

# american PETS alive!

## 12 Lifesaving Ingredients

1. [Lifesaving Vision](#): Prioritization and communication of lifesaving in your organization and community.
2. [Immediately Make ALL Animals Available](#): Every animal is made available for foster, adoption or transfer immediately, in order to compete with the timeclock that is set on euthanasia for space.
3. [Targeted Safety Net Programs for At-Risk Populations](#): Lifesaving programs focussed on saving the lives of the most at-risk populations of pets.
4. [Population-Based Foster Program](#): Cultivate a large enough network of fosters to increase your capacity to meet your shelter needs for cage space.
5. [Proactive Adoption Policies](#): Adoption policies that remove adoption barriers, encourage adoption, match pets to people, and focus on increasing live release rates.
6. [All Outdoor Healthy Cats](#): All outdoor healthy cats are placed back into their communities, or other safe communities, after spay and neuter, whenever it is a safe and viable option.
7. [Intake Diversion and Triage](#): Identify solutions and resources outside of the shelter to keep animals in homes or habitats.
8. [Proactive Return to Owner Policies](#): Policies that prioritize reuniting people and pets before and after they enter the shelter.
9. [Large Scale Transfer/Transport to Partner Organizations](#): Partnerships with organizations that take animals into their custody until a live outcome is found.
10. [Disease Prevention](#): Identify, rectify and adequately oversee procedures where disease can spread.
11. [Appropriate Capacity for Large Adult Dog Population](#): Plan for live release of the large dog population in your community, including their placement and shelter wellness needs while in your care.
12. [Euthanasia List Scrutiny & Sharing](#): Prevent unnecessary deaths of animals by providing quality control, checks and balances and ensuring there is no duplication of efforts within the community.

## Overview

**Result:** This is the overall goal for each ingredient

**Program or Policy Examples:** A list of examples of programs or policies you can implement related to each ingredient. These examples are not meant to be comprehensive.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Examples:** A quantifiable measurement used to set goals and track organizational performance and success towards the results above.

## #1 Lifesaving Vision

**Definition:** Prioritization of lifesaving in your organization and community.

**Result:** Institutionalized No Kill policies at every level, including staff, volunteers, city leadership

### Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:

1. Implementation of a workplace culture agreement that focuses on lifesaving for all staff and volunteers  
*Workplace cultural agreement signed by 100% staff and volunteers, annually*
2. City mandated No Kill resolution  
*No Kill resolution passed by X date*
3. Transparent data available to the public that includes all animals in and out of the shelter  
*Monthly and annual reports posted on website*
4. Development of core organizational values by key stakeholders and reinforcement at staff/volunteer communication level  
*Documented vision statement from shelter leadership, example documents in place by X date*
5. Partnership agreements with other organizations that spells out lifesaving intent around decision making and support.

*All partner agreements updated to reflect commitment to all the animals within first 6 months of lifesaving vision commitment*

## **#2 Immediately Make ALL Animals Available (Immediate Make Ready)**

**Definition:** Every animal is made available for foster, adoption or transfer immediately, in order to compete with the timeclock that is set on euthanasia for space. An “every second matters” approach to finding placement for an animal.

**Result:** Maximized live outcomes, increase in animals transferred, adopted and in foster care.

### **Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:**

1. Automation of medical treatments so that animals are not waiting days for treatment or spay/neuter  
*Full intake process occurs at intake to prevent having to touch animals multiple times (this cannot make it harder to get intake vaccines done before intake)*  
*Daily spay/neuter # = daily intake #*
2. All kennels and animals are made viewable by public and photos of animals are posted on the website immediately, upon intake  
*100% of animals in shelter have photos on site the same day as intake*
3. Injured, sick animals in need of treatment are available for adoption or foster and rescue placement, even if follow-up care is necessary  
*Increase # of animals available and decrease # of unavailable animals in custody*  
*Decrease number of animals on hold every quarter*  
*“At Risk” list updated hourly and disseminated*
4. Adoption and foster programs for dogs and cats with ringworm  
*No animal is killed for ringworm*  
*Decrease # of animals on hold every quarter for ringworm*
5. Find foster programs that encourage and allow good samaritans to foster the animals they find and keep them from entering the shelter  
*Decrease # of over-the-counter intake*  
*Increase # of animals in foster*

