Disease Control and Medical Care Program

Trenton Animal Shelter (TAS)

Policy Statement

TAS shall maintain a comprehensive disease control program to prevent the spread of infectious disease and provide reasonable and necessary medical care to animals in its custody in accordance with accepted sheltering standards and veterinary guidance.

Animals shall receive core preventive care, including vaccination and parasite control, and additional medical treatment as deemed appropriate by the Supervising Veterinarian.

Disease Risk in Shelter Environments

Animals enter the shelter from varied and often unknown backgrounds and may lack preventive medical care. Intake stress, population density, and frequent movement increase susceptibility to disease. Disease prevention is a priority in all shelter operations.

Modes of Disease Transmission

Staff shall recognize and actively mitigate common modes of disease transmission:

- **Direct contact:** animal-to-animal contact (e.g., nose-to-nose)
- **Fomite transmission:** contaminated objects (hands, clothing, bowls, litter pans, mops, squeegees, leashes, carriers)
- **Aerosol transmission:** airborne spread influenced by fans/ventilation
- **Droplet transmission:** sneezing/coughing at close proximity
- **Vector transmission:** fleas, ticks, rodents, insects

Common Shelter Diseases

Common infectious diseases in shelter settings include, but are not limited to:

- **Feline Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)**
- **Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (“kennel cough”)**

- **Canine parvovirus**
- **Feline panleukopenia**

Respiratory illnesses are commonly spread through aerosol, droplet, and fomite transmission. Parvovirus and panleukopenia are primarily spread by fomite transmission, often via feces/vomit, and can persist in the environment necessitating thorough cleaning and disinfecting to reduce potential transmission of these deadly diseases.

Intake Medical Evaluation and Preventive Care

General Requirement (All Animals)

All animals shall receive an intake medical evaluation. At minimum, this includes:

- Physical examination using the appropriate intake exam form
- Core vaccinations per species and age
- Parasite control per protocol and weight
- Additional medical care as directed by the Supervising Veterinarian

Staff should wear appropriate PPE during this process, including latex gloves, gowns or booties if the animal presents with significant contagious disease.

If an animal presents with serious illness or injury at intake, staff shall immediately notify the Shelter Manager and/or Supervising Veterinarian for direction.

If the Supervising Veterinarian is unavailable:

- The Shelter Manager (or designee) shall determine the need for urgent transport to an approved veterinary facility.
- Staff shall follow the shelter's emergency veterinary escalation and transport protocol (after-hours contact list, transport authorization, and documentation requirements).
    - An Animal Control Officer will transport the sick or injured animal to North Star Vets at 315 Robbinsville Rd, Robbinsville Twp, NJ 08691 (609) 259-8300

Canine Intake Preventive Care (Dogs and Puppies)

Upon intake (as appropriate by age and medical status), dogs shall receive:

- **DA2PP** (Distemper, Adenovirus, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza) and injectable Bordetella
    - All dogs/puppies 4 weeks of age and older shall receive DA2PP vaccine upon intake. Boosters shall be administered every 2–3 weeks until the puppy reaches at least 16–18 weeks of age, or as directed by the Supervising Veterinarian.
- **Bordetella Vaccination (Kennel Cough)**
    - All puppies 8 weeks of age and older shall receive Bordetella vaccine upon intake. Booster or repeat dosing shall be administered according to manufacturer guidelines and veterinary direction.
      Vaccination shall be documented in the animal's medical record.

- **DA2PP + Bordetella booster** scheduled 3 weeks after initial administration (if still in care and)

- Receive parasite treatment as follows:
    - Panacur for 6 days, administered per weight/eligibility
    - Bravecto (oral) for external parasite prevention, administered per weight/eligibility
    - Additional treatment as directed by the Supervising Veterinarian

Feline Intake Preventive Care (Cats and Kittens)

All cats and kittens older than 4 weeks shall receive core vaccination and a physical exam upon intake. No exceptions are permitted

Intake Requirements (Cats/Kittens)

- Receive FVRCP (Feline viral rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Panleukopenia)
- Receive parasite treatment as follows:
    - Cats > 6 months and ≥ 2.6 lbs: Bravecto
    - Cats < 6 months or < 2.6 lbs: liquid Panacur once daily for 3 days, dosed by weight
    - Kittens 4 weeks and up will receive boosters every two weeks until 16-20 weeks of age

    - Pregnant queens should not be receive FVRCP as it presents a danger to the kittens

Hygiene and Personal Protective Measures

To reduce disease transmission:

- Staff shall wash hands or use hand sanitizer between animals and between enclosures
- Disposable gloves shall be used when appropriate
- In the event of a disease outbreak, PPE will include disposable gowns and booties
- Hand sanitizer dispensers shall be available throughout animal housing areas
- Hand hygiene is not required between a nursing mother and her litter, but is required before handling another animal

Monitoring and Reporting Illness

Animals shall be observed at least twice daily for signs of illness or injury, utilizing Daily Rounds Tracking form.

Staff shall immediately notify the Shelter Manager and/or Supervising Veterinarian if any animal shows signs including, but not limited to:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Lack of Appetite
- Excessive thirst
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Nasal discharge
- Ocular discharge
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Any bleeding/signs of injury

Prompt identification, isolation when indicated, and documentation are essential to disease control.

Daily Disease Prevention Practices

All staff shall follow daily prevention practices to minimize transmission of infectious disease. Consistent adherence is essential to animal health and staff safety.

