

Putnam Emergency Animal Response Team

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Putnam County has identified the need to develop a countywide plan to respond to the needs of animals, whether such animals are owned, stray or domestic, during any event or disaster. An incident involving a natural or man-made disaster will exert a tremendous amount of effort to coordinate the assistance for the citizens of Putnam County. It must be considered that many of the residents who will be affected by the disaster own pets or other animals that must be cared for. Although plans are in place to evacuate and shelter people, this plan will outline the coordination of resources to shelter and care for pets and other animals during a disaster. It is assumed that residents will not shelter or evacuate if adequate facilities or plans are not initiated for their animals. This plan will outline a comprehensive approach to address the pre-disaster public education, response, short term and long term recovery process, and activities that residents can take to keep their animals safe during a disaster. If possible, all animals will be reunited with their owner. If they cannot be returned to their owners, they will be handled in accordance with established animal control regulations and procedures. This plan will also address the need to protect livestock and domesticated animals, public health, public food supply and the environment.

1.1 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this plan is to develop the capacity to protect domesticated animal resources, the public health, the public food supply, the environment, and to ensure the humane care and treatment of animals in the event of a event or emergency, including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts, fire, explosion, building collapse, commercial transportation accidents, chemical spills, nuclear power plant accidents, or other situations that many cause animal suffering. This plan will:

- Provide a means to care and minimize animal suffering
- Outline steps to ensure agency preparedness
- Define a specific chain of command for operations during disasters
- Identify how the plan will be implemented
- Define how each agency will contribute to the overall mission of this plan
- Identify a county based County Animal Response Team (PEART) using current available resources
- Identify a strategy to train new response team members who volunteer from within our community
- Address issues surrounding worker protection and response

- Identify the need to develop a public education program to assist pet and farm owners on the need to develop individual disaster contingencies for their animals and families.

1.2 SCOPE

A disaster is a natural or man-made event of severity and magnitude that normally results in the deaths, injuries and property damage that cannot be managed through daily routine. This plan is intended for use by local government and its public and private partners to take immediate action in providing a means of care and control to minimize animal suffering in the event of any event or disaster.

This action will be aimed at all animals that may need help whether such animals are owned, stray, or domestic.

Putnam County officials or an authorized representative may place into effect established plans and procedures, and direct both the emergency and recovery aspects of the incident. The official/representative may deviate from these procedures when, in their judgment, immediate or direct action is necessary to protect public safety.

By developing operational procedures to care for these animals prior to such an event, this plan may reduce the health and safety risk, as well as support the resources of crucial response agencies.

1.3 MISSION

The mission of the Putnam Emergency Animal Response Team is to coordinate animal response and care agencies within Putnam County, to respond and ensure immediate and accessible services to pet and farm owners within Putnam County in the event of a disaster or other emergency.

2.0 AFFECTED AGENCIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 PRIMARY AGENCIES

Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services

The primary role of PCBES is Consequence Management. The Bureau of Emergency Services will be responsible for the coordination of Local and Private Resources during disaster operations. PCBES will work under its respective chain of command. The commissioner or his designee will be responsible for the activation of the PEART Team and other resources to provide rescue, recovery services or establishment of shelters and animal care facilities. Local emergency

services will respond to the emergency situation in accordance with the mission of that agency. The bureau will also notify the Putnam Chapter of the American Red Cross for the need to activate humane shelters.

Putnam County Health Department

Provide guidance and support to ensure the safety of all citizens. Provide protection of Public Health

American Red Cross

The local chapter of the American Red Cross will operate under its respective chain of command with the local Emergency Services Director in command of Red Cross Operations. Red Cross will respond to the emergency situation in accordance with the mission of the agency, in support of the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services. The specific duties would include, but are not limited to:

- Recruit and train Red Cross Disaster volunteers whom will be responsible for providing Red Cross disaster services to the County
- Assign and supervise shelter personnel
- Activate, open, operate and demobilize public shelters
- Assign and communicate with a Red Cross liaison at the County Emergency Operations Center
- Provide updates and situation reports on shelter/mass care center status through the Red Cross liaison to the EOP
- Assist in maintaining an inventory of shelters or facilities that will receive pets
- Work cooperatively with animal disaster team to assist with the placement of pets and animals
- Assist and help coordinate additional supplies for animal shelter locations.
- of Donation and Staging Centers

County Soil and Water Conservation (if applicable)

Provide support for mortality disposal.

