*Sample internal communications for sharing euthanasia decision information*

**Trigger Warning: Descriptions of bite incidents and injuries included below**

From the Behavior Team:

It is with deep sympathy that we bring you the heartbreaking news that after a sustained level 5 bite incident with a volunteer this morning, we have made the decision to proceed with behavioral euthanasia for Milo.

Milo first came to APA! in October of 2017. He didn't spend much time at APA! as he was adopted just a few days later. After several years of being in a home, Milo's behavior began to decline. He had multiple bite incidents while in his home, and in April of 2022 Milo returned to APA!. He spent time in loving foster homes and made many friends both on and offsite in the past year. Sadly, Milo's behavior continued to decline despite medical, behavioral, staff, and volunteer support.

He will be missed by many and we have heard him called a friend on multiple occasions. We are sure his loss will be felt by a multitude of both dogs and humans. His endearing energy will be missed.

Euthanasia will take place on Tuesday morning with a chance for a few of his friends to safely spend time with him and say goodbye beforehand. Ink paw prints will be available. Please reach out to a team manager for additional details, or if you have any questions or just need to talk. We're so sorry.

Hi friends,

I want to share that there was a serious bite incident with the recently-adopted dog, Malachite, in his adoptive home yesterday. This incident involved a seemingly unprovoked bite to the neck/throat of a visitor in the home. The victim is ok, but due to the circumstances, our team has elected to move forward with euthanasia today.

Though we are not following the typical notice timeline, I can assure you that due diligence has been done on this case. This includes reaching out to the prior owners and AAC, where he was transferred from as a behavior-attention dog in early April. Our team is also notifying anyone we knew to be a close friend of his, and we apologize in advance if there are any friends who we missed.

Again, I am sorry to be sharing this news with so little notice. If there is anyone who would like to talk through this incident and decision, we are happy to schedule a debrief next week. Please let us know if this is something you would be interested in.

Hello everyone,

We are reaching out regarding a recent Outcomes decision on our friend Kodak, formerly known as Koda Black. Due to two separate bite incidents within the past 24-hours, our outcomes committee has come to the conclusion that Kodak is unsafe to be placed in the community or handled onsite. As a result, we have moved forward with humane euthanasia today.

Kodak came to us from AAC where he had been surrendered with an in-home bite history. Despite a sustained bite on intake, staff and volunteers collaborated to find workable solutions for Kodak, including working with him on muzzle desensitization, providing him off campus outings, and working to find him the most comfortable accommodations. Special care was provided to him as he stayed in the DBFU trailer, especially during recent storms. We know he had a number of staff and volunteer friends who dedicated so much love and care to help him with his high shelter stress. It is with this history of care and compassion that we were able to fully appreciate the severity of his recent bites.

We want to acknowledge that, while it is our intent to move quickly so as not to prolong any animal trauma, we strive to take into consideration human trauma, as we know how invested we all are in the animals we serve. It is our wish to offer Town Halls and conduct humane euthanasia where friends are able to be in attendance. However, as we are no longer able to safely handle him in the kennel or in shelter, it was in his best interest to move swiftly and compassionately. Kodak was humanely euthanized today shortly after noon with select friends and his former adopter in attendance to provide him with love and respect in his final moments.

We will have ink paw prints available for those who wish to have a memento of this wonderful, big guy.

All euthanasias have a profound impact on shelter staff and volunteers, but the timeline of this may make things especially challenging in your time of grief. Please connect with Dog Leadership if you have any questions or need support connecting with grief resources.

(Medical example)

Hi friends,

We are sorry to share some sad news with you today about the dog Sloan. Sloan unfortunately passed away overnight after experiencing medical complications at the *shelter. We don’t know the exact cause, but here are a few more details from our clinic team:*

*Sloan presented to the medical clinic for sudden collapse, very swollen and closed eyes, increased respiratory and heart rate, and minimal ability to walk on Monday, 9/26. Even with 3 days of intensive hospitalization, oxygen supplementation, and numerous IV medications, she did not respond to any treatment and unfortunately continued to decline. Late last night, she passed away. She was a very challenging medical case and despite having all of the brain power of all the APA veterinarians, we still don't know what was the underlying cause of her condition was but our top concerns were anaphylactic shock with possible thromboembolism (clots), cancer, heart disease, and pneumonia. Our sincerest condolences and thoughts go out to her friends. She was always a happy lady and will be greatly missed. -The Veterinary team*

Sloan originally came to APA! last December and was adopted and fostered a few times before her most recent return to the shelter at the beginning of September. She made friends with people and dogs alike and even helped our behavior team host students for the Dogs Playing for Life workshop last week. Thank you to everyone who cared for her during her time with APA!, and we hope you have happy memories to look back on.