

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY NEWS  
FOR IMMEDIATE USE  
Feb. 4, 2008

### Upgrades for Animal Services

Hillsborough County Animal Services is pleased to announce the opening of its new pet Adoptions Counter at the shelter at 440 Falkenburg Road in Tampa. The original front desk will remain open for tag sales, and the facility will adjust its midweek schedule to allow citizens greater “after work” access on Wednesdays.

Beginning Monday, Feb. 18, the following hours of operation will go into effect at Hillsborough County Animal Services:

FRONT COUNTERS (Lost pets, pet adoptions, rabies tag purchases, and investigations):

- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
- 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., Wednesday
- 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Saturday

ANIMAL SURRENDER (Side Gate):

- 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
- 12 p.m. - 6 p.m., Wednesday
- 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Saturday

These modified hours have a dual purpose: providing better customer service within staff and budget guidelines, and further implementation of recommended health protocols for the animals in care.

Last year, Hillsborough County Animal Services became an official partner in a national outreach program called ASPCA Mission: Orange. Its initial goal was to increase save-rates of homeless animals, but the program also put great focus on the evolving field of shelter medicine. Hillsborough County Animal Services has successfully maintained protocols for a healthy population -- despite the challenges of being the County’s only “open-admission “ shelter for sick, stray, injured, lost and homeless creatures.

The agency also instituted what is commonly referred to in the shelter industry as “open access” adoptions. This new policy allows all animals (excepting court cases and cruelty victims) to be viewed by the public while waiting for owners to be located. During this period, potential adopters may request priority consideration on animals whose owners don’t come forward. Hillsborough County Animal Services takes up to two names per animal and notifies adopters as pets become legally available.

During a climate of budget cuts and increasing requests for services, Hillsborough County Animal Services has responded by growing an enthusiastic volunteer program. Through a combination of passionate volunteers, “open-access” adoptions, and improved health protocols, the shelter reports a 40 percent increase in adoptions over the last 12 months!

Please note that the Adoption Desk always closes 30 minutes prior to the facility each day for completion of paperwork. For more information on services, hours of operation, or volunteer orientations at Hillsborough County Animal Services, please call 744-5660 or log onto [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/animalservices](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/animalservices).