

## **ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

### **I. DEPARTMENT MISSION**

Contra Costa County Animal Services Department is committed to protecting the health, safety and well-being of all people and animals in our community through enforcement of state and local laws, providing compassionate care for every animal regardless of its temperament or condition, and reducing the number of animals that enter our County shelters.

We will prioritize lifesaving as our guiding principal. We will shelter homeless, abandoned and lost animals, work to keep and place animals in safe, caring homes, and provide education and services to enhance the lives of people, their animal companions, and to strengthen the human-animal bond.

This is accomplished by:

- Protecting the citizens of Contra Costa County from animal related diseases and from animal injury.
- Preventing animal cruelty, abuse and neglect.
- Providing humane care and treatment of all animals in accordance with the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines and following the Five Freedoms.
- Striving to decrease our shelter intake, increase our live release rates and to reserve euthanasia for animals that have serious medical conditions with great suffering, or behavior issues that pose a threat to the public's health and safety and the animal's well-being.
- Keeping animals in their homes by providing resources and active counseling for owners looking to surrender their family companions.
- Increasing licensing and micro-chipping efforts to assist owners in reuniting with their lost pets.
- Providing spay/neuter services to reduce pet overpopulation.
- Educating the public about responsible pet ownership, including preventative medicine, spay/neuter, and vaccinations.
- Providing high-quality customer service and treating all individuals with respect, professional courtesy, and integrity.
- Creating collaborative partnerships that further our mission and increase our ability to serve the people and animals of Contra Costa County.

### **II. MAJOR PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **A. Field Services**

Enforce state laws and County ordinances in the unincorporated area of the County and the cities that have agreements with the County to address emergency service calls through the 911-dispatch function, as well as provide non-emergency service calls, and provide daily animal services to 18 contract cities, including unincorporated areas of the County, as listed:

- Assist police or fire and public citizen emergencies to handle animal-related concerns.
- Assist on search warrants to subdue animals safely.

- Enforce and educate the public on state laws and County ordinances regarding animal welfare.
- Investigate allegations of inhumane treatment towards animals. These investigations may result in criminal charges, but often, result in owner education and veterinary care.
- Investigate animal bites and state mandated quarantine of the biting animal.
- Investigate potentially dangerous or dangerous animal incidents.
- Rescue trapped or injured animals.
- Impound strays from the field. These include sick and injured animals that require emergency care.
- Respond to calls to contain loose livestock and transport them to a safe enclosure.
- Remove dead animals. This is a non-mandated service and one of the most widely asked for among the jurisdictions.
- Dead animals (domestic and wild) are picked up from public roadways and private property.

## **B. Center Operations**

Provide compassionate, temporary husbandry and veterinary care to homeless, abandoned, and lost animals during their stay at the Martinez and Pinole shelters. Strive to enhance the lives of these pets while they await placement into caring homes.

### **1. Shelter Services**

Provide appropriate, compassionate care for the community's animals.

- Striving to meet the standards outlined in the Five Freedoms for the duration of their stay.
- Sanitize and disinfect as appropriate the shelter environment to control disease and provide a healthy living environment.
- Provide enrichment, as appropriate based on each species' needs.
- Conduct intake processing for the health and safety of the animal and the rest of the shelter population.
- Maintain a rabies control program.
- Humanely euthanize animals, by injection, when necessary to end suffering or to ensure safety.
- Provide owner requested euthanasia, as appropriate or offer alternative resources
- Support other County departments as appropriate for the transportation or transfer of animals from one facility to another.

### **2. Medical Services**

Provide medical, surgical, emergency, and post-surgical care to animals during their stay, within the reasonable bounds of financial and resource limitations of a municipal, open admission shelter.

- Facilitate inter/intrastate transfers for placement.
- Offer low-cost vaccination clinics, including at cost rabies vaccines.
- Provide emergency/urgent care to stray, abandoned, or lost animals from the community.
- Provide foster services as appropriate until the resident animal can be rehomed.
- Provide rechecks for adopted animals to support the transition before adopters find their own regular veterinarian.

### **3. Spay/Neuter Clinic**

Provide low-cost pet spay/neuter services to the public, as well as fulfill the mandate to have all adopted animals spayed and neutered prior to adoption.

## **C. Administration Services**

Provide the support required for the ongoing operations of the department. This includes human resource functions, fiscal management, data management, contract management, and general business operations including providing customer services for members of the public.

### **1. Personnel**

Manage and maintain personnel files and compliance with County policies to ensure the department utilizes best practices for equal opportunity employment and other personnel actions.

### **2. Finance**

Provide general management of the department's financial information and accounts by creating and maintaining internal controls.

### **3. Customer Service**

Provide customer service support to members of the public through the department's phone system, online/email or at each of the Animal Service Centers.

Manage and maintain licensing program for dogs. Licensing is a registration process to assist in the identification of lost animals and is a locally mandated program to support the registration of rabies vaccinations and rabies control throughout the County. The department uses a computerized system to identify owners who have vaccinated their dogs and cats against rabies but who have not obtained a license. To streamline the process, the department recently began utilizing a scanning software to upload rabies certificates from veterinary offices.

