



ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

California Domestic Animal Crisis

Legislative Briefing by Animal Rescuers for Change



Rescue Community Perspective

California in Dire Need of:

- Sustainable Spay–Neuter Funding
- Shelter Transparency & Accountability Legislation
- Illegal Breeding Control & Enforcement Legislation
- Legal Guardrails on Social Media Animal Sales
- Mandatory Animal Identification Legislation
- A Statewide Task Force to address the escalating crisis, including legislators, key animal-welfare stakeholders, and rescue representation

Prevention, transparency, and accountability are the only path out of crisis.

Table of Contents:

Introduction	3
What Rescues Are Seeing on the Ground	4
Collapse in Low Cost Public Animal Spay-Neuter Support	5
When Prevention Fails: The \$1,500 Cost of Spaying a Single Kitten.....	7
Shelters Contribute to Animal Overpopulation	8
Average Reproduction Rates for Domestic Animals	9
Veterinarian ‘shortage’: California gained 310 Veterinarians since 2018	10
Growing Euthanasia Across the State	11
Puppies Flood Shelters and Communities	15
Growing Stray Animal Population	17
Unhoused Communities Contribute to Animal Overpopulation	20
Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum	22
Inconsistent Shelters Metrics Undermine Shelter Accountability	29
Overwhelmed Shelter System Indicators	30
Growing Contagious Disease Outbreaks Across the Shelters	33
Unsafe overcrowding at Shelters, Growing Multi-Dog Kenneling	37
Shelter Intake Limits Offload Statutory Public Responsibility to Residents across CA communities	38
Growing Communities Pleas to Overwhelmed Rescues	43
Rampant backyard breeding with no guardrails or enforcement, overwhelms communities, shelters and rescues	46
Lack of Animal Identification Fuels Overpopulation and Cruelty	47
Sharp Return To Field Expansion & Juvenile Kittens inclusion in RTF.....	48
Costly Realities to Overwhelmed Rescues	51
Growing Barriers to Rescues	52
When Bureaucracy Kills	53
Rescues Support the System—They Do Not Replace It	55
California Animal Welfare Legislation: What Keeps Failing	58
A Call for Collaboration and Practical Reform	59

Introduction

Who We Are

Animal Rescuers for Change (ARFC) is a growing statewide coalition of close to **100 California nonprofit rescue organizations, spay/neuter providers, and animal-welfare partners** working to address the escalating animal-sheltering crisis across the state. ARFC is a **nonpartisan, apolitical coalition** focused solely on **public safety, animal welfare, and systemic solutions pertaining to Domestic Animals Crisis**.

We fully respect and support the critical work performed by California's public shelters. Across the state, **200+ municipal and contracted shelters** operate daily under extraordinary pressure to serve their communities. Rescues work **alongside shelters—not in opposition**—as an essential part of California's animal-welfare ecosystem. **With more than 3,000 nonprofit rescue groups statewide, rescues collectively pull approximately 16–19% of shelter animals**, directly reducing Municipal euthanasia rates, **while also saving thousands of community animals** diverting them from ever enter shelter systems.

Our coalition was formed in response to an increasingly **urgent and unsustainable reality**. Communities across California are experiencing growing desperation as the number of homeless animals rises, and members of the public are reaching out to rescues in record numbers seeking help. **Shelters and rescues alike are overwhelmed** by volumes far beyond what can be safely or responsibly managed. Newly enacted Managed or restricted shelter intake policies have shifted extraordinary pressure onto the public and the rescue community—a largely volunteer-driven network that is now **financially strained, capacity-limited, and exhausted**. Mitigating crisis by **closing shelter doors to communities**, while failing to address root causes such as **illegal animal breeding and lack of affordable spay/neuter**, does not solve the underlying problem. Legislators may receive curated narratives of declining intake, while communities continue to struggle. We advocate for a **balanced, honest conversation**.

As a result, rescue organizations and shelters are now spending **thousands of dollars per animal** to transport dogs and cats out of state simply to find safety, because California shelters and communities are saturated with animals produced through **irresponsible breeding, insufficient access to spay/neuter services, and inconsistent enforcement**. While these transports save individual lives, they are **not a sustainable solution**. They serve as temporary relief to a few while the root causes—**overproduction, insufficient prevention, and lack of accountability**—remain unaddressed. “Managed intake” policies function as **band-aids**, rather than resolving the systemic drivers of the crisis.

Because rescues are performing a **significant share of frontline lifesaving work**, policy decisions affecting sheltering, intake practices, transparency, and enforcement must **include rescue voices from the ground**. When policies are developed without rescue input, they risk being made in a vacuum—**disconnected from operational reality** and unintentionally worsening outcomes for animals and communities alike.

To support **coordinated, responsible advocacy**, ARFC has implemented a grassroots advocacy module that securely tracks communications and enables us to provide accurate summaries to advocates, elected officials, and legislators considering animal-welfare legislation. This platform is powered by **SoftEdge**, a government relations and advocacy software trusted by multiple **501(c)(3) organizations nationwide for more than 20 years**.

Our Team: [Board and Team Page](#) & [501\(c\)\(3\) Members Rescues page](#)

What Rescues Are Seeing on the Ground

A Call for Prevention, Transparency, and Accountability in CA

On behalf of our grassroots rescue coalition and the undersigned organizations, we respectfully bring to your attention a rapidly escalating crisis in the State of California that requires urgent state and federal recognition and support. Since the onset of COVID, California has experienced a near-collapse of its public animal sheltering infrastructure, marked by extreme overpopulation, preventable disease outbreaks, rising euthanasia, and increasing public health risks — while meaningful statewide action has not followed.

We are voters, taxpayers, and lifelong animal welfare advocates, representing more than **90 California-based nonprofit organizations** united under the coalition **Animal Rescuers for Change**. We come forward with deep concern for both animals and the communities now forced to absorb the consequences of a system in crisis. Despite repeated legislative efforts, budget proposals, and public appeals, California has consistently failed to invest in even the most basic preventive measures, including accessible spay/neuter services, vaccination programs, backyard breeding prevention and shelter data transparency.

As a result:

- An estimated **over 90% of shelter animals are unsterilized and unvaccinated** at intake (our Estimate)
- Access to low-cost spay/neuter services has collapsed, even as the **number of licensed veterinarians in California has increased compared to prior years**.
- Mass euthanasia events driven by contagious diseases such as parvovirus and distemper are occurring with alarming frequency, while rabies has re-emerged in wildlife nationally, posing renewed risks to public health.
- At high-intake shelters **up to 57 Adoptable animals per day** are placed on euthanasia lists; recently, nearly **200 animals were euthanized** within another Los Angeles County shelter system — numbers not seen in the pre-COVID decade. These events are shocking to communities and overwhelmed the already exhausted rescue network.

California also lacks a comprehensive, transparent shelter data system, leaving policymakers without an accurate understanding of the scale of the crisis. Our analysis found that **only approximately 30% of California municipal shelters** participated in a nationwide data aggregation platform (Shelter Animals Count), a privately operated system that has since restricted public access. Even basic shelter data now often requires approval requests and is frequently denied — a model that does not meet any reasonable definition of transparency.

Despite its limited scope, the previously available **underreported data** clearly indicated that **by the end of 2023, California ranked first nationally in both euthanasia numbers and homeless animal populations**. Today, those public dashboards and historical statistics are no longer accessible, further obscuring the reality on the ground and preventing informed decision-making.

Collapse in Low Cost Public Animal Spay-Neuter Support

Reduction in Public Spay-Neuter Priorities, Example - San Jose

Until 2021, San José and Santa Clara County operated **extensive public low-cost spay-neuter programs** through the municipal shelter and partner veterinary clinics, providing up to **6,400 surgeries per year**.

According to a **2018 City report**, low-cost public spay-neuter statistics were previously included in annual City reporting. **Beginning in 2023, these statistics were removed** from City reports and are absent from **2023–2025 publications**.

ARFC conducted an analysis of **San José spay-neuter service levels from 2016–2025** using City reports and data obtained through **Public Records Act requests**, as spay-neuter data is **not publicly available on the shelter's website**. Currently:

- Spay-neuter service levels are **not published online**
- Historical intake data is **not publicly accessible (for past years 2016-19)**
- Data collection requires **time-consuming public records requests**

While some data gaps remain, available records show a **clear decline in public spay-neuter services**.

Why this matters:

Low-cost spay-neuter is one of the most effective tools for preventing overpopulation and reducing shelter intake. The reduction of services and lack of transparent reporting raise serious community concerns and undermine efforts to address the growing animal welfare crisis statewide.

Spay-Neuter Services: Public Information Removed, it used to be published in the past (example below)

Published spay-neuter service announcements for shelter clinic were available on the **San José Animal Shelter website until 2019-20**. Currently, **no public spay-neuter services are listed or available for city residents**, and no sign-up information is provided.

San Jose Animal Care & Services LOW-COST SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC

The City of San Jose offers a low-cost Spay/Neuter Clinic at the San Jose Animal Care Center. Our clinic operates below cost, so donations are welcome and appreciated. You can make donations at the Animal Care Center or by visiting www.sanjoseanimals.com

APPOINTMENTS: www.sanjoseanimals.com/clinic.asp

For fastest service, request an appointment online. If you do not have internet access, call (408)794-7201.

Tamed/Owned Cats

Appointments for cats are available Wednesday – Friday. All tame/owned cats must have an appointment. Kittens must be at least 12 weeks old and weigh at least 3 pounds. All cats must be in individual pet carriers or humane traps.

Cat Spay & Neuter Rates	Males	Females
Incorporated Residents*	\$15	\$20
San Jose, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Saratoga		
Non-Residents	\$65	\$75

Dogs

Appointments for dogs are available Tuesday - Friday. Dogs must be between the ages of 4 months - 6 years, weigh less than 80 pounds, be friendly, and in excellent health.

Dog Spay & Neuter Rates	Males	Females
Incorporated Residents*	\$20	\$30
San Jose, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Saratoga		
Non-Residents	\$75	\$100

An additional \$15 will be added to the cost of surgery for pets that are pregnant, lactating, in heat or obese.

Fee Schedule for Vaccinations/Treatment Services for Cats & Dogs

(available at time of surgery only)

Rabies	\$6
FVRCP (cats) or DAPP (dogs)	\$7
Bordetella (dogs) or FeLV (cats)	\$12
Deworming	\$15
Flea Treatment	\$12
Microchip	\$25
Ear Mite Treatment	\$17

OTHER LOW-COST SPAY/NEUTER CLINICS & RESOURCES

Animal Birth Control Assistance (408)244-8351

Referral service to participating veterinarians

for low-cost spay/neuter for cats and dogs

from Palo Alto to San Jose.

Authority (SVACA)

Serving residents of Campbell, Monte Sereno and Santa Clara only.

www.svaca.org

(408)64-0344

St. Francis of Assisi Low-Cost Clinic (408)683-0866

Low-cost spay/neuter and vaccination clinic in San Martin.

www.saintfrancisofassisi.org

Nike Animal Rescue Foundation (408)224-6273

(NARF)

Vouchers for low-cost spay/neuter services

in east San Jose.

www.narfrescue.org

Palto Alto Animal Services (650)496-5933

Low-cost spay/neuter and vaccination

clinic in Palo Alto.

www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pol/animal_service.asp

(408)270-7500

Alma Rock & Animal Hospital (408)258-7735

2810 Alma Rock Avenue

San Jose, CA 95127

(408)258-7735

Animal Clinic (408)927-8387

45 Constitution

Saratoga, CA 95070

(408)241-8200

Almaden Animal Clinic*

6055 Meridian Ave #10

San Jose, CA 95120

(408)927-8387

Animal Medical Center (408)267-7387

1200 Hillsdale Avenue

San Jose, CA 95124

(408)267-7387

Animal Medical Clinic (408)262-7190

1405 N. Milpitas Boulevard

Saratoga, CA 95070

(408)262-7190

VCA Bassom Animal Hospital (408)371-5630

2175 S. Bascom Avenue

Campbell, CA 95008

(408)371-5630

Bay Cities Animal Hospital (408)369-1788

3370 N. Milpitas Boulevard

Saratoga, CA 95070

(408)369-1788

Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (408)764-0344

3370 N. Milpitas Boulevard

Saratoga, CA 95070

(408)764-0344

Saint Francis of Assisi

1657 S. Bascom Avenue

Campbell, CA 95008

(408)369-1788

Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (SVACA)

Serving residents of Campbell, Monte Sereno and Santa Clara only.

www.svaca.org

St. Francis of Assisi Low-Cost Clinic (408)683-0866

Low-cost spay/neuter and vaccination clinic in San Martin.

www.saintfrancisofassisi.org

Alma Rock & Animal Hospital (408)270-7500

5647 Nell Avenue

San Jose, CA 95123

(408)972-2000

Carmel Valley Animal Hospital (408)778-7783

5617 Silver Creek Valley Road

San Jose, CA 95138

(408)270-7500

Cochrane Animal Hospital (408)778-7783

18650 Adams Court

Morgan Hill, CA 95037

(408)778-7783

Humane Society Silicon Valley (901 Ames Avenue

Morgan Hill, CA 95035

(408)778-7783

Has various programs in addition to the Santa Clara County Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program. Please

specify which you are interested in the Santa Clara County Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program.

