



Alachua County Animal Services

*Ed Williams, Animal Services Director
Lin Santerfeit, Field Services Supervisor
Jane Grantman, Animal Shelter Supervisor
Gwen Jones, Administrative Coordinator*

Mission

The mission of Alachua County Animal Services is to promote public safety for the welfare of citizens and animals. We accomplish this through education, adoption, sheltering, enforcement, and the rescue of animals that may be stray, injured, unwanted, neglected, or abused.

Narrative

Alachua County Animal Services (ACAS) is Alachua County's municipal animal shelter operating out of a facility built in the mid-1980's. When it was originally built the shelter served primarily as a collection site for unwanted animals and headquarters for our enforcement, or field services, division. Unfortunately the vast majority of animals brought here at that time were euthanized after only a few days. Fortunately times and the animal welfare profession have changed!

In the year 2000, for example, 11,131 animals were brought to our facility and 8,062 were ultimately euthanized. That means that positive outcomes (e.g. adoptions, transfers, and reclaims) were found for only 27% of our intake that year, which the industry defines as our Live-Release-Rate (LRR). The very next year ACAS, local rescue groups, and UF's College of Veterinary Medicine came together to end the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals. An aggressive modernization of the pet adoption process, increased collaboration with local rescue groups, and financial support from Maddie's Fund helped us raise that LRR to 89% last year – meaning that positive outcomes were found for 9 out of every 10 animals!

Our department now consists of 4 divisions: administrative, sheltering, field services, and medical all working in unison to affect positive change for the animals in our care and protect the public safety for the citizens of Alachua County. In 2016 the animals brought to our facility numbered 4,801. Out of those we were able to find new homes for (adopt) 1,769; transfer 1,279 to our local rescue partners where they worked to re-home them; transfer another 524 to rescue partners in other communities; and return 663 to their rightful owners. That's 4,235 lives saved!

We hope you enjoy the Citizens Academy and will come back and visit our shelter often. We would love for you to adopt one of our animals, volunteer in any number of ways that you can help at our facility or through fostering, or help by simply spreading the good news about our successes. And please always remember...

“Adopt, don't shop!” and urge all those you know to do the same.

About Animal Adoption

Alachua County Animal Services is a great place to visit when considering animal adoption. We aren't just your local animal shelter; we will help you find the right pet and educate you on how to care for your new companion. Our pet adoption process is friendly and thorough to ensure a lifetime of love and companionship. We are also always available to offer advice after you've taken your animal home.

All pets available for adoption receive basic health exams, tests, and vaccinations. We require that all dogs and cats adopted from the shelter be spayed or neutered prior to going home.

Applications are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Whoever meets the animal out of the kennel first is first in line to adopt...and so on. If others are ahead of you, we will notify you if you become first in line or if someone else adopts the animal. If you have requirements to meet, you will be given until the close of business the following day to complete them. If not completed, your application will expire and



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we will move on to the next potential adopter. If you are unable to adopt your first choice, we will hold your application on file for 3 months.

Once you have met your animal of choice out of the cage or kennel, you will complete an application and an adoption counselor will review it with you. However, if you are interested in adopting a puppy, you must have an approved application prior to meeting the puppy out of the kennel.

Animal Adoption Requirements

Address Verification: A valid picture ID (driver license or Florida ID card) is required to complete an application. If your photo ID does not have your current address on it, you must also show a bill or piece of mail that verifies your physical address.

Rabies Vaccinations: If you already own a cat or dog, you must verify your pet has a current rabies vaccination. If you reside in Alachua County, your cat or dog must also have a current license.

Animal Adoption Recommendations

Meet & Greet! If you are adopting a second dog, we strongly recommend that both dogs meet each other in a staff-supervised meeting at the shelter. This is to see how they interact with each other and to make sure they get along. Not all dogs like all other dogs; it's better to find out before bringing the dog home. Some dogs at the shelter may have a dog meeting requirement, due to behavior observed or reported.

Can I have a pet where I live? If you rent, check with your landlord or management office to confirm that pets are allowed and if there are any restrictions such as species, breed, weight limits, and number of pets allowed, etc. If you live in a development with a Homeowners Association they also may have restrictions. It's best to check first.

Who should meet the animal? We recommend that everyone in your home, including all family members and/or roommates, meet the animal so they all agree on size, breed, color, temperament, etc. Verify that no one is allergic. Even if the animal will belong solely to you, it will have an impact on each person. So everyone should be comfortable with the pet you're bringing home.

Keeping up with veterinary care and licensing! All pets 3 months and older residing in Florida are required to be vaccinated for rabies, and those residing in Alachua County are required to be licensed. Pets also require other vaccinations and need routine veterinary checks, monthly heartworm preventative, and flea and tick control to maintain their health and prevent illness. We recommend that you consider the annual cost of veterinary care prior to adoption.

