



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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Because of our desire to continually give high quality care to animals, to service the public, and at the same time stay within the boundaries of safe conduct per personal and insurance liability issues, and also to stay within legal limits of any state law or municipal ordinance, we have listed the following issues for your review and compliance.

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GENERAL POLICIES

Shelter Capacity

The total capacity number for the shelter building shall be 10 cats.

Foster Capacity

The total capacity number for the entire foster program shall be 10 cats.

Strays and Surrenders

- **Strays:** It shall be the 1st mission of this shelter to assist those cats that are in immediate danger after being refused assistance from the local police department or a community's contracted humane shelter. We will first advise any person seeking our help with a stray animal to call both of these agencies and then if refused assistance by the agency, HHPR will step in to provide all needed care. A yellow stray surrender form will have to be signed, the pet will be given a number in the numbers book and that number shall be noted on the surrender sheet and a file folder set up.
- **Surrenders:** Owner-surrendered cats shall be accepted on a space available basis. It will be requested that the animal should be current on all shots and previously spayed or neutered. If not, a moderate fee may be charged to aid in that necessary treatment. A yellow owner surrender form will have to be signed, the pet will be given a number in the numbers book and that number shall be noted on the surrender sheet and a file folder set up.
- **Ill pets:** Ill pets need to be isolated or transported to the vet *immediately*. No ill animal shall be fostered out to a family. If an animal comes into the system ill, it needs to be isolated until transported to Norma or to a vet if deemed necessary. If a public person finds a stray, injured, or ill cat, we will automatically provide care for that pet if the local police do not assist it.

Euthanasia Policy

The decision to euthanize any pet in our care must be made at the recommendation of our consulting vet. In the case of disagreement between two or more board members, the decision advised by the vet shall carry.

SHELTER CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY

The appropriate chain of responsibility shall be the shelter president and then any member of the executive committee.

If there is a question of an unwritten policy and procedure, the president and the full board shall discuss and decide on that policy together with the majority vote to carry.

GENERAL SHELTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- No stray animal is to be placed in with the main population or sent to a foster home until a complete health check has been done.
- No owner-surrendered animals are to be scheduled for intake without health records and health check with the president.
- A sick animal must be isolated immediately and, if necessary, taken straight to the vet's office.
- Volunteers are only allowed to brush and comb animals. ***They are not to use any cutting equipment on any animals at any time.***
- All Animal Function Cards are to be marked daily, all medication marked and any new problems noted and dated.

- If worms are vomited or passed in feces by any animal, it must be noted on the Animal Function Card, bagged, refrigerated, if necessary, for examination and appropriate medication given and noted on the Function Card.
- Maine State Law requires that all stray animals shall be held for a specified time before being placed for adoption: dogs for six (6) days and cats for six (6) days. Maine state law mandates that cats shall be held for at least forty-eight (48) hours before they are termed as being vicious or feral. The only exception is for known feral cats. Any cats determined to be feral are to be placed with Norma Milton for medical, spaying and placement as barn cats as necessary.

SHELTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Surgical Care For All Animals

- Animals scheduled for surgery are to have their food removed by 6 p.m. on the night before surgery. A small amount of water may be left in the unit for the animal that night.
- Animals returning from surgery will not be fed until at least four (4) hours after returning to the shelter. Offer only a small amount at first. If the animal has any vomiting, remove all food for about six (6) hours leaving just a small amount of water. Consider trying stage one baby food. If there is continuous vomiting, call the vet.
- The female animal shall not be bathed until dissolvable stitches are at least 6 days old. Dogs shall be leash walked and cats will be housed in single unit with no bench to jump up and down from for at least two (2) days.
- **URGENT:** If a surgical patient starts vomiting, spikes a fever, or stops eating, you must notify Norma and transport to the vet immediately. If Norma is not available, call the vet and transport to vet hospital immediately. In case of evening or weekend, an emergency medical charge is expected but should not hold you back from receiving immediate care for the cat.
- The incision of each female must be checked daily for torn stitches, and the neutered male needs to be checked for swelling, redness or drainage. Problems should be reported immediately to the