## **D. Community Services**

Provide public information, media relations, and community education. The team also provides department, specific program, individual animal marketing support, and manages the admissions and adoptions program. The Community Services Division is also responsible for recruiting, training and managing the department's volunteers through its volunteer program.

**1. Volunteer Program**

Provide volunteer recruitment, animal/owner reunification, and animal enrichment, along with supporting other department divisions with volunteer services, as requested.

**2. Admissions and Adoptions**

Manage the department's adoption and transfer programs to ensure positive outcomes for the animals in its care. The Admissions and Adoptions Division also oversees the department's Pet Retention Program, which is focused on keeping pets in their loving homes.

**3. Community Education**

Provide public information and humane education on animal welfare and services. The Community Education Division develops educational content, leads public presentations, and oversees the dissemination of departmental information.

**4. Marketing**

Markets and promotes the department's services. The Marketing Division also manages the department's online and external presence through written materials.

**III. DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**A. Public Safety**

The Department implemented a new Call Prioritization system, which was recommended through discussion with the Chiefs of Police for our contracted cities.

The Call Prioritization Outline describes every type of call the Department respond to and a priority level associated with the call, based on the information the Department receives at the time and on the level of threat to either public safety or to an animal.

The purpose for initiating the new Call Priority system was to assess the target goals for each type of call the Department responded to. The new system allows the Department to determine if the targeted response time was met with new measures.

The Department will continue to review the data from Call Prioritization reports and with feedback from contracted cities.

**B. Medical Services & Resources**

The Department allocated 6.0 fulltime equivalent (FTE) position for the Center Operations Division's medical unit. These positions have assisted the medical unit by increasing standards of care and supporting the Department's ability to promote and practice the shelter medicine best practices including the 5 Freedoms (freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from pain, freedom from fear, ability to express normal behavior and freedom from discomfort).

**C. Education**

In FY 2017/18, the Department provided over 150 community education presentations throughout Contra Costa County, with at least one in each of the 18 cities and unincorporated territories we serve. Activities included humane education in classroom settings, presentations to civic groups, neighborhood associations and community stakeholders, and tours at our Martinez and Pinole shelters. Additionally, the Department was able to educate tens-of-thousands of County residents by communicating important information about timely animal issues (4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks, importance of licensing/microchipping, winter weather, dogs in hot cars etc.) through news media, social media and the CCAS website.

**D. Animal Care**

The Department integrated its medical and husbandry units within the Center Operations Division. The new Division is led by the Department's Chief of Shelter Medicine. This integration allows the Center Operations Division to work unison towards promoting a higher level of animal welfare to meet best practices for shelter standards.

**E. Operational Excellence**

The Department allocated for a new position to support its Safety and Training program in 2017. The position is working with Department staff and volunteer on improving safety and training needs around Department operations and practices. This position was also created to support the Department in creating a Department manual and establishing standard operations for our Field and Center Operations divisions, including our administration unit.

In 2017, the Department participated in an internal County audit. This allowed the Department to review its financial practices to improve its financial system and activities. The Department has received recommendations from this internal audit and has begun implementing them in 2017.

**F. Community Engagement**

In FY2017/18, the Department significantly increased community engagement activities through the development of a community outreach plan, formation of new partnerships and employing a new, unique approach to more effectively reach the people in the communities we serve. Highlights of our 253 community engagement activities include:

154 Remote Adoption Events

24 Community Tabling Events (National Night Out, Local Street fairs, etc.)

20 Emergency Education & Assistance Events  
18 Presentations to Local City Councils  
16 School Presentations  
11 Running Dog Events  
10 Presentations to Municipal Advisory Councils & Community Advisory Committees

**G. Rehoming Programs**

The Department has realized that while our adoption program is key to “rehoming” pets who come into our care, the real need is to find ways to keep pets in their homes. The Department has placed an emphasis on creating programs to keep animals in their homes through improving Lost and Found Services and a Retention Program.

The Department’s Pet Retention Program has been a driving force in reducing the number of animals coming into our shelters through the owner surrender process. A partnership between Tony La Russa’s Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) and the Department provides resources and interventions to help families keep or rehome their pets. Since its launch in 2016, the Department’s Pet Retention Program has effectively reduced the number of animals coming into our shelters by 43%.

**III. DEPARTMENT CHALLENGES**

**A. Internal to Department**

The Department’s ongoing challenge is to continue its best efforts to maintain program operations at satisfactory levels while working at reduced staffing levels.

**B. Internal to County Operations**

The Department has implemented Capital improvements for the Martinez and Pinole Shelters. These Capital projects coordinated through the County Public Works Department. At this time, the County Public Works Department has been addressing other County Capital project priorities. The Department plans to implement these projects in late 2018.