VCA San Martin Animal Hospital (408)983-5985

12955 Mountain Road

San Martin, CA 95054

(408)983-4777

Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (408)764-0344

3370 N. Milpitas Boulevard

Saratoga, CA 95070

(408)764-0344

Saint Francis of Assisi

1657 S. Bascom Avenue

Campbell, CA 95008

(408)369-1788



Collapse in Low Cost Public Animal Spay-Neuter Support

Shift in Public Spay-Neuter Priorities, Example - San Jose

PUBLIC WORKS

ANIMAL CARE & SERVICES

Animal Care & Services (ACS) provides animal licensing programs, field services, adoption/rescue programs, spay/neuter programs, and medical services through its Animal Care Center. ACS serves San José, Cupertino, Milpitas, and Saratoga.

As of July 1, 2025, there were approximately 59,000 licensed animals in ACS's service area. Of licensed animals, 70 percent were dogs and 30 percent were cats. In 2024-25, the Center took in about 11,200 animals, excluding wildlife.

In 2024-25, ACS reported that the live release rate was 89 percent for all animals (target: 90 percent). The average length of stay was 20 days for dogs (target: 22 days), 14 days for cats (target: 18 days), and 29 for other animals (target: 20 days).

In 2024-25, animal service officers responded to more than 17,000 service calls, including follow-ups, a slight increase from the previous year. For emergency calls, such as dangerous situations or critically injured or sick animals, the time target is to respond to calls within one hour. In 2024-25, ACS met this target 97 percent of the time.

Note: See our audit of [Animal Care and Services: Addressing Capacity Constraints and Updating Shelter Protocols Will Help Improve Animal Outcomes](#).

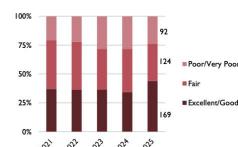
KEY FACTS (2024-25)

Animal licenses in service area	59,000
Incoming animals to Center*	11,200
Calls for service completed	17,000
Average length of stay (dog/cat/other)	20/14/29 days

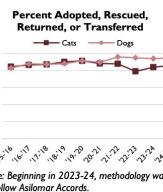
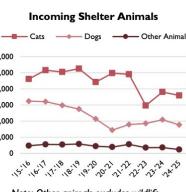
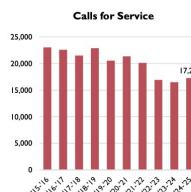
*Incoming animals does not include wildlife.

Community Survey

Residents' rating of the City providing animal control services



Low-cost public spay-neuter statistics—**have been removed entirely from annual City reports starting from 2023 - 2025 reports.**



City of San José – Annual Report on City Services 2024-25

116

Low-cost public spay-neuter statistics—**previously included in annual City reports in previous years preceding 2023 - 2025 reports.**

PUBLIC WORKS

ANIMAL CARE & SERVICES

The City provides animal licensing programs, patrol services, adoption/rescue programs, spay/neuter programs, and medical services through its Animal Care Center (Center). The Center serves San José, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, and Saratoga.

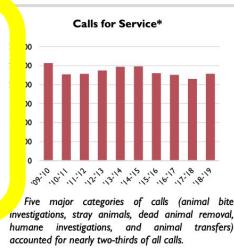
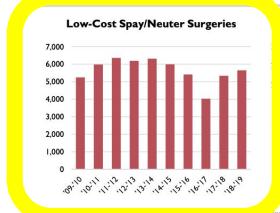
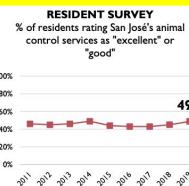
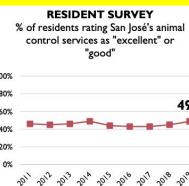
As of July 1, 2019, there were over 61,000 licensed animals in the Center's service area, up from about 54,000 in the previous year. Of licensed animals, 75 percent were dogs and 25 percent were cats. The Center provided about 5,650 low-cost spay/neuter surgeries to the public.

In 2018-19, the Center sheltered 17,156 animals, about the same as the previous year. Among incoming animals, 88 percent of dogs and 90 percent of cats were adopted, rescued, returned to their owner, or transferred, an increase from the previous year. The Center's overall live release rate is about 92 percent, consistent with the prior year.

In 2018-19, animal service officers responded to about 22,900 service calls, an increase from the previous year. For emergency calls, such as dangerous situations or critically injured or sick animals, the time target is to respond to calls within one hour. In 2018-19, the Center met this target 95 percent of the time.

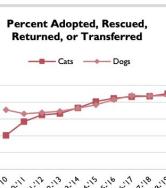
KEY FACTS (2018-19)

Location of Animal Care Center	2750 Monterey Road
Licensing costs (dog / cat)	Starts at \$25 / \$15
Animal licenses in service area (as of July 1, 2019)	61,390
Incoming animals to Center	17,156
Live release rate	92%
Calls for service completed	22,877
Low-cost spay/neuter surgeries	5,652



Incoming Shelter Animals

Cats (red), Dogs (pink), Other Animals (black)



126

City of San José – Annual Report on City Services 2018-19



ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

When Prevention Fails: The \$1,500 Cost of Spaying a Single Kitten

Rising Costs, Overcrowded Shelters, and a Growing Animal Population

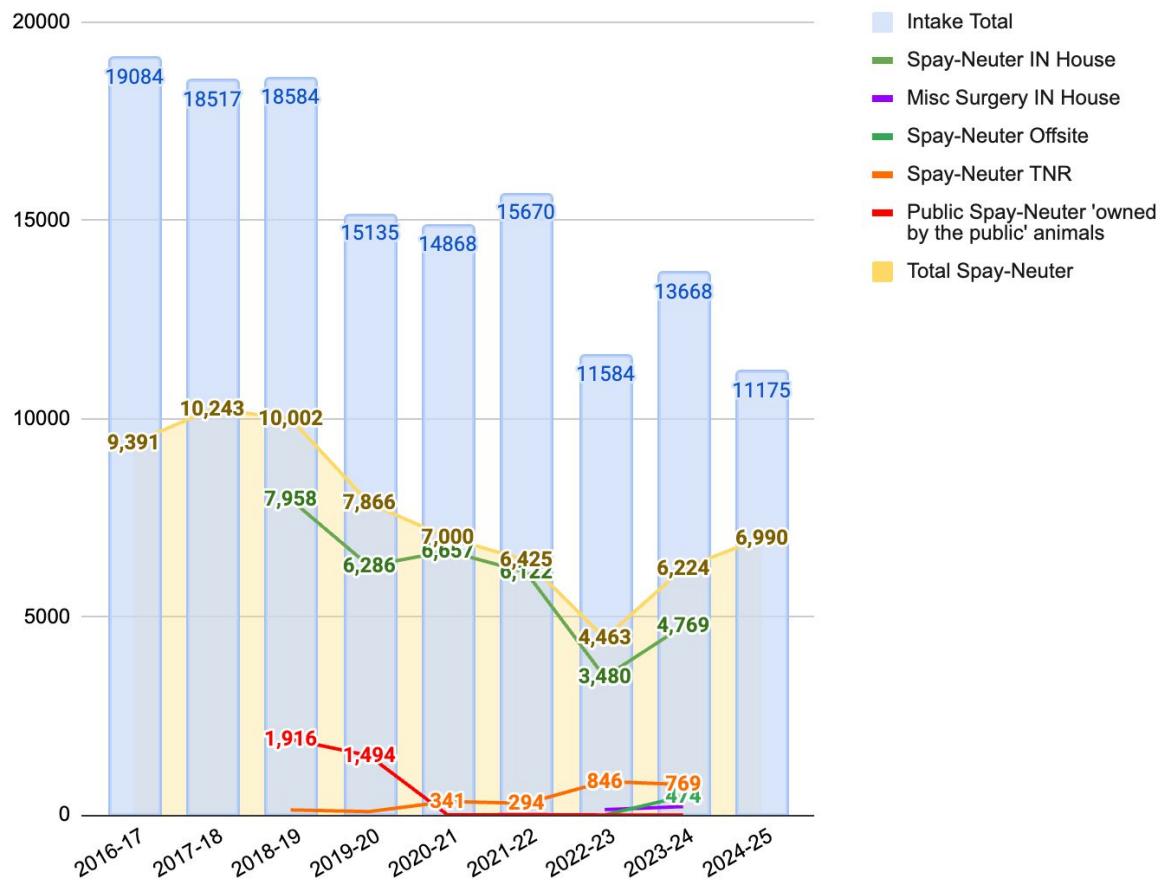
Spay and neuter surgeries have become prohibitively expensive, and the consequences are already unfolding. Many families can no longer afford routine procedures at private veterinary clinics, forcing them to delay or forgo care. The result is not a future risk—it is a present reality: more accidental litters, more puppies and kittens entering shelters, and an animal population growing faster than the system can manage. The spay-neuter crisis is no longer coming. **It is here.**

Camden Pet Hospital							1/12/2026
WWW.CAMDENPETHOSPITAL.COM							Page 1 / 1
4960 Camden Avenue							
San Jose, CA 95124-5798							
(408) 265-2200							
[REDACTED]							Client ID: 25817
[REDACTED]							Estimate ID: 25817
[REDACTED]							Expiration Date: 3/13/2026
San Jose, CA 95118							
Patient ID: 34910	Species: Feline	Weight: 3.80	pounds	Sex: Female			
Patient Name: Rosa	Breed: Shorthair, Domestic	Birthday: 07/30/2025					
Description	Staff Name	Low Qty.	Low Amount	High Qty.	High Amount		
1/12/2026 EXAM PRE-ANESTHETIC	Jelena Janjusevic, DVM	1.00	\$0.00	1.00	\$0.00		
1/12/2026 PRE ANESTHETIC MEDICATION REG.		1.00	\$75.00	1.00	\$86.25		
1/12/2026 ANTI NAUSEA PRE TREATMENT/CC		0.45	\$62.00	1.00	\$62.00		
1/12/2026 ANESTHESIA SPAY OR NEUTER		1.00	\$216.00	1.00	\$248.40		
1/12/2026 IN-PATIENT MANAGEMENT		1.00	\$81.00	1.00	\$93.15		
1/12/2026 ELEC MONITORING - BP HR PULSE TE		1.00	\$61.00	1.00	\$70.15		
1/12/2026 OVI FELINE		1.00	\$109.00	1.00	\$125.35		
1/12/2026 HOSPITALIZATION SPAY		1.00	\$131.00	1.00	\$150.65		
1/12/2026 Inj. Buprenorphine 0.5mg / mL		0.50	\$55.38	0.50	\$55.38		
1/12/2026 INJECTION Routine		1.00	\$75.00	1.00	\$86.25		
1/12/2026 Spay/Neuter Fluid Package		1.00	\$113.00	1.00	\$113.00		
1/12/2026 SPAY/NEUTER DISCOUNT		1.00	(\$203.50)	1.00	(\$234.02)		
1/12/2026 Injection, Onsior		1.00	\$94.00	1.00	\$94.00		
1/12/2026 Injection Convenia per cc		1.00	\$184.75	1.00	\$184.75		
1/12/2026 Pharmacy RX		0.00	\$0.00	2.00	\$202.40		
1/12/2026 Elizabethan Collar		0.00	\$0.00	1.00	\$31.91		
1/12/2026 IDEXX FELINE PROF 16 PLUS w/HW OI		1.00	\$228.00	1.00	\$228.00		
		Low Subtotal:	\$1,281.63	High Subtotal:	\$1,597.62		
						\$2.99	
		Low Total:	\$1,281.63	High Total:	\$1,600.61		
<p>This estimate is valid for 30 days and includes only those items listed. Prices may vary upon services rendered. I agree to pay a deposit of _____% of the estimate fees, assume financial responsibility for the remaining fees, and provide payment in full via cash or credit card at the time my pet is discharged from the hospital.</p>							
Authorization _____							

Shelters Contribute to Animal Overpopulation

Managed Intakes and Absence of Low Cost Public Spay-Neuter Services Raise Animal Overpopulation

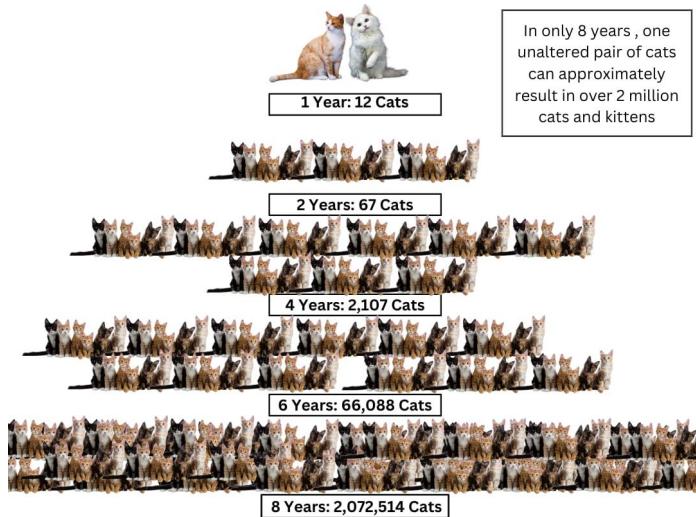
Spay-Neuter Data from SJ Website and Internal Chameleon Reports



Spay-neuter Data from SJ web site and internal Chameleon Reports (SX Reports). 2024-25 data from NCE Memorandum date 09/26/25									
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Intake Cats	10,318	10,091	5492	8855	9958	9856	6276	7833	7183
Intake Dogs	6,423	5,956	10495	4290	2911	3663	3895	4389	3540
Intake Other	2,343	2,470	2597	1990	1999	2151	1413	1446	452
Intake Total	19,084	18,517	18584	15135	14868	15670	11584	13668	11175
Spay-neuter IN House			7,958	6,286	6,657	6,122	3,480	4,769	
Misc Surgery IN House							136	212	
Spay-neuter TNR			128	86	341	294	846	769	
Offsite - HSSV							1	7	
Offsite - Valley Humane								210	
Off-site- Snip Bus								25	
Off-site- SNIPBUS								185	
Off-site- A1317691								1	
Off-site- EPCSC								2	
Off-site- Nine Lives								20	
Off-site- Other								24	
Public Spay-Neuter in House			1,916	1,494	2	9	0	0	
Total Spay-Neuter	9,391	10,243	10,002	7,866	7,000	6,425	4,463	6,224	6,990

Average Reproduction Rates for Domestic Animals

Example, Cats Reproduction Illustration



The Reproductive Capacity of Cats and Dogs

Cats and dogs have exceptionally high reproductive potential, which, without timely sterilization, leads to rapid and exponential population growth. Female cats are seasonally polyestrous and can enter heat as early as **4–6 months of age**, producing **2–3 litters per year**, with an average of **4–6 kittens per litter**. Under favorable conditions, a single unspayed female cat and her offspring can produce **thousands of descendants within just a few years**, a phenomenon well-documented in population biology literature.

