

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Are you a “no-kill” shelter?

*We probably get asked this question at least 10 times a day. The short answer? No, we are not. However, it’s really not as simple as a short answer. Keep reading to find out the reasons why we do euthanize, the reasons why we don’t, and how far we’ve come, all while operating the **only** animal shelter in Madison County.*

*We are an Open Admission Shelter, which means we accept all incoming animals regardless of age, health, breed, or temperament. We do not have a waiting list and we will never reject an animal, provided it is surrendered in accordance with state guidelines. In other words, we do not pick and choose what comes through our doors, **we must take them all**. We also must always have available space for stray animals, dangerous, aggressive animals, and bite quarantines. In addition, we also take in owner requested euthanasia’s for residents of Madison County that may or may not be able to afford a veterinarian for this service.*

*Our euthanasia rate has seen significant decline over the last 10 years and in 2016 our live release rate was 79%. As of July, we are holding a steady **Live Release Rate of over 93% for 2017**. We are proud of this accomplishment and continue to work hard every day to avoid euthanasia of healthy, treatable, adoptable animals. Since 2008, we have built partnerships with over 250 rescue organizations. We contact these groups almost weekly so that they have an opportunity to “pull” any animal we have in our facility and take it into their rescue group. This affords us the opportunity to have available space without the need to euthanize healthy, adoptable animals for space. We regularly work with rescue groups to send animals to partner shelters up north and have transferred animals to rescue groups as far away as Montana.*

*We do not have a “time limit” for animals that come to our facility. We keep healthy, adoptable, animals as long as we have space for them. We have had animals stay with us as long as 6 months until they were placed. That is unheard of in most open admission facilities, especially a shelter as small as ours, but we make it happen! As far as space, we only have 13 adoptable dog kennels and 18 adoptable cat kennels. We’re constantly working to get animals moved out of our facility through adoptions and rescue groups.*

*There are some animals that come to us severely injured, have an unprovoked bite history, or have aggression issues that make them unfit to release to the public. Animals that have severe aggression issues or unprovoked bite histories are humanely euthanized. We have a responsibility to our residents to ensure, as best we can, that we are adopting out animals of sound mind. We won’t put any members of the public at risk of being bitten simply to avoid euthanasia.*

*Animals that come into our facility with life threatening injuries are handled on a case by case basis. We do not operate with funding to support emergency medical treatment for every animal that comes to our facility and sometimes these animals must be humanely euthanized to end their*

suffering. However, our community has been an incredible source of support when we do have injured animals that need urgent medical treatment for a survivable injury. We have often been able to raise money needed for emergency medical costs and those animals have gone on to be adopted and live happy, healthy lives. We cannot do this for every sick or injured animal that comes through our doors but it's a goal that we will always work towards.

We never euthanize a dog or cat simply because of age! We have staff members, volunteers, and rescue groups with neonatal experience and a large list of adopters and rescue groups who love senior animals. Please keep in mind that life is fragile and even with the best of care some very young animals simply do not survive. It is always best to keep young animals with their mother if at all possible, until at least 6 weeks of age. We understand that this is not always feasible and we are here to help. On the opposite side of the spectrum, senior animals have a hard time adjusting to shelter life and often become depressed. This is especially true for cats and small dogs. We are always searching for specialized foster homes for senior animals.

Scared, under-socialized, and even feral animals are worked with on a daily basis (provided that it is safe to do so) to acclimate them while we find an appropriate rescue group or foster home to take them in. Cats are our most prevalent feral animal so we started a **Working Cat Program** in October of 2016. Feral or semi feral cats are matched with residents, farmers, shop owners, and warehouses where they spend their days deterring rodents and snakes in exchange for a safe place to live out their days. In the first 6 months alone we have already reduced the euthanasia rate of feral cats by 75%! This program has been made possible due to our partnership with Friends of Madison County Animals and a grant from Maddie's Fund Million Cat Challenge.

So as you can see, it's not a simple yes or no answer. Our job is to always ensure that the health and welfare of the animals in our care, along with the safety of the public, are our number one priority. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

### **How long do you keep animals?**

We do not have a "time limit" for animals that come to our facility. We keep healthy, adoptable, treatable animals as long as we have space for them. We have had animals stay with us as long as 6 months until they were placed. That is unheard of in most open admission facilities, especially a shelter as small as ours, but we make it happen! As far as space, we only have 13 adoptable dog kennels and 18 adoptable cat kennels. We're constantly working to get animals moved out of our facility through adoptions and rescue groups.

### **If I find a stray animal, how long will you hold it?**

We hold all stray animals for a minimum of 72 hours in accordance with state law (longer if an animal has identification or is surrendered over the weekend or holidays) to give an owner time to reclaim them. After the hold period, the animal is evaluated to determine what time of home would be the best fit. After the evaluation, animals are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, and placed for adoption. After the hold period the animal is also submitted for rescue placement and may be transferred to one of our rescue partners.

