



HFS Shelters Pet Policy and Procedures

This policy applies to our shelters as follows:

- Savards: One pet in total will be allowed in the Shelter
- Scarborough: Two pets in total will be allowed in the Shelter
- Kennedy and Strachan: The number of pets to be determined with Supervisor approval.

There are many positive effects associated with pet ownership, including improved physical and mental health. Many people cannot bear to give up pets they adopted while housed, while others acquire pets while already homeless. In either case, pets are generally kept because people cannot imagine life without them.

Homes First is committed to providing shelter to clients that have difficulty accessing shelter at other locations, and as a result, have put in place a pet policy and procedures to facilitate a cohesive living environment for everyone within Homes First, including residents, staff, and pets. The physical and mental health of all residents is our primary concern. The following procedures are to provide support to the staff in order to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all is at the forefront of decision-making.

Service Animal Exemption:

A Guide Dog for a blind person is not legally considered to be a pet. People who are blind and rely on guide dogs have clear legal protections. *The Blind Persons' Rights Act* (the BPROA) protects a blind person accompanied by a guide dog from the denial of, or discrimination in the provision of, accommodation, services, or facilities available in any place to which the public is customarily admitted. This includes restaurants, hotels, and taxis, none of which may refuse service to a blind person with a guide dog.

There are many types of service dogs used by people with other disabilities in addition to guide dogs for people who are blind. These include hearing dogs, assistance dogs for people with mobility impairments, and special skills dogs that detect oncoming seizures.

Homes First Society supports persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. To be considered a service animal, it must be readily apparent that the animal is being used to assist the person with a disability, or the person with a disability may be requested to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming

that it is required because of his or her disability. They may also have an identification card from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Types of service animals include, but are not limited to:

- Hearing Dog: trained to alert a person with severe hearing loss/deafness when a sound occurs.
- Service or Mobility Dog: trained to enhance life and mitigate disability, e.g. open doors, ring doorbell, activate elevator, steady while walking, carry objects, pull wheelchair, etc.

When a person requires a service animal, every effort will be made to accommodate and ensure that the surroundings will allow the person to effectively maintain their relationship with the animal. If this is not possible due to health or safety concerns, a mutually agreed upon location for the animal may be identified for a limited time. In this instance, other provisions will be made to ensure that the individual receives the support otherwise provided by the service animal.

Pet Intake:

All clients accompanied by pets must complete the “HFS Pet Intake Form” and the “HFS Pet Care Release and Agreement Form” prior to their pet being considered for admittance to the shelter and agree to the following guidelines:

- Clients are not permitted to bring in a new pet after intake.
- Upon intake of a client with a pet, the owner will be asked about what vaccines the pet has received and when the last vaccination occurred.
- As per the *Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349*, all cats and dogs must have a City of Toronto license tag, and must have the license tag securely fixed at all times on the animal for which the license tag has been issued.
- The pet will be examined for visible signs of fleas (excessive scratching and/or bald spots).
- The owner will be issued a collar and leash if they do not have one already; leashes must be a maximum of 2 metres in length (as per the Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 349).
- The owner will be issued a kennel for the pet.
- Owners may be required to muzzle their dog.
- The owner must take care not to let pets near others who are uncomfortable with animals.

Shelter Rules for Pets:

- Dogs with an Animal Service “Muzzle Order” must wear the muzzle in common areas at all times. This order is given to dogs when dogs have bitten in the past. If the pet owner does not comply, this will result in a warning and/or discharge from the shelter.
- Pets are never to enter the dining room area.
- Pets are not to be taken into the smoking area.
- Dogs may be required to wear a muzzle in common areas at staff discretion.
- Pit bull or pit-bull crosses must be muzzled in common areas at all times due to Provincial bylaws. A pit bull is defined as:
 - A pit bull terrier
 - A staffordshire bull terrier
 - An american staffordshire terrier
 - An american pit bull terrier
 - A dog that has an appearance and physical characteristics substantially similar to any of those dogs.
- The onus of proving that a dog is not a pit bull will lie with the owner of the dog.
- Pets must always be kept on leashes in the common areas (staff to ensure this takes place).
- All pet waste must be cleaned up by the owner; HFS will provide bags to owners when taking their dogs outside.
- No pets are allowed in any staffing offices in the shelter, no exceptions.
- Staff are not permitted to bring their pets to work.

