



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

**ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL** | **redefining CARE**



Marcia Mayeda, Director

September 21, 2023

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Lindsey Horvath  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Marcia Mayeda *Marcia Mayeda*  
Director

**FINAL REPORT BACK ON BOARD MOTION  
(ITEM 10, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 20, 2022)**

This is the fifth and final monthly report back to your Board regarding the subject motion. The advisory committee met in person for a two-day summit on August 22 and 23, 2023, to discuss and make recommendations for the following remaining topics under review.

Benchmarks

The committee established best practice benchmarks that will inform the Department about animal population management, pathway planning for live outcomes, and reduction of animal euthanasia. These benchmarks are shown on Attachment A. The Department will be gathering the baseline metrics and reviewing them on a quarterly basis.

Prevention Programs to Minimize Owner Surrenders

The committee also discussed ways to expand prevention programs to minimize owner surrenders. It was generally agreed that expanding programs would require investment in staffing to provide direct counseling and service referrals to pet owners, as well as a manager to oversee the program and engender resources from the community to support the programming. These staffing recommendations were included in the

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29525 Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, CA 91301  
(818) 991-0071

Baldwin Park ACC  
4275 N. Elton Street  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 962-3577

Carson/Gardena ACC  
216 W. Victoria Street  
Gardena, CA 90248  
(310) 523-9566

Castaic ACC  
31044 N. Charlie Canyon Rd.  
Castaic, CA 91384  
(661) 257-3191

Downey ACC  
11258 S. Garfield Ave.  
Downey, CA 90242  
(562) 940-6898

Lancaster ACC  
5210 W. Avenue I  
Lancaster, CA 93536  
(661) 940-4191

Palmdale ACC  
38550 Sierra Highway  
Palmdale, CA 93550  
(661) 575-2888

Administrative Office  
5898 Cherry Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90805  
(800) 253-3555

June 20, 2023, report back to your Board. Funding for services and supplies will be required as well.

Nevertheless while prevention programs are an important part of the solution, there are larger, systemic issues at play that will require more than increased staffing and are largely out of the Department's control. There are limits to what can be accomplished when access to medical care, veterinary shortages, and housing restrictions continue to be a barrier in keeping pets and families together.

The committee recommends that Los Angeles County increases the size limit of dogs allowed in Los Angeles County-managed housing and encourage landlords to do the same. Size restrictions are the primary cause for owner-surrendered animals as pet owners are forced to seek alternate housing. Most housing limits dogs to those that weigh 20 pounds. Allowing dogs that weigh more will create more housing and pet retention opportunities for pet owners and their dogs. The Department will also reach out to leaders in these areas to advocate for this change.

Barriers to owner-redemptions will also be explored. Many of these are financial and seeking funding to assist in addressing these situations can help reduce or eliminate barriers to owner redemption of pets. For example, subsidizing redemption fees to allow pet owners to reclaim stray animals they otherwise would not be able to take home would reduce the de facto owner surrender of pets for financial reasons. Our Department (DACC) will begin providing owner redemption information in multiple languages to reach pet owners whose primary language is not English.

Access to affordable veterinary medicine is another reason pet owners surrender their pets. DACC will seek additional veterinary participants in its Care Voucher Program that provides vouchers for medical treatments. It will also closely follow California Assembly Bill 1399, which will allow for veterinary telehealth options to make veterinary medicine more accessible for pet owners. If this bill passes, DACC will provide informational resources to educate pet owners about this resource.

Other opportunities to reduce owner-surrendered animals require additional funding. These include providing medical care to pets whose owners are surrendering them for medical reasons so they may be treated and remain with their family. Establishing a fund to provide pet deposits for rentals will allow pets to remain with their family when moving. More funding to provide low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, including at DACC animal care centers (ACCs) on weekends, will reduce the number of unwanted puppies and kittens surrendered to our ACCs. DACC will continue to work with the CEO to collaborate and prioritize funding needs as well as seek other funding opportunities.

### Adoption Partners

The committee reviewed the survey results from the Adoption Partner (AP) survey and developed recommendations to improve and expand partnerships with AP animal rescue organizations. These include funding a designated AP Coordinator at each animal care center to provide dedicated service and communications to these organizations. Dedicated coordinators can obtain and share photos and videos of the animals and network them among interested groups to find more adoption opportunities for the animals. They can also provide better customer service to the APs by managing the timely transfer of animals to the AP including providing medications and necessary information and completing all necessary paperwork. This would provide the AP with a separate pathway for service due to their unique and often more time-consuming needs, while at the same time enhancing customer service for the public by shortening their waiting times. The committee also identified areas to streamline the AP application process that the Department will implement.

### Review of DACC Policies

The committee has completed its review of relevant policies (see Attachment B) and the Department will begin the process of policy implementation. DACC has a standing Policy Review Committee (PRC) that regularly reviews policies and procedures each year to ensure they are current and reflective of best practices. The PRC will continue to review future policies and procedures with the advisory committee's work in mind and apply the strategies developed from the committee's work in future policy updates.

The advisory committee plans to meet one more time in October to close out the work done on this motion. The Department is deeply grateful for the thoughtful advice and suggestions provided by advisory committee members and their time spent on the many aspects of this Board motion.

