# HSNBA Euthanasia Policy

HSNBA is committed to securing a Live Outcome for each animal entering its facility. Due to the fact we are contractually obligated to shelter all animals delivered by both City of New Braunfels and Comal County Animal Control Divisions, we have no control over what type, in what conditions or how many animals enter our facility on a daily basis. In 2018, HSNBA sheltered 1,982 dogs as well as 2526 cats.

Often these animals are reclaimed by their owners. In 2018, 31% of all dogs coming into the shelter were reclaimed by their owners, but only 4% of cats. We scan each animal at intake for a microchip, follow up on any tags the animal may be wearing and in the case of an animal having no identification but having indications of ownership – spayed or neutered, wearing a collar (without tags), elderly, overweight or otherwise showing signs of ownership - we utilize social media to attempt to “get the word out” an animal is here in hopes of reaching an owner.

In order to protect the humans and other animals in our community, animals showing aggression are considered for euthanasia after all attempts at redemption have been exhausted. The safety of our staff, volunteers and visitors, as well as the community, is very important to HSNBA. The size of the animal (and how its size correlates to how much damage the animal could do) is taken into consideration. A history of aggression resulting in a significant bite to a person or seriously injuring or killing another animal is also a consideration for euthanasia.

Dogs showing significant aggression to other dogs in the shelter setting are also considered for euthanasia. The behavior modification required to attempt to rehabilitate these dogs is more than the scope our current shelter can accommodate. Often dog aggression can simply be managed, not cured, and this high level of management, coupled with the potential damage a dog could do to another dog, is more than the majority of the community is willing to undertake.

In the event an owner cannot be located (or the animal has been surrendered by its owner) we evaluate the adoptability of each animal on an individual basis. We look at many factors when considering an animal’s over all adoptability, including but not limited to:

* Age
* Size
* Physical Characteristics
* Temperament
* Health

***It is the belief of HSNBA that the majority of animals entering our facility are considered “adoptable”.*** However, the length of time and amount of resources it may take to find certain animals an appropriate placement must be taken into consideration. We always reach out to transfer partners if appropriate. Other considerations include but are not limited to:

* **Treatable Conditions** - We have made great strides in securing veterinary attention for animals with treatable illness as well as spaying or neutering all animals leaving through adoption. If the condition is not highly contagious and a reasonable course of treatment is the only barrier to adoptability, we do everything in our power to secure this treatment. However, capacity must be considered in cases of contagious illness – if we cannot safely isolate a contagious animal from the rest of the population during treatment, or a foster home cannot be located, euthanasia is considered.
* **Capacity for Care** - HSNBA’s capacity for care is also a consideration. When the shelter is exceedingly full, and our ability to provide “The Five Freedoms” \* to each animal in our care is compromised, less adoptable animals may be selected for euthanasia in a shorter time span than when we are not at full capacity.
* **Overall Intake** - When intake of animals from City of New Braunfels and Comal County Animal Control is unusually low, considerations must be made to account for the lower than average contract revenue received by HSNBA. Lower intake translates into lower income received from our contracts.

Each animal is treated as an individual by the staff at HSNBA. However, if the resources required to treat a less adoptable animal - whether it be veterinary treatment, behavior modification or financial resources available - may be too great for certain animals to realistically secure a live outcome.

\***The Five Freedoms**

1. **Freedom from hunger or thirst**
2. **Freedom from discomfort**
3. **Freedom from pain, injury or disease**
4. **Freedom to express (most) normal behavior**
5. **Freedom from fear and distress**