

Santa Rosa County Emergency Animal Plan

Introduction

Based on human and pet population estimates from 2007, there were 82 million cats living with humans in this country. Three out of ten people reading this guide will own a cat. Combine this statistic with the number of domestic dogs, 72 million, gives us an estimated number of 154 million pets in this nation¹. In the same year, the human population of the United States was estimated to be 301 million². There is almost one pet for every two people. This fact alone is staggering; and, considering that dog and cat owners spent 23.2 million dollars on vet expenditures last year³, it's safe to say that pet welfare is an important aspect of daily life.

Historical incidents have shown that citizens may refuse to evacuate from a disaster area when their pets are not provided for. These persons may choose to shelter-in-place with their animals and manage the consequences of a disaster alone. Depending on the severity of destruction, rescue workers may not reach such individuals for days or weeks. Human life and safety would clearly be in jeopardy during such situations. Considering these facts, ensuring animal welfare by incorporating household pet and service animal considerations into emergency operational plans is vital to protecting human life and safety.

In this plan the terms household pet, service animal, and congregate household pet shelter are defined as follows⁴:

- Household Pet – A domesticated pet, such as a dog, cat, bird, rabbit, rodent, or turtle that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes and can

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association. U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook, 2007. (<http://www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/sourcebook.asp>).

² United States Census Bureau. Population Estimates. (<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>).

³ American Veterinary Medical Association. U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook, 2007. (<http://www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/sourcebook.asp>).

⁴ Federal Emergency Management Agency, Disaster Assistance Directorate. Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19: Eligible Costs Related to Pet Evacuations and Sheltering, 2007. (http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523_19.shtm).

travel in commercial carriers and be housed in temporary facilities. Household pets do not include reptiles (with the exception of turtles), amphibians, fish, insects/arachnids, farm animals (including horses), and animals kept for racing purposes

- Service Animal – Any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.
- Congregate Household Pet Shelter – Any private or public facility that provides refuge to the household pets of shelterees in response to a declared major disaster or emergency.

Purpose

The Santa Rosa County Animal Emergency Plan is guided by the following assumptions:

- Human lives may be lost due to the refusal of owners to evacuate without their pets or livestock. Public education by the County and animal-related organizations is needed to make the people aware of pet sheltering facilities available, and the need to plan in advance.
- The large number of homeless/injured pets, livestock, and exotic animals, would be a health and nuisance/bite threat which would necessitate a response to address the capture and subsequent sheltering of these animals.
- Triage and treatment of sick and injured animals to include euthanasia, if necessary, would have to be accomplished by veterinarians at designated shelters and private offices.
- Commercial pet/livestock food would need to be imported into the county by prior arrangement with vendors. Food drops for wild animals would be organized by various

wild-animal-related groups and state agencies.

- The accumulation of shelter animal waste and carcasses must be removed to approved solid waste dumping sites.
- The accumulation of animal carcasses throughout the County must be removed to approved solid waste dumping sites and/or burnt on site.
- Sheltered animals will need to be re-united with their owners after the disaster.

In advisement of these assumptions, this plan has been developed to:

1. Minimize loss of life and/or suffering of pet owners due to insufficient care for pets.
2. Ensure the humane care and treatment of animals during emergencies
3. Formulate a comprehensive plan for rescue, evacuation, transportation, shelter, and recovery for animals within Santa Rosa County.

Authorities

Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 – Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act). The Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act ensures that state and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency. Specifically, the PETS Act ensures that state and local plans address the rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs of individuals and their pets and animals. The Act also states that financial contributions can be made to states and local authorities for animal emergency preparedness purposes, including

the procurement, construction, leasing, or renovating of emergency shelter facilities and materials that will accommodate people with pets and service animals⁵.

FEMA Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19 – Identifies the expenses related to state and local governments' emergency pet evacuation and sheltering activities that are eligible for reimbursement following a major disaster declaration under Category B, Emergency Protective Measures, and provisions of the Public Assistance Program. The terms household pet, service animal, and congregate household pet shelters are defined. The policy details eligible reimbursements related to shelter facilities, supplies and commodities, eligible labor, equipment, emergency veterinary services, transportation, shelter safety and security, cleaning and restoration, and the removal and disposal of animal carcasses⁶.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 – Provides enforceable standards to eliminate discrimination towards people with disabilities. This law requires that all businesses and organizations that serve the public to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the facility where customers normally go. Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) the animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it or (2) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others⁷.

