



SAMPLE EUTHANASIA PROTOCOL

Our philosophy

We are the only medical profession that has the potential to be involved with our patients for the entire length of their lives. Death is part of the cycle of experience we can expect with each client. Euthanasia offers us the chance to validate the precious relationship shared by the family and the pet as well as an unprecedented opportunity for bonding with our clients. Euthanasia is a gift we give those animals whose quality of life is compromised—we can offer relief from pain, relief from unrelenting discomfort, and relief from suffering.

Our protocol

- All members of our healthcare team will receive training in our euthanasia procedure, including how to interact with grieving clients and how to deal with their own feelings about pet euthanasia.
- We recognize that performing pet euthanasia is a very stressful, difficult job. So we offer education, training, and support to each team member on pet loss.
- We hold confidential debriefings on special pet loss cases during staff meetings.
- We encourage team members to communicate with their supervisors when they experience difficulty coping with the pet loss aspect of their work.
- Team members receive training on when and how to schedule these appointments, the paperwork we require, how we handle payments, and the body care options for euthanasia appointments.
- Team members who wish to be involved with grief counseling may receive special training.
- When we schedule a euthanasia, we inform all team members so they may request to participate if they share a special bond with the client or patient.
- We make every effort to schedule euthanasia cases at the end of the day or the beginning of the day so clients will have as little exposure to other clients as possible. Clients may arrive at and leave the practice using the rear entrance for greater privacy.
- A team member watches for these clients and escorts them directly to the comfort room.
- Clients may choose to be present at the euthanasia in the clinic or in their home.
- The veterinarian completely explains the euthanasia procedure and what clients should expect.
- An IV catheter will be placed for most euthanasia procedures. With the client's permission, we will take the pet to the treatment room for catheter placement.
- We will never rush clients. They may spend as much time as they need to say goodbye to their beloved companion.
- We handle aftercare for the body according to the pet owner's wishes. _____ is the business we use for private and general cremations unless a client requests a different crematory.
- If clients wish to bury their pet's body, we will wrap the body in a shroud and carry it to their car for them.
- If a pet is cremated, we ask if the client wants us to contact them when the ashes have been returned to the clinic. If clients do not want us to contact them, we ask them to contact us when they are ready to retrieve the remains.
- We will offer the client the pet's clay paw print and a pet angel pin.
- Each team member will sign a sympathy card we will send with a single rose in a bud vase to the client's home. For clients who live outside of our area, we will deliver the rose and the sympathy card when they pick up the pet's remains.
- We will make a donation to a charitable organization in memory of each deceased patient. The charitable organization we support is _____.
- The last four steps apply to any of our patients who die off premises.
- Our trained team members will facilitate support groups and offer individual companionship as requested.

Our goal is to help the deceased pet's family feel as comfortable as possible under the most difficult circumstances.