



POLICY

Title of Policy	Standards of Practice
Policy Number	3.1
Category	Animal Welfare
Approval Body	Board of Directors
Approval/Effective Date	December 2024
Proposed Date of Review	December 2025

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

This policy outlines the standards followed by Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue Society in the course of our day-to-day operations.

SCOPE

These guidelines and procedures apply to all volunteers, employees, and board members of Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue Society involved with.

A. INTAKE PROCEDURES

1. Intake

- 1.1 Pet owners wanting to relinquish ownership of their pet to Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue Society must complete an Owner Surrender form prior to the rescue taking custody of the animal.
- 1.2 If animal cruelty is suspected, it will be reported to the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA).
- 1.3 All animals will be checked for identification upon intake (e.g., microchip, tattoo, tags).
- 1.4 If identification registration information does not match that of the relinquishing person, or the surrenderer is not the owner, Meant 2B Loved will attempt to contact the owner.
- 1.5 Transfer of ownership will be transparent and documented.

- 1.6 Animals will be transferred into the organization's care from another organization or a shelter if there is an available foster and the transfer will benefit the animal (e.g., improve welfare or increase chance of adoption).
- 1.7 Meant 2B Loved will consider the maximum number of animals it can care for humanely and not transfer in new animals if doing so negatively impacts the animals already in its care.

2. Animal Care and Enrichment

Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue's Standard of Practice are grounded in the Five Freedoms, widely considered by experts in all types of animal care to be minimal animal welfare guidelines for all animals under human care. The Five Freedoms are:

FREEDOM	Application for Animals in our Care
Freedom from hunger and thirst	Animals have access to fresh water and food that meets their individual species, age, and health needs.
Freedom from discomfort	Animal foster homes meet the animal's individual needs and includes shelter and a resting area. Environmental factors such as noise, temperature, ventilation, and light are appropriate for species' needs.
Freedom from pain, injury, or disease	Preventive care is provided, and physical health is monitored regularly. Rapid diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury are provided.
Freedom to express normal behaviour	Every animal has sufficient space and environmental choice, including places to exercise, play, interact with people, rest, and hide. Social species have the option of interacting (or not) with their own kind whenever possible.
Freedom from fear or distress	Environmental conditions and treatment that cause mental suffering, such as rough handling, are avoided.

3. Capacity for Care

Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue's foster homes have a maximum capacity for humane care based on its ability to meet the Five Freedoms. This capacity is influenced by a number of factors, including:

- the animals' physical and behavioural needs;

- physical space;
- caregiver training, time, and ability;
- presence of other animals;
- adoption and transfer options;
- funding and other resources;
- and foster coordination and other administrative resources. An organization's capacity may fluctuate depending on these factors.

3.1 At any given time, Meant 2B Loved will know its overall capacity and that of each of its foster homes and facilities.

3.2 Exceeding the capacity for humane care results in animal suffering and is unacceptable.

4. Housing

Meant 2B Loved fosters may allow animals access to all or part of a home. For animals under confinement in a home, the "primary enclosure" is defined as the area where an animal spends the majority of his or her time, including eating and sleeping.

4.1 Primary enclosures will provide sufficient space for confined animals to move around, make normal postural adjustments (including stretching), eat, drink, and eliminate.

4.2 For most species, the elimination area will be separate from the feeding and resting areas. For example, for cats, litter boxes, food/water dishes, and resting areas are separated by 2 feet of space, and a minimum of 11 square feet per cat (single housing) and 18 square feet per cat (group housing) are provided (Canadian Standards of Care in Animal Shelters: Supporting ASV Guidelines).

4.3 Housing will include areas for: eating, drinking, sleeping, elimination, activity, hiding, interacting with humans, interacting with other animals (if desired by the animal), and other species-specific needs (e.g., scratching for cats, dust bathing for chinchillas). In some cases, these areas will be included in the primary enclosure (e.g., for rodents); for others, these areas may be separate into a primary housing area and one or more activity areas.

4.4 Animals who are in care long-term (more than 2 to 3 weeks) or permanently (e.g., in palliative care) will have substantial additional space. Portable crates are not acceptable long-term primary enclosures and tethering is an unacceptable means of primary confinement.

4.5 Group or pair housing is used whenever possible for social species if animals are bonded or are expected to enjoy being housed together, are not showing any signs of infectious disease, and do not have a history of aggressive behaviour toward other animals.

4.5.1 Caregivers will monitor animals' behaviour and body language carefully to ensure they are comfortable in a group-housed setting.

4.5.2 M2BL will have protocols in place for introducing animals to other animals in foster homes or facilities (both resident and other rescue

animals). These protocols address safe practices including initial separation, gradual introductions, regular monitoring, and the provision of resources such as each animal's needs are met.