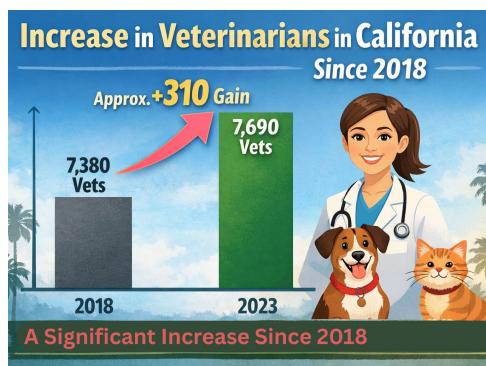
Dogs also reproduce at a rate that quickly overwhelms shelter and community capacity when preventive measures are not in place. Female dogs typically reach sexual maturity between **6–9 months**, experience **1–2 estrous cycles per year**, and give birth to litters averaging **5–8 puppies**, with larger breeds often producing even more. In the absence of spay–neuter intervention, dog populations can double within a few years, particularly in urban and peri-urban environments where food sources are readily available.

A relatively small number of intact animals—often those with the least access to veterinary care—account for the majority of unplanned litters entering shelters. This creates a compounding effect: each unsterilized animal not only contributes directly to intake but also produces offspring that enter the same high-risk pipeline.

Decades of veterinary and epidemiological research confirm that **early, accessible spay–neuter programs are the most effective and humane method** for controlling companion animal populations. Where sterilization rates decline, shelter intake, disease transmission, and euthanasia rise predictably. Conversely, communities that maintain high sterilization coverage see sustained reductions in intake, improved animal health outcomes, and lower long-term public costs.

Preventive reproductive control is therefore not optional—it is a foundational public health intervention essential to managing animal welfare, community safety, and municipal resources.

Veterinarian 'shortage': California Gained 310 Veterinarians Since 2018



Across California, collaborative spay–neuter models that once expanded capacity have been steadily dismantled. San Jose offers a clear example of the consequences. Since 2018, the termination of collaborative contracting and high-volume partnerships has **reduced spay–neuter capacity by more than 50%**, even as intake and public need have increased. When communities need more preventive care, they are receiving less.

By comparison, **humane societies across California actively utilize outside veterinarians**. These organizations routinely contract high-volume spay–neuter providers at an **average cost of approximately \$1,500 per day**. There are many veterinarians who want to step up, **There are backlogs of qualified veterinarians and clinics seeking to contract**. If this model is widely used by municipal shelters, cost-effective, and proven to rapidly expand capacity.

One high-volume spay–neuter veterinarian can typically sterilize:

- ~30 large dogs per day, or
- 50–60 cats per day

Despite this, cities such as San Jose have **persistently failed to open RFPs** for outside spay–neuter providers. If opened, these RFPs would likely attract **dozens of qualified applicants**, enabling cities to quickly:

- Address in-house surgical backlogs
- Restore access to public low-cost services

Notably, San José previously operated **public low-cost spay–neuter clinics that sterilized approximately 5,000–6,000 public animals per year at low cost**. These clinics were terminated and have not been replaced with equivalent capacity, leaving both residents and shelter without critical preventive infrastructure.

In addition, **Animal Balance**, a proven high-volume provider capable of sterilizing **up to 200 animals in a single weekend**, was never contracted. Documentation was actively in progress with the city, yet final approval was not granted. This lack of flexibility and prolonged approval process directly reduced service availability for San José residents.

Impact:

Administrative and procurement barriers—not a lack of veterinarians—have significantly constrained spay–neuter services. These decisions have worsened overpopulation pressures, increased shelter overcrowding, and contributed to prolonged health and behavioral deterioration for animals waiting months for sterilization.

At San Jose Animal Care & Services, repeated obstacles to onboarding outside veterinarians and clinics persist, even as hundreds of animals require timely procedures. **The continued refusal to deploy proven, high-volume solutions reflects a systemic failure to prioritize prevention.**

This issue is urgent and statewide in relevance. Delaying corrective action signals a lack of prioritization for the most effective tool available to reduce intake, euthanasia, and long-term public cost. Preventive capacity must be restored immediately—before further harm becomes irreversible.

Growing Euthanasia Across the State

Social Media Flooded with Pleas for Help

Furever Home Animal Rescue
Jacky Gibbons Tomlinson - Admin · July 15 at 9:22 PM ·

54 DOGS TO BE KILLED FRIDAY! 🚨🚨🚨 ALERT AND ALARM!! Lancaster Animal Care Center, part of Los Angeles County overseen by LA County Board of Supervisors has notified the public that they in tend to euthanize, kill, these 54 Dogs if they are not picked up, or arrangements made within 72 hours, by 4:45 pm Friday July 18. Will you please share this and alert any connection you have with the LA County Board of Supervisors that you are well aware of their failure? Praying to God better administrators are elected before they kill 10,000's more innocent animals!

54 Dogs at 1 of their 14 shelters on 1 day, Friday the 18th, horror of horrors. Please do what you can to save these dogs and make this stop. This is by far the worst day we have seen in our 13 years of working with these shelters rescuing their dogs, by far! 54 innocent souls in 1 day!

County of Los Angeles

Department of Animal Care and Control

Lancaster Animal Care Center

5210 W Ave. I

Lancaster, CA 93536

562-972-9036

DACCLancasterRescue@animalcare.lacounty.gov

ONLY OPEN FROM 11:00 am- 5:00pm Mon-Sat.

#rescuedismyfavoritebreed #rescuedog #rescue #dogrescue
#rescuedogsofinstagram #rescueanimals #DogRescueMission

**ARE redefining
o. CARE**

is: LOBO

My Name is BULLY

Animal ID: A5706445
Kennel No: L137
Microchip:

1 Year
PIT BULL
MALL

Animal ID: A5707740
Kennel No: L505
Microchip: NO CHIP

1/15 EUTH LIST



Saving Riverside's Dogs & Impound
12h

All on KILL LIST for TUESDAY, 7/22/25 at 3:00 PM at Riverside

DEADLINE TUESDAY
7/22/25 AT 3:00 PM



Saving Riverside's Dogs & Impound
14h

All on KILL LIST for Thursday, 7/24/25 at 3:00 PM at Coachella & San Jacinto



Photos from Saving Riverside's Dogs & Impounded Urgent Paws...

Up to 57 animals euthanized per day at a single shelter; as many as 200 euthanized within just a few days due to disease exposure.

Networking Apple Valley Animal Shelter Dogs - The OG Volunteer Page is with The Linda Blair WorldHeart Foundation and 9 others.

Follow

Jul 15 ·

505 7/15 EUTH LIST 505 505

APPLE VALL... See more

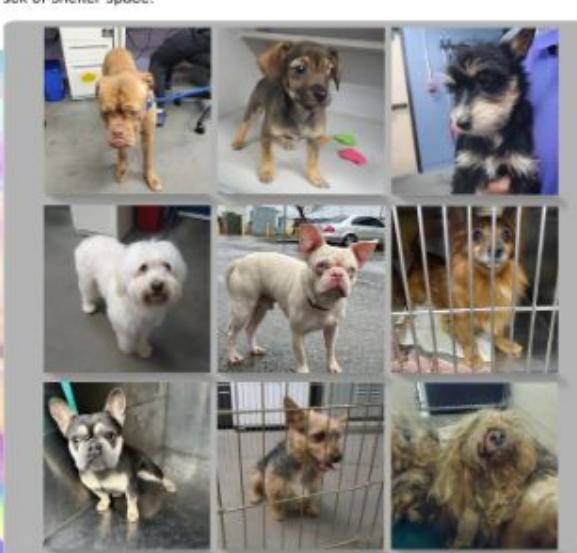


Growing Euthanasia Across the State

More Examples from Social Media



**The only dog from the list that was marked safe is the one we pulled.
All the others... gone.... See more**



Unprecedented Growth in Euthanasia:

Some California shelters are now euthanizing **up to 57 animals per day at a single facility**, with **as many as 200 animals euthanized within just a few days** due to disease exposure. These levels of mass euthanasia were **not seen in the pre-COVID decade** and reflect a system overwhelmed by overpopulation, insufficient prevention, and lack of transparency.

Growing Euthanasia Across the State

And More Examples from Social Media



◆ Laylani #253504 – 5 yrs old, 59 lbs, female, friendly but needs socialization
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02iKTNAlYiz4QE6Ju7ehpboHdobPq65nAdiiCuFq6juHUAupZhv4GzYNvTorknnWLI&id=61576732378523

◆ Kelly #253126 – 4 yrs old, 68 lbs, female, dog friendly, walks on leash, knows sit
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02ARsY7s5SSLVuK8Hji8XKxfuRBwxJxVeoG9CnudJ3dZFm9KrQcD3a7DAleJlwJFL&id=61576732378523

◆ Charlie #252241 – 2 yrs old, 81 lbs, female, walks on leash, has been very sweet and calm once she is warmed up
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02kd4Rb2HUAfNokSGpdvPktDKizMek5hfmj2QDVUPwdHqR7ZuX2VHZxK446nueME2l&id=61576732378523

◆ Swan #252175 – 2 yrs old, 35 lbs, female, dog friendly
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02S7NFYv9djepeCLjx6cjjJu8YT2wVXFc4nbgpbiQFhTaZzJZCjySV7jBAVPrbKpEszl&id=61576732378523

◆ Dingo #252174 – 3 yrs old, 45 lbs, male, dog friendly
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0MkzsZKAGUBfZiWhaPpRQKBkAFv779cWkdZz3nBjrtgPhkSz1MudPKV1EgxX4BMtly&id=61576732378523

◆ Zander #253346 – 3 yrs old, 60 lbs, male, friendly, calm, walks on leash, knows sit
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Xs15Mf2jJwKFUoNqDtsDEFhs69NjPhivV5kdiFG4YsiGChet5uZTB6AAkuNzWmqst&id=61576732378523

◆ Barqs #253359 – 2.5 yrs old, 43 lbs, male, Very friendly, walks on leash, knows sit and paw, calm demeanor
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02eu28BEZ8JCs62aYQzWME9rzP3CFpZpFxxrbDQofbyHW5qPEHiViZ2ivzXtqtSjl&id=61576732378523

◆ Elan #252459 – 2 yrs old, 34 lbs, female, friendly
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0qBjqm2JkdbQfHJdpXzdvz7MMcnRMBzmpjbT6r4PJKjtqAtorpZ48Q81S8QuWB8bel&id=61576732378523

◆ Miguel #253100 3.5 yrs old, 52 lbs, male, playful, will walk on leash
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02TrB7symcdDjXmdcppoq51bJmkFRzoreR3vVuyG6fSBAPh3KqZw6xrRtQnaPi2A93l&id=61576732378523

◆ Located in Apple Valley, California

Los Banos Animal Shelter

4d · ⚡

12 AMAZING DOGS NEED A PLAN BY TUESDAY, JULY 29TH @ 3 PM! ... See more



Saving Riverside's Dogs & ... · Follow

...



ON KILL LIST at San Jacinto for Tuesday 1/13/26 at 5:00 PM... See more

**DEADLINE AT SAN JACINTO FOR
TUESDAY 1/13/26 @ 5:00 PM**



A1893561 A1889846 A1840584 A1874310

ANY DOG CAN BE OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW ANYTIME



**POLO IS OUT
OF PUBLIC
VIEW**

A1890611

**SIBLINGS - CAPTAIN NOT
DEADLINED, BUT URGENT AT RISK**

**LIEUTENANT CAPTAIN
A1793162 A1793161
& A1888878 & A1888877**

SAN JACINTO (951) 358-7387

581 S. GRAND AVE., SAN JACINTO, CA 92582



121

54 comments 221 shares



Growing Euthanasia Across the State

Unprecedented: Puppies Routinely Listed for Euthanasia

Two Moms with their weeks old puppies are going to be killed tomorrow Weds 6/18 Stanislaus Shelter, Modesto CA if they don't have a Rescue (and of course committed foster) ❤️😢

WHO CAN HELP THEM?? 🙏

❤️ Rosita and her five (4 weeks old)...

