

For Immediate Release
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ADOPTION FEES WAIVED AS OVERCROWDED LOCAL ANIMAL SHELTER IS FLOODED WITH LOST PETS

TACOMA, WA – The Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County is temporarily waiving all adoption fees due to critical capacity after taking in an influx of lost pets within the last month. Currently, there are 122 dogs and 189 cats being cared for at the shelter.



The shelter is experiencing critical capacity.

“The shelter is in a state of emergency, and we are completely out of kennel space,” says Leslie Dalzell, chief executive officer at the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County. “With our limited facility, we are not able to keep up with the number of pets coming in. We are placing dogs in temporary crates and housing multiple dogs in single kennels because there is nowhere else for them to go.”

Since June 16, the shelter has taken in 343 lost pets, which is a 38% increase compared to mid-April to mid-May.

In December 2022, the shelter implemented an [appointment-based intake system](#) in alignment with guidelines from

veterinary experts and nationally recognized disease control best practices. This system helps to lessen the high volume of animals at the shelter at one time.

“This system is consent-based and is simply the practice of inviting our community to help a lost pet,” says Dalzell. “However, we are experiencing an overwhelming number of lost pets urgently coming in without an appointment, along with the consistently large number of animals being brought in by animal control. This causes us to run out of space very quickly.”

The community can help by adopting a shelter pet during the shelter’s Space Crisis Adoption Special with all adoption fees waived from July 18 – 23. Every adoptable pet has had a wellness exam from shelter staff, been spayed or neutered, received their initial vaccines, and is microchipped with national registration. To view all adoptable shelter pets, please visit www.thehumanesociety.org/adopt.

To continue to help with space, the community is asked to please take the following steps when finding a lost pet:

1. Provide the pet with a temporary home, if possible.
2. Walk the dog around the area – most dogs don’t wander far from home!
3. Have the pet scanned for a microchip at your local veterinary clinic.
4. Post online and put up signage around your community to help locate the owners.
5. Call the shelter to give our staff a description of the pet for it to be included in our found pet records.

Information on what to do when finding a lost pet and how keeping a lost pet out of a shelter environment is most ideal can be found at www.thehumanesociety.org/lost-pets.

The community can also help by donating to support the shelter's lifesaving medical efforts and to continue caring for the many pets in need: www.thehumanesociety.org/donate.

About the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County

As one of the oldest animal welfare organizations in the nation, the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County cares for around 10,000 animals every year and maintains multiple humane programs. Dedicated to "Making Happy Happen," the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County works tirelessly to protect animals, support pet owners, and enhance relationships between animals and people. Learn more at www.thehumanesociety.org.

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