



## NEWS RELEASE

### Memphis Animal Services Now Includes Heartworm Treatment in Adoption Fee

*Grants, including \$61,500 from PetSmart Charities®, to fund program*



**Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 17, 2018** – Today Memphis Animal Services (MAS) announced that for the first time in the shelter’s history, they will be including heartworm treatment in their adoption fee for dogs who test positive for heartworms.

The shelter says that about half of the adult dogs coming into MAS test positive for heartworms, which is fatal to dogs if not treated. Heartworms are spread by mosquitoes, making dogs in the South particularly likely to become infected. Heartworm disease can be prevented by taking regular medication as directed by a veterinarian, but once a dog is infected, treatment can be very expensive.

“Our research has shown prices for heartworm treatment can range anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a couple thousand dollars, depending on the weight of the dog and the treatment protocol,” said Alexis Pugh, MAS director. “Many adopters simply do not have the resources to provide such a costly treatment, and as a result, otherwise healthy, wonderful dogs get passed over for adoption.”

Thanks to several grants MAS applied for and was awarded, including a \$61,500 grant from PetSmart Charities, adoptable dogs from MAS will now receive heartworm treatment, if needed, as a part of the standard public adoption fee while funding lasts.

“At PetSmart Charities, our goal is to find lifelong, loving homes for all pets, and that includes dogs who may be heartworm positive,” said Kelly Balthazor, regional relationship manager at PetSmart Charities. “With this grant to Memphis Animal Services, we’re helping to ensure every dog at the shelter has the very best chance possible at being adopted.”

The medications, supplies, and veterinarian time for heartworm treatment will cost MAS about \$200 per dog. Animal lovers who would like to join PetSmart Charities in helping MAS provide heartworm treatment to adoptable dogs can donate online at [www.memphisanimalservices.com](http://www.memphisanimalservices.com).

Memphis Animal Services has maintained an 88 percent save rate for the past year. The shelter has not had to euthanize a cat, small dog, or puppy for space in more than a year.



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“Where we consistently struggle is with large adult dogs, particularly those who are heartworm-positive,” said Pugh. “We are so grateful to our funders like PetSmart Charities who will help us target this vulnerable category of our population and save more lives than ever before.”

Memphis Animal Services has extended its \$30 Save a Shelter Pet Summer adoption promotion until the end of September. It applies to all dogs and all cats, such as Pluto (A307020), pictured above, a 2-year-old, 56-lb., male dog who is heartworm-positive. The adoption fee includes spay/neuter, microchip, vaccines, heartworm test and, if needed, heartworm treatment (dogs), FIV/FelV test (cats), collar/leash, and a customized ID tag.

### **About PetSmart Charities®**

PetSmart Charities, Inc. is committed to finding lifelong, loving homes for all pets by supporting programs and thought leadership that bring people and pets together. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities helps to find forever homes and families for more than 500,000 shelter pets each year. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to nonprofits aligned with its mission under four key areas of support: Preventing Pet Homelessness; Helping Shelter Pets Thrive; Supporting the Bond Between People and Pets and Providing Emergency Relief and Disaster Support. Each year, millions of generous PetSmart shoppers help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its role as the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, granting almost \$340 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart Inc., PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator, a third-party organization that reports on the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of nonprofits, for the past 15 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of charities rated by this organization. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org).

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### **About Memphis Animal Services**

Memphis Animal Services offers a wide range of programs and services including the sheltering of lost and homeless animals, pet adoption and placement, spay/neuter programs, handling of animal control complaints & bite cases, dog licensing, cruelty investigations, humane education, and more. For more information, visit [www.memphisanimalservices.com](http://www.memphisanimalservices.com), call 901-636-1416, or visit the facility at 2350 Appling City Cove. To become a fan of Memphis Animal Services on Facebook go to: <https://www.facebook.com/memphisanimalservices/>. Follow Memphis Animal Services on Twitter & Instagram @AdoptMAS.