

ANIMAL SHELTERING BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

Animal Shelter Ad Hoc Advisory Committee
December 1, 2020



Animal Shelter Ad Hoc Committee Membership

- Wendee Brunish, Chair
- Melissa Bartlett
- Mary Timmers
- Sally Wilkins
- Jennifer Young



Animal Shelter Ad-Hoc Committee

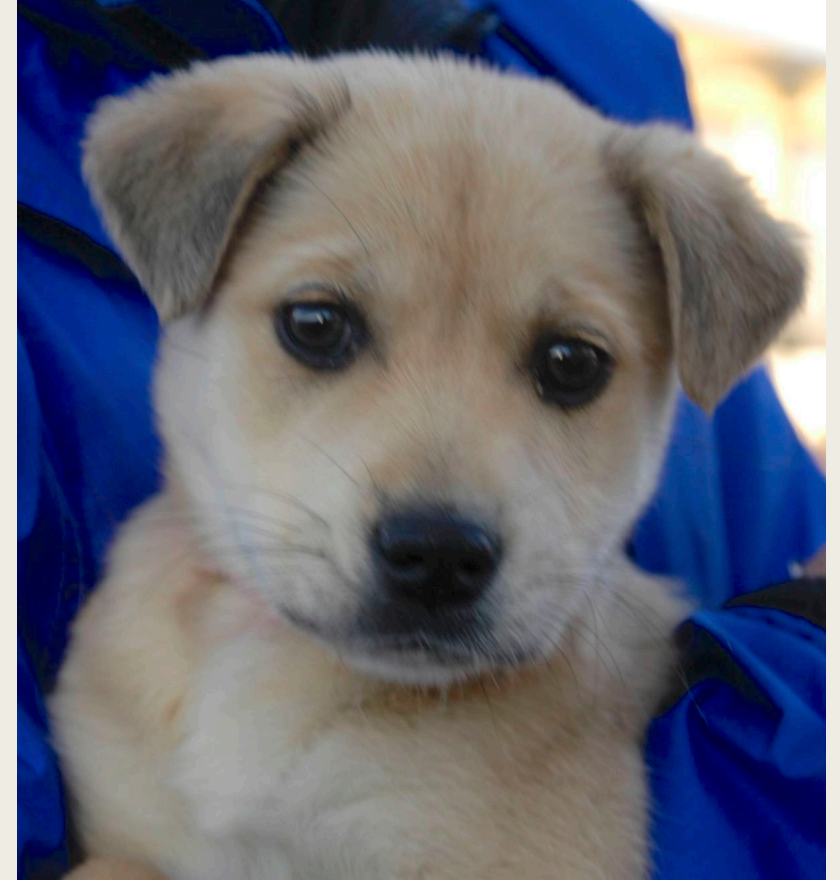
- At the request of the County Council, we have drafted a Best Practices Guide
- This guide envisions an enrichment-based shelter that provides the best possible animal care, superior services to our citizens, and serves as a partner in all pet-related activities in our community



Best Practices Guide

- a transformative approach

Enrichment is the foundation for all shelter activities and everything we do is built around decreasing stress and maximizing enrichment - everything from cleaning to feeding to social interactions



What Makes a Great Shelter?

- Dedication to animal welfare and public service
- Clear vision of state-of-the-art animal care
- Ongoing strategic planning for the future
- Clear goals evaluated by objective metrics



<https://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf>

A Great Shelter Partners with the Community

- It provides a variety of services to the community, such as surrender prevention programs, responsible pet ownership education, access to spay/neuter services, and pet ownership education for landlords.



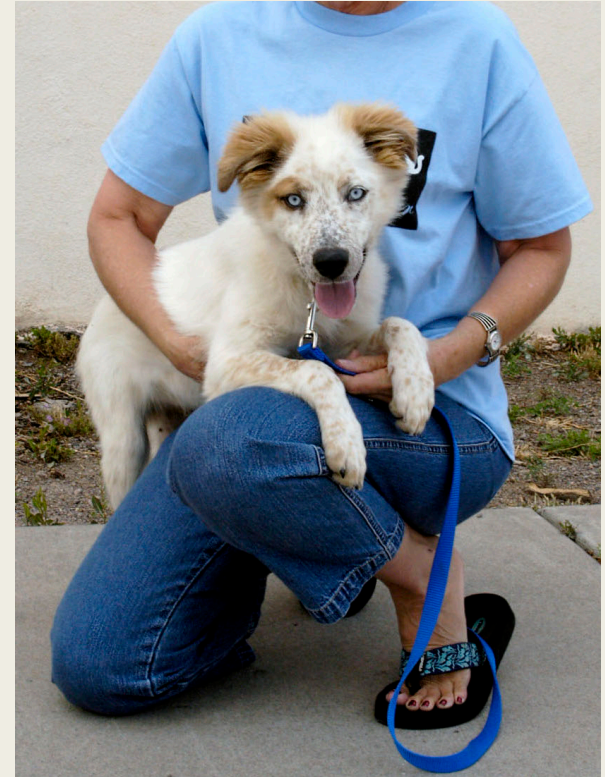
What is Covered in the Best Practices Guide?