Daily requirements include:

- Report animals showing illness immediately to shelter manager or Supervising Veterinarian
- Move animals with suspected contagious disease/conditions to isolation per management/veterinary direction
- Wash or sanitize hands between animals
- Prevent nose-to-nose contact between separately housed animals
- Pick up feces immediately when dogs defecate on shelter grounds
- After feces removal: clean, disinfect, rinse/wipe thoroughly
- Follow all disinfection procedures with thorough rinsing/wiping when required
- Laundry and dishes cleaned per posted protocols
- Dirty dishes moved promptly to designated dirty dish bins (not left in animal areas)
- Toys/enrichment cleaned and disinfected at least daily; re-sanitize if soiled
- Replace trash liners regularly; do not allow overflow
- Shared tools (control poles, coaxing sticks, pooper scoopers, etc.) cleaned/disinfected between uses and between animals

Medical Care of Animals

Policy

TAS shall provide appropriate medical care to all animals in its custody to prevent disease and alleviate suffering. All medical care shall be provided under the direction of the Supervising Veterinarian.

Medical Records

A medical record shall be created upon intake for every animal and maintained in the animal's file and/or shelter software. Records shall document:

- Vaccinations
- Deworming and parasite prevention
- Treatments and medications

- Medical observations

The medical record shall follow the animal through all outcomes (return to owner, adoption, transfer). Records shall be available to approved adopters, rescue partners, and oversight entities upon request and retained per shelter record retention practice.

Medication Log

A Medication Log shall be maintained for all animals receiving medication prescribed by a veterinarian. Each administration shall include:

- Medication name
- Dose
- Route
- Date/time
- Staff initials

Any change to medication type, dose, or schedule requires prior approval from the Supervising Veterinarian.

Medication Administration

- Medications shall be administered only by trained personnel and only as prescribed/approved.
- Oral, topical, and injectable medications may be administered consistent with training and veterinary authorization.
- All medications administered shall be recorded immediately.
- Missed doses shall be reported promptly to the Shelter Manager and Supervising Veterinarian.

Pain Management

Pain shall be recognized, assessed, and treated to prevent unnecessary suffering. Animals with acute or chronic pain shall receive appropriate pain management as directed by the Supervising Veterinarian.

Staff shall assume that conditions painful in humans are also painful in animals. Signs of pain or suspected pain shall be reported promptly for veterinary direction. Pain management decisions shall be individualized.

Veterinary Oversight and Documented Medical Examination

The Veterinarian of Record shall visit the shelter at least once weekly to provide non-emergency medical care and oversight. During visits, the veterinarian shall:

- Examine animals requiring non-emergency evaluation and document findings
- Administer rabies vaccines to:
    - New animals intaken since the prior visit
    - Animals due for rabies booster based on documentation
- Review medication logs for accuracy and compliance
- Ensure proper disposal of unused/expired medications and complete required documentation
- Review post-surgical animals (spay/neuter) since the prior visit

Stress Reduction and Disease Prevention

Stress contributes to disease transmission. TAS shall take reasonable steps to identify, minimize, and manage stress to reduce illness and support welfare.

High-Risk Animals

Animals at higher risk include those who are underweight, pregnant/lactating/nursing, injured, or recovering. These animals shall be identified and supported with measures such as nutritional supplementation, controlled handling, quieter housing, and enrichment. Foster may be considered when available.

Environmental Standards

Housing areas shall maintain conditions that promote comfort and reduce stress:

- Temperature maintained between 65°F and 80°F
- Adequate ventilation without drafts or excessive noise

- Overcrowding avoided whenever possible through transfer, foster, and population management strategies

Canine Physical Examination Procedures

Dogs assessed as friendly, calm, or timid and considered candidates for adoption shall receive a complete physical examination when safe handling is possible. Staff shall reassess daily until safe handling is feasible. A second handler should be utilized if the animal appears fractious or scared.

Exam steps (using the Intake Exam Form):

1. Scan for microchip
2. Weigh
3. Photograph
4. Perform full physical exam
5. Identify sex and reproductive status

Parasites and ears

- Assess fleas/flea dirt, use flea comb as needed
- Bravecto per protocol unless otherwise directed
- Puppies under 4 weeks or under 1 lb with fleas: Dawn bath and warm water; notify medical staff for heavy infestations
- Examine ears for debris/discharge; collect sample for ear mite evaluation as trained/authorized; report positives

Age estimation

Estimate age via teeth and other age indicators; document in record. If any neo-natal puppies are admitted into the shelter, staff should immediately contact the Supervising Veterinarian.

Deworming

Panacure based on weight per protocol unless otherwise directed.

Feline Physical Examination Procedures

Cats assessed as friendly, calm, or timid and considered candidates for adoption shall receive a complete physical examination when safe handling is possible. Staff shall reassess daily until safe handling is feasible.

Exam steps (using the Intake Exam Form):

6. Scan for microchip
7. Weigh
8. Photograph
9. Perform full physical exam
10. Identify sex and reproductive status
11. Determine declaw status

Parasites and ears

- Assess fleas/flea dirt, use flea comb as needed
- Bravecto per protocol unless otherwise directed
- Kittens under 4 weeks or under 1 lb with fleas: Dawn bath and warm water; notify medical staff for heavy infestations
- Examine ears for debris/discharge; collect sample for ear mite evaluation as trained/authorized; report positives

Age estimation

Estimate age via teeth and other age indicators; document in record.

In the event that neo-natal kittens enter the shelter, the Supervising Veterinarian will be contacted for further direction.

Deworming

All cats shall receive panacur based on weight per protocol unless otherwise directed.

FeLV/FIV testing

All cats and kittens 8 weeks or older shall be tested within 7 days of intake (excluding feral cats unless otherwise directed). Document results in the medical record.