



**MILWAUKEE AREA DOMESTIC
ANIMAL CONTROL COMMISSION**

**MADACC TRANSFER PARTNER
PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

February 2014

WELCOME TO MADACC'S ANIMAL TRANSFER PROGRAM!

We are excited to have your organization as part of the Milwaukee Area Domestic Animal Control Commission's (MADACC's) Transfer Partner Placement Program!

MADACC is a quasi-governmental agency, also known as a commission. All 19 municipalities comprise this commission and fund MADACC according to their usage per animal. Our main purpose is to provide a safe environment for the lost animals of Milwaukee County and to provide one central location for residents to look for their lost companions. State statute requires that we hold these dogs for seven (7) days.

Another function of MADACC is to act as an impound facility for the law enforcement in each municipality for holding animals that they may seize for a variety of reasons. There are humanitarian reasons such as a house fire or a sick or deceased owner. Some animals are seized for legal reasons such as an owner being arrested, or a Sheriff's eviction. There are also cruelty and neglect cases where law enforcement will pull an animal from a citizen to have the animal kept in a safe environment while it can be evaluated for injuries or illness. Often these types of cases will cause an animal to be held for far longer than seven (7) days. During that time, the animal remains the property of the individual that it was taken from and held until it is released by the police or agency that impounded it or a judge.

While MADACC has no problem taking animals into our facility, we have many difficulties getting them out of here. In Milwaukee County, we have a large, world-class adoption facility down the street at Wisconsin Humane Society so when we were conceived there were no provisions made for us to have an adoption program. The program we run now is limited to the following:

1. Finders who bring in an animal are able to adopt the animal at the end of stray hold if not reclaimed. Finders will always supersede the holds placed on animals by transfer partners. If people were not allowed to adopt the animals they brought in many would be hesitant to leave them here in order for the owner to have a chance at reclaim.
2. Cats and kittens – due to the large number of cats and kittens that we take in at MADACC, we feel that we must offer these animals for adoption in order to increase the number of live release felines.
3. Pit Bull Terriers and mixes, and dogs that look like pit bull terriers – in 2013 45% of the dogs we took in fell into this category. Since most other dogs are easily transferred from this facility, we feel adopting these dogs out is an important part of our commitment to increasing the live release rate here.

We count on our transfer partners to help us save the lives of the animals that come into our facility by pulling appropriate animals for your adoption programs. For those of you who have worked with us for years and found frustrations with getting suitable animals, we have been working hard to refine our program for maximum ease of use. We want our transfer partners to be happy and we want animals out of our facility on day eight (8) or the day it becomes our property. Keep reading to learn all you need to know about pulling animals from MADACC!

Animal Selection

Most of the time, animals are selected by organizations by watching our website and choosing based on looks, size and our amazing intake photos (note the sarcasm). We are fine with this process for our transfer partners.

In the past, both shelters and rescues had the ability to walk through the building at will, take animals out and kind of just do whatever they wanted with our animals within our facility. This created an incredibly chaotic atmosphere here and had to change. In the end, the decision to stop allowing rescues to walk through the dog kennels at will was made for several reasons.

The first reason was because of human nature and the big hearts of rescue folks. No matter how many times we asked them not to pet animals, put hands in cages, or not to open cages, these rules were not adhered to. This is just a human flaw and anyone reading this is guilty of it. As animal lovers most of us cannot resist the urge to interact with animals no matter how many verbal and visual warnings are given. Because of this we have had increases in disease transmission, bites, and animals who were not available for transfer were being handled and walked around the building.

We also had issues with several rescue personnel/groups arriving at the same time then bringing animals all over the building and unintentionally interfering with our day to day operations. As you know, we have limited space for evaluating animals and this really was a problem.

Another issue was that people ignored the current transfer list and just picked animals that were not available yet because they saw other ones coming up and liked them better, which did not help the current animals waiting to get out, so we have limited access to the kennels.

We do allow certain shelter staff (WHS, HAWS, EBHS for example) to come into the kennels. Shelter staff members are typically better able to adhere to rules and procedures that they already follow at their own facility. Some of the shelters help us with behavior assessments and need to have access to the kennels. Shelter staff are also better trained to deal with emergency situations with an animal that might exhibit sudden and unexpected behavior.

