

## Q&A Why Standards of Care Matter to Shelter Animals (1/27/11 webinar)

Q: Where is a copy of the standards that I can print out?

A: See [www.ASPCApro.org/asv](http://www.ASPCApro.org/asv) for a link to a printable PDF of the *Association of Shelter Veterinarian's Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*.

Q: Does anyone know of a good poster listing the Five Freedoms (that might be suitable for posting either in a staff area or public area of a shelter)?

A: See [www.ASPCApro.org/asv](http://www.ASPCApro.org/asv) for two versions of a printable, downloadable flyer about the Five Freedoms – one with the ASPCA Logo and another which is unbranded so you could add your own information.

Q: Will there eventually be national laws enforcing standards of care?

A: There is definitely hope that the standards document could serve as the basis for statute and law. There are many challenges to developing a national regulatory structure for shelters and this is well beyond the scope of what this document is currently meant to achieve.

Q: Is there an assessment tool available to see where your shelter is on the "Good Quality of Life - Life not Worth Living" scale?

A: The Guidelines document is probably the most thorough tool available at present, and is designed to be a self assessment tool for shelters. A shelter can read through section by section, noting the areas where the ideal or best practice recommendations are met as well as areas where improvements might be needed.

Q: What kind of metrics would you collect to measure an effective enrichment program?

A: Shelters can certainly track the behavioral health status of animals on entry and on exit just as one might the medical health status. A trend toward decline in behavioral health while in the shelter would indicate investigation and intervention to be necessary.

Q: Will there be a program for private practice veterinarians that also see shelter animals?

A: This is an important suggestion, and one that the Association of Shelter Veterinarians is mindful of. There are many audiences that the Guidelines apply to and to whom outreach will be directed. As a side note, these webinars are open to anyone interested.

Q: Was the standards of care manual ever presented to large shelter operations for practicality? I noticed there was on page 18 it recommends 6 minutes for feeding. That seems a little long?

A: This recommendation is based on the Humane Society of the United States and National Animal Control Association's current guidelines. Six minutes does sound like a long time until considering the entire process involved in properly feeding shelter animals. Feeding involves getting food together in the kitchen, measuring it out into individual dishes by age and other needs, attending to special diets, and distributing it. There is also a general consensus that feeding time is the best time to observe animals and note any who are not eating well. All of this can add up quickly.