

Gaston County Police Department

Animal Control Division

Placement Partner Policy and Procedures



Mission Statement:

The mission of Animal Control is not only to enhance the safety of citizens, but also to ensure the proper care and treatment of animals. This is accomplished through animal-related services which reflect our professionalism and a concern for responsible pet ownership.

Introduction: This is your personal copy of the Policy and Procedures Manual for Placement Partners. This document is a key tool for the successful business relationship between Gaston County Animal Control Division and the Placement Partners. The relationship between Gaston County and the Placement Partner is designed to be mutually beneficial and to help place our animals in good homes.

This manual will allow us to be consistent about expectations for both parties. The Placement Partner Policy & Procedures manual is a 'living' document that will be updated as we identify better ways of doing our jobs and responding to the needs of the animals in our care and of the human community we serve.

PLACEMENT PARTNER POLICY

I. General Policy Statement

Gaston County Animal Control Division seeks to establish business partnerships with animal Placement Partners and individuals to facilitate the transfer of animals that enter into the facility.

This policy and procedure is for approved organized animal placement organizations to transfer selected animals from Gaston County Animal Control Division.

II. Responsibility of Gaston County Animal Control:

A. Animal Control has the responsibility to ensure to the best of its ability that all animals, whether adopted or placed by private organizations, are placed responsibly. The animal placement priorities will be as follows:

1. Reuniting animals with their owners.
2. Adopting animals out to new homes.
3. Transfer of animals to approved Placement Partner organizations.
4. Placing animals in volunteer foster homes for future adoption.

III. Gaston County Animal Control Conduct

A. Gaston County Animal Control will conduct all business in a professional, ethical manner. Any concerns regarding the conduct of Gaston County Animal Control employees should be directed to the Administrator of Gaston County Animal Control. Concerned partners may leave a message on the Gaston County Animal Control voicemail with name and phone number of the partner.

IV. Requirements for Approval – Placement Partner Organizations

A. Any animal placement organization who wishes to partner with Gaston County Animal Control Division must submit the following information to the Placement Partner Coordinator either by email (placementpartner@gcps.org), mail, or fax (704.922.1205). It is the responsibility of the Placement Partner coordinator to thoroughly review the submitted information, approve or deny the application, and inform the applying organization of the results.

B. Items required to be considered as Placement Partner:

1. Complete the Placement Partner application. Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered.
2. Documentation that identifies the placement organization as a non-profit organization.
3. Certificate of Incorporation for a non-profit corporation.
4. A tax-exempt certificate from the IRS (501c3)*

*Copies of the 501c3 must be updated annually by July 1. Please email to placementpartner@gcps.org or fax to 704-922-1205.

5. The name, address, and telephone number of the placement organization.

6. A list of names of members and affiliated members (those authorized to transport animals and make transport decisions) of the placement organization who are authorized to pick up animal(s) and sign the Gaston County Animal Control Division adoption/reclaim contract. Any future changes to the members, the Placement Partner must send in writing (email is sufficient) the additional affiliated member with the address, phone number, and email address of the new member.

7. A copy of the placement organization's spay / neuter policy. The placement partner organization's policy must provide sufficient information as to prove the intent that all animals will be spayed or neutered after the animal(s) are picked up at Gaston County Animal Control Division and before a third party adopts them and the animal is released from the Placement Partners custody.

8. The placement partner organizations adoption application and adoption contract.

9. 3 letters/emails of reference:

a) 1 letter must be from a licensed veterinarian that the organization uses for medical care. This letter must be on the veterinarian's practice letterhead.

b) 1 letter must be from an animal shelter or humane organization that the Placement partner has worked with in the past.

c) 1 letter must be from a person that has adopted one of the animals from the Placement Partner.

C. Gaston County Animal Control Division may perform background checks on the animal placement organization to verify that it meets these criteria.

D. Each animal placement organization and its affiliated members must agree to comply with all stipulations on the Gaston County Animal Control Division Placement Partner contract. Violations of the Placement Partner contract may result in the Placement Partner being removed from the approved Placement Partner list at Gaston County Animal Control.

E. The placement organization must be willing to provide Gaston County Animal Control Division with proof of spaying or neutering if requested.

F. There will no charge for animals rescued from the shelter by an approved placement organization. Again, the representative from the animal placement organization must sign the Placement Partner Declaration of Conduct and Agreement and comply with the contract stipulations and NC state law.

V. Placement Partner medical responsibilities

A. The non-profit placement organization assumes all responsibility for veterinary services for any animal they rescue from the Animal Control. Gaston County will not agree to pay for any treatment prior to or after giving an animal to a non-profit placement organization.

B. Failure to provide the required information or comply with Gaston County Ordinance or NC state law will result in the non-profit placement agency being removed from the approved list of agencies authorized to remove animals at minimal cost from Gaston County Animal Control Division.

VI. Animal Holding Period:

A. Animal Control will hold all stray dogs and cats for 3 business days, provided the animal is not sick or injured per NC 19A-32.1, GC Code Sec 3-9 (e).

