

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County Temporarily Closes its Cat Adoption Due to Confirmed Cases of Panleukopenia Virus

TACOMA, WA – The Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County has opted to temporarily halt cat adoptions after several cats tested positive for Feline panleukopenia.

Feline panleukopenia (FP) is a highly contagious viral disease of cats caused by the feline parvovirus. The FP virus will attack the intestinal tract causing bloody diarrhea, dehydration, debilitation, and sudden death. The virus does not infect people.

Stuart Earley, CEO of the Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County said: ‘The Humane Society takes every precaution to prevent infections, but unfortunately FP is at large within Tacoma and Pierce County, and the virus found its way into the shelter when seven older cats were brought in as an owner surrender on February 3rd. The first sickness was discovered on Friday, and the decision to halt cat adoptions was made immediately after other cats from the same group tested positive. The shelter is reaching out to inform everyone that has adopted or reclaimed cats that were possibly exposed. Cat adoptions will be closed at least seven days to two weeks, which is the incubation time for the virus.’

While all cats at The Humane Society receive vaccinations against panleukopenia, people who have adopted or reclaimed cats from the shelter since February 3rd should watch for symptoms including diarrhea, severe weight loss, vomiting, and lethargy. If there are unvaccinated cats in the house, they should be kept separated. Any cats who show those symptoms should be taken to your family veterinarian immediately. With quick intervention, it is possible to bring your pet through the illness, but without medical care, panleukopenia is usually fatal.

The shelter is undertaking a deep clean of all potentially infected areas, and parts of the shelter will be under quarantine, with access for only designated staff members.

‘The Humane Society takes the well-being of all the animals in its care seriously,’ said Earley. ‘And we take our responsibilities to our community very seriously which is why we have acted immediately and taken all steps to prevent any further infection. Whilst the quarantine is in place the shelter will not be able to receive any cats from the public and will not be able to adopt any cats but will still be open to the public. Dogs, rabbits and all other animals will still be available for adoption.’

For the latest updates and information, please see The Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County’s website at www.thehumanesociety.org and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TacomaHumane, or call The Humane Society at (253) 383-2733.

About the Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County

Since 1888, The Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County has worked to protect animals, eliminate pet euthanasia, support pet owners, and enhance the relationships between animals and people. The Humane Society shelters nearly 10,000 animals every year and maintains more than a dozen humane programs, including a low-cost spay/neuter

service, a Pet Food Pantry, and pet adoptions. The Humane Society adopts more animals than any other shelter in the state of Washington and has long been at the forefront of progressive animal welfare legislation.

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