paw. It is painful and can lead to behavior problems. If a cat has no claws at all, it loses its defenses and can't even scratch an itch.

Indoor Cats

NAHS believes that cats should always be kept indoors. It is proven that they can lead a full and satisfying life indoors. If allowed outdoors, their chances of dying at a premature age increases greatly. They can be hit by a car, have a run in with wildlife or a neighbor dog, and get into poison, intentional or unintentional. It may also be illegal in your community unless you can successfully confine your cat to your yard. The Naperville leash law extends to cats, and it is annoying for neighbors to have your animals in their yards.

Indoor Dogs

NAHS also believes that dogs need to be kept inside with their family, going outside for exercise and bathroom breaks only. They are pack animals and feel isolated when left alone for extended periods outside away from the family.

Humane Education

NAHS is deeply committed to providing humane education, especially in the primary and secondary schools. NAHS does not believe experimentation or dissection with live or dead animals should be a part of the curriculum in elementary or secondary schools. Alternative methods (e.g., computer-aided models) should be sought at all levels of education.

Keeping live animals in schools as pets should be limited by the availability of responsible supervision, proper care, and facilities.

Positive Reinforcement Training

NAHS supports only positive reinforcement training. It is more humane and easier for your dog to understand what you want from him when you reward your dog for good behavior than if you were to punish him for bad behavior. In the punishment scenario, the dog realizes what it is not supposed to do but has not been shown what it is supposed to do, confusing the dog. We do not support other training methods such as "pack behavior", i.e. Cesar Millan. If you choose to work with the dogs, you will be taught how to train our shelter dogs using positive reinforcement.

Animal Body Language

The following page describes both canine and feline body language. It is essential for all volunteers to understand the body language of dogs and cats because this is their method of communicating with us and with each other. If you have any questions, feel free to ask a staff member. Also remember that you are not required to interact with all animals. If you are uncomfortable with an animal in any way, please do not interact with it. Please remember to look for the "Staff Only" signs located on animal cages. This may indicate that we are unsure of that animal's behavior or it may have an illness we think could be contagious to other animals and handling it could spread the infection. It is for your safety and the safety of all of our animals.

Canine Body Language

Dogs recognize leadership in a group and transfer this tendency to their human families. Dogs, like humans, communicate their emotions through body language and vocalization. The illustrations below will help you understand what your dog is saying.

ACTIVE SUBMISSION

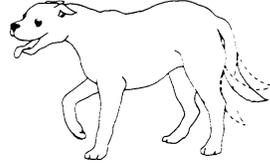
This dog knows that you are the leader and she wants you to approach her.



"I'm friendly-but please go slowly!"

PASSIVE SUBMISSION

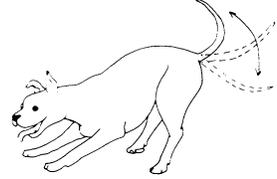
This dog knows that you are the leader but she will come to you..



"Hi!" "Lets be fiends!"

PLAYBOW

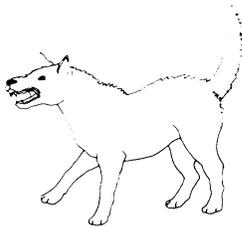
This is an invitation to play .



"It's time for some fun!"

AGGRESSION

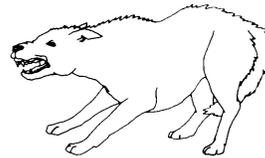
This dog does not recognize you as the leader. She may attack you.



"Go away!"

FEAR

This dog is on the defensive. She is unpredictable and could attack.



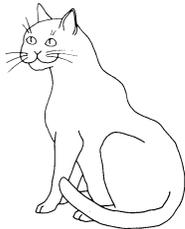
"I'm scared so back off!"

Feline Body Language

A cat's tail and ears can tell you a lot about how he feels. The following diagrams will help you to interpret a cat's mood.

CONTENT

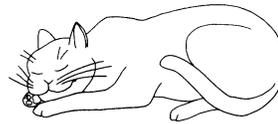
His relaxed face and erect ears let you know that he is comfortable and trusting.



"I'm happy."

CAT NAP

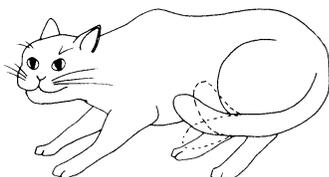
Did you know that a cat must trust you completely before he will sleep in front of you?



"ZZZZZZZZZZ"

PLAYFUL

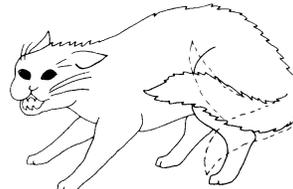
His dilated, or wide-open eyes, and swishing tail tell you that he is ready to pounce.