Noise:

- Noise in itself is not illegal, and barking dogs are an everyday occurrence and we must exercise a reasonable degree of tolerance.

Aggressive Pets:

- If a staff member observes that a pet is acting aggressively (lunging, growling, snarling) a conversation will immediately take place with the owner to discuss the pet’s behavior.
- The owner will be informed that if the aggressive behavior continues, they will have to find an alternate location for the pet.

- If the owner is non-cooperative, the staff member will inform them that Homes First can no longer serve their pet and that an alternate location must be found immediately.
- Staff will assist with helping the clients find alternate locations.

Pet Bites:

- If a pet bites a staff person, another resident, a volunteer, a visitor, or a contractor, the pet must leave the shelter. The pet owner is responsible for making arrangements for the pet.
- Staff will immediately call Toronto Public Health to report the incident (at 416-338-7600 dial option 1; after hours, staff will immediately call 311 to report the incident).
- Toronto Animal Services can be contacted directly at 416-338-7297.
- Staff will assess the situation and encourage and/or arrange for medical care for the person who has been bitten; the person might be required to go to the hospital, to see the family doctor, to go to a walk-in clinic and/or Homes First staff will call an ambulance depending on the severity of the bite.
- Please note, any Homes First staff who has been bitten must request the doctor complete a WSIB form which needs to be submitted to Homes First along with the incident report.

Abandoned Pets:

- Pet's that have been abandoned must be immediately reported to the Shelter Supervisor and be monitored by staff for 24 hours. After the 24 hours, the pet must be surrendered to Toronto Animal Services or other approved animal service agency. (Please note that Animal Services does not pick up pets, the pet needs to be brought to one of their shelters.)
- Homes First Society staff will make every reasonable effort to contact adoption/rescue services to advocate for abandoned pets.

Definition of Animal Cruelty:

- Animal cruelty falls into two categories: neglect or deliberate cruelty.
 - **Neglect:** is the failure to provide adequate water, food, care, and shelter. Examples of neglect include: starvation, dehydration, inadequate shelter, parasite infestation, failure to provide veterinary care when the pet is in need of medical attention, allowing a collar to grow into an animal's skin, confinement without light, ventilation, space, or in unsanitary conditions; and failure to trim nails resulting in extreme growth.

- **Intentional cruelty:** involves deliberate physical harm or injury inflicted on an animal. Examples include: wounds on the body, patches of missing hair, extremely thin, starving pet, animals with ribs or backbone protruding, limping, burned, poisoned, or stabbed.

Animal Cruelty:

- If a client is seen physically abusing a pet, the staff are to intervene immediately and inform the resident that the behaviour is not acceptable.
- If the abuse is severe, the staff and/or shelter supervisor are required to report it to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and/or Toronto Animal Services.
- If staff suspect a client is neglecting their pet, the staff will immediately discuss the concerns with the client and remind them of the guidelines they agreed to in the “Pet Agreement Form” they signed. Staff will inform the client that they will be put on a pet observation contract that involves the monitoring of care for the animal. If the monitoring determines that the owner(s) is not providing proper care for the animal, staff will advise the shelter supervisor, who will assess and determine if a call to the Ontario SPCA and/or Toronto Animal Services is necessary.
- **Note:**
 - If an owner fails to make the required changes, Ontario SPCA and/or Toronto Animal Services investigators can remove the animal to ensure they receive the necessary care. In cases where the owner no longer wants responsibility for the animal, the owner may surrender ownership to the Ontario SPCA or Toronto Animal Services or an affiliated Humane Society. In more severe cases, circumstances may require the Ontario SPCA or Toronto Animal Services or an affiliated Humane Society, or other law enforcement authority to remove the animal(s) immediately to provide urgent medical care.