#A600083

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/848040928655945/permalink/9733711786755437/?mibextid=Nif5oz>

❤️ Rita and her eight (3 weeks old) ...

#A599788

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/848040928655945/permalink/9733662030093746/?mibextid=Nif5oz>

I can help with shelter Tag/Logistics

I can assist with Pick-up/Transport

👉 Msg me!

* puppies ages current; photos from intake.

Stanislaus Animal Services Agency

501c3 Rescues email: rescue@stancounty.com

Copy me: nancyklein99@yahoo.com



City of San Bernardino Animal Services will euthanize the mom and find a foster for her nursing puppies if she and the kids are not rescued by 8/1/25. They claim mom is being very defensive of her puppies 😢

Mai #a580731

Puppies:

#A582568

#A582569

#A582570

#A582571

#A582572

#A582573

Deadline 8/1/25 at 2pm. The shelter is seeking rescue intervention for mom and puppies. If rescue is unable to be found by her deadline, they will seek foster only for the puppies

Location: San Bernardino City Animal Shelter

Website: www.sbcitypets.org

Phone Number: (909) 998-4000

Address: 333 Chandler Place

San Bernardino, CA 92408



Community Impact

Communities across California are **alarmed, exhausted, and heartbroken** by the growing volume of euthanasia posts—many involving **young, and even newly born animals**. Animal Rescuers for Change (ARFC) receives **overwhelming outreach from communities statewide**, asking for help in addressing these systemic failures and urging **legislative action** to correct the imbalances driving this crisis.

Puppies Flood Shelters and Communities

A Volume Not Seen by Rescues in Decades

Samantha Lopez-James 1h ...

Central Valley area I think around Modesto area animal control is not picking up because anim... See more

The Fruit Yard Follow Reels • 4h



PUPPIES IN NEED OF HELP

Golden State received another desperate plea for help. This time from the Kern County Animal Shelter regarding these six puppies.

Kern County Animal Shelter needs help placing a litter of adorable puppies, ALL FEMALES!

Left to fend for themselves, a Good Samaritan brought them to the shelter. As with all animal shelters these days, due to overcrowding, they don't have long.

For more information, please reach out to Rescue@kerncounty.com See less

666 109 456

Calpaws K9 Rescue July 11 at 6:00 AM ...

Left in a box! ... See more

Chandra Looney is at Stanislaus Animal Services Agency May 30 · Modesto ...

HELP

Litter of NINE 4 to 6 week old German Shepherd puppies, found in a field without mama; brought in on Tuesday 5/27 and need out ASAP!

They are staying in a receiving kennel and it is absolutely no place for a litter of puppies!

We... See more



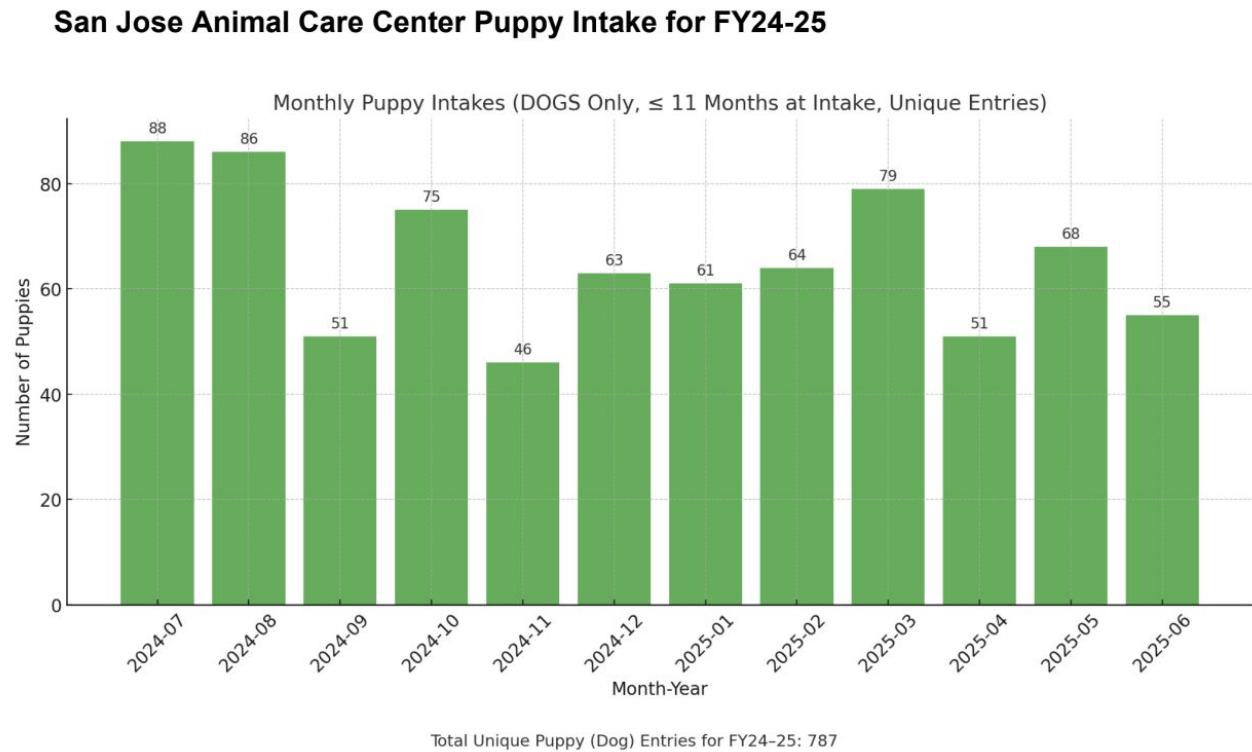
Unregulated Backyard Breeding in California

California has a **disproportionately high number of backyard breeders**, with **no effective framework to track, regulate, or prevent these activities**. The cost is borne by communities, shelters, and taxpayers.

At just **one shelter — San Jose** — **an average of 50 -80 puppies are received monthly**, signaling weak policies and lack of enforceable local ordinances. ***Unregulated breeding drives millions of dollars in annual sheltering costs, while basic prevention and accountability measures remain absent, despite their potential to significantly reduce public spending and animal suffering.***

Puppies Flood Shelters and Communities

Estimated 50K Puppies Enter Shelters Across CA in 1 year



EXAMPLE: Puppy Intake Summary – Fiscal Year 2024–2025 - 787 Puppies entered just One Shelter. A total of 787 puppies entered the San Jose animal shelter system during Fiscal Year 2024–2025. For this analysis, "puppies" are defined as dogs aged 11 months or younger at the time of intake.

To ensure accuracy, age was calculated using each animal's Date of Birth (DOB) and Intake Date. This method is more reliable than using the "age" field in the dataset, which continues to update over time. In contrast, both DOB and intake date remain fixed, allowing us to preserve the animal's actual age at the time they entered the shelter.

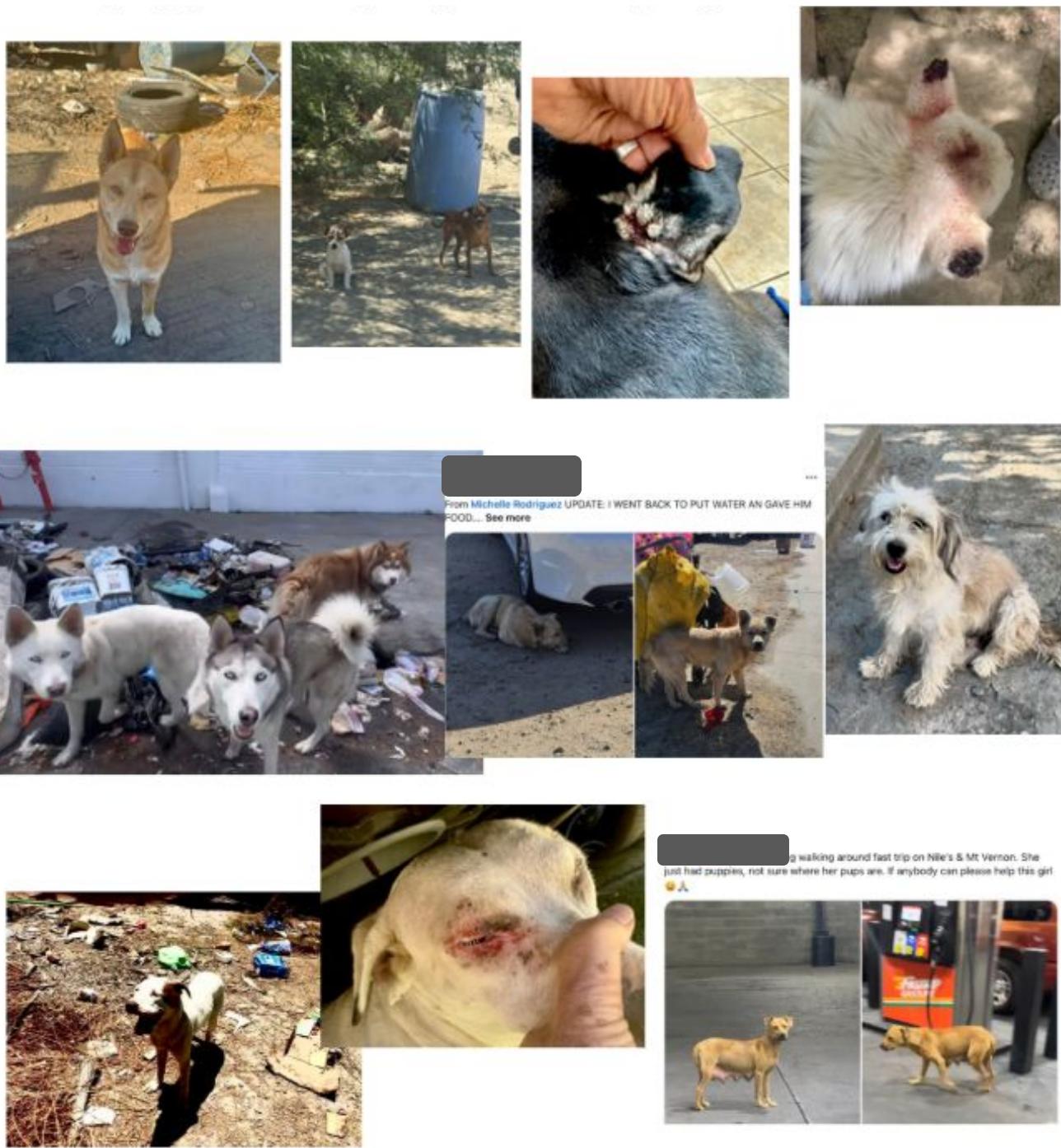
This data was obtained from the City of San Jose's public transparency portal:

[Animal Shelter Intake and Outcomes](#)

California's 200 municipal shelters puppies numbers estimate: 50 000- 100 000 (modest estimate) puppies enter shelters across CA in just 1 year.

Growing Stray Animal Population

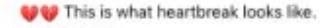
Animals Suffering on Our Streets



Streets across the state are full of stray animals and the problem is growing. Dogs and cats suffer from heat, sickness, neglect in growing numbers. From Palm Springs to Oakland. There are known animal dumping grounds in pretty much every city and town in California.

