

	Pet Evaluation Matrix	To: ██████████ Staff, Volunteers, and Public
Effective Revision Date:	██████████	Approved By: ████████████████████
Prepared By:	██████████████████	

██████████ Animal Care and Adoption

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I. Purpose

██████████ Animal Care wants the best for its animals and places animals on the most expedient path to a better quality of life. We determine a successful outcome by assigning the following condition categories during the initial intake process for all dogs and cats. These categories are called the Pet Evaluation Matrix and are developed out of the Asilomar Conditions created by animal welfare leaders at the Asilomar Accords of 2004. The categories include: Healthy, Treatable/Rehabilitable (T/R), Treatable/Manageable (T/M), Unhealthy/Untreatable (U/U). Proper categorization requires assessment of both medical and behavioral characteristics of the animal. Updates to the assigned category may occur at any time during the animal's stay when deemed appropriate by supervisory staff or a veterinary physician. Recorded categories may "decrease," but may not "increase," so that animals' least healthy state is included in their record. Categories do not determine final disposition for each animal. These standards are adopted from the Oregon Shelter Coalition and Orange County, FL Pet Evaluation Matrices.

II. Procedures

a. Healthy Category

The term "**Healthy**" as stated in the Asilomar Accord Definitions "*includes all dogs and cats eight weeks of age or older that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet; and have manifested no sign of disease, injury, or a congenital/hereditary condition that adversely affects the health of the animal or that is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future.*" Cats and dogs who meet the definition of "**healthy**" are reasonably healthy both physically and mentally. These animals do not need medical or behavioral intervention in order to be considered adoptable by a member of the ██████████ County community when provided minimal counseling and/or basic resources.

"**Healthy**" animals may include those that are old, deaf, blind, scarred, or disabled (including cataracts or luxating patellas), but are not in any pain. These animals do not require medical treatment, and are social, healthy, friendly pets (or free-roaming cats). Age, breed, and time at the shelter do not affect the definition of "Healthy."

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b. Treatable/Rehabilitatable (T/R) Category

The term “**treatable/rehabilitatable**” as stated in the Asilomar Accord Definitions “means and includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy,” but who are likely to become “healthy,” if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community.”

This care must be available and within the resources of ██████████ County Animal Care, or the animal must be able to be transferred to an individual or organization that can provide said care in such time as quality of life and prognosis can be sustained. The prognosis must be fair to good to meet this definition.

c. Treatable/Manageable (T/M)

The term “**treatable/manageable**” as stated in the Asilomar Accord Definitions “includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy,” and who are not likely to become “healthy,” regardless of the care provided; but who would likely maintain a satisfactory quality of life, if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care, including long-term care, equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community; provided, however, that the term “manageable” does not include any dog or cat who is determined to pose a significant risk to human health or safety or to the health or safety of other animals.”

This care must be available and within the resources of ██████████ County Animal Care, or the animal must be able to be transferred to an individual or organization that can provide said care in such time as quality of life and prognosis can be sustained. All of the above is provisional however, that the term “treatable/manageable” does not include any dog or cat who is determined to pose a significant risk to human health or safety or to the health or safety of other animals. The prognosis must be fair to good to meet this definition.

d. Unhealthy/Untreatable (U/U)

The category “unhealthy/untreatable” as stated in the Asilomar Accord Definitions means and includes dogs and cats who at or subsequent to the time they are taken into possession: Have a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that poses a health or safety risk or otherwise makes the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet (including a free-roaming cat), and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable” even if provided

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the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the ████████ community; or

- i. Are suffering from a disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the animal's health or is likely to adversely affect 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 guardians in the ████████ community; or*
- ii. Are under the age of eight weeks and are not likely to become "healthy" or "treatable," even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community."*

Furthermore, a pet is categorized as Unhealthy/Untreatable if they:

