

**MASS CARE
PET SHELTERING OPERATIONS**

Primary Agency: **Department of Human Services**

Support Agencies: **Health Department, Division of Emergency Management (DEM), Parks and Recreation, Police, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Purchasing, Schools, Sheriff's Office, City Farm.**

I. AUTHORITY

In order to comply with the United States Pet Evacuation and Transportation Aid Act (H.R. 3858), the City of Newport News has developed specific plans for short term sheltering and evacuating pets during emergency situations. This plan will comply with the American Red Cross (ARC) and American Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and will take into consideration the needs of pet owners as well as, the safety of the public, and the health considerations of all citizens.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the City of Newport News Pet Friendly Sheltering Plan is to coordinate efforts to provide temporary refuge for pet owners and their pets during a disaster.

III. ASSUMPTION

This plan assumes that the Division of Emergency Management and supporting agencies have available a suitable location for the pet shelter and that sufficient personnel are available to support the shelter. The Division of Emergency Management has the capability at this time to supply a total of fifty (50) companion animal shelter spaces.

IV. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

The scope of this plan is to provide coordinating actions during an initial response phase of a disaster for pet owners. The plan considers the needs of the following domestic pets: dogs and cats. Large dogs that do not fit in an average kennel (40x27x30) will need to have a kennel provided by the owner in order to be housed in the pet shelter. Owners of exotic pets and agricultural livestock must act responsibly and take appropriate actions in providing care or evacuating their animals. Pet Rescue services are available to domestic animals found roaming after a disaster has occurred. Local animal control Division will take the animals to the peninsula regional facility for care.

V. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Companion Animals are domestic animals serving as household pets and family companions; this **only** includes dogs and cats in this plan. Companion animals cannot be admitted into the human shelter.

Service Animals: As defined by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a service dog guide, signal dog, or any other animal that is individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition; animals are considered service animals under ADA regulations regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. Service animals will be admitted to regular shelters along with their owner

Short Term Pet Sheltering is emergency sheltering for companion animals in the initial response phase of a disaster that impacts much of the City. Short Term Pet Sheltering will remain open as long as regular public shelters are open.

The following city agencies and or departments will be responsible for implementing parts of the pet shelter plan.

1. **The Division of Emergency Management (DEM)** has designated Warwick High School to serve as a primary sheltering facility with the capability to a pet-friendly shelter and be responsible for organizing all resource allocations necessary to maintain the facility during emergency operations. Denbigh High School has been designated as a secondary/backup site. Emergency Management will notify all participating support agencies responsible for managing the pet-friendly shelter.
2. **Finance Department** will use disaster account numbers to procure necessary goods to support Pet Sheltering Operations. An emergency purchase order for perishable and non-perishable items that will need to be bought in order to open pet shelters will need to be available. Resource requests that cannot be met locally will be forwarded to the Division of Emergency Management which will seek state and federal assistance to meet these requests..
3. **Newport News Public Schools** will open a pre-designated facility to use as a pet friendly shelter as detailed in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Division of Emergency Management and other support agencies. The nature of the hazard and the severity of the event will determine when shelter(s) will open. A pet-friendly shelter will be activated at the same time as other public shelters are being opened. This service will be provided on an emergency and temporary basis until local officials close the shelters. Newport News Schools will also staff and coordinate bus schedules for pets and pet owners for transportation to the shelter who do not have transportation for themselves.
4. **Human Services** will continue to operate and maintain responsibility of the non pet portion of the shelter. In addition they will provide for the mass care needs of the pet shelter operations team. Normal feeding and sanitation needs of the pets will be provided by the pet owners who are in the shelter. The operation of the pet shelter portion will be the responsibility of the Pet Shelter Manager.
5. **Animal Services** will continue to provide citywide animal control and respond to emergency situations involving loose animals or attacks on people and other pets. Animal

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Services will maintain existing agreements with the Peninsula SPCA regarding stray and exotic animal capture and control. Animal Services will be present at the registration for pet (animal) intake only. They will maintain an on-call status during short term sheltering operations. Their roles and responsibilities after a disaster will significantly change with their priority being placed on rescuing and detaining lost animals. Animal services will also take into custody any companion animal not claimed by the registered owner when the shelter is closed. Although efforts will be made to reunite the animal with registered owner; the final disposition of the companion animal will be accordance with normal animal control division policies and procedures.

