

28 February 2013

Position Statement on Offsite Adoptions

Adopted by the Sonoma Humane Society Board of Directors

The Sonoma Humane Society (SHS) believes and advocates in the best policies, procedures, and practices as they apply to the animals of Sonoma County and beyond. To advocate for these positions, the SHS Board of Directors adopts the following:

Offsite adoptions provide organizations greater reach into communities by bringing adoptable pets closer to those who may not know about, be able or want to go to an established shelter. They also provide a more convenient venue to initiate adoptions and provide the organization more visibility in the community.

Questions have been raised regarding initiating offsite adoption events by brick and mortar shelter organizations. Arguments against are typically focused on the reduction of standards regarding vetting potential adopters and the standard of care the animals receive away from the shelter. Contrary to these concerns no reduction in the rigor applied to adopter reviews nor degradation in the care of the animals while offsite has been experienced.

- **A 2002 study found no difference in retention rates of animals adopted offsite versus at a shelter.¹**
- **Outreach increases education and public awareness. Offsite contact provides more opportunities for interaction and conversation regarding adoptions, animal care and welfare.²**
- **Offsite adoptions are part of a comprehensive approach to animal adoptions, providing convenient public access hours and venues closer to adopters.³**
- **Virtual expansion of shelter capacity through the utilization of offsite facilities.**

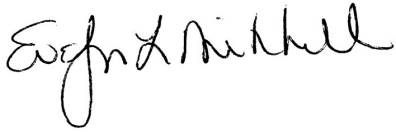
¹ Journal of Applied Animal Welfare, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2002, "Companion Animal Adoption Study"

² SPCA of Texas, www.spca.org

³ No Kill Advocacy Center, "No Kill 101", pg 5

Expanding a shelter's adoption programs to include making adoptions available offsite at venues frequented by pet owners and lovers provides opportunities to reach a greater segment of the population. This access increases the probability that more animals will be adopted into good homes, while increasing opportunities for direct public contact, outreach, and education. Studies have found that there is no difference in the level of care paid to both animals and the process of vetting adopters. Offsite adoption activities are a valuable and important part of furthering the goal of No Kill.

We adopt this position today, February 28, 2013 and declare it to be in accordance with the Sonoma Humane Society mission statement: *Ensuring every animal receives protection, compassion, love and care.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evelyn Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Evelyn Mitchell, President

Sonoma Humane Society Board of Directors