- iii. Have a medical or behavioral prognosis that is diagnosed as poor, guarded, or grave (see Matrix of Health Conditions).
- iv. Are an unsocial outdoor cat who has a condition which would be treatable or manageable, except that management would be prohibitive or treatment life limiting if returned to field (e.g. amputation, rodent ulcers).
- v. Any T/M or T/R condition causing unmanageable pain or comorbid with behavior that does not allow for treatment in shelter without sedation. Furthermore, categorizing a condition as unhealthy/untreatable does not mean that the animal will be euthanized if a willing foster home, transfer or rescue agency is able to provide care and placement for that pet within a reasonable time frame in which neither safety or welfare of the pet and pet owner is further compromised.

e. Matrix of Health Conditions

i. Prognoses

Prediction of the probable course of a disease or condition in an individual pet and the chances of recovery:

- a. **Good** – favorable outcome is expected and/or may be easily managed
- b. **Fair** – favorable outcome is possible and/or manageable

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- c. **Guarded** – outcome is unknown
- d. **Poor** – non-favorable outcome is expected
- e. **Grave** – death is imminent

Conditions	Category Summary
Healthy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Older than eight weeks 2. No signs of disease 3. No behavior/temperament issues posing health or safety risk
Treatable/Rehabilitatable (T/R)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not healthy, but likely to become healthy with proper care 2. Care must available via Animal Care or rescue group 3. No behavior/temperament issues posing health or safety risk 4. Prognosis fair to good
Treatable/Manageable (T/M)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not likely to become healthy with treatment 2. Likely to have good quality of life with ongoing treatment 3. No behavior/temperament issues posing health or safety risk 4. Prognosis fair to good
Unhealthy/Untreatable (U/U)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Behavior/temperament issues posing a health or safety risk, even if provided care b. Not likely to become treatable or healthy c. Unsocial outdoor cat with condition(s) that prohibits return to field d. Treatable but with unmanageable pain or comorbid with behavior that requires sedation e. Under eight weeks of age

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The following are examples of various health conditions and their associated categories. This list is not inclusive:

Asilomar	Condition	Pathway
Healthy	Aged	Adoption
Healthy	Disabled (deaf, blind, missing limb)	Adoption
Healthy	Cataracts	Adoption
Healthy	Luxating patellas	Adoption
T/R	Internal or External Parasites (demodex, fleas, ticks, scabies, worms, etc.)	Adoption
T/R	Heartworm	Adoption
T/R	Calici	Adoption
T/R	Cherry Eye	Adoption
T/R	Conjunctivitis	Adoption
T/R	Entropion, Ectropion,	Adoption
T/R	Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease (CIRD)/Kennel	Adoption
T/R	Fractures resolvable by cage rest or amputation	Adoption, preceded by foster if necessary
T/R	Ringworm	Foster, then Adoption
T/M	Heart Murmur	Adoption
T/M	Allergies	Adoption
T/M	Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)	Adoption

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T/M	Kidney Disease (stage 1 – manageable by diet)	Adoption
T/M	Thyroid disorders	Adoption
T/M	Keratoconjunctivitis sicca (KCS) (chronic dry eye, dogs)	Adoption
T/M	Arthritis	Adoption
T/M	Chronic Otitis Externa	Adoption
T/M	Chronic Upper Respiratory Infections, including suspected feline Herpes Virus	Adoption
U/U	FIV with clinical signs	Euthanasia
U/U	Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) with clinical signs	Euthanasia
U/U	Distemper	Euthanasia
U/U	Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)	Euthanasia
U/U	Cancer – metastasized and/or inoperable	Fospice, Euthanasia
U/U	Congestive Heart Failure	Fospice, Euthanasia
U/U	Emergency or severe medical condition such that would require overnight hospitalization	Transfer to medical transfer partner, Euthanasia, Explore using overnight care depending on prognosis and pathway
U/U	Nursing kittens	Immediate foster or rescue
U/U	Panleukopenia (positive with signs of illness, and those housed in the same cage)	Euthanasia
U/U	Parvo	Immediate transfer, Euthanasia
U/U	Rabies	Euthanasia