6. **The Hampton Roads Chapter of the American Red Cross** will assist Human Services in registering and feeding all shelter evacuees and shelter staff.
7. **CERT** will be responsible for delivering perishable pet supplies and the transporting of the pet trailer to the pre-selected sheltering location; security and inventory of pet shelter equipment and supplies, and managing the Pet Shelter operations.
8. **City Farm** will be responsible for delivering the human shelter trailer(s), unloading the cots, blankets, and assisting Human Services with setting up cots.
9. **Purchasing Department** will process the requisition submitted by DEM for a professional cleaning contractor(s) to clean and sanitize cots, cages, pet bowls, rubber mats, and restoring the school to operational status.

VI. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

During an emergency evacuation, pet-owners will be encouraged to execute their personal pet disaster plans and make an early evacuation. Pet-owners and their pets may be unable to leave the city before the onset of tropical force winds and will have to take refuge in a short term pet-friendly shelter. A pet-friendly shelter will be activated at the same time as other public shelters and used only on an emergency and on a temporary basis. Pet shelters will close when emergency public shelters are closed.

When a decision is made by the Emergency Management Director to open emergency public shelters, the supporting agencies will be notified and should be ready to activate a pet-friendly shelter pre-designated by the Division of Emergency Management.

DEM will notify all supporting agencies when a decision is made to activate emergency shelters, this notice will also simultaneously activate the pet friendly shelters if the event is anticipated to last more than twenty-four hours. For isolated, no-notice events, such as flooding, pet sheltering may not be available. Pet owners are encouraged to make alternate arrangements for their pets for this short period. Emergency Management will also coordinate security and law enforcement services as needed, submit a requisition to the Purchasing Department for a professional contract cleaning company to put them on notice for cleaning and disinfecting cots, cages, rubber mats, pet bowls, and Pet Shelter hallways so that demobilization can occur quickly and seamlessly, and submit any eligible costs for reimbursement to FEMA.

DEM will notify City Farm or the CERT Logistics Section Leader (when available) of where the pre-selected pet shelter is located for picking up of pet supplies. City Farm or CERT will need to take supplies and pet trailers to the pre-designated pet shelters.

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Newport News Public Schools will open the pre-identified facility for the pet-friendly shelter. The school will also open a pre-identified space within the facility for sheltering pet owners and shelter support staff.

The Shelter Manager will assist the CERT Pet-Shelter Supervisor and his/her designee with getting supplies and resources from the Division of Emergency Management.

The Pet Sheltering Supervisor will maintain contact with, and provide shelter statistics to, the Shelter Manager. The Shelter Manager will relay that information to Emergency Operations Center either by telephone or through WEBEOC.

The Department of Human Services will send staff to the pre-designated pet-friendly shelters when public shelters have been activated. CERT and Animal Services will process and register all pet-owners with appropriate paperwork and forms of identification. Human Services will coordinate with other agencies, such as the American Red Cross, for the feeding and the well-being of pet-owners and support staff working at the pet shelter. Human Services staff are NOT allowed to bring their pets to the Pet Friendly Shelter, unless they are a resident and have been evacuated and are not working in the shelter.

Pet Friendly Shelters will remain open for as long as emergency public shelters are open. Upon closure of the pet-friendly shelter, the Human Services demobilization team will supervise the professional contracted cleaning company hired to clean and sanitize rubber mats, animal cages, pet owner cots, and dispose of blankets, cat litter, plastic liners, and animal feces. The CERT Logistics team will be responsible for returning all cages and equipment to the Pet Shelter trailer and performing inventory of the Pet Shelter supplies as it is being loaded back into the Pet Shelter trailer. An inventory of what items were used/lost/damaged during the activation will be given to the CERT Coordinator immediately upon closure of the Pet Friendly shelter. A professional contracted cleaning company will be responsible for cleaning and restoring all spaces utilized for sheltering pets. Human Services will be responsible for restoring all space occupied by pet owners, shelter guest and support staff. When cleanup efforts are finished the NNPS representative will certify that the schools are clean and have been restored to pre-activation condition.

In accordance with the Emergency Operations Plan, all participating agencies must submit reimbursement requests to the DEM which will then be submitted to FEMA. The City of Newport News Department of Finance will act as Applicant Agent and will be responsible for making payments to participating agencies.

All participating agencies will participate in a post-disaster evaluation (hot wash) hosted by the DEM in order to determine best practices and future pet-sheltering strategies. The Newport News Pet Sheltering Plan will be maintained and updated based on the results of post-disaster evaluations.