6. Pre-adopt policies to allow unaltered pets to go home with future spay/neuter appointments  
*Decrease # of animals on hold every quarter*
7. Pre-adoption procedures for animals while they are on stray hold  
*Decrease in length of stay for stray animals*  
*# of animals adopted through pre-adoption*
8. Limitations around how long animals will be kept on hold for transfer and transport partners (should be 24 hours or less)  
*# of animals on hold in custody for longer than 24 hours*

### #3 Targeted Safety Net Programming for At-Risk Populations

**Definition:** Lifesaving programs focussed on saving the lives of the most at-risk populations of pets.

**Result:** Meeting the best practice save rate for the targeted population. A process in place to address the entirety of the high-needs groups of animals who were previously killed and dying.

**Program or Policy Examples:**

1. Neonatal kittens/puppies program
2. Barn cat placement options
3. FeLV program
4. Large dog behavior program
5. Parvo program
6. Ringworm program

**KPIs for all Program and Policy Examples:**

1. *Decrease in number/percentage of animals euthanized/died/killed of each category each month*
2. *Increase in live release rate*
3. *Documented protocols and training on how to handle populations by X date*

## #4 Population-Based Foster Programs

**Definition:** Cultivate a large network of fosters to increase your capacity to meet your shelter needs for cage space. Programs should appropriately reflect the number of animals in your care and provide for fast-as-possible turnaround time for adoption once in foster.

**Result:** A foster program that includes 3.5% of the annual dog population and 7% of the annual cat population at peak time and is balanced (increased/decreased) based on adequate dog capacity at the shelter and progressive adoptions (they work together.) In order for these numbers to work, they must be balanced with as fast as possible turnaround time to adopter (whether in foster or at shelter) AND adequate cage capacity at shelter for large dogs

### Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:

1. Diversified foster programs for cats and dogs to include medium and large adult dogs, cats and dogs experiencing shelter stress, injured, ill and geriatric animals, day trip and sleepover foster options
  - Foster programs that double-triple-quadruple in size*
  - # of repeat foster home*
  - LOS in foster by type of animal*
  - Increase in the amount of animals living in foster every month until hit the goal*
  - # of foster that completed adoptions*
2. Reducing barriers to foster
  - # of foster applications per month*
  - # of conversions from application to approved foster home*
  - Increase in foster homes*
3. Allow foster caregivers to market and adopt out their foster pets without returning to the shelter
  - # of animals adopted from foster*
4. Development of a communication plan and team philosophy to explain “foster homes= free cages=increase capacity to save lives”
  - # of facebook pleas, news releases and foster events*

*Decrease in length of stay*

## #5 Proactive Adoption Policies

**Definition:** Adoption policies that remove adoption barriers, encourage adoption, match pets to people, and focus on increasing live release rates.

**Result:** Meet best practice of adopting 40 to 75% of intake (depending on size of shelter- as long as adoption+transfer+SNR = 75% total) and moving animals out of the shelter as fast as they come in, to prevent death for space.

### Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:

1. Open, conversation-based adoption counseling  
*40-75% of intake through adoption/transfer/SNR must equal at least 75% combined of total outcomes*
2. Reduced fees and adoption specials, constant creative adoption marketing, etc.  
*# of adoption promotions per week*  
*# of news releases and marketing of promotions each week*
3. Extended adoption hours that ensure the public has accessibility (7 days a week)  
*Increase of adoptions per month*  
*Adoption inquiries per month*  
*Increase in foot traffic and tracking conversion of visitors to adopters*  
*decrease in wait times in adoption process*
4. Policies that allow animals to move out of the shelter or foster and into an adoptive homes without barriers, like home checks, landlord checks, background checks, home address verification, personal references, etc.  
*Open adoption policies fully implemented by X date*  
*Barriers removed by X date*

## #6 All Outdoor Healthy Cats

**Definition:** All outdoor healthy cats are placed back into their communities, or other safe communities, after spay and neuter, whenever it is a safe and viable option.