- 4.6 Ambient temperature in animal housing areas will be maintained in an appropriate range for the needs of that species.

5. Daily Care

- 5.1 Fresh food of an appropriate type and quantity will be provided on a schedule that is appropriate to the species and age of the animal to meet daily caloric needs and maintain an appropriate body condition.
- 5.2 Fresh water will be provided daily. Primary water sources must never be frozen or contaminated, or for food sources to be functionally inaccessible due to contamination, competition (crowding), or other reasons.
 - 5.2.1 Food and water intake will be monitored daily, particularly in animals housed in groups.
 - 5.2.2 Where appropriate, some food will ideally be provided in ways that are mentally stimulating and mimic natural feeding behaviour (e.g., food puzzles) while ensuring that:
 - I. The feeding method allows for consumption of a normal food quantity across the entire day
 - II. The feeding method prevents frustration
- 5.3 Animals will have an opportunity for safe daily exercise appropriate for individual needs (i.e., species, age, breed).
- 5.4 All animal handling, training, and daily care must be done in a gentle, humane, and low-stress manner.

6. Cleaning and Disinfection

Cleaning refers to the process of removing organic debris, and disinfection refers to the process of killing most of the contaminants in a given area. Sanitation is defined as the combination of cleaning and disinfection. Note that many household cleaners are not effective against the primary pathogens of concern in animal care.

- 6.1 Foster homes and facilities will be maintained in a sanitary fashion to minimize disease transmission between animals or to humans.
 - 6.1.1 In general, cleaning will occur at least once daily.
- 6.2 Sanitation protocols will be designed to address the primary pathogens of concern in that species and population (e.g., parvovirus, ringworm).
- 6.3 Housing, equipment, and supplies will be disinfected between animals who are not already in direct contact.
- 6.4 Sanitation protocols will be developed in consultation with a veterinarian.
- 6.5 Cleaners and disinfectants will be safe to use around animals and used according to manufacturer instructions

7. Grooming

7.1 Animals' coats and nails will be maintained regularly to ensure comfort based on individual needs, and may include bathing, brushing, nail trimming, and clipping of hair by either regular caregivers or professional groomers.

7.1.1 It is unacceptable for animals to become matted or chronically soiled.

7.1.2 If matting or soiling is detected, it must be addressed immediately.

7.2 Animals will be handled in a gentle, humane, and low-stress manner for grooming.

7.2.1 Techniques to hold or restrain animals for grooming that cause fear and stress **SHOULD** be avoided, including scruffing of cats and using dorsal hypnosis (tonic immobility) in rabbits.

7.2.2 It is unacceptable to use physical force in anger or as punishment when an animal is resistant to being groomed.

8. Animal Recordkeeping

8.1 Records will follow the animal and the organization will keep a copy for the average lifespan of the species.

8.2 All records are ideally cloud-based.

8.3 Each animal will be given an identifying number and/or name.

8.4 Each animal who has entered care will have a detailed record regardless of length of stay.

8.4.1 All animal records will include information regarding the people connected to them (e.g., surrenderer, foster, adopter).

8.4.2 The movements of all animals in care will be recorded regardless of length of stay, including the following:

I. Intake: date in, origin

II. Veterinary visits: date in and out, veterinarian's information

III. Fostering: date in and out, foster's information

IV. Adoption: date out, adopter's information

V. Transfers: date out, organization's information

VI. Returns: date in, reason for return, returner's information

VII. Euthanasia or death: date deceased, method of euthanasia (if applicable), reason for euthanasia or cause and location of death, disposal method

8.5 If the animal has permanent identification (microchip or tattoo), it will be recorded.

8.6 Each animal will be photographed upon intake and the photo will be attached to the animal's file.

8.7 Each animal will have a detailed medical record consisting of the following:

I. All medications and vaccinations administered, including dose and frequency

II. All health issues or concerns listed

III. All veterinary visits recorded, including the vet's notes

B. MEDICAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

1. Health Assessment

Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue will make every effort to obtain as much historical medical information as possible.

- 1.1 A standard physical examination/assessment will be performed by a veterinarian or someone trained by a veterinarian (registered vet tech (RVT), staff, volunteer, or foster, evaluating all body systems and determining when an animal needs to see a veterinarian.
- 1.2 Identified health needs will be disclosed to the adopter or, in the case of transfers, the receiving organization, with a written agreement that the necessary care will be provided.

HEALTH PROTOCOLS

2. Health Plan

- 2.1 Meant 2B Loved Pet Rescue will develop health plans and protocols in collaboration with a veterinarian.