Growing Stray Animal Population

More Animals Suffering on Our Streets, Examples

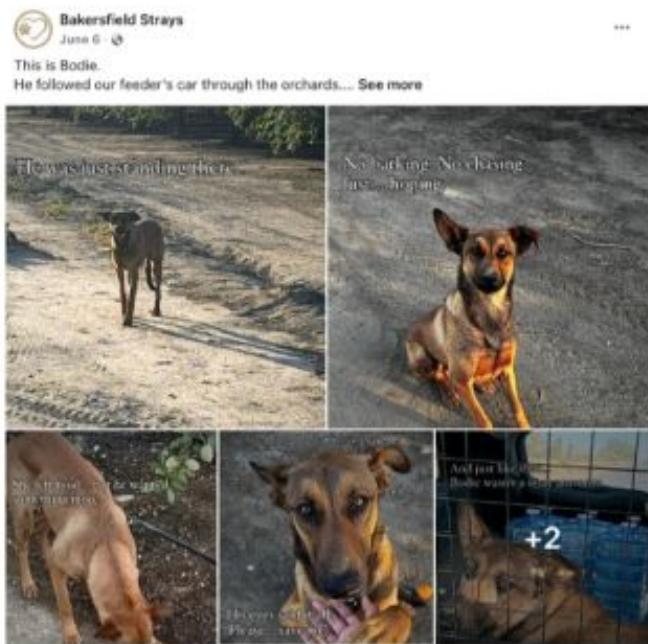
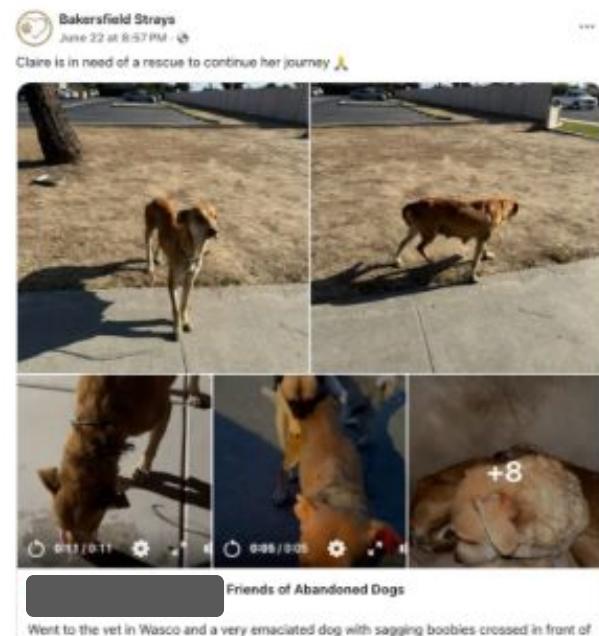
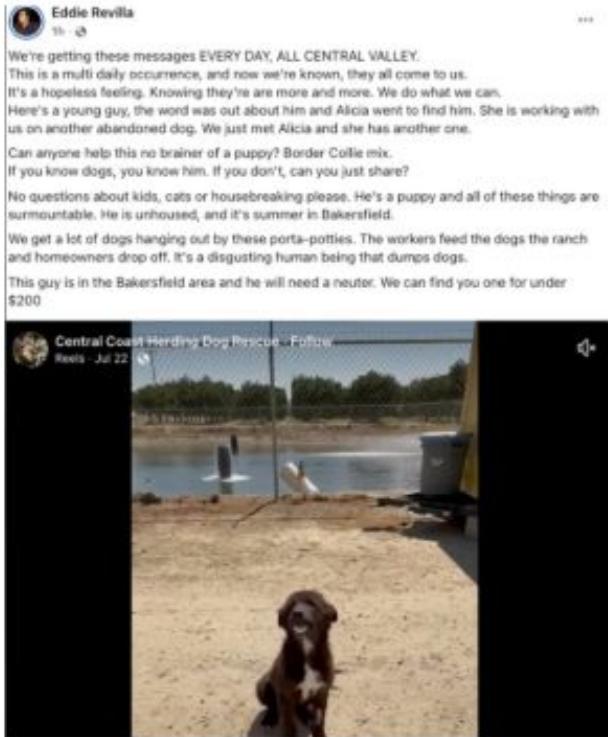


... See more



Growing Stray Animal Population

More Animals Suffering on Our Streets, Examples



Unhoused Communities Contribute to Animal Overpopulation

Homeless Encampments Produce Massive Amount of Animals



The Dogs of Skid Row

16K views · 1 month ago

KTLa 5

KTLa Kacey Montoya reports on the plight of dogs on Los Angeles' Skid Row, many of which are mistreated or neglected by

CC



Organization hopes to save Skid Row's dogs from cruelty, breeding

1.2K views · 1 year ago

FOX 11 Los Angeles

The organization 'Drive By Do Gooders' has filed a petition with LA County Animal Services, as allegations of animal cruelty in

CC



The Dogs of Skid Row

KTLa 5

Subscribe

KTLa
5

16,289 views · Jun 5, 2025
KTLa Kacey Montoya reports on the plight of dogs on Los Angeles' Skid Row, many of which are mistreated or neglected by homeless people. June 5, 2025.

Homeless individuals often exploit animals by breeding them, selling puppies on the streets, and even testing drugs on defenseless animals. Many animals suffer and die from neglect, extreme heat, starvation, and overdoses. Public pleas to protect these animals are frequently ignored by local authorities across the State.

Unhoused Communities Contribute to Animal Overpopulation

Homeless Individuals Breed and Sell Animals on Our Streets, Examples



All San Jose Lost and Found Animals

Mateo Moore · Top contributor · December 20, 2024 · ...

Coleman and Newhall in front of the "At Home" decor store"

I asked him what he's doing with them and he said selling them. I also asked if he had food for the dogs and he said he doesn't. I'm going to give him a small bag of dog food but something needs to be done about this. Not right at all.

I have 6 foster fails dogs at home so I'm in no position to take them in however I can aid in transport to shelter or foster if he's willing to give them up.

10 hrs Sad Reply 😢 6



Neely Liz

He has done this before. He used to live downtown. He has about five unfixed dogs and constantly has litters. It's unacceptable. He used to have a Facebook page but I can't seem to find it. He is not a good person, imo.

9 hrs Sad Reply 😢 1



4:49 12/20/2024

Desree Des
Charlotte Reinthaler These dogs are a money source for him and there are plenty of homeless that use dogs for that reason alone.

31w Like Share

32 0 0 0

Krishna Heart
Charlotte Reinthaler Wait, what? This is the season to give everyone a pass? He bred that poor dog so he could SELL the puppies. This is not the same as a person who has a single companion animal he takes good care of. He exploited her. Take a look at how people on skid row in SoCal keep the dogs they breed. The images will change your views on backyard breeders. It should always be the season to help the most vulnerable. Here the most vulnerable are the dogs...

31w Like Share Edited

View all 11 replies

Donna Reynolds
Charlotte Reinthaler You are my people! Harm Reduction for the win. We're full right now but I'll put my thinking cap on (we're badrap).

31w Like Share

Kathleen A Barry
Makes me so sad...

31w Like Share

Lovely Ash
If I am right his name is Joey and he lives in an RV in the area. I'm going to contact a family member of mine and see if this is him and if they are still in contact with him so I can help those doggies! He is a POS and those dog will die in his care!!!

31w Like Share Edited

Kelly Bessette
This is what's regularly going on in the homeless encampment they breed the dogs and sell the dogs for money. This is not new. They keep doing it. There are rules and regulations against breeding more than twice a year without having a license and these guys do it regularly the city has to step in this is happening on a regular basis at every single encampment site in San Jose

31w Like Share

32 0 0 0

Mary Jennison
Kelly Bessette the city is not stepping up for anything with animals look at what's happening with the animal Care Center on Monterey. Lots of improprieties to say the very least

31w Like Share Edited

0 0 0 0

Stephanie Rehe Yudchak
Mary Jennison you would think the residents would pitch a fit to the authorities They shouldn't let up and demand something be done about this. That's bs

31w Like Share

Rebekah Davis-Matthews
Stephanie Rehe Yudchak Our shelter has a lot of problems. This audit

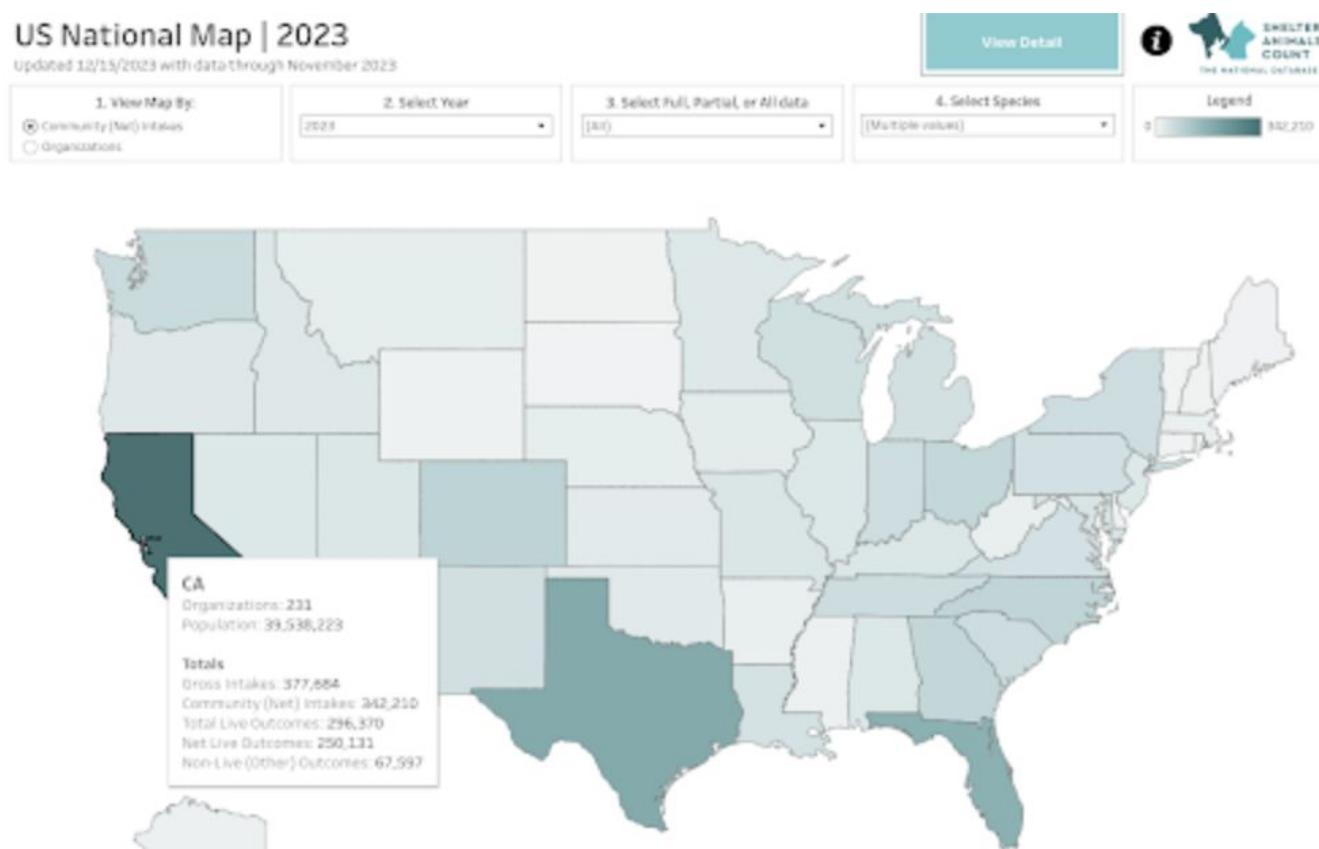


ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

No Published Basic Performance Data

Available data from California animal services agencies indicates a consistent upward trend in total euthanasia outcomes. Our review of data published on select shelter websites revealed substantial increases in euthanasia, as well as a lack of routinely published basic performance metrics. The examples below highlight this pattern:



California animal services agencies witnessed a consistent upward trend in total non-alive outcome (we only looked at some of the shelters data)

- Fresno Humane reported a significant surge of 25.81% from 2020 (6.42%) to 2022 (32.23%)
- Kern County reported a 10% increase from 2021 (14.14%) to 2023 (24.44%),
- LA County saw a 5.12% rise between 2021 (27.16%) and 2023 (31.28%).
- Stanislaus County experienced a 4.3% uptick from 2021/22 (12.41%) to 2022/23 (16.72%),
- Contra Costa County recorded a 6.14% increase from 2019 (11.16%) to 2023 (17.3%).
- Merced County noted a 4.23% rise from 2020/21 (26.49%) to 2021/22 (30.72%),
- San Jose saw a 6.41% increase between 2021 (10.16%) and 2023 (16.57%),
- Town of Apple Valley Animal Services – **No historical data on website**,
- City of San Bernardino Animal Shelter – **No data on website**,
- San Bernardino County Animal Care: Devore Animal Shelter – **No data on website**

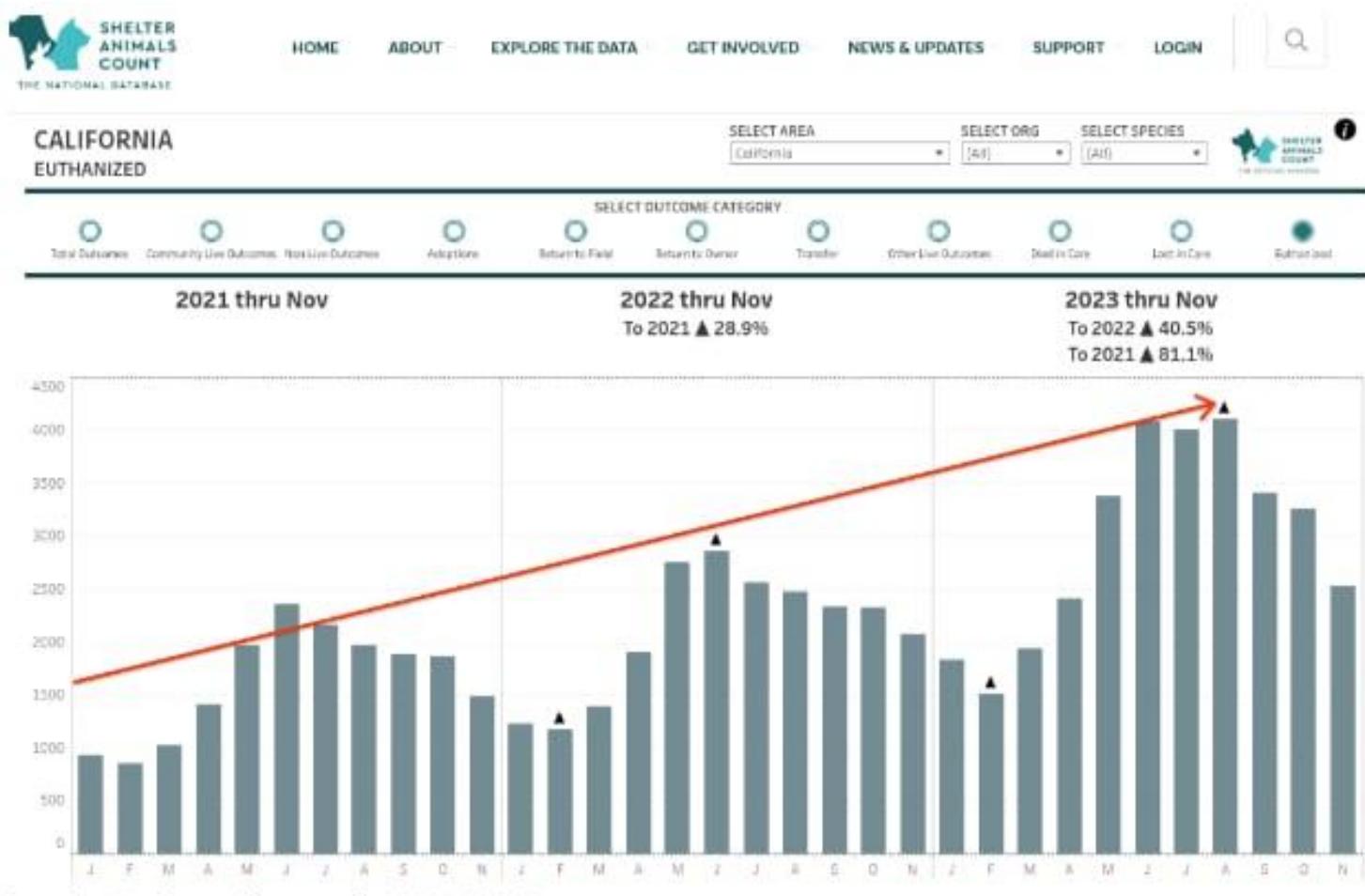
[**Alarming Trends in California Municipal Shelters Euthanasia Rates, FULL Article**](#)

