



Standard Operating Procedures

Burke County Animal Services

425 Kirksey Drive
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 438-5465

Public Hours of Operation

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 10:00am – 7:00pm

Wednesday: 10:00am-4:00pm

Thursday: 10:00am-7:00pm

Friday: 10:00am-4:00pm

Saturday: 10:00am-4:00pm

Sunday: Closed

Staff Hours of Operation

Monday: 8:00am-12:00pm

Tuesday: 8:00am-7:00pm

Wednesday: 8:00am-4:00pm

Thursday: 8:00am-7:00pm

Friday: 8:00am-4:00pm

Saturday: 8:00am-4:00pm

Sunday: Sunday Feeding Hours Vary

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Burke County Animal Services (“BCAS”) will comply with the NC Animal Welfare Act (N.C. General Statute §19A) (“AWA”) and its associated rules and regulations found in the NC Administrative Code (02 NCAC 52J) (“NCAC”) and all other applicable statutes. In the event there appears to be a conflict in the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures for Burke County Animal Services contained in this manual with the NC AWA and NCAC, the state statutes and regulations will take precedence.

Dress Code

All staff and volunteers shall maintain good personal hygiene and present a clean, well-groomed appearance. All assigned articles of clothing shall be clean, neatly pressed and shall fit properly. Staff and volunteers that work directly with animals shall not wear any dangling earrings, necklaces, or any other item that may get caught or snagged by an animal or otherwise present a safety hazard. Staff and volunteers shall dress safely and appropriately. Items listed below are strictly prohibited.

- Open Toed Shoes

- Clothing that shows undergarments or that is suggestive

- Excessively baggy clothing

- Inappropriate clothing, lettering on clothing, or offensive jewelry or other accessories.

Holiday Schedule/Inclement Weather

Burke County observes 12 holidays. An employee will be scheduled to clean and feed on these holidays. In the event of inclement weather, staff will receive phone calls letting you know that offices are closed or delayed. If the Animal Services Center is closed, the shelter director will be in charge of having a staff member coming in to clean and feed.

Telephone Use

Telephone etiquette is important for establishing good community relations. Telephones at the shelter should be primarily used for business calls. Any personal calls made or received should be infrequent and brief. This also includes cell phones. All incoming calls will be answered in a pleasant manner. Only BCAS employees can answer and field phone calls.

Social Media

Social media is controlled by the Animal Services Director and the Animal Services Coordinator. No other employees or volunteers shall have access to operations on social media sites. No animals shall be posted to social media without permission from the Animal Services Staff. Some animals may be under investigation and are not allowed to have their photos on social media sites.

Intake Procedures

Burke County Animal Services will be operated as a managed intake facility. The shelter is designed to accommodate stray, homeless, and emergency animals including injured animals as well as animals that are a danger to the public or that are in observance of rabies. In the event an owner needs to surrender their pet, the owners will be referred to county rescues and/or added to a waitlist for drop off with a shelter staff member. If there is space in the shelter and there are no pending surrenders scheduled, the pet may be surrendered at that point.

A photo ID will be required for all animals being brought to the shelter by the public. Owners bringing the animals will be required to sign an animal release form. The date and the time the animal was brought into the shelter will also be documented. If the animal is an owner surrender, the owner must provide proof of ownership. This can consist of a photographic timeline, bill of sale, pedigree, or medical records. If an owner cannot provide any proof of ownership, the animal will be marked as a stray and have to complete a mandatory 72-hour stray hold.

All staff members are responsible for intakes. The staff member who is responsible for the intake will also be responsible for entering all information into their file. This will include, age, breed, sex, color, reproductive status, and bite history. If the animal is an owner surrender more information may be gathered from the owner about temperament and medical history. A preliminary observation needs to be performed and documented in the animals' record. Every animal must be scanned for a microchipped. If a microchip is present, the number must be documented on the animal's intake sheet. If there is no microchip, this information also needs to be documented on the intake sheet. The pet must also be weighed before entering the kennels, this will also need to be documented on the intake sheet.

If a stray is brought in with identification, the staff member responsible for the intake of that animal will make every reasonable effort to contact the owner for the pet to be reclaimed. No action to dispose of the animal or place the animal up for adoption will be taken while trying to locate the animal's owner during the mandatory 72 hour stray hold. Exception: If the animal is severely injured or ill and it is determined by the shelter director in writing that keeping the animal alive would cause more suffering than humane euthanasia may be elected. All efforts to contact an owner will be made prior to making this decision.

Any animals arriving at the shelter after a reported bite shall be placed under bite quarantine. Animals housed under bite quarantine will be housed for a 10-day period starting the day of the initial bite. Upon leaving the shelter, the owner must pay in full for the quarantine boarding fee. The owner of the animal must plan to retrieve the animal at the end of the quarantine period. Any additional charges for the animal, such as vet bills or immunizations, must be paid before the animal is released. Should the owner not retrieve the animal within 24 hours of the end of the quarantine period, the animal will be treated as a stray and be made available to the general public or euthanized at the end of the 72-hour holding period.

An aggressive animal must be held for 72 hours unless at least one of the two conditions are met:

- 1) The animal is seriously ill or injured and the shelter manager determines and documents in writing that it is appropriate to euthanize the animal due to this condition; or
- 2) The animal has been surrendered by the owner who has provided proof of ownership and has given written consent for the early disposition.

After the 72-hour hold period an aggressive animal may be euthanized without being offered for adoption if the director of the shelter finds the animal to be unadoptable.

Animal Receiving

All animals arriving shall be placed in clean and disinfected holding kennels or cages. Dogs and Cats shall not be housed in the same room. Intact animals of opposite gender and that are of sexual maturity shall not be housed together.

All animals entering the facility shall be processed as follows:

- Microchip Scan
- Weight
- Gender Identified
- Approximate Age
- Breed
- Colors/Markings
- Unique Features
- Name
- Photograph

Animal is moved into a holding kennel until an intake health exam can be performed and vaccines can be administered. Animals should not stay more than 1 hour in the holding kennel.

