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CONTACT: Kay Hyman
(843) 224-0899
khyman@charlestonanimalsociety.org

SOUTH CAROLINA SHELTERS DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY *Shelters Across the State at Critical Capacity*

NORTH CHARLESTON, SC -- The lives of hundreds of animals in shelters across South Carolina are at stake, as homeless animals have been pouring into shelters for weeks. “Nearly every shelter in the state, including the two largest shelters, Greenville County Animal Care and Charleston Animal Society, are at the breaking point and need help now,” said No Kill South Carolina 2024 Chief Project Officer Abigail Appleton, CAWA, PMP. “These and other lifesaving organizations are critically overcapacity and there’s no sign of it letting up. We must move these animals into homes now, especially as we enter the peak of hurricane season,” said Appleton.

To solve this crisis in SC, shelters throughout the state have reduced or waived adoption fees, offered special promotions, and created special incentives to make adoptions more accessible and affordable to the public. Statewide animal welfare organizations, such as South Carolina Animal Care and Control Association (SCACCA), No Kill South Carolina and South Carolina Animal Legislative Coalition, are working together to encourage current pet owners and new ones to make room for one more. “We are in uncharted waters, in a perfect storm plus one. “We have the end of summer slowdown in adoptions, the peak of hurricane season, the lingering COVID pandemic, and staffing shortages” stated Shelly Simmons, President of SCACCA. “We need South Carolina to respond to our plea for help.”

To help with this emergency, every animal lover is encouraged to visit their local shelter(s) now to adopt or foster animals at-risk. “This is a community crisis, not only an animal shelter crisis. Everyone has a role to play. For instance, citizens can help lost pets find their way back home instead of taking them to shelters, where they are far less likely to find their way back home,” stated Denise Wilkinson, Chair of the SC Animal Legislative Coalition (SCALC).

At the same time, businesses, veterinarians, rescue groups, governments, shelters and media can help. “We don’t declare a ‘State of Emergency’ unless the situation is dire and we know that if we work together, thousands of lives can be saved,” Appleton said.

“Many shelters are waiving their adoption fees or significantly reducing them in an effort to get more people to take home a shelter pet. We’re asking all shelters to implement managed moratoriums and accept only animals in danger or who present a danger to others, until we get out of this State of Emergency,” said Appleton.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Media** can promote this plea for help and encourage citizens and others to reach out to shelters
- **Citizens** can adopt or foster animals or sponsor adoption fees
- **Businesses** can become adoption ambassadors for animals
- **Veterinarians** can help shelters through the backlog of animals with spay/neuter and take in an animal to adopt to their clients
- **Rescue groups** can take in additional at-high risk animals, even though it may not be the type of breed they normally rescue
- **Government shelters** and animal control agencies can implement managed moratoriums

About No Kill South Carolina 2024

No Kill South Carolina is a statewide initiative of Charleston Animal Society and is made possible thanks to the generosity of Petco Love.

About SCACCA

SCACCA’s mission is to promote the professionalism of the animal care and control industry through training and networking opportunities for its members.

About South Carolina Animal Legislative Coalition (SCALC)

SCALC is a collaboration of leading SC nonprofit animal protection organizations to advance statewide legislation to save the lives of animals.