



Veterinary Health Center

MANHATTAN, KANSAS

OFFICIAL PROTOCOL

EUTHANASIA FOR SMALL ANIMAL

Interns and residents must have direct authorization by a senior clinician in each instance before they euthanize a patient. **The client must sign a “Consent for Euthanasia, Necropsy, or Donation” form authorizing the procedure before it happens.**

Euthanasia is carried out only by veterinary faculty at the request or consent of the owner. Euthanasia of injured stray animals and laboratory animals may also be required by faculty members. **Students are not authorized under any circumstances to euthanize a patient without direct supervision of a senior clinician.**

In every case:

- I. Make appropriate inquiry regarding ownership to ensure that we are receiving proper authorization to euthanize the animal.
- II. Make certain there is no doubt about the identification of the animal. Always double check.
- III. Ensure that a proper history regarding rabies exposure has been taken that includes inquiry regarding possible bite wounds or other exposure to humans in the past ten days.
- IV. Determine how client wants to handle the remains.
- V. Offer post mortem examination.
- VI. Witness the signing of the consent to euthanize statement by the owner.
- VII. The euthanasia process should be conducted with professionalism and compassion.
- VIII. Clients should be consoled and offered grief counseling, if appropriate.
- IX. A final patient report should be completed by the clinician.

Clients who have had patients seen at the VHC in the past year and are in good financial standing (no past balances, no collections issues) will be given the option to pay at the time of euthanasia or to be billed at a later date. This option should also be given to clients whose patient is an inpatient with a current deposit collected.

For new clients or established clients who elect to pay at the time of euthanasia, please follow the protocol below:

1. Once the decision to euthanize a pet has been made, the supervising clinician, nurse or assistant will review the invoice and medical record to ensure all charges have been entered. **Review with an auditor when possible.**

2. The auditor will review the charges and notify the clinician by text page that all of the charges are entered into the client's file. Please allow a minimum of 30 minutes for the audit process.
3. The client will be taken to the room where the procedure is to take place. The preference is to use a dedicated comfort room or a room without windows.
4. Ensure that the patient has been properly identified, the bite history has been obtained, and that the consent to euthanize form has been signed.
5. The clinician, nurse, or assistant should discuss options for post mortem examination and how to handle the remains. **A Euthanasia and Cremation tic sheet has been created to order services.** These forms are available at the Emergency/Discharge Desk.
6. The pet will be prepared for the euthanasia procedure as directed by the clinician.
7. The clinician or other staff member will notify the desk staff that all charges have been entered/audited and will bring the client to the desk to collect payment.
8. Staff members will make every effort to be sensitive to client needs and emotions.
9. The pet should be brought to the room and the client allowed to spend personal, uninterrupted time with the pet.
10. The clinician enters the room and the euthanasia process is completed. The client exits the VHC without having to stop at the discharge desk.