Emergency Animal Situations

- If a MALE animal has not urinated in 24 hours, please notify the president, and if not available, call the vet directly. It is always best to be over cautious about urine output. A male cat can die on that second day if he does not have proper vet care. *CONSIDER THIS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY.*
- Keep in mind that an animal may be too nervous to eat during the first few days. If the animal is not eating well, try canned people tuna fish, Fancy Feast or people chicken breast. Put Nutri-cal on the roof of the cat's mouth. Nutri-cal is a food supplement but it also stimulates the urge to eat.
- Loose stools: Diarrhea can be very serious. Take food away, leave the water and give the animal a chance to calm his stomach. Fix him some chicken and rice and check for stools then. If continues, start on Albon once a day or Kaopectate per each stool sample. If the pet has not been wormed, make sure that is done. Other options are available so check with Norma or the consulting vet if you do not have controlled bowels within two days for an adult or 24 hours for an infant. Hydration is of extreme importance. Be sure to let Norma know of any diarrhea so that she can hydrate or advise that you take them to vet for hydration.
- A sneeze must be watched, but one sneeze does not yet make an outbreak of URI. Isolate the pet from the other cats until you are sure what the problem is. Err on the side of caution. If it

is URI, the one sneeze has already spread the illness so use general universal precautions and separate (isolate the pet) as much as possible.

- Keep in mind that any time a new cat population reaches 10, there is more chance of stress reactions within the cat population, which brings a greater incidence of URI. Watch for personality issues between cats and move them accordingly to ease personality conflicts between cats.

LEUKEMIA TESTING POLICIES

All kittens over the age of twelve (12) weeks shall be given a snap-combo test for Feline Leukemia/AIDS as soon as possible on entry. If a mother cat tests negative, her kittens are considered negative. If we are working with a cat colony, we test the most ill looking of the colony and if it is negative the colony is negative – an only exception would be if a different color cat were to suddenly appear in the colony – then one of those should be tested as a recent addition to the colony.

Dr. Andrea signed a note to this effect for our leukemia testing and care policy:

- **All cats:** should euthanize any cat with a test of FELV (Leukemia) Antigen positive
- **Adult Cats:** over 6 months old – should euthanize any cat testing FIV (AIDS) combo positive
- Any management program for positive testing is beyond the scope of this shelter
- Test kittens at over twelve (12) weeks of age only: if positive for FELV or FIV – must euthanize
- Kittens under eight (8) weeks of age should be fostered until eight (8) weeks. They will not be put up for adoption until at least the start of their ninth (9th) week. When the kitten is 12 weeks old, if the new owner wishes for a leukemia/AIDS (snap-combo) test, the shelter shall pay for that test but not the vet visit if they go to the PIAH. The new owner can then choose to use their free well-cat check-up for the vet visit.
- We cannot afford to test babies – some may not even make it to the 8 week time period as mortality rates for orphaned kittens is extremely high. Also, many tests on kittens under the age of 12 weeks prove to be false positive which would then require testing every two weeks until 12 weeks with full isolation or being immediately put down. We don't wish to put down a kitten that might have had a false test and each test costs \$45.00. So every two weeks is out of the question. Orphaned kittens under eight (8) weeks need to be fostered outside of the shelter if possible as they are highly susceptible to any virus lurking in any cement crack or even a spot of dust. Foster families can work more with the babies, as there is less stress. An adult has some strength to fight a new virus – the babies have no strength.
- If a litter comes in with a mom, then we can test the mom and consider the kittens the same as the mom's test result. The mom and her babies should be fostered out if at all possible or kept in a room alone. They should be second in fostering policy: 1) Orphaned kittens, 2) Mom and kittens, 3) Special Needs cats, 4) Depressed cats

BASIC DAILY SCHEDULES FOR ROUTINE KITTEN/CAT CARE

Although each volunteer will develop their own routine in caring for the shelter animals, ***the following are basic procedures that must be followed:***