This system works out for the MADACC staff, and while it might not seem to be fair to some, with the current hold procedures there is no favoritism and everyone has the same ability to put holds on animals.

When it comes to the cat wards, shelter and rescue personnel are both permitted to walk into the cat wards and make selections. For rescues, at no time can animals be touched and cages cannot be opened. When selections have been made, if it is imperative that a cat be touched, we can get a staff member to assist you. Should this rule be violated we will give a verbal warning to the volunteer/rescue staff person responsible and a written warning will be sent to the organization. A second violation will result in the loss of full access to cat ward privileges for 30 days.

Placing a Hold - Day 8 Philosophy

Animals held as a stray are to be held for seven (7) days. At the end of the business day on the seventh day we are holding them, they become our property and can legally leave our building via transfer the next morning. This is why we are trying to focus on finding a path for each animal as close to the time that they arrive as possible.

In the past, we have had many different ways and time periods that organizations and groups have had to wait to put holds on animals. This has led to nothing but confusion and ill will towards our staff and between groups. So we have decided to simplify the hold process completely.

1. Holds can be placed on STRAY animals only. Not animals that have arrived for any other reason. When and if those animals are available for transfer, we will then open the animal up for transfer to everyone.
2. Only the Shelter Supervisor, Executive Director, or the Front Office Manager can place holds on animals. The Shelter Supervisor should be your first contact and resource for this purpose. We receive emails and calls to place holds on animals all hours of the day and night. We will place holds on animals in the order that they are received. On weekends and evenings, email is your best way to communicate with us. All managers at MADACC regularly check emails even on days that they are not scheduled. Should a vacation or other emergency occur with MADACC staff that can place holds, all transfer partners will be notified of the proper alternate to reach out to place a holds. Kennel and medical staff should NOT be asked to place a hold since that might interfere with a hold request placed through the proper channels.
3. Holds can be placed on an animal at ANY time by ANY group after an animal arrives – however please understand the following:
 - a. Purebred animals with purebred rescues that work with us will have an automatic hold on their breed animals for that group upon intake. Our expectation is that rescue groups take ALL animals of their breed with an adoptable temperament. Medical issues can be discussed and evaluated, but we do expect medical cases also to be transferred to purebred rescues. This is why we will put holds on the puppies up through the seniors for purebred rescues. So far, our experience has been that this works just fine and we have never had a rescue reject an animal for anything other than terrible behavior issues. We will always advise you that we have an animal on hold for you.
 - b. In the case of purebred cats, MADACC will automatically place them on hold for Purebred Cat Rescue.
 - c. In the case of birds, large birds will be automatically placed on hold for CARE. Smaller birds like parakeets and cockatiels will be available for transfer to any group who wants them.
4. With respect to automatic holds, we will expect a confirmation from the group with the automatic hold to advise if they have the resources in their program to accept animal on day 8 within 48 hours of notice of the hold. During that time, we will accept a secondary hold for any animal with a hold in the event the agency advises that they cannot accept that animal at that time.

