

Keith Grover proposes the following substitute bill:

**Shelter Animal Euthanasia Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Keith Grover**

House Sponsor: Anthony E. Loubet

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill deals with the treatment of dogs and cats in an animal shelter.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- defines terms; and
- provides that an animal shelter may euthanize an animal only if no reasonable alternatives

to euthanasia are available.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

ENACTS:

**11-46-403**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **11-46-403** is enacted to read:

**11-46-403 . Disposition of animals in an animal shelter.**

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Animal organization" includes both an animal rescue group and an animal shelter.
- (b) "Animal rescue group" includes a private humane society or a private animal welfare organization.
- (c) "Animal shelter" does not include a private humane society or a private animal welfare organization.

(2) An animal held by or in the custody of an animal shelter that is not adopted, transferred to another animal shelter or an animal rescue group, placed into a community cat

30 program as described in Part 3, Community Cat Act, or reclaimed by the animal's owner,  
31 may be euthanized:

32 (a) if no reasonable alternatives to euthanasia are available; and

33 (b) in accordance with the requirements of this part.

34 (3)(a) An animal shelter may euthanize an animal:

35 (i) only after:

36 (A) the holding period for the animal required by Section 11-46-103 is expired;

37 (B) notifying animal shelter and animal rescue groups, except as provided in  
38 Subsection (5), that have expressed an interest in receiving animals at risk of  
39 euthanasia;

40 (C) no animal shelter or animal rescue group requests the transfer of the animal  
41 within two business days after the day on which the animal shelter makes the  
42 notice described in Subsection (3)(a)(i)(A); and

43 (D) no animal shelter or animal rescue group collects the animal within two  
44 business days after the day on which the animal shelter makes the notice  
45 described in Subsection (3)(a)(i)(A);

46 (ii) to prevent unnecessary suffering due to serious injury or disease, in accordance  
47 with Subsection 11-46-103(3); or

48 (iii) if the animal is a dog that has been determined to be dangerous or vicious under  
49 state or local law.

50 (b) The time periods described in Subsections (3)(a)(i)(C) and (D) may run concurrently  
51 with:

52 (i) the holding period required by Section 11-46-103; and

53 (ii) any holding period required by an applicable local ordinance.

54 (4)(a) An animal shelter may provide the notice described in Subsection (3)(a)(i)(B) in  
55 accordance with the animal shelter's established internal policies and procedures.

56 (b) An animal organization is responsible for monitoring messages left for the animal  
57 organization.

58 (c) If an animal organization maintains an electronic or other digital forum in which an  
59 animal shelter may post notices about animals available for placement, the animal  
60 organization that maintains the forum is responsible for monitoring the forum.

61 (5)(a) Nothing in Subsection (3)(a)(i) requires an animal shelter to notify or release an  
62 animal to an animal rescue group if the animal shelter knows or has reason to believe  
63 that:

- 64            (i) any of the animal rescue group's current directors, officers, or employees have
- 65            been convicted of a crime related to animal cruelty or neglect;
- 66            (ii) any of the animal rescue group's current directors, officers, or employees have
- 67            pending charges related to animal cruelty or neglect; or
- 68            (iii) the animal rescue group is constrained by court order that prevents the
- 69            organization from taking in or keeping animals.
- 70            (b) Subsection (5)(a) does not impose an obligation on an animal shelter to investigate,
- 71            verify, or monitor:
- 72            (i) the criminal history or pending criminal charges of or for a director, officer, or
- 73            employee of an animal rescue group; or
- 74            (ii) whether an animal rescue group is subject to a court order described in
- 75            Subsection (5)(a)(iii).
- 76            (6) An animal shelter is not liable for an act or omission under this section if the animal
- 77            shelter acts in good faith based on the information available to the animal shelter at the
- 78            time of the act or omission.

79            Section 2. **Effective Date.**

80            This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.