



FACA Policy Statement

Euthanasia

The pragmatic truth is that certain animals are unadoptable due to health and behavioral traits. Euthanasia is necessary when an animal poses a public health risk due to disease or aggressive behavior, when an animal is suffering from an untreatable condition, or when the numbers of animals in the shelter outweigh the available resources to provide appropriate and humane care for them.

The responsibility for humanely euthanizing unadoptable animals falls largely on animal control and protection personnel. The Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) believes most strongly that since our responsibility is so vast in this area, it is incumbent upon us to take the lead in setting standards for humane euthanasia in Florida shelters.

It is the policy of FACA that:

- 1) All animals which must be euthanized by an animal control or protection agency, either in the shelter or in a field emergency, must be humanely euthanized as free from fear and distress as possible, while following the mandates of FL Statutes 828.05, 828.055, 828.058 and 828.065.
- 2) All personnel performing euthanasia in Florida shelters must be certified in accordance with Florida Statute 828.058 utilizing the FACA curriculum, as approved by the Florida Board of Veterinary Medicine.
- 3) All entities that perform humane euthanasia must do so in accordance with the guidelines provided by the American Veterinary Medical Association, The Association of Shelter Veterinarians and the National Animal Care and Control Association.
- 4) Euthanasia solutions containing sodium pentobarbital, or a sodium pentobarbital derivative, may only be administered via intravenous (IV), intraperitoneal (IP), or intracardiac (IC) routes.
- 5) Intracardiac (IC) injection may only be performed on animals that are unconscious with no corneal reflex.
- 6) When IV access would be distressful, dangerous, or impractical due to the small size of the animal, IP injection of euthanasia solutions containing sodium pentobarbital, or a sodium pentobarbital derivative, is an acceptable alternative. It should only be used on small animals such as kittens, puppies, small dogs and cats, or other small non-domestic/exotic species
- 7) All entities that perform humane euthanasia must foster a work environment and culture designed to protect staff, both physically and emotionally, from burnout and compassion fatigue.

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