

STERILIZATION POLICY

This protocol outlines the requirements for sterilization of shelter animals. Under Chapter 828 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, animal shelter agencies may not release a dog or cat for adoption unless the animal has been sterilized or the release is made to a new owner who signs an agreement to have the animal sterilized.

The City of Sugar Land requires a three business day stray hold for animals not microchipped, and five business day stray hold for animals with a microchip. Once the stray hold has been completed, surgery should be scheduled as soon as possible to spay or neuter the animal.

Additional factors can influence timing of surgery

- Health of the animal
- Age (must be 8 weeks)
- Size (2 lbs. for kittens and 3 lbs. for puppies)
- Availability of veterinarian performing surgery
- Nursing or in labor: Nursing litters must be weaned before the mother can be spayed. Animals currently in labor should have surgical procedures postponed until the litter has been weaned.
- Terminal spays, or “spay-abortion” is a commonly accepted and performed procedure in shelter medicine. If it is possible to have the animal spayed prior to labor, it should be done.

The goal should be to schedule sterilization surgery as soon as reasonably possible to allow the animal to become adoptable and minimize the length of stay.

Illness Or Old Age

Rarely, some animals may be deemed unfit to undergo surgical procedures for example because of illness or old age. The licensed veterinarian can deem an animal too old or unhealthy to be sterilized. This must be documented in records and agreed upon by the Animal Services Manager. Only then can the animal be adopted out intact.

Rescue

If a rescue is found for an animal and the party has agreed to accept this animal intact and accepted the responsibility to sterilize the animal while in their care, the animal may be transferred out intact. This agreement must be noted in the animal record in Chameleon and proof of sterilization be provided.