

# **THE STATE OF ANIMAL WELFARE 2002**

**A Report to  
Animal Rescue of Tidewater**

**Joseph Riddick  
Betty Rouse**

**Joseph Riddick and Associates  
Petersburg VA**

JOSEPH RIDDICK AND ASSOCIATES  
1755 BRANDON AVENUE  
PETERSBURG, VA 23805  
804-733-2026

January 24, 2003

Debra Griggs  
Animal Rescue of Tidewater  
111 S. Arden Circle  
Norfolk, VA 23505

Dear Ms. Griggs:

We are pleased to present this report on The State of Animal Welfare in Hampton Roads 2002. The findings in this report are a result of our working with the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads during 2002.

Typically, when one presents a report with the title of "The State of Animal Welfare in Hampton Roads in 2002....." the expected completion to that sentence is "is excellent" or some other superlative language. This report, however, will indicate that the state of animal welfare is fair.

We made this assessment after reviewing the data from our work with the coalition during the past year, our conducting focus groups in the region, conducting a survey of animal welfare providers, conducting a telephone survey with the general public and reviewing reports sent to the Office of the State Veterinarian.

We believe that this report will help the coalition focus on the tasks that need to be accomplished so that the state of animal welfare in the near future will be good to excellent.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and the coalition on this exciting project.

Sincerely,

Joseph Riddick

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2002, a systematic review was conducted to determine the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs of the animal welfare community and the general public about animal welfare issues. Focus groups were held throughout the region, a survey was mailed to animal welfare providers, a telephone survey was conducted with the general public, documents from the Office of the State Veterinarian were reviewed, and activities with the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads were documented. All of these data were analyzed to produce a report that provides an overview of the state of animal welfare in Hampton Roads.

What we found generally were dedicated people doing the best they could given the constraints of human, financial, and legislative resources. There are high rates of euthanasia in many shelters and low adoption rates. We discovered a serious disconnect between the knowledge of the general public about some core issues and the reality of what happens in the animal welfare world. We found mistrust among providers: this distrust was between shelters and veterinarians, public and private organizations, between organizations in different localities and between the general public and organizations that are provide services to animals. We discovered that many providers have a paternalistic attitude toward the general public and their care of animals.

We also found relationships that formed and grew during the year because of the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads. Organizations formed formal and informal partnerships. Animals were rescued, spay/neuters were performed,

adoptions and transfers of animals to keep them alive occurred, and business partnerships were formed. Some of the positive things would have happened whether the coalition was in existence or not, some of them would not. All of the people in the coalition want to do the right thing and most are looking for a collaborative way to provide services.

There is a lack of indicators to accurately measure the effectiveness of the community's ability to address animal welfare issues. There are data from the Office of the State Veterinarian that report on animals retrieved and their disposition through owner retrieval, adoption and euthanasia. These reports are required of some organizations in the state, but not every organization providing services. There is no centralized data base of spay/neuter; so determining the number of animals that have been altered is next to impossible. There is no unique identifier for each animal at this point in time, so it is not possible to track animals through systems that cross provider type and city boundary.

Many of the organizations provide a variety of services and cross city boundaries to deliver services. Forty percent of the organizations who responded to our survey are affiliated with a state, regional or national organization.

There is disparity between what veterinarians feel is a fair market value for their services and what other service providers feel is a fair market value. The cost of spay/neuter directly impacts the general public's access to this service as does clinic hours. Providers in the region believe that spay/neuter should be mandatory for adopting an animal preferring that this service be provided prior to the adoption

process. The public is more likely to spay a female dog than a male dog or a cat of either sex. Eighty-four percent of respondents indicate that their pets are altered within the first year of their lives. There is wide variance between the Caucasian and African American respondents as to whether animals should be altered. The African American respondents in our research indicate that altering an animal is against God's wishes. This same stance is used by African Americans on the topic of euthanasia.

Most people acquire a dog either through a breeder or through a pet shop. They generally acquire cats that are strays. The reasons given by the general public for giving an animal up for adoption is that the family is moving; this is followed by landlord problems.

Women are the primary caretakers of cats in Hampton Roads households. Taking care of a dog is reported as a shared adult activity.

Animal abuse is of concern to both providers and the general public. There is no centralized reporting center for animal cruelty cases. Eighty percent of providers state that they have reported animal cruelty cases to either the SPCA or to Animal Control officers in their localities. The need for early childhood education on responsible pet ownership is reported as a major need in the area.

There is a disconnect between what the general public believes happens to animals that are collected by animal control and the reality that approximately fifty percent are euthanized. Euthanasia rates range from 42.7% at facilities in Virginia Beach to 69.6% in Suffolk.

Microchipping is an evolving issue in the animal welfare arena. Forty-eight percent of providers provide microchipping services in their programs. There are various brands of microchips on the market which then require providers to have universal readers to identify all animals who are microchipped. Most providers cite cost and underutilization as primary reasons they have not installed universal readers of microchips. Nine percent of the general public indicate that their animals are microchipped.

The majority of providers state that the differences in local ordinances impact their ability to provide services. All of the providers who participated in the research indicate that uniform ordinances are needed but few believe it will happen. The interaction between the general public and animal control is generally seen as positive in all of the localities.

Feral animals are a problem in both the urban and rural areas of the region. Both providers and the general public encounter feral cats and dogs. There is no one solution to the feral animal problem and different groups are devising their own ways of handling the problem.

The research presents opportunities for the Animal Welfare Coalition to provide leadership to effect change in the state of animal welfare in the Hampton Roads. The vast majority of animals do not enter public facilities such as shelters, animal control facilities or rescue. They are largely "owned" by the public, as is the state of animal welfare. There is a need to develop community awareness of all the things impacting animal welfare and to build community-wide acceptance.

Overpopulation of companion animals exacerbates many of the things that negatively impact animal welfare. Strong spay/neuter programs for animals being adopted will not alone resolve overpopulation. There is a need for expanded general public education on health issues of companion animals. Addressing the health needs of animals is larger than the issue of spay/neuter. Increasing access for low-income owners and those on fixed income should be of concern.

The impact of animal abuse and cruelty is at this time difficult to assess. There is a need to develop a mechanism for reporting events in order to establish incidence data, to increase surveillance for episodes of abuse, and to track disposition of animal abuse cases.

Adoption of uniform codes and cross-jurisdictional agreements related to enforcement would enhance the work of animal welfare providers and show a united community position of such issues.

There is a need to increase the number of adoptive and foster homes. There are several concerns that have to be addressed for this to work however.

Finally, there is a need to develop consensus on indicators for the state of animal welfare in the community similar to those used for human health issues. These should be tracked and reported to the general public and the elected representatives annually by jurisdiction and in aggregate for the region in order to track progress toward an excellent state of animal welfare.

## INTRODUCTION

Animal welfare is important to the Hampton Roads community, the Coalition believes, because first and foremost it is a statement about who we are as a community. Assuring animals' welfare speaks not only to the animals but also to the overall value system we have about our quality of life. Second, how we treat animals is a statement about how we appear as a community –to the citizens living in the region, to those who move into the area, and to those who view us from afar. Third, our consideration of companion animals is reflective of our consideration of our fellow human beings. The health, safety and emotional well being of humans are reflected in that of our companion animals. Finally, the coalition believes that attractive neighborhoods and the quality of life of our citizens are enhanced by an improved state of animal welfare.

There are many items that impact animal welfare, including:

- Ø Human attitudes towards animals
- Ø Human understanding about the nature of animals
- Ø Number of animals needing homes
- Ø Availability of good homes for animals
- Ø Availability of affordable veterinary care
- Ø Access to affordable spay/neuter
- Ø Enforceable laws regarding acceptable treatment of animals
- Ø Enforcement of existing laws.

In order to examine animal welfare issues in the area, members of the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads (AWCHR) developed a working definition of animal welfare during 2002. Animal welfare, as defined by AWCHR is "a positive state of living in an environment where the animal's needs for shelter, safety, good

nutrition, health care, and physical, psychological and emotional developments are being met.”

What has become evident to many providers in Hampton Roads is that considering the Coalition’s definition, the term “animal welfare” organization may be a misnomer. While quality services are provided by many organizations, many of the programs in the area have relatively low adoption rates and high euthanasia rates. The region is not unlike the rest of Virginia in utilizing adoption of animals to reduce the number of animals that are euthanized. Hampton Roads is also not unlike the rest of Virginia in having a fragmented system of care for animals. Further, the fragmentation for animal welfare services mirrors what many people state is the pattern of services for humans. One should not assume they would be dissimilar.

In the fall of 2001, Animal Rescue of Tidewater invited representatives from identifiable animal welfare organizations to a meeting to discuss the feasibility of working collaboratively to enhance the chances of attracting funding from national philanthropies to reduce the euthanasia of viable animals in through increased adoptions and increased offering of spay/neuter. From this initial meeting, the idea germinated to form a regional body that has become known as the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads. Funding for development of the coalition was secured from the Alfred L. Nicholson Fund of the Norfolk Foundation. The Foundation also funded research to be conducted with providers of animal services and the general public.

## COALITION DEVELOPMENT

During 2002, Riddick and Associates provided technical assistance to a burgeoning community of providers as they formed a coalition. Some 85 individuals representing thirty-eight organizations participated in the coalition during the year. The coalition met once a month throughout the year. Leadership of the coalition was elected in July to serve until the end of 2002. In December the membership elected leadership to guide the coalition through the second year of its existence.

Organizationally, the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads has accomplished much during the past year. It has:

- § Adopted bylaws that state its mission, define membership, establish leadership roles, and prescribe parameters for decision making, (Attachment A)
- § Elected interim leadership and seated an active Executive Board,
- § Elected leadership for 2003 (Attachment B),
- § Adopted a core values statement (Attachment C),
- § Developed a preliminary set of strategies to guide its work in 2003.

Just as important as these aforementioned items, is that many members of the coalition have started thinking about animal welfare issues on a regional basis instead of on an individual organizational level. This change in thinking pattern is not universal as the parochialism is ingrained. More providers understand the synergy of working together to address both the needs of the animals in the community and the power of speaking with a unified voice. Organizational development is an ongoing process and the coalition will continue to have to

address the same issues faced during its first year of operations while it determines the role it may have in the larger community.

Membership interest grew at a steady rate during the year. The participation at meetings remains steady with new organizations coming into the group on an ongoing basis. A challenge for the coalition will be to bring all animal welfare providers to the table, particularly animal control officers and veterinarians. Membership development work will continue to be a major need in 2003

Coalition development does not occur without conflict. The conflict is a result of the changing paradigm in the community and the resultant threat to the status quo. The work that occurred during 2002 was not without conflict. At the start of the year many participants were pleased that an outside organization (Riddick and Associates) was hired to facilitate the organizational process. As part of an ongoing evaluation of the coalition we queried the participants in April about their readiness to elect leadership from among their fellow providers. At that point, one member stated that the trust level was insufficient to determine leadership. By July 2002, the participants felt comfortable electing leadership to serve for the balance of the year. In December 2002, the members elected leadership that will guide them through the crucial second year of development.

## RESEARCH

Riddick and Associates conducted research on animal welfare issues for the coalition during the year. Six focus groups were held during the year. Two were directed to providers of services and two were focused on the general public. Two

additional focus groups were held: one with racial/ethnic minorities and one with people who use dogs for hunting. What became very evident during the initial focus groups was the lack of people of color in the meetings and thus a focus group was held with African American and Hispanics. This was reflective of the lack of people of color participating in the coalition – this continues in the coalition as this report is being written. A survey was developed and mailed to providers of animal welfare services in the region. This survey attempted to capture the scope of services offered, what dollar values providers assigned to services and information on adoptions, spay/neuter and euthanasia. In addition to the provider survey, a telephone survey was conducted with the general population on their knowledge, attitude behaviors and beliefs about companion animals, more specifically, dogs and cats. Information was solicited from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of the State Veterinarian on the collection and disposition of animals in the Hampton Roads area.

The information in the report is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The report includes data collected not only from the focus groups and surveys but also from the ongoing research we conducted with members of the coalition during the year. The results of the research efforts follow core themes so that the data are referential among the various sources.

So how does one measure the state of animal welfare? The data collected starts to point to indicators that can be used for measurement. We anticipate that the coalition will use the data to help focus the region on how its citizens,

government, and providers determine acceptable levels of care that should be provided to animals given the working definition Coalition members adopted in 2002.

## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

The Hampton Roads area is challenged in its delivery of animal welfare services by the geography of the region, the government structure, the large military presence, a lack of coordination among service providers and unreliable data on the number of animals in the community.

Hampton Roads is named after the water ways that converge within the region. The natural water divisions are also boundaries of many of the cities that dot the area. The multiplicity of cities has led to multiple animal welfare ordinances in the region. These ordinances can be used as an advantage by providers but can also be a hindrance as they attempt to deliver services. Citizens in the different cities encounter different local rules when they cross city lines and deal with governmental animal organizations.

All animal welfare providers in the region are aware of the military presence in Hampton Roads. The movement of families has a direct impact on the number of animals put in shelters or that are abandoned. Further, rapid deployment as is occurring in the winter of 2002-2003 profoundly impacts the capacity of shelters in the area to care for animals. Another factor of importance to the animal welfare community is the feral cat problem that is endemic around the military piers.

The development of the AWCHR has pointed to the fragmented system of animal care that is available in Hampton Roads. Not only is there a lack of coordination, but there is also a certain level of infighting among the providers to control the agenda for animal welfare as well as the resources in the community.

