

The Restigouche County SPCA (RCSPCA) was founded as a direct result of a community response to the issue of animal abandonment. Animals were, and still are, left in boxes, tied to trees in the woods and dumped in remote areas when no longer wanted. The shelter, which covers a huge geographic territory, attempts to help as many beating hearts as possible as our winters are long, cold and challenging. Restigouche County is an economically depressed, rural area, and the shelter relies solely on the benevolence of the area, its many volunteers and their creativity to fund raise. We never want to have to close our doors due to lack of funding, nor do we refuse those arriving with an animal in need. Hence our policies, listed below.

Animals, on intake, are evaluated for adoptability and health issues. Animals that are in dire condition, exhibit the signs of communicable disease, or are unapproachable, due to aggression are humanely euthanized. This is done, on a case by case basis, and must be signed off by two, certified attendants, and is not a decision that is taken lightly. The procedure is performed by personnel certified under the NBVMA euthanasia training program, of which there is always one on site, and on call, so that no animal has to suffer needlessly, waiting in pain, or distress, to be put out of its misery.

Animals that are deemed able to be kept at the shelter are treated for parasites, both internal and external, vaccinated and kept in a quarantine area for 10 days. During that period, they are evaluated for any personality quirks and preferences so that this information may be shared with prospective owners. Nursing mothers and juvenile animals are housed in "nurseries" - one for dogs, one for cats.

Animals then proceed to "adoption". The length of stay is variable. We give animals exposure on Facebook and aggressively feature them so as to sensitize the Public as to what is available to be adopted. An occasional animal will be transferred to another facility to increase its chances of being adopted. As long as the animals are adapting to being at the shelter, they are featured and promoted for adoption. The vast majority of cats are adopted within 3 months. If an animal is not adjusting, is exhibiting signs of "cage-itis" and can no longer be safely housed, posing a danger for staff, or exhibiting distress, it is humanely euthanized.

We strive to adopt as many animals as possible, and internal policy is to make the stay as positive as possible. Cat cages have portals and shelves, with toys to stimulate and a blanket to hide under. They are handled and groomed daily. Dogs have separate quarantine and adoption yards with agility equipment for stimulation. Staff are instructed to interact with the animals so as to reduce stress and provide much needed human contact and stimulation.

Every life counts, and we are animal-welfare oriented. Our goal is to re-home as many animals as possible, while leaving as few as possible to face the elements. Those that we can help, we give our hearts and soul to. Those that we can't, due to illness, behavior issues or inability to adapt, thus creating distress, are humanely euthanized, this by trained, compassionate staff, who are certified and must maintain this designation.