

## In-Home Euthanasia Services

We want to help provide and arrange gentle and compassionate end of life services that you feel are right for your pet and your family. This time is all about your pet and family, and so we want to help you honor your pet the way that feels best to you.

### ❖ Planning a Time & Scheduling an Appointment

- ◆ All appointments are mobile, meaning in your home. *We do not have a clinic location where we see patients.*
- ◆ We always try to be available when needed, especially for our current palliative and hospice care patients.
  - *Dr. Cook must be able to park in close proximity to your home as he is often carrying a number of bags and materials. It is your responsibility to ensure that parking is available, and you are responsible for all parking and toll fees.*
  - Our availability is based on the appointments already scheduled, but we do our very best to be available when needed.
  - We usually see our first appointment at ~10:00am and our last appointment ~3—4:00pm, Monday-Friday.
  - You may decide to schedule an appointment for euthanasia in advance, and if so, we can try to find a time that is best for you and your pet. It is always ok to plan for a time when we can ensure that your pet's last day is a good day, and when it is possible for your whole family to be present.
  - While evening, weekend, and other after-hours appointments are limited, they may be to be available if scheduled in advance (*additional charges apply*).
  - If you have an emergency with your pet (whether during or outside of regular clinic hours), we will do our very best to help if possible; however, after hours and emergency appointments are generally reserved for current hospice and palliative care patients (*additional charges apply*).
- ◆ We allow up to an hour for end of life care and in-home euthanasia appointments so that we will not have to rush in any way.
  - We can adjust the timing of the procedure (slower or faster) to what feels most comfortable.
  - If you would like to arrange for a longer appointment, this can be done in advance, but may not be possible if not scheduled in advance (*additional charges apply*).

### ❖ Finding a Comfortable Location in Your Home

- ◆ Any room or area of your home is ok, but we do want to make sure that you and your pet will be comfortable and that there will be enough space for all who plan to be present.
  - Choosing an open space where we will not be restricted in movement or cramped is usually best.
  - *For large dogs, it is best to be on the ground floor to help facilitate aftercare and transport. It can be very difficult to carry large dogs down the stairs and through tight spaces.*
  - Additional family members (including children) and friends (human, dog, cat, or other) are welcome to be present, or to visit before or after euthanasia services.
  - Your pet might like to lie on their special blanket or bed with a favorite toy nearby.
  - If your pet is still eating, we encourage you to give them their favorite foods and treats.
- ◆ If you and your pet would prefer to be outside, that is also possible (*weather conditions and location permitting*) and as long as we can be in a safe, private, fenced-in area.

## ❖ Our Gentle Euthanasia Procedure

- ◆ This process is always individualized to your pet and your family's wishes in every way that we can. The most important thing to know is that it will be very gentle and will cause no pain.
  - On arrival, we will make sure that your pet is as comfortable as possible, and we can give pain medication immediately if needed.
  - There is no part of this procedure that will be hidden from you or that you cannot be present to see. Likewise, if there is any part that you do not want to see or be present to see, that is also ok.
  - If you would like private time with your pet during the procedure or after, the doctor can step into a different room or outside for a period of time to allow private visitation.
- ◆ We generally give a series of medications (injections) to ensure that your pet is as comfortable as possible. *Please let the doctor know if you have any concerns about your pet's comfort.*
  - The first medication we give will help to control any pain and discomfort your pet may be feeling (and may cause mild sedation). This medication usually takes just a few minutes to reach full effect. We want to make sure that there is no pain in these last moments.
    - *For pets who are very sensitive to needles or injections, we have the option to start with an oral gel instead to help ensure your pet's comfort.*
  - When it is time, the second medication we give will help your pet slowly relax into a sleep-like state, providing sedation slowly and gently and taking effect over about 5-10 minutes.
    - By providing this sedative medication, we will prevent your pet from having any fear, anxiety, or discomfort and will ensure that no restraint or uncomfortable positioning is needed.
    - *This may be a time when you would like some privacy with your pet, and if so, the doctor can step out.*
  - After your pet is fully relaxed and you feel that it is time, the final medication we give is the anesthetic for euthanasia. Although this medication takes effect quickly (usually within 1-2 minutes or less), your pet will not feel any discomfort because of the medications we have already given.

