

SHAWANO COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Municipal Stray Dog & Cat Service Agreements

Effective January 1, 2027

Dear Town Chairpersons, Village Presidents, Mayors, Council Members, Board Members, Clerks, and Municipal Administrators:

On behalf of the **Board of Directors of the Shawano County Humane Society**, thank you for your municipality's longstanding partnership in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of stray dogs and cats throughout Shawano County. We value the relationship we have built with your community and appreciate the trust you have placed in our organization over the years.

As the cost of providing animal sheltering services continues to increase, the Board of Directors has carefully evaluated the long-term sustainability of providing stray animal services. Like many animal shelters throughout Wisconsin, SCHS has experienced significant increases in veterinary expenses, medications, food, staffing, utilities, facility maintenance, and daily operating costs. Today, SCHS operates at an average cost of approximately **\$57,000 per month**.

In **2025**, SCHS received **578 stray dogs and cats**, the overwhelming majority of which originated within Shawano County municipalities. Of those animals, only **141** were reclaimed by their owners during Wisconsin's required five-day stray hold period. The remaining **437 animals** became the responsibility of SCHS for ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, and placement.

Once ownership transfers to SCHS, the shelter assumes responsibility for all future expenses associated with those animals, including:

- Spay/neuter surgery
- Rabies vaccination
- Core vaccinations
- Microchipping
- Medical treatment
- Emergency veterinary care
- Housing and daily care
- Behavioral rehabilitation, when needed
- Adoption preparation and placement

Many stray animals arrive with untreated injuries, illnesses, parasites, malnutrition, dental disease, or other medical conditions requiring immediate veterinary care. As a result, stray animal services represent one of the most resource-intensive responsibilities of the shelter.

SCHS estimates the average cost of caring for an unclaimed stray animal to be approximately **\$800**, resulting in an estimated **\$349,600** in stray animal care expenses during 2025.

During that same year, SCHS received **\$17,335.41** through Wisconsin's statutory apportionment of dog license fees. SCHS does **not** receive county or state operating funding for municipal stray animal services. The remaining costs are funded almost entirely through the generosity of private donors, businesses, foundations, and community supporters.

Despite these financial challenges, SCHS helped **1,109 animals** find homes or be reunited with their owners during 2025. We remain committed to providing compassionate, professional, and responsible animal care while serving the communities of Shawano County.

Formal municipal agreements for stray animal services are standard practice throughout Wisconsin. These agreements create clear expectations, promote fiscal responsibility, and help ensure that humane animal care services remain available well into the future.

After careful consideration, the Board of Directors has determined that formal Municipal Stray Dog & Cat Service Agreements are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of these essential services. Accordingly, beginning January 1, 2027, SCHS will transition to providing municipal stray dog and cat services through written service agreements.

Enclosed you will find:

- **Municipal Agreement Options**
- **Municipal Contract**

The two agreement options were developed to provide flexibility while allowing municipalities to select the funding model that best fits their needs and budgeting preferences.

To ensure SCHS can continue providing sustainable stray animal services, municipalities that do not have an executed Municipal Stray Dog & Cat Service Agreement in place by January 1, 2027, will no longer be eligible to utilize SCHS for routine stray dog and cat intake services.

To assist municipalities in reviewing the proposal and answering questions, the Shawano County Humane Society will host two informational **Town Hall Meetings** at the shelter:

**Tuesday, September 3, 2026
6:00 p.m.**

**Thursday, September 10, 2026
6:00 p.m.**

The meetings will include an overview of the proposed agreements, the financial realities of providing stray animal services, and an opportunity for municipal representatives to ask questions before making their decisions.

To assist with planning for 2027 operations and municipal budgeting, we respectfully request that municipalities **notify SCHS of their selected agreement option and return a signed agreement no later than November 1, 2026.**

The Board of Directors believes these agreements will establish a sustainable partnership that allows municipalities and the Shawano County Humane Society to continue working together to provide safe, humane, and professional care for stray animals throughout Shawano County for many years to come.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for your continued partnership in serving the residents and animals of Shawano County. We look forward to continuing to work together to protect the health, safety, and welfare of stray animals throughout our communities.

Questions?

If you have questions before the Town Hall meetings, please contact:

Pam Nowak

Executive Director

Shawano County Humane Society

Phone: (715) 526-2606

Email: executivedirector@shawanocountyhumanesociety.org

Sincerely,

Dusty Martzke

President, Board of Directors

Shawano County Humane Society

Pam Nowak

Executive Director

Shawano County Humane Society

SHAWANO COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Proposed Municipal Stray Dog & Cat Service Agreement Options

Effective January 1, 2027

Municipalities may choose the agreement structure that best fits their community's needs and budgeting preferences.

OPTION A – Per Resident Municipal Agreement

Best for municipalities wanting predictable annual budgeting with one annual payment.

Annual Fee – \$2.50 per resident per year \$ 2,497.50 / yr

The annual fee will be calculated using the most recent official U.S. Census population for the municipality.

Includes

- Acceptance of eligible stray dogs and qualifying stray cats
- Five-day stray hold as required by Wisconsin law
- Owner reunification efforts
- Standard shelter housing and daily care during the stray hold
- Routine veterinary care during the stray hold

If an animal is not reclaimed after the required five-day stray hold, ownership may transfer to SCHS in accordance with Wisconsin law. At that time, SCHS assumes responsibility for all future expenses, including:

- Spay/neuter surgery
- Rabies vaccination
- Core vaccinations
- Microchipping
- Medical treatment
- Housing
- Rehabilitation
- Adoption preparation and placement

OPTION B – Per Animal Intake Agreement

Best for municipalities with low stray animal volume that prefer to pay only when services are used.