Animals that may injure the handler upon arrival may be given 24 hours to acclimate before completing the intake process. These animals may be housed with the general population unless there is evidence of disease. They are not to be housed with any other animals.

Animals are then entered into Shelter Pro and a cage card is printed for their kennel.

Primary Enclosures

Enclosures must be structurally sound and maintained in safe, working condition to properly confine animals, prevent injury, keep other animals out and enable animals to remain dry and clean. There are no sharp edges, gaps or other defects that could cause an injury or trap a limb or other body part. There are secure latches or other secure closing devices.

Enclosures must provide enough space to allow each animal, regardless of species, to make normal postural adjustments (e.g. turn freely, easily stand, sit, stretch and move their head without touching top of the enclosure). Animals can lie in a comfortable position with limbs extended, move about and assume a comfortable posture for feeding, drinking, urinating and defecating.

The size of each primary enclosure is enough to meet the physical and behavioral parameters described in the AWA and NCAC.

Food and water bowls are provided. Animals can sit, sleep and eat away from areas of their enclosures where they defecate and urinate. Cats must have litter boxes large enough to comfortably accommodate their entire body.

As the length of stay increases (beyond 1-2 weeks), mentally and physically stimulating spaces are provided.

Animals who are housed long-term have opportunities to hide, play, rest, feed and eliminate. Outdoor spaces are suitably enclosed.

All animal areas have non-porous surfaces that can be easily disinfected and are durable enough to withstand repeated cleanings – especially important in areas where puppies, kittens and animals who are infectious or newly admitted are housed.

Disposition of Animals

Animals brought to Burke County Animal Services leave in one of four ways,

1. Adoption
2. Returned to Owner
3. Transferred to Rescue
4. Euthanasia

The descriptions of stray animals brought to the shelter by persons, or traps, are cross-checked with any lost animal reports. If a possible match has been made, potential owners will be promptly notified of the process involved for the release of the animal. Care should be taken in exploring possible matches to evaluate the distance between the place of disappearance and the location where the animal was found against the time missing. Potential owners should be advised they will be required to provide proof of ownership (pictures, vet records etc.) should the distance be unreasonable under normal circumstances. Repeat offenders will be counseled on appropriate methods of restraint as well as neutering services. The owner will always be advised of the Animal Control Ordinance requiring a rabies tag to be affixed to the animal.

Stray animals brought to the shelter will be made available for adoption after the mandatory 72 hour holding period. Owner surrenders will be made available immediately given proof of ownership has been provided and that the owner has consented to early disposition of the animal. All adoptable animals must be held for a minimum of 5 days if space permits.

Owners who are reclaiming their pets that have been able to provide proof of ownership and proof of a current rabies vaccine will be allowed to take their pet if proper fees are paid. Fees are as follows...

- Bite Quarantine Boarding: \$8.00/night
- Regular Boarding: \$5.00/night
- Rabies Vaccine: \$10.00

All citations and veterinary medical fees will also need to be paid at the time of pick up. Owners of animals brought in by the City of Morganton and Valdese will need to pay their citations at the respectful police department and bring proof of payment before reclaiming.

Animals deemed inappropriate for adoption due to age, medical condition or space limitations may be transferred to approved rescue groups for placement in a home environment. Animals who have been at the shelter and who we have not been successful in getting adopted are also candidates for rescue. If an animal is transferred to a rescue for fostering prior to the end of the 72 hour hold period, the location of the transfer must be noted in the animal's record and a photograph of at least the head and face of the animal must be posted until the animal's final disposition.

When deemed necessary for medical, behavioral, or space reasons, animals may be euthanized. Unweaned, critically ill, or seriously injured domestic animals may be euthanized prior to conclusion of the holding period to prevent additional suffering. Contact will be made with the approved rescue groups to see if they would like to rescue these animals prior to euthanasia. If an animal requires

euthanasia prior to the 72-hour holding period, it will be approved by the BCAS Director. Euthanasia must be performed in compliance with the AWA and NCAC. The reasons for the shelter director's determination for euthanasia prior to the 72-hour holding period must be documented in writing.

If a rescue is offered the opportunity to take an injured/ill animal, the shelter must provide full written disclosure of the medical condition of the animal. The rescue also must be able and willing to provide adequate veterinary care for this animal. Diseased or deformed animals can only be adopted in accordance with the BCAS Program of Veterinary Care as required by the AWA.

Adoptions and Adoption Procedures

Guidelines for adoption procedures and the handling of adoption applications ensure that potential adopters are given an equal opportunity to adopt from Burke County Animal Services. Burke County Animal Services employees are responsible for adhering to adoption procedures. Staff should be readily available to answer any questions the public might have. Staff will interact in a positive and forthright manner with individuals seeking information or wishing to dialogue about any animal. Our attention to the needs of our public will generate returns for our animals to get adopted.

Animals with treatable/manageable medical and behavioral conditions and/or deformities may be adopted out to the public or transferred to an approved rescue with full written disclosure to the adopter. Any diagnosis from a veterinarian and/or treatment rendered while in the care of BCAS will be given to the adopter or rescue group as well.

Adoption fees are \$125 per animal and this covers a spay/neuter and a rabies vaccine. Animals under 4 months of age may leave the facility prior to alteration. An appointment will be made by BCAS staff and a follow up will be made to be sure the animal has been altered. All other animals are required to stay at the shelter until a spay or neuter appointment can be made. The animal will be transported to the veterinary hospital the morning of the surgery and the new adoptive owner is responsible for picking the animal up.

An adoption contract will be filled out by the owner. We will need to obtain a government issued ID and the adopter must be 18 years of age. The contract comes with a voucher for spay/neuter and a rabies vaccine for animals under 4 months of age or younger. A spay or neuter appointment will be scheduled when the animal is 4 months or older. The owner is responsible for taking the animal to the appointment. Animals 4 months and older are held until the earliest available appointment for a spay or neuter.

Once an animal has been adopted, the owner becomes the legal owner of that animal. There will be no refunds issued.