- Vision and Mission
- Policies and Procedures
- Training for staff and volunteers
- Enrichment-based Care
- Oversight and Inspections
- Metrics and Strategic Planning
- Outreach
- Local Ordinances
- Other programs including foster and transfer programs

Purpose of the Best Practices Guide

- Learn from the best so that our community gets the high quality shelter that our pets and our people deserve
- Look at the whole picture – shelter, citizens and civic leaders are all part of this process
- The desired outcomes are intertwined – better shelter animal care produces better pets which leads to a happier and more animal friendly community



Vison and Mission



<https://www.icam-coalition.org/>

- The Vision is for Los Alamos County is to become a socially conscious animal community that ensures that every homeless pet has a safe place in which to be cared for, physically and emotionally, until they find their forever home.
- The Animal Shelter should support this vision by ensuring that the facility provides a safe and healthful environment for our animals, staff, volunteers and the public, the best shelter enrichment practices are provided by well-trained and compassionate staff and volunteers, and best practice adoption, foster, transfer, surrender prevention programs, and a vigorous volunteer program are implemented
- Further, the mission supports the broader goals of laws defending animals against cruelty and neglect, a local ordinance that supports animal welfare, and includes education and outreach to ensure a safe community for pets, pet owners, and non-pet owners.

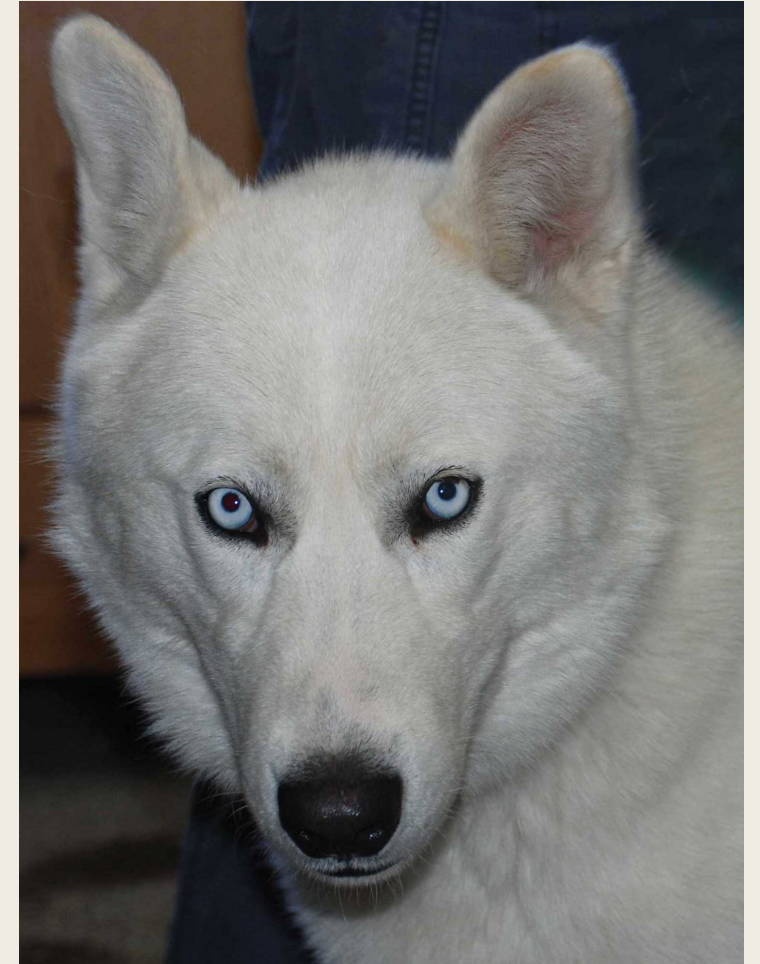
Policies and Procedures

Policies should all be focused on enhancing animal welfare serving the public by providing great adoptable pets and partnering with the community to address all pet-related issues



Training for staff and volunteers

- Providing daily enrichment and social interaction is key – just as important as food, bedding, and medical care
- Proper training is essential to ensure that enrichment and social interactions are beneficial to the animals
- A local trainer can provide enrichment directed classes for staff and volunteers



Enrichment-based Care

- Focus on reducing stress in the environment by building it into all processes including housing and cleaning
- Daily mental stimulation and beneficial social interaction with humans and animals
- Social housing and play groups designed by trained professionals
- Shelter pet evaluations, behavior management and training, and adoption counseling services



https://cdn.ymaws.com/theaawa.org/resource/resmgr/files/2018_files/The_Association_Animal_BP.pdf

Outreach

- The shelter should partner with community leaders to address pet-related issues
- Surrender prevention is key to addressing pet-related issues in the community
- Provide owner education, spay/neuter resources, landlord education, information about training and resources



Local Ordinances

- Best communities for pets use local ordinances to reinforce their values, protect animal welfare, and provide information and assistance to their citizens
 - *Cruelty statutes*
 - *Spay/neuter regulations to reduce unwanted litters and animal neglect and abandonment*
 - *Licensing can be used to promote responsible pet ownership (identification, no roaming, spay/neuter)*



<https://www.calgary.ca/csps/abs/animal-services/responsible-pet-ownership-and-licenses.html>

Oversight, Inspections & Metrics

- A permanent county advisory committee should be established to review shelter policies and procedures and performance
- External organizations should conduct inspections to ensure that we are on the right track
- Qualitative and quantitative metrics (length of stay, adopter satisfaction, citizen complaints) to inform strategic planning for continuous improvement



Other Programs

- Even the best animal shelter can not provide the care and social interactions that kittens and puppies require. A foster program with trained and properly equipped caregivers should be established to care for young animals as well as for adult animals with special medical or behavioral need
- A well-designed reciprocal transfer program will save lives and ensure that pets get into their forever homes as quickly as possible



Best Practices Guide Summary

This transformative approach to an enrichment-based shelter that provides top-notch physical and psychological care to shelter animals will provide our citizens with loving and emotionally stable pets that will enhance their lives

The shelter will partner with the community reducing pet-related problems and conflicts and making Los Alamos a leading humane community



The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated

— Mahatma Gandhi