Any legislation regarding pets and/or service animals supersedes this policy in-part or in its entirety.

Additional Information:

- Toronto Animal Services Hotline: 416-338-7297.
- Website:
<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=8a4b11044c0f0410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

Please call the animal shelter before transporting an animal, as they are not always able to take additional animals.

- Toronto Animal Services 416-338-6668
 - South Shelter
140 Princes' Blvd, Toronto, ON M6K 3C3
Hours of Operation: Monday-Sunday: 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
 - North Shelter and Spay Neuter Clinic
1300 Sheppard Ave W, North York, ON M3K 2A6
Hours of Operation: Monday-Sunday: 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
(Spay Neuter Clinic 416- 338-6281)
 - East Shelter
821 Progress Ave, Scarborough, ON M1H 2X4
Hours of Operation: Monday-Sunday: 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
 - West Shelter
146 The East Mall, Etobicoke, ON M8Z 5V5
- Toronto Humane Society (416) 392-2273
 - 11 River St, Toronto, ON M5A 4C2
Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday: 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Etobicoke Humane Society (416) 249-6100
 - 67 Six Point Road, Etobicoke ON M8Z 2X3
Hours of Operation: Monday-Sunday: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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- Created on October 26, 2016.
 - To be reviewed by HFS Management Team on an annual basis or as needed.
 - This Policy applies to all Homes First Society Shelters, staff, clients, and pets.



Everyone needs a home

Administrative Office
90 Shuter Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5B 2K6
Fax: (416) 214-1873

HFS Shelters' Pet Care Contract Form

The pet owner must initial to indicate agreement with the terms.

Table with 2 columns and 9 rows containing pet care terms and conditions.

Registered Canadian Charitable Registration No. 118962182 RR



<p>10. If a dog shows any aggression towards people and/or other animals, it must be kept muzzled. The aggressive behaviour will be discussed with the owner.</p>	
<p>11. Pet owners must ensure that their pets do not cause a nuisance to others. Any pet owner who allows their pets to disturb or frighten others will be asked to leave. If a pet bites or scratches a person while at Homes First, that pet will no longer be able to stay.</p>	
<p>12. If a pet is excessively noisy, this will be discussed with the owner. The owner will be encouraged to consult a veterinarian for advice. The pet may be required to be relocated.</p>	
<p>13. If a pet is being neglected, mistreated, or remains locked in a cage for over 4 hours during daytime hours, the staff will discuss the matter with the owner. After discussion, appropriate options will be given. Homes First will not tolerate refusal by any pet owner to care for their pets and will take advice from the appropriate authority. In cases of neglect or maltreatment, the management will contact the Toronto Humane Society and/or the Toronto Animal Services to report the incident(s) and to surrender the pet(s).</p>	
<p>14. If a pet is sick and you are unable to provide adequate care for the pet, you will be encouraged to contact the Toronto Humane Society or the Toronto Animal Services. If the pet's health deteriorates to a point where there are health and/or safety concerns, and you are unable or unwilling to take the animal to a veterinarian for care, you will be informed that in the best interests of the animal's welfare, you must transport the pet to the Toronto Animal Services or the Toronto Humane Society.</p>	
<p>15. All pet owners must clean up after their pets. All pet owners walking their pet(s) are responsible for immediately cleaning up after their animal and discarding as appropriate.</p>	
<p>16. All pet owners must feed their pets using bowls and utensils specifically designated for that purpose. Pet owners have the sole responsibility for feeding and watering pet(s) and will not be entitled to extra human food for the pet(s).</p>	
<p>17. Pets may not be given away or sold within the building.</p>	
<p>18. Pet breeding is not permitted on the premises. If a pet is pregnant, the owner must make arrangements to have the pet transported to Toronto Animal Services or the Toronto Humane Society or make alternate arrangements <u>within 48 hours</u> for the pet who is pregnant.</p>	
<p>19. If you leave the Shelter, you must take your pet with you.</p>	
<p>20. If you abandon your pet for a period of 24 hours, the staff will make arrangements for the animal to be surrendered to Toronto Animal Services and/or the Toronto Humane Society.</p>	