**C. External to County Operations**

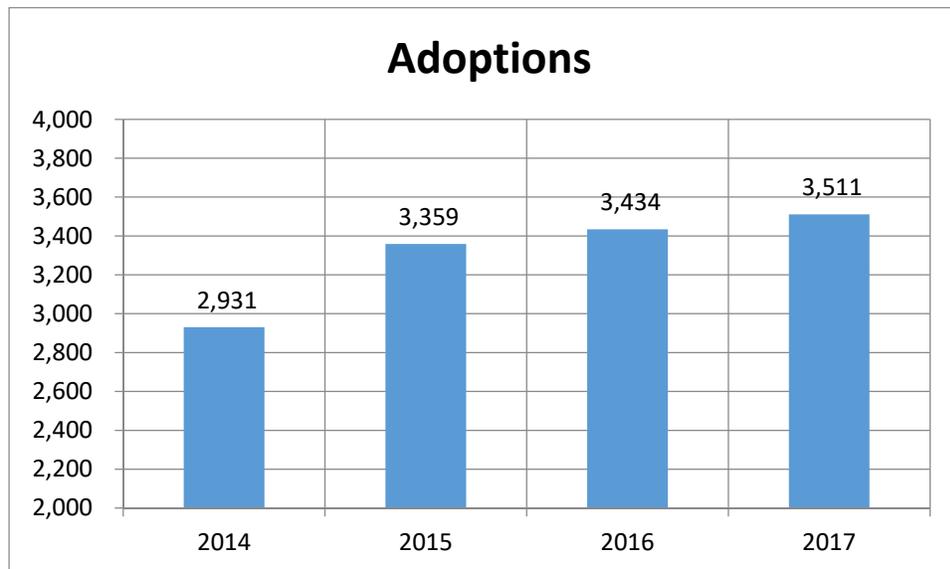
The Department has been required to increase its emergency and urgent care medical services for injured and sick animals. These services have affected the Department’s and other emergency veterinary service providers’ service capacity.

The service demands for Animal Control services from contracted cities continue to exceed the service capacity levels of the Department. The Department is currently reviewing contract mandates and requirements for contracted cities.

**IV. 2017 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**A. Goal:** Promote animal adoptions and transfers to increase live releases. The department plans to continue to promote pet adoption events through social media and other marketing platforms. These marketing efforts will assist the department to promote transfers to local rescues to save animals that need additional support and services, while seeking a new home.

**Measurement:** In June 2017, the department created a comprehensive performance report that accurately measured its key metrics, including the rate of adoptions and transfers to transfer partners. The report shows significant improvement in the areas of Live Release Rate (up 18% since 2014), adoptions (up 19% since 2014) and reduced euthanasia rate (down 71% since 2014). This data highlights the increase in positive outcomes to promote and identify new homes for sheltered animals impounded into the department's care.



- B. Goal:** Prioritize creating more low-cost vaccine and spay/neuter resources in the community while improving our internal processes for shelter animals and public animals from Contra Costa County.

**Measurement:** The department increased public surgery resources by working closely with Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation, Fix Our Ferals, PAWsitively Safe, SNIP and PawFund. The department also increased the volume of shelter animals who the Department spayed/neutered by evaluating and improving current processes for altering adopted animals. These improvements in turn expedited adoption processing by allowing animals to go home the same day they are adopted. This also helps to reduce costs by decreasing the overall length of stay for adopted animals. These efforts the Department accomplished while maintaining surgery and vaccine services to the public.

- C. Goal:** Evaluate and enhance our current policies and procedures to ensure the Department are providing a standard of care to meet the Five Freedom standards and using best practices for care in shelter and the field. Make certain the Department have clear, documented policies and procedures.

**Measurement:** The department has educated its staff on the Five Freedoms model. The department has also improved its standards of care by replacing 95% of cat housing enclosures to meet the needs of our cat population within the Veterinary Association best practices for feline husbandry. At the Pinole shelter, care standards

are being created to reduce the animal's length of stay and to provide adequate living spaces/exercise for impounded dogs, cats and rabbits.

- D. Goal:** Focus on building "people power" in the Department to sustain and grow our organizational capabilities through our community partners, employees and volunteers. Emphasize excellent customer service for internal and external customers.

**Measurement:** In January 2018, the department hosted a customer service training with SkillPath® for staff. The training focused on emotional intelligence and motivational interviewing skills for staff to utilize when engaging with the public and our non-profit partners. Additional training will be offered to staff to continue to support a strong customer service model to clients.

**V. DEPARTMENT DATA**

**BUDGET:** \$12,607,850

**FTE:** 89

**Staff Profile by Function and Level**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	FUNDED POSITIONS
Officials and Administrators	5
Professionals	12
Technicians	49
Administrative Support	16
Service Maintenance	7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>89</b>

**Current Staff Profile by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender**

RACE/ETHNICITY	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
White	13	23	<b>36</b>	66.6 %
African American/Black	3	1	<b>4</b>	7.4 %
Hispanic/Latino	4	5	<b>9</b>	16.6 %
Asian American	0	1	<b>1</b>	1.8 %
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander American	0	0	<b>0</b>	0 %
Filipino American	1	1	<b>2</b>	3.7 %
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	0	<b>2</b>	3.7 %
Other	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0 %

<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100%</b>
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