

## **COVID-19 Update 3/25/20: SCHS Continues to be an Essential Community Resource**

Thank you for supporting the SCHS team as we have made so many operational changes to keep providing high-quality care for our animals while protecting our staff and community's health. Please take comfort knowing our animals are still receiving the love and care they deserve from our dedicated staff and volunteers.

We are pleased to share Wisconsin animal shelters like SCHS have been included as "Essential" in the Safer at Home order that starts March 25, 2020. SCHS will continue to offer adjusted services and be present as a resource for our community. See below for the most up-to-date detailed instructions on how to access our services. Through these uncertain times, SCHS will be here to help our community's people and animals.

Most important, rest assured, we are still an open-admission shelter. We will not turn any animal away, nor will we put them on a waiting list. Whether you find yourself in difficult circumstances and cannot take care of your animals or find a stray, there will be no judgment or criticism from us if you release them to us.

You do not need to tie a stray dog to a guardrail or dump cats on the side of the road, nor do you have to wait until we leave the shelter to put the animals in crates or cages at the shelter. You may bring them to us during the day, if possible. However, if we are gone, please call the number listed on the door so we can dispatch an employee to bring the animal in. Please see detailed instructions below.

If you find injured or orphaned wildlife, we will take that, too, or refer you to the proper authorities.

An open-admission shelter does not close its doors to the animals, even during a pandemic!

And it goes without saying, we could not begin to continue to serve our community without our existing volunteers, foster networks, and members of the community supporting us through these changes.

### **Here are our guidelines effective 25 March 2020:**

The SCHS team will be on hand to care for the animals and provide resources to the community, however, our doors will be locked to minimize unnecessary foot traffic. If you have an animal to bring in, an appointment or have called ahead to let us know you are coming (more info below), or need to access resources such as our pet food pantry, please ring the bell at the front door entrance and someone will assist you. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to keep everyone safe, animals and humans.

We are expecting a heavy call volume at a time when we anticipate reduced staffing levels, so please be patient and leave a voice mail message. We will return your call as soon as we are able.

## **VISITOR GUIDELINES**

Visitors to our facility are asked to use hand sanitizer and wash their hands frequently to prevent the spread of any illness. Because we are a small facility, we are limiting visitors in our lobby. So even if you have an appointment, you may be asked to wait outside or in your car. We ask that you be patient with us during this difficult time as we strive to keep everyone safe and healthy.

In addition, we ask you not visit the facility if you:

- Had direct contact with anyone who has been confirmed to have COVID-19 or visited a high risk area within the past 14 days.
- Have a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, including older people and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions.
- Feel sick, especially if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing or any flu-like symptoms within the past 14 days.

## **ADOPTIONS**

We have many wonderful animals looking for new homes, so we encourage you to visit our [website](#) to view them. If you are interested in possibly adopting one of the animals you see, please call us to make an appointment to meet the lucky candidate. From there, our regular adoption policies and procedures will apply.

## **STRAY ANIMALS**

If you have found a stray animal, we will be available as business as usual, however, if you are able, please call us ahead of time so we can be prepared for your arrival. Our animal drop off hours are Sunday – Saturday 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; . We are also available to take animals at other times. Please call dispatch at 608-355-4495 to arrange either pick up or for someone to meet you at the shelter.

## **SURRENDERS**

If you need to surrender your pet, if you are able, please call us to arrange a time. We will not require you to make an appointment, however, we want to be prepared for your arrival. If this is not possible, please ring the bell at the front door and someone will assist you. Please be patient if we ask you to wait outside or in your car.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

If you need humane euthanasia for your pet, please call us to arrange a time. We are available for this service 24/7 but want to be prepared for your arrival.

We are continuing our low cost spay/neuter clinic on a limited basis for cats only. At this time, we are not doing dogs. Please call 608-356-2520 to get more information.

## **SCHS NEEDS**

In addition to adopters, our greatest need is for monetary donations to provide critical care for our community's animals at this time.

While we have enough of most supplies to care for the animals, we are now running low on several items. Our most urgent needs can be purchased from our Amazon Wishlist and sent directly to the shelter. That includes non clumping kitty litter, Purina Kitten Chow, and Science Diet wet kitten food (minced). All of these items can be ordered online from our Amazon [Wishlist](#) where they will be sent directly to the shelter.

Because we have had to cancel our largest fundraisers of the year, we are expecting a significant impact to our budget which will directly affect the animals. Please consider making a [donation](#) via our website or via a Make A Donation button on our [Facebook](#) page.

## **CARING FOR OWNED PETS DURING COVID-19**

- Please make sure pets are wearing a collar with an accurate ID tag and ensure their microchip registration is up to date, including your emergency contact(s)
- Have extra food, litter, medication and other supplies on hand, as well as a crate or carrier should moving your pet becomes necessary
- Document your animal's medications, veterinarian and other relevant information should anyone else need to take over their care
- Identify a trusted family member, friend, neighbor or pet sitter who can care for your pet if you become ill or are hospitalized
- By creating a preparedness plan ahead of time for the unlikely event it becomes necessary to put into motion, community members can do their part to ensure SCHS and other area animal service resources do not become overwhelmed and spare your pet from unnecessary stress.