

Animal Transparency Act and Animal Control Penalty Fee Revisions

**Department of Community Affairs
Animal Services Division**

**Community Corrections Department
Code Enforcement/Animal Control Division**

July 18, 2013
BCC Committee of the Whole Workshop

Animal Transparency Act

- Recently passed legislation (Chapter 2013-32) that amends F.S. 823.15, formalizing the Legislature's stance against uncontrolled breeding of dogs and cats
- Specifies and denotes the preparation, recording, maintenance, and dissemination of a plethora of public animal shelter data
- Also requires a written policy statement for euthanasia of certain breeds

Animal Transparency Act

The Act specifies:

Public Animal Shelters shall provide

- Total number of Dogs and Cats taken in in the following categories:
 - * Surrendered by owner
 - * Stray
 - * Impounded
 - * Confiscated
 - * Transferred from within Florida
 - * Transferred into or imported from out of state
 - * Born in shelter

Animal Transparency Act

- Disposition of all Animals
 - * Adoption
 - * Reclamation by owner
 - * Death in kennel
 - * Euthanasia at the owner's request
 - * Transfer to another public or private entity
 - * Euthanasia
 - * Released in field/Trapped, Neutered, Released (TNR)
 - * Lost in care/missing animal record
 - * Ending inventory/shelter count at the end of the last day of the month

Animal Transparency Act

- Breed Specific Euthanization

- ***Prior Shelter Practice – Non Adoptions on Certain Breeds Listed**

- * Pit Bull
 - * Rottweillier
 - * Chow
 - * Wolf Hybrid
 - * Doberman
 - * Akitas

**These breeds have always been available to Rescue organizations but not available for public adoption.

Animal Transparency Act

- New Breed Specific Policy:

The Animal Services Shelter Manager and staff will assess all animals entering the Shelter population for public adoption suitability and not discriminate towards any breeds. A checklist of suitability criteria will be developed and maintained as part of the permanent record for every animal adopted from the Escambia County Animal Shelter.

Animal Transparency Act

- Animal Behavioral Assessment

All healthy dogs, no matter the breed, must be behaviorally assessed by trained staff, as to suitability to be a pet before they are placed in adoption. The most important consideration is a dog that is, or might have a tendency to become aggressive towards people, other dogs, or other animals. Other considerations are the adaptability in a household (destructive behavior, separation anxiety, noise phobia, fence climbing, etc). It is understood that some dogs that do not assess well at the shelter may still be candidates for transfer to rescue organizations. There are 4 stages of assessments.

Animal Transparency Act

- Animal Behavioral Assessment (cont.)

Stage One:

The dog is confined in a kennel. Observations on posture (tail, ears, crouching, jumping, etc), vocalization, approach, or retreat, are noted, as well as reaction to a stare. If possible, this observation should be conducted twice, by two different people. These results are compared to comments that may have been left by a former owner (INTAKE information).

Stage Two:

If the dog shows positive, friendly signs, it is taken outside to determine sociability around other dogs (in kennels), ability to lead on a leash or be held and restrained. Reaction to touch and petting to body, ears, tail, and extremities are assessed, along with any indication that the dog knows commands.

Animal Transparency Act

- Animal Behavioral Assessment (cont.)

Stage Three:

The dog is taken to a quiet, empty room where it is assessed by two people to determine response to novel situation, response to physical examination, resource interest and guarding, food aggression, and other tests that will be adapted from professional systems used at other shelters.

Stage Four:

If the dog is placed in adoption, there will be a daily observation from outside the kennels to determine if there are changes in comportment related to territoriality, or stress of confinement. If this is the case, the dog will be re-assessed, starting with Stage One. In addition, cat-testing, individual (family) dog introduction through the perimeter fence, and sociability with children will be available as requested by potential adopters.

Animal Transparency Act

COMPLIANCE:

- The majority of the required records have already been generated by the Animal Shelter monthly for the last 2 years
- The Division will coordinate with the Information Technology Department for dissemination of the data via the County's website
- The Act is effective as of July 1st with changes to be implemented by July 31st

Animal Control – Penalty Fee Revisions

- **Items**

- **7a**
- **7c**
- **7h**

Action Required –

Schedule a public hearing for adoption of this Resolution