

Parma Animal Shelter - Code of Ethics

Humane Treatment and Responsible Stewardship

"In a general sense, ethics is the name we give to our concern for good behavior. We feel an obligation to consider not only our personal well-being, but also that of others and of human society as a whole." -Albert Schweitzer

Purpose

Formal codes of ethics, in themselves, are never enough. No document can cover every eventuality. No series of rules and procedures can guarantee ethical behavior. But establishing a formal code of ethics is crucial because it sets the tone, defines the issues and articulates the values and visions of the organization. Codes of ethics are public announcements. They are statements about the beliefs and intentions of the organization. Codes help to define both the issues at stake, and exactly who has a stake in the issues. Codes help to clarify rights and obligations and articulate an unmistakable minimum standard of conduct. Codes help to make up for human frailty by guiding the individual on what conduct is acceptable. Finally, codes provide a basis for doing principled reasoning and making ethical decisions.

Code of Conduct

The Parma Animal Shelter, Inc. (PAS) promotes communication that is respectful, honest, and direct. Understanding that there are different philosophies, opinions and views, it is essential that the PAS professionals treat one another with respect and dignity and be accountable for a standard of transparency and disclosure.

PAS embraces ethical communication and respectful public discussion and opposes efforts that encourage threats, hateful or derogatory language, and mistruths. These behaviors are unprofessional, divisive, and harmful to the collective mission.

Values

"Unless all members of an organization share a common vision and a similar series of values, the objective, purpose, and/or goals of that organization cannot and will not be achieved." -James MacGregor Burns

- We believe in the intrinsic dignity and sanctity of human and animal life.
- We believe all animals are entitled to be free from suffering, abuse and exploitation.
- We believe that companion animals are a product of human intervention and that we have a special obligation to them in regard to humane treatment and responsible stewardship
- We believe we have an obligation to alleviate suffering.
- We believe we have an obligation to prevent cruelty.
- We believe that people should treat each animal as kindly as possible.
- We believe we have a duty to protect and care for the suffering and homeless.
- We believe that our values, decisions, conduct and behavior should set the tone and be a model for others in their care and treatment of animals.
- The commitment, care and attention we afford to both human beings and animals is only differentiated by degree and not by kind.

Organizational Policy and Values

"The culture of any organization can be documented in its rules and values, but the real culture and worth of an organization is truly demonstrated in the behavior of its members." -Allan Cox

I. HONESTY

Communicate consistently, truthfully and with integrity in all our transactions and dealings, inside and outside of the organization.

Accept responsibility for our actions.

Provide honest and accurate information regarding shelter policies, procedures and programs like fund-raising and the disposition of animals.

II. RESPECT

Treat all living creatures with respect and dignity.

Create an open environment which encourages and solicits input from all volunteers.

Recognize the value of each individual or group.

Acknowledge socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and philosophical differences.

Advocate and model respectful behavior through individual and organizational example.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

Apply all applicable laws impartially with organizational guidelines.

Provide humane treatment and care for animals.

Seek ways to improve the operation and delivery of services. Pursue excellence.

Share information and seek input from, educate, and cooperate with others.

IV. BE FAIR and JUST

Use good judgment instead of being judgmental. Listen to and consider opposing viewpoints.

Make informed decisions without personal bias.

Apply consistent principles in decision-making while allowing for flexibility.

V. CARING and COMPASSION

Strive to provide for the physical and psychological needs of people and animals and provide conditions that safeguard their rights and welfare.

Encourage and support volunteer development.

Extend the principles of caring and compassion to the public.

Provide a humane and dignified death for animals.

Provide a supportive environment in which to deal with issues of euthanasia and grief.

VI. CITIZENSHIP

Represent the organization in a professional manner.

Strive to promote positive and collaborative relationships with other animal agencies, organizations, and individuals.

Act responsibly toward the community in which we work and for the benefit of the communities we serve.

Comply with both the spirit and letter of the law.