**TNR / Trap Neuter Return:** cats that are being cared for by colony caretaker brought to shelter or offsite spay/neuter clinic, spay/neutered and vaccinated and returned to the colony. TNR cats are often not taken into custody of organization because they generally have established caretakers or colonies.

**SNR / Shelter Neuter Return:** stray, unowned cats who are brought into the custody of the shelter, spay/neutered, vaccinated and returned to where they were found.

**Result:** No viable, clawed cats over 2 months of age are euthanized.

#### **Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:**

1. 48-hour or less turn around for placing cats back in the field  
*# of cats that were sheltered for more than 48 hours*
2. Housing feral cats separately from adoption cats while in the shelter to prevent disease  
*No reports of spread of illness from shelter to community cats brought into shelter*  
*Space determined for separate housing by X*
3. SNR program, Feral Freedom program  
*Number of SNR surgeries each day matches the number of cats eligible for release*  
*ALL healthy stray cats over 2 months leave the shelter alive (cats between 2-4 months do not have to be SNRed but they must leave alive OR be SNRed)*

## **#7 Intake Diversion and Triage**

**Definition:** Identify solutions and resources outside of the shelter to keep animals in homes or habitats.

**Result:** Shelter is reserved for animals who truly need shelter and intake meets best practice of 13-15% of human population size in that community per year.

#### **Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:**

1. Empower animal protection to provide resources to keep pet with family or in their communities and to return animals to their homes without bringing them into the shelter  
*# of interactions with community members in field without citation*

- #of feral cat calls left in community*
- # of dogs returned in field (at least 5%)*
- 2. Encourage people who find pets to foster, provide support for RTO
  - # of found to foster homes per month*
- 3. Pet Resource Center to connect pet owners with the resources they need in order to keep pets with their families
  - # of animals who stayed with their families per month*
  - # of calls completed*
- 4. Pass programs, managed intake and return to field programs
 

On a monthly basis measure:

  - # of successful alternative placements*
  - # of kitten calls left with their mothers and out of the shelter*

## #8 Proactive Return to Owner Policies

**Definition:** Policies that prioritize reuniting people and pets before and after they enter the shelter.

**Result:** Shelters reach the industry standard of 15-20% of all animal intake being return to owner, increase in the # of pets that Animal protection returns in field (5% is Austin's number)

### Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:

1. Reduced or waived reclaim fees
  - % of RTO (15-20% of total intake)*
2. Empower animal control officers to have the option to return animals to their homes after they've been in the shelter
  - Monthly increase in:*
  - % of RTO*
  - # of methods that are used to reach possible owners*
  - # of "drop offs" from shelter back to owners*



3. Empower animal protection to return found animals to their homes without bringing them into the shelter (return in the field)  
*Monthly increase in:*  
*% of RTO*  
*# of pets that Animal Protection Officers return in field*

## #9 Large Scale Transfer/Transport to Partner Organizations

**Definition:** Partnerships with organizations that take animals into their custody until a live outcome is found.

**Result:** Meet Best Practice of 10-30% of intake transferred out (depending on the size of organization and total live outcomes through adoption/transfer/SNR must equal 75%)

### Program or Policy Examples:

1. Make at-risk animals available to rescue partners  
*10-30% of intake transferred out (depending on the size of organization and live outcomes through adoption/transfer/SNR must equal 75%)*
2. Programs to support rescue partners (provide some medical care, spay/neuter, stipends for medical care, transport costs or vehicles, holding area for transport)  
*Increasing % of intake transferred*
3. Incentives for rescue partners to pull- \$ based on difficulty of animal for municipal shelter to place  
*Increase # of animals that rescue partners commit to pull each year (in advance)*
4. Implementation of programs that prevent disease spread while waiting on transport/transfer and in new shelter  
*Decrease in the spread of disease*  
*Decrease in partner complaints*
5. Policies that require fast pick up by partners so that already claimed animals are not in municipal cages  
*Decrease in # of days on rescue hold (should be less than 24 hours)*