It is difficult, at best, to accurately determine the number of companion animals in the Hampton Roads area. Less difficult to determine, but still somewhat ambiguous, is the number of animals that receive care through shelters, animal control operations, veterinarians, rescue groups and other animal welfare organizations. Using a formula derived by the Humane Society of the United States, the number of companion animals (dogs and cats) in households within the Hampton Roads areas represented in AWCHR is estimated to be 642,507. The vast majority of these are in homes with little information available regarding how their needs are being met. There are a significant number each year, however, not in homes. Among them are those animals that enter public facilities responsible for animal control and sheltering. The number entering in 2001, the last year for which complete reporting to the Department of Agriculture and Commerce is available, was 58,784. Of these, fourteen percent (8,192) were recovered by their owners, thirty percent (17,770) found new homes through adoption, and fifty percent (29,708) were euthanized.

The diversity and level of severity of these problems presents unique opportunities for the region to address the needs of animals. A unilateral effort across governmental boundaries, board room tables, and in the field where many of the organizations work, will be required to achieve an excellent state of animal welfare in Hampton Roads.

## METHODOLOGY

Six focus groups were conducted during the year. A convenience sample was chosen for each of the groups. Members of the coalition were asked to nominate potential candidates for the focus groups and from these lists, Riddick and Associates contacted potential participants. Animal welfare provider focus groups were held on both the Southside and Peninsula. An effort was made to get a cross representation of providers so that animal control officers, veterinarians, shelter employees, rescue organization members, and humane society employees were included. Two focus groups for citizens who own companion animals were held on the Southside and Peninsula. The focus group for minority citizens who own companion animals was held on the Southside. A focus group for people who use dogs for hunting was held in Western Tidewater. The same set of questions was used in the focus groups for citizens and hunters.

A forty-eight question survey was mailed to animal welfare providers in the region. The list of recipients was drawn from lists provided by members of the coalition in addition to a search through directories for other service providers. A total of 256 surveys were mailed using a modified Dillman method. There were 99 responses, for a response rate of 38%.

The telephone survey of households was a sixty-three question instrument. The questionnaire took respondents approximately 15 minutes to complete. Telephone numbers were drawn from directories of households with listed numbers.

There were two levels of screening to determine whether we would seek participation from the person called. If the person called did not have a companion animal they were not asked to participate. If they did have a companion animal we then asked if they had owned a dog or cat in the past three years; if the answer was affirmative, we asked that person to participate in the survey. We did not conduct complete surveys with people who had not owned a dog or cat within the last three years. There were 254 completed surveys of the 889 households contacted.

Data were collected from the State Veterinarian in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on animals received during 2001 and the disposition of the animals. The Office of the State Veterinarian provided us with information from all agencies that provided reports.

The Legislative Committee of the Animal Welfare Coalition compiled the data on local ordinances and state laws pertaining to animal welfare. Members of the Research Committee of AWCHR worked with Riddick and Associates on development of all survey instruments.

## SURVEY RESULTS

There were 254 respondents to the general public survey that was conducted in the fall of 2002 out of 889 households contacted. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents were female (Table 1). Seventy-five percent of the respondents were Caucasian, eighteen percent were African American, and approximately four percent were Hispanic (Table 2).

Table 1  
SEX OF RESPONDENT

	%
Female	31.6
Male	68.4

Table 2  
RACE OF RESPONDENT

	%
African American	18.2
Caucasian	75.3
Hispanic	3.9
Multiracial	1.3
Refused	1.3

Forty percent of the respondents live in a two person household. Twenty-four percent live in a three person household and sixteen percent live alone (Table

3). Over half of the respondents have lived in Hampton Roads for more than ten years (Table 4).

Table 3  
NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD

	%
1	16.0
2	40.0
3	24.0
4	12.0
5	8.0

Table 4  
LENGTH OF TIME IN HAMPTON ROADS

	%
1-2 years	2.7
3-10 years	12.3
Over 10 years	52.1
Refused	32.9

The majority (58.1%) of the people participating in the general public survey live in a single family home. Over ten percent live in an apartment or a condominium (Table 5). Fifty-six percent of the respondents own their dwelling and twenty-four percent rent (Table 6).

Table 5  
TYPE OF DWELLING

	%
Single Family House	58.1
Duplex or Triplex	6.8
Apartment or Condo	10.8
Mobile Home	8.1
Don't Know/Refused	16.2

Table 6  
OWN OR RENT

	%
Own	56.2
Rent	24.7
Refused	19.2

One third of the respondents have a high school diploma or did not finish high school. Over seventeen percent have some college experience or technical school training. Over thirty-two percent are college graduates or have post graduate experience (Table 7).

Table 7  
EDUCATION LEVEL

	%
High School or Less	33.8
Some College/Technical School	17.6
College Grad	31.1
Post Grad	1.4
Refused	16.2

The demographic data collected from the general public in the telephone survey indicates a high level of refusal in providing information to classify their responses.

There were 99 responses from 254 animal welfare provider surveys that were mailed. Responses were received from animal control officers, animal shelters, animal welfare groups, rescue groups, SPCAs, veterinary practices, and other people who provide some level of care.

When asked about service areas, fifteen percent of responders stated that they served the entire region. Chesapeake, Norfolk and Virginia Beach were the localities with the highest percentage of providers (Table 8).

Table 8  
PROVIDER COVERAGE

	% OF PROVIDERS WHO SERVE GEOGRAPHIC AREA
Region	15.2
Chesapeake	46.5
Franklin	6.1
Hampton	19.2
Isle of Wight	5.1
James City County	9.1
Newport News	17.2
Norfolk	48.5
Poquoson	9.1
Portsmouth	24.2
Smithfield	6.1
Southampton County	2.0
Suffolk	25.3
Virginia Beach	57.6
Williamsburg	14.1
York	5.1

Volunteers provide services across the spectrum of provider types. Twenty-eight percent of the organizations have more than 25 volunteers, and twenty percent have between 16-20 volunteers (Table 9). Forty percent of the volunteers donate between 2-5 hours per week to an animal welfare organization; fifty percent donate more than 6 hours per week (Table 10).

Table 9  
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

# OF VOLUNTEERS	% of agencies
1-5	22.0
6-10	16.0
11-15	12.0
16-20	20.0
More than 25	28.0
N/A	2.0

Table 10  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

	%
1 hour per week	10.4
2-5 hours per week	39.6
6-10 hours per week	20.8
11-20 hours per week	29.2

## WHO ARE ANIMAL WELFARE PROVIDERS?

Animal Welfare Providers in the Hampton Roads area define their members as being:

Veterinarians  
Humane societies  
Shelters  
Rescue groups  
Trainers  
Foster homes  
Pet sitters  
Feral cat keepers  
SPCA  
Pet supply stores  
Entire community

Groomers  
City council members  
Breeders  
Professional associations  
Pet stores  
Animal control officers  
Tax payers  
Owners of Animals  
Fire Departments  
Behaviorists  
Policy makers

## COLLABORATION AMONG PROVIDERS

Providers report that the relationship among animal welfare providers runs the gamut from one of respect among colleagues to ego-driven programs that want control of the animal welfare agenda in the community. There are those who feel that the fractionalization is because of regional boundaries, while others believe it is because of scarce resources for services, and yet others believe it has to do with controlling individuals/programs. Providers state there is a sense of entitlement among some of the programs/providers in the community due to the age of an organization or the size of its budget.

Providers state it is vital for the community welfare groups and the veterinarians to work hand-in-hand to solve the animal welfare issues in the community. Money is an issue. Some of the veterinarians state that a lot of people in the animal welfare business do not understand the economics of running a veterinary clinic with the perception being that veterinarians should donate or discount more services when veterinarians state this is not profitable. Smaller animal welfare organizations state there is a power differential with larger animal welfare organizations that is hard to overcome. Animal control officers report that they encounter resistance from animal welfare providers when they are doing the job they are required to perform.

Providers believe it is possible for the various animal welfare groups and individuals in Hampton Roads to work together. They state that there has to be an investment of time and willingness on the part of providers to make this happen.

The issue of trust is seen as a major stumbling block. There are trust issues between organizations and between individuals. Paralleling the construct of trust is the paradigm of respect that providers state is often lacking. There is also a perception of "blame casting" among organizations in the Hampton Roads area.

The disparity in the size of organizations is perceived as a barrier to developing an effective relationship; there are organizations large and small with paid staff and there are organizations large and small staffed with volunteers. Those organizations with an all volunteer staff state they feel or are made to feel inferior to those with paid staff. Providers report that among organizations there is perceived to be an ego problem that gets translated into, "I love them more than you." Some providers define this as power brokering to corner the market on public perception as being "THE" animal welfare provider in the area.

Consensus building around reasonable goals for the community is seen as a primary way for providers to come together. One participant states that if common goals can be developed then organizations may more likely work together and then everyone's voice is valid. It is important to have tangible goals that organizations individually and collectively can reach. Providers state that an important part of goal setting and achievement is the necessity that organizations know their capacity for service provision and that they be honest about their capacity and capability.

Power in its different guises is recognized as a motivator as well as a deterrent in the animal welfare community. People come into the animal welfare community seeking to assist animals and feel empowered by their actions. The

recognition of people for their contributions to the animal community in Hampton Roads is lacking on a regional basis. It is felt that the animal welfare providers groups in the community should come together annually to recognize each other's efforts through an awards program. This recognition could be a great motivator for other people to become involved and to heighten the public awareness of a united provider community. Other people are perceived as wanting power that they feel is bestowed through their linkage to an animal welfare organization. Many people come to work for animal welfare organizations for the right reasons, but develop an attitude of not accepting dissent from the ideas they espouse. Further, it is believed that some organizations feel that they should have to power to control the animal welfare agenda for the community.

Providers state that mandatory, non-judgmental cooperation is the key to true collaboration. They define this language as meaning professionals honoring the work of other professionals. When surveyed, over eighty percent of providers define their working relationship with other providers at being good or better. Almost twenty percent state that the working relationship could be better (Table 11).

Table 11  
WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

	%
Excellent	28.7
Very good	33.1
Good	19.1
Could be better	19.1
Not good	0

Over forty percent of the respondents indicate that their program is affiliated with a state, regional or national organization. Thirteen percent of rescue groups and fifty-seven of veterinarians identify affiliation with state, regional and national organizations (Table 12).

Table 12  
AFFILIATION WITH STATE, REGIONAL OR NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

	% YES
Animal Control	100
SPCA	100
Animal Welfare Groups	66.6
Veterinary Practices	57
Animal Shelters	50
Animal Rescue Groups	13

Providers in the region provide a full array of essential services to animals and owners. All respondents indicate that their programs offer access to five services: rescue, adoption, euthanasia, consumer education and foster care (Table 13).

Table 13  
Services by Type of Provider

	Animal Control	Veterinary Practice	SPCA	Rescue Group	Shelter	Other
Primary Medical Care		X	X	X		X
Emergency Care	X	X		X		X
Boarding		X		X	X	X
Rescue	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shelter	X		X	X	X	X
Spay/Neuter		X	X	X	X	X
Adoption	X	X	X	X	X	X
Euthanasia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Public Advocacy		X	X	X		X
Consumer Education	X	X	X	X	X	X
Emergency Intervention	X	X	X	X		X
Capture of Feral Animals	X	X		X	X	X
Necropsy		X	X			X
Foster Care	X	X	X	X	X	X
Breeding		X				X
Behavior Counseling		X	X	X	X	X

## HUMAN RELATIONSHIP TO ANIMALS

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups consistently define their pets as being members of their families. Owners acquire the animals for companionship and speak to how amazed and surprised they are about their deep affection for their animals. Generally the emotional attachment that occurs is not seen as a factor when the animal is acquired. One Hispanic participant believes that her pets are on equal footing with her human children in terms of her love and care they receive.

These participants often assign human characteristics to their pets believing that the animals have feelings that are analogous to humans. Animals are taught to play together and share as they are integrated into the family life. Feelings of jealousy, joy and moodiness are accounted for and described in detail.

Planning for the care of animals during the absence of the family is perceived as a major challenge to family vacations, trips and outings. Some participants state that their animals are not alone for more than seven hours at a time; some dogs attend doggie day care while their humans are at work. One participant has a sun room that was built onto her home for the cats which otherwise would not have been added.

Hunters define their relationship to animals into two distinct categories: hunting dogs and house pets. The hunting dogs are the responsibility of the hunters and the house pets are the responsibility of the wives and children. They speak to deep emotional attachment to all of their dogs but they use different language when talking about their hunting dogs – the language of work,

productivity, sustainability, effectiveness, and return on investment. They also use the language of love, respect, caring, companionship, and pride when describing their hunting dogs. When talking about the household pets they use the language of play, family togetherness, and someone else's responsibility. They are able to talk extensively about the hunting dogs but seem to have limited experience and contact with the household animals. One hunter states that the family cat belongs to his wife and the dogs are his. The cat is allowed in the house to keep peace in the household.

Animal welfare providers speak of their connection to the animals they provide care for in terms of professional responsibility, care, and concern. They acknowledge the need for a certain level of emotional detachment from particular animals but have an overwhelming concern and love for animals in general. Providers who work in the rescue field are more likely to speak of particular animals they have rescued or provided foster care for. All of the providers speak to developing practices and protocols that will lead to the best placement of animals in homes. All of the providers express concern about animals that are abandoned or mistreated.

Veterinarians relate that many of the animal's owners perceive that the animal is part of the family unit. When approaching the veterinarian for care, most people speak of their pets as children relating the medical conditions of the animals to human health conditions.

## CONSUMER RELATIONSHIP TO CARE PROVIDERS

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups speak to their relationship with veterinarians as being strong. For many of the participants the relationship starts with either an initial physical when an animal is acquired or when the animal is being spayed or neutered. They maintain that relationship when subsequent animals are acquired.

Some participants state that adequate care is provided in their veterinarian's office and they would pay more for excellent care. The interface with the entire staff, not just the veterinarian, is important to the participants. Most have had what they consider honest interactions with veterinarians when they have sick animals that need expensive treatment. They feel that the veterinarian helps them make informed decisions about the care of their animals.