## ❖ Deceased Pet Services

*Sometimes it is our plan for our pet to die without the intervention of euthanasia, and sometimes pets pass away unexpectedly. In these cases, we are still able to help facilitate aftercare arrangements for your pet.*

- ◆ *If your pet passes away overnight (or outside of clinic hours), it is ok to wait until we are opened to call us (or to leave a message on the regular line) so that we can help make arrangements.*

## ❖ Hospice-Assisted Natural Death

*If your beliefs do not include the intervention of euthanasia to help your pet at a time when we can no longer help them maintain a good quality of life, hospice-assisted natural death (also called palliated natural death) can help you and your beloved pet navigate this difficult time.*

- ◆ Please make sure to let us know if you are considering the option of hospice-assisted natural death because we should discuss what is involved in this type of advanced hospice care.
- ◆ It is important to know what to expect because without having the proper hospice support, an animal may suffer unduly while their family struggles to care for them.
- ◆ If this is the best way to help you and your pet, we will need to develop a plan in advance that gives you and your pet the specific support needed to prevent suffering and ease, not hasten, your pet's transition.

## Aftercare Arrangements & Memorial Keepsakes

*It is our promise to provide the most gentle, dignified and respectful aftercare services available for your pet.* Based on your wishes for your pet, we can assist in aftercare arrangements, but of course you may also decide to make your own arrangements.

### ❖ Considerations for Aftercare Arrangements

- ◆ If we are providing aftercare services for cremation, we will bring a sheet or blanket to wrap your pet to ensure that their transportation can be discrete.
  - If you would like for us to use your blanket or sheet, that is also ok.
  - We regret that we are not able to return any items you send with your pet, and only natural fibers (cotton, wool, silk, etc.) can be cremated with your pet.
- ◆ **For dogs weighing more than 45 pounds**, the doctor will need assistance from one or more family members or friends to help in carrying your dog from the house to the doctor's car.
  - The doctor will have a stretcher to assist in carrying large dogs with dignity.
  - For dogs weighing more than 75#, it is best to have at least 2-3 people to assist.
  - *We do not usually bring an assistant to euthanasia appointments, but for appointments planned in advance, we can usually arrange to do so if needed.*
- ◆ Home Burial: Please see information below for considerations and guidelines.
- ◆ Extended Visitation: If you decide that you would like to have additional time with your pet for extended visitation after an in-home euthanasia appointment, please let us know in advance so that we can be available to return (*additional charges apply*).
- ◆ Delay of Aftercare Services Pending Making a Decision: You might find that you need a few days to make a decision regarding aftercare services. If so, we can arrange to hold your pet's body in cold storage for up to 7 days (*additional charges apply*).

### ❖ Cremation and Burial Services

- ◆ We work exclusively with Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services for cremation and burial services. We know and trust them to carry out all services carefully, gently and respectfully. [www.hinsdalepetmemorialservices.com](http://www.hinsdalepetmemorialservices.com)
- ◆ **Private Cremation**: *Ashes **can be returned** to you.* Your pet will be individually cremated, meaning no other animals will be cremated at the same time.
  - If you prefer private cremation, but do not want to have ashes returned, we would be honored to scatter your pet's ashes in the Butterfly Garden at Hinsdale Pet Cemetery.
  - Attended Private Cremation: *If you would like to be present for your pet's private cremation, this is available by appointment with Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services.*
- ◆ **Communal (Group) Cremation**: *Ashes **cannot** be returned to you.* Your pet will be cremated in a small group and ashes will be scattered in the Butterfly Garden at Hinsdale Pet Cemetery.
- ◆ **Burial at Hinsdale Pet Cemetery**: *All arrangements are made directly with Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services.*

## ❖ Memorial Keepsakes

- ◆ **Urns:** your pet's ashes will be returned in a beautiful urn crafted from handmade paper inlaid with flower petals. These urns are biodegradable and so can be buried if desired but can also serve as a beautiful permanent urn or placeholder until choosing a custom urn.
  - *Ashes are sealed in a bag and so can easily be removed to be scattered or transferred to a different urn if desired.*
  - A full selection of custom urns and cremation jewelry is available at [www.hinsdalepetmemorialservices.com](http://www.hinsdalepetmemorialservices.com).
- ◆ **Fur Clippings:** a lock of fur sealed in a vellum envelope
  - *Please tell us if there is a special area of fur you would like.*
- ◆ **Ink Paw & Nose Prints:** your pet's paw or nose print in black ink on a custom hand-printed card
  - Handmade by Chicago Veterinary Geriatrics
  - Includes a fur clipping if desired
- ◆ **Terra Cotta Clay Pawprints:** an impression of your pet's pawprint in terra cotta polymer clay
  - Handmade by Chicago Veterinary Geriatrics
  - We will stamp your pet's name on the back and bake the pawprint for you; includes a fur clipping if desired
  - *Please request holes for hanging if you would like to be able to hang your pet's pawprint as an ornament.*
- ◆ **White Clay Pawprints:** an impression of your pet's pawprint in white polymer clay
  - Handmade by Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services
  - Your pet's name will be stamped on the front of the pawprint and the pawprint will be baked for you; *holes for hanging are not available.*