## #10 Disease Prevention

**Definition:** Identify, rectify and adequately oversee procedures where disease can spread.

**Result:** Ending the practice of culling animals when suspect diseases outbreak and confidence in live outcome focused disease management. Procedures in place to control how animals physically move through the shelter from intake to outcome, addressing disease when it occurs.

### Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:

1. Intake diversion/straight to foster for the most vulnerable populations of pets, ie kittens, puppies, pregnant or nursing moms  
*# died in care*
2. Intake Vaccine protocols- all animals are vaccinated immediately before placement in kennel  
*# euthed for contagious illness*  
*# complaints from people who take your pets*  
*\$ spent on contagious illness drugs (doxycycline, azithromycin, nebulizing, chest x-rays, distemper prevention (Vit C or New Castle serum), parvo tests)*
3. Flow Implementation: all animals are vaccinated immediately before placement in kennel with 72-hour quarantine before joining the general population.  
*Implementation of flow by X date*
4. Implementation of flow charts that show where animals must go if sick, contagious, neonatal, healthy, returns, etc and their care upon intake to prevent noncontagious illness such as fading kitten.  
*Increase in written protocols, training and oversight of disease prevention.*

## #11 Appropriate capacity for large adult dog population

**Definition:** Plan for live release of the large dog population in your community,

including their placement and shelter wellness needs while in your care.

**Result:** No large adult dogs is killed for issues that are solvable.

**Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:**

1. Large, adult dog foster programs that house 35-40% percent of dogs  
*LOS in shelter for large, adult dogs*  
*Kennel capacity calculation above - recheck annually*
2. Procurement of additional large kennels to support dog intake  
*1 kennel per 25 dogs (all dogs incl puppies)*  
*1 kennel per 40 dogs if unrelated large breed dogs are cohoused)*  
*Decrease in large breed adult dog euthanasia for any reason monthly*
3. Enrichment and volunteer programs for dogs with longer length of stay  
*# of times each large breed longer stay dog gets out of kennel per day*  
*# of enrichment activities per LOS dog per day*
4. Adoption and advocacy programs that target large breed dogs that tend to stay longer  
*Adoption numbers of long stay dogs/# of onsite long stay dogs total*  
*Monthly decrease in LOS in shelter for large, adult dogs.*  
*Increase in # of adoptions of large breed adult dogs*

## #12 Euthanasia list scrutiny and sharing

**Definition:** Prevent unnecessary deaths of animals by providing quality control, checks and balances. Ensure there is no duplication of efforts within the community.

**Result:** No animal dies that truly doesn't need euthanasia, ie. for irremediable, terminal suffering or demonstrated, unmanageable, community safety issue.

**Program or Policy Examples with KPIs:**

1. Program to make actual euth list public, easily accessible and updated daily. Give the public adequate time and access to market and advocate for at-risk animals (24 hours)

*Increase in % of animals saved daily/weekly/yearly.*

*Track % of animals saved daily/weekly/yearly*

2. Policies and procedures to ensure the shelter director is aware of and approves of any and all deaths, including medical and behavioral (Pima and Austin at-risk dog protocol, medical protocol in Austin)

*# of pets dead with no shelter director permission*

*Weekly review and action plan for # of pets dead with no shelter director permission*

3. Protocol to review all deaths weekly and find gaps in lifesaving that could prevent similar future deaths

*# of pets dead weekly- reasons documented, plan for prevention, plan of action*

*Decrease in # of pets dead weekly*

4. Checks and balances to ensure every animal is treated as an individual, as a medical patient and that no single person has the power to euthanize without question

*Documentation of reasons , plan for prevention, plan of action*