

THE LIFESAVING MODEL - WASHOE COUNTY REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES

In 2007, Nevada Humane Society launched an ambitious No Kill Initiative to make Washoe County Nevada one of the safest places in the U.S. for homeless animals.

Despite a per capita intake rate higher than many communities nationwide, they succeeded.

By the year's end, 92% of all dogs and 78% of all cats found loving, new homes, were reclaimed by their responsible caretakers or, in the case of feral cats, were adopted as barn cats or returned to their habitats.

2007 Dog Statistics *

Total Intake	8,036
Total Saved	7,366 - 92%
Total Killed	670 - 8%
Change in Kill Rate	2006 vs. 2007 - 51%
Change in Adoption Rate	2006 vs. 2007 + 53%

2007 Cat Statistics *

Total Intake	7,819
Total Saved	6,087 - 78%
Total Killed	1,752 - 22%
Change in Kill Rate	2006 vs. 2007 - 52%
Change in Adoption Rate	2006 vs. 2007 + 84%

* Figures are combined data for Washoe County Regional Animal Services and Nevada Humane Society.

Key Components of the Washoe County Model

1. Establish priorities and align actions with them to save animals.

- Create lifesaving solutions for animals.
- Involve the community in our work.
- Deliver quality customer service.
- Provide excellent care to the animals.

2. Get “the right people on the bus”.

People are the heart and soul of any organization, so we set out to find a team of managers and staff members who are committed to the organization’s mission and goals, share our lifesaving values, and have a strong work ethic. We also sought out people who had proven skills and a track record of success.

3. Invest time and assets in lifesaving.

4. Inspire and involve the community.

- Make a public declaration.
- Define your goal and report progress by publishing statistics - intake, adoptions, kill rate - monthly. Compare current year to prior year.
- Develop a volunteer program or revitalize the one you have.
- Reach out to the media.
- Ask the community for feedback.

5. Increase adoptions.

- Open the shelter for pet adoptions when people are available.

- Bring animals to the people.
- Streamline the adoption process.
- Make it easy to identify staff and volunteers.
- Make the shelter a welcoming place.

6. Spay and neuter animals.

- Fix mom and dad.
- Focus efforts for greatest impact.
- Get the job done - make the process less bureaucratic.
- Concentrate efforts on the immediate, do not waste time and energy on spay and neuter legislation.

7. Actively work to keep animals out of shelters.

- Establish an animal help desk.

8. Provide a safety net for feral cats.

- Promote Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) and provide free spay / neuter for feral cats.
- Council people who surrender feral cats.
- Create a barn cat adoption program.

9. Partner with other groups.

10. Stay flexible.

- Find opportunities in challenges.