Fostering

Fostering is allowed through the shelter. Animals may be fostered through their 72-hour stray hold. A picture must be displayed in the front common area and if an owner comes to reclaim then the foster must return the animal in a timely manner or they could be charged with obtaining property by false pretense.

Foster-to-adopt allows potential adopters to see if they are going to be a compatible match. Potential adopters will be allowed to foster for 72 hours to see if the animal will be a good fit. Extensions may be granted by staff on a case by case basis.

Fosters must be 18 years of age. They must fill out a foster application and provide a government issued ID. The fosters may be provided with necessary items to care for the animal during the foster period if the center has items available. This includes, food and litter, bowls, litter pans, blankets, crates, leashes, harnesses, and collars. These are expected to be returned with the animal or at the time of adoption.

Fosters will be provided with emergency contact numbers in the event of an emergency with the animal after hours. Fosters must contact a Burke County Animal Services employee before seeking veterinary treatment.

Staff members are to follow up every 72 hours an animal is in foster care.

Rescue Groups

The BCAS Director may choose to release/adopt suitable animals to rescue groups. These groups will be approved after checking that all documentation has been turned in. The following documentation is required before a group can take/adopt any animals:

- A copy of the group's 501(c) 3 registration.
- A list of up to 5 persons authorized to transfer or adopt animals on behalf of your group along with a copy of each person's driver's license or photo ID card. (This list may be altered by the founder of the rescue at any time by email.)
- 3 letters of recommendation including a veterinary reference and a shelter you currently pull from.
- A current email address.
- Complete, sign and return the Rescue Agreement.

The BCAS Director will designate a rescue group coordinator who will serve as a liaison between BCAS and all rescue groups. BCAS is committed to working with all approved rescue groups to find homes for its animals.

All animals made available for adoption through BCAS will be held a minimum of 5 days with space permitting. Adoptions to the general public will take precedence over transferring the animal to an approved rescue.

BCAS will be allowed to transfer animals with medical needs and animals that BCAS has been unable to adopt into their care.

Rescues transfers will be on a first come first serve basis. If a rescue is interested in transferring an animal into their care after their holding period they must notify the rescue group coordinator by email. This is for documentation purposes.

Veterinary Medical Care Program

Veterinarian: Dr. Clarence Dunning

Practice: Medicine Man Veterinary Hospital, PLLC

1001 East Union St.

Morganton, NC 28655

Phone: (828) 475-0287

This protocol will cover care that animals receive on intake into the shelter as well as common conditions animals may encounter during their stay at the shelter. Each animal is observed on a case by case basis, but these protocols must be followed. If at any point the animal is determined to be too sick for treatment with the protocols developed, it will be transported to a veterinarian for further treatment or humanely euthanized. If at any point during their treatment the animal is deteriorating or not improving, they will be transported to a veterinarian for further treatment or humanely euthanized.

Intake Protocol:

These are treatments rendered when the animal enters the shelter before being placed within the general population of animals. If it is determined that the animal is too sick to receive vaccines or any other preventative medicine, they will be placed in an isolation kennel (if available) or transported to a veterinarian for treatment. Animals on bite holds will not receive any intake care during their 10-day quarantine period (unless approved by a veterinarian), but rather be placed in an isolation kennel for observation.

Cats Intake Protocol:

- Intake Health Observation (Initial Exam)
- FVRCP – SQ Right Shoulder (must be 4 weeks of age or older)
- Flea Control (must be old enough for package dosing recommendation)
- Dewormer

After 72 Hour hold:

- Rabies Vaccine
- Cats/Kittens will be given a FVRCP booster after 2 weeks
- Cats/Kittens will be dosed with flea control according to the recommended package dosing

Dogs Intake Protocol:

- Intake Health Observation (Initial Exam)
- DHPP (must be 4 weeks of age or older)
- Bordetella (must be 4 weeks of age or older)
- Flea/Tick Control (must be old enough for package dosing recommendation)
- Dewormer

After 72 Hour Hold:

- Rabies Vaccine
- Dogs/Puppies will be given a DHPP booster after 2 weeks
- Dogs/Puppies will be dosed with flea control according to the recommended package dosing
- Dogs over 6 months of age will be heartworm tested. If they are negative, they will be started on prevention.

****All of the items will be logged into the animal's chart.**

When an animal is adopted an appointment will be made with one of our veterinary offices (whoever has the first available appointment) and the animal will be transported to the veterinary hospital on the day of the surgery. If the animal is under 4 months of age, they may be adopted prior to be altered. An appointment will be scheduled once they are old enough and a follow-up will be done by shelter staff to be sure the animal has been altered.

If there is a pregnant female in our care and no rescue can pull the animal, the shelter director may schedule an appointment with a veterinarian to assess gestational age and if termination of pregnancy is appropriate.

Conditions to Treat at Shelter:

If at any time the severity of the animal's condition is questionable or if the animal is not responding to treatment, then the animal will be transported to the veterinary hospital for further treatment or humanely euthanized. If we have an animal in our care who is not improving with the protocols put in place, we are to notify our overseeing veterinarian for advice or to make an appointment. If the animal is deteriorating and suffering it may be humanely euthanized.

Flea Allergy Dermatitis –

Animals exhibiting signs of FAD which may include, but not limited to fleas and flea dirt present, alopecia generally located on the lower half of their bodies, excessive chewing and scratching, erythematous skin and sometimes open sores from scratching, may be treated the following way.

- Bath in soothing shampoo (if needed)
- Once dry, apply flea control. Oral flea medication is best if regular baths are needed
- If skin appears infected Cephalexin may be dosed for dogs at 22mg/kg BID.

Demodex –

Demodex needs to be observed by microscopic evaluation of scraping the skin in the affected areas. If demodex is observed, they may be treated in the following way.