Medical Services Offered to the Public

Microchipping

Rabies vaccinations are offered We-Fr 2-5pm and the first Saturday of the month 10-1pm. ACAS cannot offer any other vaccinations.

Medically necessary euthanasia – medical records must be provided.



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Medical Services Offered In-House

Sheltering and care for stray and unwanted animals awaiting adoption
Basic veterinary treatment and vaccinations for animals in our custody
Spay/Neuter for animals to be adopted from ACAS only

Field Services

Animal Cruelty Investigations
Quarantine of Biting Animals
Nuisance Animal Complaints
Humane Education
Trapping of sick, injured, or possibly rabid animals
Dangerous Dog Investigations
Dog-at-Large Complaints
Rabies Control
Complaints of Failure to Remove Animal Feces
Complaints of Failure to Confine Animals in Estrus
Animal Establishment Inspections
Emergency Assistance for Public Safety Agencies

Tips for Finding Your Lost Pet

Above all make sure your pet is wearing a current license tag and/or has a microchip!

If a pet wearing identification is brought to the shelter, we will make every effort to contact the owner. Animals with microchips are identifiable even if they have lost their identification tag, but only if the information on the microchip is kept up to date by the owner.

Place a notice on the ACAS Lost & Found Board. Even if you leave a notice on the board, you should continue to check the shelter regularly. Some pets are difficult to match to written descriptions.

Post flyers in your neighborhood or the area where you last saw your animal. Flyers should include your pet's name, a description (with your pet's distinguishing characteristics), a picture (if possible), where your pet was last seen, your telephone number, and a reward for the person who returns your pet if you plan to offer one.

You should also place ads in veterinary offices near to your home. If someone has found your pet and he or she is injured, they might bring them to a veterinary clinic for treatment. With flyers posted, the veterinarian may be able to recognize your lost pet.

Place an ad in the classified (Lost and Found) section of local publications like The Gainesville Sun with your pet's name, a description (with your pet's distinguishing characteristics), a picture (if possible), where your pet was last seen, your telephone number and a reward for the person who returns your pet if you plan to offer one. (Some newspapers will run these ads at no charge.)



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You can also place an ad through online classifieds like Craigslist. Online ads are almost always free, and may reach a greater range of people than a printed ad alone. You can also check Craigslist for Found postings that may match your pet's description.

You can search our kennels online at www.myacas.org. To use the search function, follow the instructions listed. You can also list your missing pet at PetHarbor.com, and receive e-mail alerts when an animal similar to your pet's description comes in. To do that, use the "Lost My Pet" button.

Social Media websites offer a unique opportunity to post or search for Lost/Found pets, as well as the ability to share postings with many people at once. Groups like Gainesville Pet Finder on Facebook and others like them are a good place to begin.

Give us a call (352) 264-6870, or stop by at least twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays ideally) to see if your pet has been picked up or turned in. Stray animals are held for a minimum of 3 shelter business days which does not include Sundays, Mondays, holidays when the shelter is closed to the public or the day the animal was brought to the shelter. Animals with evidence of ownership are held for a minimum of 5 shelter business days, and animals displaying a current Alachua County license are held for a minimum of 7 shelter business days.

Volunteering

Our Volunteer Program is designed to enrich the lives of cats and dogs during their stay at ACAS as well as help our animals find their permanent adoptive home. If you want to make a difference in the life of an animal, become a volunteer. We have a variety of volunteer positions to choose from such as: Cat Cuddler, Dog Wrangler, Animal Photographer, Dog Play Group Attendant, Morning Dog Play Yard Partner, Behavior and Enrichment Specialist, Adoption Counselor, Off-Site Adoption Event Assistant, Foster Parent, Paws on Parole Volunteer, and Animal Transporter. Call or visit our website to find the date and time of our next volunteer orientation.

Foster

Would you like a way to help homeless pets without committing to a lifetime of pet ownership? Are you willing to open your home to provide love and socialization to a pet that isn't quite ready to be adopted? Do you want to help care for motherless puppies and kittens until they are old enough to find their forever homes? Foster care might be the perfect option for your family! Call or visit our website to find the date and time of our next foster orientation.

Paws on Parole

Paws on Parole is a prison-based dog training program which pairs adoptable dogs from ACAS with inmates from the Florida Department of Corrections and the Alachua County Jail. The dogs live with and are trained by the inmates for 8 weeks and learn the basic skills necessary to pass the American Kennel Club's (AKC) Canine Good Citizen test. The adoption fee is still only \$30.00 and includes spay/neuter, microchip, first annual vaccines, and current Alachua County license to residents.