3. Vaccination

- 3.1 All cats and dogs will receive core vaccines according to the Canadian Standards of Care in Animal Shelters guidelines.
- 3.2 Additional/elective vaccines will be given based on local/regional risk as determined by a veterinarian.
- 3.3 Puppy/kitten vaccines will start by 6 to 8 weeks of age depending on risk and then be given at 2- to 4-week intervals until the animal is 16 weeks of age or older as recommended by a veterinarian.
- 3.4 Adult vaccines will be given if there is no vaccine history. Adult vaccine boosters and/or titres will be performed in accordance with the above guidelines and the attending veterinarian's recommendations.

4. Parasite Control

- 4.1 All cats and dogs will receive treatment for roundworm and hookworm as these pose a zoonotic risk (ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters).
- 4.2 All visible or diagnosed parasites will be treated.
- 4.3 Parasite prevention for parasites common in the region will be used whenever possible.

5. Treatment

- 5.1 All animals suffering from illness or injury are evaluated by a veterinarian, diagnosed, and treated in a timely manner.
- 5.2 All medical conditions causing pain or other forms of suffering (e.g., nausea, itchiness) will be treated promptly to ensure animals are not in distress.
- 5.3 Prescription medications will be used only on the order of a veterinarian for a particular animal.
- 5.4 Decisions about what treatment to pursue will be made in collaboration with a | veterinarian while considering the organization's resources.

6. Routine Disease Testing

- 6.1 Decisions about testing for diseases that are present in British Columbia and are not easily transmissible (e.g., feline immunodeficiency virus) balance the cost of testing against the risk of disease.
- 6.2 Animals from regions where severe infectious diseases are endemic as determined by a veterinarian (e.g., heartworm) will be tested for these diseases prior to adoption.
- 6.3 Routine disease testing decisions will be made in collaboration with a veterinarian.
- 6.4 Information about what tests were or were not performed will be given to adopters upon their request. Results of any positive tests will be disclosed prior to adoption.

7. Spay/Neuter

- 7.1 Surgeries will be conducted by a licensed veterinarian.
- 7.2 All adult dogs, cats, and rabbits will be spayed or neutered prior to adoption unless medically or behaviourally contraindicated according to a veterinarian.
- 7.3 For juvenile cats, dogs, and rabbits who may be too young to be altered before adoption, a stipulation will be included in the adoption contract for the animal to be altered by a certain date and is the financial responsibility of the rescue.
- 7.4 Other animal species (e.g., rats) are ideally spayed or neutered prior to adoption where feasible.
- 7.5 Animals in the organization's care will never be bred.
- 7.6 Spaying of pregnant animals will be performed at the individual discretion of the organization based on consultation with a veterinarian and capacity to care for and place offspring.

8. Permanent Identification

- 8.1 All dogs, cats, and rabbits placed for adoption will have a form of permanent identification (tattoo or microchip) with microchip always being the preference.
- 8.2 Whenever possible, other animal species are microchipped where practical based on animal size.

9. Infectious Disease Control Protocols

- 9.1 Animals displaying signs of a contagious disease (a disease that spreads between animals) will not be housed with healthy animals.
- 9.2 If contagious disease is widespread or spreading within a population, a veterinarian will be consulted and a treatment plan implemented.
- 9.3 If contagious disease is suspected or confirmed in an animal, the prospective foster or adopter will be notified prior to them receiving the animal into their care.
- 9.4 Fosters and adopters will be counselled that they are to immediately notify the organization of any contagious health concerns arising with the animal.

10. Quarantine

Quarantine refers to a period where an animal is separated from others and monitored for potential infectious disease to which he or she may have been exposed.

- 10.1 The quarantine period will be equal to the maximum incubation period of the disease of concern.
- 10.2 Quarantine procedures will be designed in consultation with a veterinarian and may include quarantine periods in a home or facility.
- 10.3 The necessity of routine quarantine of apparently healthy animals will be evaluated based on their history and origin.

11. Isolation

Isolation refers to a space where animals with suspected or confirmed infectious disease are held until they are no longer sick and no longer pose an infectious risk to others.

- 11.1 Isolation procedures will be designed in consultation with a veterinarian and may include isolation periods in a home or facility.
- 11.2 Animals will not be in isolation and quarantine in the same space at the same time.

12. Zoonotic Diseases

Zoonotic diseases are those transmissible from animals to humans (and vice versa) and include various viral, bacterial, parasitic, and fungal infections.

- 12.1 A written plan will be in place to mitigate zoonotic disease risk including precautions to prevent transmission to humans or other animals.
- 12.2 Animals with known or suspected zoonotic disease will not be placed in foster or other living situations where at-risk (immunocompromised) humans may be exposed.
- 12.3 All cases of reportable zoonotic disease will be reported to the appropriate public health authorities.

