

# Standard Shelter Pet Health Summary

*Presented by: CATalyst Council's Task Force\* on  
Standardization of Shelter Pet Health Records*



## Introduction

This is a model Shelter Pet Health Summary (SPHS) developed in collaboration with animal care agency and veterinary professionals. The need for a standard SPHS for collecting and sharing shelter pet health information has been recognized for many years. With the increasing use of electronic communication across animal care and control communities, veterinary practices, and pet owners who are increasingly choosing pet adoption, the need for efficient access to, and distribution of, a common set of data has increased.

Although use of the SPHS is optional, we designed it to promote uniformity of recording and sharing of shelter pet health information within and between agencies, transfer partners, receiving veterinarians, adopters and other stakeholders of pets that enter animal care and control communities. We consider the Shelter Pet Health Summary to be current best practice.

## Definitions

**Species:** Please designate cat or dog. As the vast majority of animals entering shelters are cats and dogs, this form was designed for these species. For other species of adopted pets, we recommend sharing a complete copy of the animal's health record.

**Breed, Color and Coat Pattern:** We recommend using the descriptors developed by Petfinder.

**Geographic Origin:** Designate if the animal originated locally, from out of the immediate area but within the state, out of state, or internationally. This information helps inform veterinarians and public health officials of potential disease or parasite exposure.

**Behavior Note/Handler Alert:** Highlight any behavior or handling concerns to help ensure the safety of the animal, other animals and handlers. Make details of assessments available by attachment to the SPHS as "additional information."

**Assessment:** Include all assessment results, including whether or not a diagnosis is tentative, presumptive or confirmed, and the date the assessment was completed.

**Tests Performed:** List all tests performed, including the name of the test, the date completed, results, and a notation if retesting is recommended.

**Medications Administered:** Include all records of medications administered for a period of up to the past 6 months, including medication name, dose prescribed, date begun, and date ended.

### To be noted:

- States in the US have differing requirements related to veterinary record keeping and this form may not meet all state requirements.
- To request a complete record or additional information (every shelter should include here information on whom to contact for more detailed information or questions).

## SPHS Task Force Participants

(All are members of **Society of Animal Welfare Administrators**):

- **Jodi Buckman**, CAWA; ASPCA. Facilitator
- **Kat Burns**, CPVM; Humane Society of Boulder Valley
- **Catherine McManus**, VMD, MPH, DACVPM; Dallas Animal Services
- **Julie Levy**, DVM, PhD, DACVIM; University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine
- **Apryl Steele**, DVM; Dumb Friends League
- **Stephanie Janeczko**, DVM, CAWA, DABVP (canine/feline; shelter medicine); ASPCA
- **Gary Weitzman**, DVM, MPH, CAWA; San Diego Humane Society
- **Jane Brunt**, DVM; CATalyst Council

### About Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA)

The Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA) is a non-profit individual membership organization of international professionals in animal welfare, care & control, dedicated to the growth and prestige of our industry. SAWA was founded in 1970 by six directors of humane organizations located throughout the United States, wanting to collaborate with other executives to share their professional concerns and ideas.

SAWA strives to advocate humane ideals through professional advancement of members. Animal welfare leaders network with peers, establish mentor relationships, share best practices, form successful collaborations, and advance the field. For more information, visit [www.sawanetwork.org](http://www.sawanetwork.org).

### About the ASPCA®

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is the first animal welfare organization in North America and serves as the nation's leading voice for animals. More than two million supporters strong, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of anti-cruelty, community outreach and animal health services. For more information, please visit [www.ASPCA.org](http://www.ASPCA.org), and be sure to follow the ASPCA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

### About CATalyst Council

Established in 2008, CATalyst Council is a 501 c (3) not-for-profit coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to transforming the health, welfare, and value of companion cats. CATalyst Council believes strong relationships between members of the animal welfare community to be one of the greatest assets to improving the lives of pets. The Council's initiative, *Catalyst Connection: Forever Homes, Forever Health*, includes educational and relationship resources, and a technology platform designed for multi-species use in local communities. These resources facilitate and measure shelter-veterinary relationships and post-adoption outcomes of pet health, and are considered an important path for cat health and welfare. More information is available at [www.catalystcouncil.org](http://www.catalystcouncil.org), or by contacting [connection@catalystcouncil.org](mailto:connection@catalystcouncil.org).

