

Upson County Animal Control

Standard of Operating Procedures

Mission Statement

Upson County Animal Control is dedicated to promoting responsible pet ownership. This can only be accomplished by enforcement of county (*Upson County Code, Chapter 14, Section 14, Article I, II*) and state (*OCGA 4-5*) ordinances and the cooperation of the citizens of Upson County. Our facility works with rescues and adopters to rehome pets and promote the need for spay/neuter and vaccinations.

Services Provided

Upson County Animal Control allows intake of stray and unwanted dogs and cats in Upson County.

Business Hours

Monday – Friday 10:00 to 4:30 office
12:00 to 4:30 kennel area

Working Hours

Monday-Friday 8:00 to 5:00, on-call 24/7
(Visitation hours vary, based on work load)

- Enforcement of local and state laws to include rabies control, nuisance violations (*Chapter 14, Section 14.6*), and cruelty (*Chapter 14, Section 14.7*), (Livestock and exotics can be enforced but not impounded at this facility).
- Animal Quarantine for domestic pet attacks for rabies, monitoring in isolation for 10-day minimum (*Chapter 14, Section 14.9 g*).
- Removal of dead animals that obstruct traffic from county roads not to include Hwy 36, 19, 80, and 74 which are maintained by GDOT.
- Feral and stray trapping of dogs and cats, as well as some other nuisance animals to include common rabies carrying non domestics such as foxes, skunks, raccoons, opossums and or armadillos.
- Dangerous Dog inquiries (*Chapter 14, Article II*).

Daily Cleaning Procedures

Upon arrival to start shift, employees must do a walkthrough of the kennel area to do a visual examination of all dogs and cats that are currently confined at the facility. The walkthrough is to check general health and wellness of the animals. Any observance of dead, sick, or injured animals should be reported to supervision. The issue will be handled according to state and county regulations.

After all animals' conditions are verified, employees should start with feeding the animals. Dogs are to be given 2 cups of dry food one time, daily. This can be adjusted based on size of dog. Puppies that still have developing teeth may be given wet food. Cats and kittens are given a half scoop of dry food one time daily.

After allowing the dogs 5 to 10 minutes to eat they should be isolated to the outside of the kennels by use of the guillotine door. Once all dogs are secure on the outside, all inside kennel doors should be opened to remove food trays and water bowls from the previous day.

Food trays should be discarded in the trash and water bowls should be put in the sink with 2 cups of bleach to be sanitized. Bowls should soak for a minimum of 30 minutes to remove bacteria.

Kennel beds must come up from the floor and be placed vertical during cleaning to insure there is nothing left on or under the beds during the cleaning.

All feces, spilled food, hair, and treats should be removed with shovels and placed in trash bags. It's important to remove as much debris as possible from the floors, to insure no solids get to the drains.

Once all debris has been removed from the kennels, the kennels should be hosed with hot water, starting from the top down, from high to low in a sweeping pattern. Use the hose to wash all sediment and small debris down into the drains, being sure to wash the beds and all corners of the kennels. Every kennel should be washed even if no dogs were present. After all kennels are sprayed out, proceed with using the chemical solutions to sanitize. Option 1: Bleach can be added to a self-mixing sprayer, which will mix the bleach to water ratio as you spray. Option 2: bleach can be pre-mixed and applied with a pump up sprayer. It is crucial that all areas of the kennels are covered with the solution, to include walls, floors, doors and beds. This should stay on the surface for a minimum of 15 minutes to insure all germs and bacteria are neutralized. After the allotted time period, the floors can then be squeegeed of all standing water so the drying process can begin. Once all the kennel areas are dry the water bowls can be set out in the kennels and filled with fresh water. Secure all the kennel doors to assure they are latched. Once secured, dogs are able to move into the clean kennel area. When all dogs are secure on the inside of the kennels proceed to cleaning the outside kennel area in the same order as the inside. Remove all debris, spray down any remaining sediment, add chemical solution and let dry. Once the outside kennels are dry, doors can be locked in the open position so the dogs can roam on both sides of their individual kennels, half inside and outside. Periodic walkthroughs are needed throughout the day to check for waste and water levels.