13. Veterinary Relationship And Communication

- 13.1 Meant 2B Loved has and will continue to have an ongoing relationship with a veterinarian or veterinarians familiar with its protocols and procedures.

C. BEHAVIOURAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

1. SOCIAL HISTORY

It is often said that the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. This is especially true in foster-based organizations that house animals in home environments. Caregiver observations are invaluable in these situations.

- 1.1 Meant 2B Loved will make every effort to obtain as much historical behaviour information as possible from the previous owner, previous foster, shelter, and rescue placements.
- 1.2 All information, including any instances of aggression (threat of harm to an animal or human, including lunging, barking, snarling, growling, snapping, and biting) and the context in which they occurred, will be communicated and recorded in an honest and transparent fashion.

2. Assessments, Observations, And Evaluation

Evaluation of behaviour begins at intake. Standardized assessments may be useful to help describe animals' personalities, determine how to best meet their behavioural needs in care, and best match them into homes. It should be noted, however, that there are no temperament assessments for dogs that have been scientifically validated to comprehensively predict behaviour in a future home. Recent research highlights the potential shortcomings of temperament assessments. For other species, few standardized evaluation tools exist.

- 2.1 All behaviour observations relevant to the animal's emotional/mental health or safe care and handling will be recorded.
- 2.2 Recent stressful circumstances, such as transfer, will be taken into consideration when evaluating overall behaviour.
- 2.3 If standardized assessments are performed, they will be done in a consistent and humane way by an evaluator trained in their use. The results will be recorded and shared with other caregivers and the adopter.

3. Behaviour Protocols, Monitoring, And Decision-Making

- 3.1 Meant 2B Loved have basic behaviour protocols outlining how it maintains behavioural wellness (including socialization, enrichment, training, and daily routines) and how it handles various types of common behaviour problems in each species under care.
- 3.2 Staff, fosters, and volunteers MUST be trained to recognize animal body language and use humane, science-based behaviour modification and behaviour monitoring protocols.
- 3.3 Behaviour and behaviour trends will be monitored daily by caregivers while in

care.

3.4 Animals displaying signs of psychological distress, behavioural deterioration, or posing a danger to staff, volunteers, or other animals in care will be assessed and action will be taken (i.e., treated promptly or euthanized).

3.4.1 Failure to take action with an animal displaying serious behaviour issues as stated above is unacceptable.

4. Pathway Planning For Animals With Behaviour Issues

4.1 When considering whether to move forward with animals who display signs of aggression, overall risk will be assessed, including the following:

I. Size of the animal and likelihood of the animal causing injury to a human or other animal

II. Welfare of the animal (e.g., whether he or she is experiencing ongoing fear and anxiety, and whether that can be mitigated)

III. Resources available for treatment and management

IV. Indicators that help predict future behaviour, such as bite severity, predictability of triggers, chronicity, emotional motivation, level of management/behavioural expertise needed, and response to treatment

4.2 Appropriate management techniques and precautions for animals with behaviour challenges will be used to optimize animal welfare and minimize risk to public safety, and may include avoidance of triggers, temporary confinement, muzzles, leashes, exercise, and maintaining a consistent routine.

4.3 Meant 2B Loved will identify professionals such as veterinary behaviourists, certified applied animal behaviourists, veterinarians with behaviour expertise, and professional trainers certified in humane, science-based training techniques, and know when to seek outside help.

4.4 In general, professional assistance will be sought when animals in care have behaviour concerns that are affecting their quality of life or pose a risk to others.

4.4.1 Placing animals with known aggression into a situation where they may injure a person or animal is unacceptable.

4.5 If behaviour modification (treatment techniques such as desensitization and counterconditioning) is used, records will be kept of each animal's behavioural condition, training methods used, and the animal's response.

4.6 Records will be kept for each training or behaviour modification session.

4.7 Complete behaviour records will be kept and a full behavioural history will be provided to the adopter.

4.8 Appropriate options for post-adoption support will be provided to the adopter when adopting animals with known or suspected behavioural issues.

5. Training Methods

Studies show that training methods using punishment, intimidation, and equipment that causes pain and distress are less effective than humane, science-based training methods. Studies also show animals trained using punishment-based methods are more likely to show signs of aggression. Positive, reward-based training methods are more effective and do not pose a risk to animal welfare.

- 5.1 All training methods will be humane and science-based.
- 5.2 The use of aversive training methods, including the use of shock or prong collars (with the exception of the use of vibration for deaf animals), is an unacceptable practice.
- 5.3 Appropriate socialization (balanced with risk for infectious disease) will be provided for all young animals in care during their critical socialization period.