5. We will conduct behavior assessments after day (three) 3 for animals that have been put on hold if requested. As you are aware, most animals have fear hormones and can act very differently between the time they arrive and the time that they leave. Some animals in a photo on a catch pole will be the picture of docility once they have calmed down. Most of our behavior assessment resources for MADACC's purposes will be spent on dogs that are considered to be Pit Bull Terriers or pittie mixes. Because there are so many concerns about the legitimacy of behavior assessments, we want to make clear that our goal is to only send out adoptable animals to our transfer partners. We will discuss more about this in a later section.
6. We will expect that animals on hold will be leaving on day eight (8) or due to transport scheduling will sit a few more days with a set in stone pending weather and other normal transport issues (i.e. mechanical, volunteer emergencies, etc.). Should a rescue or shelter not pick up on the day scheduled, the hold can be removed and given to the next in line for each animal. Please understand that in the warmer months, animals leaving on the first day available is critical to our organization. We do not want space to ever become a factor in our decision making process at MADACC.
7. A secondary hold can be placed on animals where the finder is interested in adopting the animal – the notorious "IP" hold. Many times people will only place holds on animals because they are afraid that the animal will be euthanized. We have weekly problems with people who adopt animals from us only to turn around and try to offer them to rescues or re-home them on their own. One thing to note is MADACC's new policy of not performing behavior assessments on IP animals. Due to the controversies out there with the assessments we feel that if a finder has spent time with an animal and that they want the animal, why should we look for a reason not to have the animal leave here alive? If someone who adopts one of our animals approaches you because they were just saving them, please keep this in mind and remember that we have no idea if the animal is good with other animals and you should make sure that you do whatever you need to do to have a comfort level before you accept that animal.
8. If you need to remove a hold due to a foster falling through or space issues or any other reason, please advise MADACC as soon as possible so that we can immediately begin searching for alternate placement.
9. We will also place secondary holds on animals with a primary hold in the event a situation changes with the group with the first hold. We all know how things can change minute to minute in animal welfare.
10. Please do not bring potential fosters up here to choose between animals you have on hold. We believe our transfer partners are professionals and can do the selecting and placement with fosters. The only time a foster should be up here is to pick up an animal or bring back for any necessary and pre-approved rechecks for an animal. We expect your hold to be a hold, not a hold pending a foster meet and greet.

What do we have to do to send you home with an animal today?

Now that you have an animal on hold – it is time to consider what you need from MADACC before the animal leaves. Do you need any vaccinations done? Do you need a microchip? Spay/neuter? CVI? Great! MADACC has you covered! We can do all of these things for you if we know ahead of time! If you show up without making arrangements for these things ahead of time, you will have a long wait and add to the circus that is MADACC every day.

When you place the hold on the animal that is the time to let us know if you need any medical services performed. This way, we can notify our medical department so the items can be addressed prior to you arriving and have everything done and ready to go when you arrive. Often, this will be later in the day on the first day available to leave.

Here are the services and prices for placement partners for animals they pull from MADACC:

Dog Spay	\$70 (please note that due to tight scheduling, you may have to come back for a surgery we were not able to do prior to transfer on any animal!).
Dog Neuter	\$65
Cat Spay/Neuter	\$60
Rabies Vaccine	\$10
Combo Vaccine	\$5 (for both dogs DHPP and cats FVRCP)
FELV/FIV	\$25 (we can arrange preferred pricing on this to organizations who pull felines regularly from us).
Heartworm	\$15
Microchip	\$15
CVI	\$5 (for animals during spay/neuter) - \$10 for regular pulls – days available limited so scheduling very important for this service
Dentals	We can do routine scaling on animals for very low cost. We can discuss the best options and costs on animals you are interested in when you are pulling. Extractions can be discussed on a case by case basis and you may have to return for surgery at a later date for any dental work we can assist with.

We cannot allow transfer partners to do medical procedures on animals in our facility. We understand that everyone wants to reduce costs. We are happy to let you provide tests for FIV/FelV or heartworm and we will charge a nominal fee for the staff time to run them.

If a rescue picks up an animal that is currently being treated for upper respiratory infection, we will provide the balance of the medication to the rescue. We cannot offer this service to shelters.

Behavior Assessments – What they are – What they are not...

This is a very controversial area for all animal welfare organizations at the moment. There are so many conflicting reports out there about the value or the waste of time that behavior assessments are in getting animals out of a shelter. For instance, there is truth to the fact that a dog might fail a food bowl assessment in a shelter and not have any problem in a home. I was told it was 50-50 shot. But how are we to know which dog is in which 50%? Are we responsible if that animal bites someone after it is adopted if we chose to ignore that behavior in a test? Will our transfer partner be liable, too?

Truth be told, the only people who care about behavior assessments are shelter and rescue people. Most adopters inherently assume that the dog is safe to bring home because they are in a rescue or shelter and ask questions about things that are not assessed in a shelter – separation anxiety, house skills, good with cats and children, can ride in a car, can be a therapy/service dog, and things of that nature.