- If animals are 6 months of age or older a heartworm test needs to be performed. If negative, they may proceed with treatment.
- Ivermectin dosed at 0.1mL/10# SID of body weight on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or;
- Simparica may also be administered for treatment if Ivermectin is not an option.
- Treatment can be completed when there are no visible lesions for 2 weeks.
- Cephalexin dosed at 22mg/kg BID may be administered if needed.
- Soothing baths may be given if needed
- Benadryl 1mg/1# TID PRN
- Animals need to be offered a higher quality food if available.

Ear Mites

Ear mites may be treated based off of microscopic evaluation. If ear mites are observed, they may be treated as follows.

- Ears need to be cleaned using a mild ear cleaner.
- Ivermectin 0.1mL AU. This needs to be repeated in 2 weeks.
- All animals housed in the same unit that have been exposed will need to be treated.

Upper Respiratory Infection

Signs of upper respiratory infections include but are not limited to ocular or nasal discharge (may be clear or green), sneezing, febrile, inappetence, dehydration. If an animal is experiencing these symptoms they may be treated as follows.

- Strict Isolation and supportive care.
- Clavamox Drops dosed at 1.0mL/10# BID x 7 days.
- May need to extend duration of Clavamox if not completely cleared.
- Triple Ophthalmic (No steroid) may be administer if needed.
- Fluids may be administered SID PRN if dehydrated from inappetence.
- If no improvement, a FeLV/FIV test may need to be ran. If negative, make an appointment with a veterinarian for further treatment. If positive, consider euthanasia.

Kennel Cough

Signs of kennel cough include, but are not limited to harsh cough, febrile, inappetence, coughing up mucus. If an animal is experiencing these symptoms it may be treated as follows.

- Strict isolation and supportive care.
- Doxycycline 5 mg/kg BID x 7 days or 10mg/kg SID x 7 days
- Cough Tabs TID PRN
- If no improvement in 5-7 days an appointment needs to be made for further care.

Ringworm

Signs of ringworm include but not limited to circular, crusty alopecia lesions, excessive scratching. If an animal is showing signs of ringworm they may be treated as follows.

- Isolation. If other animals have been exposed, they need to be treated as well.
- If the animal only has a few lesions they may be treated topically with a copper fungicide SID until lesions are no longer present.
- If the animal has multiple lesions (3 or more) they will need to be treated with itraconazole 3.0mg/kg SID x 15 days. Some animals may have to complete an additional 15 day course.

Acute Vomiting and Diarrhea

Animals showing signs of vomiting and diarrhea need to be treated as follows.

- Isolation and supportive care
- Parvo Test
- Fecal
- Bland Diet
- If vomiting, start a 12 hour fast. If still vomiting add Cerenia 2mg/kg Sid for 5 days.
- Can add Metronidazole 15mg/kg BID x 7 days.
- Consider adding Biosponge (Probiotic)
- Fluids may be administered SID PRN
-

Minor Cuts and Lacerations

Animals with minor cuts or lacerations may be treated as follows.

- If the wound does not appear infected it may be cleaned with dilute chlorhexidine or betadine BID.
- If not improving or needs additional medical treatment an appointment will need to be made

Minor Pain

If an animal is experiencing minor pain due to an injury or if an animal needs pain control prior to other treatments needed (ex. Spay Sx.) they can be dosed as follows.

- Dogs can have carprofen 2.2mg/kg BID
- Cats can have Metacam 0.05mg/kg SID.
- If the animal requires long term management an appointment needs to be made to discuss proper pain management control and long-term dosing options.

Parasites found of Fecal Floatation

If parasites are found on fecal floatation that are controlled with intake dewormer they may be treated as follows.

- Coccidia – Albon: Initial dose of 25mg/# SID x 1 day, then 12.5mg/# SID x 7 days
 - Kittens being batched together need to be dewormed for coccidia regardless of dx
- Giardia – Metronidazole: Dogs - 12mg/kg BID x 8 days
Cats – 17mg/kg (1/3 of tablet) SID x 8 days
- Tapeworms – Interceptor Plus can be used for dogs who are heartworm negative as well as for cats. Cats may also be does with Profender for tapeworm control.

Disease Outbreak

If there is a suspected disease outbreak at the shelter the overseeing vet will be notified. Any changes to the cleaning protocol will be made based off recommendations from our overseeing vet. If the disease cannot be managed, depopulation may need to be elected.

Adoption of Disease or Deformed Animals

Adoption of animals with known disease or deformities may be allowed if the animal is not suffering and provided the adopter can provide a good quality of life for the animal and treatment if needed. These conditions include, but are not limited to, FIV + cats, heartworm + animals, animals with missing limbs, and blind or deaf animals. Any and all medical conditions will be disclosed at the time of adoption along with any medical treatments provided by the shelter. It is encouraged that these adopters follow up with their veterinarian for any additional medical care needed. The shelter may elect to place certain criteria for adoption of such animals. A few examples include FIV + cats must be adopted into indoor only homes and preferably only cat homes or into a home with other FIV + cats. Recommending a fenced in yard for blind or deaf animals. Each case is reviewed on a case by case basis and a veterinarian will be contacted if needed.

Monitoring Daily Rounds

Rounds are conducted at least once every 24 hours by a trained staff member in order to visually observe and monitor the health and well-being of every animal.

Any animal who is observed to be experiencing pain, suffering, distress, rapidly deteriorating health, life-threatening problems or suspected zoonotic medical conditions is assessed and appropriately managed in a timely manner.

Monitoring includes food and water consumption, urination, defecation, attitude, behavior, ambulation and signs of illness or other problems. Monitoring takes place before cleaning. For animals housed in groups, monitoring also takes place during feeding time.

When apparently healthy animals remain in care for longer than one month, exams that include weight and body condition score are performed and recorded by trained staff on at least a monthly basis.

Geriatric, ill or debilitated animals are evaluated by a veterinarian as needed.

Monitoring should include checking for appropriate grooming and bathing since it is important to health.

Pain Management

Pain is recognized and treated to alleviate suffering.

It is generally assumed that if a procedure is painful in human beings, then it must also be painful in animals.

Analgesia is an appropriate strength and duration to relieve pain.