## ❖ Return of Ashes & Memorial Keepsakes

- ◆ Your pet's ashes and keepsakes will always be handled with care and are hand delivered to Chicago Veterinary Geriatrics unless you elect to retrieve them directly from Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services.
  - We will contact you as soon as your pet's ashes and memorial keepsakes are ready (within 1-2 weeks).
  - We want to return your pet's ashes and memorial keepsakes to you as soon as you are ready, but also understand that you may need more time, and so we can keep everything safe for you.
- ◆ **Pick-Up or Delivery from Chicago Veterinary Geriatrics (by appointment)**
  - 1544 W. Thorndale Ave. APT 1, Chicago IL 60660 (near Thorndale & Clark; Edgewater Glen)
  - Scheduled home delivery is also available (*additional charges apply*)
- ◆ **Pick-Up or Mailing from Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services**
  - 6400 S. Bentley Ave., Willowbrook, IL 60527; 630-323-5120
  - Available by appointment during office hours, please call prior to pick up
  - Express mail shipping is also available if desired (*additional charges apply*)

## Home Burial & Extended Visitation

### ❖ Caring for Your Pet's Body During Extended Visitation and/or Prior to Burial

- ◆ Leakage of bodily fluids may occur—disposable under-pads, baby wipes, and waterless shampoo are effective ways to manage cleanliness and reduce odor
- ◆ The development of muscle rigidity (rigor mortis) can occur quickly, or over a period of hours
- ◆ Most animals will not close their eyes and/or keep their eyes closed after death
- ◆ Occasionally, there may be minor muscle spasms that occur after death
- ◆ Temperature guidelines during extended visitation or prior to burial:
  - Warm/Hot Temperatures (>60°F): cold storage is needed within 2-8 hours
  - Cool Temperatures (~40-60 °F): cold storage is needed within 8-12 hours
  - Cold temperatures (<40 °F): cold storage is needed within 12-24 hours

### ❖ Choosing a Burial Site

- ◆ Burial of a pet is generally permitted on private property, as long as you own the property or have permission from the owner
- ◆ Burial of a pet on public grounds is generally prohibited
- ◆ *Please check your local regulations as they vary*
- ◆ Consider also any potential future plans for landscaping or moving

### ❖ Additional Preparations and Considerations for Burial

- ◆ The grave (hole) should be at least 4 feet deep, at least 4 feet above the ground water table, and covered with at least 4 feet of earth
  - Avoid rocky areas and tree roots (such as under a tree)
  - Maintain a 100-foot separation from wells or waterways
  - Be aware of any buried water, gas or power lines
  - Do not bury in a low-lying area, gully, or ditch as these areas are prone to flooding
- ◆ It is best to avoid burying synthetic fibers and plastic bags if possible as they interfere with natural processes
  - Cotton, wool, bamboo fiber, and silk are better options to wrap your pet
  - Caskets are also available for purchase online if desired
- ◆ You may wish to either purchase a memorial stone or gather stones or rocks to mark and cover the burial site
  - This provides protection from accidental uncovering by humans, pets, or wild animals
  - Memorial stones are available for purchase locally and online

## ❖ Appointments & Services

- ◆ In-Home Euthanasia Appointments: 295 + travel fee (starting at 25.00, based on your location)
- ◆ Deceased Pet Services Appointments: 195 + travel fee (starting at 25.00, based on your location)
- ◆ COVID-19 PPE & Biohazard Fee: 24.95 (applies to all appointments until further notice)
- ◆ **Emergency/Fit-In Appointment Fee (during clinic hours)**: additional fee of 75–300+
- ◆ **After-Hours Appointment Fee**: additional fee of 150–300+

## ❖ Cremation Services

- ◆ Transportation for Cremation: Our cremation fees below include us arranging and providing transportation for your pet to Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services
- ◆ Attended Private Cremation: Additional charges may apply

Weight (pounds)	Private Cremation	Communal Cremation
Under 25#	250	150
25.1–75#	300	200
75.1–100#*	350*	250*
100.1–150#*	400*	300*

*\*Special arrangements may be needed to assist with pets weighing more than 75 pounds.\*  
Please contact us for an estimate for pets weighing more than 150 pounds.*

## ❖ Burial Services at Hinsdale Pet Cemetery

- ◆ Please contact Hinsdale Pet Memorial Services directly for more information.

