



## Standard Operating Procedures

### LOST AND FOUND AND THE REDEMPTION OF STRAY ANIMALS

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to establish policy and procedure for reuniting lost and stray animals with their owners.

#### II. Policy

It is the policy of the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC) to attempt to successfully reunite every lost and stray animal with their rightful owner.

#### III. Procedures

- **MCASAC is committed to the following:**
  - Scan every domesticated animal admitted to the organization for a microchip.
  - Maintain a registry for lost pets.
  - Complete no fewer than three phone calls, over the course of three days, in attempt to contact an owner if an animal has ID at time of admission (identification tag, license tag or microchip). If no phone numbers are listed and/or if numbers are not in service, an email address may be substituted, if available.
  - Photograph all stray animals at the time of admission and upload such photos to an online database allowing owners the opportunity to search for their lost pet.
  - Scan all deceased domesticated animals for a microchip and maintain a log including description of animal and location found, if available. This information will be compared to lost reports and owners will be contacted if a match is made.

- If a stray animal is found in the field by an Animal Services Officer, the officer will make all reasonable efforts to return the animal to its home instead of admitting the animal to the shelter.

- **Location, contact information, and hours to claim lost pets**

**Location:**

Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center  
7315 Muncaster Mill Rd.  
Derwood, MD 20855

**Contact Information:**

The main telephone number for MCASAC is (240) 773-5900.

**To search for a lost pet online go to:**

[www.petharbor.com](http://www.petharbor.com)

**Hours of Operation:**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from Noon to 7:00 PM  
Saturday and Sunday from Noon to 5:00 PM  
CLOSED ALL WEDNESDAYS AND MAJOR HOLIDAYS

- **Fees**

- Return to Owner Fees:
  - Boarding fee per day - \$10
    - ❖ Additional special handling fee of \$5 per day may be added for animals requiring special housing or handling due to behavior, health and for animals under quarantine or being held for court cases or Animal Matters Hearing Board review.
  - Impoundment fee - \$16
  - Field Services Fee - \$25
  - Microchip - \$10

Individuals claiming ownership of an animal may, at times, be required to speak to an Animal Services Officer at the time of redemption. MCASAC staff will make the appropriate arrangements to ensure an officer is present at the scheduled time, as needed.

- Licensing Fees:

- Unaltered

- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a three-year rabies vaccination - \$75.00
- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a two-year rabies vaccination - \$50.00
- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a one-year rabies vaccination - \$25.00
- ❖ All dogs / cats between four (4) months and twelve (12) months of age – No cost

- Altered

- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a three-year rabies vaccination - \$32.00
- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a two-year rabies vaccination - \$24.00
- ❖ Dog / cat over one (1) year old with a one-year rabies vaccination - \$12.00
- ❖ All dogs / cats between four (4) months and twelve (12) months of age – No cost
- ❖ Service Animals -- No cost

Puppies and kittens under four (4) months do not require a license.

- **Lost and Found Pet Reports**

- In order to get the full benefit of services provided, citizens should go to PetHarbor.com to file their lost pet report. PetHarbor will send the information to our shelter database and the citizen will receive emails when any finder (within a 200-mile radius) reports an animal that meets the description of the lost pet. Lost pet information will be accepted over the phone, by email, through the PetHarbor website, or in person at MCASAC.
- Lost pet reports will be kept on file for 30 days. When possible, MCASAC staff, prior to disposing of a lost report, will contact the owner for an updated status. **Ultimately, it is the owners' responsibility to contact MCASAC if the pet is still missing and request to have the lost report extended an additional 30 days.** Impounded stray animals will appear on the PetHarbor website and once on a listing posted on Craigslist. A bulletin board will also be maintained at MCASAC for members of the public to post fliers regarding pets lost in the area.
- Within 24 hours or as staffing allows, descriptions/pictures of all animals admitted as strays will be compared to the descriptions/pictures of the animals found in the MCASAC network of lost pet resources to determine if a match can be made. If a match for a stray animal is found, the potential owner will be contacted as soon as possible.
- Owners who come directly to the facility looking for a lost pet will be asked to give a description of their lost pet prior to being escorted to the holding kennels to view the stray animals.

- **Redemption of Stray Animals**

- Once a stray animal is determined to be in the custody of MCASAC, the owner will be required to provide personal identification, proof of ownership of that animal, and pay all fees associated with the impoundment of that animal within five days (the stray hold period in accordance with Division policy) of the animal coming into possession of MCASAC. At the end of the five-day stray hold, stray animals who have not been redeemed become the legal property of MCASAC, which will have full rights and authority to determine the animal's outcome. Decisions regarding the return of animals to their owner(s) is subject to the discretion of MCASAC management and designated staff/representatives.
- Individuals attempting to claim a stray animal must provide an official form of photo identification, such as a state-issued ID card or driver's license, a government or military ID or a valid passport. Any person claiming an animal must be 18 years of age or older or accompanied by a legal guardian. In cases where a legal guardian is necessary, the guardian must provide photo identification as listed above.
- Individuals must also provide proof of ownership of the animal they are attempting to claim. Accepted forms of proof are a rabies certificate or other veterinary record, a current pet license, microchip information, adoption paperwork or bill of sale. Photographs are generally not accepted as proof of ownership, but may be considered on a case-by-case basis, especially if the picture(s) are accompanied by another form of proof. The name of the individual listed on the proof of ownership must match the identification of the person attempting to claim the animal.
- Instances where the actual owner is physically unable to reclaim their animal and has authorized a friend, neighbor or family member to do so requires written authorization from the owner (or legal representative) with the name, address and phone number of the person authorized to claim the animal.
- All associated fees must be paid at the time the animal is claimed. Associated fees include the Return to Owner Fees listed above, as well as any veterinary medical expenses authorized by MCASAC staff in the absence of the owner. Authorized expenses are limited to those associated with emergency care to either save the animal's life or to relieve pain and suffering. Once payment has been received and all necessary paperwork has been completed, the owner and pet will be reunited.