Local Dog Control Officers

Domestic pets loose and/or in need of assistance due to the emergency or the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of local dog control officers. Local dog Control Officers will respond to the emergency situation in accordance with mission of their local municipality, following the guidance outlined by the State of New York and guidance listed in the plan. The specific duties and responsibility during an incident would include providing personnel and equipment as required to protect a/or injured domestic animals and the

coordination of measures to minimize damage and danger caused by stray, injured or trapped animals.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cornell Cooperative Extension will assist in situations in accordance with the Mission of the agency, following the guidance outlined in this plan. The specific duties and responsibilities during an incident may include but are not limited to the following:

- Assist with the recruitment of volunteers
- Help identify local volunteer groups to assist the PEART
- Assist with the need for additional resources and technical expertise
- Assist with the identification and staffing

Putnam County Humane Society

The Putnam County Humane Society will assist in the response to the emergency situation in accordance with the mission of the agency, following the guidance outlined in this plan. The specific duties and responsibilities during an incident may include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide technical assistance with animal issues during disasters and other emergencies
- Provide assistance and work with County Emergency Services and Red Cross in the coordination of animal shelters during disasters or other emergencies
- Assist with the coordination of support agencies to manage animal protection during an emergency shelter situation
- Assist with the coordination of personnel, equipment and shelter as required to care for domestic animals

2.2 SUPPORT AGENCIES

NYS ESART

Provide volunteers, assistance, information, supplies and expertise in caring for animals

NYS Department of Agriculture

The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Representatives will respond to the emergency situation in accordance with the mission of their agency, following the guidance outlined by the State of New York. The specific duties and responsibilities during an incident would include but are not limited to the following:

- Assist the EOC in Disaster Management regarding animal issues
- Serve as a liaison with the PEART as needed
- Serve as a liaison to SEMO and County Public Health Agency

2.3 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Livestock Association (Local/Regional)

Provide personnel, resources, and equipment as needed/requested

Equine Veterinary Service

Provide veterinary care to equine

Private Farms

Provide shelter and supplies to care for displaced animals

Private Kennels, Stables, etc.

Provide personnel, equipment and shelter as required to shelter and care for pets from evacuated citizens and in cases when established animal shelters are filled or destroyed

Private Veterinary Clinics

Provide veterinary care to animals

NYS DEC

Provide personnel and equipment as required to protect wildlife. Provide personnel and equipment as needed to protect and care for animals

County or Regional Veterinary Medical Association

Provide personnel to aid in the medical treatment of animals. Activate regional Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT).

2.4 TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Team Leader

- Help lead general membership meetings along with leadership meetings
- Keeps in constant contact with PCBES
- Make sure plans are updated as necessary

Deputy Team Leader

- All the same requirements as a Team Leader with the understanding that they may need to step in at any time

Veterinarians/Licensed Veterinary Technicians

- Care and aid the sick/injured animals
- Distribute vaccinations to limit zoonotic diseases
- Help control stray and abandoned animals
- LVT's will also make sure the appropriate feeding, walking and caring for the animal is taken
- Provide medical care/examinations to all animals
- Try to prevent food-borne illness
- Vets and LVT's must make sure they have a current license on file at all times

Animal Control Officers

- Capture/Control Animals thought to be a threat to the community
- Assist in guidance regarding Feed/exercise/clean areas where animals are kept
- Have at least one year of experience as an Animal Control Officer
- Take the lead in identifying safety procedures that must be taken while handling animals

3.0 PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an upcoming emergency, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their care and/or control. Natural, technological or manmade disasters could affect the well being of domesticated or non-domesticated animals.

The County plans for both large and small scale emergency situations, and plans to carry out response and recovery operations utilizing local resources. Outside animal care and rescue assistance would likely be available in most large-scale emergencies affecting the County.

Animal protection planning should ensure the proper care and recovery of animals impacted during an emergency. These plans may include measures to identify housing and sheltering for animals, communicate information to the public and develop proper animal release forms and procedures to ensure return of animals to their rightful owner(s).

Provision should be made for calls from the public being made during a disaster offering assistance. A method for managing this should be included, as some offers will fill gaps not yet addressed by the CART.

Public information statements will be issued through the various media outlets. This information will include locations where domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock and wild animals) may be accepted during emergency situations. A large-scale emergency may warrant immediate response from state and local personnel, agencies and organizations. However,

depending on the nature of the emergency, some situations may require activation of additional specialized agencies through mutual aid.

Through effective animal protection planning and organization, disaster relief efforts will be more expedient.

3.1 SHELTER OPERATIONS

Area 1: Registrar

- Observe cross-contamination techniques
- Greet each individual as they enter the facility
- Label the identification bands with owner name and name of pet. Place identification bands on each animal.
- Direct the owner to cage the animal. Assist as needed and direct the owner to return to the Reception Center for personal monitoring.

