



**TORONTO
HUMANE
SOCIETY**

like no
other.

COMMUNITY BASED SHELTERING SERVICES

Program Summary

Executive Summary

The Community Based sheltering program complements the shelter by minimizing length of stay in an institutional environment and provides animals with medical and behavioural care and rehabilitation from the comfort of a home. Community-supported sheltering models are focused on finding the best possible outcome for pets by inviting members of the community to participate to support the lifesaving process.

Within the Community Sheltering program, we aim to ensure each animal receives the care they deserve, while also maximising our life-saving capacity through excellent care coordination and population management. The Community Sheltering program enables our organization to expand our capacity beyond the confines of our onsite housing. Through engaging our community, we tap into the limitless ability to save and improve more lives.

The Community-Based Sheltering program has three main placement tracks of focus. The length and intent of these tracks vary, but our goal remains the same: to provide care while working towards continuous improvement.

Our **Adoption-Track** animals remain in care for as long as needed to prepare for adoption, with a goal to minimize length of stay as best we are able. This includes animals undergoing medical care or training and behavioural support, as well as those who are pregnant, nursing or immature. We see hundreds of these animals each year with many cases requiring ongoing rehabilitation, medication, veterinary treatment or surgeries. Our TLC cases, those that require behavioral support and rehabilitation are given a chance to show their true personality and learn skills and to prepare them for their adoptive home. Community placement gives our TLC animals the opportunity to excel in a stress-free home environment. Our Nursery Care fosters take in our most vulnerable population, providing round-the-clock care which can include frequent feedings, cleaning and socialization work.

Our **Palliative Care program** offers respite care for animals who are experiencing a good quality of life, but whose medical issues prevent them from being readily adopted. Our foster caregivers will nurture these animals until their quality of life deteriorates.

Our **Urgent Care program** offers up to 1 year of foster care for pets whose caregiver is experiencing crisis. Through all foster tracks, our animals receive unique care provision including attention from educated direct care providers, out-of-cage space and ongoing access to support and medical care.

This program hinges on us successfully managing and supporting the volunteers who care for community-sheltered animals. The Strategic Plan also charges us with engaging the hearts and minds of volunteers. Through a relationship centred on collaboration and partnership, we work with our community of foster parents to deliver excellent care to foster animals. We offer an inclusive, transparent and supportive program to our foster volunteers with the hope of retaining an engaged force who is eager to help us care for animals. Foster volunteers are our partners and stakeholders and we continuously work to discover avenues and strategies to support our mutual goal of improving the lives of animals.



Program Objectives

Objective One: To Provide Exceptional Care to our Animals

Our goal in the Community Sheltering Program is to ensure that each animal who enters our program experiences reduced stress and improved quality of life from the comfort of home. Through our community sheltering program, we have a dedicated team who works to ensure each individual's unique treatment and pathway plan are followed. Animals require foster placements for a number of reasons and ailments – it is our job to ensure each individual gets the care they deserve regardless of their history, medical requirements or behaviour. Care that ensures best in class husbandry, veterinary care access, professional training and behaviour supports and the capacity to access all the 5 freedoms.

Objective Two: To Provide an Exceptional Foster Caregiver Experience

We simply cannot run a Community-Based Shelter system without the dedicated support from our foster volunteers. We strive to remain acutely aware of this fact, and seek ways to offer education, support and guidance to our foster community. We emphasize the importance of being partnered with our foster parents so that we can collectively improve the lives of animals. We know an engaged force of volunteers will exponentially increase our reach and impact on animals. We continue to offer and create engagement and appreciation activities for our foster community.

The Community Sheltering program offers an outlet from the shelter, wherein our organization can care for more animals at any given time. We recognize that key indicators such as length of stay can affect our capacity, which is why our program regularly considers how we can best manage the flow of animals into and out of our care. We strive to be consistently readily able to place animals into foster care and have space for those who need it most. Our community-based services allow us to deliver our high-levels of care at a lower cost per animal enabling Toronto Humane Society to impact a greater number of lives than would be possible through the facility alone.

Objective Three: To Deepen Organizational Capacity for Life-Saving

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Program Leadership

Division Manager, Community-Based Sheltering and Animal Transport – Larisa Nagelberg

Larisa has worked at Toronto Humane Society for the past 8 years in a number of different capacities. She started in Animal Care, and since has worked in Adoptions, Foster, and Transport. She has a Project Management certificate from the University of Toronto and is a certified Project Management Professional. She also holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts (Hon. BA) degree focused on Major in Environmental Geography & Human Geography from University of Toronto. In her current role, Larisa oversees the operations and care of over 1000 animals each year.

Larisa's key strengths are within the areas of program development, partnership-building, and volunteer coordination. She has scaled several different aspects of the shelter's operations, including the growth of the foster department from 2-12 people since 2020. In her role as a Rescue Transport Coordinator, Larisa managed relationships with 50+ partner organizations such as shelters and rescue groups, successfully creating 21 new partnerships in one year.

With a passion for the Human-Animal Bond, Larisa began developing the Urgent Care program in 2019 offering temporary animal housing to individuals experiencing crisis.