Animals must be reassessed periodically to provide ongoing pain relief as needed.

When adequate pain relief cannot be achieved, transfer to a facility that can meet the animal's needs or humane euthanasia must be provided.

Treatment (pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic approaches to pain) is supervised by a veterinarian.

When pain can be anticipated, analgesia is provided preemptively.

Nutrition

Fresh, clean water is always accessible to animals unless there is a medical reason for water to be withheld for a prescribed period.

Food that is consistent with the nutritional needs and health status of the individual animal is provided.

Food is fresh, palatable, free from contamination and is of enough nutritional value.

Uneaten food is discarded after 24 hours.

Food that has been offered to an animal and remains uneaten is not offered to another animal.

Healthy adult dogs and cats are fed at least once per day.

Healthy puppies and kittens are fed small amounts frequently or have food constantly available through the day.

Food intake is monitored daily.

Animals displaying inappetence or extreme weight loss or gain are evaluated by a veterinarian and treated as necessary.

Food and water is provided in appropriate dishes that are safe, sufficient in number and of adequate size.

Animals who guard food or prevent access by cage mates are housed or fed separately.

A schedule of regular sanitation is followed for all food and water containers.

Food preparation and storage areas are easily sanitized and maintained in clean condition.

Medical Treatment

The legal status of an animal never prevents treatment to relieve suffering (which may include euthanasia if suffering cannot be alleviated).

Medical decisions balance both the best interest of the individual animals requiring treatment and the shelter population.

Those providing treatment have the necessary training, skills and resources to ensure treatment is administered correctly and safely.

Treatment decisions are based on several criteria, including the ability to safely and humanely provide relief, duration of treatment, prognosis for recovery, the likelihood of placement after treatment, the number of animals who must be treated and the expense and resources available.

Adopters or those taking animals from the shelter are informed about the presence of any disease or condition known to be present at the time of adoption and provided a copy of any treatment records.

Medication protocols for management of common diseases are provided to staff and developed in consultation with a veterinarian.

All treatments are documented.

Behavioral Health

BCAS takes into consideration the behavioral care of each animal as well as the conditions experienced by the entire population.

All incidents or reports of a history of aggressive behavior along with the context in which they occurred are recorded as a part of an animal's record.

Care is given to minimize stress during intake.

A thorough behavioral history and the reason(s) for relinquishment are obtained at the time of intake. Any available information about stray animals is solicited when they are impounded.

The history is used to alert staff to the presence of potential problems, such as aggression or anxiety, and to inform staff of any individual needs so that proper care can be provided for the animal.

Behavior Evaluation

The assessment of an animal's behavior begins at the time of intake.

Staff is trained to recognize body language and other behaviors that indicate animal stress, pain and suffering as well as those that indicate successful adaptation to the shelter environment.

Animals are monitored daily in order to detect trends or changes in well-being and respond to their behavioral needs.

If many animals are displaying signs of unrelieved stress, steps are taken to improve the shelter's stress reduction protocols.

For humane reasons, long-term confinement is avoided for feral animals and for those who remain markedly stressed/fearful and are not responding to treatment/ behavioral care.

Staff performing behavior evaluations receive adequate training in performance, interpretation and safety.

An overall behavior assessment considers all the information gathered about the animal, including history, behavior during shelter stay and formal evaluation if performed.

BCAS is aware that animal histories provided by an owner or finder, although important, may be either incomplete or inaccurate.

Behavioral problems that require intervention or affect how an animal can be safely handled are noted at the time of intake and entered into the animal's record. Actions are taken to respond promptly to behavioral needs.

Each animal's behavior is assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the shelter stay.

Formal behavioral evaluations do not necessarily invalidate information provided by the owner or observations made during staff interactions with an animal.

Cats are assessed by observing behavior and interacting with the cat to help enhance in-shelter care.

In-Shelter Care

Even short-term housing meets the minimum behavioral needs of animals, providing separate areas for urination/defecation, feeding and resting and enough space to stand and walk several steps and sit or lie at full body length.

Animals are provided regular social contact, mental stimulation and physical activity.

For animals who are housed short-term and with unknown health backgrounds, social interaction is balanced with infectious disease control.

When animals must remain confined for health or behavioral reasons, positive social interaction is still provided without removing the animal from the enclosure.

A high priority is placed on ensuring proper socialization of young puppies and kittens.

For puppies and kittens housed in a shelter, socialization is balanced with infectious disease control.

Training methods are primarily based on positive reinforcement in accordance with current professional guidelines.

For long-term shelter stays, appropriate levels of additional enrichment are provided on a daily basis.

Cats are allowed an opportunity to exercise and explore in a secure, enriched setting.

Dogs are provided with daily opportunities for activity outside of their runs for aerobic exercise.

Any animal who is observed to be experiencing mental suffering, distress or behavioral deterioration is assessed and appropriately treated in a timely manner or humanely euthanized.

Lights are turned off at night and on during daytime hours to help keep normal circadian rhythms.

Enrichment is given the same significance as other components of animal care, such as nutrition and veterinary care, and is never considered optional.

Animals receive some type of positive social interaction outside of the activities of feeding and cleaning on a daily basis.

Socialization is provided by workers or volunteers wearing clean protective clothing in an environment that can be fully disinfected between uses.

Precautions are taken to ensure that disease transmission and stress are minimized.

Enrichment is provided for animals while in their enclosures through opportunities for play.

Animals believed to be dangerous are not re-homed.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of how efficiently the shelter operates. Volunteers must be 18 years or older in order to participate in shelter operations. Volunteers must obtain a volunteer application and volunteer agreement and complete them to the best of their abilities. These can be found at the shelter or on our website. (www.BurkeNC.org/2444/animal-services)

Once these are filled out they need to be turned into the Director for review. If approved, volunteers will be notified. They will be required to have a background check, a driving record check, as well as sign a confidentiality statement with the HR department.

HR will notify the Director once the background checks and driving records are approved or denied. If they are denied the Director will let the volunteer applicant know.