"This looks like fun!"

AGGRESSION

His ears are pointed back. His eyes are fully dilated. He is ready to defend himself.



"Don't touch!"

Animal Care Volunteer Opportunities

Adoption Greeter

Provides exceptional customer service to shelter visitors and assists the Animal Care Staff in guiding potential adopters through the process.

Cat Feeding and Cleaning

Properly cleans and sets up cat/kitten cages and provides proper daily dietary requirements.

Cat Socializer

Helps to reduce stress among shelter cats and assists in making the cats more adoptable.

Kennel Cleaning/Dog Feeding

Ensures that the dog kennels are properly cleaned and sanitized and that the dogs are provided with clean bedding, toys and fresh water and food, all in accordance with NAHS policies and procedures.

Dog Socializer (Level 1)

Ensures that the dogs receive quality individual attention inside their kennels throughout the day.

Dog Enrichment (Level 2)

Ensures that the dogs receive at least the minimum number of walks each day and aids in dog training and behavior modification to better prepare dogs for adoption and for their transition into their new homes.

Dog Outing (Level 3)

Will learn additional techniques to be able to safely transport shelter dogs to events, pet therapy or to Animal Care League for spay/neuter surgeries. Will have the skills to have complete control of the dog in public situations.

Foster Home

Care for shelter pets at home until the animal(s) are ready for adoption. An Illinois Department of Agriculture license is required for Foster Homes and is \$25 a year. NAHS asks the volunteer to pay for the first year and NAHS will pay for every year there after as long as you actively foster shelter animals.

Spay/Neuter Animal Transport

Transports shelter pets to and/or from Animal Care League (ACL) in Oak Park for spay and neuter surgeries to help save NAHS medical costs. (Demonstrates ability to pass assessment(s) to achieve Level 3 dog volunteer status and have a good driving record.)

Administrative/Community Volunteer Opportunities

Coin Bank Collector

Collect monies from NAHS coin banks located in local businesses.

Home Project:

Assists NAHS with time-consuming projects that can be done at home.

Humane Education Assistant

Assists in the management and development of education programs for audiences of all ages.

Humane Education Promotions & Marketing Assistant

Helps promote and market education programs for audiences of all ages.

Office Assistance

Assists with office operations.

Pet Therapy

Provide therapeutic visits to residents at participating senior facilities with either own dog or an appropriate shelter dog.

Retail Outreach Event

Represents NAHS at retail stores and other outreach events.

Fundraising

Assists with various NAHS fundraising activities such as planning and implementation of NAHS fundraising and special events and solicitation of sponsorship and vendor donations.

Special Events

Assists with various NAHS fundraising activities such as event planning and coordination and invitation design and mailing.

Common Terminology

Limited Admission/ Managed Admission

Shelters or groups that restrict both the type and the number of animals it will receive. When the shelter cages or foster homes are filled, they are unable to accept more pets and animals often get placed on a waiting list. Animals are not euthanized in order to make room for more other animals.

This is the term used to describe NAHS. There are some animals that NAHS will not accept such elderly pets or those with terminal or debilitating illnesses. NAHS will accept pets with aggression issues; however, owners are counseled as to the outcome that will most likely occur.

Open Admission

Shelters or groups that will not turn an animal away and with that open door policy comes certain realities and responsibilities. These organizations may be faced with euthanizing an animal in order to make space for other, but this is not always the case.

Many animal control facilities are required to operate in this manner. It is their service to the public. Most work with other organizations to transfer animals to avoid euthanasia of adoptable pets.

No Kill

See Limited Admission.

** NAHS has chosen not to use this term to describe our organization because it is divisive among animal welfare groups and tends to paint open admission shelters in a negative light.

Behavior Evaluation

(a.k.a. Behavior Assessment, Temperament Test, Temperament Assessment/Evaluation) NAHS performs a behavior evaluation before a dog can be placed up for adoption. There are certain behaviors that, if exhibited, will prevent the dog from being placed up for adoption and instead will be humanely euthanized.

Protective, Territorial, and Possessive Aggression

Protective, territorial, and possessive aggression are all very similar and involve the defense of valuable resources. Territorial aggression is usually associated with defense of property, and that "territory" may extend well past the boundaries of your yard. Protective aggression usually refers to aggression directed toward people or animals whom a dog perceives as threats to his family, or pack. Dogs become possessively aggressive when defending their food, toys, or other valued objects, including items as peculiar as tissues stolen from the trash.

Also known as Food Aggression, Possession Aggression and Stranger Aggression. NAHS will not place a dog up for adoption that exhibits any of these types of aggression.

Lack of Sociability

The lack of sociable interaction in a dog during the behavior evaluation is often the most significant indicator of the dog's potential for aggression. For the dog that merely tolerates petting, or isn't internally rewarded by praise or soft eye contact, anything that crosses the line into unpleasant territory can cause aggression.

