

Overview of Position Statements

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board presents these position statements as our vision for San Antonio Animal Care Services.

The Board is concerned with welfare issues facing animals. The Board's Position Statements are based on the belief that animals have the capacity to suffer and feel pain and inherently deserve our respect, compassion, advocacy, and humane treatment. We believe that:

- Animals should have adequate nutritious food appropriate to their species and access to fresh water to maintain health.
- Animals should be accorded freedom to express normal behavior with sufficient space and appropriate companionship.
- Animals should live free of fear and distress.
- Animals should have adequate shade and protection from the elements, including sun, rain, heat, and cold. (A carrier or kennel is not deemed adequate to provide shade, or protection from the elements.)
- Animals should have clean living environments.

Animal Care Services Advisory Board

Position Statements

passed September 30,2020

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports the following position Statements to make the San Antonio area a safe place for people and animals to live.

1. Spay/Neuter

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board strongly supports that all dogs and cats be spayed or neutered, including early age sterilization, except those who are part of a licensed breeder's breeding program or where surgical sterilization is contraindicated for medical reasons.

2. Stray Animals

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports the picking up of stray animals with the exception of community cats.

3. Cruelty to Animals

Research has established that there are strong links between violent behaviors toward humans and violent behaviors toward animals. Abusive behavior toward animals may be an indicator of other forms of violence within the family setting.

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board encourages staff and other agencies not within the board's purview to have interagency cross-training and referral programs.

4. Standards of Care

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports registration of agencies/ rescue groups which implement humane care of the animals equal to or greater than Animal Care Services' protocols including veterinary care, sterilization before adoption and non-discriminatory adoption policies.

5. Professional Development Training

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports the Animal Care Services Department's ongoing state/national training in professional development.

6. Ban of Specific Breeds

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports the opposition to laws that ban specific breeds of dogs or that discriminate against particular breeds and the housing restrictions placed on these breeds.

7. Dangerous Dogs

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports holding dog owners responsible for unjustified harm or damage done by their pets. Dangerous dog laws should focus on the behavior of individual dogs and all of the circumstances surrounding an event.

8. Enforcement

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports compassionate enforcement of current animal ordinances.

9. Shelter Data

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports the transparent, consistent and accurate data reporting by Animal Care Services.

10. Euthanasia

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports euthanasia by injection. Euthanasia should be performed by state-certified staff. Performed properly, euthanasia by injection is the most humane, safest, fastest and least stressful to the animal and is safe for shelter personnel.

11. Community Cats

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports Trap/Neuter/Return and local policy of non-lethal population control and coalition based approaches.

12. Sale of Pets

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board opposes the sale of dogs and cats through pet stores, roadside sales, the internet, flea markets, and other commercial operations.

13. Disasters

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports a comprehensive disaster plan for natural and manmade disasters that place animals in jeopardy. Further the Board supports cooperation between government agencies, city, state, and federal and other animal welfare agencies to save the lives of animals affected by such disasters.

14. Wildlife

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports harmonious co-existence with native wildlife and all healthy wildlife be left alone. The Board further supports that injured wildlife get advocate assistance from verified rehabbers. We further support personal ownership of wildlife be in accordance with state and local laws.

15. Declawing Cats

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board opposes declawing cats since scratching is a natural behavior and declawing has postoperative pain with no benefit to cats. For cats that spend time outside, they need their claws for survival.

16. Transport

The Animal Care Services Advisory Board supports responsible animal transport (that adheres to federal and interstate regulations) to places where there are fewer adoptable animals in order to save lives.