⁵ United States Congress. Pets Evacuation and Transportation Act of 2006. Public Law 109-308. Approved January 3, 2006. (www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-3858).

⁶ Federal Emergency Management Agency, Disaster Assistance Directorate. Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19: Eligible Costs Related to Pet Evacuations and Sheltering, 2007. (http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523_19.shtml).

⁷ United States Department of Justice. Americans with Disabilities Act. (<http://www.ada.gov/>).

Responsible Agencies

Santa Rosa County includes numerous organizations relating to animal welfare and emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. The following organizations are directly involved with emergency management and animal care; therefore they will be included in the implementation of the Santa Rosa County Animal Emergency Plan:

- Santa Rosa County Health Department/ Environmental Health
- Santa Rosa County Cooperative Extension Office
- US Department of Agriculture: (County Office)
- Natural Resources
- Conservation Services
- Farm Services Agency
- US Department of Agriculture District 1
- Northwest Florida Veterinarian Association
- Black Water Stables / Division of Forestry (Over flow kennels for dogs)
- Humane Society of the United States (H.S.U.S.)
- Gulf Breeze Zoo
- Santa Rosa County Sheriffs Department\ Live Stock Officer
- North West Florida Animal Clinic (large Animal Veterinarian)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Volunteer Resources
- Santa Rosa County SEARCH AND RESCUE

Concepts of Operation

Santa Rosa County Animal Services will be the primary entity for coordinating other agencies involved in the emergency plan. This office will also be responsible for assessing and

determining the resources needed for implementation and operation of a congregate household pet shelter. Animal Services Office will designate one individual who will serve as the incident commander in the event of an emergency. During non-emergency operations this individual will be the Animal Emergency Response Coordinator (AERC). This person will also form a committee which will be responsible for the development, maintenance, and improvement of the plan. Each agency incorporated into the plan will nominate a representative to sit on the committee. The responsibilities of each agency will be as follows:

- A. Emergency Management Office
 - 1. Develop plan
- B. Animal Services Office
 - 1. Coordination and oversight of plan
 - 2. Designate AERC
- C. Veterinary Agencies
 - 1. Provide pet care during an emergency
 - 2. Assist in distributing information to the public
- D. Animal Control
 - 1. Coordinate recovery of lost or stranded animals
 - 2. Properly dispose of deceased animals
 - 3. Recover and return wild animals to their natural habitats
- E. Animal Shelters
 - 1. Serve as Congregate Household Pet Shelters
 - 2. Assist in distributing information to the public

Estimated Number of Pets in Santa Rosa County

In order to prepare facilities in advance, it is important to estimate the number of pets in Santa Rosa County. The American Veterinary Medical Association's US Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook provide formulas to calculate this estimate: Companion Animals (Pets) - the number of pet-owning households = $.589 \times 43,793$ (number of households in Santa Rosa County according to the 2006 census) = approximately 25,794 pet households in Santa Rosa County

- Dogs = $.534 \times 25,794$ = approximately 13,773 dogs.
- Cats = $.598 \times 25,794$ = approximately 15,424 cats.
- Birds = $.126 \times 25,794$ = approximately 3,250 birds.
- Rabbits/Ferrets = $.023 \times 25,794$ = approximately 593 rabbits/ferrets.

Animals Covered

For an animal to be accepted into the county's congregate household pet shelter it must be pre-registered. The registration form can be found in Appendix B. All animals must also have a collar and ID tag, proof of current vaccinations, and proof of ownership. Pet owners should bring food, leash (if applicable), toys/comfort items, crate, cage, kennel, and bedding with their animals to the congregate household pet shelter at the time of drop off. In addition to service animals, the following animals are covered under the Santa Rosa County Emergency Animal Plan:

Dogs/Puppies:

- Must be in a crate or kennel large enough for the animal to turn and lie down.
- Aggressive or growling dogs will be admitted only with the approval of the on-call veterinarian.

Cats/Kittens:

- Domestic cats only, no feral or wild-trapped.
- Must be in a crate or kennel.

Birds:

- Only domestic birds in cages at all times.

Ferrets/Rodents/Rabbits:

- Only common domestic breeds.
- Must be in cages at all times.

Animals that are NOT permitted

- Exotics (primates, snakes, etc.)
- Spiders/Insects
- Farm/Agricultural animals

Mitigation

Mitigation is necessary to decrease the likelihood of a disaster from happening. Because the main focus of this plan is on the safety of animals, there are several steps owners can take to protect and ensure the survival and safety of their pets before a disaster occurs. Pet owners are responsible for developing emergency plans for their pets.

