



Department of Animal Care and Control County of Los Angeles



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

“Unleashing the Future”



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ABOUT DACC

The County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) is one of the largest and most progressive animal care and control agencies in the United States. Our animal care centers (ACCs) serve unincorporated Los Angeles County and 47 contract cities, with a combined total population of more than three million residents. DACC officers patrol more than 3,400 square miles of cities, deserts, beaches, and mountains.

DACC operates two administrative offices in Long Beach and Norwalk. In addition, DACC operates seven animal care centers located in the cities of:

🐾 Agoura Hills	🐾 Carson/ Gardena	🐾 Castaic	🐾 Lancaster
🐾 Baldwin Park		🐾 Downey	🐾 Palmdale

These ACCs provide safe, humane care for animals that are lost or no longer wanted by their owners. The ACC staff and volunteers work tirelessly to reunite lost pets with their owners or find new homes for homeless pets.

The Department employs sworn animal control officers who serve as a key component of the community's public and animal safety program. Our animal control officers enforce state and local animal laws, respond to requests for service, and patrol neighborhoods seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Dispatched and monitored via the Department's Communications Centers, DACC's robust and professional team of animal control officers handle a myriad of field services calls each day. The following are the most common field service duties of your animal control officer team:

- 🐾 Protecting communities from dangerous animals
- 🐾 Rescuing sick, injured, or lost animals
- 🐾 Investigating animal cruelty, abuse, neglect, and illegal animal fighting
- 🐾 Enforcing local and state animal ordinances
- 🐾 Rescuing animals during natural disasters such as wildfires and mudslides.
- 🐾 Supporting local law enforcement officials.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) is dedicated to community responsiveness regarding public safety, animal welfare, and animal law enforcement. As with all public service agencies, DACC faces many competing demands that exceed available resources. A strategic plan is essential to focus our attention and energy on the most important challenges and opportunities before us. The DACC Strategic Plan prioritizes the most effective ways DACC can achieve its greatest impact in these areas.

The DACC Strategic Plan is the result of the collaborative efforts of 38 DACC staff members from various work areas and levels throughout the Department. It was created with particular focus on priorities identified by residents as well as alignment with the County of Los Angeles' 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan.

Special focus is placed on standards of animal care, serving the community, maximizing the use of technology, improving organizational effectiveness, and employee training and development.

The DACC Strategic Plan team also revised the Department's mission, vision, and values. Additionally, the Department's Code of Ethics was updated to reflect our high standards and expectations for conduct.

The DACC Strategic Plan includes a plan of implementation with action steps and milestones that tie into the overarching goals. The plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure we are on target to meet these objectives.

Please join me and the DACC Strategic Plan team in our enthusiasm and commitment to implementing this plan. This roadmap for our future clarifies our priorities for the next several years and drives our commitment to excellence. Together, we will unleash DACC's future and continue to lead the way for animal protection and enforcement!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Mayeda".

Marcia Mayeda, CAWA
Director of Animal Care and Control
County of Los Angeles
(Pictured with adopted dogs
Rebecca, Dino, and Lucy)

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

MISSION

Leading the nation in protecting people and animals through compassionate care, community education, proactive intervention, and effective enforcement.



VISION

An innovative animal care and control agency with state of the art facilities providing animals and residents high quality, effective, and caring service. In our communities, people and animals thrive, interact safely, and every animal has a safe and loving home.



VALUES

- 🐾 **Compassion:** We treat people and animals with empathy, kindness, and dignity.
- 🐾 **Customer Service:** We meet the needs of our customers by being welcoming, attentive, respectful, and resourceful.
- 🐾 **Excellence:** We provide high quality and responsive service and hold ourselves to the highest standards of professionalism.
- 🐾 **Integrity:** We are honest, trustworthy, ethical, and accountable for our actions.
- 🐾 **Safety:** We are uncompromising in our commitment to the health and safety of people and animals.
- 🐾 **Sustainability:** We employ best practices and innovate to provide services and build programs with the future in mind.



STRATEGIC PLAN

DACC'S 2020 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) has developed this three-year Strategic Plan to focus its priorities on the most important issues currently before the Department. The goals were identified through a collaborative process using feedback from residents, community partners, and staff. Four key areas of focus, DACC's goals, were identified for DACC to pursue.



These goals are:

1. Strengthening and standardizing animal care center practices.
2. Enhancing service to the community.
3. Developing our workforce.
4. Increasing operational effectiveness.



