

Animal Welfare League of Arlington Behavior Matrix

Category	Details	R-Can rehabilitate	M- Manageable	U- Unhealthy/Untreatable
Aggression-dog/dog	Off leash issues with other dogs resulting in conflict. Inability to notice normal dog social cues. Abnormal threats or follow through. Includes selective dogs that can live in harmony with select dogs. May show as fear based reactivity due to lack of socialization or genetics. Determine if it is specific to gender, type of dog, size.	Under 8 weeks old, aggression due to lack of socialization. Guidance of social dog	If behavior can be interrupted and dog is able to work with handler at reasonable distance. (Approximately 10 ft.)	If dog is unable to redirect attention towards handler. If behavior results in hospitalization/death of another animal
Aggression-dog/human	Off leash issues with humans. Threatening signals, as well as bites.	Under 6 months of age and improvement after 2 weeks of counter conditioning	If specific to place or type of person. If animal can be interrupted working from approximate distance of 8ft. If no improvement , U.	Unable to interrupt behavior and /or some level 3. Level 4 or higher bite on Ian Dunbar bite scale.
Aggression-dog/other animal (outside of household)	Issues with other animals. Category is based on intent and follow through		If dog can be interrupted from a reasonable distance on leash and	
Aggression-Cat/Human (non feral)	Issues with humans that can include :vocalizations, hissing, biting and scratching		M, explore TNR option as needed	If triggers are unmanageable, unidentifiable, unprovoked aggression and TNR not an option
Aggression-Cat/Cat	Vocalizations, hissing, scratching, biting.		M	
Anxiety			Defined triggers. Triggers may either be avoidable or sometimes avoidable	If triggers are hard to identify/avoid. If animal self-injures and/or put others at risk. Quality of life is compromised
Aversion to medical staff/handling	Growling ,air snap, bite, freezing, hissing (cats) or fleeing during vet exam or grooming procedures.		Using low restraint techniques, counter conditioning and when needed muzzles	

Barrier Reactivity (includes on leash and in kennel behaviors around other dogs)	Reactivity through fence, kennel, window or on leash. Towards other dogs or humans. Lunge, snap, growl, bark		If improvement is made with training. If behavior changes when barriers are realistically removed	If results in bite of Handler level 4 and above and dog cannot be safely contained without incident. Foster option should be explored to determine if behavior is shelter specific
Bite History-dog/dog	Did the bite require vet visit? If so, what treatment given? Was the issue between resident dogs?		If minimal damage occurred and /or was due to handling and/or management err .See: aggression-dog/dog.	If results in other dog being hospitalized or killed. Unprovoked bite
Bite History-human	Assess with Ian Dunbar bite scale. See :Aggression-dog/human	puppy(under 5 months)	level 1-2, possibly 3	Level 4 or higher, some level 3
Chase	Cars, bikes, skateboards, motorcycles	If easily interrupted	If difficult to interrupt	
Compulsive Behaviors	Spinning, tail chasing, self-mutilation, barking, shadow chasing, licking, etc. If behaviors are difficult to interrupt , disrupt daily life and cause physical and mental damage		If put in different environment such and behavior can be interrupted / determined to be a shelter specific issue. If behavioral medication is option.	If other environment produces no change and quality of life is compromised
Defensive Aggression/ Fear Aggression	Behavior to increase distance. Barks, growls ,bares teeth with fearful body postures (lowered head, tucked tail, ears back, whale eye) while moving away		If results of working with animal for one week show improvement.	Behavior increases or stays same after 1 week of working with. If staff or volunteers cannot safely handle dog
Depression/ Shelter Stress	Lack of appetite, shut down, refusal to drink or eat. Avoidance of typical social behaviors. Affecting quality of life	Yes		
Deterioration	Behavior worsens with shelter environment. Foster or different environment would likely cause improvement. Includes behaviors such as kennel charging	With foster, PAP support		
Escaping	History of jumping fences, backing out of collars and running, digging,etc... Difficult to contain		If management does not affect quality of life.	If management does affect quality of life.

