

ETHICAL NO-KILL PHILOSOPHY FAQs

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF “NO-KILL”?

There is no universally accepted definition for the term “no-kill.” However, it’s important to understand that “no-kill” does not mean no euthanasia. Some organizations define “no-kill” as a 90 percent live-release rate while others use less stringent standards. Generally, a no-kill shelter typically does not euthanize animals who can be adopted or when the shelter is full, reserving euthanasia for animals who are terminally ill or deemed dangerous.

DO NO-KILL ORGANIZATIONS TAKE IN ALL ANIMALS?

Most no-kill organizations limit their intake to only the healthiest animals. AHS is a modern, managed admissions shelter in which we serve the Valley’s most vulnerable pets — the sick, injured and abused - and manage the care of our pets while adhering to the best standards of care for them. If space is not available at our shelter, we will delay intake of healthy animals and schedule appointments, however we always fast-track sick and injured pets into our trauma hospital. And, we do our best to help people keep their pets by providing critical resources.

WHAT IS AHS’ ETHICAL NO-KILL PHILOSOPHY?

AHS developed an “Ethical No-Kill” Philosophy, meaning we never euthanize a pet for space or length of time. Because we care for the most vulnerable animals in the Valley - the sick, injured and abused, who are often turned away by other shelters, sometimes we have to make the compassionate decision to euthanize an animal who is terminally ill, suffering from a severe medical condition or deemed too dangerous. In these instances, we are confident the typical pet owner would make the same decision. Staying true to our mission, we never turn away an animal who is suffering, sick or injured. For healthy pets we schedule an appointment. And, we do our best to help people keep their pets by providing critical resources. We are committed to ending animal suffering, homelessness and needless euthanasia.

IN THE STATEMENT WHICH REFERS TO ANIMALS BEING EUTHANIZED FOR SEVERE MEDICAL CONDITIONS. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Each animal is different. Each case is different. At AHS, we treat severe conditions, such as many of the traumas that enter our trauma hospital, on a daily basis. Our veterinarians will first prepare a specific medical plan to determine the severity of a pet’s injury or medical condition and will assess the ability to treat the condition. Once tests are performed, if it is found that the pet’s medical condition is unable to be regulated despite medical attention or the pet would continue to be in pain and have a poor quality of life, the pet would be euthanized. A variety of factors are taken into account, such as number of other health conditions, likelihood of recovery, quality of life and behavior status making each case unique. **Examples include:** *Pets diagnosed with cancer, pets with kidney failure, pets with multiple traumatic injuries, such as fractures in several limbs where treatment of one fracture is not possible due to fractures in another area.*

IN THE STATEMENT WHICH REFERS TO ANIMALS BEING EUTHANIZED IF THEY ARE DEEMED TOO DANGEROUS. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Our Behavior Team works with our dogs and cats to provide enrichment and socialization opportunities that help make every interaction, every day, as positive as it can be. In addition, our trained behavior specialists work with dogs and cats who enter the shelter fearful, shy, lacking basic manners or with other behavior challenges that make finding a loving home difficult; however, if we find that a pet is highly aggressive and a danger to the public or other animals than we would make the compassionate decision to euthanize them.

Every Pet Deserves A Good Life