Area 2: Animal Examinations

- Exams are required for animals who arrived; by a veterinarian.
- Shots for animals that arrive without records.
- Decontamination

Area 3: Housing/Sheltering Area

- Cages should be set up for animals to be kept in
- All cages should be labeled with information on the animal in it
- Cage forms should be checked twice daily for care and cleanliness
- Area should be broken up by type of animal

Area 4: Exercise Area

- Designated area OUTDOORS (if possible) to be walked daily
- Designated area for to exercise & socialization with owners

4.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATION

4.1 GENERAL

The Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services has the legal authority for the implementation and coordination of disaster planning and preparedness within the jurisdictional boundary of Putnam County. The primary objective for the development of an Animal Emergency Plan is to identify pre-designated resources to meet the needs of pet and livestock owners within the county and to educate the public on how they can keep their animals safe from a disaster or other emergency.

The primary and support agencies will manage and coordinate local animal protection activities. These agencies will use established animal protection and support organizations, processes and procedures. Responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs in the event of a disaster or emergency lies primarily with appropriate county officials in cooperation with local incident managers.

Requests for animal protection assistance and resources such as food, medicine, shelter material, specialized personnel and additional veterinary medical professionals, will be transmitted through the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services, 911 Communication Center which will arrange for local, State and Federal assistance as may be needed.

Animal protection operations will be managed under the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Public health concerns will be managed in accordance with appropriate County plans and procedures.

Animals Included Under the Plan

The sheltering and protection of companion domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock and Exotics) are the responsibility of their owners.

Domestic and non-domestic animals that are lost, stray, incapable of being cared for by their owners, or a danger to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of PEART. These animals will be sheltered, fed and if possible returned to their owners. If the animals cannot be returned to their owners, they will be handled in accordance with established animal control procedures. For the purposes of this plan animal foster care shall be for the period of Five (5) days; unless extended by order.

Wild animals should be left to their own survival instincts. Wild animals out of their natural habitats that are a danger to either themselves or the public will be the responsibility of the NYS DEC in cooperation with local animal control officials and will be returned to their natural habitats, if possible.

4.2 NOTIFICATION

This plan will be activated in the event of a disaster or emergency causing a significant need for animal protection. The appropriate County official will determine when the plan will be activated and notify the appropriate primary, support, and mutual aid agencies. A call down notification system will be maintained by the leadership of PEART.

4.3 COMMUNICATION

Communications between the primary and support agencies will occur primarily through telephone, facsimile and cellular telephone transmission. Amateur radio will be used as a backup system if all other communication is impossible due to the nature of the emergency situation, consistent with standard communication.

4.4 PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (P.I.O.)

A spokesperson from Putnam County will be responsible for the coordination of all media activities and press releases associated with the protection of animals. The P.I.O's responsibilities include:

Providing information to the public BEFORE disasters occur on responsibilities of owners of animals

Notifying the public of appropriate shelters to drop lost/stray animals, animals they cannot care for, or animals that need immediate medical attention.

Delivering instructions to the public to prepare their pets for an impending emergency.

Delivering relevant information concerning livestock.

4.5 TRAINING

Required training for every member of the team includes:

- IS 100-ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS 100-Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)
- IS 700-National Incident Management Systems (NIMS), An Introduction
- Pet First Aid
- UAlbany Emergency Animal Sheltering
- UAlbany County Animal Response Team
- Any other trainings offered by Team Leader

Addition required training for Team/Deputy Team Leader

- IS-10: Animals in Disasters, Module A: Awareness and Preparedness
- IS-11: Animals in Disasters, Module B: Community Planning
- IS-111: Livestock in Disasters

4.6 RESPONSE

Potential hazards, such as flash flooding, ice storms, hazardous materials incidents or radiological emergencies may require the evacuation of selected areas. The owners of pet or livestock, when notified of an emergency, will take all reasonable steps to shelter and care for their animals.

TO BE FURTHER DEVELOPED:

Companion Animals

Companion animals in need of assistance due to an emergency or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of PEART in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

Evacuated Domestic Animals

Domestic pets from evacuated citizens, who have made no other arrangements, may/will be sheltered at PEART facilities; if necessary, at the owner's expense.

Upon the activation of evacuation shelters for citizens, a representative from the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services will contact PEART and request to initiate the opening of an animal shelter.

Each of the citizens' evacuation shelters will have an available caretaker volunteer on the premises to evaluate the pets of evacuated citizens. Pets with significant injuries or illnesses will be transported to an animal shelter where medical attention is available.

Stray/Lost Domestic Animals

All stray/lost domestic animals recovered by local Animal Control will be sheltered by traditional/local means. Any pets whose owners cannot care for their animals will also be sheltered at these locations. Private boarding kennels and veterinary clinics can serve as overflow shelters and will be requested to open by the PEART Team Leader.

Recovery of Domestic Animals

County Animal Control will support efforts to identify owners of lost/stray animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals in accordance to their established procedures. Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Livestock

Search and Rescue:

Livestock loose or in need of assistance due to an emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the PEART in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance if safe to do so.