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

Vague Reporting by National Data Organization

Shelter Animals Count, a third-party-owned platform that we previously relied on for partial analysis, no longer displays these critical metrics. *The platform has discontinued its statewide views of all government-operated animal shelters in California. This directory previously provided data from city, county, and regional animal services departments, allowing users to view trends:*

- Search intake, outcomes, and euthanasia data by county, city, or ZIP code, time periods
- Filter by shelter type (city-run, county-run, joint powers authority, contracted)
- View contact details, locations, service areas, and operational status
- *BELOW DATA Views last were available for viewing in beginning of 2024, this information no longer exist on the platform.*



Graph: Euthanasia growth 2021-2023

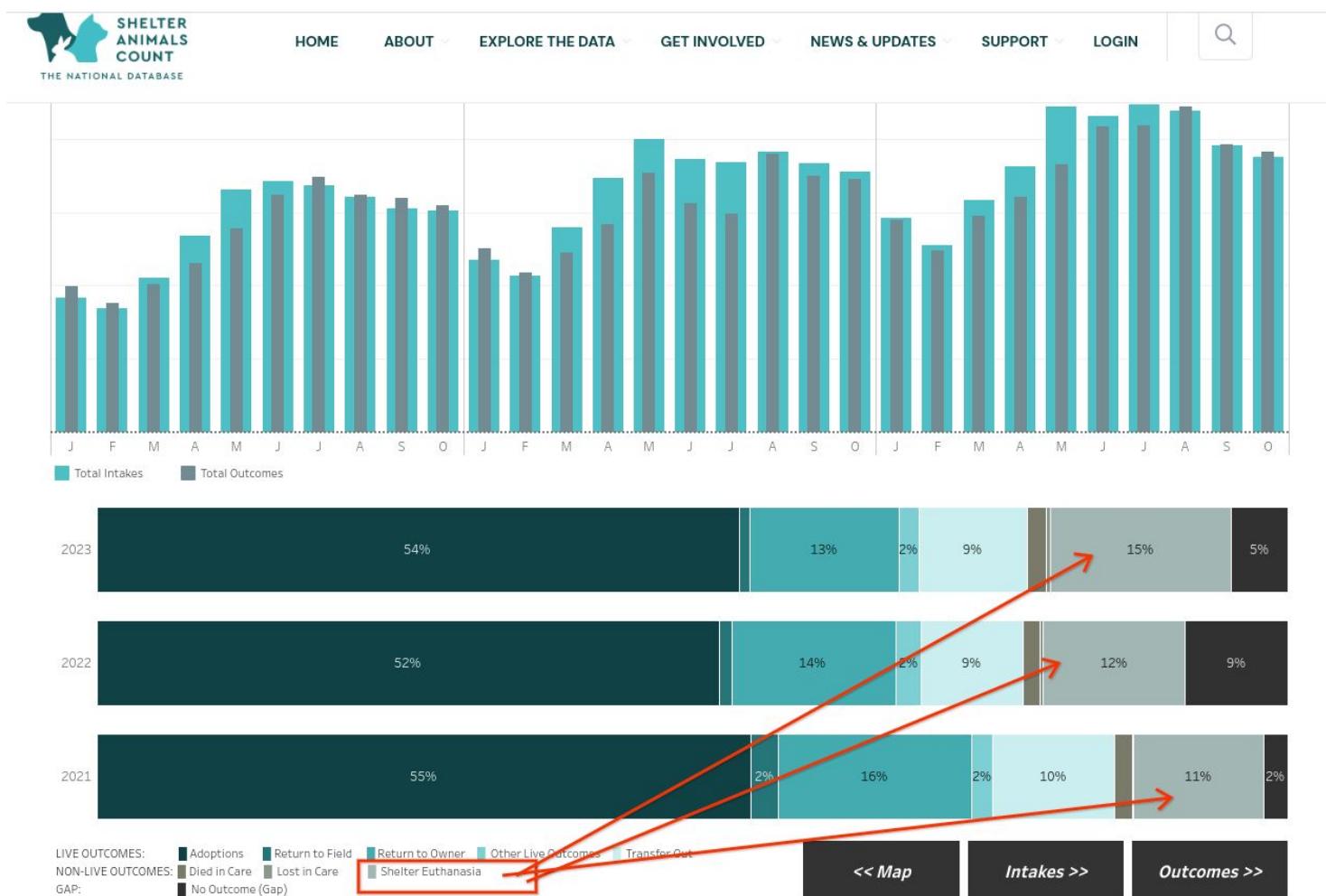
Source: <https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/>

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

Vague Reporting by National Data Organization

As of mid-2024, Shelter Animals Count has eliminated multiple public dashboards and terminated open access, shifting data behind paid access. The resource now provides only high-level aggregated figures from a limited subset of participating shelters. Due to low participation and lack of transparency, the remaining data **cannot represent an accurate statewide picture**.

Examples of terminated (discontinued) Data views are shown below. This particular view represented Euthanasia Growth in California.



Source: <https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/>

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

Lack of Shelter Participation

VERY FEW Government Animal Services + Animal Shelters with Government Contracts Submitted Data to Shelter Animals Count. California Legislature does not have Animals Data. While Taxpayers fund public shelters operations approximately 400 000 000 per year, California still does not require Shelters publish basic operational data. There is obvious lack of basic transparency of funds usage and intakes/outcomes metrics

Less Californian Shelters Reported Data in 2024, then in 2023

ONLY 45 Gov't Animal Services

Antioch Animal Services
Berkeley Animal Care Services
California City Animal Shelter
Chula Vista Animal Care Facility
City of Burbank Animal Shelter
City of Chico Animal Shelter
City of Hesperia Animal Shelter
City of Los Angeles, Department of Animal Services
City of Perris
City of Tracy Animal Services
County of San Diego Department of Animal Services
County of Santa Clara Animal Shelter
Elk Grove Animal Services
Front Street Animal Shelter
Irvine Animal Care Center
Kerman Police Department
Kern County Animal Control (Services)
Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control
Madera County Animal Services
Manteca Animal Services
Monterey County Animal Services
Napa County Animal Shelter
Newman Animal Services
Oakland Animal Services
Paradise Animal Control and Shelter
Placer County Animal Services
Redlands Animal Control
Riverside County Department of Animal Services
Rohnert Park Animal Services
Sacramento County, Bradshaw Animal Shelter
San Bernardino City Animal Services
San Francisco Animal Care and Control
Santa Barbara County Animal Services
Selma Animal Services
Siskiyou County Animal Control
Sonoma County Animal Services
Southeast Area Animal Control Authority (SEAACA)
Stanislaus Animal Services Agency
Stockton Animal Shelter
Sutter Animal Services Authority (SASA)
Tehama County Animal Care Center
Trinity County Animal Shelter
Tulare County Animal Services
Visalia Animal Services
Yolo County Animal Services

ONLY 25 Shelters w/ Gov't Contract

Animal Friends of the Valleys
ASAP (Animal Shelter Assistance Program)
East Bay SPCA
Fresno Humane Animal Services
Friends of Upland Animal Shelter
Haven Humane Society
Humane Society of Imperial County
Humane Society of Sonoma County
Humane Society of North Bay
Humane Society Silicon Valley
Inland Valley Humane Society and SPCA
Marin Humane Society
Mendocino Coast Humane Society
North Bay Animal Services
Palm Spring Animal Shelter
Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA
Placer SPCA
Sacramento SPCA
San Diego Humane Society
San Gabriel Valley Humane Society
Santa Paula Animal Rescue Center (SPARC)
Siskiyou Humane Society
Town of Truckee Animal Services and Humane Society
of Truckee-Tahoe
Ventura County Animal Services
WAGS Pet Adoption

In 2024, **from 200** + California government animal services, shelters, and rescues holding government contracts, **Only 70, or 35%**, submitted any of their animal statistics to the Shelters Animal Count database. Even more concerning, only 60, amounting to a mere 30%, reported statistics for the entire year. This glaring lack of reporting implies that a significant 70-75% of California's animal intake and outcome data from these crucial organizations remains unaccounted for. Considering that 85% of all animal intakes in California occur within shelters, the true extent of the issue is obscured. It's evident that many of the state's highest euthanasia rate shelters opt not to disclose their statistics, suggesting that the actual intakes and euthanasia rate in California is likely substantially higher.

The private resource listed below NO LONGER provides public access to information.

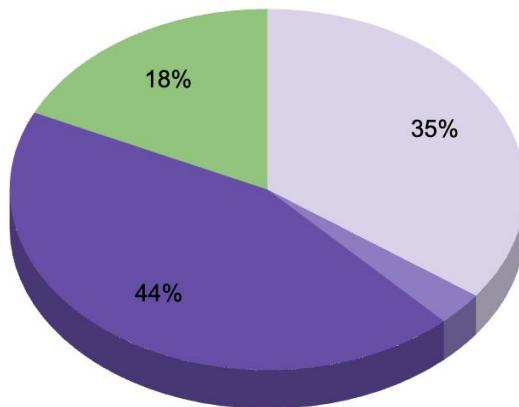
Data From: <https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/participating-organizations/>

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

Gaps in Critical Animal Data Reporting

Animal Intakes Reported By Government Funded Shelters

- Government Funded Animal Shelters Report Data
- Government Funded Animal Shelters Don't Have Websites (estimated)
- Government Funded Animal Shelters Have Website and Don't Report Data
- Rescue Groups

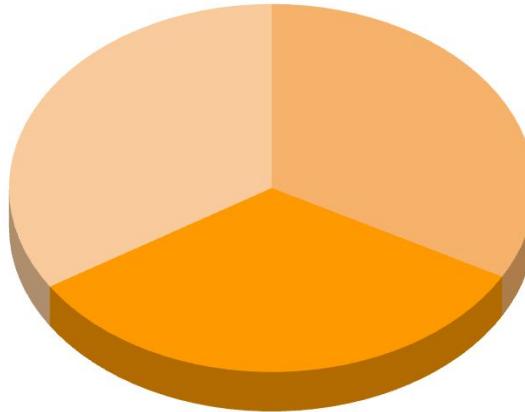


Partially Reported:

Public Shelters Intakes, Rescue Groups Intakes from Shelter.

Not Officially Recorded Community and Rescue Animal Intakes

- Found Animals - Refused Intake to the Shelter, Remained in Public Custody, ID assigned
- Found Animals - Refused intake to the shelter, Remained in Public Custody, No ID assigned
- Animals received by rescue organizations from the public, streets



Not Reported

Uncounted System Load: Homeless Animals declined by shelters

Shelter intake limits create more homeless animals, many diverted to rescues from the public. These animals—often **thousands per rescue each year**—remain invisible in statewide reporting.