A Hispanic woman states that she goes to a veterinarian who speaks Spanish and had practiced veterinary care in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She did not live in San Juan at the time he practiced there but she believes that he better understands her as the owner of an animal because of this connection. He also speaks Spanish which is important to her even though she is fluent in English. The African American participants seek out African American veterinarians to provide care. Both the Hispanic and African American participants feel that there is stronger, more honest communication when they and the veterinarian are the same race.

Participants feel that cost is a major barrier to accessing veterinary care. Some point to different priorities that people have and that seeking care may be a

function of how the animal is valued in the home. One participant states that it is difficult for her to pay veterinary bills even though she provides excellent care to her animal. She states that she knew of this expense when adopting the animal; yet it is a financial struggle when she has to take her animal to the veterinarian.

One woman is struggling with whether she morally owes the veterinarian for care provided to her animal that subsequently died. She acknowledges her approval of the care and her commitment to pay, but feels that since her animal died she should not be held liable for the charges. She states that she has not discussed this dilemma with her veterinarian.

The need for an animal health clinic that provides services either at no cost or on a sliding fee scale is stated by several participants. Some participants feel that veterinarians should donate some time for this type of clinic in the Hampton Roads area. When queried, most participants do not know whether their veterinarians provide reduced cost services or donate animal welfare services in the community.

The hunters are unwilling to speak in specifics about the cost of the care. One participant states that last year he started accounting for the care of the animals but destroyed the paperwork after three months because he was concerned his family would find how much it cost to keep the pack of hounds. The hunters opine that they would provide whatever care was necessary for the animal. Each participant relays stories of spending hundreds of dollars for veterinary care for a favorite animal at some point in their hunting life. They also state that the reality for them is that it is not possible to provide that level of care when twenty-five or

more dogs are involved. Hunters identify one primary barrier to access health care for their dogs – money. Congruent with that barrier is the notion that “hunting dogs are a tool – you do what you have to do.” They view the dogs in terms of return on investment – will the dog be useful for hunting if the care is successful. They are reluctant to speak on the disposal of dogs no longer suitable for hunting purposes but acknowledge that for them disposal is a reality of keeping packs of animals.

Maintaining dogs for hunting purposes is not cheap. Members of one hunt club receive bills at the end of each hunting season for the care of the animals. Last year the bill at one hunt club was \$1,400 per person. This hunt club has between 60-70 members and runs a “couple hundred” dogs on any given day. The hunting is done on private land in Southampton County where the hunters have access to 14,000 acres.

The hunters praise the veterinarians they use. They express concern about the increased cost of care but that is weighed against the quality of the care received which they believe is high. The hunters take dogs to the veterinarian when an animal has been injured, is not eating, or has physical maladies. The veterinarian visits the kennels on an annual basis to provide an annual physical and give necessary shots.

## SPAY NEUTER

Animal welfare providers state in the focus groups that animals should be spayed or neutered prior to adoption. Providers add to this assertion the idea that prospective owners should receive education on the care of the animal prior to adoption. The education component not only focuses on the health reasons for spay/neuter but overall health of the animal. Providers feel that most people who adopt animals are not aware of the health needs of the animals they are acquiring.

The cost of spay/neuter is often a problem for people who adopt an animal. It is felt by some that veterinarians bear the brunt of the spay/neuter cost through voucher programs and reduced fees. Some veterinarians suggest that the public does not understand the general low cost of spay/neuter and that they are not doing a good job educating the public about this. Other providers feel that the cost of spay/neuter is a shared expense among individuals who acquire animals, veterinarians and humane societies, shelters and animal control.

Some providers state that it is the veterinarian's responsibility to provide health education to animal owners as veterinarians are in a unique position to convey the medical information. Other providers feel the only way to effectively address the spay/neuter problem is that all animals leaving a shelter, animal control, or a rescue group should be spayed/neutered prior to adoption. The language used to describe spay/neuter includes having an animal "fixed," "snipped," "deneutered," and "neutered." The term "neuter" is gaining universal recognition. There is a

feeling among most animal providers that the public will more willingly have a female spayed than have a male neutered.

Providers state that people who adopt are often unrealistic about what it costs to provide spay/neuter, ongoing health care, food, and housing to animals. This translates into people not having the resources to pay for spay/neuter once an animal has left a shelter. People also lack the knowledge of community resources for animal care and support. Providers characterize some in the general public who think that animals are property, have no souls or emotions, and that they cannot think and feel. Conversely they characterize other people as including the animals as part of the family and having all of the rights thereof.

Animal welfare providers feel that the media is an excellent medium to educate the general public about spay/neuter issues. They feel that hard hitting creative educational information will help the public understand the value of spay/neuter. It is felt that education of students in public and private schools is essential to increase the understanding of animal care. Curricula for this type of presentation are available and one participant did state that her organization is able to get into public schools. It is believed that the largest barrier to providing humane education in schools is the Standards of Learning Exams. Animal welfare providers are told that there is no time to bring in speakers on animal issues because of having to prepare for the SOLs.

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups think it is important that the facility where they acquire their pet have the animal spayed/neutered. Some participants

espouse that animals that are spayed/neutered are healthier. Another reason given is the desire for the animal not to have any offspring. Other participants believe "it is the right thing to do." One participant states that he will not acquire an animal that has not already been spayed or neutered. Another participant states that she separates her dogs when the female goes into heat and she will not have her dogs spayed/neutered. The African Americans participants believe that it is against God's law to spay/neuter animals and therefore animals should be able to breed as long as they are able. Their animals are not spayed and they will not do so in the future. One Hispanic participant purchased his dogs for breeding purposes but after the female delivered her first pups the male owner had her spayed because of the difficulty she had whelping. The owner does not want to see his pet have such a difficult delivery again. The puppies have been given to friends and family and thus there is no return on the investment. The male dog, however, has not been neutered as the owner does not see this as necessary. The financial "loss" is of no consequence as the owner's relationship with the dogs is more important than the financial gain.

Some participants take advantage of voucher programs available through some programs in the area. They pay \$35 for a male cat and \$55 for a female cat to have them neutered. One participant paid \$80 to neuter a dog and feels that is too much. Other participants think that \$50-\$75 is an acceptable price with \$100 being the dollar limit; however they acknowledge that this amount could be a deterrent to people on limited income who would otherwise provide love and care

for the animal. The Snip Van is mentioned as an alternative for people who have limited resources.

The hunters believe that spaying/neutering their animals affects the dog's ability to hunt. Most of the hunters also breed animals for their use in hunting and for sale/trade. These hunter/breeders speak to the controlled environment of their kennels so there are no accidental pregnancies. There is consistent agreement among the hunters that household pets be spayed or neutered. Most of the hunters state that their wives manage the health care of the household pets while they manage the health care of the hunting dogs.

The hunter/breeders also speak to giving females a shot to delay the onset of heat if that would occur during the hunting season. The cost of this shot is \$10 per day while season. Hunters believe that delaying the onset of heat is an economic issue. The cost of providing care throughout the year needs to be recouped by having animals that are ready and available to hunt during the "limited season available."

Hunters consider the cost of spay/neuter to be "not cheap." They give no clear answer about an acceptable price for spay/neuter but speak in terms of a controlled environment so that unwanted pregnancies do not occur. For these participants knowing the blood line of the animal is critical. One man states the "worst thing is to not know the father of a litter."

The veterinarians who responded to the survey provided, on average, 492 spay/neuters in their practices during 2001. Other service providers either provided

or provided access to, on average, 176 spay/neuters per program in 2001. The number of animals seen in both veterinary practices and in other service providers who have already been spayed/neutered is in the 82-85% range (Table 14).

Table 14  
 NUMBER OF SPAY/NEUTERS AT VETERINARY CLINICS  
 AND AT OTHER SERVICE LOCATIONS

	Average Number of spay/neuters provided during 2001	% of animals seen in practice that are spayed/neutered
Veterinarians	492	84.48
Other Service Providers	176	82.71

There is a significant difference in the fair market value for spaying/neutering cats and dogs between the veterinarians and other service providers (Tables 15 and 16). Veterinarians assert that \$91 is a fair market value for spaying/neutering a cat and \$143 for a dog. This is significantly different than other animal welfare providers who believe that the prices should be \$44 and \$61 respectively.

Table 15  
 FAIR MARKET VALUE FOR SPAY/NEUTER OF DOGS

	Fair Market Value
Veterinarians	\$143.00
Other Service Providers	\$61.00

Table 16  
 FAIR MARKET VALUE FOR SPAY/NEUTER OF CATS

	Fair Market Value
Veterinarians	\$91.00
Other Service Providers	\$44.00

The general public was not asked to give a fair market value for spay neuter but was asked what influence price and accessibility had on their decision to seek spay/neuter. There is a direct correlation between the price of spay/neuter and the influence that has on the general public in seeking that service. Seventy-six percent of respondents state that having free spay/neuter would be a significant factor in their choosing to spay/neuter their animal. Coupons for 50% off of the cost of spay/neuter also has a strong appeal with the public. Sixty-seven percent of respondents state that this would motivate them to seek spay/neuter.

When queried about accessibility of services, seventy percent indicate that expanded hours at a clinic impacts their seeking spay/neuter services. Having a mobile van come into the neighborhood was supported by sixty-two percent as being a factor that would lead to spay/neuter action. The availability of a pick-up service was ranked lowest with 59% percent endorsing that concept.

All of the animal welfare providers in Hampton Roads who responded to the survey believe that spay/neuter should be required for all animals adopted in the region (Table 17). The providers differ on who should require that this happen; 67.6% believe that spay/neuter for adopted animals should be a state law, 19.7%

believe it should be handled at the local level and 12.7% believe that animal welfare organizations can make this work without government mandates (Table 18).

Table 17  
SHOULD SPAY/NEUTER BE REQUIRED FOR ALL ADOPTIONS IN HAMPTON ROADS?

	% Yes	% No
Veterinarians	100	0
Other Service Providers	100	0
General Public		

Table 18  
WHO SHOULD MANDATE SPAY/NEUTER?

	%
City/County Ordinance	19.7
State Law	67.6
Participation agreements with affinity organizations	12.7

Providers were asked their perceptions of why people do not spay/neuter animals in the Hampton Roads area. Sixty-one percent believe that cost is the primary factor. Twenty nine percent state that people don't believe in neutering male animals and almost 10% believe it is a convenience issue (Table 19). Neither the health of the animal nor females going through heat before being neutered were endorsed by any of the providers.

Table 19

PROVIDER PERCEPTION OF WHY PEOPLE DO NOT SPAY/NEUTER ANIMALS

	%
Cost	61.3
Health of Animal	0
Don't believe in neutering male animals	29
Females should go through heat before being neutered	0
Convenience	9.7

The general public was surveyed to ascertain whether the animals in their households were spayed/neutered. Sixty-two percent of female dogs have been spayed and fifty-three percent of male dogs have been neutered. Fifty-two percent of female cats have been spayed and the same percent of male cats have been neutered. (Table 20). There is a significant difference in the percent of female dogs and cats that have been spayed.

Table 20

DOGS AND CATS SPAYED/NEUTERED IN HOUSEHOLDS

	Female Dog	Male Dog	Female Cat	Male Cat
% Spay/Neuter	62.9	53.3	52.4	52.6
% Not Spay/Neuter	37.1	46.7	47.6	47.4

When the decision on spay/neuter is made in the household it is typically a shared decision between the adults with a fifty-four percent endorsement. This is

followed by female adults in the house with a thirty-four percent endorsement (Table 21). Over ninety percent of the respondents state that it is an easy decision to make (Table 22).

Table 21  
WHO DECIDED TO SPAY/NEUTER ANIMAL

	%
Female Adult	34.0
Male Adult	6.0
Teenage Female	0
Teenage Male	0
Already done when we got the animal	2.0
Done at shelter, we had no choice	4.0
Shared Adult decision	54.0

Table 22  
DIFFICULTY OF MAKING DECISION TO SPAY/NEUTER

	%
Very easy to make	75.0
Somewhat easy	16.7
Somewhat difficult	0
Very difficult to make	0
Don't know	8.3

The primary reasons cited by respondents for having an animal spayed/neutered are not having a litter to deal with in the home or having to find placements for puppies or kittens, the current overpopulation of cats and dogs in the area, and that spay/neuter stops the sex drive and associated behaviors in animals (Table 23). When asked about hesitations or concerns about not having an

animal spayed or neutered the overall response was very low, with cost ranking highest followed by never being able to breed the animal and the animal never having a litter (Table 24).

Table 23  
PRIMARY REASONS FOR SPAY/NEUTER

	%
None	6
No litters to deal with/find homes for	17
Overpopulation of cats and dogs	12.5
Makes a better companion/better with kids	8.6
Keeps pet from straying	7.1
Keeps other animals away from pet	6.3
More convenient/less messy	.8
More healthy for animals overall	2.4
Stops sex drive and related behaviors	15.7
Required for breeder/shelter	0
Save money for license/financial incentive	0

Table 24  
HESITATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT HAVING A PET ALTERED

	%
None	25.1
Never have a litter	2.4
Never able to breed animal	3.1
Good traits not passed on	0
Cost	4.7
Where to go/who should do it	0
Surgery dangerous/hurt the pet	.8
Pet gains weight, is more sluggish	1.6
Timing/when to do it	0

Over eighty-four percent of the respondents to the general public survey have their pets spayed/neutered within the first year of life. The majority (72.5%) of the citizens we surveyed indicated that they had their pet spayed/neutered between six months and one year of age. This was followed by those who had their pets altered at less than six months of age (11.8%). Twelve percent waited until the pet was greater than one year of age (Table 25). Over eighty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that their pet did not father or have a litter prior to being spayed/neutered (Table 26).

