

Euthanasia Policy

Homer J's Senior Dog Sanctuary provides a lifetime commitment to all animals that come into our care. While we do not euthanize any animal for time or space, unfortunately, there are times when the only humane option for our dear friends is euthanasia.

The issue of euthanasia will arise when one of our Resident Ambassadors is suffering (physically or mentally) and the resources to stop or ease the suffering are unavailable, and when our advice is sought by others who may see us as having an expertise on the issue.

The decision to euthanize is never easy. We will always live within the guidance of the Five Freedoms. The Five Freedoms are:

1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor.
2. Freedom from Discomfort by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. Freedom to Express Normal Behavior by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
5. Freedom from Fear and Distress by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

How we make the decision to euthanize

Homer J's Senior Dog Sanctuary only considers euthanasia as an option for residents that are suffering mentally, emotionally or physically and have a poor prognosis; are experience unremitting pain or mental suffering that cannot be reasonably alleviated; or pose danger to other animals, themselves or people. Each resident is evaluated as an individual and assessed under the circumstances as a whole. Euthanasia is not an option we take lightly and it will be done only when it we have determined that is the only humane option for the animal.

Once the Executive Director or other person in charge of resident care makes the determination that euthanasia may be the right choice, they will convene a meeting of the board of directors and present their evidence, which may be both in favor and against euthanasia. The board of directors will evaluate the information, consult other resources if necessary and make a determination by a simple majority vote.

All euthanasia must be conducted humanely by a veterinarian or certified euthanasia technician who administers an injection of sodium pentobarbital (a tranquilizer is not required, but may be appropriate), and the Resident must be made comfortable and **accompanied by a staff or volunteer representative throughout the procedure.**

Approved: 8/14/13