

**For Immediate Release:**

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### **TACOMA ANIMAL SHELTER WAIVES DOG ADOPTION FEES AS KENNELS EXCEED CAPACITY**

TACOMA, WA – In response to a surge in dog intake, the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County is waiving adoptions fees for adult dogs from March 12-17. Currently, the shelter is caring for over 120 dogs at the shelter plus an additional 39 in foster homes.

"As one of the few open-admission animal shelters in the state, we take in animals no matter their age, breed, or behavioral and medical needs. Just last week, we tended to a dog who had been shot three times, and was among 10 rescued in a mere 72 hours, pushing our capacity to the limits," says Leslie Dalzell, chief executive officer at the Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County. "We are now needing to double or even triple kennel occupancy to provide care for our community's most vulnerable animals."

Community members can help by adopting a dog during the shelter's adoption promotion. Every adoptable dog 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 dogs, visit the shelter's website at [www.thehumanesociety.org/adopt](http://www.thehumanesociety.org/adopt).

"When our community adopts from our shelter, it enables us to extend our care to countless more animals in dire need," states Dalzell. "Additionally, community members can play an active role in reuniting lost pets with their families. A significant number of lost pets are found less than a mile from home, and many lost pets brought to shelters never make their way back to their families."

For lost animals, the shelter has an appointment-based intake system in alignment with guidelines from veterinary experts, nationally recognized animal welfare organizations, and disease control experts. The consent-based system reduces the high volume of animals at the shelter at one time and allows the shelter to provide owner reunification support for lost pets while preventing them from entering the shelter.

To aid in creating space, the community is encouraged to 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](http://www.thehumanesociety.org/lost-pets).

For those not ready to adopt, the shelter welcomes new foster volunteers to foster large-breed dogs, offering temporary homes to ease kennel overcrowding. Foster volunteers also aid staff in understanding the dog's behavior in a home, enhancing our ability to match them with adopters. To learn more about fostering, visit [www.thehumanesociety.org/get-involved/foster](http://www.thehumanesociety.org/get-involved/foster).

Additionally, the community can 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](http://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](http://www.thehumanesociety.org).

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