Strengthening and Standardizing Animal Care Center Practices

DACC will build on its strong foundation of excellence in animal shelter veterinary medicine to enhance and standardize operational practices among its seven animal care centers. These practices will align with national standards established by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and apply the Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare. The Master Plan for animal care center renovation and replacement will be finalized, and DACC will continue efforts to improve existing animal care center housing.

Animal behavior and enrichment programs will be revised and expanded to incorporate the latest knowledge in this emerging field of study. Environmental stressors for animals will be reduced and behavioral assessment and treatment programs will reflect best practices for evaluating and placing pets into lifelong homes.

DACC will also expand programs that support positive outcomes for animals, such as foster care for underage, ill, or injured animals; grooming for severely matted and neglected animals; medical services for ill or wounded animals; and transportation programs to relocate excess DACC animals to animal care organizations in other areas of the country for adoption opportunities in their communities. DACC will also explore opportunities to sustain its community partner-driven intervention programs that reduce pet relinquishment by pet owners.



Enhancing Service to the Community

DACC will improve key programs and procedures so its staff and volunteers can more promptly and knowledgeably provide customers with the information,

services, options, and resources to meet their needs. Key customer focused initiatives include expanded use of technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness, measuring customer experience and implementing continuous improvement processes, capturing more complete information about relinquished pets so future adopters can make better informed choices, and enhancing relationships with adoption and community partners to increase adoptions.

Central to our customer service initiative is growing DACC's volunteer program by improving volunteer recruitment and onboarding practices; adopting proven volunteer program management strategies from other organizations; and expanding roles and opportunities for volunteers.

DACC will increase community awareness of the many successful Department programs that save animal lives every day through increased and coordinated communication strategies including broadcast and print media, social media, state and national conferences, and regular community outreach activities. DACC will conduct a feasibility study to determine the benefits of rebranding its image to match the professionalism, compassion, and deep commitment of the workforce.



Developing the Workforce

DACC has identified several key objectives to further develop our workforce so staff is better prepared to perform at optimum levels. DACC will introduce existing employees to DACC's revised mission, vision, and values, as well as establish an improved onboarding program for new employees. A formal training academy for animal control officers will begin, so they may receive structured, thorough, and current training regarding DACC policies and best practices.

Leadership development training and mentoring will be provided to leaders through all levels in the Department. Further staff development initiatives include expanding DACC's successful Shared Leadership Philosophy through all command levels in every ACC.

We will create a more participative working environment to increase employee engagement and improve morale. Staff meetings, increased communication, and problem-solving forums will be used to engage employees at all organizational levels.



Increasing Operational Effectiveness

DACC will clarify organizational intent and expectations by undertaking a systematic review of all Department policies and procedures to ensure they are clear, current, and consistent with industry best practices. Metrics will be revised to provide transparent measurements of DACC mission performance. Other operational improvements include creating efficiencies to improve financial management. These include improving financial data capture to better inform operational decisions, engaging managers in budget oversight and planning, and expanding the capacity of the Department to recover costs.

I. Goal: Strengthen and standardize animal care center practices.

A. Strategy: Meet and exceed national standards of animal care for municipal animal care organizations.

- 1. Objective: Standardize animal care center practices for providing care to animals by using guidelines established by the Association of Shelter**

Veterinarians and results of surveys of best practices among animal care organizations.

2. Objective: Improve existing ACC housing to improve the health and well-being of care center animals by reviewing recommendations set forth in the DACC Master Plan for Facility Improvement and implementing those recommendations that can be completed by 2020.
3. Objective: Improve experiences for care center animals in the areas of animal enrichment and behavior, medical care, expanded placement opportunities, and foster care.

B. Strategy: Achieve sustainability of animal life-saving programs provided through collaborative partnerships.

1. Objective: Evaluate existing DACC programs supported through partnerships and identify opportunities for growth.
2. Objective: Identify and pursue funding sources to support current and proposed life-saving programs.

II. Goal: Enhance service to the community.

A. Strategy: Provide professional, knowledgeable, and helpful customer service at animal care centers and in the communities we serve.

1. Objective: Implement updated and thorough customer service training to provide professional, knowledgeable, and helpful customer service.
2. Objective: Revise customer service survey tool to improve data capture, and implement a continuous improvement process to incorporate improvements.
3. Objective: Improve information gathering process for collecting information from pet owners about their relinquished pets, so future adopters can make better informed adoption decisions.
4. Objective: Improve relationships with Adoption Partners through DACC staff support and better communication.

B. Strategy: Expand the DACC volunteer program and increase volunteer opportunities.

1. Objective: Conduct program assessment and best practices survey to identify areas of improvement for growing the volunteer program in terms of recruitment, retention, orientation, and additional volunteer roles.
2. Objective: Develop written recommendations for program improvements and present to the executive team for approval.
3. Objective: Develop growth plan for increasing volunteer participation, with SMART goal measurements.

