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## No-Kill is not what you think

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Employees at animal welfare organizations are often faced with the question: Are you a no-kill shelter? If they answer the question with no, does that mean the organization is pro-kill? Definitely not. But that is how they are perceived by the public.

This question is not as easy to answer as you think.

A shelter is considered to be no-kill when 90% of the animals taken in are placed in a home through adoption, transport, or reuniting lost animals with their owners. Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, a well-known self labeled no-kill organization states on their site:

*'A 90% save rate for the animals entering a shelter is the common-sense benchmark for measuring lifesaving progress. Typically, the number of pets who are suffering from irreparable medical or behavioral issues that compromise their quality of life and prevent them from being rehomed is not more than 10% of all pets entering shelters.'* [1]

When a member of the community inquires about a shelter's no-kill status, they typically ask a yes or no question: 'Are you a no-kill shelter?' The person asking the question is usually not aware of the 90% benchmark mentioned above. Using data from a Louisiana shelter from 2015 through 2019, we will form a better answer to this question than yes or no.

### The reality of a *non* no-kill shelter

In 2019, our shelter placed 84% of the animals that arrived through their life saving programs including adoption, transport to partner shelters and reuniting pets with their owners. While this is just shy of the 90% benchmark, it is still an impressive number of lives saved.