Fee Schedule

- \$500 per stray dog
- \$500 per stray cat
- \$500 per mother cat with litter
- \$500 per mother dog with litter

Municipalities will be invoiced quarterly based on actual intake.

If an animal is not reclaimed after the required five-day stray hold, ownership may transfer to SCHS in accordance with Wisconsin law. At that time, SCHS assumes responsibility for all future expenses, including:

- Spay/neuter surgery
- Rabies vaccination
- Core vaccinations
- Microchipping
- Medical treatment
- Housing
- Rehabilitation
- Adoption preparation and placement

Standard Terms

Covered Animals

SCHS accepts:

- Stray dogs
- Sick, injured, malnourished, or otherwise compromised stray cats
- Abandoned kittens
- Mother dogs with litters
- Mother cats with litters

Acceptance is subject to available shelter capacity and SCHS intake policies.

Extraordinary Situations

Large-scale intake situations—including hoarding cases, cruelty seizures, owner abandonment, incarceration, hospitalization, eviction, deceased owners, or other circumstances involving unusually high numbers of animals—**may require separate coordination, approval, and additional fees outside the standard agreement.**

SCHS reserves the right to evaluate available shelter capacity, staffing, medical resources, behavioral concerns, and animal welfare considerations before accepting large-scale intake requests.

Medical & Shelter Discretion

SCHS retains sole discretion regarding medical treatment, behavioral assessment, rescue transfer, adoption placement, and humane euthanasia decisions consistent with SCHS policies, veterinary guidance, Wisconsin law, and accepted animal welfare standards.

Effective Date

Beginning January 1, 2027, SCHS intends to provide stray dog and cat services only to municipalities with an active Municipal Stray Dog & Cat Service Agreement.

Reminder: Please include your selected agreement option as a line item in your 2027 municipal budget.

SCHS is committed to working collaboratively with each municipality to provide humane, professional, and fiscally responsible stray animal services while ensuring the highest standards of animal care and public service.

SHAWANO COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

MUNICIPAL STRAY DOG & CAT SERVICE AGREEMENT

Effective January 1, 2027

This Agreement is entered into between the **Shawano County Humane Society, Inc. ("SCHS")** and the Wittenberg ("**Municipality**") for the purpose of providing stray dog and cat sheltering services.

1. Term of Agreement

This Agreement shall become effective on **January 1, 2027**, and shall remain in effect until **December 31, 2027**, unless terminated in accordance with this Agreement. The Agreement shall automatically renew for successive one-year terms unless either party provides at least **90 days written notice** prior to the renewal date.

2. Selected Agreement Option

The Municipality selects the following option:

☐ **Option A – Per Resident Municipal Agreement**

- Annual Fee: **\$2.50 per resident**
- Population based on the most recent official U.S. Census.
- Annual Contract Amount: \$ _____

OR

☐ **Option B – Per Animal Intake Agreement**

- \$500 per stray dog
- \$500 per stray cat
- \$500 per mother dog with litter
- \$500 per mother cat with litter
- Billed quarterly based on actual intake.

3. Services Provided by SCHS

SCHS agrees to provide:

- Intake of eligible stray dogs and qualifying stray cats.
- Five-day stray hold in accordance with Wisconsin law.
- Daily housing, feeding, and routine care.

- Owner reunification efforts.
- Routine veterinary care during the stray hold.
- Record keeping and documentation.
- Adoption placement after ownership transfers to SCHS.

4. Ownership After Stray Hold

If an animal is not reclaimed during the required five-day stray hold, ownership may transfer to SCHS in accordance with Wisconsin law.

Once ownership transfers, SCHS assumes responsibility for all future costs, including but not limited to:

- Spay/neuter surgery
- Rabies vaccination
- Core vaccinations
- Microchipping
- Medical treatment
- Housing
- Rehabilitation
- Adoption preparation and placement

5. Animals Accepted

SCHS accepts:

- Stray dogs
- Sick, injured, or compromised stray **friendly** cats
- Abandoned kittens
- Mother dogs with litters
- Mother cats with litters

★ Will not accept feral cats regardless of contract

Acceptance is subject to available shelter capacity and SCHS intake policies.

6. Extraordinary Intake Situations

The following situations are **not included** in the standard agreement and may require separate approval and additional charges:

- Hoarding cases
- Cruelty seizures
- **Court-ordered holds** - Rabies holds
- Dangerous dogs requiring extraordinary care
- Large-scale intake situations
- Owner incarceration
- Owner hospitalization

- Evictions
- Deceased owners
- Any situation involving unusually large numbers of animals

SCHS reserves the right to evaluate available shelter capacity, staffing, medical resources, and animal welfare considerations before accepting these animals.

7. Medical Decisions

SCHS retains sole discretion regarding:

- Veterinary treatment
- Behavioral assessment
- Transfer to rescue organizations
- Adoption placement
- Humane euthanasia

All decisions shall be made in accordance with accepted veterinary practices, Wisconsin law, and SCHS policies.

8. Payment

Per Resident Agreement

Payment is due by **March 31** of each contract year unless otherwise agreed.

Per Animal Agreement

Invoices will be issued quarterly and are due within **30 days** of receipt.

9. Liability

The Municipality remains responsible for animals until they are delivered to SCHS.

SCHS assumes responsibility for accepted animals upon intake at the shelter.

SCHS maintains its own liability insurance for shelter operations.

10. Termination

Either party may terminate this Agreement by providing **90 days written notice**.

Termination shall not relieve either party of financial obligations incurred before the effective date of termination.

11. Entire Agreement

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. Any amendments must be made in writing and approved by both parties.

MUNICIPALITY

Municipality:

Representative:

Title:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SHAWANO COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Representative:

Signature: _____ Date: _____