C. Strategy: Re-brand DACC with an image that matches the professionalism, compassion, and deep commitment of the workforce and volunteers.

1. Objective: Evaluate existing name, logo and motto for retention or replacement.
2. Objective: Develop formal marketing and communication plan to publicize Department activities, services, accomplishments, and messages.
3. Objective: Create a community outreach plan for adoptions, education, and to provide resources for pets and their families.

D. Strategy: Maximize the use of technology to improve the customer experience.

1. Objective: Expand self-service options and information visuals at animal care centers so customers can use technology to enhance their adoption experience.
2. Objective: Identify and recommend opportunities to expand the use of technology by staff and volunteers at the animal care centers, so they may more effectively and efficiently perform their duties.
3. Objective: Identify and recommend opportunities to expand the use of technology to improve officer response to service calls in the community.

III. Develop our workforce.

A. Strategy: Develop a workforce ready and trained to perform at optimum levels.

1. Objective: Develop and begin a training academy for animal control officers to provide a standardized curriculum and field training officer (FTO) program.
2. Objective: Establish an improved onboarding program for all employees that includes organizational and workplace-specific orientation.
3. Objective: Implement a reorientation program for existing employees that includes DACC's revised mission, vision, and values.

B. Strategy: Create a more inclusive working environment to increase employee engagement.

1. Objective: Create a participative change process that engages employees at all organizational levels.
2. Objective: Design a first-level supervisor training program to provide instruction, develop leadership skills, and prepare them for advancement.
3. Objective: Expand methods of internal communication to better inform staff and volunteers about DACC activities, news, and events.

C. Formalize the Shared Leadership Philosophy program as the leadership framework to be used at all animal care centers.

1. Objective: Develop and implement Shared Leadership training program for new managers and veterinarians.
2. Objective: Establish quarterly shared leadership training sessions for all supervisor staff at ACCs.

IV. Increase operational effectiveness.

A. Strategy: Clarify and update organizational intent and expectations through current and clear policies and procedures (P&Ps).

1. Objective: Establish and implement a process to ensure ongoing review and update of policies.
2. Objective: Undertake a comprehensive review and restructuring of existing P&P manual to provide a separate manual for policies and a separate manual for procedures. Update all policies and update or create procedures as necessary.
3. Objective: Develop and implement training for newly released policies and procedures.

B. Strategy: Review and refine operational metrics to inform decisions and achieve operational excellence.

1. Objective: Engage key stakeholders and technical experts to review existing data sets and identify any additional activities to measure.
2. Objective: Identify a method for continual review of published reports to ensure accuracy.

C. Strategy: Create efficiencies to improve financial management.

1. Objective: Improve financial data capture to better inform operational decisions by expanding revenue collection categories and revising the financial Chart of Accounts.
2. Objective: Align animal management software database with financial systems.
3. Objective: Develop new financial reports to provide better insight and measurement of DACC's financial status.
4. Objective: Expand the capacity of the department to recover costs for services and to fund new programs.
5. Objective: Engage managers in budget oversight and planning.

Appendix

County of Los Angeles
Department of Animal Care and Control
Code of Ethics

Employees, volunteers, and other representatives of the Department of Animal Care and Control are recognized as official agents of the County of Los Angeles. Our fundamental duties are to serve the community, care for and protect the public and animals, and support the enforcement of related laws. The authority to perform these responsibilities is provided by local ordinances and State law. This is a position of public trust, and as such I understand that I am held to a higher standard of conduct than that of the general public. Therefore, I pledge to adhere to the following Code of Ethics:

Animal Care and Compassion

I will treat all animals, including my own, humanely and compassionately, both on and off duty. I will never inflict unnecessary pain or suffering, nor engage in cruel or inhumane treatment of any animal. I will follow all laws related to the care and keeping of animals as well as advocate that the Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare are met for all animals under my care or within the scope of my duties:

- ❖ Freedom from hunger and thirst
- ❖ Freedom from discomfort
- ❖ Freedom from pain, injury, or disease
- ❖ Freedom to express normal behavior
- ❖ Freedom from fear and distress

Reporting of Animal Abuse

I will report any knowledge of animal abuse or neglect to the appropriate local authorities. I will fully cooperate with any investigations or legal proceedings to see that all persons who are cruel or inhumane to animals are prosecuted in a court of law.

Non-Discrimination

I will comply with all provisions of the County Policy of Equity and will not discriminate or refuse service to anyone based on characteristics including, but not limited to, race, color, creed, age, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, immigration status, mental or physical disability, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or veteran status.