Excessive Barking	Anxiety and stress can factor. May be learned behavior, reinforced in some way.	Yes		
Fear/ Shyness	Displays fearful behaviors such as tucked tail, lack of eye contact, hiding in back of kennel, "pancaking" May warn(ex. Growl) but no follow through(ex.snap or bite)	If fearful but shows improvement and generalizes when familiar with new people/ new things.	Fearful but shows social signs to select /few individuals. Becomes comfortable in consistent, stable environment. May have phobias	
Feral Dog	A dog that escaped (or was born) from a domestic living situation and is not living in wildlife with minimal contact.		5 months or younger, with behavior help including counter conditioning and socialization	Adult
Feral Cat-Under 6 weeks			Usually can be socialized even if hard to handle initially. May have fight or flight response. Behavior foster support.	
Feral Cat- Over 6 weeks	Over 8 weeks, cannot handle safely. Fight or flight response		TNR program	
Handling Sensitivity(Non-medical)			Counter condition and manage	
High Arousal-Dog	Becomes so over aroused that behaviors can be difficult to interrupt. Frantic and instinctive behaviors. Higher concern: high arousal, slow recovery. Includes- intense rough play, tug, leash biting, jumping AT people, and excessive mouthiness		Yes	If bite follows or if volunteers and staff are unable to work with and foster is unavailable or did not change behavior
High Arousal-Cat	Becomes over aroused during interactions. Can escalate to bite or scratch		Counter condition to handling exercises. Give needed handouts for in home support	
Hyper Active	High energy but recovers faster than high arousal. Can show calm behaviors. Adolescent, working dogs, high-energy dogs who need mental and physical exercise. May become destructive when appropriate outlets and coping skills are neglected	Home placement understands needs. shelter enrichment to prevent deterioration. Often dogs in the adolescent phase with excess "shelter" energy		

Hyper Active	High energy but recovers faster than high arousal. Can show calm behaviors. Adolescent, working dogs, high-energy dogs who need mental and physical exercise. May become destructive when appropriate outlets and coping skills are neglected	Home placement understanding of exercise needs. Appropriate enrichment in shelter to prevent deterioration. Often dogs in the adolescent phase with excess "shelter" energy	True working dog ,high energy	
Prey Drive	Excessive chasing, stalking, pouncing on humans or animals but able to respond to distractions, refocus and be managed. May have killed another animal such as wildlife due to mismanagement. Did not kill from focused active hunting prey or did not kill another housemate.	Yes		
Prey Drive- resulting in death of another animal	If animal has killed another animal, which is a pet and actively seeks prey.			U
Housetraining Issues- Dog (Non-Medical)	Going to the bathroom indoors or in crate r any other inappropriate areas	Yes		
Jumping	To greet people. Not to be confused with muzzle punches	Yes		
Litter Box Issues(non medical)	Not eliminating in litter box	If not ongoing issue	If ongoing, possible TNR or M	
Mouthy(puppy)	For adult dog, see :High Arousal	Yes		
Multiple "M "categories and/or combined with medical management			Yes , if realistic to home environment and it does not affect the quality of life for owner or animal	U- If it does affect quality of life for owner and animal
Non- Social	Avoids contact with humans, cannot adapt to new situations		If it is safe option to seek foster support and improvement is made in foster	If it is unsafe to seek foster support or no improvement is made in foster

Offensive Aggression	Behaviors to decrease distance. Barks, growls, bares teeth with offensive body postures (high tail, direct eye contact, ears erect, muzzle punch) while charging and/or moving forward		If results of working with dog for one week show improvement.	If behavior increases or stays same. If staff or volunteers cannot safely handle dog
Play Aggression- Human	See :High arousal		Ideal home would provide boundaries and consistent rules	
Resource Guarding- Other Animals	May include- food, water, space, people, toys and other objects. Medium(growl, body block and tension, whale eye) High(air snap , biting)		May or may not be shelter specific behavior. Management on objects such as food toys and treats. Space or people may be more challenging and may need to be in an only pet household.	If animal begins to expand guarding behaviors and becomes difficult to manage /care for in shelter. If foster support is not a safe option
Resource guarding- Humans	Can include- food, water, space, people, toys and other objects. Medium(growl, body block and tension, whale eye) High(air snap , biting)		May or may not be shelter specific behavior. Waiver may be needed if behavior is significant. Work on exchanges while in care. Send owner home with information and support.	If results in unprovoked bite. If animal begins to expand guarding behaviors and becomes difficult to manage /care for in shelter. If foster support is not a safe option
Separation Anxiety- Severe	Distress when left alone that result in harm and damage done to self and property. May urinate/defecate e on themselves		If issues have shown improvement after 2 weeks of being put in foster or environment other than shelter situation	If no improvement in foster and with recommended behavioral medications
Separation Anxiety- Mild to Moderate	Distress when alone. Stress vocalizations, destruction. Typically will still eat and drink. Does not cause harm to oneself		With building good associations with departures and being confined.	

Submissive Urination		May grow out of it(6 months and under)	Education on greetings and interactions to prevent behavior and increase confidence	
Territorial Aggression			If it is reasonable that owner understands issue and will keep dog contained safely around visitors	If aggression would result in interruption of daily life for owner. If dog had previous bite history. If dog cannot be contained in shelter without exhibiting aggression
Urine Marking (Dog)			Limit water intake when not home , use of belly band	
Urine Marking (Cat) territorial			Home with no other pets, take precautions to make environment sound for cat	