



To Whom It May Concern,

As the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area continues to evaluate advancement in our policies and procedures under our new leadership structure, one of the current policies that has come under scrutiny is Breed Labeling and Profiling. As a Municipal partner, you are aware of the Humane Society's current agreement language which encourages breed profiling and the subsequent limit in the number of animals specified by breed to receive safe intake and placement services. This breed profiling also comes with a higher per animal fee, which may cost your municipality not only more for that one-time intake but also more in time spent by the Municipality representative to determine if the animal is of that breed profile.

The Humane Society of Harrisburg Area is now under an affiliation agreement with the Brandywine Valley SPCA who is a long-time proponent and supporter of removing breed labels for mixed breed dogs. BVSPCA has done extensive research on the topic and has used the Mixed Breed label effectively since 2020 and can attest to the positive effects.

The Humane Society of Harrisburg and the Brandywine Valley SPCA, believe that every dog is an individual and should not be judged and/or discriminated against based on their breed. DNA results show that shelter workers are often mistaken when they label a dog as a "pit bull" dog. According to a new University of Florida study, this can have potentially devastating consequences for the dogs. Julie Levy, D.V.M., Ph.D., Professor of Shelter medicine at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and the lead author of a study published in the Veterinary Journal, said: "Even when observing the same dogs at the same time, shelter staff had only moderate agreement with breed designations."

After careful consideration, we have decided to draft an amendment to the 2024 Municipal Domestic Animal Protective Services Agreement to address the removal of restrictions on animal intake based on "pit bull" breeds. We've amended the per animal fee for dogs to reflect this change as well. In section 7 of the amendment we've updated the per dog fee to \$250.00 which is a half way point between the \$158.60 for "non-pit bull" breeds and the \$345.40 for "pit bull" breeds. We've analyzed 2023's billing data and have found that "pit bull" dogs account for about 50% of the total dog's received by the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area through our Municipal Partners.

In addition to removing the "pit bull" restrictions and updating the per dog fee, we've also added the ability for our municipal partners to bring humanely trapped feral cats to the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area with the understanding that those cats will be spayed/neutered, vaccinated, ear tipped, and returned to the approximate location they were found. This change will allow for more effective Community Cat control and provide live outcome alternatives for feral cats in our community. These cats will be billed to our municipal partners under the standard per cat fee but we did want to allow for this service should the Municipality show interest in participating.

We've attached the Amendment to this letter for your review. We're hoping to receive signed copies back before the end of the month so that we may update you Municipality's billing rate for April's billing. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Amendment, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly.

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