Pet owners can take steps ahead of time to prepare for their pets in times of disaster. Along with a family emergency kit, pet supplies should be made readily available. Each pet kit should include a 3 day supply of:

- water and food
- medication

- first aid kit
- small trash bags,
- a comfort item such as a blanket or toy
- a cage for travel
- phone numbers and addresses of local animal shelters and hospitals

It is also important that pet owners make sure their pet's identification tags are up to date and securely fastened to their pet's collar so in the event that the pet goes missing or is separated from their owners, it can be identified and returned. Up-to-date tags also ensure quick entry and acceptance into the congregate household pet shelter.

In the event of an official evacuation order, pet owners should be aware that most public emergency shelters do not allow animals. By filling out the registration forms in appendix B of this plan, pet owners can ensure their pet's acceptance into the county's congregate household pet shelter. If a pet has not been pre-registered, pet owners are responsible for contacting shelters and hotels to find pet friendly accommodations while they will be evacuated. The following website offers a listing of pet friendly hotels across the nation: <http://www.petfriendly.ca/usa.php>. For a list of local pet friendly accommodations please refer to Appendix A.

Public Information

Educational information will be made available to the public regarding proper procedures for their pets during an emergency. Santa Rosa County authorities will coordinate with the media, local shelters, and local pet supply stores to distribute information regarding important animal safety information and updates to the Animal Emergency Response Plan. A copy of the plan

and the animal pre-registration form are available on the animal services website <http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/animals/disasterprep.html>.

Review

The review and update of this plan is the responsibility of the Santa Rosa County Emergency Management Office and the Animal Services Office. Review of the plan will take place after a major event by a thorough debriefing session. Improvements recognized in the after-action report will be included in future implementation of the plan.

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APPENDIX A

Santa Rosa County Hotels/Motels Accepting Pets Disasters/Hurricane Emergencies

NAME OF HOTEL	ADDRESS	PHONE	PET ROOMS	CHARGE	PETS ALLOWED	CONTACT
COMFORT INN	4962 HWY 87 S	623-1511	ALL	\$10+TAX PER NIGHT	INDOOR PETS	GAYNELL/LAURA
EMERALD SANDS INN	6436 HWY 90	623-3821	NO LIMIT	BASED ON SIZE	UNDER 20LBS	MARSHA
RED CARPET INN	4905 HWY 87 S	626-7631	3, 4	\$10	UP TO 20LBS	JO/PETE
RED ROOF INN	2672 AVALON BLVD	995-6100	ALL	NONE	UP TO 30LBS	PAMELA
COMFORT INN NAS CORY	3 NEW WARRINGTON RD	455-3233	101	\$25	DOMESTIC	TASHA
PALM COURT INN	6911 PENSACOLA BLVD	479-3800	120	NONE	DOMESTIC	TINA
LA QUINTA INN	7750 N DAVIS HWY	474-0411	130	NONE	UNDER 25LBS	SCOTT
MERRITT LODGE	30 N NEW WARRINGTON RD	453-2904	25	\$35	UNDER 25LBS	ROBIN
MOTEL 6	7226 PLANTATION	474-1060	80	NONE	SMALL PETS	FRONT DESK
MOTEL 6	7827 N DAVIS HWY	476-5386	108	NONE	DOMESTIC	VICKI
RAMADA INN BAYVIEW	7001 SCENIC HWY	477-7155	150	\$25-\$50	UNDER 20LBS	LINDA
RED ROOF INN	6919 PENSACOLA BLVD	478-4499	120	\$15-\$50	DOMESTIC	LES
RESIDENCE INN	I-10/DAVIS HWY	476-7960	108	NONE	UNDER 80LBS	MERLENE
COMFORT INN	601 E CHASE ST	432-0202	78	\$100	DOMESTIC	SANDRA
SUPER 8 MOTEL	7220 PLANTATION RD	476-8038	60	\$10	UNDER 50LBS	SHAH
TRAVELODGE	6950 PENSACOLA BLVD	473-0222	60	\$50	DOMESTIC	GLENN
UPDATED 05/2008						

APPENDIX B

Santa Rosa County Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter Pre-Registration

Name of Applicant _____ I live in a mobile home

Last: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Pet's Name	Age	M/F	Dog/Cat	Spay/Neuter Y/N	Breed	Color/Markings	License # and/or Chip #

Do you understand that completing a pre-registration form does not guarantee that your pet(s) will be accepted into the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter? Due to limited space and resources, only two (2) pets per residence, which have been pre-registered, will be allowed entry into the shelter on a first come, first served basis until capacity has been reached. Upon approval of this registration, you will receive a letter of acceptance into this pilot program.