Table 25  
AGE OF PET WHEN ALTERED

	%
<6 months	11.8
6months to 1 year	72.5
1-2 years	7.8
Over 2 years	3.9
Don't know	3.9

Table 26  
DID THE PET HAVE, OR FATHER, A LITTER BEFORE IT WAS ALTERED

	%
Yes	1.9
No	88.7
Don't Know	9.4

When deciding whether to spay/neuter their animal, the general public relies upon the information provided by a veterinarian fifty-two percent of the time. Over thirty-six percent sought no information before having an animal spayed/neutered. Almost ten percent state that they had information on spay/neuter after having the procedure performed with a prior animal (Table 27). Ninety-six percent of respondents went to a veterinarian's clinic to have spay/neuter performed (Table 28).

Table 27  
ACQUIRING INFORMATION ABOUT SPAY/NEUTERING

	%
No information sought	36.5
Veterinarian	51.9
Friends/family/acquaintance	1.9
Previous experience	9.6

Table 28  
WHERE DID YOU HAVE THE PET ALTERED?

	%
VETERINARIAN	96.0
Humane Society	2.0
SPCA	2.0

The majority (69.4%) of the respondents to the general public survey do not think there is a difference in the decision process used to determine whether to alter a dog or cat (Table 29). Over twelve percent think it is easier to alter a cat.

Table 29  
EASE OF ALTERING DOGS AND CATS

	%
Easier to decide to alter dog	2.8
Easier to decide to alter cat	12.5
Decision to alter a dog or cat is equally easy	69.4
Don't know	2.5

Respondents were read a series of statements about why people in the community have not had their animals spayed/neutered. Respondents were asked whether this statement was a factor in their having an animal spayed/neutered. The statement that the cost of spay/neuter was too high was read and the respondents were asked to what extent this was a factor in their decision making (Table 30). Over twenty percent stated that cost was very much a factor, almost twenty-seven percent listed this as somewhat a factor and over fifty-two percent stated that this was not a factor at all.

Table 30  
COST AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING

	%
Very much a factor	20.5
Somewhat a factor	26.9
Not a factor at all	52.6

Respondents were then read the statement about the desire for their dog or cat having puppies or kittens was a factor in their decision making. Seventy-four

percent of respondents stated that this was not a factor in their decision making. (Table 31). Over sixteen percent stated that this was a factor in their decision making and almost ten percent did not know whether this was a consideration.

Table 31  
HAVING PUPPIES OR KITTENS AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING.

	%
Very much a factor	6.8
Somewhat a factor	9.6
Not a factor at all	74.0
Don't know	9.6

Not knowing where to have spay/neuter performed was a factor for almost eleven percent of respondents (Table 32). Over eighty-three percent of respondents stated that this was not a factor.

Table 32  
LOCATING A SERVICE PROVIDER AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING

	%
Very much a factor	2.7
Somewhat a factor	8.1
Not a factor at all	83.8
Don't know	5.4

Almost fifty percent of respondents believe that a pet's personality will change after spay/neuter has been performed (Table 33). Over forty-six percent state this is not a factor at all, and approximately five percent state they do not know.

Table 33  
CHANGE IN PET'S PERSONALITY AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING.

	%
Very much a factor	33.8
Somewhat a factor	14.3
Not a factor at all	46.8
Don't know	5.2

Almost twenty-five percent of respondents believe that spaying/neutering an animal is against Mother Nature is a factor to consider (Table 34). Seventy-eight percent of the African Americans endorse this idea; fifty percent of Hispanics while only eight percent of Caucasians believe it is a factor (Table 35).

Table 34  
BELIEF THAT SPAY/NEUTER IS AGAINST MOTHER NATURE AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING.

	%
Very much a factor	11.7
Somewhat a factor	13.0
Not a factor at all	72.7
Don't know	2.6

Table 35  
BELIEF THAT SPAY/NEUTER IS AGAINST MOTHER NATURE AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING;  
BY RACE.

	%
African American	78.0
Caucasian	8.0
Hispanic	50.0

Over twenty-eight percent of respondents believe that a factor to consider with spay/neuter is keeping one's options open for future breeding (Table 36). Over twenty-eight percent of respondents believe this is a factor to consider, while almost sixty-nine percent do not believe it is a factor.

Table 36

WANTING TO KEEP OPTIONS OPEN FOR POSSIBLE BREEDING AS A FACTOR IN ALTERING.

	%
Very much a factor	14.9
Somewhat a factor	13.5
Not a factor at all	68.9
Don't know	2.7

## ADOPTIONS/ACQUIRING PETS

Animal welfare providers state in the focus groups that animals are primarily placed for adoption because of behavior problems. Other reasons for adoptions include owners developing allergies, families moving, landlord problems, owner or pet health problems, and military deployment. The alternative used by people who cannot take an animal to a shelter has been to set them loose in the community. Generally people will use an excuse other than behavior problems when bringing their animal in to be placed for adoption. Animals that people prefer to adopt are purebred animals, small animals, young dogs and kittens, and popular breeds. The popular breeds in 2002 are golden retrievers, cocker spaniels, poodles, and exotics.

Providers state that some people adopt certain animals for status purposes. This is particularly true when animals are portrayed in movies. All providers state that within a few months after the release of "101 Dalmatians" local facilities were seeing an increase in the number of Dalmatians brought in for adoption. The acquisition of certain of animals is not just related to movies but to the status that people wish to portray in the community, i.e. having a breed that is considered desirable at that point in time.

People adopt animals for companionship for family members and for animals in the household, to give as gifts, protection for the owners, because they are cute, to recreate childhood memories and for breeding. Some animals are adopted on a spontaneous basis when people visit a shelter and see a young animal. It is felt by

many providers that adopting an animal will teach a child responsibility and compassion and five years of age is appropriate for a child to have the first pet.

Providers acknowledge that animal control offices have different pressures than rescue groups and shelters relative to adoption of animals.

Animal Welfare providers feel that there should be standards to adopt animals in the Hampton Roads area but acknowledge that it would be hard to get agreement from all animal welfare providers in the community. Animals should be spayed or neutered prior to adoption. Potential owners should take classes on animal care, understand the temperament of the animal that is to be adopted and understand that adoption is a commitment to care for the life of the animal. Providers feel there should be a mechanism in place to examine the environment where the animal will be placed. More time should be spent with prospective owners prior to adoption to ascertain their level of understanding about the animal's needs. Providers state that people "shop" from city to city for adoptions to "get the best deal." People also go from one city to another when they are turned down by the first organization. Potential owners become angry when they are denied an adoption.

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups state that they acquire their animals from SPCA, shelters, "find them," bid on them at Duck's Unlimited, receive as a gift, and are given to them by family members. Participants think an acceptable rate for adopting a spayed/neutered animal is in the range of \$30-80. African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to acquire a pet through a breeder. There is pride in

having “the papers” to prove that the dog is of good lineage. They believe there is a correlation between the breed of the animal, its cost, and its general health and well being. Non-Hispanic and non-black participants are less likely to purchase an animal through a breeder because they believe the animals are over-bred, too highly emotional, and that there are too many animals in shelters that need to be adopted. These participants also believe that people would think differently “if they knew about the farms that are puppy mills.”

Factors that participants in the Citizen Focus Groups consider when acquiring a pet include: the amount of time it takes to have another pet in the house, health care for the animal, how it will affect other animals already in the house, and the overall financial cost of having the animal. Some participants put the animal's health at the top of the list in acquiring a pet. Participants state that they don't believe that all people understand the cost of raising an animal. Some participants believe one needs at least two animals because one will be “lonely” when it is left alone.

Some of the citizens believe there should not be a limit on the number of animals a person can have while others think it is reasonable for localities to have ordinances that limit the number of animals. Defining the number of animals that are reasonable in a household is a rather nebulous, unquantifiable idea to many of the participants. They speak to care issues, amount of space, time to provide care, financial ability to provide care, fenced enclosures or yards when determining how many animals people may have. They are not able to give any specific number;

however several state that the dog limits in Norfolk and Virginia Beach appear to be reasonable.

Hunters are particular about the dogs they acquire. They look for a dog that “will do the job.” They want to see the lineage of the animal and its track record. There is a national network of breeders for hunting dogs. Information on available dogs is acquired at field trials and other gatherings of hunters. The hunters state that it is important to keep the hunting breeds “pure.”

The genetic predisposition of the animal is very important to the hunters in that a “coon dog” is for coon hunting and other breeds are for other types of hunting. They believe that hunting dogs are not someone’s pet in that the animals are happiest and most satisfied when they are doing what they have been bred to do – hunt. They acknowledge that some breeds are satisfactory as house pets but their natural instinct is to hunt.

When queried about what to do with animals that are no longer suitable for hunting, the hunters are reluctant to tell their stories. One participant speaks of his favorite hunting dog being diagnosed with kidney failure. The dog is receiving medical treatment and the owner has turned the dog loose in the yard to spend his final days. Other hunters tell similar stories yet acknowledge that this is the rarity rather than the norm. The idea of adopting the dogs to people in the community looking for a pet is met with skepticism based on two ideas: the first being that they do not think that the public is interested in adopting hunting dogs based on the

low adoption rates in animal control shelters and second that the dogs will not make good pets for people who have not been around hunting dogs.

Certain provider groups are required to report receipt and dispersion of animals to the State Veterinarian in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Organizations in Virginia Beach had the highest number of animals reclaimed by their owners (22.1%), followed by Chesapeake at seventeen percent then Franklin and Southampton at over fifteen percent. Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson and York had the highest adoption rate of animals brought into facilities with thirty-nine of the animals leaving with owners. This was followed by Virginia Beach facilities with an adoption rate of over thirty-one percent and then Isle of Wight County with an adoption rate of thirty percent (Table 37).

Table 37

ADOPTIONS OF COMPANION ANIMALS BY LOCALITY OF AGENCIES THAT REPORT TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, CY 2001

	Total Companion Animals Received	Reclaimed by Owners	% Reclaimed	% Adopted	% Adopted
Chesapeake	6,429	1,112	17.2	1,565	24.3
Franklin/Southampton	672	106	15.7	112	16.6
Hampton/Newport News/Poquoson/York	14,313	1,778	12.4	5,585	39.0
Isle of Wight	1,595	126	7.8	482	30.0
Norfolk	10,132	927	9.1	2,823	27.8
Portsmouth	6,139	610	9.9	882	14.3
Suffolk	3,305	235	6.8	719	21.7
Virginia Beach	13,409	2,967	22.1	4,283	31.5
Williamsburg/James City County	2,790	332	11.8	779	27.9

The general public was asked where they had acquired their pets. Over twenty percent acquired their dogs from breeders while less than thirteen percent of cats were acquired from breeders (Table 38). Almost nineteen percent of dogs were acquired from pet shops as compared to less than three percent of cats being acquired in the same location. People were significantly more likely to acquire dogs from family members, relatives and ads in the newspaper than people were to acquire cats from the same sources. Over sixty-one percent of cats were picked-up off the street or just appeared at a household and then were kept as family pets (Table 39).

Table 38  
WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR DOG?

	%
Born in this household	6.3
Ad in paper	17.2
From family member or other relative	17.2
From neighbor, acquaintance	9.4
Picked up a stray/just appeared	9.4
Pet shop	18.8
Breeder/professional	20.3
SPCA/Pound/Animal Control	1.6
Humane Society/Rescue Group	0

Table 39  
Where did you get your cat?

	%
Born in this household	0
Ad in paper	2.6
From family member or other relative	5.1
From neighbor, acquaintance	7.7
Picked up a stray/just appeared	61.5
Pet shop	2.6
Breeder/professional	12.8
SPCA/Pound/Animal Control	5.1
Humane Society/Rescue Group	0
Other	2.6

Eleven percent of respondents state that they have given up a pet for adoption (Table 40). Of those who have given up a pet, the primary reason cited for giving up a pet is because of the family moving followed by landlord issues (Table 41).

Table 40  
HAVE YOU GIVEN UP A PET FOR ADOPTION?

	%
Yes	11.3
No	85
Refused to Answer	3.7

Table 41

WHAT WAS THE PRIMARY REASON FOR GIVING UP YOUR PET FOR ADOPTION?

	%
Moving	55.6
Landlord Issues	33.3
Other	11.1

Women are more likely to be the primary caretaker of a cat in the household while caring for the dog is a shared responsibility. Women are the primary caretaker of cats in sixty five percent of households (Table 42). Shared responsibility between adults is the primary manner in which dogs are cared for in the household, followed by adult females as the primary caretaker (27.9%) and adult males (24.6%) in households in Hampton Roads (Table 43).

Table 42

Who is the primary caretaker of the cat in your household?

	%
Female Adult	62.5
Male Adult	7.5
Female Teenager	2.5
Shared Adult	27.5

Table 43  
Who is the primary caretaker of the dog in your household?

	%
Female Adult	27.9
Male Adult	24.6
Female Teenager	3.3
Shared Adult	44.3

## ANIMAL CRUELTY

Animal welfare providers state that animal cruelty has three constructs or levels: neglect, ignorance and cruelty. Cruelty is abusive and providers believe that many serial killers start out as abusive to animals. Some providers define cruelty as deprivation of food, water, shelter, veterinary care, and taking away or not providing for basic needs. Some see cruelty as requiring direct action versus neglect, which is more benign. Providers state that we have a lot of animals that are neglected. This neglect includes not feeding or watering animals on a regular basis, ignoring their health needs, or abandoning the animal when the person moves. Providers believe that some of these actions are attributable to ignorance on the part of the owners about providing for the well being of the animal.

Some providers believe that cruelty and neglect are a function of ignorance, education and economics. Without region-wide education programs on the care of animals many providers believe that proper care will not happen. The providers in the focus groups believe that public education has to be multi-focused to be successful.

Determining the economic viability of providing care is seen as a major hurdle at the time of adoption. Rescue groups are perceived to better positioned to ask for proof that the prospective owner has the ability to provide care than are shelters or animal control.

Providers assess for animal cruelty when animals are brought to them for care. They state that it is generally very difficult to determine whether there has

been abuse, but they look for patterns. Generally owners are given the benefit of the doubt when questioned about possible abuse of an animal. The veterinarians state that they generally reported animal abuse. They also state that the person who brings the animal in for care is usually not the person who perpetrated the abuse.