D. ANIMAL TRANSPORT

Animal transport typically refers to programs in which animals are transferred over some distance from one organization or individual to another. However, the standards outlined in this document apply regardless of the purpose, distances, or parties involved, as careful management and planning are always required to ensure an animal's comfort and safety and to minimize the risk of disease transmission (ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters).

When planning transport partnerships, Meant 2B Loved will consider the responsibility they have within their local, regional, and broader communities and will take into account their maximum capacity for humane care levels. Meant 2B Loved will not transfer animals in if it negatively affects animals already in their care. Meant 2B Loved will also consider whether the animals' needs will be met in the new location, and their chances of adoption improved by the move (e.g., transporting a dog who was kept outside in a rural environment to a busy city environment is not ideal). Meant 2B Loved is aware of the risk of introducing infectious diseases that are uncommon or nonexistent at the destination location.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMUNICATION IN TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS

1. SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 Origin and receiving organizations will establish a solid working partnership.
- 1.2 A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be created whenever possible.
- 1.3 Both organizations should commit to clear communication in the best interest of the animals' welfare. Meant 2B Loved will do our part to ensure that communication takes place.
- 1.4 Both organizations will adhere to the Animal Rescue Standards of Practice.

2. RESPONSIBILITY AT ORIGIN

- 2.1 If M2BL is the origin organization, we will confirm with the receiving organization that each animal has left on transport.
- 2.2 Meant 2B Loved will provide the receiving organization with a detailed list of the animal(s) being transported, the contact information for the transporter (volunteer or company), and the approximate itinerary.
- 2.3 Each animal's health and behaviour status will be accurately described and communicated.
- 2.4 Each animal will be identified by a collar, tag, tattoo, microchip, or any

combination of these methods.

2.5 Health records and a copy of the animal's record will accompany each animal.

3. RESPONSIBILITY AT DESTINATION

3.1 When Meant 2B Loved is the receiving destination, there will be sufficient trained staff or volunteers ready to receive and evaluate animals upon arrival.

3.2 Meant 2B Loved will confirm with the origin organization that each animal has been received.

3.3 M2BL will intake each animal, checking against the list provided by the origin organization.

3.4 Each animal will receive a physical examination by a veterinarian as soon as possible after arrival.

3.4.1 If necessary, ongoing treatment will be provided as soon as possible.

4. PRIOR TO TRANSPORT

4.1 Animals selected for transport:

I. must be in good overall health (exceptions may occur for animals with existing treatment plans who have been cleared for transport by a veterinarian)

II. must have received a physical examination by a trained volunteer or staff member within 24 hours of transport

III. must have received a veterinary examination if required by provincial or federal transportation regulations

IV. will be vaccinated and treated for internal/external parasites, whenever possible

V. will be spayed/neutered and microchipped, whenever possible

4.2 Extra measures will be taken during transport to provide for the comfort, health, and safety of animals who are under 8 weeks of age, geriatric, pregnant, have anxiety, or have serious medical conditions.

4.3 Screening, prevention, and quarantine plans will be developed and carried out for each disease of concern (e.g., heartworm, rabies, canine influenza) in consultation with a veterinarian familiar with regional disease patterns.

4.4 Every effort will be made to identify infected animals and prevent introduction and transmission of infectious disease between regions

5. DURING TRANSPORT

5.1 Animals will not be sedated unless recommended by a veterinarian, as sedation can make animals more vulnerable to hypothermia, dehydration, and injury.

5.2 Depending on the age, species, and duration of transport, the following will be provided:

I. Adequate water and food (affixed securely to prevent spillage)

II. Appropriate bedding

III. Opportunity to appropriately eliminate (e.g., access to a litter box, toileting breaks)

IV. Regular observation and appropriate rest time

5.3 Maximum transport time (measured from the start to end of confinement) to an intermediate or final destination will be no more than 12 hours.

6. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

6.1 There will be adequate ventilation in the vehicle as well as in each enclosure.

6.2 The vehicle (including cargo space) will be heated and cooled as needed to allow animals to thermoregulate properly.

7. ENCLOSURES

7.1 Adult dogs and cats will be housed individually (unless separation of familiar animals would cause extreme distress).

7.1.1 Other animal species will be housed based on existing social bonds.

7.1.2 Littermates who are bonded will be housed together with appropriately sized enclosures.

7.2 Animals must be able to stand, sit upright, turn around normally while standing, and lie in a natural position.

7.3 If more than one animal is in the enclosure, all animals must be able to lie down at the same time without needing to lie on top of each other.

7.4 Animals must be safely confined within the enclosure.

7.4.1 Doors on enclosures MUST be secured to prevent accidental opening.

7.5 Floor area should have non-slip material to prevent animals from slipping during transport.

7.6 Enclosures should be secured to prevent movement within the vehicle during transport.

8. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATION AND FOSTERS AND ADOPTERS

8.1 Fosters and adopters will be counselled that they are to immediately notify M2BL of any contagious health or serious behaviour concerns arising with the animal.

