



Open Admissions Shelter

Position

Calgary Humane Society operates as an open-admission shelter, accepting animals in need regardless of health, age, or behaviour. Intake is not denied based on medical or behavioural conditions, ensuring service to the most vulnerable animals in the community.

To provide responsible and humane care, the organization uses a triaged intake model. Animals are prioritized based on urgency and welfare risk, so those in immediate distress receive timely intervention. Intake is managed through coordinated pathways, including admissions, foster care, medical treatment, behaviour support, community services, and adoption.

Calgary Humane Society is committed to transparency throughout the admissions process. When an animal's needs exceed the organization's capacity for safe placement or rehabilitation, this is communicated openly, and alternative options are explored collaboratively with the owner or guardian.

Rationale

An open-admission model is essential to protecting vulnerable animals and preventing suffering in the community. Refusing intake based on medical or behavioural complexity can increase the risk of neglect, abandonment, or harm. By maintaining this approach, Calgary Humane Society ensures animals in greatest need can access care and intervention.

Responsible open admission requires active population management. The organization balances intake with outcomes by supporting animal flow through foster programs, adoption, and community services. This approach enables timely response to urgent cases while maintaining appropriate standards of care and avoiding overcrowding.

Animals are assessed individually, and all reasonable efforts are made to achieve positive outcomes, including treatment, rehabilitation, and rehoming. When an animal is experiencing unmanageable suffering or poses a significant and unresolvable public safety risk, euthanasia may be considered as a humane and compassionate option. It is not used due to time, space, or capacity constraints.

References

[The Association of Shelter Veterinarians. "Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters", 2022](#)

[The Association of Shelter Veterinarians. "Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters", 2010](#)

[Overview of Capacity for Care \(C4C\) - Koret Shelter Medicine Program](#)

[Hurley, Kate F. "The Evolving Role of Triage and Appointment-Based Admission to Improve Service, Care and Outcomes in Animal Shelters." Frontiers in Veterinary Science, vol. 9, 4 Mar. 2022](#)

[An Observational Study of the Relationship between Capacity for Care as an Animal Shelter Management Model and Cat Health, Adoption and Death in Three Animal Shelters." The Veterinary Journal, vol. 227, 1 Sept. 2017,](#)

[Humane Canada. "Humane Canada Accreditation Standards", 2020.](#)