Evacuated Livestock:

If the need arises, PEART will open a livestock evacuation shelter. Livestock will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner can request assistance. A shelter or non-occupied livestock facility is hard to find and maintain for an emergency only basis. The county has no livestock show facility. Evacuated livestock will need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals.

Due to the size of most livestock and the inability to transport large numbers of farm animals, owners are expected to develop evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for livestock. In the event of an emergency situation, PEART will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in sheltering.

Recovery of Livestock:

County Animal Control will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures. Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Equine

Search and Rescue:

Equine loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the Equine Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

Evacuated Equine:

Equine from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private facilities, at the owner's expense. Fill in Name will maintain and update a list of participating shelters and veterinary clinics. See Appendix.

A representative of the Equine Committee will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated livestock to either the shelter facility or veterinary hospital and ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered Equine with their rightful owners.

Transportation is to be provided by individuals who do local transport of equine. The equine owner is responsible to reimburse transport individual. Other private horse owners will also be available to assist with transport.

Equine Evacuation Shelter

If the need arises, the CART may open an Equine shelter. Equine will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner may request assistance from the Livestock Committee. A shelter or non-occupied equine facility is difficult to find and maintain for an emergency only basis. Putnam County has no equine show facility. Evacuated equine would need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals. This list of people will be kept by the Equine Committee but may change according to available space. Feed, hay, bedding, etc. can be obtained through resources list in Appendix. Additional supplies, including corrals and panels may be requested from SART. Equine Committee volunteers, SART personnel and private individuals will be trained in equine management and will help maintain facilities.

Stray/Lost Equine

Due to the size of most equine and the inability to transport large numbers of equine, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for equine. In the event of an emergency situation, the Equine Committee will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering operation. See Appendix. The owner will be responsible to reimburse the private farms for all expenses incurred during sheltering of equine. If necessary SART may be contacted for boarding assistance of equine at possible locations such as: veterinary hospitals or other sites with the capacity to house horses. (Farm Show Complex, racetracks, etc.)

Recovery of Equine

County Animal Control will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures.

Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed into adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance to the established animal control procedures.

Wildlife

Wild animals out of their natural habitat that are endangering either themselves or the human population will be handled in accordance NYS DEC protocol.

Recovery/Stranded Wildlife:

If possible, wild animals outside of their natural habitat will be transported back to their natural habitat. If the responsible agency is unable to transport the animal back to its natural habitat due to the nature of the emergency or to injuries that the animal may have sustained, the situation will be handled by the NYS DEC.

Incapacitation of Shelters

In the event that established shelters are destroyed or incapable of functioning due to the nature of the emergency situation, assistance from private boarding kennels, veterinarian hospitals, stables, adjacent facilities, may be requested to open as boarding and/or medical facilities. In rare cases, during large-scale emergencies, animals may be moved outside the County for care and protection.

Shelter Staff and Supplies

Staff:

Animal shelters will be staffed with available personnel from PEART and assisted by personnel from support and mutual aid agencies.

Supplies:

Each animal shelter will identify resources for potable water, food, medical, cleaning and shelter supplies in advance of an emergency situation. Prearranged domestic and non-domestic animal food companies, medical suppliers, water suppliers, and cleaning product suppliers will be contacted and requested to begin the shipment of supplies in the event of an emergency (or upon request). If the need arises, resource agencies (e.g. kennel clubs) may be requested to donate cages and other various shelter supplies.

Medical Assistance

Staff:

Volunteers from PEART along with support and mutual aid agencies will assist in providing the medical care in these shelters.

Bites/Disease Control:

The Putnam County Health Department will make vaccinations available to rescue and shelter personnel and will ensure that treatment of bites and injuries are available to affected persons. Outbreaks of rabies and other infectious diseases are a serious threat during an emergency situation. Consultations with local public health officials are planned, and will be coordinated by the Putnam County Department of Health.

4.7 RECOVERY

The recovery process begins when disaster operations slowdown, residents can return home and day-to-day life and activities begin to return to normal. Part of the recovery effort is to provide continued assistance to help disaster victims return to normal life. During the recovery process the following should occur:

- County Emergency Services will provide the public with information on how and where to relocate with their animals

- Red Cross will demobilize shelter and Mass Care sites and continue to provide assistance to disaster victims through other operations such as Damage Assessment and Emergency Assistance to Families
- Each agency will consolidate and report disaster-related expenses to the finance section at the EOC.

Disposal of Animal Carcasses

Disposal of deceased animals will be coordinated by the Department of Public Health and the Department of Highways and Facilities. They will arrange for the disposal of deceased animals and animals succumbed in emergency situations.

Priority on how to handle deceased animals shall be determined as needed following a disaster.

5.0 REVIEW AND UPDATE

On an annual basis, this procedure will be reviewed and updated as appropriate by appropriate local government officials and the partner organization. This procedure will be periodically tested by an appropriate exercise method.