8.2 Records of contact information will be kept so that fosters and adopters can be contacted immediately if an urgent public health concern arises with another animal from the same origin (e.g., rabies, brucellosis).

8.3 Any provincially or federally reportable or notifiable diseases must be reported to the appropriate agencies.

E. ANIMAL PATHWAYS AND OUTCOMES

1. FOSTERING

Even for organizations with a brick-and-mortar facility, having a foster system in place is crucial. Shelter-type facilities are often not suitable for neonates, sick or injured animals, and animals with behaviour issues.

BEFORE THE FOSTER PLACEMENT

1.1 Organization's application process:

- I. must ensure the suitability of prospective foster homes
 - II. must include an application form to collect personal information
 - III. Will include an interview to discuss specific concerns or questions
 - IV. Will include a home visit to ensure a safe physical environment
- 1.2 Meant 2B Loved's foster contract outlines the responsibilities and rights for both the foster and the organization, including the following:
- I. Information about legal ownership of the animal
 - II. Expected duration of the foster period
 - III. Expenses
 - IV. Veterinary partners
 - V. Contact information
- 1.3 Meant 2B Loved will have policies that outline protocols for different situations, such as the foster going on vacation, moving, or needing to return the animal, or when the foster animal requires medical care, including emergency care.
- 1.4 The foster applicant must be allowed to review the contract, policies, and protocols prior to taking in an animal.
- 1.5 If the foster is approved, they will be supplied with a copy of the above contract, policies, and protocols.
- 1.6 The foster household members and the animal should meet to ensure a suitable match whenever possible.
- 1.7 Meant 2B Loved will not place an animal in a foster home that is unsuitable for the animal's medical or behavioural needs.

2. DURING THE FOSTER PLACEMENT

- 2.1 Meant 2B Loved will monitor the foster placement periodically to ensure the animal is thriving and the foster is supported.
- 2.2 A Meant 2B Loved foster support will be easily accessible for the foster should they have any questions or concerns and provide prompt correspondence.
- 2.3 Meant 2B Loved will provide the foster with support and training for medical, behavioural, and general care of the animal.
- 2.4 Meant 2B Loved will monitor the foster animal's health, such as vaccine schedules, wellness exams, and bloodwork.
- 2.5 If issues arise, including the need to return the animal, M2BL will provide timely assistance with making appropriate changes to rectify concerns.
- 2.6 Meant 2B Loved will make every effort to find a more suitable foster placement.

F. ADOPTION

The intent of adoption is to place all adoptable animals in caring, stable, and long-term homes suitable for the animal.

3. BEFORE THE ADOPTION PLACEMENT

- 3.1 Meant 2B Loved has an application process to ensure the suitability of prospective adopters, including the following:
 - I. An application form to collect personal information
 - II. An interview to discuss specific concerns or questions
- 3.2 The potential adopter will have the opportunity meet the animal to ensure a suitable match.
 - 3.2.1 All household members, including resident animals (depending on species), will have the opportunity to meet the animal to ensure a suitable match.
- 3.3 A consistent home visit procedure will be followed.
- 3.4 Meant 2B Loved will not knowingly place an animal in a home that is unsuitable for the animal's medical or behavioural needs.
- 3.5 Meant 2B Loved has an adoption contract that outlines the responsibilities and rights for both the adopter and the organization, such as veterinary care provided, standard of care expected, and the return policy.
- 3.6 M2BL will disclose to the prospective adopter all known behaviour or medical concerns.

4. AFTER THE ADOPTION PLACEMENT

- 4.1 The adopter will be supplied with a copy of the animal's health records.
- 4.2 A Meant 2B Loved representative will check in with the adopter at least once to ensure the placement is suitable.
- 4.3 A Meant 2B Loved representative will be easily accessible for the adopter should they have any questions or concerns and provide prompt correspondence.
- 4.4 Meant 2B Loved has a clear return policy in place should the adoption not be successful.
 - 4.4.1 The adopter **MUST** be advised of the return policy at the time of adoption or before.
 - 4.4.2 Meant 2B Loved will be prepared to accept or arrange placement for all returned animals.
- 4.5 In urgent circumstances where there is a public safety risk or risk to the animal, Meant 2B Loved will admit the returned animal immediately.

5. OFF-SITE ADOPTION PARTNERS

- 5.1 When M2BL partners with an off-site adoption centre, such as a retail store, animal café, or veterinary clinic, to showcase adoptable animals, at least one Meant 2B Loved representative will be present to accept adoption applications and care for the animals at all times. All regular adoption screening processes will remain in effect.

