



**POLICY TITLE: EUTHANASIA POLICY**

Approved by: Board of Directors

Date: September 24, 2013

Policy: The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) exists in order to rescue domesticated animals and wildlife from cruelty, abandonment, and neglect. Care and protection of these animals is our mission.

The Animal Rescue League of Boston achieves a high placement rate for the animals in its care because of our commitment to rehabilitation. Our shelters have dedicated veterinary and shelter personnel who evaluate animals for health conditions, stress, and other behavioral issues; we make every effort to provide medical and behavioral care to rehabilitate all animals.

Using positive training methods, we work on-site with animals with behavioral conditions that prevent immediate placement in an adoptive home. Occasionally, we place them in foster homes with trained and experienced “foster parents” to socialize them and teach them how to live with people. Such intervention improves both the quality of life for individual animals and the chance of finding adoptive homes for them.

Unfortunately, in our work, we confront animals suffering from a wide range of injuries, illnesses, and behavioral conditions. Due to the broad scope of our rescue and law enforcement programs, we bring in high numbers of at-risk, displaced and compromised animals.

While we make best efforts to treat animals, there will be times when humane euthanasia is the most compassionate and responsible course for the animal’s well-being and for public health and safety. When euthanasia is performed, it is done with respect and care by highly trained, compassionate staff.

We are proud that at the Animal Rescue League of Boston we look at each animal individually to assess its particular needs. Every year, our goal is to increase the number of animals that we are able to place in loving homes. We do not use euthanasia for population control of adoptable animals in the shelter, nor do we have a timeframe after which an animal is euthanized if it is not adopted.

When an animal is not able to be placed for adoption due to complex medical or behavior issues, we may transfer it to appropriate breed-specific rescue organizations or identify other options such as barn placement for cats that are unable to integrate into indoor life.

We believe that through careful evaluation of individual animals, we will make the decision that is in the best interest of each animal. This means that, unfortunately, there will be some for whom euthanasia is the most compassionate and responsible outcome.

The Animal Rescue League of Boston is committed to improving favorable outcomes for an increasing number of animals through the promotion of accessible spay/neuter services and adoptions, the use of foster homes, and the encouragement of responsible pet ownership.