B. Adoptable Animals: "Adoptable animals" is defined as animals that are suitable for adoption by the public. Animals deemed "adoptable" by Gaston County Animal Control will be held for up to 10 calendar days for the general public viewing and adoption.

1. The public will have first choice of adoptable animals.

2. Adoptable animal policy: Adoptable animals will normally become available to the public after 72 business hours (excluding date animal entered the facility with the approval of the Administrator and the kennel staff). "Adoptable" animals will be available for the citizens of Gaston County for 1 full day after the mandatory 72 business hour hold AND after that time will also be available to Placement Partners.

C. Rescue Only animals

1. Animal determined to be classified as "rescue only" by Gaston County Animal Control will be held for the required 72 business hours per GC Code Sec 3-9 (e).

2. Gaston County Animal Control may hold the animals for a total of 10 calendar days depending on health status, temperament, and space availability.

3. "Rescue only" animals are available for pick up by the Placement Partners after the initial 72 business day mandated hold is completed.

D. Animal Availability The disposition of an animal whether adoptable or rescue only will be determined by the staff. Animals that show signs of aggression or are determined dangerous for public safety will not be considered candidates for adoption or placement with private organization. This determination is made by qualified veterinary medical staff and is non-negotiable.

E. All rescue animals will be available on a first come first served basis. All rescue animals are available to all approved placement organizations and no animal will be held at the facility for any particular placement organization.

VII. Animal Rescue List

A. In cases with animals that are nursing puppies or kittens the entire litter is being sent out to rescue as a group.

B. Staff members will not contact individual rescue organizations or independent rescue individuals announcing the arrival of specific species, breeds, sexes, etc. but may assist in rescue pleas after the pet has been placed on the rescue list.

VIII. Placement partner Fee

A. No adoption fee will be charged for animals that are transferred to an approved Placement Partner organizations.

IX. Special Needs animals

- A. An animal that has a medical condition or permanent disability can be placed on the adoption floor and/or made available for Placement Partners with the following restrictions:
1. The Veterinarian must approve placing the animal on the adoption floor.
 2. A sign must be placed on the cage/ run door identifying the animal as special needs.
 3. Any citizen/placement partner group wanting to adopt a special needs animal must be a good match for the animal and agree to comply with the special needs requirements.
 4. All adoptions will be on a first come, first served basis.

X. Arranging for pickup of Placement Partner animals during determined hours of service
"Rescue only" animals are available on a first come, first serve basis. If a placement partner is en route to pick an animal up from Gaston County Animal Control, the placement partner may call to state they are en route. Gaston County Animal Control will do their best to have the animal ready for the transporter's arrival. We do not make any guarantees that the animal will be ready for pick up even if the Placement Partner telephones the shelter.

XI. Transport of animals from Gaston County Animal Control

- A. To ensure the safety of the animal and the transporter, all Placement Partners and affiliated member must have the following:
1. Leash and Collar or slip leash suitable for the animal.
 2. Carrier*: a carrier that is large enough for the animal to fit comfortably during transport. Carriers will not be provided for Placement Partners or their affiliated members.

*Animals must be secured safely in the vehicle at all times to ensure safety of the animal and the transporter. Placement of dogs in the car without a carrier is at the discretion of the transporter.

B. Animals are to be properly secured in the transport vehicle. Animals are not to be transported in the bed of a truck. All animals, dogs and cats, must be transported in a safe manner, preferably a pet carrier suitable for the size of the animal.

C. Animals must not be left in a motor vehicle for more than 30 minutes. Failure of a Placement partner or affiliated member to leave the shelter with an animal in the motor vehicle within the 30 minute window may result in the removal of the Placement Partner or affiliated member from the approved list.

XII. Placement Partner and affiliated members conduct

A. All Approved Placement Partners and their affiliated members are required to act in a professional, ethical manner. All communications must be in a respectful manner. Any Placement Partner or affiliated member that is disrespectful or discourteous may be removed from the approved Placement Partner list at Gaston County Animal Control.

B. If an affiliated member of a Placement Partner behaves in an unprofessional manner, the Placement Partner will be contacted by Gaston County Animal Control. It is the Placement Partners responsibility to remedy the behavior of the affiliated members of their group. If the Placement Partner fails to resolve the concerns, the Placement Partner may be removed from the approved list of Placement Partners at Gaston County Animal Control.

C. Placement partners and their affiliated members will only have unsupervised access to areas of the Gaston County Animal Control facility that are accessible to the citizens of Gaston County. The areas include:

1. Outside walkways to view adoptable dogs
2. The receiving area where adoptable cats are housed
3. Placement Partner Coordinator's office

D. All other areas of the facility, Placement Partners and their affiliated members must be escorted by an employee or approved volunteer of Gaston County Animal Control.

XIII. Paperwork in reference to animals claimed by Placement Partners

A. Placement Partners and their affiliated members will receive 1 copy of the animal's intake sheet, medical record if available, and reclaim receipt.