Providers are concerned with animal abandonment, particularly around military facilities in the area. They state that a lot of domesticated cats are left behind when families move. It is perceived that cats are savvy and can fend for themselves but these cats are often injured. Providers believe that the public understands the pack mentality of dogs and therefore are more reticent to abandon them. This abandonment of these cats is seen as animal cruelty by animal welfare providers.

Providers recount the deployment of troops in 1991 to the Middle East as a time when the system was overwhelmed with animals. While they are happy that the animals were turned into shelters rather than being abandoned on the street, they point to the lack of foresight and planning of people adopting animals as a major concern. They also state that no plans for placement of animals have been developed in the event of another mass deployment from the military facilities in the region.

Some of the participants in the Provider Focus Groups state that a lot of hunters are cruel to their dogs. They report that animal control picks up dogs abandoned by hunters when the dogs are non-performers. The providers state that

the hunters do not see themselves as cruel or abusive but from the provider's perspective hunters are.

Providers acknowledge that they have a different standard than the general public about what constitutes animal cruelty. They believe that most of the providers have a higher level of education regarding animal welfare. Providers perceive themselves as very emotional and sentimental about animals but do not always express these emotions around the general public. Providers believe that the public knowledge of animal cruelty is improving; the general public is beginning to see the seriousness of the problem, yet there is substantial ground to be covered.

Animal collectors are of concern to the provider community. While these individuals believe they are helping the animals, providers believe they are doing more harm than good. Providers believe that animal collectors are not psychologically "there" or they would understand how they are endangering the animals.

There is no uniform manner in which to report animal cruelty in the Hampton Roads area. Participants note the need for a central telephone number for citizens to use to report animal cruelty to authorities. This central telephone number would operate in the same way that the 1-800-LOCK-U-UP system works. The providers express concern that there are not uniform ordinances in the region relative to animal cruelty which can lead to misinterpretation and frustration on the part of animal control officers and the general public.

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups believe that there is a lot of animal cruelty in the Hampton Roads area. They characterize the cruelty as ranging from neglect to dog fighting to abandonment. Several participants state that it is hard to convince people that animals need more than just food and water and that only providing these constitutes animal cruelty. One participant states that any dog left outside should be considered mistreated. Most participants state that dog fighting is a major issue in the Hampton Roads area and cite local media as their source of information. All participants are emphatic that they consider dog fighting to be animal cruelty. Like the providers, participants in the Citizen Focus Groups state that they may have a higher standard than a lot of the general public regarding animal welfare.

A major concern in the Citizen Focus Groups is the correlation between animal cruelty and human cruelty. Participants do not think that enough attention is paid to this relationship. They believe that animal cruelty speaks not only to our relationship to animals but also to each other.

Participants in the Hunter Focus Group state that they see animal cruelty in the towns and villages in their area. They are concerned with animals abandoned by people who do not have their companion animals spayed or neutered. They state that these people often go into the rural areas and dump animals in the woods. The hunters believe that animals that survive and become feral are a danger to domesticated animals and to people. The hunters are also concerned that these animals are vectors for rabies.

Forty-six percent of the respondents to the general public survey state that they let their pets stay outside at times either unsupervised or loose. Ten percent of the respondents use their animals for hunting purposes and 5.5 percent use their animals for breeding. None of the respondents indicate that they use animals for gaming purposes.

The majority of the respondents to the general public survey are concerned about “community” animals and un-owned animals. Over fifty-eight percent of the respondents indicate that they feed these animals.

When animal welfare providers are asked about physical and mental abuse of animals they see in their programs, over ninety-five percent state that they ask questions to help them determine whether abuse has occurred (Table 44). Seventy-five percent of providers state that they have reported abuse to the SPCA or to their local animal control office (Table 45). The reasons why abuse is not reported are because the provider does not feel there is sufficient proof. Ninety-four percent of providers believe that a centralized 1-800 telephone number reporting system would be an effective method for citizens and providers to notify authorities about suspected abuse.

Table 44  
ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT SUSPECTED ABUSE

	%
Yes	95.1
No	4.9

Table 45  
 REPORTED SUSPECTED ANIMAL CRUELTY TO SPCA OR ANIMAL CONTROL

	%
Yes	75.9
No	24.1

Ninety-seven percent of providers believe it is best to teach children about animal responsibility prior to age ten. Seventy-five percent feel this education should occur between the ages of 1-5 (Table 46).

Table 46  
 BEST AGE TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT ANIMAL RESPONSIBILITY

	%
1-5 years	75.0
6-10 years	22.6
11-15 years	2.4

## EUTHANASIA

The terms that providers use to describe euthanasia include: "put to sleep," "put down," and "kill the animal." The term "No Kill" is inflammatory among many animal welfare providers. Providers are unsure what the term "No Kill" means with some taking a very narrow definition of not killing any animals while others take a broader view of not killing any viable animals. There is no agreement on what constitutes a viable animal. Some participants state that euthanizing an animal because of poor health is the same as killing the animal while others take the polar view. Some people feel that there are animals that cannot be placed because of their genetic disposition and that providers have a responsibility to separate these animals and provide care until they have a natural death.

Euthanasia is a difficult subject for the general public to discuss and is equally so for animal welfare providers. Euthanasia in animal control is governed by Virginia code. Virginia law states that animal control facilities have to keep strays for at least 5 days and keep animals with an identified owner for at least 10 days. An animal control officer states that euthanizing animals is very difficult and painful for his staff. Staff members rotate on the assignment of euthanizing animals and employees have a higher absentee rate on the days they are required to euthanize animals. Staff reactions include putting distance between themselves and the number of animals to be euthanized. Among all providers it is acknowledged that euthanizing an animal is extremely stressful on staff members.

Veterinarians suggested that it is appropriate to euthanize an animal that is vicious, non-treatable, has uncontrollable behavior or serious health problems. Veterinarians encounter owners who bring animals in to be euthanized because the animal has become inconvenient to them.

The participants state that the standard method of euthanizing an animal is through sedation. The death of an animal – either natural death or through euthanization is seen by many providers as a necessary part of pet ownership. It is stressed by the providers that pet ownership should not be perceived as a right but as a responsibility and that euthanizing animals may be part of responsible ownership.

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups generally mirror the language of providers in describing euthanasia, using the terms “put animal to sleep,” or “put down” but they do not use the term “kill the animal.”

Most participants have experience in having a pet euthanized. Reasons for euthanization include old age, infirmity, cancer, and kidney failure. More than one participant says that they waited too long to euthanize the first companion animal they had that should have been euthanized. Participants state this delay is due to their inability to “let go.” One participant states that while the head says it is the right thing to do, the heart cannot let go. The participant likens it to euthanizing a human relative. The participants state that given a second time they will have the animal euthanized earlier so the animal does not suffer. One participant recounts

going to a psychiatrist for therapy because she believes that she had her animal euthanized too soon and that amounted to cruelty.

It is important for most participants to be present when the animal is euthanized. They do not want the animal to feel abandoned. One participant states that she felt as if her guts were being ripped out when it was time to have her dog euthanized. Hispanic participants acknowledge that euthanasia has a place in the overall care of animals but find it difficult when it is their own animal. One Hispanic male states that when it is time for his dog to be euthanized someone else will have to take the dog to the veterinarian and that he (the Hispanic man) will leave town for a few days so that he can emotionally recover from that trauma. Several of the African American participants liken euthanasia to killing. They also believe it is not our place to kill companion animals. One participant believes that the killing of animals is a prophesy foretold in the Christian Book of Revelations. She cites chapter and verse from the Bible and provides the interpretation that supports her theory. This idea is familiar to other African Americans in the focus group and they understand her position.

Facilities in Chesapeake, Franklin, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Norfolk and Suffolk euthanize over fifty percent of animals brought into their shelters (Table 47). Suffolk has the highest rate with over sixty-nine percent of animals entering shelters in that city being euthanized. Virginia Beach has the lowest euthanasia rate in the region with over forty-two percent of the animals brought into shelters being euthanized.

Table 47  
 Animals Euthanized by City – Agencies that Report to the Virginia Department of  
 Agriculture and Consumer Services

Locality	Total Number of Companion Animals Received	Number of Companion Animals Euthanized	% Euthanized
Chesapeake	6,429	3,385	52.6
Franklin/Southampton	672	425	63.2
Hampton/Newport News Poquoson/York	14,313	6,731	47.0
Isle of Wight	1,595	896	56.1
Norfolk	10,132	6,034	59.5
Portsmouth	6,139	2,841	46.2
Suffolk	3,305	2,303	69.6
Virginia Beach	13,409	5731	42.7
Williamsburg/James City County	2,790	1,362	48.8

Providers were asked to identify the top three reasons that animals are euthanized (Table 48). Euthanizing unhealthy animals is the primary reason given (65.7%), followed by the animal being a danger to society (20.1%), then owner request (14.1%).

Table 48  
 REASONS FOR EUTHANIZING ANIMALS

	%
Law/ordinance regarding Length of Stay	6.1
Space limitations	10.1
Unhealthy animal	65.7
Owner request	14.1
Danger to society	20.2
Lack of funds to provide care	13.1

## MICROCHIPPING/ ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

Providers see microchipping as having many advantages in identifying animals that are lost or turned in to animal control, shelters or rescue groups. There is no universal scanner at this time to read the different microchips that are implanted in animals. Veterinarians indicate that microchipping is easily accomplished when an animal is being spayed or neutered. The cost for microchipping is inexpensive for owners of animals. There is a problem in maintaining updated information on the owners so that lost animals can be returned to their rightful owners. Providers believe that microchipping has the potential to increase owner responsibility. There is no consensus among the providers whether microchipping should be a standard in the community.

Most of the Caucasian participants in the Citizen Focus Groups are aware of microchipping. Some report having their animal micro chipped. Participants report that they see scanners in veterinarian's offices. It is felt by the participants that all animals should be micro chipped when adopted from shelters, animal control, and from rescue groups.

Participants who have their animals micro chipped have paid between \$25 - \$35 per animal. Most are in favor of an ordinance requiring that all companion animals be micro chipped and that city licensure fees be incorporated into the fee for the procedure.

One participant states that it is difficult to keep the information updated when you move. This is seen by the participants as a particularly large problem in the Hampton Roads area with the military population.

The participants in the Hunter Focus Group state that they use tracking collars on dogs that are out of the kennels. The tracking collars have significantly improved their ability to retrieve dogs. The electronic collars send out a frequency to a transponder so that it is easier to find dogs at the end of the day. The collars cost \$150 each and the collars are rotated in that they are used on the dogs hunting on that particular day. The hunters also put dyed "tattoos" on their dogs so that the dogs are identifiable to each owner.

Fifty-nine percent of the respondents to the general public survey indicate that their animals have identification tags with name and contact information (Table 49). Nine percent indicate that they have micro chipped their animals for identification purposes.

Table 49  
IDENTIFICATION TAGS ON ANIMALS

	%
Yes	59.0
No	41.0

Forty-eight percent of providers report that they provide microchipping services in their programs (Table 50). Forty-six percent have universal readers of

microchips for identifying animals. The primary given for not having a universal reader is the cost of the equipment (Table 51).

Table 50  
OFFER MICROCHIPPING

	Offer Microchipping	Have Universal Reader
Yes	48.4	46.2
No	51.6	53.8

Table 51  
REASON FOR NOT HAVING UNIVERSAL MICROCHIP READER

	%
Cost	68.4
Not enough animals are microchipped to make it worthwhile	21.1
Don't believe it is useful	10.5

## LICENSING

Providers believe that approximately five percent of domestic animals in Hampton Roads are licensed. More dogs than cats are licensed. It is believed that more cats are not licensed because they more often do not wear collars. Providers suggest there should be a linkage between having an animal vaccinated for rabies and the purchase of an animal license. Some providers believe that veterinarians' offices would be the logical place for animal licenses to be sold while the veterinarians do not want the added responsibility for collecting a city tax. Providers believe that a differential licensing fee between spay/neuter and non spay/neuter animals has merit.

Some participants in the Citizen Focus Groups believe the licensure of animals is punitive because the money is put the general funds in the cities and is not set aside for animal welfare. Most participants do not know what the animal license fees are used for in the city. The participants also do not know the amount budgeted in their localities for animal services. One participant states that it would be hard to determine because sometimes the funds are part of a department's larger budget.

One participant suggests that the licensing of all animals would provide a mechanism to track all owners and therefore could be used to identify people who abuse animals. There is consensus among the participants that the cities need to do more to educate the public about animal services provided and the requirement for licensure. One Hispanic participant is distraught because her dogs are not licensed.

She states that she is unaware of the need to license her dogs. She is adamant that her animals receive ongoing care and grooming and that if she knew of the licensure requirement she would comply. An African American woman states that the issue of licensing animals involves privacy issues. This woman is concerned that the government has information on her by requiring licensing of her animals. She is not opposed to the fee, as such, but to the maintenance of a register that ties her to the animal.

The participants in the Hunter Focus Group state that they have to license their kennels as well as their dogs. The kennel license fee cited by the participants is \$50 and the dog license fee is \$10 per dog. More onerous to the hunters are the new zoning requirements that impact their ability to build kennels.

## LOCAL ORDINANCES/ANIMAL CONTROL INTERACTION

Animal welfare providers believe that having uniform ordinances in the Hampton Roads area is needed ---- but few believe it is achievable. They state that the variances in city codes allow people who have a difficult time qualifying to adopt an animal in one city to “animal shop” from city to city until they find someone who will allow them to adopt. There is general agreement that home inspections should be required for all adoptions throughout the region.

