Grassroots Lifesaving for Citizens Protocol

Definitions

> Government-funded shelter: a shelter that is funded entirely or partly by the local county or city government and is charged with keeping the public safe from animals as their primary purpose.

Purpose

Shelter Pet Lifesaving is a community ethic and sometimes shelters don't have all the resources they need to implement plans that allow them to save the most lives. Covid 19 has caused public concern and in some cases, shelter shutdowns, which could lead to the unnecessary death and killing of shelter pets. Community members are the most valuable asset to a shelter and can greatly impact lives saved if a shelter is shut down.

Procedure & Metrics

If your community shelter is at risk of being shut down and is not prepared to empty the shelter through foster and adoption

- Meet with the leaders of your local government-funded shelter to offer your support and the readiness checklist resource for implementation immediately (before a shut down), Here is a video you can show them.
- Email/call/meet with elected officials to make it known that:

a.   Your community expects shelter pets' lives to be saved

b.   It is critical that the government funded shelter is prepared by emptying the shelter population into foster homes, enacting the NACA guidelines, and allowing shelter employees do virtual adoptions/foster placements after a shutdown

c.   Share the AmPA! Shelter Preparedness Handbook and Checklist as a resource

- Meet with local nonprofit shelters and rescue groups to urge the same shelter preparedness so that they can help the government funded shelter to save lives if necessary. Urge them not to shut down.
- If the government funded shelter still is not ready for a shutdown, start a foster sign up campaign yourself. This can be built up even if the shelter is not necessarily equipped to do it themselves.
  - . Challenge your community, through Nextdoor.com and local media, to sign up to save at least number of lives by filling out an application and being ready to act if disaster strikes
  - a. You can use google forms, for free, to have people sign up and enter all the information necessary in the foster application.
  - b. If your shelter doesn't have the resources to manage a new foster base, offer to help the shelter keep track of where animals are and how they are doing (google spreadsheets are just fine for this!) Make sure your elected officials know you are willing to do this.
  - c. Serve as a foster mentor to help new fosters care for their new foster pets by answering questions on basic husbandry and general precautions so pets aren't lost or put into situations that might result in a bite or scratch (can start a fb page!)
  - d. Create a transport group of volunteers who can help move pets from the shelter to foster homes
  - e. Start writing foster protocols now - hint you can find many of these online

- Do a press release asking your local media to run a story on how other cities' shelters are getting prepared which will hopefully inspire your local shelters to do the same (Norfolk, Dallas, Austin, Williamson County (TX), Kansas City, etc)
- Start a petition using change.org to gain support for getting the local shelter to become prepared and act quickly if a closure is forced.
- Keep at it until someone listens. Often things don't change at the first ask and so a community member's interest and strong will to create change is just as important as the ask itself. Make calls every day until it happens.

AmPA! has virtual support services available for each of these protocols in the AmPA! COVID-19 Animal Shelter Preparedness Guide. For custom support or guidance on any of these protocols, or how to implement for your organization, contact us here and include "COVID-19 Support" in the message.