



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the Humane Society? Are you a government agency?**

The Warren County Humane Society has provided animal control since 1930. We pick up all stray dogs, and house stray, injured and/or abused animals in need of shelter, food, and medical care. Our state-licensed cruelty officer enforces the state's animal cruelty and neglect laws. We receive more than 150 such complaints each year. We also provide pet care and education materials to the public. The Humane Society is a private, non-profit organization. We receive a small percentage of our operating budget from the townships, the County, and the City. The amount of these funds varies, and is subject to change. Our Board of Directors sets policies and raises funds for operations. Our adoptions, fundraisers, and donations help make our services available to the community.

### **Are dogs and cats given to the Humane Society because of medical or behavioral problems?**

No. Many of the dogs and cats are strays, and owners often reclaim their pets. If they have ID tags, we contact the owners. Any animal—owned or stray—can have medical or behavioral issues. All dogs at the shelter are temperament-tested for aggression before being placed for adoption. We also evaluate cats for temperament, but it's not a formal process. Medical issues are evaluated and handled according to the severity of the problem and the cost involved.

### **How do I know I'm not getting a problem dog or cat from the Humane Society?**

Despite our years of experience, we don't always know how an animal will respond to a new home until it gets there. While we evaluate the animal at the shelter in our setting, we go one step further with our "Home Visit," and allow you to take the pet into your home for 12 days to evaluate the animal in your family setting. Only when everyone is satisfied, is the adoption finalized.

### **Are you a "no-kill" shelter?**

We are an "open admission" shelter, taking in all strays and never refusing an animal in need. A "no-kill" shelter takes only selected, adoptable animals--usually from a city pound. Many no-kill shelters are near an open admission shelter that handles difficult and dangerous animals. We do not euthanize adoptable animals, and there is no limit on how long animals can stay with us. All adoptable animals are kept until adopted. This policy is the same as a no-kill shelter. Many animals have spent almost a year in our shelter before finding the right family. However, we receive many terribly abused and thus vicious and aggressive animals at our shelter, animals that would be dangerous to a family. We do our best for every animal brought to our care. If the decision must be made to euthanize, the animal is treated humanely and with respect. If you are concerned that too many animals are euthanized at shelters, do your part to prevent animal abuse, encourage spaying and neutering, and promote adoption as an option.

**How many animals are adopted from your shelter?**

We measure our success by permanent homes, and that isn't always reflected in actual adoption figures. The numbers are not as important as placing the right pet in the best situation. If we get five aggressive, dangerous dogs and five friendly dogs, we will adopt out five dogs, not ten. Our adoptions, fall between the National averages of 25-35% of animals received are adopted. The Humane Society is committed to adopting out every adoptable pet.

**Why do I have to fill out an information form and wait for the pet I want? With all the animals looking for homes, can't I just take the pet home today? Is it true you refuse some people?**

We want our animals to have every opportunity for a forever home. We know our pets and matching them to your situation is our job, a job we take seriously. As with any business, we have policies and procedures. We're aware that our procedures don't satisfy everyone, but our first obligation is the welfare of the animals. That's why we spend time and talk the family members who will be responsible for the new pet. The information form and waiting period give you an opportunity to think with your head as well as your heart. The waiting period also allows us to prepare the pet for the Home Visit. Shots are updated, the animal is bathed, and a travel bag is packed. If a person is refused, it's for a reason based on our policies. Perhaps the landlord said "no," veterinary information on other household pets wasn't provided, family members couldn't agree on which pet they wanted, or the new pet wasn't compatible children or with another pet in the home. Sometimes other people are interested in the same pet and may have a more suitable situation. If you get a pet from the newspaper, a friend, or a breeder, you may have to cover the shots, de-worming, and, of course, spaying or neutering to avoid unwanted litters. We do all that--and more. We help you through the introduction to the home and other pets, offer free use of a crate, educational information, and moral support. With over 25 years of combined experience, our staff works to give you a healthy, well-adjusted pet. Our adoption success rate over the years confirms that these procedures work best for the animals.

**I have a pet I can't keep or find a home for. Will you take it?**

Yes. We don't refuse a pet from an owner unless it has serious medical issues better handled by a veterinarian. But we do accept all animals with the understanding that our staff makes the final determination as to whether or not a pet is adoptable. You will be charged a relinquishment fee for your pet to cover some of the initial costs of the pet's shelter stay. Boarding and health care costs add up quickly. Our animals consume 300 pounds of food each week.

**If I find a stray and bring it to you, will you charge me a fee, and can you tell me what happens to it?**

There is no fee for a stray. We do not release information about what happens to the animal. Our policy is set for the interests and welfare of the staff and the animals. When an animal comes to us, it becomes our responsibility and we do what is best for each one.

**Your shelter hours conflict with my work schedule, what are my alternatives?**

We're available by phone, and have a well trained staff to help. We also have a wealth of information on our website ([www.warrenhumanesociety.org](http://www.warrenhumanesociety.org)). Adoptions must be done in person. We are open on Saturdays, and make appointments after hours, if necessary. Our staff spends the morning hours cleaning, feeding and taking care of the animals. Afternoons are open for the public to visit.