Participants in the Citizen Focus Groups generally feel that animal control has a job to do and that they do it to the best of their ability. Most participants feel comfortable calling animal control if they have a need. Some participants feel uncomfortable interacting with animal control officers because they are viewed as an extension of law enforcement. Many participants viewed the job of animal control as one of finding stray animals and then locating homes for them. One participant states that most animal control officers start out being committed to doing the right things but the laws and resources do not contribute to their ability to do a good job. This participant states that the animal control officers know that most of the animals they bring in will be euthanized and that this impacts their ability to do their jobs effectively over a long period of time.

Some of the participants believe that localities should not limit the number of animals a person can have while others think it is reasonable for localities to have ordinances that do set limits. There is no clear agreement on the number of animals that people should have; several believe that the limits in Norfolk and

Virginia Beach on the number of dogs allowable in a household appears to be reasonable.

All Caucasian participants believe that there should be leash laws for both dogs and cats. The Hispanic and African American participants have mixed responses to leash laws; some believe it is appropriate if you live in a residential area while others believe that their animals should be able to wander freely if they are not hurting anyone.

Several of the hunters express concern with the “suburbanization” of the once rural area of Western Tidewater. One participant states that if he moves his family he cannot move his dogs because of his perceived inability to get a permit to install a kennel on the new property. The participants speak to the requirement of having to get a building permit to construct a dog kennel and one participant stated “I never thought I would live to see this in an agricultural area.” The hunters also express concern about “city folks” moving to the country and not understanding their way of life which includes hunting. Several participants spoke of their interactions with new homeowners who have moved to the country. They are all conversant in the particulars of the law in terms of retrieving hunting dogs that have crossed onto private property. Some of the hunters have unpleasant interactions with game wardens. They say the game wardens “go crazy” during hunting season looking for any excuse to issue citations to hunters. Others state that their particular hunt clubs have good working relationships with the game wardens. All of

the hunters praise the local animal control officers as being concerned about returning animals to their owners and being easy to work with.

Hunters believe that in their area, 75% of the population “understands hunters and hunting because they grew up here”, the other 25%, they believe, have moved in from other areas and do not understand hunting. While people understand hunting, the hunters believe they are in a no-win situation if they publicly address animal welfare issues. In the area where they live, if an animal welfare ordinance comes before local government that might adversely impact their ability to hunt and to keep their kennels, that “there is not a building large enough to hold the people who would come out to speak on the issue.” They believe that as long as “things are ok” they are better not to take a proactive role. They also believe there is apathy among the general public about animal welfare issues unless it is about their specific pet.

Over sixty-one percent of respondents to the Provider Survey indicate that the differences in local organizations impact their ability to deliver services (Table 52).

Table 52  
Impact of local ordinances on service delivery

	%
Not at all	38.6
Some	47.7
A lot	13.6

## FERAL ANIMALS

Feral animals are a concern among many of the animal welfare providers. Feral cats are seen as a major problem in the urban areas of Hampton Roads. The solution proposed by the providers is to capture the cats, spay or neuter them, and return them to their habitat. Providers state that a lot of dogs are abandoned in the urban areas but they do not adapt as well as cats therefore fewer become feral. A concern for providers is that dogs will form packs and this is potentially dangerous.

Consumers recognize feral animals as a problem in the Hampton Roads area. A primary concern is that the animals may become rabid and infect a domestic animal. Another concern voiced is that the feral cats may have FIV which is contagious. Like the providers, some consumers suggest that the feral animals should be captured, then spayed or neutered, returned to their habitat and then fed and cared for. There is sentiment that the feral animals should only be euthanized if they are sick and are a threat to other animals or humans.

The hunters state that there is a large feral dog problem in Southampton County and they are concerned about their hunting dogs coming into contact with these animals. They believe the feral dog problem is larger than the feral cat problem in rural areas. A primary concern for the hunters is that feral animals may have rabies. The hunters state that they see feral dogs on a daily basis during hunting season.

Hunters believe that a primary way to control the feral animal problem is to provide free spay/neuter in the towns in the county as many of these people "dump"

litters in the rural areas when they cannot afford to provide care. They express concern about the cost of spay/neuter and the inability of poor people in the cities to pay for this service. Another solution the hunters believe is viable is to kill feral dogs when they are seen in the rural areas.

## **AREAS OF CONCERN**

From the values adopted by the Coalition and the results of the research done during emerge several areas of concern. These present opportunities for the Coalition to provide leadership to effect change in the state of animal welfare in Hampton Roads in the future.

From the numbers presented here, the vast majority of companion animals living in the area do not enter public facilities such as shelters, animal control facilities, or rescues. They are largely “owned” by the general public. Similarly, the state of animal welfare is owned by the general public—the community at large. There is a need to develop community awareness of all the things impacting animal welfare and to build community-wide acceptance of the responsibility for its ownership and for the resolution of the negative impacts on animal welfare.

Overpopulation of companion animals exacerbates many of those things that negatively impact animal welfare. Strong spay/neuter programs for animals being adopted will not alone resolve overpopulation. The general public’s knowledge regarding spay/neuter issues such as early age neutering, neutering for all animals not planned to be used for breeding, positive health benefits of spay/neuter, and behavioral facts and fiction about neutering needs to be expanded so that attitudes and behaviors change.

A more realistic attitude regarding the costs of veterinary medical care including the cost of spay/neuter surgeries needs to be promoted among animal owners and non-veterinary providers. Particularly important in this area, just as in

human health, is promoting preventive health maintenance—immunization, parasite preventive treatment, annual physical examination, and dental hygiene. Increasing access by developing options for low-income owners and those on fixed incomes should also be of concern.

The impact of animal abuse or cruelty on the state of animal welfare is at present difficult to assess. There is a need to develop a mechanism for reporting events in order to establish incidence data, to increase surveillance for episodes of abuse, and to track disposition of animal abuse cases. There are implications for human behavior particularly among children and families that may be better addressed through access to such data. The link between animal abuse and violent behavior presents another group of stakeholders in the fight to improve animal welfare—the human services community that addresses violent behavior.

Differences in local codes and variance in the enforcement of codes related to animal welfare present concern, particularly relating to adoption, fostering, and abuse. Adoption of uniform codes and cross-jurisdictional agreements related to enforcement would enhance the work of animal welfare providers and show a united community position on such issues.

In addition to reducing the population of companion animals without adequate homes through spay/neuter, there is a need to increase the number of adoptive and foster homes available. There are several concerns that may need to be addressed in order to do this. First, realistic universal criteria to be met by adopters need to be developed and utilized by those providers needing to place

animals. Second, there may be a need for animal welfare providers to improve customer service to potential adopters through improved customer relations, expanded operating hours, user-friendly application processes and increasing their ability to provide follow-up supportive service to the adoptive family and the newly placed companion animal. Third, providers need to take every opportunity to be visible in the community and may need to “think outside the box” to create opportunities to put adoptees and potential adopters together.

Finally, there is a need to come to consensus on a set of indicators for the state of animal welfare to be used similarly to those used for human health issues. These should be tracked and reported to the general public and its elected representatives annually by jurisdiction and in aggregate for the region in order to track progress toward an excellent state of animal welfare.

## ATTACHMENTS

## Attachment A

### **Bylaws of the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads**

#### ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads.

#### ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization is to improve the welfare of animals in Hampton Roads.

#### ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING

##### A. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The General Membership of the Coalition is open to those organizations and individuals interested in addressing animal welfare issues in the Hampton Roads community.

Section 2. A member agency may have one voting member and an alternate. These members shall be identified to the Secretary in writing by the agency and any change in representation should be identified as it may occur. Each organization shall have one vote.

Section 3. The role of the General Membership is to provide oversight and guidance to the Executive Board of the Coalition, act on recommendations for annual funding, review and act on bylaw changes, set policy for the Coalition, and plan for the delivery of services to animals.

Section 4. Any member desiring to resign from the General Membership of the Coalition shall submit a letter of resignation to the Chairperson, who then shall present it to the Executive Board for action.

Section 5. One may not be an individual member of record and the designated representative of an agency at the same time.

Section 6. Individual members do not have individual votes, but shall designate one individual member to vote on their behalf.

Section 7. In order to be a voting member in good standing, organizational representatives and the voting individual member shall attend no less than 6 meetings per year.

#### ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Coalition shall be an elected chairperson, an elected vice chairperson, an elected recording secretary, and three elected members at large. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the coalition.

Section 2. The chairperson, vice chairperson, recording secretary, three members at large shall be elected by ballot to serve for one year or until a successor is elected, and their term of office shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

Section 3. Officers of the coalition are limited to a two-year tenure in any one office.

Section 4. The chairperson, vice chairperson, recording secretary, and three members at large shall not be on the board, staff, or volunteer of any agency that may be a contractor of the coalition.

#### ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The officers of the Coalition and the chairpersons of the standing committees shall constitute the Executive Board.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Coalition providing financial oversight. The Board shall be subject to the orders of the General Membership of the Coalition, and none of its acts shall conflict with actions taken by the Coalition.

Section 3. Unless otherwise ordered by the Board, regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held prior to each monthly general membership meeting. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairperson and shall be called upon the written request of three members of the committee.

Section 4. Any member of the Executive Board who has more than three absences during the year will forfeit the Board position.

Section 5. At any meeting of the Executive Board, a majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If less than a majority is present at a meeting, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting without further notice.

## ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular meetings of the Coalition shall be held on the first Sunday of each month.

Section 2. The regular meeting of the first Sunday of January shall be known as the Annual Meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a recording secretary, three members at large, and chairpersons of the committees cited in Article VII, receiving reports of officers and committees and for any other business that may arise.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson of the Executive Board and shall be upon the written request of ten members of the Coalition. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days notice shall be given.

Section 4. At any meeting of the General Membership of the Coalition, representation from at least ten percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but if less than said number is present at a meeting, a majority of the those members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

Section 5. Actions taken by the General Membership and Executive Board shall be by a simple majority vote.

## ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

Committee Chairs shall be elected by committee members.

## ARTICLE VIII – GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Section 1. The Coalition may designate a lead agency or organization as the lead agency for seeking and managing grants.

Section 2. The Coalition will direct the action of the designated lead agency by vote of the general membership concerning regulations governing provisions of grants and contracts as they pertain to the Coalition.

## ARTICLE IX – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 1. Conflict of interest occurs when an appointed or voting member of the Coalition has a direct or fiduciary interest in an organization with which the Coalition has a direct, financial and/or recognized relationship including any such interest that existed at any time during the prior twelve months. Direct or fiduciary relationships include ownership, employment, contractual, creditor, consultant, board member, staff membership, or volunteer.

Section 2. In the event of a conflict of interest, and/or during the period of review of said conflict of interest, members with a conflict of interest shall state the conflict, may participate in the discussion

of the matter in conflict/question but shall recuse themselves from voting on the matter. Such members shall be counted in order to determine if a quorum is present.

Section 3. All statements and concerns regarding conflict of interest shall be recorded in the Coalition's meeting minutes and referred to the chairperson, or the chairs appointed representative, for review. The full Coalition shall take, based on the recommendations of the chairperson, whatever actions it deems appropriate.

Section 4. A member shall be terminated from membership on the Coalition and any of its committees for refusing to cooperate in a conflict of interest review, or when it is determined that the person has knowingly taken action to influence the conduct of the Coalition in an unethical manner as determined by the chairperson.

#### ARTICLE X – PARLIMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Coalition in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Coalition may adopt.

#### ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Coalition by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

Section 2. These bylaws may also be amended at any regular meeting of the Executive Board by two-thirds vote, to bring these by-laws into compliance with federal or state regulations and guidelines.

Approved by General Membership vote, (July 14, 2002)

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Debra Griggs, Chairperson (Date)  
Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads

Attachment B

Animal Welfare Coalition of Hampton Roads  
2003 Executive Board

<b>Person</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Debra Griggs	Chairperson	Animal Rescue of Tidewater
William Christensen	Vice-Chairperson	Heritage Humane of Williamsburg
Erica Mascarello	Secretary	SHINE
Kelly Schmidt	Member at Large	Mastiff Rescue
Shirley Land	Member at Large	Isle of Wight County Humane Society
Ella Ellis	Member at Large	Suffolk Animal Control
Nancy Woodward	Legislative Committee	K9 New Life
Cindy Hiddeman	Legislative Committee	Iguana Rescue
Alan Gollihue	Research Committee	Corps Cats
Sharon Day	Promotion Committee	T Touch Practitioner
Mary Alice Beale	Membership Committee	PACC of Franklin
Erin Pavey	Program Committee	Trek-9 Search and Rescue

## Attachment C

### AWCHR Values

AWCHR members' goal as a coalition of shelters, rescue groups, animal control, veterinary professionals and others is to help bring an end to animal overpopulation and euthanasia of adoptable animals in Hampton Roads. Our members support having a responsible home waiting for dogs and cats before they are born. Our members believe that healthy adoptable animals should be adopted into homes and not euthanized.

The coalition believes that an animal's health is evaluated on physical, mental, and behavioral criteria appropriate to the animal's type.

It is the consensus of AWCHR that sterilization must be performed prior to the adopter taking possession of the animal, and that this should apply to animals that are in foster networks as well as shelters.

AWCHR supports pre-pubertal spay/neuter of companion animals.

All adopted animals in the AWCHR network should have a method for identification prior to adoption. Our preferred method for identification for dogs in the network is microchip and id tag/license; for cats it is microchip and ID tag/license and in the case of feral cats, ear tipping.

AWCHR supports adoption fees and municipal licensing differentials for altered dogs and cats with proceeds to be used for animal welfare programs.

Public and private funds for spay/neuter should be given priority as follows:

1. homeless animals
2. animals in low income households
3. 1<sup>st</sup> come/1<sup>st</sup> served in community.

