



## The Companion Animal Care Standards Act for Shelters and Rescues

The Companion Animal Care Standards Act for Shelters and Rescues will replace the existing shelter/rescue registration law, enacting new requirements for facilities and care and creating a mechanism for inspection by the State. It applies to **all animal organizations with a facility**, including facilities which also serve as personal homes, making them subject to inspection. It does not apply to veterinary practices, wildlife facilities, boarding kennels, pet stores/deals, or foster homes.

The law requires annual inspection and licensure of \$150 and provides provisions for suspension or revocation of a license, as well as associated fines.

**Below is a broad overview of the law but is by no means comprehensive. It is recommended that all New York sheltering and rescue agencies read the law in full to understand how they may be impacted by it. [Read the full law here.](#)**

### Personnel Training Requirements

Requires a formalized training program for all staff and volunteers to include animal handling, infectious disease, sanitation, body language, documentation, and data entry.

### Recordkeeping

Requires the maintenance of statistics to include total annual animal intake and disposition as well as by species, source, and type of disposition; requires individual records for each animal cared for by the shelter or rescue. Formal agreements are required for each foster home including contact information and number of animals cared for. Records must be maintained and made available for inspection for a period of 3 years.

### General Facility Standards

Requires the facility to be of sound structure, allowing for the protection and confinement of housed animals and restricted entry of unauthorized individuals. Facilities must meet specific requirements for surface, drainage, electrical power including emergency backup, HVAC, noise, isolation, and pest control among others.

### Animal Housing

Requires animal housing to be non-porous and able to withstand routine cleaning and disinfection; requires enclosures to be structurally sound and in good repair, allowing animals to remain safe, clean, and dry. Establishes requirements for co-housing including which animals may be housed together and when.

## Sanitation

Requires formal sanitation protocols including personnel hygiene; sanitation protocol must provide adequate cleaning and disinfection for existing pathogens according to published recommendations and literature.

## Shelter Management Protocols

Requires a formal, documented management structure including reporting relationships and responsibilities, available to all personnel including volunteers. Licensed entities would be required to have a clear, written management structure that defines staff authority, reporting structure and responsibilities, and is readily accessible to all staff and volunteers.

Requires staffing levels necessary to meet minimum requirements including daily feeding, cleaning, enrichment, and exercise; requires daily management observation to ensure care requirements are met. Requires that the number of animals housed shall not exceed the number of housing units available at a facility (exceptions allowed for animal cruelty seizures or natural disasters).

## Animal Husbandry

Outlines requirements for food, water, associated storage, provision of meals, and observation and documentation. Outlines requirements for humane handling, restraint, safety, and prohibited practices.

## Veterinary Care

Requires the coordination of veterinary services with a licensed veterinarian, including provision of medication and treatments. Requires shelters/rescues to provide veterinary assessment of animals in a timely fashion. Outlines requirements for the administering of vaccines, parasite control, exams, pain management, grooming, spay/neuter, and similar care for animals in foster.

## Behavior

Requires the collection of behavioral history at the time of intake and documentation of behavioral information and observation, as well as provision of behavioral support within the animals' records. Outlines requirements for daily exercise and enrichment, specific measures for animals' demonstrated behavioral deterioration or stress, and allows for the performance of standardized behavioral evaluations. Requires shelters/rescues to disclose all behavior information prior to transfer or adoption.

## Transportation

Outlines requirements for transport vehicles including restrictions on open-air transport, such as on a flat bed or pick-up truck, heating and cooling requirements and safe confinement. Requires shelters/rescues to ensure receiving transport partners have the capacity to care for animals from the source shelter and requires the administration of vaccines, examinations, and health certificates prior to transport.

Outlines requirements specific to the transporter including adherence to maximum transport periods, sanitation, feeding and watering, separation of sick and healthy, among others. Requires destination shelters to provide timely intake, including veterinary care and isolation. Prohibits shelters and rescues from sourcing animals less than one year of age from USDA-licensed dog breeders.

### Foster Care Providers

Requires formal, written agreements between shelters/rescues and foster homes to be renewed biennially.

### Importation

Requires a 48-hour hold following importation of any animal into the state.