

# EUTHANASIA POLICY

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The Baltimore Humane Society (BHS) is resolved to not euthanize due to time or space constraints. We reserve euthanasia for animals who are suffering mentally or physically, terminally ill, or considered dangerous to themselves, other animals, and/or humans.

Baltimore Humane Society is committed to the preservation of life and to the objective use of approved methods of euthanasia, when appropriate, guided by medical standards and a reasonable interpretation of the definition of the purpose behind euthanasia. Factors contributing to the euthanasia of any animal include quality of life, and risk to the health and safety of other animals, including people.

The Baltimore Humane Society resolutely affirms that it will not euthanize for reasons amounting to insufficient operational capacity such as space, manpower, and the like.

The staff and Board of Directors of the Baltimore Humane Society recognize that the subject of euthanasia is emotionally charged and can be difficult to reflect upon. We also recognize that the subject is a 'moving target' and requires both reflection and open discussion in order to minimize its practice beyond just one facility and instead across our country.

Given the sensitivity of the practice of euthanasia and the organization's requirement to maintain transparency and objectivity, the euthanasia of any animal for reasons other than owner requested euthanasia must be approved via signature by:

- The Executive Director
- The Medical Director
- The Shelter Program Director

Euthanasia may occur at the Baltimore Humane Society due to the following:

- Pet owner authorized euthanasia. However, the BHS staff has the right to decline this service if the BHS staff determines that the animal still has quality life remaining and that the animal can live comfortably.
- Deteriorating medical or behavioral condition that is causing suffering to an animal.
- If the BHS Staff determines that a pet is suffering from medical conditions that are not able to be medically treated to maintain a comfortable and quality life. Should outside opinions of the medical state of a pet be needed, the BHS Veterinary Medical Director will consult with other Veterinarians to make a final determination on the pet's state of health.
- If the pet is treatable, BHS will attempt to do everything possible within BHS' resources to properly treat the pet to manage their medical condition to live a comfortable and safe life. Behaviors that are beyond management that are deemed unsafe to other pets,

people, and to themselves. In these cases a certified behaviorist may be consulted in conjunction with recommendations from the trainer(s) on staff.

**2016 Annual Live Release Rate using Asilomar Accords Live Release Rate: 99.16%**

**2017 YTD (Jan 1-May 4 2017) Live Release Rate using Asilomar Accords Live Release Rate: 99.47%**

Here are the Asimolar Animal Statistics in detail:

[2016](#)

[2017](#)

## **Standards of Operation**

Each animal admitted into the animal center of the Baltimore Humane Society will be evaluated initially at intake. Pets placed in the organization's adoption program will continuously be evaluated for medical and behavioral considerations.

Evaluations are intended to identify:

- Animals who are suffering mentally, emotionally or physically.
- Animals with a poor prognosis, protracted painful recovery, incurable illness, and/or who are non-responsive to treatment or who suffer from an affliction in which treatment is not reasonably available.
- Animals who are deemed to pose an unacceptable danger to other animals, themselves or the public.
- Animals who have a condition that individually may not necessitate euthanasia, but that contribute to escalate other conditions that, in total, warrant euthanasia.

If the animal poses an immediate or serious danger to animals and/or people, alternative options will not be considered.

## **Definition of Terms**

### **Medically Necessitated Euthanasia**

Animals who are suffering from a disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the animal's health or is likely to adversely affects the animal's health in the future, and are not likely to become "healthy" or "treatable" even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.

## **Behaviorally Necessitated Euthanasia <sup>1</sup>**

Animals who have or who develop a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that poses a health or safety risk or otherwise makes the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable” even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.

<sup>1</sup>The assessment of animal behavior remains a controversial practice within the animal welfare industry. Behavioral evaluations are intended to elicit specific actions, though their failure to do so does not mean that underlying behavioral traits are not still present (false negative). Specific behaviors, when elicited, are considered indicative of underlying traits (false positive responses are rejected).