

Shelter Review Guidelines

May 2014 - Working DRAFT

Purpose

Establish a Shelter Review Committee to review case histories of dogs under the care of MCAS, which may pose a potential safety risk to the community due to dangerous or potentially dangerous behavior or based on health condition. The committee will compile and review all facts, documents, observation, options and all relevant information to make recommendations to the director for disposition of the dog.

Description

The committee will consist of the Shelter Manager, MCAS veterinarian, Chief Field Supervisor, a staff member from either the behavior assessment or dog foster team, and the Director. The Shelter Review committee will meet weekly to review the facts of each identified dog, discuss the circumstances, review case histories and field investigation reports, medical information, behavioral observations and assessments, and any other relevant information necessary to make a disposition decision. No dog will be euthanized without being reviewed by this committee except cases where a veterinarian deems it necessary for humane reasons.

Authority

Multnomah County Code 13.505 (E) (2) states: "An animal held for the prescribed period and not redeemed by its owner or keeper, and which is neither a dangerous or exotic animal or in an unhealthy condition, may be released for adoption subject to the provisions of MCC 13.506."

Multnomah County Code 13.505 (E) (3) states: "The director shall dispose of animals held for the prescribed period without redemption or adoption only by humane means.

Procedure

1. **Information gathering-** the following is required before the committee can review a case:

- a. Every dog will receive a Behavior Assessment and notes will be recorded in the Animal Record. The notes should include specific observed behaviors that led to any conclusions drawn by the assessor.
- b. If a Behavior Assessment cannot be completed safely, the assessor will note the behaviors shown in kennel.
 - i. A second behavior assessment attempt will be made on a different day and recorded in the notes. This may be by the same assessor or not.
- c. Owner surrender forms and Finder notes will be summarized in the Animal Record.
- d. Bite history/investigation – all attempts will be made to get accurate information regarding the bite incident, including a photo or detailed description (punctured skin, bruising, etc) should be made prior to bringing the case to the committee. Review bite incidents circumstances and provocation. This may include asking for further follow up from Field Services.
- e. Assessment of the bite/injury severity – the committee will review bite severity using the Dunbar Bite Scale.
- f. Review medical history – examination files
- g. All owner contact attempts should be completed.
- h. Dog -to-dog assessments should be complete and detailed notes made in the Animal Record, including the behaviors observed and the conclusion drawn by the assessor.
 - i. If the dog has seriously injured another dog, dog-to-dog assessment in the shelter can be waived.
- i. Information gained from history obtained through fostering, owner/finder surrender information, etc., will supplement but not replace Behavior Assessments.
- j. Adoption history
- k. Review of environmental factors, including the kennel environment, home environment (adoption, foster), and other settings.
- l. Review of history of incidents
- m. Other factors, including length of stay in the shelter, age, fertility status, behavior consultations and training, quality of life, rehabilitation or management options.

2. Euthanasia will be recommended if:

- a. The dog has a previous recorded incident of causing serious damage to a human (Dunbar bite scale 3 or higher)