- 5.2 Animals selected for off-site adoption events will be in good health and up to date on vaccinations, and every effort made to ensure they are free of infectious disease.
- 5.3 Animals who are placed in a communal adoption area will have undergone screening and/or a quarantine period to ensure they are disease-free.
- 5.4 Animals will be free of behaviour problems where welfare would be compromised by the adoption setting or that could pose a risk to the public.
- 5.5 If adoption events are held at these sites, these Standards of Practice will still be upheld in the interests of public safety and animal welfare.

6. EXTERNAL TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS

Transfer partnerships with other organizations may be beneficial for some animals. Some organizations have more/different resources (financial, species- or breed-specific experience, physical space, etc.) that will allow for a better outcome for the animal. Also, some organizations do not have a mandate to conduct adoptions.

- 6.1 If animals are transferred to other organizations, the receiving organization will meet these Standards of Practice.
- 6.2 Transfers will be done to improve the animal's welfare and/or chance of adoption.
- 6.3 Meant 2B Loved will review the animal's medical and behaviour needs before deciding whether to transfer the animal to another organization.
 - 6.3.1 All of the animal's records (health, behaviour assessments, etc.) will be sent with the animal to the receiving organization.

7. SANCTUARY

For a variety of reasons, some animals who end up in an organization's care are not suitable for adoption or have very little chance of being adopted. If the organization feels the animal's quality of life is good (i.e., he or she can be provided with the Five Freedoms) and there is little to no danger to the public, it is appropriate to consider a sanctuary or permanent foster placement.

- 7.1 Meant 2B Loved will be responsible for the animal's medical and behaviour needs for the remainder of his or her life if the animal is in a private foster home.
 - 7.1.1 The animal's welfare will be monitored regularly as determined by their individual needs.
- 7.2 A sanctuary facility must meet the Animal Rescue Standards of Practice.

8. EUTHANASIA

Whether for physical or mental health issues, euthanasia is a necessary part of working with animals. Organizations also have a responsibility to ensure the animals in their care do not pose a health or safety risk to the public or other animals. The most appropriate method of euthanasia may vary depending on animal species, age, weight, temperament, and health status.

- 8.1 Meant 2B Loved's euthanasia policy is transparent and available to stakeholders.
- 8.2 All euthanasia will be conducted or overseen by a licensed veterinarian.

8.3 Death must be quick using a method that causes the least possible pain and distress.

EUTHANASIA FOR PHYSICAL WELFARE/MEDICAL REASONS

8.4 Meant 2B Loved must euthanize animals who are suffering from untreatable illness or injury, and who cannot experience the Five Freedoms.

EUTHANASIA FOR MENTAL WELFARE/BEHAVIOUR REASONS

8.5 Meant 2B Loved is responsible to euthanize:

- I. Animals who are suffering from untreatable behaviour issues that prevent them from experiencing the Five Freedoms
- II. Animals who have severely injured or attacked humans or otherwise pose a risk of human injury when managed by an average adopter

8.6 Meant 2B Loved may also euthanize animals who pose a severe risk to other companion animals when managed by an average adopter.

G. EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS

Whether operating out of foster homes or facilities, organizations need a detailed plan in place to ensure their animals are cared for in time of emergency or disaster.

9. MITIGATION

9.1 Meant 2B Loved has identified areas of risk and types of emergencies/disasters (e.g., large and small, natural and manmade), who could be affected and what type of effects are expected.

9.2 Meant 2B Loved has its relevant stakeholders, which may include staff and volunteers, foster homes, adoptive homes, other animal agencies, and local government.

10. PREPARATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH A FACILITY

10.1 In the event Meant 2B Loved opens a facility, the society must prepare response kits that include documentation, contact information, and checklists.

10.2 Meant 2B Loved will prepare adequate resources for response, including the following:

- I. Shelter and supplies for staff/volunteers caring for animals
- II. Sufficient equipment and supplies to confine and care for shelter animals safely
- III. Documentation, including photographs, for animals in care
- IV. Sufficient training and resources for worker care (e.g., briefings, debriefings, emotional support, availability for respite, safe workplace)
- V. Transportation to safe location

10.3 Meant 2B Loved will store adequate inventory for easy retrieval, if needed.

10.4 Meant 2B Loved will plan alternate locations for sheltered animals who are out

of the affected area and not reliant on emergency shelter.

11. PREPARATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH FOSTERS

11.1 All fosters should have sufficient resources for their own animals and fostered animals, including the following:

- I. Food, water, and shelter for shelter-in-place
- II. Supplies for moving animals in the event of evacuation (e.g., crates, leashes)
- III. Emergency animal first-aid supplies and training
- IV. Handling skills for stressed and/or injured animals
- V. Transportation to safe location

11.2 Meant 2B Loved will provide support to their fosters, including the following;

- I. Emotional support, during and after
- II. Access to supplies for fostered animals
- III. Additional equipment to provide safe confinement during emergencies

11.3 Meant 2B Loved will ensure fosters are aware that duration of stay may be longer than normal after a disaster due to fewer adoptions.

G. FERAL CAT STANDARDS

Rescue organizations are crucial in feral cat management, including Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs. TNR is an accepted, humane, and effective approach to controlling feral cat populations. Feral cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and returned to their outdoor homes. TNR improves the cats' health, stabilizes the colony population, and allows the cats to live out their lives. Public opinion generally supports TNR over lethal control of feral cats.

1. TRAPPING

- 1.1 Meant 2B Loved will only use humane live traps.
- 1.2 Traps must be disinfected after use.
- 1.3 Traps that have been set must be monitored at all times, either by the organization or by the resident.
- 1.4 Trapping will be conducted in accordance with any local animal control bylaws.
- 1.5 In extreme weather, traps will be monitored more closely to ensure that animals are not subjected to freezing or excessively hot temperatures.
- 1.6 Cats in traps must be transported as soon as possible and not left in a trap outdoors longer than 8 hours.

2. VETERINARY CARE

By nature, feral cats cannot be easily handled while conscious. Sedating cats reduces their stress and minimizes the risk of escape, as well as injury to the cats and volunteers.

Therefore, the following procedures are conducted while cats are sedated.

- 2.1 Veterinary care provided by a veterinarian knowledgeable about feral cats.
- 2.2 If there is a marked difference between indoor and outdoor temperature, cats will be allowed to acclimate to the indoor temperature prior to surgery.
- 2.3 Cats will be sedated while still in the trap or a suitable cage/carrier.

- 2.4 Once sedated, cats will be examined and checked for identification.
- 2.5 While at the veterinarian:
 - I. Cats will ideally receive permanent identification (microchip)
 - II. If necessary, cats will receive ear tipping or notching.
 - III. Cats will receive a Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis-Calicivirus-Panleukopenia (FVRCP) vaccine
 - IV. Cats may receive a rabies vaccine (if in an area where rabies is a concern)
 - V. Cats will receive parasite control (a topical multi-parasite control product is ideal)
 - VI. Cats will receive pain medication during surgery and post-operatively based on sex and age
- 2.6 Only absorbable sutures or inert, nonabsorbable material will be used so that suture removal is not necessary.
- 2.7 If antibiotics are needed beyond the day of surgery, long-acting injectable versions will be given the day of surgery.
- 2.8 Other health concerns will be addressed at the same time of the spay/neuter surgery (e.g., dental disease, wound treatment).

3. POST-OPERATIVE CARE

It is a best practice to monitor feral cats in post-operative care for several days, but the duration of confinement may vary based on the individual cat's needs. Being confined is generally very stressful for feral cats. If there are signs of extreme stress (attempting to escape repeatedly, not eating), the cat can be released immediately. Otherwise, the guidelines below should be used.

- 3.1 Cats will be kept in care post-surgery for a duration of time recommended by the attending veterinarian (generally 12-72 hours depending on organization resources).
- 3.2 In recovery, feral cats will be monitored regularly and housed in a quiet and temperature-controlled environment and, if in care longer than 12 hours, housed following the guidelines in 2 – Animal Care and Enrichment.

4. ANIMAL CARE AND ENRICHMENT.

- 4.1 Each feral cat trapped will be logged by the organization with the following information:
 - I. Date of trapping
 - II. Exact address/location of trapping
 - III. Caretaker's contact information: name, phone number, email address
 - IV. Detailed description of cat: sex, age, state of health, coat/colour and markings
 - V. Date of spay/neuter surgery and the clinic
 - VI. Detailed list of veterinary care provided: tattoo/microchip number, if ear tipped, vaccines, flea and parasite treatment, dental care, wound treatment, medications

VII. Date returned

VIII. Exact return address/location

5. RETURN

5.1 Whenever possible, feral cats will be returned to the exact spot they were trapped.

5.2 If the original location is unsafe or has been demolished, feral cats may be relocated to a suitable environment with the following conditions:

I. Cats will be relocated in familiar groups where possible

II. All resident cats should be sterilized, identified, vaccinated, dewormed, and healthy

III. There will be a plan to acclimate the cat(s), such as temporary confinement in a smaller space

IV. The caretaker must agree to provide fresh food and water daily and to monitor the cats' health

V. The caretaker ideally has a succession plan/contact person in the event they are no longer able to care for cats