

Frequently Asked Questions: WHS Shelter Operations and COVID-19



When will Willamette Humane Society be open?

While we understand that Marion and Polk Counties are slowly reopening for business, we are taking our own plans to reopen one paw at a time. Our team is hard at work developing and implementing the safety precautions we'll need to ensure every shelter visitor can visit our animals safely. While we cannot provide a specific timeline or date at this time, we're excited to welcome you back to WHS soon. Please keep an eye on our website for the latest information.

What are the shelter's current hours of operation?

Currently, we are serving the public seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. by appointment only. If you are interested in adopting a pet, please see our step-by-step instructions below. Or, if you need to surrender an animal or bring in a stray, please schedule an appointment with our Customer Service Team by calling and leaving a message at 503-585-5900 (select option #1 or dial extension 300) or by emailing info@whs4pets.org.

We want to adopt a pet! What steps should we take?

Thank you for considering adoption! We are excited to help you find the perfect four-legged addition to your family. As we adjust shelter operations to address COVID-19, our adoption process looks a little different right now. **Here's how to start the adoption process as we operate by appointments:**

1. Research the pets we have available. Read through their profiles and biographies on our [adoptable cats page](#) and [adoptable dogs page](#). Consider if that pet is the right fit for your lifestyle and family.
2. Once you find a pet you're interested in, click the red button on his or her profile to access and complete our adoption questionnaire.
3. Next, our Adoptions Team will give you a call to discuss the pet's specific needs and whether the pet will be a good fit for your lifestyle. You can expect to hear back from us within 24-72 hours of your questionnaire submission. You are welcome to contact us at adoptions@whs4pets.org with questions.
4. Then, we'll schedule you an appointment to meet your potential furry friend

How will my adoption or intake appointment work with social distancing?

Plan to arrive five minutes before your scheduled appointment. A member of our Adoptions or Intake Teams, depending on your appointment type, will meet you at the front door and walk you through your shelter visit. To ensure we follow recommended health guidelines, we request you limit your party to no more than two people. Visitors will have access to hand washing stations and sanitizer, while shelter staff utilize face masks, frequent hand washing, and sanitation protocols.

I need to surrender my animal. How do I make an appointment?

We're accepting animals by appointment only, and we anticipate a full shelter. WHS is asking owners who are not facing an immediate crisis to hold their pets for up to four weeks and to surrender at a later date. For any pet owners who need to surrender immediately due to an emergency, please schedule an appointment with our Customer Service Team by calling 503-585-5900 or email info@whs4pets.org. Our mission is to keep as many pets with their families as possible. To accomplish this, we are happy to work with families on a case-by-case basis to provide support and resources.

I'm signed up for a training class at the shelter. What do I do?

We're excited to begin offering in-person behavior classes and one-on-one sessions in early June. We'll continue offering off-site and virtual training options as well for those clients who prefer to do so. Contact our team at behavior@whs4pets.org with any questions. You can always take advantage of our public helpline for your animal behavior questions. Just call our certified trainers at 503-585-5900 (ext. 318). We're happy to help and will respond as soon as possible.

I found a stray animal. Can I bring it into the shelter?

Please call our Customer Service Team and leave a message at 503-585-5900 (select option #1 or dial extension 300) or email us at info@whs4pets.org. We are addressing stray animals on a case-by-case basis as the situation develops. Thank you for your understanding!

What else is WHS doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

To ensure our shelter remains a safe and healthy environment for all visitors, WHS already follows comprehensive cleaning and sanitation guidelines every day. We are taking additional precautions to prevent the spread of any illness, including utilizing masks, gloves and strict sanitary guidelines. We've implemented a comprehensive staffing schedule to ensure our shelter is adequately staffed for animal care and our public services but minimizes overlap between teams and asks as many employees as possible to work from home.

What if I need to make a spay or neuter appointment?

At this time, the WHS Spay and Neuter Clinic remains closed to publicly-owned animals. Please check back for ongoing updates.

Can animals get COVID-19 and spread it to humans?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Organization for Animal Health, there is no evidence that companion animals can spread the virus. There is also no evidence of people catching the virus from companion animals. It's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals.

How can I make sure that my family and pets are prepared for an emergency?

Rising concerns around COVID-19 are an essential reminder about emergency preparedness. We encourage you to use this opportunity to review your household's

emergency plan and ensure your four-legged family members are prepared as well. These are good steps to follow:

- Ensure your pet's microchip information is current, and he or she is wearing a legible form of identification.
- Stock up on food and supplies in case you must stay home for an extended period.
- Keep your veterinary's contact information readily available, as well as copies of your pet's medical and vaccine records.
- Identify a trusted friend, family member, or neighbor who can provide temporary pet care in case of an emergency.

How can I help?

Thank you for thinking of shelter animals during this time! You can always support WHS by [making a donation](#) online or by mail to 4246 Turner Rd SE, Salem, OR 97317. You can also help by purchasing essential supplies through our [Amazon Wish List](#). Your donations help us meet ever-changing needs to ensure that we can keep pets safe and healthy in the face of uncertainty.

Does the shelter need volunteers right now?

We appreciate your interest in lending a paw. Right now, the shelter is only allowing essential staff onsite. We are so thankful to the hundreds of volunteers who donate thousands of hours each year to helping WHS operate smoothly, serving pets and people throughout our community. For questions about future opportunities, please email volunteer@whs4pets.org.

What foster needs will there be?

We're thankful for our community's ongoing interest in fostering! At this time, we invite anyone interested to contact us with questions via email at foster@whs4pets.org.

I want to bring a donation to the shelter. Is that okay?

Thank you for thinking of the pets! At this time, we're requesting that people do not drop off donations at the shelter. Following the governor's recommendations, we'd like to encourage you to stay home and stay healthy. And with limited staffing, we're not always available to bring in donations that are left outside.

But don't worry, there are other ways to help! Right now, [a monetary donation](#) is the best way to support the shelter. This equips us to meet the ever-changing needs of our community, and we often get discounted prices on supplies, so your dollar can go further. You can also visit our [Amazon Wish List](#) to purchase one of our top-needed items to be shipped directly to the shelter.

However, the WHS Thrift Store is accepting limited donations by appointment only. Please contact our store directly to learn more: (503) 362-6892.

Can I still shop at the WHS Thrift Store?

Yes! We're excited to welcome shoppers back to the downtown WHS Thrift Store with temporary hours from Thursday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We appreciate your

patience and cooperation as our limited staff follow cleaning and safety precautions to keep our shoppers and employees safe. The WHS Thrift Store is accepting limited donations by appointment. Please contact our store directly to learn more: (503) 362-6892.

Updated Friday, May 29 at 5 p.m.