NAHS will not place a dog up for adoption that exhibits a lack of social interaction during the behavior evaluation. These dogs are humanely euthanized.

URI

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI) is most likened to a human common cold. Feline URI is perhaps the most frustrating illness facing shelter veterinarians, managers, and staff. Many cats are chronically infected, vaccines are partially effective at best, and specific treatments are limited. URI is very easily spread by fomites or droplet transmission, and some URI agents are resistant to disinfection.

Feline URI is very easily spread in the shelter environment, hence the need for sanitizing hands between handling animals. It is important to note that URI does not spread to dogs or humans. NAHS does treat felines for this type of infection.

UTI

Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) is a common cause of litter box issues in cats. When a cat is surrendered to NAHS for litter box issues, the first course of action is to have the animal checked for a UTI. If an infection is found, NAHS will treat with up to two rounds of antibiotics in order to eliminate the infection. Once the infection is cleared most cats will resume using the litter box. However, if it is determined that a cat is not using the litter box due to a behavioral reason, the cat will be humanely euthanized.

FeLV (a.k.a. FeLeuk)

FeLV, or Feline leukemia virus, is a contagious, viral disease of cats. In addition to causing leukemia, it has been associated with various other types of cancer, anemia, and immune suppression leading to increased susceptibility to various infectious diseases. Although cats may clear initial infection, there is no cure for persistent infection and it is ultimately fatal.

NAHS tests all felines for FeLV. Any felines testing positive are not placed up for adoption and are transferred to shelters where they will be cared for the remainder of their lives. As a last resort, NAHS will humanely euthanize FeLV-positive cats.

FIV

FIV, or Feline immunodeficiency virus, is a disease of cats that is quite similar to human HIV/AIDS. Like a person with HIV, a cat can be infected with FIV and enjoy good quality of life for quite some time before developing full blown disease. There is no cure for FIV, and cats with this disease are vulnerable to a number of secondary infections due to a suppressed immune system. Ultimately, this is a fatal disease.

NAHS tests all felines for FIV. Because FIV cats can live a relatively normal life span, NAHS will make FIV-positive cats available for adoption.

FIP

FIP, or Feline infectious peritonitis, is a viral disease of cats caused by certain strains of a virus called the feline coronavirus. In a small percent of infected cats (5 to 10 percent), either by a mutation of the virus or by an aberration of the immune response, the infection progresses into clinical FIP. Once a cat develops clinical FIP involving one or many systems of the cat's body, the disease is progressive and is almost always fatal.

Currently there is no way of pre-screening a cat/kitten for FIP. However, once an animal is suspected to have FIP, NAHS will humanely euthanize the animal.

Parvo

Canine Parvovirus is highly contagious, incredibly durable in the environment, and capable of producing severe or life-threatening disease in dogs.

NAHS will treat canines for parvo on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the progression of the virus and risk to other dogs.

Kennel Cough

It is common to use the term "kennel cough", "infectious tracheobronchitis" and variations on "canine infectious respiratory disease complex" interchangeably. However, this is an overly simplistic view of a complicated syndrome. Disease is not limited to the trachea, nor does it always manifest as coughing. Clinical syndromes of Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC) may include sneezing, nasal and ocular discharge, and sometimes lower respiratory and/or systemic disease.

Kennel Cough is highly contagious and can spread rapidly in the shelter environment and hence the need for sanitizing hands between handling animals. It is important to note that Kennel Cough does not spread to cats or humans. NAHS does treat canines for this type of infection.

Declaw

Also known as onychectomy, is an operation to surgically remove the claws. This process involves amputating all or part of the distal phalanx, or end bone, of the animal's toes — the equivalent of cutting off the end of a human finger at or near its first joint — and is popularly known as declawing.

Declawing is very controversial. NAHS will allow an adopter to front-paw declaw a kitten 5 months or younger. Declawing of adult cats is not allowed as it is painful and more difficult for them to adjust to this change. Adopters are encouraged to visit with our adult cats that were previously declawed if this is important to them.

Easy Walk Harness

Designed to gently discourage dogs from pulling while walking on a leash. Unlike traditional collars, the Easy Walk Harness never causes coughing, gagging, or choking because the chest strap rests low across the breastbone, not on the delicate tracheal area.

Traditional harnesses can actually encourage dogs to pull harder because of the opposition reflex. That's the reflex that makes sled dogs do what they do. The Easy Walk Harness redirects the pressure through the front leash attachment.

E & C

This stands for Euthanasia and Cremation. NAHS works with two local animal hospitals for veterinary services, including euthanasia. Animals are taken to the animal hospital where the euthanasia is performed.

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