

## **Animal Aid Inc 571 NE 44th ST. Oakland Park, FL 33334**

### ***EUTHANASIA POLICY - 10/20/2017***

#### **About Animal Aid**

Founded in 1999 and Incorporated in 2001, now based in Oakland Park, Florida, Animal Aid is a non-profit pet rescue, adoption center and clinic. Animal Aid places more than 1400 dogs and cats in loving homes each year. We also spay and neuter more than 5000 dogs and cats per year. Animal Aid serves more than 12,000 clients per year low cost annual vaccines. Animal Aid survives completely by donations.

Nearly all of the dogs and many of the cats we rescue come from shelters where they are to be euthanized within 24 – 48 hours. Animal Aid takes in hundreds of animals that otherwise would have no chance of living.

As one of the few rescues with a clinic, Animal Aid is fortunate to be able to take in animals that require urgent care. We take on cases others will not. A heartbreak we face is that some animals' medical needs are so advanced we are ultimately unable to save them.

Animal Aid is also known for giving every chance to aggressive or biting dogs that would be put down almost immediately. Although very rare, we have to face the difficult decision of what to do about severely aggressive dogs that after extensive socialization and behavioral work continue unprovoked to attack or severely bite and injure people or other animals. These are dogs that we cannot ethically place in any home situation.

#### **Addressing Severe Aggression**

*With regard to severe aggression our dog placement leaders interact extensively and daily over a period of weeks and months with these dogs in an effort to socialize them such that behaviors are successfully modified. With this we have an outstanding record of success. In more extreme cases we often place these dogs in foster care with very experienced handlers in hope that behavior in settings outside the shelter environment can create improvement. We also work with an experienced, certified dog trainer.*

## **Euthanasia Policy (continued)**

Our policy covers three distinct scenarios: end of life care when there is no hope, severe trauma with suffering and no chance for survival, and cases of such severe aggression that would place an adopter at risk. In each of these scenarios we have adopted very clear policies.

1. End of life Care – these are pets that are terminally ill and in a state of suffering. In these cases our veterinarians would prescribe humane euthanasia, which then must be unanimously agreed by all team members, if one team member disagrees, euthanasia is not performed.
2. Trauma – these are animals that have come to us severely injured. They are suffering and there are no medical or surgical options that can reasonably be expected to save their lives. In these cases our veterinarians would prescribe humane euthanasia, which then must be unanimously agreed by all team members.
3. Severe Aggression – These are our most difficult cases. For this we have a very rigid policy managed by very experienced people. A group of not less than six people with extensive dog and other animal handling experience must unanimously agree that this is the right course. This group includes our director, our dog handlers and adoption leaders who have the most direct daily contact and nurture responsibilities, a staff veterinarian and our veterinary technician who also has daily interaction with pets, and a certified animal behaviorist. We then revisit the situation the next day or several days later to reconsider the and then make a final determination.

Decision team members are: Animal Aid's President, Vice President, three board members and our canine behaviorist. If one of these team members does not agree with the euthanasia - it is not performed.

**Note:** The decision to euthanize an animal in our care is very painful and It is one that is not taken lightly. Animal Aid is deeply committed to placing every cat and dog we can.

We take on the hardest cases and we have had enormous success. Every week we place wonderful animal companions. In addition to the healthiest, most perfect dogs and cats, we successfully place many dealing with blindness, repaired or amputated limbs, animals that have had extensive life-saving surgeries, dogs requiring lifelong medication, some nearing the end of life, and some that nip at strangers.

This gives us enormous pride.