

# Animal Admissions FAQ's

## **1. Why did HSBC move to offering an appointment to surrender?**

By allowing owners to be present at the time of the animal's evaluation for placement, it means they can take a more active role in the future of their pet. Owners know their pet better than anyone and by providing as much information as possible about them will:

- Help to ensure the best possible outcome for their pet
- Ensure that we can provide the best possible care for their animal
- Allow us to move their pet more quickly through our shelter and into a new home

Prior to surrender by appointment, we had no control over the number of animals that would come into our care each day. We often experienced a flood of animals which hindered our ability to provide the best care possible. The high volume of animals also led to increased stress and illness in the shelter.

## **2. When did you make this change?**

Communications to the public about the change to surrender by appointment began in fall 2013.

## **3. It seems like this whole process is designed so that you take in less animals. Are you not an "Open-Admission" shelter anymore? Won't there be more animals abandoned by their owners?**

The Humane Society of Broward County is still open-admission – we continue to accept any owned animals with proof of ownership. We still offer a walk-in service to surrender as well. Our process of taking in animals by appointment allows us to provide more for your pet when it comes into our care.

Prior to making this change, we consulted with animal shelters across the country that already accepts animals by appointment. Those communities recognized the incredible benefits of surrendering their animals by appointment and have not seen an increase in abandoned animals. We expect the same here, but will work with other animals welfare agencies to ensure our community responds the same.

## **4. What is an Open-Admission shelter?**

An "Open-Admission" shelter means we will accept all owned pets with proof of ownership. There are no age limitations, behavioral requirements, or health

standards necessary to surrender your pet. Unfortunately not every animal we meet is an adoptable candidate. At the Humane Society of Broward County, we base our criteria for adoptable pets on their health and temperament. Pets entering the shelter must appear healthy and friendly when coming in and stay that way while they are here.

A shelter is a scary environment and some animals do not adjust well to the stressful change. As friendly as a pet may be with you at home, being confined in a cage in an unfamiliar environment can cause aggression and health issues and can cause existing issues to worsen. Despite our best efforts, not every pet will be able to adjust to the new environment. At that point, we would make the decision to humanely euthanize the pet.

## **5. What is the difference between surrendering by appointment and walking-in?**

When you schedule an appointment to surrender your pet, the whole process gives us more information on the animal. We can spend more time evaluating the pet and we are able to inform the owner of the pet's "adoptability".

When you walk-in to surrender, the admissions staff will ask you basic questions regarding the pet and we will discuss your options and possible alternative solutions for your pet. The animal will be evaluated on health and temperament by our clinic staff at a later time. When we do the evaluation, you will not be notified of his/her status at that point.

## **6. What should I expect from my appointment?**

When you arrive for your appointment, check in at the "Admissions" department.

- There is a fee of \$45 for one pet and an additional \$20 for another animal.
- Your appointment will take approximately 45 minutes and will include a health exam and behavior evaluation of the animal.
- During your appointment, our clinic staff will greet you and your pet, ask necessary questions and then take your pet to an evaluation room and begin the process.
- After we have gathered information about your pet and the exam and evaluation are complete, we will discuss the results and options with you so you can make the best decision for your pet.
  - If your pet is a candidate for adoption, it will be placed into our adoption center immediately and would only be euthanized if it were to get sick or aggressive while up for adoption. (After the initial evaluation, you will not be notified of his/her status)

→ If your pet does not meet the adoption criteria, a staff member will discuss your options and possible alternative solutions for your pet.

Please keep in mind that the appointment fee is non-refundable regardless of the outcome or services provided. Please take into consideration that some pets coming into a shelter environment can be immediately unapproachable due to fear.

### **7. Why can't I be in the room when the Behavior Evaluation is done?**

Owners present during the evaluation will be a distraction to the animal. We would like to see how the pet reacts in a different environment around unfamiliar people. In order to get our best, most objective results, we ask that you wait in the lobby. The staff will go over the results as soon as the evaluation is completed.

### **8. Buddy has always been a friendly dog/cat; I don't understand how he/she could have failed the Behavior Evaluation.**

Please understand that your pet's behavior may be different in a strange environment being handled by unfamiliar people. Animals will often act differently when surrounded by persons unknown to them, and that is what they will experience on the adoption floor.

### **9. Can't you do the Behavior Evaluation over/again?**

We need to base our decision on the information presented to us during the initial behavior evaluation. The animal will know what to expect the next time around. If the animal presents aggressively at any point, even if he/she doesn't do so again, we know that the underlying aggression is there. We do our best to place only healthy, friendly animals for adoption.

### **10. What if I miss my appointment or need to reschedule?**

If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please call **954-266-6873** and leave a voicemail on the machine stating **Your Name**, the **Pet's Name**, and **Day/Time** of your appointment. Please call us no less than 24 hours in advance, so the appointment time can be available to another owner in need. Please keep in mind another appointment may not be available right away.

### **11. Why do you need my personal information?**

We collect each person's name, address, phone, and email during the appointment setting process to maintain accurate records for the transfer of ownership, and to have contact information for appointment confirmations. You will also be required to show identification during the appointment. The surrender contract acts as a transfer of ownership and your identification (driver's license, etc.) will serve to verify your representation as the legal owner of the animal.

### **12. What if I don't want to make an appointment?**

If you are not interested in making an appointment, we do offer a walk-in service to surrender your pet during our normal business hours. There is a minimum \$25 surrender fee donation at time of surrender. (Exact cash, credit or check is accepted)

### **13. Why should I contact my local Animal Control agency when I find a stray?**

The local animal control agency is most likely the first place an owner will go to or contact when their pet goes missing. In order to give the pet its best chance to be reunited promptly with its owner, we recommend that you have animal control be your first point of contact. The county where you found the pet is where you should contact. (Ex: A pet found in Miami-Dade county should be reported to Miami Dade Animal Services. A pet found in Broward should be reported to Broward County Animal Care & Adoptions.) Also, most cities provide animal control services for the purpose of capturing and housing animals at large. Your tax dollars are used to fund such services.

### **14. Can I visit on my pet while he/she is up for adoption?**

We highly discourage visiting the pet after surrendering. Coming to see the animal places so much stress on him/her and can contribute to making them sick or depressed in the kennels.

### **15. Why is there a fee to surrender?**

The cost to care for and re-home pets can be in the hundreds of dollars for each animal that comes into our care. The Humane Society of Broward County asks for a surrender fee to help subsidize this cost.

Our shelter does not receive government funding and is not affiliated with any national humane organizations. Your tax dollars help pay for your local animal control, but they do not benefit the Humane Society of Broward County, which

is a private, nonprofit organization. Therefore, surrender fees are critical to helping us care for the animals coming through our doors each day.

After you surrender the pet, please keep in mind that the surrender fee is non-refundable, regardless of the outcome or services provided.