Most of our time is spent working with the larger dogs. Those are the ones that are harder to get out of here, so we want to make sure that we are investing the time necessary to get them the best possible outcome. They are also the animals our partners have more reservations about pulling and need more reassurances before they commit.

If you need a behavior assessment done or info on any animal's behavior, please advise the Shelter Supervisor who will be happy to relate all info we have available.

Behavior evaluations are available on any dog and are performed only by the shelter supervisor, however, if you prefer to do your own this is permitted. Evaluations by outside persons must be done by appointment, can be performed by a maximum of 2 people. They will be conducted in a room in the back of the shelter, you are also asked to bring your own testing equipment and limit each test to about 15 minutes. A staff member will bring each dog to you and then return them to their kennels. Tests are only permitted on dogs that are past their stray hold.

You may NOT bring in dogs from outside the shelter for dog to dog testing purposes. This is a health and safety concern for that animal. If you have a foster home that requires doing a meet and greet with a resident dog that must be arranged in advance with the Shelter Supervisor and may not be permitted in some cases. Those requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

We cannot do cat/dog testing at MADACC. We can walk a dog past a cat condo, but doing any more than that is not acceptable. There is no way for us to perform an accurate test on how a dog will react around a cat with the ability to run at MADACC. Cats are stressed out enough here without being put into a room with a dog to see what will happen. Or having a dog come right up to it in a cat condo and seem threatening even if it is just curious.

Always remember, no matter how much credibility you put into a behavior assessment, they are only a snapshot in time. Just like people, dogs have good days and bad days. They are only one tool in a large arsenal that we use to try to determine the success of an animal once it leaves here or adopted.

Ready to Roll!

When your MADACC transfer animal is ready to go – it is best to be fully prepared. Our front office is what we like to call “dynamic” and often there are people and animals in the lobby conducting business or waiting for vaccine clinic appointments.

Make an appointment! It is always better for all of us to be fully aware of each other’s expectations.

If you had special requests for medical services, do not hesitate to email or call to make sure they have been completed before you come if you have time constraints. We do our best to complete things to your schedule but emergencies happen here daily.

When you arrive, if you are picking up an animal that you have to pay for services for, we ask that you come into the front office to take care of the paperwork and payment prior to requesting the animal be brought up.

If you are picking up cats, do you have crates? If you do not, we have some, but we will have to charge for cardboard ones in the future. We charge only \$5. If we have plastic ones we can usually let you use those as those seem to bounce from shelter to shelter to BRATS and back but finding one that we have all the parts for is not as easy as it sounds. We will not let cats leave the building unless they are safely contained. If you need to make arrangements ahead of time, do not hesitate to call.

If you are picking up a dog, we always recommend a crate be used for transport. It is safer, cleaner, and animals loose in a car are a recipe for disaster when you do not know how they ride in a car. We do not normally have kennels for dogs available, so please be aware of this before coming.

If you are picking up one dog, please bring a leash and a collar and we can fit them and have the dog brought up to you. If you are picking up multiple animals, after you have made payment, you will be directed to our back gate where you can load your vehicle in the relative safety of our fenced in yard.

If you are a shelter, you can simply pull up to the back gate and call us from a cell phone and request that the gate be opened. This way they will open the gate and announce your arrival to our staff.

Also, whenever possible, please plan on coming between Tuesday and Saturday as those are the days the Shelter Supervisor is in the building. On Sundays and Mondays other staff members will be assigned to work with transfer partners and this is expedited by making an appointment in advance. Showing up without any prior notification really IS a big deal. We have one staff person scheduled for every job and when we have to take a person off assignment without scheduling that into the day it throws everything off here.

Transfer partners should always receive a medical report for each animal they are pulling. Please look at them before you leave or upon receipt to make sure you are aware of the services performed and any issues we discovered while the animal was in our care.

We strive to give transfer partners all the information we have when the animal leaves. Make sure you have all vaccine and spay/neuter certificates before you leave with the animal. You are our customers and we want you to be happy when you leave!

If you use BRATS for transfers, we are always happy to work with them and accommodate special requests when possible for transports.

Normal hours for transport pickups are Monday through Friday 10:00am – 6:00pm and weekend are 10:00am – 4:00pm.

