

Willamette Humane Society Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



About Us & Our Mission

Founded by local civic leaders in 1965, the mission of Willamette Humane Society (WHS) is to promote the welfare of animals through leadership, education, and action. WHS exists to provide a temporary shelter for unwanted, abandoned, abused, and lost animals; complete families by matching pets with people; and lead the community by fostering respect and compassion for animals.

What services does Willamette Humane Society provide?

Adoptions	Lost & Found
Low-Cost Spay & Neuter	Canine Training Classes & Consults
Humane Education	Summer Camps for Kids
Facility Tours	Behavior Helpline & Tip Sheets
Volunteer Opportunities	Owner Requested Euthanasia & Cremation
Birthday Parties for Kids	On-Site Pet Supply Store (Davenport's Den)
Helping Paws Thrift Store	WHS Thrift Store

Is Willamette Humane Society affiliated with other humane societies?

Willamette Humane Society is a local, independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving the pets and people in the mid Willamette Valley. Although we may collaborate when our missions overlap, we are not affiliated with other local, state or national animal welfare organization. Willamette Humane is not a chapter of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), nor do we receive funding from HSUS or from any other animal welfare organization.

How is Willamette Humane Society funded?

WHS relies entirely on donor support, fees for service, and revenue from our for-profit ventures (The WHS Thrift Store and Davenport's Den pet supply store) to care for more than 9,000 animals each year and provide valuable community services. WHS does not receive state or federal funding, nor do we receive funding from any other animal welfare organization. Donations made to WHS are used to help pets and people in our community.

What is Willamette Humane Society's admissions policy?

It is our goal to accept healthy, friendly cats and dogs from Marion and Polk Counties by appointment and place them in loving, new homes. Staff will discuss options with owners whose pets are not accepted for adoption, including referrals to other shelters or rescue groups. Animals that display extreme aggression or are suffering mentally and/or physically may be recommended for humane euthanasia. The decision to euthanize an animal is never taken lightly, and each case is thoroughly assessed on an individual basis.

Is there a fee to surrender my pet?

Yes. Like most humane societies and animal welfare organizations across the nation, Willamette Humane Society asks for a small fee to help offset some of the costs of care. It costs an average of \$250 for WHS to care for an animal from intake to adoption. WHS charges a fee of \$20 per cat, \$30 per dog, and \$40 for a litter of puppies or kittens accepted for adoption.

Is Willamette Humane Society a “no kill” shelter?

Willamette Humane Society is an “optimized admissions” shelter, which means we accept cats, kittens, puppies and dogs primarily from Marion and Polk Counties as space and resources allow.

How do you decide which animals are put up for adoption? Why can’t every animal be put up for adoption?

Animals are thoroughly evaluated for both health and temperament for our adoption program. We have no breed discrimination rules, but rather, assess each animal on an individual basis. Animals that are suffering mentally and/or physically due to injury or disease, vicious or aggressive animals (whose placement would constitute a danger to the public), and animals that pose a public health hazard are not put up for adoption. The decision to euthanize an animal is never taken lightly, and each case is thoroughly assessed on an individual basis. If an animal must be euthanized, he or she is treated humanely and with respect.

How do you determine when an animal’s “time is up?”

We do not impose artificial time limits on adoptable animals. As long as the animal remains healthy and temperamentally sound, he or she will stay in our adoption program. Staff and volunteers socialize and exercise animals to help keep them healthy for as long as they are in our care. If an animal begins to show signs of stress in the shelter, we may transfer him or her to another shelter or rescue group, or provide a temporary respite in a volunteer foster home.

Why do so many people surrender their animals? Is there something wrong with the animals?

Most animals are surrendered because the owner’s circumstances change, not because there is anything wrong with the animal. People may find that they can no longer afford to care for their animal, they need to move and their new housing does not accept pets, or they no longer have the time to spend with them. Failure to spay or neuter a pet also results in hard-to-place litters, which are then brought to the shelter. Many animals brought to Willamette Humane are healthy, temperamentally sound, and terrific companions for their new adopters.

Why should I pay to adopt an animal when I can get one for free from a newspaper or online ad?

Every adoption package at WHS includes the spay/neuter surgery, initial vaccinations, a vet exam, microchip, ID tag, 30 days of pet health insurance, and other valuable benefits. In addition, we evaluate pets for health and temperament, so that we can help match adopters with the pet that’s right for them. We also offer post-adoption support to address concerns and questions that may come up after a pet goes home. In all, adopting a pet is a tremendous value for the price.

A “free” pet is not really free because you will likely have to pay for its first vet exam, vaccinations, sterilization surgery, microchip, and other services. Those costs add up quickly, and you will probably end up paying more for your “free” pet than if you adopted one from a reputable rescue group or shelter.

