

# **Pet Shelter FAQ's**

## **What pets are allowed in pet shelters?**

Dogs, cats, and birds. No reptiles, exotic animals, pot belly pigs or farm animals.

## **Can I stay at the shelter with my pets?**

Owners of pets are required to remain at the shelter and care for their pets.

## **What supplies must be brought to the shelter for my pets?**

All pets must be in an airline approved carrier. Proof of all required vaccinations, food, a leash, a collar and supplies for proper waste disposal must be brought to the shelter.

## **Will I be able to take my pet outdoors or allow others to pet them?**

Pets must remain inside an airline approved carrier at all times while inside the shelter buildings. Only the owners will be able to walk the pets outside or handle the animals.

## **Why are shelters for animals being provided?**

Many citizens of Polk County live in mobile or manufactured housing, substandard housing, or in a flood prone area and must evacuate during a hurricane. Often these citizens have pets that are considered as part of the family and refuse to move to a safer location without taking their pets. Pet shelters offer a safer place for people not just pets.

## **What happens if a pet in the shelter is dangerous or bites someone?**

The Polk County Sheriff's Office Animal Services Division will manage the pet shelters and have Animal Control officers present. Pets must remain inside an airline approved carrier at all times while inside the shelter buildings. Pet owners acknowledge that any decision concerning the care and welfare of pets and the shelter population as a whole are within the sole discretion of the shelter staff, whose decisions are final. Failure to follow these rules may result in the removal of a pet from the shelter.

**My pet has required vaccinations and has no fleas or ticks. What is being done to make sure all pets in the shelter don't have fleas?**

While we can not guarantee fleas or other parasites will not be passed among pets, pet owners must understand that if a pet becomes unruly, aggressive, shows signs of contagious disease, is infested with parasites (fleas, ticks, lice, etc.) or begins to show signs of stress-related conditions, their pet may be removed to a more remote location in the shelter or removed from the shelter.

**I am not a pet owner can I go to the pet shelters?**

Pet Shelters are primarily for pet owners who live in mobile or manufactured housing, substandard housing or in an area prone to flooding. Additional public shelters will be available in the County for those without pets. As in any other sheltering situation, residents are advised to consult the local media or Citizens Information Line to ensure a specific shelter is open and operating before proceeding to that facility. Public shelters or pet shelters should be your last option if you must evacuate. Seek out family, friends, church members or others that do not have to evacuate as your first choice.

**Lake Region High School was "my shelter" and now I can't go there without a pet. Where is the next closest shelter?**

In the Winter Haven area Chain of Lakes Elementary at 7001 CR 653 (Thompson Nursery Rd) and Jewett Middle Academy 601 Avenue T N.E. In Bartow, Bartow Senior High School at 1270 S. Broadway Avenue. As in any other sheltering situation, residents are advised to consult the local media or Citizens Information Line to ensure a specific shelter is open and operating before proceeding to that facility.

**Does pre-registration guarantee space in the shelters?**

Pre-registration is for planning purposes only. Pet owners will be required to complete and sign a Pet Shelter Agreement and complete other shelter registration process upon arrival at a shelter.

**What is the address of the Pet Shelters?**

Lime Street Elementary: 1225 East Lime Street, Lakeland, 33801  
Lake Region High School: 1995 Thunder Road, Eagle Lake, 33839  
Alta Vista Elementary: 801 Scenic Highway, Haines City 33844