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### Attachments

c: Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Animal Care Board Deputies

Benchmark	Priority	Definition	Metrics	Comments
<b>1. Live Release Rate (LRR)</b>	<b>1</b>	Number of live outcomes divided by live admissions	Calculation by Animal Type, Age, Size, and by Animal Care Center	Live Release Rate will be used to determine the % of animals that have live outcomes and what sub-type needs more attention and resources.
<b>(a) Live Intake</b>	<b>1</b>	All animals not deceased upon arrival. The majority of these animals include strays and owner surrenders.	Calculation by Animal Type, Animal Care Center, and Zip Code of Intake	Live Intake will be used to determine how many animals are brought into each animal care center and how many owner surrenders are deferred through intervention programs.
<b>(b) Outcomes</b>	<b>1</b>	The final outcome for any live animal admitted to an animal care center.	Calculation by Outcome Type, Euthanasia Reasons, Animal Care Center, Public Adoptions v. Rescue Animals, and Transfers between ACCs	Intake and outcome data needed to determine LRR.  <u><b>Primary Measurements:</b></u> Adoption (%) out of total outcomes  <u><b>Supplementary Measurements:</b></u> Euthanasia Reasons (month to month)
<b>(i) Return-to-Owners (RTOs)</b>	<b>1</b>	Animals that are returned to their owners at an animal care center or in the field.	Calculations by RTO Type, Breed, Animals Deferred, and Zip Code	Opportunities for pet reunifications in the field tied heavily to field staffing.  Apply equity lens to RTO rates (i.e., location, ethnicity, and other identifiable factors)
<b>2. Pathway Planning</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>(a) Managed Intake</b>	<b>1</b>	Strategy to reduce the flow of both owned pets and homeless animals into their care, which is accomplished by partnering with the community and providing resources and solutions.	Calculations by Animal Deferments, by each pet intervention program (Care Voucher, RTO assistance, and other PAF Programs), and by Zip Codes of pet owners assisted	Currently, most of these programs are sustained through donations and grants from external partners.  <u><b>Supplementary Measurements:</b></u> Intake diversion by type (e.g., field, hotline) Intake diversion by need (e.g., medical, food, behavior, etc.)  Diversions, LOS, fast-tracking of animals
<b>(b) Length of Stay</b>	<b>1</b>	Number of days between an animal's initial intake and final outcome.	Calculate Length of Stay by Outcome Type, Animal Type, Size, Age, Animal Care Center, Euthanasia Reason, Designation, and Intake Type	The overall goal is to reduce average length of stay by developing pathway plans for each animal and increasing positive animal outcomes.
<b>(c) Euth of Adoptable</b>			Calculations by Animal Type, Size, Breed, and Euthanasia Reason	Increasing adoptions (looking at particular zip codes, socioeconomic factors, other trackable identifiers)

**Legend:**

Neo - Neonate  
Juv - Juvenile  
OS - Owner Surrender  
PAF - Pets Are Family program  
LOS - Length of Stay  
ACC - Animal Care Center  
RTO - Return to Owner

<b>4. Staffing (FTEs)</b>	<b>1</b>	Measuring the capacity of each care center to meet the basic needs of animals and customers, and to implement robust intervention programming.	Calculations by Housing, Field, Medical, Behavior, Pathway Planning operations.  Calculations by Vacancy Rate, Staff Retention, Staff Calling Out, Light Duty, Injuries, Job Satisfaction.	DACC Five-Year Staffing Plan submitted to Board of Supervisor.)
<b>5. Community Cats</b>	<b>2</b>	Outdoor, free-roaming cats.	Calculations by Spay/Neuters performed, #of Clinics Held, Zip Codes of Community Cats Spayed/Neutered, Kitten Finder Fosters, Resources (1) offered and (2) given	
<b>6. Volunteer Program</b>	<b>3</b>	The volunteer program includes both care center and foster volunteers who support the department by providing direct care, networking, and other critical services to animals in care.	Calculations by Active Volunteers, Volunteer Demographics, Volunteer Satisfaction, and Volunteer Retention	Goals are to increase volunteer engagement, retention, and recruitment.
<b>7. Foster Program</b>	<b>3</b>	Program made-up of volunteers who provide lifesaving foster care for vulnerable animal populations such as unweaned kittens or animals with medical needs.	Calculate by Active Foster Care Providers, Animals Placed into Foster Care (% and timeline), and Foster Animals by Type	The foster program is essential for providing temporary care and socialization for animals with behavior or medical needs, or for unweaned kittens and puppies.

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**Note:** These benchmarks were developed in collaboration with the board motion committee made-up of leaders from nationally recognized animal welfare organizations.

DACC Policy Review - Board Motion Committee 2023	
Policy Name	Summary of Changes
Adoption	Updated to better reflect current DACC policies and to remove potential barriers to adoption.
Adoption Partners	Updated to remove language that might discourage rescues from applying to become an Adoption Partner or existing Adoption Partners from pulling (rescuing) more animals.
Animal Intake Procedures	Updated to better reflect current DACC operations and to make policies clearer for care center staff.
Euthanasia	Added language regarding the new three-plea system and redefined "adoptable animals"
Good Neighbor Cat Program	Revised to better align with DACC's Managed Intake strategies
Lost Animal Recovery and Assistance	Updated to better reflect current DACC operations and to integrate new resources available for lost/found pets.
Canine Behavior Assessment	Added more specific and refined language to make assessments less subject to interpretation by care center staff.
Chameleon Photographs	Added additional strategies for obtaining better photographs of animals upon intake.
Holding Times and Available Dates	Modernized language; changed available adoption date for kittens from eight to six weeks.
Owner Relinquished Animals	Added language on appointments for pet owners looking to surrender their pets; this will allow staff to engage with pet owners and connect them with resources to prevent pet surrenders.
Impounded Animal with Traceable Identification	Revised language to make duties and expectations clearer for animal control officers.
Pathway Planning <sup>1</sup>	New policy to develop a proactive and intentional plan for each animal's specific condition and the availability of DACC staffing and resources.

<sup>1</sup>The Pathway Planning policy was a new policy that was developed in collaboration with the board motion committee.