AWCHR believes education is fundamental to bringing Hampton Roads to a "No healthy companion animal euthanized" status. The priority target groups for educational initiatives and target topics for discussion are:

a. City and County officials

1. the need for mandatory pre-release sterilization of adopted shelter animals
2. the need for differential licensing for altered dogs and cats
3. the need for mandatory sterilization of repeat impounds
4. feral cat colony management
5. spay-neuter assistance for low-income residents
6. mandatory humane education in our schools starting in pre-kindergarten

b. general public

1. The need for spay/neuter of companion animals to reduce over-population
2. Responsible animal guardianship education.

Adopted by the General Membership September 8, 2002

Attachment D

**§3.1-796.122. Cruelty to animals; penalty.**

Virginia State Code:

A. Any person who (i) overrides, overdrives, overloads, tortures, ill-treats, abandons, willfully inflicts inhumane injury or pain not connected with bona fide scientific or medical experimentation, or cruelly or unnecessarily beats, maims, mutilates, or kills any animal, whether belonging to himself or another; (ii) deprives any animal of necessary food, drink, shelter or emergency veterinary treatment;; (iv) willfully sets on foot, instigates, engages in, or in any way furthers any act of cruelty to any animal; (v) carries or causes to be carried in or upon any vehicle, vessel or otherwise any animal in a cruel, brutal, or inhumane manner, so as to produce torture or unnecessary suffering;. B. Any person who (i) tortures, willfully inflicts inhumane injury or pain not connected with bona fide scientific or medical experimentation, or cruelly and unnecessarily beats, maims, mutilates or kills any animal whether belonging to himself or another; (iii) instigates, engages in, or in any way furthers any act of cruelty to any animal set forth in clause (i); or (iv) causes any of the actions described in clauses (i) and (iii) of this subsection, or being the owner of such animal permits such acts to be done by another; and has been within five years convicted of a violation of this subsection or subsection A, shall be guilty of a. C. Any person who abandons or dumps any dog, cat or other companion animal in any public place including the right-of-way of any public highway, road or street or on the property of another shall be guilty of a **Class 3 misdemeanor**E. For the purposes of this section and §§3.1-796.111, 3.1-796.113, 3.1-796.114, 3.1-796.115, and 3.1-796.125, the word animal shall be construed to include birds and fowl. G. In addition to the penalties provided in subsection A, the court may, in its discretion, require any person convicted of a violation of subsection A to attend an anger management or other appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling. The court may impose the costs of such a program or counseling upon the person convicted. H. It is unlawful for any person to kill a domestic dog or cat for the purpose of obtaining the hide, fur or pelt of the dog or cat. A violation of this subsection shall constitute a **Class 1 misdemeanor. A second or subsequent violation of this subsection shall constitute a Class 6 felony.** I. Any person who (i)tortures, willfully inflicts inhumane injury or pain not connected with bona fide scientific or medical experimentation or cruelly and unnecessarily beats, maims or mutilates any dog or cat that is a companion animal whether belonging to him or another and (ii)as a direct result causes the death of such dog or cat that is a companion animal, or the euthanasia of such animal on the recommendation of a licensed veterinarian upon determination that such euthanasia was necessary due to the condition of the animal, shall be guilty of a Class 6 felony. The provisions of this subsection shall not overrule §3.1-796.93:1 or §3.1-796.116.

Penalty:

A **Class 1 misdemeanor**

**B Class 6 felony if the current violation or any previous violation of this subsection or subsection A resulted in the death of an animal or the euthanasia of an animal based on the recommendation of a licensed veterinarian upon determination that such euthanasia was necessary due to the condition of the animal, and such condition was the direct result of a violation of this subsection or subsection A**

Chesapeake	Defers to State Law. .	Class 1 misdemeanor
Hampton	Defers to the State Law	Class 1 misdemeanor
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Defers to the State Law  Except as otherwise provided for by law, if any person maliciously shoots, stabs, wounds or otherwise causes bodily injury to, or administers poison to or exposes poison with intent that it be taken by, any dog or fowl of another, with intent to maim, disfigure, disable or kill the same, or if any person does any of the foregoing acts to any dog or fowl of his or her own, with intent to defraud any insurer thereof, such person shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.	Class 1 misdemeanor
Norfolk	Exceeds State Code  (2) Deprive any animal of necessary <u>sustenance</u> , food, drink, <u>medical care</u> , or shelter  (4) Carry or cause to be carried in or upon any vehicle, vessel or otherwise any animal in a cruel, brutal, or inhumane manner, so as to produce <u>imminent threat of harm</u> , torture or unnecessary suffering; or	

	<p>(5) Cause, permit or allow any of the above.</p> <p>(b) A person found guilty of cruelty to animals may be ordered by a court not to own an animal within the city limits for a period of two (2) years from the date of conviction. Prosecution for violations of this section shall commence within five (5) years after commission of the offense. Prosecutions of this subsection regarding agricultural animals shall commence within one year after commission of the offense.</p> <p>(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the dehorning of cattle.</p>	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Adds sustenance; Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County	Defers to State Code	

**§3.1-796.73. Abandonment of animal; penalty.**

Virginia State Code: 7 No person shall abandon or dump any animal. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the release of an animal by its owner to an animal shelter, pound, humane society, or companion animal rescue agency.		Penalty: <b>Class 3 misdemeanor.</b>
Chesapeake	Defers to State Law and Includes Leaving any dog, cat or other domestic or companion animal in any public place including any public right-of-way, highway, road or street or on the property of another; or an owner's failure to do the following within the time limit set forth in section 10-42 after receiving notice that his or her domestic or companion animal has been impounded: Redeem said animal and pay impounding and veterinary fees; or Surrender said animal to the city in writing and pay impounding and veterinary fees.	
Hampton	(a) No person shall abandon any animal. Abandonment, for the purposes of this section, is defined as deserting, forsaking or intending to absolutely give up an animal without securing another owner or without providing the necessities set out in section 5-79.	Class 3 misdemeanor
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Defers to State Code	
Norfolk	Any person who abandons any dog, cat or other domesticated animal in any public place including the right-of-way of any public highway, road or street or on the property of another	Class 2 misdemeanor
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County	<b>No person shall abandon any animal. "Abandonment," for the purpose of this section, is defined as deserting, forsaking or intending to absolutely give up an animal without securing another owner or without providing the necessities for the life and well-being of the animal.</b>	<b>Class 3 misdemeanor</b>

**3.1-796.69. Transporting animals; requirements; penalty**

<p>Virginia State Code: No owner, railroad or other common carrier when transporting any animal shall allow that animal to be confined in any type of conveyance more than twenty-four consecutive hours without being exercised, properly rested, fed and watered as necessary for that particular type and species of animal. A reasonable extension of this time shall be permitted when an accident, storm or other act of God causes a delay. Adequate space in the primary enclosure within any type of conveyance shall be provided each animal depending upon the particular type and species of animal. No person shall import into the Commonwealth, nor export from the Commonwealth, for the purpose of sale or offering for sale any dog or cat under the age of eight weeks without its dam.</p>		<p>Penalty:</p> <p><b>Class 1 misdemeanor</b></p>
Chesapeake	Defers to State Code.	
Hampton	<p>Defers to State Code.                  Adds (from cruelty definition)                  No person shall carry or cause to be carried, in or upon any vehicle, vessel or other conveyance, any animal in a cruel, brutal or inhumane manner, so as to produce torture or unnecessary suffering</p>	Class 1 misdemeanor
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	<p>Defers to State Code.                  Adds (from cruelty definition)                  No person shall carry or cause to be carried, in or upon any vehicle, vessel or other conveyance, any animal in a cruel, brutal or inhumane manner, so as to produce torture or unnecessary suffering.</p>	Class 1 misdemeanor
Norfolk	Defers to State Code	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Cod	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County	Defers to State Code	

**3.1-796.68. Care of animals by owner; penalty**

Virginia State Code: A. Each owner shall provide for each of his companion animals: 1. Adequate feed; 2. Adequate water; 3. Adequate shelter that is properly cleaned; 4. Adequate space in the primary enclosure for the particular type of animal depending upon its age, size, species, and weight; 5. Adequate exercise; 6. Adequate care, treatment, and transportation; and 7. Veterinary care when needed or to prevent suffering or disease transmission. The provisions of this section shall also apply to every animal shelter, pound, companion animal rescue agency, foster home, dealer, pet shop, exhibitor, kennel, groomer and boarding establishment.		Penalty:  <b>Class 4 misdemeanor</b>
Chesapeake	Defers to State Code	
Hampton	Defers to State Code.  Adds: For purposes of this section, adequate space shall mean the space deemed adequate as determined under the current federal standards for sizes of animal cages.	
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Defers to State Code	
Norfolk	Exceeds State Code.  Adds: Adequate shelter that is properly cleaned and <u>sanitized</u> ;	Class 3 misdemeanor. Second violation on the same animal -class 2 misdemeanor. subsequent violation on the same animal - class 1 misdemeanor.
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County	Defers to State Code	

**3.1-796.70. Sale, etc., of unweaned or certain immature animals prohibited; penalty.**

	<p>Virginia State Code: . No person shall sell, raffle, or offer for sale as pets or novelties, or offer or give as a prize, premium, or advertising device any living chicks, ducklings, or other fowl under two months old in quantities of less than six or any unweaned mammalian companion animal or any dog under the age of seven weeks without its dam, or any cat under the age of seven weeks without its queen. Dealers may offer immature fowl, unweaned mammalian companion animals, dogs or cats under the age of seven weeks for sale as pets or novelties with the requirement that prospective owners take possession of the animals only after fowl have reached two months of age, mammalian companion animals have been weaned, and dogs and cats are at least seven weeks of age. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the sale of an unweaned animal (i) as food for other animals or (ii) with the lactating dam or queen or a lactating surrogate dam or queen that has accepted the animal. B. Dealers shall provide all dogs and cats with current vaccinations against contagious and infectious diseases, as recommended in writing and considered appropriate for the animal's age and breed by a licensed veterinarian, or pursuant to written recommendations provided by the manufacturer of such vaccines at least five days before any new owner takes possession of the animal. For dogs, the vaccinations required by this subsection shall include at a minimum canine distemper, adenovirus type II parainfluenza, and parvovirus. For cats, the vaccinations required by this subsection shall include at a minimum rhinotracheitis, calicivirus, and panleukopenia. Dealers shall provide the new owner with the dog's or cat's immunization history.</p>	<p>Penalty:</p> <p><b>Class 3 misdemeanor</b></p>
Chesapeake	<p>Exceeds State Code.                  Adds: No person shall give away any <u>live animal, fish, reptile or bird</u> as a prize for or as an inducement to enter any contest, game or other competition or as an inducement to enter a place of amusement. No person shall offer such vertebrate as an incentive to enter into any business agreement whereby the offer was for the purpose of attracting trade.</p>	
Hampton	<p>Adds: No person shall import into the city, nor export from the city, for the purpose of sale or offering for sale, any dog under the age of eight (8) weeks, without its dam. A violation of this section shall constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor.</p>	Class 1 misdemeanor
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	<p>Adds: No person shall import into this city, nor export from this city, for the purpose of sale or offering for sale, any dog under the age of eight (8) weeks, without its dam.</p>	Class 1 misdemeanor.
Norfolk	<p>No person shall give away any live vertebrate</p>	

	animals as a prize for or as an inducement to enter any contest, a game or other competition or as an inducement to enter a place of amusement or offer such vertebrate as an incentive to enter into any business agreement, whereby the offer was for the purpose of attracting trade.	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County	Defers to State Code	

**3.1-796.71. Failure of dealer or pet shop to provide adequate care, etc.; penalty.**

<p>Virginia State Code: Any dealer or pet shop that fails to adequately house, feed, water, exercise or care for animals in his or its possession or custody as provided for under this chapter shall be guilty of a <b>Class 3 misdemeanor</b>. Such animals shall be subject to seizure and impoundment, and upon conviction of such person the animals may be sold, euthanized, or disposed of as provided by §3.1-796.96 licensed, tagged, or tattooed animals. Such failure shall also constitute grounds for revocation of a permit or certificate of registration after public hearing. Any funds that result from such sale shall be used first to pay the costs of the local jurisdiction for the impoundment and disposition of the animals, and any funds remaining shall be paid to the owner, if known. If the owner is not found, the remaining funds shall be paid into the Literary Fund.</p>		<p>Penalty:</p> <p><b>Class 3 misdemeanor</b></p>
Chesapeake	Defers to State Code.	
Hampton	Defers to State Code.	
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Defers to State Code.	
Norfolk	<p>Adds</p> <p>Applications and renewals for permits issued pursuant to this section may be denied by the animal control officer if the applicant or permittee has demonstrated fraudulent practices, inhumane treatment of animals, or violation of local, state or federal laws applicable to animals. An applicant may appeal any denial for permit or renewal to the animal welfare board of review as set forth in article VII.</p>	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code.	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code.	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code.	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code.	
York County	Defers to State Code.	

**3.1-796.72. Misrepresentation of animal's condition; penalties**

Virginia State Code: No person shall misrepresent the physical condition of any animal at the animal's sale, trade, delivery, or other method of transfer. For the purpose of this section misrepresentation shall include selling, trading, delivering or otherwise transferring an animal to another person with the knowledge that the animal has an infection, communicable disease, parasitic infestation, abnormality or other physical defect that is not made known to the person receiving the animal.		Penalty:  <b>Class 3 misdemeanor</b>
Chesapeake	Defers to State Code.	
Hampton	Defers to Sate Code.	Class 3 misdemeanor.
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Defers to State Code..	
Norfolk	Defers to State Code	

Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code.	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code.	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code.	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code.	
York County	Defers to State Code.	