If we need to make special arrangements for time outside of the preferred hours those need to be done in advance.

We normally will be unable to accommodate transfers on holidays when the facility is closed. Should you wish to pull large numbers of cats, however, we can make an exception!

We are not Finished Yet!

Remember, often times animals leaving MADACC will develop upper respiratory symptoms. We know this is news to no one. While great strides in the health of our animals has been reached here, we still have a ways to go.

We will treat all animals for any illness while in our care. Once they leave here, they need you to keep an eye on them. We recommend if an animal is not responding to Doxy midway through the course of antibiotics that you or your foster have the animal examined by a vet. Doxycycline is always our first strike for upper respiratory infection. However, if the animal's symptoms worsen the animal might have a more complicated situation where another bug is present. *Mycoplasma* spp. that is not treated can develop into pneumonia and your vet can save you hundreds of dollars by bringing an animal in that is not responding to the doxy for further evaluation. REMEMBER! There can be a viral component, too, and like in humans, antibiotics won't work and will allow the condition to worsen!

Like a broad spectrum de-wormer, doxy is only effective on certain bacterial menaces and sometimes a more specialized treatment is needed. Other stronger antibiotics can be introduced after a vet has made an assessment which usually will bring things under control. Please educate and follow up with your fosters about signs that an animal needs to be seen by a vet before things get worse.

Also remember that transport and introduction into a new environment can cause stress and can exacerbate an existing condition or make an animal susceptible to the resident bacterial flora in a new place! Germs are everywhere! Even a trip to the vet can expose an animal to diseases like parvo, the vet is where people bring sick animals so it is important to be cautious with an animal and exposures.

Most shelters have veterinarians on staff or better access to medical care and have staff that are more perceptive at seeing subtle signs that an animal needs intervention, one advantage over some rescues.

MADACC works very hard at maintaining the health of our animals. Should you ever pull an animal that develops pneumonia, we would ask you to have your vet contact our vet to discuss symptoms, diagnostics and treatment. We also ask that you follow up with us and advise us about animals that you pull from us who develop with things like ringworm, parvo, have neurological signs or other out of the ordinary concerns to protect our future population and assess our protocols.

Sometimes we can trace the source to MADACC; other times those exposures occur post transfer. We always want to give information to our transfer partners in the event that animals they have taken may have been exposed so that they can take necessary precautions.

While we cannot provide veterinary services post-transfer or funds to cover any unforeseen medical problem, please feel free to contact MADACC if you need resources for expensive medical treatment for MADACC animals that we were not aware of prior to transfer. We can often give you recommendations on affordable options for treatment. We know rescue and sheltering done properly will put you in the poor house, but we do want to help our transfer partners as much as possible and we do not want you to feel abandoned when you have a medical issue with one of the animals you pulled from us.

One last thing...

We love working with you, and we know you love pulling animals from here to give them a second chance. We ask that our transfer partners not say that they “rescued” an animal “from” MADACC. While that may have been how it felt to you once upon a time, we are working really hard to save as many animals as possible and change the way people think about MADACC. Please say that you have pulled an animal from MADACC, rescued an animal “with” MADACC.

We see those postings on Facebook all the time, and even though we know (or hope) you do not mean anything negative toward MADACC, it does sound that way. We will never get the public to see us differently if our closest partners use words like that.

If you think you have to rescue animals from us, please contact us to come in for a tour and to talk about how we can work better together for you not to feel like you have to save animals from us.

and finally....

THANK YOU FOR BEING A TRANSFER PARTNER!!!

We hope this manual has given you enough information to understand MADACC’s goals for our transfer program, and that this educational material will help us all work more efficiently together. We are a team of animal welfare organizations who are doing great things together!

MADACC takes in almost 13,000 animals each year. We could not save as many as we do without you. We need you to help us save a lot more.

We truly value our transfer partners and welcome you to contact us with questions, concerns or suggestions that can improve our transfer program.

Thank you again for taking our animals on the final part of their journey to a second chance. We are so grateful for all you do and look forward to working with you for many years to come.

Please use the following information to contact us with questions or concerns:

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