Strategic Housing Placement Guidelines

Strategic housing of animals refers to moving and placing animals throughout the shelter in a way which helps reduce length of stay, manages possible behavior concerns, and helps to reduce illness and cross contamination. Below are some basic guidelines to follow when moving animals through the building. This will apply to all staff members (field, kennel staff, techs, etc.).

**General**

**Fast track** animals refer to any animal who is likely to be seen and adopted very quickly (within 7 days or less). This includes small dogs, puppies/kittens, and animals who appear to be a desirable breed/breed mix (i.e., Husky, Bengal, Siamese, Golden Retriever, etc.). Behavior can also play a role in how quickly an animal is likely to be adopted with more social animals being faster track than those presenting with moderate-severe levels of FAS.

**Slow track** animals refer to any animal who has behavior and/or medical concerns or who appears physically similar to the majority of the population (i.e., blocky headed dogs, brown tabbies).

**Moving animals to the floor**

Strategically moving animals to the adoption floor can help to decrease length of stay for animals in care therefore opening up space and resources to be better utilized. The below guidelines should be followed to the best of staff’s ability:

* Cats should be housed in their “final” destinations upon entrance to the shelter if the following criteria is met
  + Vaccinated upon intake
  + No obvious significant medical concerns
* Dogs exhibiting FAS 4 or lower should be vaccinated upon intake and placed into the admissions kennel area until an intake exam has been performed
* If an animal does not meet the above criteria, see the following:
  + Dogs:
    - If FAS is 5 or presenting with other serious behavior concerns, place in 173
    - If on Rabies Quarantine due to a bite, place in 173
    - If animal is part of an open police investigation, place in 173
    - All other incoming dogs should go first into admissions kennel to have a medical exam. These dogs should spend no longer than 24 hours in this space.
      * Move fast track animals to the floor as soon as space is available regardless of length of stay
      * Fast track animals who are being reclaimed or have holds do not need to be housed on the adoption floor and can be placed in other areas of the shelter if available and appropriate
      * Move slow track animals to the floor as space is available and as deemed behaviorally appropriate only if there are no faster track animals available
  + Cats:
    - If ringworm is suspected, place in 145
    - If scabies is suspected, place in 144
    - If needs assessed due to medical concerns, place in 138
* Cats should be moved minimally as it is very stressful for them, and stress has been linked with increased risk of respiratory illness. Please house a cat in their “final” destination within the shelter as often as possible.
* Animals should always be housed in double sided housing. Rare exceptions may be:
  + Dogs housed in admissions due to medical concerns until seen by Veterinarian
  + Dogs housed in admissions at intake for examination. Should not be housed here longer than 24 hours.
  + Cats placed in non-portalized housing due to lack of availability for portalized housing

**Placement within building**

When moving animals to the adoption floor, use the following housing options and strategies:

**Cats**

Keep in mind that cats are particularly prone to stress and that this can have significant negative effects on both physical and mental health. Please move cats minimally and do so with their traveling cat box.

* **Free Roaming Rooms**

All adult cats should be housed in free roaming rooms if they fit the following criteria

* + Are altered
  + Are vaccinated
  + Do not have any medical concerns
  + Behavior concerns may or may not be present but will not be a limiting factor. Cats presenting with behavior issues, often improve with space and choice thus a free roaming room is more ideal than a cage.
  + There is open space in the free roaming rooms (Maximum of 4 cats in each of the free roaming rooms 181/190/187A/187B, maximum of 2 cats each in the free roaming rooms 162/165).
* **Cages**

Cats who do not fit the above criteria may be housed in cages. Please follow the criteria below when housing a cat in a cage. Place in rooms 184 and 185.

* + Use portalized cages first
  + Use top cages first (portalization takes priority over top cage)

**Dogs**

* Adoption floor

Placement in kennels should be guided by the following:

* + Quieter spaces
    - Typically, 180, 174, 175 due to the physical set up and smaller number of animals in those “pods”
    - Quieter spaces are great for all dogs, but especially for fearful dogs or dogs who are frustrated/anxious
  + Dogs displaying reactive type behaviors towards other dogs
    - Dogs who are displaying significant reactive type behaviors towards other dogs should ideally be housed in one of the quieter sections and in the kennel on the end closest to the door. This allows for this animal to be walked out of the kennel without having to pass other dogs, as well as allows for easy management whilst other dogs are being walked.
  + Dogs displaying reactive type behaviors towards people
    - Dogs who are displaying significant reactive type behaviors towards people passing their kennel should be placed in lower trafficked areas (i.e., not right in front of a door).
  + Dogs with LOS>30 days
    - Dogs whose length of stay exceeds 30 days, should have their kennel location changed to help provide from a change of scenery, as well as provide a different view for the public. This should be done for every additional 30 days they are in shelter care.
    - Above guidelines should still be followed as applicable.
* ISO-173
  + ISO (173) should be reserved for dogs on Rabies Quarantine, dogs who are part of open police investigations, or dogs who are being behaviorally assessed due to significant fearful behavior or observed aggression.