### **Do you pick up stray animals?**

*Yes, we pick up stray animals on Tuesdays. You will need to contact the shelter to file a report for Animal Control and an officer will contact you to schedule a pick up time. You must be present in order for Animal Control Officers to pick up the stray animal so that you can sign the state required surrender paperwork.*

### **Do you accept donations of blankets, towels, or other items?**

*Yes! They may be dropped off at any time. We are open Tuesday through Friday 10:00am to 4:30pm and on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Please see our **Amazon Wish List** for some of our other needs.*

*(Link for Amazon Wishlist:*

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/TAIP2WBZN3X/ref=nav\\_wishlist\\_lists\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/TAIP2WBZN3X/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_1) )

### **Are you funded by a government entity or are you a 501(c)(3)?**

*We are funded by our local government.*

### **I think my neighbor is abusing/neglecting their animal. Can you help?**

*Yes. Please call our office at 828-649-3190 to file a report with Animal Control. You will need to leave your name and phone number, however, all caller information is strictly confidential. The person you are reporting will never give out your information.*

### **Does my dog require a rabies vaccine even though she or he stays inside?**

*Yes! All dogs, cats, and ferrets over the age of 3 months are required by law to have a rabies vaccine. There is a \$50.00 fine for failure to show proof of current rabies vaccinations by 4 months of age.*

### **I found an injured/orphaned baby bird, rabbit, or other injured wild animal. What should I do?**

*Please visit <http://www.ncwildlife.org/Have-A-Problem> or call the NC Wildlife Commission at 1-800-662-7137 for further instructions. Unfortunately, the law prohibits us for handling, removing, relocating, or rehabilitating any wildlife.*

### **Can I check on an animal that I surrendered?**

*Absolutely! Feel free to call our shelter anytime to check on them.*

### **Can I adopt a stray animal that I turned in?**

*Yes, most of the time. Please speak with a shelter staff member when you surrender the animal and let them know your interest.*

### **Is there a fee to drop off an animal?**

*No, there is not a fee to drop off an animal.*

### **How long will my cat or dog be pregnant?**

*Gestation is approximately 63 days. However, in keeping with the mission of Madison County Animal Services, we encourage you to have your animals spayed or neutered in order to control the pet population. Please see our [Spay/Neuter section](#) for details on programs to assist you in having your pets spayed or neutered and prevent unwanted animals from making their way to our shelter.*

### **Can I get my animal spayed for free?**

*Madison County residents can have their pets spayed or neutered through Friends of Madison County Animals at a lower cost for qualifying individuals. You can contact them 828-649-9798 to find out about costs and to schedule an appointment. Please visit our [Spay/Neuter section](#) for more information. Spaying or neutering your pet is critical to controlling the animal population and ending the euthanasia of healthy adoptable pets.*

### **There is a feral cat problem in my neighborhood. Can you help?**

*Yes, in many ways. Ultimately we want the cats to stay on the property where they are currently residing as a form of rodent control and to prevent new, unwanted cats from moving in. Feral cats are the highest euthanized animal in the shelter system and our goal is to avoid them coming to the shelter if we can. We also don't want them reproducing and making even more unwanted babies! We work closely with Friends to Ferals, a non-profit group whose sole purpose is to trap, neuter, and return these cats to their current location, **AT NO COST TO YOU!** If you'd like to speak with Nancy about all of the benefits of TNR and how to get help for your neighborhood, please call Friends to Ferals at 828-505-6737.*

*Another spay/neuter option for stray cats are Friends of Madison County Animals. They provide low cost, and no cost spay/neuter services for community cats. Please give them a call at 828.649.9798 or visit their website at [www.fomca.org](http://www.fomca.org).*

*To request assistance from Animal Control for feral cat problems, please call our shelter at 828.649.3190.*

### **Do you accept donations of opened food?**

*Yes, we accept all donations. Please visit our [Amazon Wish List](#) for information on other needs we have.*

### **What kind of medical care did the animal receive?**

*We generally perform an initial physical exam upon the animals' arrival to the shelter to check for immediate, noticeable medical issues. The animals receive at least one round of DA2PPv*

*(Distemper/Parvo), Bordatella, and Rabies vaccines and they are dewormed with pyrantel paomote when they arrive. If they did not come in already altered, we have them spayed or neutered. We do not perform routine heartworm tests on every animal that comes into the shelter; however, you can request this test be done for a \$15.00 fee that must be paid before the test is administered. Our shelter has partnered with a local animal hospital and the veterinarians and 4<sup>th</sup> year veterinary students come out each week and give the animals thorough physical exams and evaluate them for any medical issues that we may not see. Any staff member can go over the Patient Medical Records with you and you will receive a copy upon adoption to take with you to your veterinarian.*

### **What is the timeline for adoption?**

*Not all organizations handle the adoption timeline the same way. All of our animals must be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped before they can be adopted. Factors such as if the animal was a stray, owner surrender, or if it needs to be altered will make a difference on when the animal can be adopted. Please speak with a Shelter Worker if you're interested in a particular animal. They can inform you on when the animal can be adopted. Animal that are ready to be adopted can go home the same day if approved.*

### **What is the adoption process?**

*For many of our dogs, we request that you bring your dog(s) in to meet the dog you are interested in. This is a requirement and condition of adoption for any dog that has shown or has a history of aggressive tendencies towards another dog. We do this for the protection of both our shelter dog and your other pets, we don't want to set them up for failure. If the meet and greet goes well, all family members are on board with the new addition, and the staff members feel like this is a good fit, the adoption can be processed. You must be 18 years old to adopt and you must present a state or military issued photo ID in order to adopt, in accordance with state law. Our standard adoption fee is \$85.00 which includes the vaccinations, deworming, spay/neuter, and microchip that the animal received while in our care. Our payment options are cash, check, credit, or debit card.*

### **Do you work with other rescue groups/organizations?**

*Yes! We are very rescue friendly and have formed partnerships with many rescue organizations through the years.*

### **Do you have a foster home program?**

*Yes! If you would like to become a foster parent please fill out our [Foster Home Application](#) and email it to [EPayne@madisoncountync.gov](mailto:EPayne@madisoncountync.gov). You can also stop by the shelter and speak to our Foster Coordinator and fill out an application in person. We would love to have you on board!*

**Do you offer pet food, dog house, or fencing assistance?**

*No, but Friends of Madison County Animals does! Please visit their website at [www.fomca.org](http://www.fomca.org) for more information. You can also give them a call at 828.649.9798.*

**Do you offer veterinarian services for the public?**

*No, we do not.*