Why do you have variable adoption fees for dogs?

We review our adoption fee scale on a yearly basis and take into account the fees that other humane societies and shelters in our area are charging. Our base adoption fee is currently \$100 for an adult dog and \$60 for a senior dog. Adoption fees for dogs that are in high demand (e.g. small dogs, puppies, unusual shelter breeds, and purebreds) are set higher than our base prices. These types of dogs tend to be adopted very quickly, which helps offset the cost of care for other dogs that may stay with us for a month or longer before finding new homes. In addition, many dogs receive dental work and other medical services prior to adoption, so the higher fees can help offset some of those costs as well.

Our dog adoption package is a great value because it includes the spay or neuter surgery, initial vaccinations, flea treatment, microchip and inclusion in national registry, a free vet exam, one month of pet health insurance, personalized ID tag, leash, and collar.

Why do you sometimes turn adopters down?

Our goal is to place adoptable animals with people who can care for them properly and meet their needs throughout their lifetime. We do not expect adopters to be perfect guardians, but it’s important to make the right match for both the adopter’s sake and the animal’s. We may turn an adopter down who is not the right fit for a particular animal, but can often help the adopter make the right match with another pet.

How many animals find homes? What types of animals do you adopt?

In 2009-10, Willamette Humane Society found homes for 3,954 animals through adoption, transfer to partner organizations for guaranteed placement, and by reuniting lost pets with their owners.

WHS focuses on placing dogs and cats in loving, new homes. WHS does not accept or adopt out small pets, exotic animals, reptiles, or farm animals. If you need help re-homing a small pet or farm animal, ask our Customer Service Staff for referrals to other organizations or visit our website, www.willamettehumane.org to download handouts and tips for re-homing small pets.

Can I adopt more than one pet at a time from WHS?

Yes. WHS allows more than one adoption for cats, kittens and adult dogs. We may also encourage two pets to be adopted together, if they come into the shelter as a bonded pair. WHS does not allow people to adopt two puppies from the same litter, and strongly discourages adopting two unrelated puppies at the same time. The puppies will tend to bond strongly to each other and not to their human companions. Also, because of the amount of work and energy it takes to train one puppy, training two at the same time is likely to be too challenging for all but the most experienced puppy raisers.

What if the adoption isn't working out? Can I return the pet?

If you are experiencing difficulties with your new pet, we are happy to work with you to try to resolve the issue through behavior advice, tips and/or training. If you find that the match still isn't working out, you may return the pet within 30 days of adoption and receive a full refund of your adoption fee.

How can you work/volunteer there? It's so sad.

Visit our shelter and you'll find that it's an inviting, bright, and clean facility. Thanks to hardworking staff and volunteers, pets in our facility receive quality care, social interaction, and exercise. We see the work we do as both rewarding and inspiring because we have a positive impact on the lives of many animals and on the people who adopt them. While we occasionally see sad cases of cruelty or neglect, we also experience the joy and satisfaction that comes when neglected animals are rehabilitated and find a loving, new home.

I want to volunteer at WHS. How can I get involved?

WHS relies on the help of hundreds of dedicated, hardworking volunteers who help with every aspect of our organization, from working with the animals to assisting with fundraising and outreach efforts. If you'd like to volunteer, the first step is to attend a Volunteer Orientation, held the first Monday and third Thursday of each month, from 5:30 pm to 7 pm. (No orientations are held the month of December). You do not have to sign up to attend an orientation; drop-ins are welcome. You'll learn about our mission and what types of volunteer opportunities exist. After you attend an orientation, you can fill out and submit a volunteer application and meet with our volunteer manager to discuss the right role for you.

Is there a minimum age requirement to volunteer?

Yes. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to volunteer on their own, or 12 years old if accompanied by a parent or guardian. Kids under the age of 12 can help the animals by making treats and toys, collecting food or other needed items, or holding their birthday party at WHS.

If I witness animal abuse or neglect, what should I do?

Abuse

If you believe an animal is being physically abused, has been abandoned within the confines of a residence, or is in immediate danger, you should contact your local law enforcement agency immediately.

Neglect

Under Oregon law, animal caregivers must meet what's known as Minimum Care Standards, which means care sufficient to preserve the health and well-being of the animal. Essentially, it means animals must be provided with potable water, food, shelter, a clean environment, and proper veterinary care.

If you believe minimum care standards are not being met, you should contact your local law enforcement agency. Law enforcement may decide to remove or seize the animal and may place him or her in protective custody with Willamette Humane or other appropriate rescue organization.

Salem Police Department	(503) 588-6123
Dallas Police Department	(503) 831-3516
Keizer Police Department	(503) 390-3713