CS-17 RECLAIMING AN ANIMAL

**Purpose**

To define the process of reclaiming animals housed at HSWM

**Policy**

Owners may reclaim their animals after they have been taken in, whether the animal was surrendered by them or brought in as a stray. There are fees associated with reclaims that must be charged in order for the owner to reclaim. Any dog that is reclaimed must have been vaccinated against rabies, and issued a dog license if the owner lives in Kent County.

**Staff /Areas Affected**

• Customer Service Staff

• Shelter Manager

* Director of Animal Care and Behavior

**Definitions**

**Reclaim-Stray** - owner comes in after their pet has been brought in as a stray and wishes to take possession of the pet.

**Return to Owner** - owner comes back after surrendering the pet themselves to take the animal home.

**Proof of ownership** - A photo of the person with the animal, vet records with the animal and owner information on it, a dog license, or a microchip registered to the owner.

**ShelterLuv** – Database used by HSWM for all tracking of customers, animals and associated service

**CS** – Customer Service staff

**Responsibilities**

Customer Service is responsible for making sure this process

**Procedures**

In case of a Reclaim - Stray:

1. The owner will come in and fill out a lost report. CS will compare the information on the lost report to surrender information of the dogs in our building.
2. The owner will then be allowed to view the pet they believe is theirs. If it is their pet, they are required to show proof of ownership.
3. Once we have proof of ownership, CS staff will inform the owner of the fees involved with reclaiming that specific animal. If it is a dog, we need to either verify that the dog has a current rabies vaccine or have the staff veterinarian administer a rabies vaccine before we are able to release the dog. If the veterinarian is not able to administer the vaccine that day, we will call the owner as soon as they can come get the dog, but will not charge any additional boarding fees past then.
4. Once a rabies vaccine is verified, CS will process the reclaim, print the contract and have the owner sign it, print the medical summary report and let the owner know of all vaccines or treatments the dog has had in our care.
5. CS will create a receipt including the impound fee, any charges for boarding, medication and vaccination charges. If the owner lives in Kent County and does not have a valid Dog License, we will issue them one at the time of reclaim and add it to the receipt. It is important to note if the animal has been surgically altered or is intact during the receipt creation.

In case of a Return to Owner:

1. The owner will express interest in taking the animal back instead of leaving the animal with us.
2. Shelter Manager or Director of Animal Care and Behavior will check with the owner to see if this is in the best interest of the animal and the owner, as likely the circumstances regarding the surrender have not changed. As long as the owner agrees, we will notify them of the charges involved with the reclaim.
3. CS will process the reclaim, print a contract and have the owner sign it.
4. CS will print a copy of the medical summary report and go over any medical treatments or vaccines the animal was given while in our care.
5. CS will then create a receipt, including any appropriate boarding, medication, and vaccination fees. We do not charge an impound fee for a return to owner.

In both cases:

All paperwork (animal’s kennel card, follow up care sheet, lost report, surrender form, return to owner contract, copy of rabies vaccine certificate if applicable) will be stapled together and placed in the reclaim bin at the admitting desk.

**Reference Documents**

• Lost report

* Dog license
* Return to owner contract

• kennel card

* Follow up care sheet
* Lost report
* Surrender form
* Vaccine certificate

**Revision History**

Created 8/24/16 – V1

Revised 12/21/18 – V2