Fast Track Planning

Fast tracking has benefits for all shelter animals and helps maximize life saving capacity. Minimizing the average length of stay reduces the daily in-shelter population allowing more resources (eg. time, housing space, and attention) to be available for each animal present. In shelters that control or limit intake, more "fast track" animals may be admitted and adopted as "fast track" animals leave more quickly.

Consider two largely separate groups for each species when adoption flow through plans are made for cats and dogs, those on the "adoption fast track" and those on the "slow track". This will permit a primary focus on quick turn around time and infectious disease control for fast track animals, who are generally younger and more susceptible, and a focus on welfare and enrichment for those in the slow track.

In reality, if the balance of available animals is right, both groups can move through the system quickly. When fast tracking begins, the length of stay for other animals often stays the same or get shorter not slower.By identifying that an animal is at risk for being "slow track", extra measures can be taken early on to promote and highlight the animal. However, if slow track animals do tend to stay longer, housing can be planned that accommodates a longer length of stay while preserving adoptable behavior and maintaining good welfare.

Who is in the Fast Track may be different for each organization. Based on the experience of each organization, animals who are most likely to be rapidly adopted (e.g. kittens, puppies, and friendly small to medium sized dogs) should be assigned to the fast track. Animals that may be slower to place due to behavior, age, or physical issues may be assigned directly to the slow track. Animals that do not get adopted out of the fast track within 2-3 weeks should be reassigned to the slow track.

"Fast track" and "slow track" should be considered as two separate populations. Adoption driven (AD) capacity (mydocuments/aspca_los_capacity_calculator.pdf) can be estimated

for both by setting targets for length of stay and using historical numbers of adoptions in each category. Slow track housing should be designed to accommodate longer stays with good welfare.

Daily evaluation of all available animals helps determine which animals would be the best choice for the available housing units. In some cases, intake may be limited for slow track or fast track animals until space becomes available. When slow track housing units are full, additional animals should not be assigned to the slow track until animals have been adopted or otherwise dispositioned. This will prevent the adoption area from overfilling with "slow track" animals, leaving no space for "fast track" animals that would otherwise be quickly adopted.

"Fast Track" Recommendations

Implement a "Fast Track" for **a single** group of animals as a first step.

Fast tracking puppies and kittens has the added benefit of protecting them for disease exposure.

Reserve some of the cages in adoptable sections of the shelter for "Fast Track" animals. (You may end up with about 25-50%)

Fast track all apparently healthy animals in your first"Fast Track" category directly from intake to adoption.

Ideally, fast track numbers are estimated by evaluating historical monthly intake numbers for fast track animals.

Monitor the average length of stay for animals in the fast track.

If LOS to adoption for the "fast track" is prolonged beyond the target LOS (no longer than 10 -14 days), it is likely too many animals have been made available at one time.

Determine the historical number of fast track animal adoptions vs. other adoptions (if possible) adoptions in order to calculate AD capacity for each track. Otherwise, simply estimate a percentage, watch what happens and adjust numbers if needed.

Implement practices to minimize length of stay for slow track animals as well.

Once the "fast track" has been established and runs smoothly for the first group, consider implementing a "fast track" for a second group as a next step.

Monitor adoption numbers and length of stay to adoption by group over time.

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