Lack of Animal Data, Shelter Data Vacuum

Rescue Data is Missing From Statewide Reporting

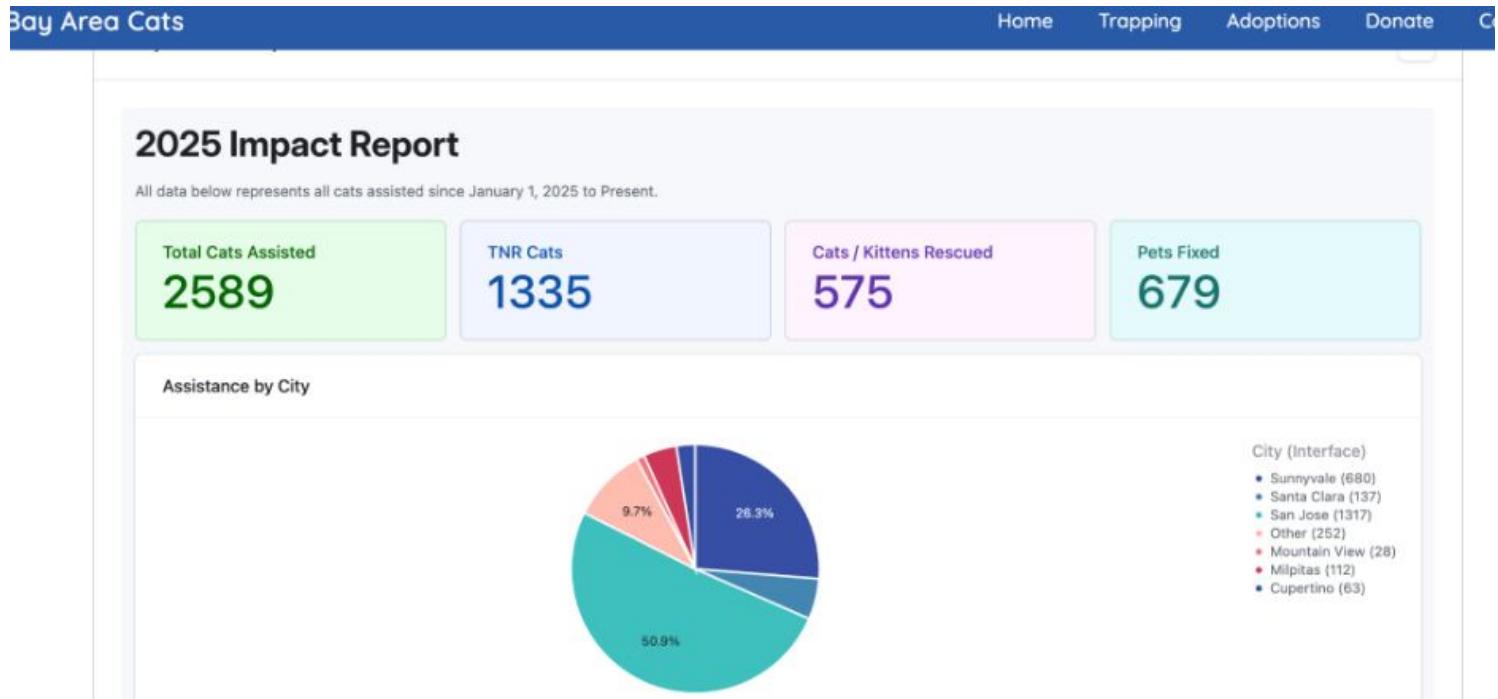
There are 200 + shelters and around 3000 Registered animal rescue 501c3 Groups in California. On average Rescue groups intake up to 20 % of Shelter Animals, significantly lowering euthanasia rates.

In Addition thousands of animals are **diverted directly from communities** — found strays, abandoned pets, and owner surrenders — and **never enter shelters**, yet their care, medical treatment, adoptions, and outcomes are not reported.

California's animal shelter data systems exclude non profit rescue organizations, creating a misleading picture of the crisis. This omission hides the true scale of the problem and shifts cost and capacity burdens onto rescues. **Without rescue data, lawmakers cannot accurately assess needs or design effective prevention and accountability policies.**

Examples of unreported rescue community intakes volume, Legislators do not have a full picture:

- Bay Area Cats — ~2,600 animals/year
- Jelly's Place (Contra Costa County) — hundreds annually
- Lost & Found Dogs USA (Kern County) — up to 250 dogs/year



Lack of Animal Data

Non Existing Data Sharing Between Rescues and Shelters

From: AdoptionPartners
Sent: Tuesday, May 20, 2025 8:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ADOPTION PARTNER APPLICATION & DOCUMENTS

Hello [REDACTED]

Thank you for submitting this, your application is currently being reviewed. Upon reviewal it was discovered you have adopted over 70 animals from DACC in just a few short months. We are requesting that you provide the current location, active phone number and full name of adopter for each animal pulled. I have attached a report listing all animals pulled, please submit no later than 05/23/25 and use the forms provided. Please note until the requested information is received, you will not be allowed to pull anymore animals from our care centers. All pending interest and adoptions have been voided. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]
Animal Control Officer I
Adoption Partner Admin Liaison

[REDACTED]
Los Angeles County
Department of Animal Care and Control
Adoption Partner Liaison
<https://animalcare.lacounty.gov/>
<https://lacountyanimals.org/>

Some Nonprofit rescues already provide **detailed intake and outcome information** when requested by shelters. **These reports are often comprehensive and time-consuming, yet they are produced voluntarily to support accountability and collaboration.**

*If California adopted a **single, standardized reporting framework statewide**, rescues could easily and consistently share data, ensuring their lifesaving work is recognized and incorporated into official records. What rescues struggle with today is not transparency, but **fragmentation** — dozens of different emails, formats, deadlines, and requirements that vary by shelter.*

Instead of a uniform system (EX.: uniform simple quarterly/yearly form to jurisdictional shelters), **rescues face escalating administrative pressure and penalties, repetitive requests, even when acting in good faith. While negligent rescues are not detected. We can provide examples (not included here, for the purpose of keeping this document shorter).**

Example:

One rescue saved **over 80 dogs in a few months, all dogs being responsibly placed**. The shelter then requested “full transparency records” and simultaneously suspended the rescue’s ability to pull animals. The rescue submitted the complete report within **three days**, yet received no response for over **three months**. During that period, **dozens of animals that could have been rescued were instead euthanized**.

Key Point:

Rescues are willing and able to share data — but without a consistent, statewide standard, lifesaving is delayed, capacity is lost, and animals pay the price.

Inconsistent Shelters Metrics Undermine Shelter Accountability

No Standard Metrics = No Clear Picture of Shelter

To achieve real transparency and accountability, California must address the **use of inconsistent and incompatible performance metrics** across shelters. **Life Release Rate (LRR)** is a clear example.

- Kern County and San José calculate LRR using fundamentally different methodologies, making direct comparisons misleading.
- Kern County uses an **intake-based formula**, anchoring performance to total animals entering the shelter and adjusting the denominator by excluding owner-requested euthanasia—linking results to intake pressure.
- In contrast, San Jose uses an **outcome-only formula** that **ignores total intake entirely** and further adjusts results by excluding owner-requested euthanasia of unhealthy and untreatable animals from euthanasia counts.
- Other shelters use **outcome-based or selectively adjusted formulas**, where certain deaths are excluded, allowing reported performance to shift based on classification rather than actual outcomes.

San Jose Animal Care Center Formula

$$\text{LRR} = \frac{\text{Total Intakes} - \text{Total NonAlive Outcomes (Died, Lost, Euthanised, OwnerRequestedEuthanasia)}}{\text{Total Intakes} - \text{OwnerRequested Euthanasia}}$$

Kern County Animal Shelter Formula

$$\text{LRR} = \frac{\text{Total Life Outcomes (Total Adoptions, Total Transfers, Total ReturnToOwner)}}{\text{Total Life Outcomes} + (\text{Total Euthanasia} - \text{OwnerRequested Euthanasia of U/U Animals})}$$

Importantly, **Shelter Animals Count does not display LRR at all**. Traditional, widely accepted methodologies focus on **euthanasia outcomes measured against total intake**, which allows for clearer comparisons across jurisdictions.

Because 200+ shelters apply different definitions, exclusions, and formulas, the data:

- Is not compatible across the industry
- Allows significant manipulation of reported performance
- Can inflate success or mask deteriorating conditions
- Cannot support meaningful statewide aggregation or policy analysis

California lacks a single, standardized data format and performance metric, resulting in distorted reporting and an incomplete picture of the true animal welfare crisis.

Overwhelmed Shelter System Indicators

Multiple Public Shelters Routinely Inform Communities of Being Over Capacity Crisis

Concern: Legislators currently see declining shelter intake, rather than a rise in the overall number of animals in need.



Starting in 2023, Shelters across the state alarm communities about State of Crisis.

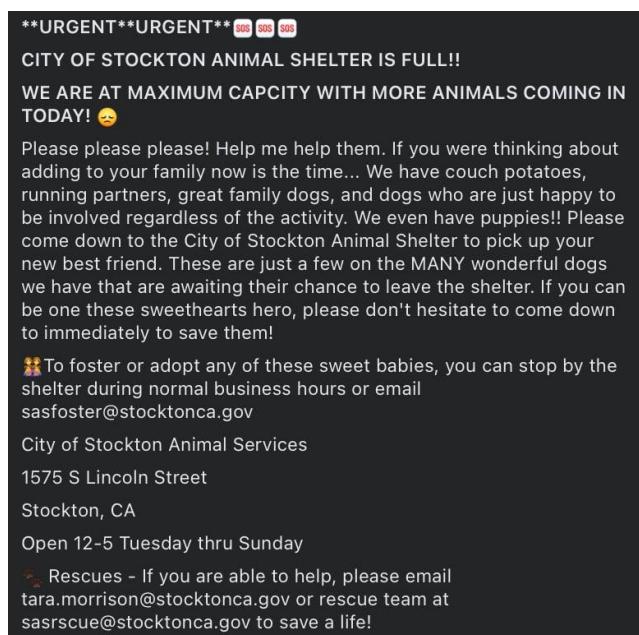
San Jose: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/Home/Components/News/News/5160/4699?backlist=%2F>

Riverside: <https://www.nbcpalmsprings.com/2025/05/30/riverside-county-animal-services-issues-urgent-plea-as-shelters-face-overcapacity-crisis>

With the growing animal overpopulation crisis, many public shelters are operating at or beyond capacity and have shifted from traditional open-intake to managed-intake policies. While this reduces the number of animals entering shelters, it has significantly increased the burden on our communities and private rescue organizations.



City of San Jose Animal Care & Services limited who can comment on this post.



Overwhelmed Shelter System Indicators

Rescues Receive Daily Lists of Animals Facing Euthanasia at Shelters in Growing Numbers, Example:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - New Dogs Needing Rescue Help - 01/08/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, The following dog(s) have been ...		9:39 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 01/07/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's update...		Jan 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/07/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe. 3	SBC SBC - New Dogs Needing Rescue Help - 01/07/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, The following dog(s) have been ...		Jan 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 01/06/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's updated li...		Jan 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/06/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe. 4	SBC SBC - New Dogs Needing Rescue Help - 01/06/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, The following dog(s) have been ...		Jan 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/05/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/04/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 01/03/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's updat...		Jan 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/03/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe. 7	SBC SBC - New Dogs Needing Rescue Help - 01/03/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, The following dog(s) have been ...		Jan 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 01/02/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's updat...		Jan 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Kennel Cards - 01/02/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached are the full k...		Jan 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe. 5	SBC SBC - New Dogs Needing Rescue Help - 01/02/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, The following dog(s) have been ...		Jan 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 01/01/2026 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's update...		Jan 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DoNotReply-SBCityPe.	SBC SBC - Dogs Needing Rescue Help: Summary - 12/31/2025 - Hello Rescue Partners, Attached is today's update...		12/31/25

Concern: Many long-standing rescue organizations report they have never seen this level of urgent euthanasia requests in 30+ years.

Impact: Each rescue pull requires immediate foster placement, veterinary care, spay/neuter, and ongoing support — costs that now reach **thousands of dollars per animal**, rapidly exhausting rescue capacity and funding while euthanasia rates continue to rise.

Crisis Indicator: Public shelters now send daily mass emails to rescues listing animals “at risk of euthanasia.” The volume has reached levels rescues can no longer absorb, overwhelming inboxes and capacity.

Overwhelmed Shelter System Indicators

The Volume Has Reached Levels Rescues Can no Longer Absorb, Example:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 01/08/26 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12:00 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 01/06/26 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Notice of...	Jan 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 01/02/26 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Notice of...	Jan 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/27/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/27/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/20/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/20/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/19/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/19/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/18/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/18/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/17/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/17/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/12/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/12/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/11/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/11/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/10/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/10/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 12/03/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	12/3/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 11/26/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	11/26/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 11/25/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Notice of ...	11/25/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 11/21/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	11/21/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 11/20/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	11/20/25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Apple Valley	Inbox Apple Valley Animal Shelter- Pending Euthanasia 11/14/25 - Apple Valley Pending Euthanasia List AVAS Noti...	11/14/25

Current Shelter Reality:

Due to severe and sustained overcrowding, shelters across California are routinely designating **healthy, adoptable animals for space-related euthanasia**. These animals are circulated to rescue organizations as urgent, last-resort requests when no internal capacity remains.

The public response has become increasingly distressed. Communities are exposed daily to repeated emergency postings across social media—often multiple times per day—prompting residents to organize informal groups, raise short-term pledges, and urgently contact rescues. While well-intentioned, many community members are unable to foster or provide long-term care, placing additional pressure on an already overwhelmed rescue network.

Rescue organizations are being asked to absorb animals despite operating far beyond reasonable capacity. Volunteers are experiencing severe burnout, financial strain, and emotional fatigue, while adoption demand has not kept pace with intake. The result is a cycle in which responsibility shifts away from systemic prevention and onto exhausted volunteers, with life-or-death decisions being made under extreme time pressure.

These conditions are not isolated or temporary. They reflect a systemic failure of prevention, capacity planning, and coordination. Without immediate legislative action focused on prevention, transparency, and accountability, shelters, rescues, and communities will remain trapped in a crisis response model that is neither humane nor sustainable.