VII. PET SHELTERING TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Emergency Disaster Notification

When the decision is made by the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to open emergency public shelters; the Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) Pupil Transportation Department will be notified. The NNPS district will open the pre-identified facilities for sheltering pets, pet owners, and sheltering support staff.

Pet Transportation Operations

For those citizens who do not have means of transportation for the evacuation of their pets and themselves, the city will provide school bus transportation to the pet shelters. At the onset of an emergency, school buses will be placed at designated areas on standby for pet transportation. In addition, the Newport News School System will provide a bus attendant who will help with entering and exiting the bus and helping to seat riders. For health reasons, the dispatch staff will identify and assign pet drivers and attendants who are not allergic to pets. Separate buses will be provided for pet and owner transportation and will be separate from regular human transportation during the evacuation. Animal Control Division will be on call if needed to assist with a possibly aggressive animal.

Pets Traveling on Bus

Pet owners must have their pet in a carrying kennel before transportation and boarding the school bus. The kennels may be placed in a bus seat with the owner sitting next to the kennel. In the case of large sized animals that do not fit in a carrying kennel they must be leashed and wearing a muzzle, and under control of the owner. If the bus driver does not deem the animal to be under control, he is under no obligation to transport the animal and the pet owner will have to make other arrangements to get to the shelter. Necessary clean up supplies will be placed on the bus but it is the responsibility of the pet owner to clean up any messes made by their pet. A professional contracted cleaning company will be responsible for cleaning and restoring all buses used for pet transportation.

The School District will submit reimbursement requests through the Division of Emergency Management for payment of services and contracted services provided in support of the Newport News Pet Sheltering Plan.

Security will be provided by the appropriate law enforcement agency with one officer at the Pet Shelter and one officer at the human shelter.

VIII. PET SHELTERING PROCEDURES

Facility Requirements

Prior to using the facility as a Pet Friendly Shelter, a Pet Shelter Supervisor with the Sheltering Manager will physically inspect the site and do an inventory of the current condition of the facility. Pet Sheltering Supervisor and Sheltering Manager should make notes and photos of any damage, equipment, furniture, or materials present as well as cleanliness of the site. In order to prevent possible contamination the Heating, Ventilation and Air (HVA) systems must be turned off in the hallways that house the pets.

Break Down Procedures

The authority for closing the Pet Friendly Shelters rests with the Emergency Management Director. That decision will be communicated directly to the Sheltering Manager. The Shelter Manager will then communicate that information to the Pet Sheltering Supervisor. Once the decision has been made to close the Pet Friendly Shelter, break down can be initiated. Once owners have checked out all the animals housed in the Pet Friendly Shelter, all crates, kennels and cages will be cleaned by a professional cleaning contractor, broken down and removed from the facility. The cages can be cleaned outside the school or off-site.

Cages, crates and kennels will be cleaned before being returned to their appropriate storage locations.

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All crates, materials and supplies will be removed from the facility. The rubber runners will be cleaned, disinfected and rolled up prior to their return to storage. If the rubber runner is significantly damaged it can be discarded, but this must be captured in the post-event inventory. Plastic sheeting will be rolled up and removed last. The plastic sheeting will be disposed of on-site as it presents no biological hazard.

Following the closing of the shelter and the initial cleaning, the school system will use a pre-designated contract cleaning service to complete the cleanup. The Newport News Schools Plant Facilities will use their pre-designated contractor for this cleanup. This contract cleaner is responsible for cleaning and restoring all spaces utilized for sheltering pets.

Final Walk through of Facility:

The Pet Shelter Supervisor and Shelter Manager will physically inspect the building and pet walking area before leaving and correct any discrepancies noted. The Sheltering Manager should have a School Principal or Maintenance Supervisor walk through the school and certify that the school was left in good condition.

Pet Shelter Set up

The Pet shelter will be set up in accordance with the instructions contained in Appendix 1 Emergency Pet Shelter Standard Operating Guidelines. Appendix 2 contains the layout of both Denbigh and Warwick High Schools. Appendix 2 shows the applicable hallways that will be used to set up the shelters.

Material from the Pet Shelter Trailer will be used to set up the shelter. If any additional material is needed, a request must be made as quickly as possible so that the appropriate material can be acquired. If it appears that there will be a material shortage that might preclude full set up of an operational shelter; the pet shelter manager must notify the EOC so that appropriate action can be taken. Timely resolution of this matter will be required. An inventory of materials inside the pet shelter trailer is inside the pet shelter trailer.