



Category 1: Physical and Emotional

MANDATORY

1.8 The practice maintains a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for preventing and alleviating FAS upon arrival at the practice.

- Drafting SOPs helps practices create their Fear Free culture.
- Consider making this a team effort: ask a few team members to work together to create a first draft (or review & edit an existing SOP), then review and finalize it as a group.
- SOPs can also be used in New Hire Training & Orientation
- **Basic SOP Format:**
 - **Procedure:** This is what we do and why we do it.
 - **Responsible Team Members:** This is who does it.
 - **Equipment/Supplies:** This is what we need to do it.
 - **Procedural Steps:** This is how we do it.
- The SOP examples that follow are meant to provide further insight as to what Fear Free is looking for.
- Example SOPs should NOT be copied & pasted into your self-assessment.
- Additional resources include but are not limited to:
 - Fear Free Module 8
 - The Vital Role of the CSRs
 - Webinar: Tell Me More About SOPs!



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Example

Procedure: Pheromone support supplied to patients upon arrival to the practice to help prevent and alleviate FAS.

Responsible Team Members: CSRs

Equipment/Supplies: canine & feline pheromones, assorted sizes of bandanas for dogs, towels for cats

Procedural Steps:

- The daily appointment schedule is reviewed. The anticipated needed bandanas and towels for morning appointments are treated with canine and feline pheromones upon arrival. For afternoon appointments, they are treated 15 minutes before the first appointment of the afternoon is expected.
- When a canine patient arrives, the owner will be handed an appropriate sized pheromone treated bandana and instructed to allow the dog to sniff it before securing it comfortably around the dog's neck. If this results in a rise in FAS, the owner will be advised to discontinue placing the bandana.
- When a feline patient arrives, the owner will be instructed to place the carrier on the 'cat parking' elevated platform and to partially cover the carrier with the pheromone treated towel. Partial coverage provides the cat with the choice to either hide or observe his/her surroundings.



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1.9 The practice maintains a SOP for preventing and alleviating FAS during the visit at the practice.

Example

Procedure: To minimize entrances and exits, exam rooms are prepared with all anticipated supplies.

Responsible Team Members: All

Equipment/Supplies: May include but are not limited to handling tools (e.g. basket muzzles, towels, treats, toys), sampling supplies (e.g. needles, syringes, butterfly catheters, blood collection tubes), vaccines, and diagnostic equipment (e.g. doppler, Tonopen, Wood's Lamp).

Procedural Steps:

- Each morning and mid-day before appointments begin, supplies of items routinely kept in exam rooms are monitored and re-stocked as needed. These include but may not be limited to species appropriate pheromone diffusers, treats, toys, catnip, towels, cotton balls, cotton swabs, paper towels, cleaning supplies, water bowls and litter boxes. Trash cans are also to be emptied at these times.
- For each appointment, the reason for the patient visit is reviewed and anticipated equipment & supplies are gathered.
- If additional supplies are needed, exits and re-entries are made slowly and quietly.
- Patients will not be moved to the treatment area for procedures that can be completed in the exam room. If the owner does not wish to be present, s/he will be asked to wait in the reception area.
- If a patient does need to be moved to another part of the hospital, the owner will be given the option to accompany their pet, returning to the exam room or reception area once the patient arrives at the desired location.



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1.10 SOP for preventing and alleviating FAS must be in place to support animals during check out from the practice.

Example

Procedure: To prevent and alleviate FAS during check out, discharge instructions are reviewed, and payment is collected without pet needing to wait in the reception area.

Responsible Team Members: Veterinarians, Veterinary Nurses, CSRs

Equipment/Supplies: May include but are not limited to PVN/PVP or other FAS management tools for next visit, medications, written discharge instructions, other applicable handouts (e.g. Fear Free Happy Homes: How to pill your pet with kindness, How to manage a Fear Free return home)

Procedural Steps:

- Check-out should occur in the exam room or equivalent quiet, distraction-free space.
- The veterinarian or nurse will review any discharge instructions including but not limited to nutraceutical or prescription instructions and information, test results, and, if applicable, re-integration of patient to a multi-pet household. Written discharge instructions will also be provided.
- The CSR will collect payment for the visit in the same space.
- Alternatively, if there is more than one owner, one can wait outside or in the car with the pet while the other owner receives the discharge instructions and provides payment.
- Cat carriers shall not be placed on the floor during discharge/check-out.