



## FACA Policy Statement

### Disaster Management of Animals

**Pet-Friendly Shelters:** Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) strongly supports the establishment of pet evacuation shelters to allow owners and pets safe sheltering. Provisions for such shelters may prevent the abandonment of animals during forced evacuations and accommodates owners who refuse to leave their pets to seek shelter, thus protecting both humans and animals. FACA encourages that these Pet-Friendly shelters allow owners to provide care for their pets during the stay allowing Animal Services manpower to be available for other priorities during a disaster response. FACA also encourages the jurisdiction to develop and train volunteers to assist with disaster response operations. An operational plan should be developed for the Pet-Friendly Shelters and reviewed annually to make sure that it can be operated successfully.

FACA understands that, in order to be successful, such shelters must be strongly and directly supported by the community. Due to the additional demands on animal control agencies during disasters, FACA urges all levels of government to support animal control agencies and provide tangible resources to protect pets and owners. All jurisdictions should be familiar with the “PETS Act” and ensure that they are encouraging compliance with all aspects.

**Chain of Custody:** FACA strongly recommends that all entities that rescue or receive animals in a disaster operate through the animal control agency jurisdiction; maintain a documented chain of custody to include photo, description, microchip, area of origin and subsequent relocation site; and make every effort to reunite them with their owners.

FACA encourages Animal Shelters to make every effort to reduce the number of animals in their facilities as much as possible prior to an anticipated disaster. All animals that have completed any required hold period and now belong to the jurisdiction should be made available for transport, adoption, or foster to free up kennel space for potentially displaced animals. Pets displaced by a disaster should be held for an extended period to allow them to be reunited with their owners.

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