Do you further understand the following:

- You must attach to this application proof of the following current vaccinations:

Dogs

Rabies

Bordetella

DA2PP

Cats

Rabies

FVRCP

FelV

- In addition, all dogs over the age of 4 months must be currently licensed in Lafayette County and must wear their licenses in order to gain entry into the shelter. It is strongly recommended that cat owners place identification tags on their pets as well.
- Pets must have had an application of an appropriate flea/tick control product within 7 days prior to coming into the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter.
- Cages/crates must have secure doors and be large enough for the pet to stand and turn around in. Cat cages/crates must be large enough to contain food, water and a litter pan in addition to the cat.
- You must bring your pet's medications and enough pet food and water for 3 days. You will make sure all items are identified with your name and address.

Are any of your animals on medications or dietary supplements? If so, please explain; give the pet's name, the medication and dosage, the time normally administered and any necessary details.

Can medications/supplements be given in the regular food ration? Yes No

Are there medical problems or behavioral characteristics of which we should be advised? Yes No

If so, please give your pet's name and details.

Complete both pages of this form and mail it to:

Santa Rosa County Emergency Management

Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter Pre-registration

4499 Pine Forest Road

Milton, FL 32583

Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter Use Agreement

I, _____, the owner of the pet(s) listed on the reverse side of this form, understand that an emergency exists, and that special arrangements have been made to allow my pet(s) to utilize the designated Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter. I understand and agree that in order to utilize the services of the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter, I must be staying at the designated Santa Rosa County Emergency Shelter (for humans) closest to the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter. I further understand and agree to abide by the pet care rules contained in this agreement.

Rules

1. My pet will remain contained in its approved cage/crate except at scheduled times. During scheduled relief time, my pet will be properly confined with leash, harness, and/or muzzle (as necessary). Scheduled times will be strictly adhered to.
2. I certify that my pet is current on rabies and all other vaccinations as listed on the reverse side of this page.
3. I agree to provide dry or canned food, treats, kitty litter and other supplies as needed and to properly feed, water and care for my pet as instructed by Lafayette County Animal Services or designee. I agree that the administration of all medications for my pet is my sole personal responsibility as designated by my veterinarian and should be properly documented.
4. I agree to properly sanitize the areas used by my pet: including performing proper waste disposal and disinfecting as instructed by the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter facility manager or designee.
5. I will not permit other pet owners to handle or approach my pet, either while it is in its carrier/crate or during exercise times. I will make sure the cage/crate door is latched and secured with wire or rope ties.
6. I will maintain proper identification on myself, my pet and its carrier at all times. I understand that if I fail to wear the identification band assigned to me by the Shelter, I may be denied re-entry access to the animal holding facility.
7. As the animal owner, I understand and agree that during "lock-down", no pet(s) or people will be allowed outside. When a "lock-down is imminent, owners must re-cage their pet(s) and return to the Shelter until the "all-clear" has been given.
8. I assume full responsibility and liability for the behavior of my pet(s) at all times.
9. I acknowledge that my failure to follow these rules may result in the removal of my pet. I further understand that if my pet becomes unruly, aggressive, shows signs of contagious disease, is infested with parasites (fleas, ticks, lice, etc.), or begins to show signs of stress-related conditions, my pet may be removed to a more remote location. I understand that the decision concerning the care and welfare of my pet(s) and the shelter population as a whole are within the sole discretion of Lafayette County Animal Services or designee, whose decisions are final.
10. I understand that pet care (i.e. feeding, watering and removal of waste from the cage/crate) is my responsibility. I understand and agree that should my animal not receive care from me for 24 hours or if I leave the shelter without my pet, the animal(s) will be considered abandoned and will be surrendered to Lafayette County Animal Services for potential adoption, fostering or euthanasia in accordance with the Animal Services Ordinance or policy.
11. I certify that my pet has no history of aggressive behavior and has not been diagnosed with any contagious diseases for which it has not received successful treatment.

I hereby agree to hold harmless all persons, organizations, or government agencies involved in the care and sheltering of my animal(s). I further agree to indemnify any persons or entities which may have suffered any loss or damage as a result of the care and sheltering of my animal(s).

I agree to all of the above rules and conditions. ___ Yes ___ No

Signed: _____ Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Phone: _____