Dog Death Notification Protocol- Internal

**Purpose**

This protocol outlines the notification process for staff and volunteers when a dog who is in the care of APA!, whether onsite or in foster dies or is euthanized.

It is to be understood by all that the goal is to notify everyone who may have known or cared for the dog without creating an undue delay in notification. It is always possible that somebody will learn the news in a less-than-ideal way, but this protocol is designed so that as many people as possible can be reached quickly.

**Avenues of notification**

**1)** **Outcomes email notification for volunteers only:** Volunteers opt into the outcomes notification emails by choosing YES/NO via the prompt they receive on MyImpact.com once they complete their BLUE class.

**Who contacts:** Dog Behavior Director or Medical Director is responsible for ensuring notification is sent within 24 hours.

| **Behavior:** Yes | **Medical:** Yes | **Terminal Illness:** Yes |
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**2) Staff Google groups:** Notifications are sent to dog-team@ (for all dog staff) and outcome-decisions@ (for non-dog staff) email groups

**Who contacts:** Dog Behavior Director or Medical Director is responsible for ensuring notification is sent within 24 hours.

| **Behavior:** Yes | **Medical:** Yes | **Terminal Illness:** Yes |
| --- | --- | --- |

**3) Facebook Grief Page for volunteers and staff:** Staff and volunteers can request to be added to this page by emailing the Volunteer Team or being invited by a current group member. This group IS NOT searchable on Facebook.

**Who contacts:** Behavior Director posts, or may request a Care Director

| **Behavior:** Yes | **Medical:** Yes | **Terminal Illness:** No |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Notification Process:**

**For Reference:** [**Example notifications**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1owGRhhBODgne8oArRXpRz9vXioCQICUL8HJ_kU1qw1E/edit)

**Planned behavior euthanasia:**

1. The Behavior Director will write up a notification as soon as possible.
2. Notification to staff will be sent to: outcome-decisions@austinpetsalive.org, and dog-team@
3. Better impact notification email to be sent to volunteers by the Dog Behavior Director through Better Impact.
4. A post will also be published on the close Vol group page: [APA Dog Grief and Support Page](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1886935334928002) by the Behavior Director to post. .
	1. In this notification the opportunity to request a paper paw print will be offered using this context:
		1. Should you want a paw print of [INSERT NAME] please fill out [THIS FORM](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTzpZCeW6XKiJ53JvqVZA4d6rZJkQ4aSRAjQWQ7Vni94Wmnw/viewform?usp=sharing) within 24 hours of this notification being received. Please note that paw prints are distributed on a first come first serve basis if a form is not filled out.
5. Notification will go out minimum 24 hours in advance (during regular business hours), unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

**Medical euthanasia or sudden death:**

1. A vet or the Clinic Manager will provide case information to all dog program managers at dp-managers@
2. Medical Care Director or other assigned manager will write up a notification as soon as possible
3. Notification to staff will be sent to: outcome-decisions@austinpetsalive.org, and dog-team@
4. Better impact notification email to be sent to volunteers by the Medical Care Director through Better Impact.
5. A post will also be published on the close Vol group page: [APA Dog Grief and Support Page](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1886935334928002) by Volunteer team, or may request a Medical Care Director to post. .
	1. In this notification the opportunity to request a paper paw print will be offered.
		1. Should you want an ink paw print of [INSERT NAME] please fill out [THIS FORM](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTzpZCeW6XKiJ53JvqVZA4d6rZJkQ4aSRAjQWQ7Vni94Wmnw/viewform?usp=sharing) within 24 hours of this notification being received. Please note that paw prints are distributed on a first come first serve basis if a form is not filled out.
6. Notification will go out within 24 hours of dog passing (during regular business hours). Every attempt will be made for the information to go out the same day, but we want to ensure that the most accurate information is compiled.

**Terminal Illness / Hospice Diagnosis:**

1. A vet or the Clinic Manager will provide case information to all dog program managers at dp-managers@, including whether a hospice foster is being requested or more immediate euthanasia is being recommended
2. The Medical Care Director and/or Clinic Manager will work with appropriate staff members to determine next steps for care and write up a notification to include what support is being requested as soon as possible
3. Notifications should go out within 24 hours of diagnosis and/or decision made about next steps

**When a notification IS sent**

* When the dog has been under the Dog team’s care for over 300 days (shelter long stay) even if they are currently in foster
* If a dog is currently onsite and has been in a shelter kennel collectively for 30 days

**When a notification IS NOT sent**

* A dog that comes into our care via Parvo and does not survive
* A dog that comes into the clinic’s care without ever being under the Dog Care Team and does not survive
* When a dog is already in foster-hospice, unless they have been in our care for 300+ days
* When a dog is in an adoptive home

*\*Note that a manager can decide case-by-case if a notification should be sent for a dog in these categories (if they have known good friends, for example)*

**Other Considerations**

* If there was a recent foster or adopter who any manager thinks might want to know about the dog’s death, the appropriate manager may reach out

**Messaging Tips**

* If there was anything particularly upsetting or gruesome about an animal’s death, those details should be left out of any large group messaging
* Notifications should not include any assumptions or personal speculations about an animal’s cause of death
* It should be communicated at every level that there may still be further notifications to make and that the team is working on reaching out to everyone as soon as possible

**Better Impact Instructions to email Volunteers that have opted in:**

Login to Better impact and start with:

1. Send email

2. Scroll down to "add search criteria"

3. Search type "qualifications"

4. Under qualifications in the drop down click on "dog death agreement"

5. Equal to yes

6. Make sure "volunteer" is clicked at the top and then hit search.

For reference on 3/6/24 it was 53 volunteers.