1. ***All*** cats are to be checked on and cared for during each volunteer's shift.
2. ***It is imperative that volunteers wash their hands in between handling cats as this helps to prevent the spread of illnesses.*** You can carry a disease up to five (5) minutes on your hands or even long enough to take it home. If you don't wash your hands after being sneezed on and your own cat(s) licks your hand you increase the chances of spreading illnesses.
3. On entry to the shelter, check with Norma or other volunteer and/or for notes telling what problem any individual cat might be showing. Whenever Norma has to leave the shelter for a period of time longer than two (2) hours, she will always leave a note on the kitchen counter as to what needs to be done. ***It is each volunteer's responsibility to look for and read these instructions. Failure to read the note is not an excuse for basic and necessary care not to be given to an animal.***
4. Dislike of any task contained in written instructions is not an acceptable excuse for not doing a task.
5. Refusing to medicate any ill and isolated animal will be means for immediate dismissal. If this is something that you as a volunteer are uncomfortable doing, it is your responsibility to advise Norma of this at the beginning of your volunteer time.
6. Cleaning aprons or men's shirts will be provided for your shift. Take a clean one and toss it in the wash when your shift is over. This practice helps protect both ends ... protects from bringing an illness in and not bringing an illness home to personal pets.
7. The order of caring for animals is: well animals are to be taken care of first, then the new animals and lastly any animals in isolation. (This order helps to prevent the passing on of diseases and illness.) After feeding the animals, go through and then do the cleaning.
8. When cleaning kittens, please be sure to save any stool samples that are watery. Change kittens' dirty litter daily and replace with clean litter in a clean litter pan. Wash and bleach the soiled pan in the cellar washtub.
9. If there is a cage that has been emptied but not cleaned and disinfected, please do so and put the towels/bedding in the laundry and the dishes in the upstairs kitchen sink. Mark the cage as "Cleaned by (your name) on (date)." Please bring to Norma's attention and write it in your shift notes that an individual kitten/cat is due for worming, Revolution, etc.
10. If you have extra time left and Norma is available, check to see if she has any filing, photocopying, etc., that you could help with.
11. As a lot of people come through the kitchen to go to the office, if you have time please see that the kitchen sink and countertop are tidy and the living room at least tidied up. This just helps Norma to have more quality time in the office or with the cats that need her attention.
12. At the end of your shift, please make any important notes in the shift book and sign your name and date it. ***If we are not there to say "thank you," please know that we greatly appreciate your work.***
13. At the age of eight (8) weeks we can administer the first distemper shot and bring the orphaned kitten into the shelter for adoption. If it is an orphan kitten, distemper shots should be given immediately on entry to the shelter. Youth shots should be given between 21 to 30 days from each shot until two (2) or three (3) shots have been given according to age of kitten.

All healthy incoming cats/kittens shall be given age appropriate worming, vaccines and snap-combo testing on entry. They shall be checked for fleas and ear mites and provided with a Revolution and/or Capstar treatment immediately as needed. Ill cats/kittens will be isolated until vet medical check-up.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Halfway Home Pet Rescue welcomes volunteerism to help keep the pet advocacy efforts of this organization ongoing. The following are items that new volunteers should be aware of:

Our Mission: We are a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of all animals in the central Aroostook County area by:

- Providing temporary shelter and medical care for stray, abused and abandoned animals.
- Promoting responsible pet ownership.
- Vigorously promoting the spaying and neutering of all pets.
- Foster a respect for all life.
- Encourage volunteerism
- Arranging low-income assistance for medical issues when financially able.
- Providing a Free Pet Food Pantry named the Marie Joyce Allen Free Pet Food Pantry

Funding:

- Private donations
- Grants
- Fundraising events

Programs and Services:

- Pet adoptions
- Foster Care program
- Responsible Pet Ownership classes in schools
- Newsletters to donors
- Free pet food pantry for low-income families
- Free pet spay/neuter vouchers for pets of low-income families

Volunteer Opportunities available:

- Foster care provider
- Comfort Care at Adoption Fairs
- Laundry
- Clerical work
- Go-For – run errands
- Rescue volunteer – provide rescue transportation to shelter or vet when requested by president.
- Medical Transportation Driver: transport pets to vet for surgical and return to foster home
- Fundraising Assistance at events

FERAL CATS – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Norma Milton is in charge of the feral cat program, and all calls of this nature must be referred to her (492-1722 or 316-8340). Record the actual call, date, time, name, return phone number and the nature of the need.

Feral cats must not be brought into the shelter except by advance appointment with Norma. She must be present to admit and transfer them to a feral safety crate.