

Betsy Bailey Nelson Coalition Agreement

1. The mission of those involved in creating the *Betsy Bailey Nelson Coalition Agreement* is to work together to save the lives of all healthy and treatable companion animals.
2. We recognize that all stakeholders in the animal welfare community have a passion for and are dedicated to the mutual goal of saving animals' lives.
3. We acknowledge that the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals is the sad responsibility of some animal welfare organizations that neither desired nor sought this task. We believe that the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals is a community-wide problem requiring community based solutions. We also recognize that animal welfare organizations can be leaders in bringing about a change in social and other factors that result in the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals, including the compounding problems of some pet owners'/guardians' failure to spay and neuter; properly socialize and train; be tolerant of; provide veterinary care to; or take responsibility for companion animals.
4. We, as animal welfare stakeholders, agree to foster a mutual respect for one another. When discussing differences of policy and opinion, either publicly or within and among our own agencies, we agree to refrain from denigrating or speaking ill of one another. We will also encourage those other individuals and organizations in our sphere of influence to do the same.
5. We encourage all communities to embrace the vision and spirit of this agreement, while acknowledging that differences exist between various communities and geographic regions of the county.
6. We encourage the creation of local "community coalitions" consisting of a variety of organizations (e.g., governmental animal control agencies, nonprofit shelters, grassroots foster care providers, feral cat groups, funders and veterinary associations) for the purpose of saving the lives of healthy and treatable animals. We are committed to the belief that no one organization or type of organization can achieve this goal alone, that we need one another, and that the only true solution is to work together. We need to find common ground, put aside our differences and work collaboratively to reach the ultimate goal of ending the euthanasia of healthy and treatable companion animals.
7. While we understand that other types of programs and efforts (including adoption, spay and neuter programs, education, cruelty investigations, enforcement of animal control laws and regulations, behavior and training assistance and feral cat management) play a critical role in impacting euthanasia figures and agree to investigate ways to support and expand upon these critical services.

8. In order to achieve harmony and forward progress, we encourage each community coalition to discuss language and terminology which has been historically viewed as hurtful or divisive by some animal welfare stakeholders (whether intentional or inadvertent), identify “problem” language, and reach a consensus to modify or phase out language and terminology accordingly.

9. We believe in the importance of transparency and the open sharing of accurate, complete animal sheltering data and statistics in a manner which is clear to both the animal welfare community and the public. We also acknowledge the importance of a common understanding of policies and procedures of the organizations involved in this agreement.

10. Through participation in and support of the advisory committee, we are committed to continuing dialogue, analysis and potential modification of this vision as needs change and as progress is made toward achieving our mission.

Those involved in the development of the *Betsy Bailey Nelson Coalition Agreement* have agreed to make a personal commitment to ensure the furtherance of these principles, and to use their professional influence to bring about a nationwide adoption of this vision.