Volunteers will be required to have proof of a current tetanus vaccine. Prophylactic rabies vaccinations are recommended, but not required. They can bring proof of vaccines to orientation or on their first day of volunteering.

If approved, volunteers will be allowed to sign up for an orientation class. Orientations will cover the following...

- Review of the signed Volunteer Agreement
- Acknowledgement of the Volunteer Code of Ethics
- A signed Volunteer Waiver
- Acknowledgement of the SOP Manual and Policies related to volunteering
- Hours Log
- A signed Social Media Waiver
- A in-depth description of the duties performed for the volunteer class they are taking.

Volunteers will be required to complete 20 hours of cleaning and disinfecting, laundry, and dishes before advancing to other areas of the shelter. Classes will be required for training in advancement courses. Volunteers will be responsible for signing up and attending these classes.

Volunteers are responsible for keeping a log of their hours.

Volunteers must wear identification letting the public know they are a volunteer.

If at any time volunteers refuse to agree with the terms set forth in the Volunteer Agreement/SOP Manual they may be asked to leave and may be dismissed of their duties as a volunteer.

Animal Husbandry

Housing

The intake process assures that animals are examined and housed properly.

Birds, guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, rats, and other domestic animals are not accepted at Burke County Animal Shelter unless it is an emergency. This will have to be approved by the Shelter Director to ensure the shelter has proper enclosures and food for the animal.

Puppies and dogs are separated from kittens and cats. Canines are housed in pen area. Felines are housed in the cat room. The housing of dogs and cats will be in compliance with the AWA and NCAC. Dogs and puppies cannot be housed in the same primary enclosure with cats and kittens.

Each adult dog is confined to one pen. Dogs which enter the shelter together, and are compatible, and are spayed or neutered or of the same sex may be housed together. Paired intact animals may not be housed together. If the male is intact and there is no medical proof that the female is spayed the pair must be separated.

Nursing mothers and their young should be housed together. Puppies less than four months of age shall not be housed in the same primary enclosure with adult dogs other than their dams. Puppies between 4 – 16 weeks of age shall have daily access to human social interaction, excluding animals which pose a danger to humans or other animals. Puppies from the same litter can be housed together.

Known or suspected aggressive animals, and dogs that have bitten humans or animals are not to be placed with another dog for any reason. These dogs are to be put in an appropriate pen for quarantine. During the quarantine period of 10 days, the dog will not be available for adoption.

All stray, adoptable kittens and cats are housed in the cat room for a minimum of 72-hours before being placed for adoption. All cats shall be provided with food and water in sanitized containers. Cats will also be provided with clean litter daily. Each adult cat is confined to one cage. Cats that enter the shelter together, are compatible, and are spayed or neutered or of the same sex may be housed together.

Kittens less than four months of age shall not be housed in the same primary enclosure with an adult cat other than their dam. Kittens between 4-16 weeks of age shall have daily access to human social interaction, excluding animals which pose a danger to humans or other animals. Kittens from the same litter can be housed together.

Cats that are known to be or suspected of being aggressive or reported to have bitten or scratched humans or animals, are kept in isolation. Cats that have bitten will be held in the isolation room until the end of the quarantine period of 10 days and will not be available for adoption during this time.

Any animal held longer than 15 days, that are older than 16 weeks, must receive a rabies vaccination.

Group Housing

For group housing of cats, a variety of elevated resting perched and hiding places are provided to increase the size and complexity of the living space.

Sufficient resources (e.g. food, water, bedding litter boxes and toys) are provided to prevent competition or resource guarding and ensure access by all animals.

The size of the enclosure is large enough to allow animals to express a variety of normal behaviors.

Animals are not to be housed in the same enclosure simply because they arrived on the same day or because individual kennel space is insufficient. Unrelated or unfamiliar animals are not combined in groups or pairs until after a health and behavior evaluation is performed.

If group housing is utilized short-term for intact animals, they are separated by gender. Animals who are not socialized to other animals as well as those who actively bully other animals are not grouped with other animals. Animals who have engaged in fighting with one another are not grouped together. Caution is used when attempting to include any animal with a history of fighting in a group.

Even for littermates, all requirements for group housing are met.

Options for individual housing are available for animals when group housing is not appropriate. Single, enriched housing is provided for animals who are fearful or aggressive toward other animals, are stressed by the presence of other animals, require individual monitoring or are ill and require treatment that cannot be provided in group housing.

Animals are appropriately matched for age, sex, health and behavior. Intact animals of breeding age are not placed in group housing.

Feeding

It is important that animals are provided a regular feeding/watering schedule.

All incoming strays are fed immediately as there is no way of knowing when they last ate, and water bowls are filled.

Adult dogs shall be fed at least once in a 24-hour period. Puppies less than 6 months of age may have food available continuously or must be fed at least twice daily with a minimum of an 8-hour interval between feedings. Size and age appropriate food is required.

Animals are fed the proper amount of food based on the size and age and body condition of the animal. All animals should be given fresh water. Fresh water shall be available continuously to all dogs and puppies unless otherwise required for adequate veterinary care reasons.

Adult cats should be fed at least once in a 24-hour period. Kittens less than 6 months of age may have food available continuously or must be fed at least twice daily with a minimum of an 8-hour interval between feedings. Fresh water shall be available continuously to all cats and kittens unless otherwise required for adequate veterinary care reasons.

Enrichment

All dogs and puppies in the shelter shall be provided with daily enrichment. This may include toys and/or walks outside of their primary enclosures. If an animal has been in the shelter for more than 14 days, they must be taken out of their primary enclosure daily for enrichment time outside.

All animals on bite hold must be provided with enrichment toys in their kennels.

All cats and kittens in the shelter must be provided with daily enrichment. This may include toys and/or puzzle feeders.

All adoptable animals need daily human interaction and socialization.

Animal Handling

Handling is as humane as possible and appropriate for the individual animal and situation.

The minimal amount of physical restraint needed to accomplish the task without injury to people or animals is used. When physical restraint is necessary to avoid human injury or injury to an animal, it is of the least intensity and shortest duration possible.

