



Office of County Commissioners
130 Jacob's Way, Suite 301, Clarkesville, GA 30523
706-839-0200 Fax: 706-839-0209
www.habershamga.com

NEWS RELEASE
Monday March 23, 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Restricted Access to Animal Shelter and Temporary Animal Control Operations

Effective immediately, access to the Animal Shelter building will be restricted to Animal Care and Control employees only. Adoptions are being done by appointment and a visit can be scheduled at <https://calendly.com/hcacc/30min>. After scheduling a visit, a staff member will call to discuss the pets and find the best fit to what the adopter is looking for. During their scheduled visit, adopters will remain outside of the building and a masked and gloved staff member will bring the pet outside the gate to meet the potential adopter.

A sign is posted on the gate to the Animal Shelter and HCACC office with instructions and information on how to contact the shelter. Residents must call 706-839-0195 to contact the Animal Shelter or HCACC. Residents should call 911 for EMERGENCIES ONLY.

In accordance with guidelines from the National Animal Control Association (NACA) regarding Animal Control Functions during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Habersham County Animal Care and Control (HCACC) will take extra measures to mitigate the short and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. NACA recommends the following guidelines which HCACC will temporarily adopt:

High priority/emergency calls: At this time, officers should continue to respond to emergency and high priority calls. High priority/emergency calls include law enforcement assistance, injured or sick stray animals, cruelty and neglect complaints, bite complaints, and dangerous and aggressive dog complaints.

Non-emergency calls and activities: Officers will suspend low priority/non-emergency activity. This includes non-aggressive stray animal pick-up, leash law and licensing complaints, barking and nuisance complaints, trapping and transport of community cats, and conflict mitigation scenarios.

Shelter intake reduction: HCACC will take active measures to reduce nonessential shelter intake. Measures taken will include returning pets in the field instead of impounding them, suspending non-emergency owner surrender intake, and encouraging owners who are ill to keep their pets at home whenever possible.

Personal protective equipment: Animal control officers will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) for cases requiring a response to a location with someone who is sick or has been exposed to COVID-19. Officers should make every effort to not enter the home of anyone who is known to have been exposed to the virus.