



Municipal Animal Services Position Statements

MISSION STATEMENT: Working together with compassion to ensure healthy and safe pets and people through education and community outreach.

Municipal Animal Services

- **Public Safety as Our Primary Mandate**

As a municipal animal services department operating under the laws of the State of Texas, including the Texas Health & Safety Code and local ordinances, our foremost responsibility is the protection of public health and safety.

We are committed to:

- Enforcing state and local animal control laws
- Responding promptly to dangerous dog incidents and cruelty complaints
- Investigating bite cases and enforcing rabies control measures
- Ensuring animals placed into the community do not present a safety risk

Public safety will always guide our decision-making, placement standards, and enforcement practices.

- **Spay and Neuter as Responsible Population Control**

We strongly support accessible and affordable spay and neuter services as the most effective tool to reduce overpopulation and shelter intake across Texas communities.

Through education, partnerships, and enforcement of local ordinances where applicable, we promote sterilization as a core component of responsible pet ownership.

Preventing unwanted litters reduces euthanasia, stray populations, and strain on municipal resources.

- **Transparency, Accountability, and Fiscal Responsibility**

As a Texas municipal department funded by taxpayers, we operate with transparency, fiscal responsibility, and accountability to our city leadership and residents.

We will:

- Maintain accurate reporting
- Follow state and local mandated holding periods
- Ensure compliance with Texas rabies control regulations
- Use data to guide policy decisions

Our responsibility is to balance compassion with lawful, ethical, and community-centered operations.

- **Safer Communities for People and Pets**

Our vision for the communities we serve:

- Pets are responsibly owned
- Animals are properly identified and vaccinated
- Stray populations are reduced
- Safe, adoptable animals find loving homes
- Public safety remains paramount

Through enforcement, education, and ethical sheltering practices, we work to create a community where both people and animals thrive.

Field Operations

- **Rapid Reunification: Returning Pets to Their Owners**

Texas law recognizes pets as property, and we prioritize returning stray animals to their rightful owners as quickly as possible.

We actively promote:

- Microchipping and identification tags
- Field-based reunification when appropriate
- Accessible lost-and-found reporting
- Efficient redemption procedures

Reducing length of stay decreases stress on animals, lowers operational costs, and strengthens community trust.

- **Reducing Stray and Free-Roaming Animals**

Free-roaming animals present risks including:

- Traffic hazards
- Rabies exposure
- Livestock conflicts
- Wildlife impact
- Public nuisance concerns

We are committed to proactive enforcement, public education, and community partnerships to reduce stray populations and keep animals safely confined and cared for.

Shelter Operations

- **Lifesaving and Safe Placement Within a Public Safety Framework**

As a Texas municipal animal services department, we believe every healthy and behaviorally sound animal deserves the opportunity to find a responsible home. We are committed to maximizing live outcomes through adoption programs, rescue collaboration, return-to-owner efforts, and active community engagement.

At the same time, public safety remains our primary responsibility. We adopt out only animals that have been evaluated and deemed safe for placement in the community. Our adoption standards include behavioral assessments, bite history review, compliance with Texas dangerous dog statutes, and full transparency with adopters.

While we strive for positive outcomes for every adoptable animal, we will not place animals that present an unreasonable risk to children, families, other household pets, or the public. All

lifesaving efforts operate within the boundaries of state law, local ordinances, and responsible placement standards.

Our approach balances compassion with accountability—protecting people and pets while creating opportunities for safe animals to find loving homes.

- **Owner Surrender Policy**

As a municipal animal shelter, our primary responsibility under Texas law is to protect public health and safety by responding to stray animals, bite cases, dangerous dogs, and cruelty investigations.

Because kennel space and resources are limited and funded by taxpayers, we do **not accept owner surrenders for rehoming purposes**.

Owners are responsible for finding a new home for their pets through family, friends, rescue organizations, or other private rehoming options. Surrendering a pet to the municipal shelter should not be the first solution when challenges arise.

We do accept owner animals **for humane euthanasia services**, in accordance with Texas law and professional standards.

- **Stray Animal Intake Policy**

To ensure proper jurisdiction, public safety, and responsible use of taxpayer-funded resources, all stray animals must be brought to the shelter **by an Animal Services Officer (ASO)**.

Stray intake is conducted by Animal Services personnel only to:

- Verify the animal was found within city limits
- Confirm proper jurisdiction
- Ensure legal impound procedures are followed
- Document location and circumstances of pickup
- Make every reasonable effort in the field to locate the owner

Our officers actively scan for microchips, check identification, and attempt field reunification whenever possible before impoundment.

If you find a loose animal within the city limits of Edgecliff Village, Everman, Forest Hill or Kennedale, please contact Animal Services for assistance. Do not bring stray animals directly to the shelter unless instructed by an officer.

This process helps us:

- Return pets home faster
- Reduce unnecessary shelter intake
- Maintain accurate reporting and legal compliance
- Prioritize public safety response

We appreciate the community's partnership in helping keep animals safely contained and returned to their rightful owners.