B. Additional copies: if a Placement partner requests additional copies of the above paperwork, copies can be purchased for \$0.05 per page per the fee schedule set by Gaston County.

C. Transporters will be required to provide a valid form of government issued photographic identification (per NC 19A-32.1-(i)). A photocopy of the government issued identification will be made and placed in a secure file for future transports for the individual at Gaston County Animal Control.

XIV. Fostering of Gaston County Animal Control Animals that are still within the mandatory 3 working day hold and Gaston County's possession. (GC County Code Sect 3-9, e-(1)).

A. The purpose of the fostering program at Gaston County Animal Control is to enhance the pet's chances for adoption and placement into forever homes. To ensure the success of this program, guidelines for the fostering of Gaston County Animals must be documented.

B. Guidelines for qualified foster homes

1. Must be a recognized placement partner group with a 501c3 on file at Gaston County Animal Control.
2. A copy of the 501c3 must be current and legible
3. Must include the placement partner groups name, address, phone number
4. Owner or responsible person's contact information to include name, address, email, and phone number (must be able to be reached at any time during business hours).
5. List of people approved to pull for the placement partner. This is to include full name, email, and phone number. This information is to be provided by the Owner or responsible person of the placement partner group.*

*If the above information is not on file at Gaston County Animal Control, the placement partner group will not be able to foster a Gaston County Animal until all of the above information is received.

6. If a member of placement partner group is pulling for another placement partner group, this must be verified by the owner or person responsible for the group prior to an animal going to foster.

7. The person picking up the animal, must state what placement partner they are picking up for and this must be verified by the owner/responsible part of the placement partner group where the animal is being taken.
- C. All pertinent information for the placement partner groups must be updated annually or when changes occur.
- D. Must meet the following requirements:
1. Be 18 years of age or older
 2. Provide a copy of a current picture ID for our files: (NC General Statute 19A-32.1.)
 3. Have a permanent residence within a travel distance of 1 hour of Gaston County Animal Control
 4. This address must be where the animal is to be housed
 5. Gaston County reserves the right to inspect the foster address at any time
 6. If the above address is an apartment, rental property, or owned by anyone other than the foster, Gaston County must receive written acknowledgement that the animal is to be housed at the property and is within the guidelines of the rental agreement.
 7. Have received training or experience in proper animal husbandry and handling.
 8. No history of convictions of child or animal abuse.
 9. Not under the influence of alcohol or drugs to an extent that impairs the ability to foster the animal.
- E. Agreement form: All fosters are required to sign and agree to the "Pet Foster Agreement" form prior to fostering a Gaston County animal. When fosters sign the agreement form they are agreeing to the following:
1. Take care of the fostered pet and to treat him/her with kindness, patience, love, and respect.
 2. Provide the fostered pet a balanced, good quality pet food specific to the species and fresh potable water at all times.
 3. Provide proper shelter and housing for the fostered pet.
 4. This includes; protection from the environmental elements, protection from harm by other animals, protection from external parasites such as fleas and ticks, protection from toxic and harmful substances, protection from injury, protection from children and others that may harm the pet, must not be chained or tethered at any time while in the foster's care, must not be in a kennel or crate for longer than 6 consecutive hours, must be placed on a leash or in a secure fenced in area anytime the animal is outside, and must only be exposed to animals that are current on all required vaccinations and on a heartworm preventative for intestinal parasites.
 5. Groom and walk the foster pet daily and ensure the pet is clean. Pets that become dirty while playing outside or by soiling from feces/dirt, must be bathed with a pet approved shampoos and thoroughly dried.
 6. The pet must have a collar or harness with a legible, accurate identification.
 7. Supervise all foster pets any time the animal is outdoors or unconfined.

8. Foster cats must be housed indoors with proper temperature controls.
9. Foster puppies and mother must be housed indoors in proper temperature controls in a home that has had no positive animals for Parvo virus within 30 days prior to fostering.
10. Foster pet are prohibited from exposure to the opposite sex (intact reproductive tract) at any time once the pet is 5 months or older.
11. The foster pet must receive immediate veterinary care by a licensed veterinarian if the pet becomes acts sick, becomes sick or is injured.
12. The foster must abide by all of Gaston County laws and ordinances.
13. The foster must contact Gaston County Animal Control immediately if the pet escapes from the foster's control or custody.
14. The foster must agree to inspections by Gaston County Animal Control if requested.
15. The foster must return the animal to Gaston County Animal Control upon request within the agreed time period.
16. The foster releases Gaston County Animal Control from any liability once the pet is placed in the foster's possession.
17. Upon return of the animal to Gaston County Animal, the foster agreement will be terminated.

XV. Can the animal be fostered?

A. Hold by Gaston County Citizen: the only hold that can be placed on an animal is an animal that is in a "foster" home. The hold can only be placed by a citizen of Gaston County. Animals that have a hold by a citizen cannot be fostered by a placement partner group. The animals are required to stay at Gaston County Animal Control for the required 72 business hour holding period so that the citizen has the opportunity to adopt the animal at 11 am on the day of the animal's release date.