Calls and Complaints

Upton County Animal Control receives the majority of the complaints by phone. On occasion, complaints are made by email or walk in at the office. When a complaint is made, the information is copied onto a complaint sheet and placed in the call box for the animal control officers. The complaint sheet should contain the following information at a minimum; Date, Time of call, name of complainant, address of complainant, phone number of complainant, nature of complaint (detailed), any alternate address associated with the complaint. There are many different situations that can be called in as a complaint as stated in *Chapter 14, Section 14.8*, but the basic complaints will fall into the categories below:

- Live trap for dog or cat.
- Dead animal on the roadway blocking traffic.
- Stray dog or cat on premises or running at large.
- Owners turn in of unwanted pets.
- Cruelty or suspected neglect of animals.

When responding to a complaint, a copy of the call sheet should accompany the officer to the residence. In some cases the officer should call ahead to give notice that an officer is in route to the location of the complaint. Not only does this notice speed up the process, it adds an extra layer of safety to the situation.

When the officer arrives on scene, the area should be surveyed, checking for animals and/or people. The officer should make his/her presence known by sounding the vehicle horn. If possible, take a control pole when exiting the vehicle to defend against aggressive animals. Once access is gained to the door, knock and identify yourself as Upton County Animal Control. When the door is answered, identify yourself again and state the purpose of the visit. After an explanation of complaint, determine how the complaint needs to be handled. Once determination has been made, proceed with the Intake Field Report. If no contact is made on scene, the officer should leave a door tag with the following information:

- Nature of Complaint,
- Time,
- Date,
- Address,
- Call back number,
- Officers printed name.

This information is to inform the complainant or the defendant that Upton County Animal Control had responded to a complaint and if any actions were taken at the scene. Upon completion of any investigated complaint, a small narrative of actions taken by animal control should be notated on the complaint sheet along with date, time, and signature of completing officer. The paperwork should be turned over to the director for review and filing.

Generally, most complaint calls are basic pickup, but some calls require more time, attention, and personnel. In the case of a multiple dog pickup, eviction, aggressive animal, neighbor dispute, or any situation where the officer feels uncomfortable, he/she should request additional officer(s). The animal control officer also has the option of notifying 911 to request assistance from a sheriff deputy. The officer is not obligated to respond to the complaint call if the situation appears dangerous, due to aggression from the dog or citizen, until sheriff department arrives on scene. Once a deputy arrives on the scene the animal control officer can proceed. If possible, always wait for backup or assistance for safety and liability reasons.

Dangerous Dogs

Once a dangerous dog call has been received, the animal control officer will serve as the County Dog Control Officer. This officer is authorized to make any inquiry that is necessary to ensure compliance with this policy regarding dangerous dogs.

Once a dog has been classified as a dangerous dog or a potentially dangerous dog, the County Dog Control Officer must notify the owner (if known) of such classification. The owner has 15 days to request a hearing based on the Officer's determination. The Animal Control Board must schedule a hearing within 30 days of receiving the request. After the hearing, the Animal Control Board must notify the owner in writing of its determination on the matter.

If the Animal Control Board has agreed with the Officer that the dog is indeed dangerous, The County Dog Control Officer, will issue a certificate of registration to the owner of the dangerous dog. The dog must be confined in a proper enclosure, a warning sign must be posted, and an insurance policy of at least \$15,000 and a surety bond in the amount of \$15,000 or more must be kept by the dog owner. The dog owner must notify the County Dog Control Officer if the dog is on the loose, is unconfined, has attacked a human, has died or has been sold or donated within 24 hours. Also, the owner must notify the County Dog Control Officer if he/she move out of the county. If the owner of a dangerous or potentially dangerous dog moves into the county, he/she must register the animal within 30 calendar days after becoming a resident. (*Chapter 14, Section 14, Article II*)

Intake of Animals

Procedures of animal intake for new animals

As dogs and cats come in to the shelter, each animal is given an identification number with the year followed by a consecutive number starting with one and so on.