Adequate training is key to limiting the use of unnecessary force during handling and must be provided to anyone who will be handling animals.

Physical force should NEVER be used as a punishment or in anger.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Dog kennels are cleaned and disinfected daily and after each animal leaves. Cat cages are cleaned daily and disinfected every 3 days and after each animal leaves.

Sanitation protocols are revised as needed during a disease outbreak in order to address specific pathogens.

Dogs

Dogs should be moved to the outside of their enclosures and their walk-throughs closed. Remove all items from the kennel. This includes food and water bowls, beds, toys, and blankets. Bowls and hard toys need to be put into the sink to be cleaned and sanitized. Blankets are placed into the laundry to be washed. Beds are set up inside of kennels to be cleaned and disinfected.

Kennels are sprayed out and any organic debris is removed from the kennel. A degreaser is then sprayed into the kennel. All walls, floors, doors, and beds are scrubbed then rinsed. A disinfectant is then applied and allowed to sit for 10 minutes. This is then rinsed. Kennels are to be squeegeed. The beds are to be placed neatly in the kennels with blankets. If a dog has been noted chewing blankets, then blankets may be left out. Water and bowls with an appropriate amount of food for the dog is placed in the kennel.

Dogs are let back inside, and the slides are closed behind the dogs.

The same process is repeated for the outdoor portion of their kennel.

Cats

Cat kennels are to be cleaned and disinfected once every 3 days. For disinfecting, all cats and kittens are removed from their primary enclosures. All items are removed from their kennels. This includes food and water bowls, litter pans, blankets, and toys. They are placed in their appropriate areas for proper disinfecting.

All organic debris is removed from the kennel. The kennel is then scrubbed with a degreaser. A disinfectant is then applied and let sit for 5 minutes before wiping out.

Blankets can then be placed in the kennels along with an appropriate amount of food bowls and water bowls and litter pans. There must be 1 litter pan for every 3 cats.

Cat kennels are to be spot cleaned for the additional 2 days to reduce stress. If any cat has a contagious condition such as a URI or ringworm, the kennel is to be cleaned and disinfected daily with 10% bleach.

Dishes/Litter Pans

Fill the first sink with a degreaser and let your dishes soak while you are cleaning kennels. Scrub dishes well making sure all organic debris is removed from the bowls. Place in the disinfectant located in the second sink for 3 minutes and then place on the drying rack to dry.

Litter pans are to be washed after all the dishes have been washed. Remove large organic debris into the trash can. You must use a litter scooper to scrape the litter into the trash can. Wash the litter pans in the degreaser and then let soak in disinfectant for 3 minutes. Place on drying rack and let dry.

Hard plastic and rubber toys are to be sanitized the same way.

Laundry

Shake out all laundry before putting in the washing machine. Only wash medium loads using laundry detergent and bleach. If a blanket is soiled, you may throw it away. Once finished, laundry is placed into the dryer. Large blankets may be hung outside or in the sally port to dry. Rope toys and cloth toys can be washed in the laundry as well.

Disease Control

Animals are observed on intake for any signs of illness or injury. Animals are then observed daily for any signs of disease. If any animal is expected to be breaking with an illness, they will be moved into an isolation ward until they can be more closely evaluated. The kennel then needs to be sanitized with a 10% bleach solution after a thorough degreasing has been performed. (see cleaning and disinfecting protocol)

Depending on the severity of the disease and how easily spread it is, humane euthanasia may be elected to end suffering from disease as well as keep other animals from getting sick. This is elected after all other options have been explored.

Animals that have been diagnosed with as infectious diseases, such as Parvovirus in dogs and Panleukopenia and Feline Leukemia in cats or ringworm in both species, should be housed in the quarantine area as space permits. In such cases the BCAS Director or their designee may recommend transfer to an approved rescue group although infection from these illnesses should normally warrant euthanasia. Full disclosure of the disease must be provided to the Rescue Group. All information obtained for the animals needs to be provided to the rescue group.

Depending on the disease and the severity, the transfer may need to occur in a timely manner set by the BCAS staff requesting the transfer. This is for disease control as well as to prevent any additional suffering.

When dealing with illness, one must look at each case individually:

- What is the prognosis of the illness
- What is the recovery time of the illness
- What is the cost and time involved for treating the illness
- What is the age of the animal
- How adoptable is the animal
- How urgent is the medical treatment necessary
- What is the space situation at the shelter

The shelter is not a veterinary hospital. Treating diseases requires more care or time than can be provided at a shelter. If space allows the director may approve treating minor illnesses.

Zoonoses

Enclosures of animals with suspected zoonotic disease are clearly marked to indicate the condition and any necessary precautions.

BCAS provides periodic staff and volunteer training and information on the recognition of potentially zoonotic conditions and the means of protecting others from exposure.

Training identifies to whom concerns should be reported and how to respond when zoonotic disease is suspected or confirmed.

BCAS institutes good preventive medicine protocols such as prophylactic deworming and external parasite control to decrease the potential for exposure to zoonotic pathogens.

Food and drink are not consumed in areas where animals are housed; use of items the public may bring in – such as spill-proof cups, pacifiers, teething toys and baby bottles – is discouraged in these areas.

Information about zoonotic diseases is made available to visitors, adopters and foster care providers. Shelter-provided literature about zoonotic diseases suggests that immune-compromised adopters discuss pet selection with their healthcare professional before adoption.

If inquiries are made, shelter staff refers people to published guidelines or their health care professional.

Rabies Quarantine

Animals brought in by animal control that have been bitten someone or that have had a possible exposure to rabies must be quarantined in the facility. Quarantine cages are located on the left side of the hall as you enter the facility.

Animals in quarantine must be covered with a piece of removable plexi-glass. This plexi-glass is to be removed a minimum of every 7 days to be cleaned and disinfected properly. It can be removed on an as needed basis to be cleaned and disinfected.

The animals housed in these areas are to be moved to each side of the kennel during cleaning and feeding hours. Human contact with the animal needs to be minimized as much as possible.