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U/U	Dental Disease, severe	Transfer
U/U	Diabetes	Transfer within reasonable time period to maintain possible positive prognosis, Euthanasia
U/U	Incontinence	Transfer
U/U	Kidney Disease (not manageable by diet)	Transfer, Euthanasia
U/U	Epilepsy	Transfer within reasonable time period to maintain possible positive prognosis, Euthanasia
U/U	Fractures which would require orthopedic surgery	Transfer, Explore outside medical care depending on prognosis and pathway
U/U	Failure to thrive	Euthanasia
U/U	Respiratory distress, agonal, or lateral recumbancy	Euthanasia
U/U	Deteriorating quality of life (in daily QOL assessment)	Transfer, Foster, Euthanasia
U/U	Organ failure	Euthanasia

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f. Behavioral Conditions: Assessment and Categorization

Healthy categorization includes animals that have no identified behavioral problems and exhibit normal levels of species typical behaviors. These include, but are not limited to:

- i. Scratching inanimate objects (cats)
- ii. Jumping on elevated perches (cats)
- iii. Play
- iv. Digging
- v. Vocalization – barking/meowing
- vi. Initial shyness behaviors when exposed to novelty (new people, objects, situations)
- vii. Apparently “feral” behaviors for cats found free roaming (and who may be returned to their location of origin)

For an animal with an undesirable displayed behavior, two things should be identified:

- i. What triggers (starts/initiates/prompts) the behavior

Examples include:

- a. A child nearby (could be fear aggression/fear)
- b. A squirrel (predatory aggression)
- c. A loud noise (noise phobia)
- d. Being left alone (separation-related anxiety)
- e. An unfamiliar person walking onto the dog’s territory (territorial aggression)
- ii. A description of what the animal does when triggered:
 - a. This may include a description of past injuries that the dog has inflicted, past damage on inanimate objects that the dog or cat has caused, behavior that has been witnessed by the staff (e.g. when you walked in the room the dog growled at you).
 - b. The description of the behavior will be classified into mild, moderate, and severe levels of unwanted behavior.

g. Triggers

- i. Level 1: well-defined (discrete) triggers and avoidable triggers

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Examples:

- a. Dog attempts to bite only when trimming nails
- b. Dog is scared of flags waiving in the wind
- ii. Level 2: well-defined (discrete) triggers but unavoidable in some households

Examples:

- a. Dog only attempts to bite toddlers; in households without children, close contact with toddlers is avoidable
- b. Dog is scared of loud noises
- iii. Level 3: poorly defined/unidentifiable triggers and/or unavoidable triggers (includes “unprovoked”):

Examples:

- a. Dog growls whenever you walk by
- b. Dog is aggressive to all men (impossible to avoid men)
- c. Dog is always upset when left alone
- d. Cat hides under the bed all the time

h. Intensity of Unwanted Behavior

i. Mild:

- a. Warnings such as stare/tension/growl/snarl/head threat (turning head quickly around in direction of intended target)/ Level 1 bite (air snap) with indication that the dog is not actually attempting to bite. These actions are targeted to humans, animals of same species, and animals of other species (may be predatory behavior, see triggers).
- b. Mild anxiety with mild destruction and/or vocalization. Anxious displays easy to interrupt with handler vocalization and/or body language and animal does not resume anxious displays after handler intervention ceases (easily redirectable).

ii. Moderate:

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- a. Level 2 bite – teeth make contact, but no puncture. May be a tooth scrape with minimal bleeding. Also includes animals with barriers in place to prevent contact (muzzle, fencing), but due to body language and before and after attempted bite behavior indicate that bite would have been Level 2 had contact been made (e.g. warning, snap that would have made contact, followed by no further attempts to bite.) These actions are targeted to humans, animals of same species, and animals of other species (may be predatory behavior, see triggers).
- b. Moderate anxiety with moderate destruction and/or vocalization. Anxious displays are interruptible by handler but may take several attempts or sustained effort to interrupt. Animal may be redirected, but it may take sustained interventions (e.g. a Kong taking the place of bedding to chew on).
- c. Animal may be challenging to handle during routine sheltering activities, yet all animal care staff can interact with them without fear of Level 2 bite.
- iii. Severe:
 - a. Level 3 to 6 bites – puncture wounds, superficial multiple wounds, and more escalated biting behavior. Also includes animals with barriers in place to prevent contact (muzzle, fencing) that exhibit Level 1 warnings and then actively bite, swat, or otherwise attack the barrier. These actions are targeted to humans, animals of same species, and animals of other species (may be predatory behavior, see triggers).
 - b. Animal is sustaining self-injury; their welfare is compromised.
 - c. Animal is putting staff at risk during routine activities.
 - d. Number of staff able to interact is limited to one or two staff members.

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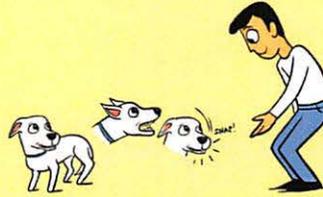
i. Categorization Based Upon Level of Trigger and Intensity Level of Unwanted Behavior:

	Trigger Level 1 (well-defined, avoidable)	Trigger Level 2 (well-defined, but may be unavoidable)	Trigger Level 3 (poorly defined, unidentifiable, and/or unavoidable)
Mild	T/M – T/R	T/M – T/R	T/M
Moderate	T/M – T/R	T/M – T/R	U/U
Severe	U/U	U/U	U/U

T/M – Treatable/Manageable
T/R – Treatable/Rehabilitatable
U/U – Unhealthy/Untreatable

Level 1 (Pre-Bite)

Snapping (air bite, no contact)



Get help before it progresses to an actual bite. Do not punish these warning signs or the dog may progress to biting without warning. Instead, learn the signs of fear and anxiety that the dog may show prior to this situation and the common human actions that might contribute.

Level 2 (Near-Bite)

Tooth contact on skin but no puncture



This near-bite is concerning even though it is inhibited and has not yet broken skin. Ask yourself what earlier signs (i.e. of fear/anxiety) you missed.

Level 3

3A. Skin punctures, single bite (all punctures shallower than the length of the canine tooth)



Even though the bite may not be severe it is still reportable. Reporting is mandatory if the victim is treated in a hospital. Once your dog has actually bitten at this level (or higher) he will always be considered a liability, even if, with behavior modification he is 99.9% improved.

3B. Skin punctures, multiple bites (all punctures shallower than the length of the canine tooth)



Multiple bites generally mean the dog is in a higher arousal state. The dog is reacting without thinking in between bites.

Level 4 (Very Serious)

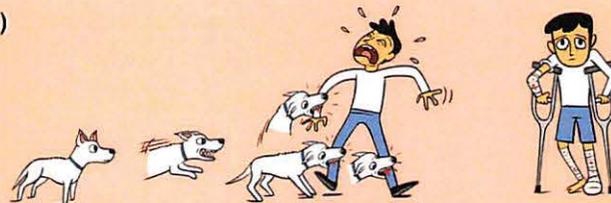
Single bite with puncture deeper than the length of the canine (the dog bit and clamped down) or with slashes in both directions from the puncture (the dog bit and shook his head)



This is a harder bite than a level 3 bite. It's no longer inhibited. Therefore, it represents a much higher liability. This level bite can kill a child.

Level 5 (Very Serious)

Multiple-bite attack with deep punctures, or multiple attack incident



Dogs that bite at this level have generally had practice biting at levels 3 and 4 already. Some dogs are so fearful that a scary event triggers such a high arousal state that they get stuck in a reactive mode and continue to bite.

Level 6 (Death)

Victim killed or flesh consumed



It's important to realize that even little dogs and puppies can kill infants and small children and that death may be due to overly aroused play, rather than viciousness or fear. It's best to seek qualified help before the dog even reaches a level 2 bite.

*These levels are based on the levels developed by Dr. Ian Dunbar

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