Customer Service

Customers may be external, such as members of the public, community partners, contract cities, other County departments, or vendors. Customers may also be internal, such as coworkers and volunteers. Each customer is a unique individual with different requirements and perspectives. I recognize this calls for a personal approach, and will actively listen and seek to understand how each customer's needs may be met. I will ensure that all customers and individuals I encounter throughout the course of my service are treated fairly, impartially, and respectfully. I will make every effort to promptly and knowledgeably provide customers with the information, services, options, and resources to meet those needs.

Confidentiality

I may see, hear, or learn confidential information in the performance of my duties, such as personal identifying information, individual animal information, and the details of field activities and criminal investigations. I will keep such information confidential except where legal, ethical, or professional obligations require otherwise. I will comply with all County and Department policies regarding privacy and the disclosure of information, including the creation and dissemination of social media postings.

Use of Authority

I will not use my authority or position as a County and/or Department employee to harass, coerce, unduly influence, seek favor or special consideration, or intimidate others for personal gain or advantage. I will not use my position to

obtain favors, gifts, discounts, or bribes. I will only use my County-issued badge and identification card for official work-related purposes. I will never use my County-issued badge or uniform, or that of another, to falsely impersonate a law enforcement officer or other authority.

Conflict of Interest

I will not participate in any situation in which my personal and/or financial considerations have the potential to influence or compromise my professional judgment, actions, or the Department's authority. I will disclose all real or potential conflicts of interest to my supervisor immediately. I will accurately account for and report all outside employment as required by County policy. I will not engage in any self-dealing transactions in which I take advantage of my position to place my personal interests above those of the Department, the County, the public, or the animals.

Lawful Conduct

I will ensure that my conduct at all times adheres to all Department and County of Los Angeles policies and procedures as well as local, State, and federal laws as they relate to animals and/or my employment or volunteer status.

Professional Conduct

I will conduct myself in such a manner as to inspire trust, confidence, and respect for myself, the County, and the Department. I will exercise sound judgment, fairness, respect, and courtesy in all my duties and interactions. I will not engage in, nor condone inappropriate actions, conversations, gossip, or rumor. I will follow the recognized code of ethics for any related professional organizations in which I have been certified or taken an oath. I will strive to be seen as a role model for others, and be mindful of how my words and actions may impact the Department's mission and image.

Appearance

I understand that my appearance is a reflection of the Department, and will meet all Department uniform, professional dress, and grooming standards. I will ensure

my appearance projects an image of professionalism that inspires confidence and respect from others.

Character

I will demonstrate integrity and ethics in all that I do. I will be honest and not withhold any information necessary for the efficient and effective operations of the Department. I will report any misconduct in the workplace to my supervisor.

Accountability

I understand I am accountable to the best interests of the public and animals. I will recognize and correct my mistakes, and accept responsibility for my actions in an honest and open manner.

Competency and Skills

I will accurately represent my education, training, experience, and competencies as they relate to my duties. I will seek assistance for any problem that impairs my performance. I will not provide advice for problems outside the bounds of my competency. I will correct misleading or inaccurate information made by others concerning my qualifications or services. I will accept direction, training, and be receptive to learning new information or skills. I will maintain a current and high level of competency and awareness regarding Department policies and procedures, applicable animal laws, and County policies.

Teamwork

I will demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and support of others at all times. I will assist my coworkers, volunteers, and community partners to meet the Department's mission and goals. I will not disparage, demean, or undermine the work of others.

Health and Safety

I will be committed to health and safety. I will report any unsafe working conditions and injuries to my supervisor immediately, and will not knowingly or negligently create unsafe or unhealthy working conditions for myself or others. I

will comply with all State of California mandated reporting responsibilities regarding the abuse or neglect of children, dependent adults, and elders.

Supervisory Responsibilities

If I am responsible for supervising the work of others, I will do so in accordance with all County and Department policies. I will treat those who report to me with courtesy and respect, and provide them with the coaching, mentoring, and training to safely and effectively perform their duties. I will hold staff accountable for their performance and use progressive discipline to correct substandard performance. I will effectively communicate the Department's mission, vision, and values to all personnel. I will ensure Department policies, procedures, and directives are followed by all staff and volunteers for whom I am responsible.

Excellence

I will strive to always provide high quality and responsive service and will hold myself to the highest standards of professionalism, knowledge, skills, and abilities. I will demonstrate initiative and commitment to producing the best work product I am capable of doing.

PREPARED BY:

Eagle Leadership Group, LLC

Oct 2017