Each animal should have the following information at a minimum:

1. Pickup address inside Upson County.
2. Name and phone number of complainant or owner
3. Description of animal to include color, sex, breed, temperament, collars, tags, injuries and any violations to county ordinances.
4. Name of pet, medical records, any valuable information the owner may have.

In certain cases some animals will have their weight recorded at intake to track progress of weight gain, but most weights are recorded during the Euthanization process.

The intake form for each animal follows them through the entire process at the shelter. The info is annotated on the intake form and recorded in a binder for a backup when quick research is needed.

Time Spent at Shelter

The time frame for an animals stay at the shelter is determined by two factors (*Chapter 14, Section 14.9 b*). Animals can either be picked up as stray or surrendered by their owner. When an animal is picked up stray it is given 3 full days to be reclaimed by the owner. The animal will be put up for adoption on the fourth day. The animal is given two more days to be adopted before it is eligible for Euthanization.

Animals that are surrendered by an owner are not eligible to be held. These animals can be euthanized immediately. There is no hold period required for any animal that has been surrendered by their owner.

Animals involved in bites or attacks are held for a 10 day quarantine period from the day of the bite. The owner has visitation rights during the quarantine period. The animal will be euthanized after 12 days and no response from the owner. There is no adoption period for animals involved in bites. (*Chapter 14, Section 14.9 g*).

Animals involved in cruelty cases vary in time held. The type of case determines the hold time. Animals involved in cruelty are sometimes euthanized on the spot based on their body condition or overall health, while others can be held long enough to be adopted or rescued. Animals involved in most cruelty cases are not returned to the owners due to pending charges.

Adoption of Animals

Procedures of Adoption

Adoptions are done on Monday – Friday between the hours of 12pm and 4pm. In order to adopt an animal you must be at least 18 years of age with a valid form of identification. Once the adopter finds an animal they want to adopt, an application is filled out to be reviewed by an Animal Control Officer. The officer will determine if the applicant is qualified to adopt an animal based on the answers given. The application can be approved or denied based on the applicants' answers as well as any incidents that animal control has had with the adopter that is animal related. The adopter is required to disclose any charges of cruelty past or present, in or out of state. The adopter is also required to sign a spay/neuter contract that gives a period of 30 days to have an adopted animal sterilized. A licensed veterinarian must sign off on the contract stating they performed the surgery. The signed contract must be returned to Upson County Animal Control as proof of a successful surgery. A rabies vaccine is also required by the state for all dogs and cats over the age of 8 weeks. The adoption contract states that any adopted pet that is not a suitable fit should be turned back in to the shelter. The pet can't be sold or given away and must be returned to Upson County Animal Control.

Fees

Fees for an adoption of a shelter animal vary based on the time the animal has been in possession of Upson County (*Chapter 14, Section 14.10*). Upson County collects no fees for spay/neuter or any vaccines. The adopter is responsible for all cost associated with an adopted pet. Upson County does not guarantee the health of adopted animals that may have underlying issues that arise after adoption.

Requirements for Adoption

The adopter must be 18 or older with a valid form of Identification. The adopter is required to inform landlords/roommates of a pending adoption if there is a lease involved. The adopter cannot have any prior convictions for any animal related offenses, in or out of state (*Chapter 14, Section 14.11*).

