

*** § 429. Veterinary care.**

1. Prescription medications and treatments shall be administered by each animal shelter under the advisement of or in accordance with written protocols provided by a duly licensed veterinarian.
2. All drugs shall be documented and dispensed by each animal shelter in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
3. All incoming animals shall be assessed within two hours after intake by a trained animal shelter staff member to determine if any physical abnormalities exist that require immediate veterinary attention in accordance with the shelter's written protocol for emergency care, as required by section four hundred twenty-three of this article.
4. Each animal shelter shall have the ability to provide for veterinary assessment and humane care in a timely fashion through in-house facilities or at an off-site location.
5. Pursuant to the written protocol for emergency veterinary care required by section four hundred twenty-three of this article, each animal shelter shall provide appropriate and timely veterinary care for any animal that is in distress, experiencing pain, or showing signs of significant illness or injury.
6. Each animal shelter shall recognize and treat acute and chronic pain appropriately, as set forth in article twenty-six of this chapter. The legal status regarding the ownership of any animal shall not prevent treatment to relieve suffering.
7. Each animal shelter shall provide a complete physical examination of all animals in its custody or possession by trained shelter staff within twenty-four hours of intake to identify medical or behavioral conditions that require further evaluation and care. Animals shall specifically be examined for bite wounds; animals that have potentially been exposed to rabies shall be managed in accordance with applicable local and state laws. Each animal shelter shall comply with the rabies reporting requirements prescribed in 10 NYCRR 2.14.
8. Each animal shelter shall vaccinate each animal in its custody or possession with core vaccines as recommended by national standards and guidelines specific to animal shelters as established, endorsed or approved by the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP), American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), or the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV).
9. Each animal shelter shall provide all dogs, cats, and ferrets in its custody or possession with a rabies vaccination prior to release in accordance with local public health laws. Each animal shelter shall be in compliance at all times with section one hundred nine of this chapter and title four of article twenty-one of the public health law.

10. At a minimum, each animal shelter shall treat all animals in its custody or possession for hookworms and roundworms prior to release and/or placement in foster care.

11. When a physical or behavioral abnormality is identified at the time of intake or at any time during any animal's shelter stay, staff members shall follow written medical protocols required by section four hundred twenty-three of this article, to determine if and when any animal in its custody or possession needs to be examined by a duly licensed veterinarian. If the animal is in foster care, the foster care provider shall follow written medical protocols to determine whether the animal needs to be examined by a duly licensed veterinarian.

12. Any animal in the custody or possession of any animal shelter for more than thirty days shall be examined and weighed at least monthly by a trained staff member. Animals in foster care shall be examined and weighed at least once every six months by a trained staff member.

13. Any apparently healthy animal remaining within the custody or possession of any animal shelter shall be examined by a duly licensed veterinarian at least every six months, or more frequently if problems are identified.

14. Each animal shelter shall provide regular grooming to prevent discomfort or injury to each animal in its custody or possession. Matted, soiled, or otherwise unkempt animals shall be provided with timely grooming to alleviate discomfort and prevent injury within forty-eight hours of intake or identification of condition. Severe matting that prevents normal movement, an animal's ability to eat, drink, urinate, or defecate, or that compromises tissue health shall be treated as a medical emergency requiring immediate care.

15. (a) No animal shelter shall release any dog or cat for adoption to any person unless the dog or cat has been spayed or neutered, in accordance with section three hundred seventy-seven-a of this chapter.

(b) Prior to performing spay/neuter surgery at any animal shelter:

(i) All animals in such shelter's custody or possession shall receive an examination by a duly licensed veterinarian within twenty-four hours of surgery and anesthesia. Such examination may be performed under sedation or anesthesia if, due to the animal's behavior, an examination is not possible while awake.

(ii) Balanced anesthetic protocols that include sedation, the provision of pre- and post-operative analgesia, stress reduction, muscle relaxation and controlled, reversible loss of consciousness shall be utilized for all animals.

(iii) While surgery is being performed, the operating area shall be dedicated to surgery and contain the necessary equipment for anesthesia and patient monitoring.

(iv) Aseptic surgical technique shall be required, and separate sterile instruments shall be used for each patient. All instruments and equipment shall be maintained in proper working condition.

(v) A permanent tattoo shall be placed on the ventral abdomen of shelter-owned cats and dogs at the time of spay or neuter.

(vi) Each animal shelter shall provide adoptive owners instructions in both written and verbal forms for ten-day post-operative care of recently spayed or neutered animals.

(c) Written protocols required by section four hundred twenty-three of this chapter, shall be followed to handle related post-operative emergencies.

* NB Effective December 15, 2025