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## **Dispositions of Animals - Adoption**

### **Guideline Statement**

A professional animal control agency is one that moves beyond enforcement to prevention. A successful adoption program focuses on quality placements in efforts to break the cycle of unwanted, surplus animals.

### **Basis for Guideline**

Adoption is the opportunity for shelters to make a difference in the life of an animal. The objective is not to "sell" the animal but to sell the new owner on the principle of proper pet management. The success of an adoption program will be determined by the quality of the adoption (e.g. animal's long term tenure in home, licensed, spayed/neutered, and vaccinated.)

### **Guideline Recommendation**

Shelter adoptions should include some form of required sterilization, preferably prior to adoption. NACA supports the concept of early (8-16 weeks of age) spay/neutering. Alternatives may include enforceable contractual obligations which require sterilization within specified time periods following adoption. Incentives for sterilization may include reduced license fees, discounted sterilization costs, or prepayment of all or part of sterilization costs. Shelters should temperament test all animals to be considered for adoption to make sure they are suitably socialized. Potential adopters must demonstrate that they will be responsible pet owners. An adoption questionnaire may prove successful in determining the prospective adopter's past ownership history, their reason for adopting, and their ability to financially and emotionally provide for the animals basic and extended needs. Established periodic follow-ups should be made during the first year of the animal's placement to assist in problem solving and reinforce principles of proper pet care.

Reviewed/Revised by the NACA Corporate Office - 09/17/02

The foregoing Guideline has been affirmed as duly adopted by the NACA Board of Directors.

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