21. Pets must be removed from the cage area during posted required hours at each shelter, to allow the area to be cleaned.	
22. The pet owner is responsible for the care and maintenance of their animal(s) and also for the daily cleaning of their cage(s).	
23. The cage(s) are not for the storage of personal belongings. There is a strict two-bag limit that is enforced at all times and any personal belongings found in a cage will be disposed of.	
24. You, as a pet owner, agree to indemnify Homes First Society, its staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers, and hold it harmless against loss or liability of any kind arising from your pet(s)'s including injury, loss, and theft of the pet(s).	

 Pet owner's name (please print)

 Pet owner's signature

 Name of pet(s)

 Date

 Staff's name (please print)

 Staff's signature



Everyone needs a home

Administrative Office
90 Shuter Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5B 2K6
Fax: (416) 214-1873

HFS Shelter Pet Intake Form

We cannot admit a pet that does not have a license.

Client's Name: _____

Pet's Name: _____

How long have you had this pet: _____

Pet's Breed/Type of Animal: _____

Where did you get this pet: _____

Pet's age: _____ Female: _____ Male: _____

Neutered/Spayed: _____ License #: _____

Vaccinations: _____

Current Vet: _____

Vet's Contact Info: _____

Pet's Medical Information:

Has the pet been diagnosed with any medical condition? If yes, please describe: _____

If yes, has the pet received treatment: _____ Does your pet have allergies: _____

Do you use a regular flea/tick preventative on your pet: _____

Registered Canadian Charitable Registration No. 118962182 RR



United Way
Member Agency

Pet's Behaviour:

Meeting with and/or interacting with another pet:

Calm: ___ Happy: ___ Timid: ___ Fearful: ___ Aggressive: ___ Unknown/Varies: ___

Meeting with and/or interacting with strangers:

Calm: ___ Happy: ___ Timid: ___ Fearful: ___ Aggressive: ___ Unknown/Varies: ___

Has your pet ever bitten a person: _____ If yes, please explain: _____

Has your pet been bitten or attacked by another pet: _____

Does your dog protect his or her food or toys: _____

What makes your pet anxious or stressed: _____

Has Toronto Animal Services ever issued a "Muzzle Order" for your dog: _____

Notes to Staff:

- If any pet is described as aggressive, bring this to the attention of management. Based on individual situations, service might be denied.
- If a dog has a "Muzzle Order" from Animal Services, the owner must ensure the dog is muzzled at all times while in common areas. Muzzle Orders are enforced when a dog has bitten in the past (people or other animals). The denying of service and discharge will take place if the dog owner does not abide by this order.

Staff Only Section

Date:

Staff Signature:



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Fax: (416) 214-1873

HFS Shelters' Pet Care Release and Agreement Form

I _____ have read and fully understand the Pet Policy and acknowledge that I will comply with all of its terms and conditions.

In addition, I hereby release and forever discharge Homes First Society, their directors, officers, agents, volunteers, and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, suits, debts, dues, accounts, claims, and demands whatsoever which I have, may or will have now and, has of which my heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns of any of them, can shall, or may have for or by reasons of caring for the pet on this effective date _____ to _____.

AND

For the said consideration, further agree not to make claim or take any proceedings with respect to said claim against any other person or corporation what may claim contribution or indemnity from Homes First Society.

This release and agreement form has been explained to and read by me, and I understand its terms.

Pet owner's name (please print)

Pet owner's signature

Emergency Contact Number

Date

Staff's name (please print)

Staff's signature

Registered Canadian Charitable Registration No. 118962182 RR