Disposal of Animals

Euthanasia procedures

The Euthanization process takes a minimum of three people. There should be a state certified administer of the medicine, a record keeper and a restrainer. Once an animal reaches its eligibility date for Euthanization, the intake form is pulled to be recorded on the Euthanization log. The animal is matched with its intake paperwork and taken to the scale to be weighed. The weight is recorded by the record keeper and relayed to the certified administer who measures out the correct amount of medicine. The medicine amount is dosed base on 1cc per 10lbs. This formula mainly pertains to animals over 30lbs with suitable veins. Animals with hard to find veins are injected intraperitoneal, or through the stomach wall. This method is affective but takes longer to take effect. The incapacitation time varies because the medicine needs time to absorb into the system. The main method used is Intravenous injection. The medicine is administered through the vein that runs along the front leg above the wrist joint and below the elbow joint. There are other suitable injection points such as rear leg, tongue, and neck. These should only be used if damage occurs to the front leg veins. There are steps that can be taken to make the best of each vein. The fur/hair should be shaved as close to the skin as possible. The restrainer should apply adequate pressure and a slight roll to the elbow joint. The administrator should wet the area with alcohol and always use a sharp needle. The restrainer should follow all commands from the administrator, such as when to hold, squeeze, and release. When all steps are executed to standard the animal is down within 5 to 10 seconds. The restrainer should gently lay the subject with the left side facing up. The administrator is now responsible for checking for a heartbeat and pupil reflex to insure the subject is deceased.

Storage of deceased animals

The storage of deceased animals is only for special circumstances. We have two freezers that hold deceased animals. There is a cat collection freezer that is for specimens that are used for college dissection. This freezer is only for adult cats that are at least 12" nose to base of the tail. They are collected by Carolina Biological on an as needed basis. The other freezer is for any dead animals picked up from the roadway or a citizen's personal property. They are only kept until enough carcasses are collected to do a full burn of the incinerator. There are some occasions where a deceased animal will be stored for further testing for rabies or necropsy for an animal cruelty case. The majority of all deceased animals are immediately incinerated. (OCGA 4-5)

Proper documentation

The intake sheet remains with the animal till the end of the process. This includes the Euthanization process. Intake sheets are recorded with the weight and amount of medicine administered per animal. Animal Control keeps the master sheets which are visually verified by a licensed vet at Hannah's Mill Animal Hospital.

Storage/Disposal of Euthanized Animals

The animals that undergo the Euthanization process are immediately incinerated. They are reduced to ash and bone fragments and disposed of by local waste management. The only exception to this is for an owner who request to bury their pet. The animal will be triple bagged and turned back over to the owner who must agree to bury the pet a minimum of 3 feet down. This is to insure no other wildlife digs up the carcass for feeding. The carcass is contaminated and will pass on the Euthanization solution that was administered during the process. (OCGA 4-5)

Sick/Diseased Animals

Upson County does not intake sick or diseased animals. Owners are encouraged to seek veterinarian care for sick pets. If an animal displays signs of sickness after intake it has to be separated from general intake immediately. In the case of an owner surrendered animal, that animal would be euthanized on the spot. Stray animals, which have to be held, can be quarantined and evaluated for possible vet care to be charged to the owner. Upson County only covers the cost of the vet visit to get a proper diagnosis of the animal's condition. If an owner can't be located, humane euthanization is the next option. The kennel that was occupied by the sick animal now must be quarantined for a minimum of 3 days. During this period the kennel must be marked as contaminated, and left empty. The kennel should be sprayed with cleaning solution which should be left on surface to kill any contaminants left behind. The kennel is to be put back in rotation at the supervisor's discretion (OCGA 4-5).

General Guidelines

Safety (Personal protective equipment)

The basic PPE use for daily operations is name/latex gloves for safe handling of any and everything. Ear protection is provided for high noise in the kennels. Dust mask are provided to block ingestion of animal dander. Grip palm gloves are available for handling traps and cages or medium duty tasks. Bite gloves are forearm to elbow length, and are used to handle feral cats and small breed dogs that may possible bite. Lab coats are used for close contact with animals covered with feces or with mange or skin irritation. Hazmat suits and boots are used for extreme situations such as puppy mills and hoarding houses.

Uniforms

The standard animal control uniform is navy blue cargo pants and shirt with 3M reflective markings on the shirts for safety. A county employee picture identification card and closed toe shoes is required, preferably leather boots. A pair of calf length rain boots are provided for kennel cleaning.