## ❖ Memorial Keepsakes

- ◆ Urns: there is no additional charge for the basic urn included with private cremation
- ◆ Ink Paw Print & Fur Clipping (CVG): 1 included as a special keepsake; 25.00/each additional
- ◆ Ink Nose Print & Fur Clipping (CVG): 25/each
- ◆ Terra Cotta Clay Paw Print (CVG): 35/each
- ◆ White Clay Paw Print (HPMS): 35/each (fur clippings are 15/each from HPMS)

## ❖ Return of Ashes & Memorial Keepsakes

- ◆ We want to help make return of your pet's ashes and memorial keepsakes as easy as possible for you, and so there are number of methods available, including options with no additional charges.
- ◆ Your pet's ashes/keepsakes will never be mailed unless you ask us to do so.
- ◆ Please contact us if you would like an estimate for scheduled home delivery.

**Payment is respectfully required at time of service by cash, Venmo (@ChicagoVeterinaryGeriatrics), Zelle/Quickpay (info@chicagoveterinarygeriatrics.com), personal check, or credit card (Visa, MC, Discover, AMEX). Prices included in this document are an estimate, and adjustments may be needed based on specific circumstances that might not be known prior to an appointment. Prices are subject to change at any time. Please contact us if you would like a more detailed estimate for your pet. (Effective Date: January 1, 2021)**

## ❖ COVID-19 (SARS-COV-2) Policy & Information

- Our goal is to continue to provide the most compassionate and gentle in-home care for older pets and pets with serious illness.
- We have updated our policy in April 2020, November 2020, and now in May 2021 based on AVMA & CDC guidance.
- **Failure to comply with any part of this COVID-19 Policy may result in immediate termination of services.**

## ❖ COVID-19 PPE & BIOHAZARD APPOINTMENT FEES:

1. **Homes of NEW patients regardless of vaccination status:**
  - COVID-19 Protocols and Policy will remain basically unchanged (see below) although temperature checks are no longer required.
  - COVID-19 PPE & Biohazard Fee will remain 24.95 until further notice.
2. **Homes of CURRENT patients where all family members (and everyone who will be present at appointments) have completed their vaccine program at least 2 weeks prior to the appointment, and have provided a copy of their CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Card:**
  - It is now an option for both you and Dr. Cook and CVG staff to wear a single face covering during appointments.
  - COVID-19 PPE & Biohazard Fee will remain 24.95 through May 31, 2021 and will be discontinued starting June 1, 2021.
  - *If you would like Dr. Cook and CVG staff to continue wearing N95 masks in addition to a surgical mask (+/- additional PPE), the COVID-19 PPE & Biohazard Fee will remain 24.95 until further notice.*
3. **Homes of CURRENT patients where some or all family members (including children, and everyone who will be present) have been partially vaccinated, have not been vaccinated, or have NOT provided a copy of the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Card:**
  - COVID-19 Protocols and Policy will remain basically unchanged (see below) although temperature checks are no longer required.
  - COVID-19 PPE & Biohazard Fee will remain 24.95 until further notice.

## ❖ PRECAUTIONARY QUESTIONS BEFORE EVERY APPOINTMENT—Has anyone in the household:

1. ...traveled outside of the State of Illinois within the last 14 days (AND/OR had any contact with a person who has)?
  2. ...been placed under self-quarantine or awaiting test results due to potential COVID-19 exposure?
  3. ...had any contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or with symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
  4. ...been experiencing any illness or COVID-19 symptoms including but not limited to fever, body aches, dry cough, fatigue, chills, headache, sore throat, loss of appetite, and/or loss of sense of smell/taste)?
- **If anyone in your household answers “YES” to any of these questions, please notify us immediately.**
  - We will notify you immediately if Dr. Cook or CVG staff would answer yes to these questions.
  - ***Please confirm your answers over email the day before our appointment.***

## ❖ WHAT ARE WE DOING TO PROTECT YOU AND OUR STAFF?

1. Vaccination: Dr. Cook is fully vaccinated as of April 30, 2021. All CVG staff who attend appointments will also be fully vaccinated.
2. Monitoring: Dr. Cook and CVG staff keep a daily body temperature and symptom log.
3. Testing: Dr. Cook and CVG staff have access to rapid COVID-19 testing if needed.
4. PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) & Hygiene:
  - Ongoing frequent hand washing/hand sanitization and disinfection of all materials/supply bags between appointments.
  - Dr. Cook and CVG staff will wear an N95 mask and surgical mask cover at each appointment (+ additional PPE if indicated).
  - ***All humans present at the appointment are required to wear your own face covering as well as an additional (provided) surgical mask at all times during every appointment. Two masks are provided per appointment at no charge.***
5. Social Distancing: We will practice social distancing as much as possible. Appointments can be outdoors or via Zoom when acceptable.
  - **While indoors with Dr. Cook and/or CVG Staff, you may not remove or lower your mask, even for a moment.**

*Thank you for helping us continue to provide in-home care by keeping everyone safe.*