Any signs of rabies noted during the stay must be reported to animal control and to the health director for euthanasia and testing decisions.

If an animal completes its quarantine with no signs of rabies they may be given a rabies vaccine and returned back to their owners once all fees are paid or they may be placed up for adoption if they are deemed adoptable or they may be euthanized at the discretion of the BCAS Director.

Public Health

BCAS maintains compliance with federal and state occupational and safety regulations regarding chemical, biological and physical hazards in the workplace. Hearing protection is provided for employees working in loud environments. Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, goggles, masks, etc. is provided by the shelter in order to protect employees from exposure to chemical and biological agents.

Employees and volunteers wear gloves and change them frequently while cleaning and disinfecting, especially when removing animal waste. Eye protection is worn when working with cleaning and/or disinfection agents. Frequent handwashing is strongly encouraged, especially after handling animals and after removing PPE, before eating, smoking or touching eyes or mucus membranes, including applying contact lenses.

BCAS does not allow smoking or the use of any tobacco products on the premises.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a final act of kindness we can offer for the animals in our care. Humane euthanasia may be elected for animals who are severely ill or injured or have unrehabilitatable behavioral issues. Euthanasia procedures are performed by a Certified Euthanasia Technician or a Licensed Veterinarian by following laws set forth in the Animal Welfare Act.

Euthanasia decisions are made by the Animal Services Director. No decision made by the director should be questioned by any staff member or volunteer. If a staff member or employee would like to discuss the decisions being made, they may approach the Director to set a meeting time.

Shelter animals are selected for euthanasia based on the following criteria, keeping in mind that any selection order of priority may change as circumstances warrant: space, ability to cope in a shelter environment or new home environment, temperament, health, age, condition and length of stay.

Animals are evaluated by staff as to known or observed behavior/health issues. There are times when an animal's condition or behavior results in immediate euthanasia. Any immediate euthanasia must be done in compliance with the AWA and NCAC. Any euthanasia of any dog or cat that has not completed the 72-hour hold can only be authorized by the shelter director and must comply with the AWA and NCAC.

If animal is sick or injured it may be offered to an approved rescue organization before Euthanasia is considered. All euthanasia must be cleared through the Shelter Director or person(s) acting on their behalf for euthanasia.

Owner requested euthanasia – The owner must provide proof of ownership and written consent for the immediate disposition of the animal. [In addition, the custody of the animal must be turned over to the shelter by the owner; otherwise providing euthanasia for an animal owned by the public can be interpreted as “practicing veterinary medicine without a license.”] Owner's animals that need to be euthanized at their request need to provide proof of ownership of the animal. Owners of animals who cannot produce proof of ownership cannot request euthanasia of an animal; these animals will be euthanized under the same procedures as stray animals. The shelter staff reserve the right to decline euthanasia of an owned animal if they feel it is not in the best interest of the animal.

Procedure for Euthanasia

Only Certified Euthanasia Technicians or Licensed Veterinarians can perform euthanasia procedures. The procedure for euthanasia is always to be followed without any change to steps.

1. Animals are sedated with a mixture of two drugs, XYLAZINE and KETAMINE. This drug mixture is classified as a sedative/analgesic with muscle relaxant properties. The starting dose is approximately 0.6 cc per 10 pounds of body weight, which works out to 6.0cc's per 100 pounds of body weight. Weight is approximate in some cases. Not all animals require chemical restraint.
2. Animals are to be scanned for the presence of a Microchip after sedated.
3. Intravenous injection of a euthanasia solution such as Fatal Plus
4. The controlled drug log will be filled out every time that euthanasia is performed. It is to be filled out completely in the following order:
 1. Date of administration of controlled drug
 2. Animal ID number
 3. Species of animal
 4. Signature of Certified Euthanasia Technician or DVM
 5. Amount of drug used
 6. Balance of opened vials
 7. Amount of drug wasted
 8. Staff Initials that participated during Euthanasia

If euthanasia is approved by Shelter Director prior to the 72-hour holding period, the card must reflect the documentation. Only the shelter director can authorize the early euthanasia of an animal (prior to the end of the 72-hour hold). The shelter director must document in writing the specific reason for the early euthanasia. The details of the serious illness or serious injury must be documented on the animal's record.

Emergency Disaster Plan

The emergency disaster plan is put in place with the Director of EOC. In the event of an emergency when pet sheltering is required the BCAS Director will contact all employees that have completed proper ICS training.

Sheltering plans will be followed as outlined with EOC.

Monthly and Annual Reports

The State of North Carolina requires that information on each shelter be provided on an annual basis. Burke County requires the same information be compiled on a both a monthly and an annual basis. The BCAS Director, or their designee, will compile both of these reports. The BCAS Director shall sign off on these reports and have them delivered to the applicable party. (County Manager for the monthly report, NC Department of Agriculture for the annual report.) Both reports shall include:

- The total number of cat intakes
- The total number of dog intakes
- The total number of cat adoptions
- The total number of dog adoptions
- The total number of rescued cats
- The total number of rescued dogs
- The total number of owner cat reclaims
- The total number of owner dog reclaims
- The total of euthanized cats
- The total of euthanized dogs

While the BCAS does not normally house other types of animals, should circumstances or court orders require the intake of such animals, reports will be compiled similar with those completed for cats and dogs.

Deposits

Money is deposited into the bank on each Friday or when the amount of cash and checks total \$250.00.

BCAS keeps a copy of the receipt of the deposit for records.

**Every Animal Services Employee is required to read and sign off that he/she understands and commits to following The Standard Operating Procedure Manual for Burke County Animal Services. If the policies and procedures of this Manual are not followed, this could result in Disciplinary action.
I have read, I understand and I will follow the above outlined Burke County Animal Services Standard Operating Procedure Manual.**

_____ Date _____
Kaitlin Settlemyre, RVT - Director

_____ Date _____
Lindsay Stump - Coordinator

_____ Date _____
Alicia Grindstaff - Technician