



Asilomar Accord Definitions

The Animal Welfare League of Arlington uses definitions for animal shelter outcome statistics developed by animal welfare organization leaders called the Asilomar Accords. The definitions are intended to provide a standard way to categorize the dogs and cats that constitute the animal population of the sheltering organizations each year. The definitions are strictly for statistical gathering purposes only and are not meant to define the outcome for each animal. The League categorized conditions typically seen in shelter animals within the four Asilomar definitions with the assistance of community stakeholders. After conducting a community survey with the assistance of Arlington county government, the League convened a panel including veterinarians, animal behaviorists, animal welfare advocates, rescue group representatives, volunteers, and shelter staff to determine the conditions that should be included in each definition. The panel met three times and categorized conditions under the Asilomar definitions as follows:

Asilomar Definition: Healthy

The term “healthy” means and includes all dogs and cats eight weeks of age or older that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and have manifested no sign of disease, injury, a congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the health of the animal or that is likely to adversely affect the animal’s health in the future.

Asilomar Definition: Treatable/Rehabilitatable

The term “rehabilitatable” means and includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy,” but who are likely to become “healthy” if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community.

Conditions:

Medical

Kennel cough

Fatty tumors

Cystitis

Pneumonia

Sarcoptic mange

Minor or severe wound broken bone(s)

Heartworm levels 1 and 2

Demodectic mange

Cherry eye

Conjunctivitis

Malnourishment

Ear infection, non surgical

Intestinal parasites

Ear mites

Coccidiosis

Upper respiratory infection

Pyometra

Ringworm

Asilomar Definition: Treatable/Manageable

The term “manageable” means and includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy,” and who are not likely to become “healthy,” regardless of the care provided; but who would likely maintain a satisfactory quality of life, if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care, including long-term care, equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring guardians in the community; provided, however, that the term “manageable” does not include any dog or cat who is determined to pose a significant risk to human health or safety or to the health or safety of other animals.

Conditions:

Medical

Chronic ear infection (non surgical)

Mild hip dysplasia

Mild allergies

Behavioral

Mildly shy dogs/cats with no concern regarding aggression

Dogs/cats with minor handling problems

Dogs with mild separation anxiety

Resource guarders that do not pose a significant risk to the safety of humans or other animals

Mild dog to dog aggressive behavior

Mild cat to cat aggressive behavior

Asilomar Definition: Unhealthy and Untreatable

The term “unhealthy and untreatable” means and includes all dogs and cats who, at or subsequent to the time they are taken into possession,

1. have a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that poses a health or safety risk or otherwise makes the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable” even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community; or

2. are suffering from a disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the animal’s health or is likely to adversely affect the animal’s health in the future, and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable” even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community; or

3. are under the age of eight weeks and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable,” even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community.

Categorizing a condition as unhealthy/untreatable does not mean that the animal would be euthanized. For example, unweaned infants without mother are classified as unhealthy/untreatable, but if there is a foster home that can provide bottle feeding the animal

may thrive. Likewise cancer is classified as unhealthy/untreatable, but if the cancer is localized and the animal is healthy enough to withstand surgery it is not euthanized.

Conditions:

Medical

Bladder stones

Heart murmurs

Heartworm level 3

Moderate/severe Hip dysplasia

Cancer

FIV +/-exposed

Urethral block in cats

Any infectious disease not responding to treatment

FIP suspect or exposed

FeLV+ or exposed

Panleukopenia

Diabetes

Seizures

Chronic demodex mange not responding to treatment

Rabies exposure

Kidney or liver failure

Distemper

Parvo

Cushings disease

Spinal cord injury

Hyperthyroidism

Congestive heart failure

Unweaned infants without nursing mother

Hepatic lipidosis

Severe allergies

Behavioral

Habitual house soiling not responsive to behavior modification

Serious anxiety including self-destructive behavior

Serious stranger/barrier issues

Shy cats/dogs with concern regarding aggression

History of serious injury to people or other companion animals

High likelihood of causing serious injury to a person

Feral cats/dogs