**3.1-796.124. Organized dogfighting; penalty.**

<p>Virginia State Code: A. No person shall knowingly do any of the following: 1. Promote, engage in, or be employed in the fighting of dogs for amusement, sport or gain; 2. Wager money or anything of value on the result of such fighting; 3. Receive money or anything of value for the admission of another person to a place for dogfighting; or 4. Permit any act described in subdivisions 1 through 3 of this subsection on any premises under his charge or control, or aid or abet any such act. B. Any animal control officer, as defined in §3.1-796.66, shall confiscate any dogs that have been, are, or are intended to be used in dogfighting and any equipment used in training such dogs or used in dogfighting.</p>	<p>Penalty:</p> <p>Class 6 felony</p> <p>May be prohibited by the court from possession or ownership of other companion animals.</p>
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<p>Virginia State Code: A. No person shall knowingly do any of the following: 1. Promote, engage in, or be employed in the fighting of dogs for amusement, sport or gain; 2. Wager money or anything of value on the result of such fighting; 3. Receive money or anything of value for the admission of another person to a place for dogfighting; or 4. Permit any act described in subdivisions 1 through 3 of this subsection on any premises under his charge or control, or aid or abet any such act. B. Any animal control officer, as defined in §3.1-796.66, shall confiscate any dogs that have been, are, or are intended to be used in dogfighting and any equipment used in training such dogs or used in dogfighting.</p>	<p>Penalty:</p> <p>Class 6 felony</p> <p>May be prohibited by the court from possession or ownership of other companion animals.</p>
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Chesapeake	Defers to State Code.	
Hampton	Defers to State Code	
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Exceeds State Code. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the fighting of cocks, dogs or other animals for money, prize or anything of value, or upon the result of which any money or other thing of value is bet or wagered, or to which an admission fee is charged, directly or indirectly.	
Norfolk	Defers to State Code	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	Defers to State Code	
Smithfield	Defers to State Code.	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code.	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	Defers to State Code.	
Williamsburg	Exceeds State Code. If any person engages in the fighting of cocks, dogs or other animals for money, prize or anything of value, ...	Class 1 misdemeanor
York County	Defers to State Code.	

**Va. Code**

<p>Spay and Neuter  <b>§3.1-796.126:1. Sterilization of adopted dogs and cats; enforcement; civil penalty.</b> A. Every new owner of a dog or cat adopted from a releasing agency shall cause to be sterilized the dog or cat pursuant to the agreement required by subdivision 2 of subsection B of this section. B. A dog or cat shall not be released for adoption from a releasing agency unless: 1. The animal has already been sterilized; or 2. The individual adopting the animal signs an agreement to have the animal sterilized by a licensed veterinarian (i) within thirty days of the adoption, if the animal is sexually mature, or (ii) within thirty days after the animal reaches six months of age, if the animal is not sexually mature at the time of adoption. C. A releasing agency may extend for thirty days the date by which a dog or cat must be sterilized on presentation of a written report from a veterinarian stating that the life or health of the adopted animal may be jeopardized by sterilization. In cases involving extenuating circumstances, the veterinarian and the releasing agency may negotiate the terms of an extension of the date by which the animal must be sterilized. D. Nothing in this section shall preclude the sterilization of a sexually immature dog or cat upon the written agreement of the veterinarian, the releasing agency, and the new owner. E. Upon the petition of an animal control officer, humane investigator, the State Veterinarian or a State Veterinarian's representative to the district court of the county or city where a violation of this article occurs, the court may order the new owner to take any steps necessary to comply with the requirements of this article. This remedy shall be exclusive of and in addition to any civil penalty which may be imposed under this article. F. Any person who violates subsection A or B of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed fifty dollars.</p>	<p>Penalty:  \$150.00</p>	
<p>Chesapeake</p>	<p>Any person desiring to adopt (from animal shelter) a dog or cat shall have the dog or cat spayed or neutered within a time period administratively set by the animal bureau, which time period shall not be more than six months;</p>	<p>class 4 misdemeanor</p>
<p>Hampton</p>	<p>a) Every person residing in the city receiving a dog or cat placed to or with such person by any animal shelter or pound located in the city or receiving funding of any kind from the city shall, within thirty (30) days of receiving such dog or cat, or in the case of a female dog or cat less than six (6) months old or a male dog or cat less than ten (10) months old, within thirty (30) days of the earliest date determined by the placing shelter or pound as safe for sterilization of such dog or cat, have such dog or cat spayed or neutered by a duly licensed veterinarian.</p>	<p>Every person violating this subsection shall be subject to a fine of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), plus two dollars (\$2.00) per day for each day such violation continues up to a maximum total fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) and the pound utilized by the city may additionally revoke the placement and take possession of the unsterilized dog or cat.</p>
<p>Isle of Wight County</p>		
<p>James City County</p>		
<p>Newport News</p>	<p>Every person residing in the city receiving a dog or cat placed to or with such person by any animal shelter or pound located in the city or receiving funding of any kind from the city shall, within thirty (30) days of receiving such dog or cat, or in the case of a female dog or cat less than six (6) months old or a male dog or cat less than ten (10) months old, within thirty (30) days of the earliest date determined by the placing shelter or pound as safe for sterilization of such dog or cat, have such</p>	<p>Any person violating this subsection shall be subject to a fine of ten dollars (\$10.00).</p>

	<p>dog or cat spayed or neutered by a duly licensed veterinarian. Every person violating this subsection shall be subject to a fine of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), plus two dollars (\$2.00) per day for each day such violation continues up to a maximum total fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00); and the pound utilized by the city may additionally revoke the placement and take possession of the unsterilized dog or cat.</p>	
Norfolk	<p>Every new owner of a dog or cat adopted from the city animal management center shall cause to be sterilized such dog or cat pursuant to the agreement required by subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section.</p> <p>(b) A dog or cat shall not be released for adoption from the city animal management center unless:</p> <p>(1) The animal has already been sterilized; or</p> <p>(2) The individual adopting the animal signs an agreement to have the animal sterilized by a licensed veterinarian (a) within thirty (30) days of the adoption, if the animal is sexually mature, or (b) within thirty (30) days after the animal reaches six (6) months of age, if the animal is not sexually mature at the time of adoption.</p> <p>(c) The animal control officer may extend for thirty (30) days the date by which a dog or cat must be sterilized on presentation of a written report from a veterinarian stating that the life or health of the adopted animal may be jeopardized by sterilization. In cases involving extenuating circumstances, the veterinarian and the releasing agency may negotiate the terms of an extension of the date by which the animal must be sterilized.</p> <p>(d) Nothing in this section shall preclude the sterilization of a sexually immature dog or cat upon the written agreement of the veterinarian, the animal control officer or his designee, and the new owner.</p> <p>(e) Upon the petition of the animal control officer to the general district court, the court may order the new owner to take any steps necessary to comply with the requirements of this article. This remedy shall be exclusive of and in addition to any civil or criminal penalty which may be imposed under this chapter.</p>	<p>Violations of subsection (a) or (b) of this section shall constitute a class 4 misdemeanor.</p> <p>(g) Any person giving false information in the adoption of an animal pursuant to this section including misrepresentation of spaying or neutering shall be guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor.</p>
Poquoson		
Portsmouth		
Smithfield	Defers to State Code	
Suffolk	Defers to State Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	<p>If a dog or cat impounded under this article is not claimed by its owner within five (5) days, it shall be disposed of in accord with the provisions of section 3.1-796.96 of the Code of Virginia. In the event a resident of the city proposes to adopt such dog or cat, pursuant to such section, he shall pay a fee not to exceed</p>	Class 4 Misdemeanor

	<p>fifty dollars (\$50.00) to be determined administratively by the city manager to cover the cost of transfer, seizure and veterinary care for the dog or cat. The person desiring to adopt the dog or cat shall sign an adoption contract agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations of the bureau of animal control and shall have the dog or cat spayed or neutered within a time period administratively set by the bureau of animal control which time period shall not be less than thirty (30) days. Upon producing proof that the dog or cat has been spayed or neutered, the person may be entitled to a refund of all or part of the above mentioned fee, the amount of said refund, if any, to be determined by the city manager or his duly authorized agent. Failure to have the dog or cat spayed or neutered in accord with this section shall constitute a Class 4 misdemeanor. Such person shall, in the case of a dog, obtain a proper license for such a dog, pursuant to article III of this chapter, within ten (10) days of such transfer.</p>	
Williamsburg	Defers to State Code	
York County		

**Va. Code**

Public Education		Penalty:
Chesapeake	No Local Code	
Hampton	Sec. 5-3. The city shall develop and promote an educational program designed to inform the public of the animal-control problems existing in the city. The council shall allocate such funds as are available for this purpose.	N/A
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News		
Norfolk		
Poquoson		
Portsmouth		
Smithfield	No Local Code	
Suffolk	No Local Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	No Local Code	
Williamsburg	No Local Code	
York County	No Local Code.	

**Va. Code**

Riding in an open Vehicle		Penalty:
Chesapeake	<p><i>Definition.</i> As used in this section, the term "open motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle, including but not limited to the following: The open bed of a truck; convertible vehicle with the top down or removed The rear storage portion of a station wagon with the tailgate open and The trunk or hatchback portion of any vehicle with the trunk or hatchback open.</p> <p><i>Restrictions.</i> No person who owns or has control of any animal shall allow such animal to ride in any open motor vehicle or vessel in such a manner as to permit injury to the animal. For purposes of this section, the operator of a motor vehicle shall be deemed to have control of any dog riding therein.</p>	
Hampton	<p>(a) It shall be unlawful for any person who owns or has control of any dog to allow such dog to ride in any motor vehicle in any portion thereof that is open in such a manner as to permit such dog to jump out of the vehicle or to be thrown there from by acceleration of, stopping of, or accident involving, such vehicle, including, but not limited to, the open bed of a truck, the interior of a convertible vehicle with the top down or removed, the rear storage portion of a station wagon with the tailgate open, the trunk or hatchback portion of any vehicle with the trunk or hatchback open. For purposes of this section, the operator of a motor vehicle shall be deemed to have control of any dog riding therein.</p> <p>(b) The provisions of subsection (a) above shall not apply to:(1) Any person who owns or has control of any dog and who allows such dog to ride in the prohibited portion of any motor vehicle if such dog is confined to a cage of adequate construction and design to prevent its escape there from. (2) Any portion of a motor vehicle which is fully enclosed except for open windows.</p>	Class 4 misdemeanor
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News	Sec. 26-79: Local Code same as Hampton	Class 4 Misdemeanor
Norfolk	(a) It shall be unlawful for the operator of any motor vehicle to place or keep an animal in any portion of such vehicle that is open in such a manner so as to permit such animal to jump out of or escape the vehicle or to be thrown from the vehicle by	Violations of this section shall constitute a class 2 misdemeanor.

	<p>acceleration or stopping of the vehicle or by an accident involving the vehicle. The prohibited portions of a motor vehicle shall include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>(1) The open bed of a truck or upon a motorcycle; or</p> <p>(2) The rear storage portion of a vehicle with the tailgate, trunk or hatchback portion open or down.</p> <p>For the purposes of this section, the operator of a motor vehicle shall be deemed to have control of any animal found therein.</p> <p>(b) The provisions of this section shall not apply to:</p> <p>(1) Any person who operates a motor vehicle in which an animal is secured in a cage or carrier of adequate design and shape to protect the animal and prevent its escape;--</p> <p>(2) Any animal which is properly secured; or restrained, or tethered.</p> <p>(3) Law enforcement animals.</p>	
Poquoson		
Portsmouth	<p>All animals, including household pets, shall be kept or maintained so as not to constitute a public nuisance by concentration or number, causing production of insects, excessive odor, dust, noise, or other conditions detrimental to the community health and welfare.</p> <p>It shall be unlawful for any person who owns or has control of any dog to allow such dog to ride in any motor vehicle in any portion thereof that is open in such a manner as to permit such dog to jump out of the vehicle or to be thrown therefrom by acceleration or stopping of the vehicle or by an accident involving the vehicle. The prohibited portion of a motor vehicle shall include, but not be limited to, the open bed of a truck, the interior of a convertible vehicle with the top down, or removed, the rear storage portion of a station wagon with the tailgate open and the trunk or hatchback portion of any vehicle with the trunk or hatchback open. For the purpose of this section, the operator of a motor vehicle shall be deemed to have control of any dog riding therein.</p> <p>(b) The provisions of this section shall not apply to:</p> <p>(1) Any person who owns or has control of any dog and who allows such dog to ride in the prohibited portion of any motor vehicle if such dog is confined to a cage of adequate construction and design to prevent escape therefrom; and</p> <p>(2) Any portion of a motor vehicle which is fully enclosed except for open windows.</p>	
Smithfield	No Local Code	
Suffolk	No Local Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	a) It shall be unlawful and a class 4 misdemeanor for any person who owns or has control of any dog to allow such dog to ride in any motor vehicle in any portion thereof that is open in such a manner as to permit such dog to jump out of the vehicle or to be	Class 4 Misdemeanor

	<p>thrown therefrom by acceleration of, stopping of, or accident involving, such vehicle, including, but not limited to, the open bed of a truck, the interior of a convertible vehicle with the top down or removed, the rear storage portion of a station wagon with the tailgate open, and the trunk or hatchback portion of any vehicle with the trunk or hatchback open. For purposes of this section, the operator of a motor vehicle shall be deemed to have control of any dog riding therein.</p> <p>(b) The provisions of subsection (a) above shall not apply to: (1) Any person who owns or has control of any dog and who allows such dog to ride in the prohibited portion of any motor vehicle if such dog is confined to a cage of adequate construction and design to prevent its escape therefrom; and (2) Any portion of a motor vehicle which is fully enclosed except for open windows.</p>	
Williamsburg	No Local Code	
York County	No Local Code.	

**Va. Code**

Care of Companion Animal on a Chain		Penalty:
Chesapeake		
Hampton	Any companion animal that is kept on a chain must be provided with a minimum of twelve (12) feet of untangled chain. Adequate food, water and shelter shall be easily accessible to such animal and it shall be exercised at intervals of not longer than twenty-four (24) hours.	
Isle of Wight County		
James City County		
Newport News		

Norfolk		
Poquoson		
Portsmouth		
Smithfield	No Local Code	
Suffolk	No Local Code	
Surry County		
Virginia Beach	No Local Code	
Williamsburg	No Local Code	
York County	No Local Code.	