

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<p>So, what exactly is the Florida Keys SPCA?</p>	<p>Actually, there are two parts to our organization. First, we are an independent** center for animal welfare and education. We have two campuses in Key West and Marathon.</p> <p>Secondly, we are contracted by Monroe County for animal control services from Key West to Mile Marker 70.</p> <p>Our Mission Statement is: “The Florida Keys SPCA is dedicated to promoting the humane treatment of all animals through compassionate care, adoption, education, population control and humane law enforcement.”</p> <p><i>**We are not affiliated with the ASPCA, nor do we receive funding from them. Neither do we receive federal or state funding.</i></p>
<p>Where does the money come from?</p>	<p>Under our contract with Monroe County, we are paid for animal control services. For the additional community services that we provide, we rely on donations and grants to fund these services, roughly \$300,000 per year.</p>
<p>How many animals does the Florida Keys SPCA serve each year?</p>	<p>The Florida Keys SPCA serves approximately 3,000 animals per year through its adoption, animal control, clinic, behavior counseling, lost & found, and FAITH programs.</p>
<p>What are “animal control services”?</p>	<p>As contractors for Monroe County, we are responsible for housing animals available for adoption, investigating animal abuse and neglect, picking up animals at large.</p> <p>We are charged with responding to requests for help with animals including wild animals, dangerous animals, and animals in distress.</p> <p>The terms of our contract with Monroe County stipulate that we must be an “Open Admission” shelter, meaning that we help and take in all species of animals, no matter what their condition or temperament.</p>

What is an “Open Admission” Shelter”?

The Florida Keys SPCA turns no animal away! No matter what the species, no matter the age or medical condition, EVERY animal brought to us is welcomed. That’s what an open admission shelter is. Aside from dogs and cats, we have welcomed turtles, snakes, birds, lizards, rabbits, hamsters, rats, guinea pigs and other small animals. Larger animals include goats and pigs.

So, what happens to these “unusual” animals?

We work with rescue groups and animal sanctuaries throughout the Florida Keys as well as on the mainland. Some of our “unusual” animals have found safe havens at the Monroe County Sheriff’s farm.

But what about so-called “nuisance” animals like iguanas and bufo toads and raccoons?

This comes under our animal control mandate under our contract with Monroe County.

Iguanas: per Fish & Wildlife regulations, we are not allowed to release iguanas that are brought to us. We are required to humanely euthanize them.

Bufo toads: We are also legally required to humanely euthanize these animals as they can poison dogs.

Raccoons: We relocate these animals within our jurisdiction, or work with Raccoon Rescue to find a suitable place for relocation.

What about chickens and birds?

We work closely with the Key West Wildlife Center, and the Marathon Wild Bird Center which has programs in place for relocating chickens and wild birds.

Is the Florida Keys SPCA a “no-kill” shelter?

There is no certifying body that bestows a “no-kill” label, and there is no universally held definition of it even among the various strands of the animal welfare community. That said, the most common understanding of a no-kill shelter isn’t that it *never* kills, though that’s clearly what it implies. Instead, it’s a shelter with a 90 percent “live release rate” — meaning that nine of every 10 animals admitted leaves alive.

	<p>While we don't label ourselves “no kill,” we embrace the positive philosophies of the movement by working tirelessly to save all healthy and treatable animals in our care. No healthy or friendly animals, or animals that can be saved through reasonable medical intervention, have lost their lives. The Florida Keys SPCA is always growing and evolving our processes to save more animals each year and more can be saved when the community comes together for the animals.</p> <p>Bear in mind that as an open admission shelter we turn no animal away, regardless of age or medical condition! Once we admit an animal into our care, we treat that animal no differently than we would expect a loving pet owner to do. We do not take the life of any animal in our care for reasons of length of stay or our shelter capacity.</p> <p>If our veterinarian determines that an animal in our care requires veterinary care, we provide that care so as to return that animal to a healthy or a manageable state. We euthanize an animal only if our veterinarian determines that the animal is too sick or injured to recover to a life of quality and is suffering, or if our animal behavior specialist determines that an animal is so behaviorally aggressive as to present a material danger to human safety.</p> <p>(It should be noted that as a community service, Florida Keys SPCA offers end of life services for owned pets in our communities, although these numbers are not included in the our statistics.)</p>
<p>Are there different kinds of “no-kill” shelters?</p>	<p>Yes. Some “no-kill” shelters achieve no-kill status by only accepting what they consider adoptable animals. This definition of “adoptable” may exclude seniors, pets with treatable illnesses or animals with special needs.</p> <p>The Florida Keys SPCA is an “open admission” (see above) shelter. No animal is turned away. Ever. Regardless of species, age or medical condition.</p>

	<p>Additionally, each adoptable animal is kept as long as it takes to find its forever home. We have housed a cat for five years and it is not unusual for a dog to be with us for a year.</p>
<p>What is the difference between euthanasia and killing?</p>	<p>We firmly believe these two words have distinctly different meanings.</p> <p>Animal welfare organization Best Friends defines euthanasia purely as an act of mercy reserved for situations when an animal is irremediably suffering and a veterinarian has determined the animal has no chance of recovering an acceptable quality of life, or the animal’s behavior doesn’t allow him/her to be a candidate for rehabilitation. This is the policy of the Florida Keys SPCA .</p> <p>Conversely, if a healthy or otherwise treatable animal has his or her life ended simply to make space for other animals, or for some other reason (e.g., old age, special needs), we consider that animal to have been killed. This is NOT the policy of the Florida Keys SPCA. As a shelter, we do not believe in euthanasia as a means of population control or for space. We utilize euthanasia for its true meaning: for suffering animals that no longer have a quality of life or for animals that we cannot safely place in a home.</p>
<p>Please explain “live release rate.”</p>	<p>Most animal welfare organizations, especially those like ours that are open admission shelters (see above) believe that the “live release rate” statistic (cats and dogs only) more truly represents the real picture.</p> <p>Under the “no-kill” definition, a difference of 1% can equate to inaccurate labeling. For example, if XYZ Shelter saves 90% of their animal population, they are considered a “no kill” shelter, but would be labeled a “kill shelter” at 89%. Furthermore, when comparing shelters, intake numbers can make a huge difference in what the percent actually means. For example, a shelter that takes in 100 animals each year and saves 90% (90 animals) has different resources and needs than a shelter that takes in 11,000 animals a year and</p>

	clinic to the public. Every animal adopted from the FKSPCA has been sterilized and we hold regular clinics for owned pets.
What about pit bulls?	Because these dogs have become so popular, some people are overbreeding them. Others neglect to have their dogs spayed or neutered, resulting in unwanted litters. These two factors have led to an influx of pit-bull-terrier-like dogs in shelters, including the Florida Keys SPCA. To address the situation, the Florida Keys SPCA offers free spay/neuter services for pit-bulls and pit-bull mixes.