Tools necessary on trucks/in building

Each truck should be equipped with the following:

1. 2 control poles (loop used to restrain animals around the neck) preferably different lengths.
2. Leashes (2 to 3) to handle non aggressive dogs. A Snappy snare for timid or skittish animals. A snappy snare acts as a trap leash that closes rapidly around an animal's neck when they are trying to elude or escape.
3. Gloves for safe and sanitary animal handling.
4. Bolt cutters for removal of locks and chains from an animal's neck.
5. Loadout box. A loadout box contains all the misc. items that may come in handy for daily operations. Contents consist of cat or dog food for bait. Bait is used in traps as well as at random to lure animals in and gain trust. Towels and blankets, which can be used for cleaning or used as a stretcher for injured animals. Hazmat suits with boot covers, for entering unsanitary locations. Large trash bags for dead animal pickup. Scatter is used to pick up animal carcasses by masking unpleasant odors so they can be handled. Jumper cables and a charged fire extinguisher should also be present.

Handling of animals

Gloves are required for handling all animals and equipment. Proper restraint device for the situation should also be selected by officer. Equipment is based on levels of aggression. The control pole can be used for all aggression levels. The pole maintains proper distance between the officer and the animal to protect from injury. Leashes are only to be used on animals that can be touched on the

head, neck, belly, or back without any aggressive or erratic behavior. Muzzles are used on certain dogs to prevent a bite to an officer. It can also be used to keep a dog from gnawing on a wound and causing more damage to itself. Lab coats and masks are available for handling dogs with skin conditions or animals that are soiled in their bodily fluids. Mandatory hand washing with antibacterial soap is required after any contact with animals or equipment. It is important to wash the hands and forearms at least up to the elbow to ensure removal of germs and bacteria. The eyewash station is available for emergency splashes of foreign substances' to the eyes and face. Frequent hand washing helps keep all employees safe as well as the animals that are handled, due to the amount of zoonotic diseases associated with handling animals.

Documentation of accidents/injuries

Accidents should be reported immediately, no matter how minor. If the accident requires medical attention, always call 911 first. Accidents should be reported directly to your supervisor, who will start the documentation process. The supervisor will start an accident report which includes employee information and an account of what caused the accident, injuries, damages, and a brief narrative of the timeline of events. The supervisor must contact Human Resources with the information to determine if the accident requires any additional steps that would be required if workers compensation becomes involved. The employee must complete a drug screen after accidents. Human Resources have to send in the information to request the test, and then the employee is escorted to the clinic by their supervisor. The supervisor is required to wait until the test is complete and escort the employee appropriately based on test results. There are certain minor injuries that should be reported in animal control. There is a certain level of contamination associated with handling animals that increases the risk of infections with cuts and scrapes. Animal control officers should report cuts, scrapes, and even tick bites for documentation, especially if it bleeds and leaves an open wound. Some infections can take time to contaminate the immune system and show symptoms. Documentation can help determine a timeline of how long an employee has been infected as well as provide necessary documentation for workers compensation claims.

Forms/Documentation

Intake form/ Field sheet: Main formed used daily to intake animals whether it's a pickup or drop off, adoption, return to owner, euthanize or rescue. This sheet contains all information anyone should need to locate an animal that is currently in the shelter, or that was previously in the shelter. This form follows the animal through the entire process.

Complaint Form: Used to record all incoming complaints answered by the secretary. Should include name, address, and phone number, nature of complaint, description of animal in question, alternate address, and any other helpful information to help with the pickup process.

Euthanization Form: Records animals' intake number, weight, amount of sedation, amount of Euthanization solution, type of needle technique, and dog/cat. The form should be dated and signed by three employees as followed, State certified administrator, record keeper, and a restrainer.

Adoption/Spay or Neuter Agreement: Gives an idea of what the pet history is of a potential adopter, how many pets the adopter has or had, will pet be chained or used for a guard dog, is there a fenced in yard, how many people live in the household, does adopter have a veterinarian, etc. The spay/neuter agreement gives a 30 day period from time of adoption to have pet sterilized. There is a penalty of \$200 for noncompliance of the contract.

Sign-In/ Volunteer Form: Record keeping for daily visitation as well as a waiver for contact with animals in the shelter. The form includes name, address and signature. Parents/Guardian must sign for visitors under 18 years of age.