Growing Contagious Disease Outbreaks Across the Shelters

Rescues Receive Multiple Notifications on Outbreaks at Multiple Shelter Facilities

Date: Mon, May 19, 2025 at 3:08 PM

Subject: RE: SPF violationFwd: TAG for A579083 BINO 4 month Husky

To: [REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

Yes, another rescue has tagged Bino.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

We are currently experiencing a distemper outbreak. We have had multiple confirmed cases of distemper at our facility. **Any dog pulled from our facility should be considered distemper-exposed.** Transporters will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging the possibility of pulled dogs having contracted distemper.

Unfortunately, due to our limited resources, we are **unable to test for distemper** prior to an animal's exit. Thank you for your understanding during this critical time.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Rescue Coordinator

Animal Services

City of San Bernardino

333 Chandler Pl, San Bernardino CA 92408

Office: 909-998-4000

sbrescue@sbcity.org | <https://www.SanBernardino.gov/>



Outbreaks of parvovirus and distemper are ravaging multiple shelters, claiming the lives of hundreds of animals at a time.

Increasingly, these rescued animals succumb to illness Often shortly after rescue transfer—despite costly and intensive treatment—underscoring the urgent need for prevention, transparency, and accountability.

Some rescues report up to 30 animals pulled from shelters sick in their care, **many animals still die after after being rescued and expensive treatments.**

Crisis Indicator: Contagious disease outbreaks are sweeping through the shelter system, with shelters routinely alerting rescue groups and requiring them to sign liability waivers before taking animals.

Growing Contagious Disease Outbreaks Across the Shelters

More Shelters Outbreaks Notifications Examples



Hello Rescue Partners,

We are sending this notice out to request some important information as we continue to identify positive distemper cases in this outbreak.

If you have pulled a dog from our facility that tested positive for distemper within 4 weeks of being pulled, please contact our rescue team with the ID of that animal.

We need to track who that dog was exposed to so we can notify adopters, fosters, or seek placement for remaining dogs in our care.

Additionally, if a dog has passed away, we need to update our records to indicate that the pet is deceased.

Please contact the rescue team with any animal IDs of dogs that have tested positive for distemper within 4 weeks of being pulled from SBC.

As always, our rescue team's primary form of contact is through the rescue email: sbrescue@sbcity.org. All callers will be directed to send an email.

Distemper and parvovirus outbreaks are occurring across California shelters, yet many systems do not publicly track or report animals who contract disease while in shelter care.

- Shelters lack a **dedicated reporting category** for animals exposed to or infected with contagious diseases while in custody. An increasing number of animals die **after being pulled by rescues**, following intensive and costly treatment efforts.
- Rescues routinely spend **thousands of dollars per animal** attempting to treat shelter-acquired illnesses.

Impact:

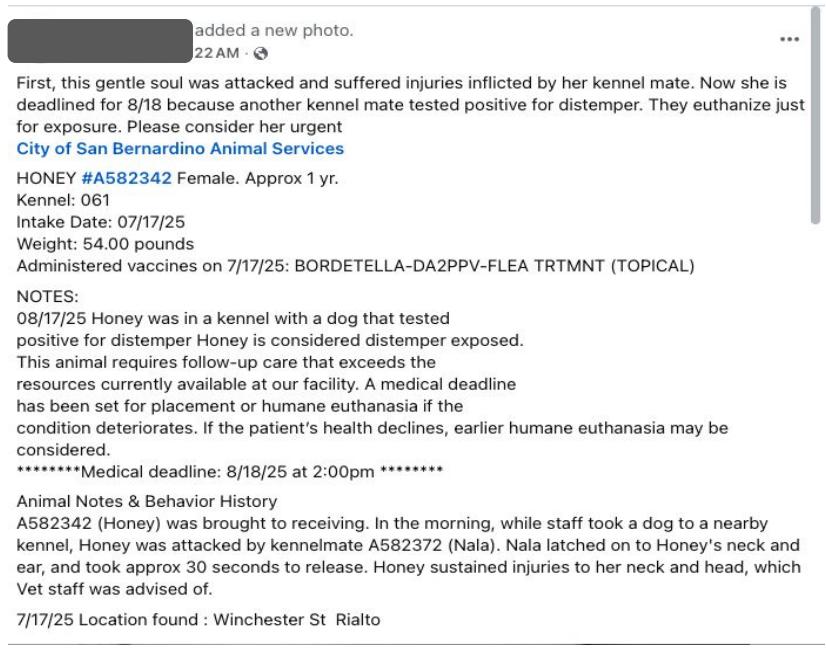
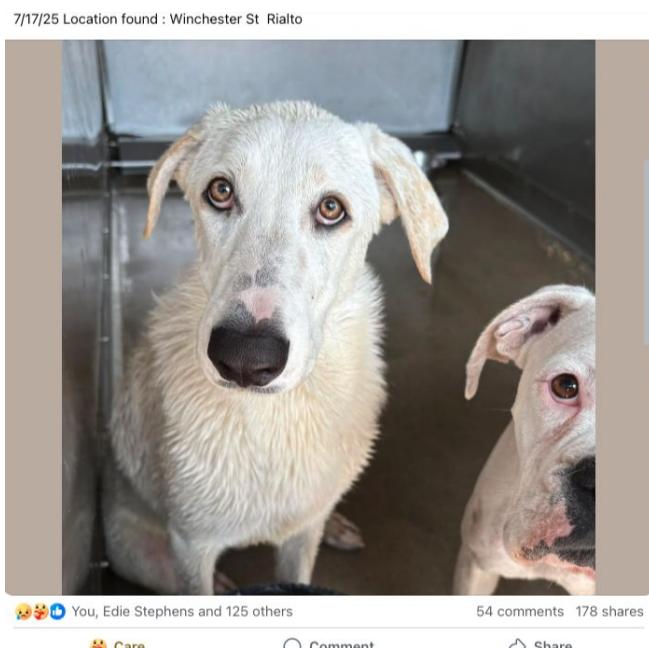
Animals suffer preventable disease, rescues absorb medical and financial burden, and volunteers experience profound moral injury after saving animals only to witness prolonged suffering or death caused by shelter-acquired infection. Many rescues have to stop intakes, due to Medical costs debts in tens of thousands dollars. Hard burden for small groups willing to help save animal lives in times of crisis.

Policy Gap:

Without mandatory disease reporting, the true scale of outbreaks remains hidden, preventing accountability, prevention, and public health planning.

Growing Contagious Disease Outbreaks Across the Shelters

Placed on Euthanasia Due to 'Exposure' at The Shelter



To manage extreme overcrowding, many shelters are placing **multiple dogs in a single enclosure**, significantly increasing the risk of **fighting, injury, and disease transmission**—especially because many animals are **unsterilised and unvaccinated**.

These risks are not theoretical. In one case, multiple rescue groups save dogs whose **kennelmates were found dead OR Injured**. Dog **Honey** (on picture) was injured in a fight with a kennel mate, as well as had another kennelmate die in her enclosure. After Honey was rescued last minute from euthanasia, she required **injury treatment and quarantine to prevent potential distemper exposure**, a precaution increasingly common for dogs pulled from overcrowded shelters, and treatments to injured ears.

Such incidents are becoming **far too frequent**. As overcrowding worsens, **standards of care decline**, allowing disease to spread rapidly. This has led to situations where **hundreds of otherwise healthy and adoptable animals are euthanized for “suspected exposure”**, rather than illness.

The root cause is systemic: large numbers of unsterilized and unvaccinated animals entering shelters from across the state due to [lack of access to low-cost spay/neuter and vaccination services](#). This failure of prevention **repeats the cycle**—more animals are born, shelters overflow, disease spreads, and mass euthanasia follows.

Growing Contagious Disease Outbreaks Across the Shelters

Preventable Deaths Linked to Shelter Overcrowding and Disease Exposure



Shannon, a 2-year-old Siberian Husky, was **rescued from the euthanasia** list at the San Bernardino municipal shelter. She **had been deteriorating rapidly**—losing weight, showing signs of kennel stress, and suffering from diarrhea and respiratory symptoms. Shelter records show she was co-kenneled despite her illness—likely due to overcrowding. Her condition worsened. On the day she was pulled by rescue, Shannon was so weak her jaw trembled. During transport, her muzzle had to be secured for safety, but the rescuers immediately recognized something was very wrong. A parvovirus test came back positive. Despite intensive care over the following weeks, Shannon's suffering only grew. She experienced multiple complications and ultimately **died a painful, preventable death.**

Sierra Mist, a 5-month-old Black Labrador, **had just escaped the euthanasia list at the Apple Valley shelter.** Like so many others, she was exposed to infectious disease while in the shelter system—this time, distemper. Her rescue did everything possible to give her a chance at life. They brought her into their home, risking the health of their own animals, pouring in time, money, and love. But Sierra Mist couldn't fight off the virus. **She died shortly after arriving in rescue care**—another young life lost, after thousands of dollar medical expenses by rescue.

These are not isolated cases. Every day, small private rescuers pull animals from overcrowded, municipal shelters—often sick, traumatized, or exposed to deadly diseases. The animals arrive too late for treatment to succeed. For the rescues, **it is emotionally devastating. To fight so hard to save a life, only to watch it slip away**, again and again—it breaks something inside. These stories are repeated across California, silently endured by the people trying to hold the system together.

Networking Apple Valley Animal Shelter Dogs - The OG Volunteer Page 's post

 Networking Apple Valley Animal Shelter Dogs - The OG Volunteer Page added a new photo to the album: Rescued/Adopted/RTO (July 2025) ❤️. July 18 at 1:53PM - 4

RESCUED 🐾

Sierra Mist #253389

AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION ON 7/19

Dogs are given only a few days after their "available for adoption date" before they are scheduled for euthanasia. In some cases, dogs are killed ON the date they are "legally available for euthanasia" according to AVAS. Consider all dogs "red listed" or "urgent."

***** AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION 7/19/25 ***** Intact female 5 months old 58 pounds Vaccines given 07-15-25 No microchip ALT ID# 07-15-25 26 Scared but nice, does not walk on leash (will need training), can be carried *****Animals are eligible for adoption by the public after their stray hold period. Rescues are permitted to pull on 7/22/25; animal is also legally available for euthanasia on this same date.

AVAS will continue to follow the protocols in place for the health/safety of the animals in our care. The canine population currently in our care that are not showing symptoms will be posted on our website for public viewing. Canines will continue to be monitored by our medical staff under the direction of our supervising Veterinarian. Interested adopter(s) should email an adoption application to animalservices@applevalley.org or call 760-240-7555. Any current rescue partners or rescues interested in partnering with our facility are encouraged to contact us at AVASrescues@applevalley.org or call us at (760) 240-7000ext. 7519 to coordinate rescue pull and transportation. *****

⚠️ Dog may still be alive even if link is down! ⚠️

<https://www.adoptapet.com/.../4531971-apple-valley...>

Unsafe Overcrowding at Shelters, Growing Multi-Dog Kenneling

Overcrowding & Multi-Dog Kenneling: A Welfare and Safety Risk



Severe overcrowding has led many shelters to house **multiple dogs in a single kennel**, often without regard to age, size, health, or sterilization status. **Dogs often not sterilised for a few months**, that degrades their health and capacity to withstand shelter environment. This practice significantly increases the risk of **fighting, injuries, stress-related illness, and rapid disease transmission**.

Confined environments—especially for larger breeds such as shepherds—exacerbate **fear, depression, and behavioral deterioration**, which can quickly escalate into medical or behavioral flags and result in animals being placed on euthanasia lists.

Uniform, humane statewide standards are urgently needed to define:

- *Safe kennel capacity limits*
- *Appropriate grouping practices*
- *Timely spay/neuter and medical protocols*

Improving these standards is critical to protecting animal welfare, reducing preventable suffering, and ensuring fair, consistent treatment across shelters.



Shelter Intake Limits Offload Statutory Public Responsibility to Residents across CA communities

Shelter Intake Is Replaced by Mandatory Adoption by Finders

Example: Found-Animal Intake Practices at San José Animal Care & Services (SJACS)

Individuals who bring a found dog or cat to **San José Animal Care & Services** are often:

- **Refused physical intake** of the animal
- **Required to sign a contract immediately**
- **Required to keep the animal in their custody for 30 days**
- **Mandatory Assigned full legal, medical, and liability responsibility to Finder** after 30 days
- **Assigned immediate responsibility** for vaccinations, microchipping, and sterilization upon signing

During this period, the animal is **not formally impounded, not medically assessed, not vaccinated, and not microchipped** by the shelter. While the shelter may assign an identification number and briefly post the animal online for a 30-day period, the animal **never enters shelter custody** during the stray-hold process. After 30 days, the finder is expected to sterilize the animal and secure placement independently, without shelter oversight or support.

Result:

Core animal control responsibilities are shifted from a public shelter to private individuals, leaving animals and finders without shelter services, medical safeguards, or public oversight.

FOUND REPORT WAIVER

I, [REDACTED], hereby take possession of a DOG named [REDACTED], animal ID number [REDACTED] described as a WHITE MALTESE MIX. I have been informed that this DOG has a known medical condition and/or owner. I agree to follow up with a licensed veterinarian within 72 hours of taking possession of this animal. I understand that this is a condition that may or may not be on going and that any professional services rendered by any outside agent are my sole responsibility or the responsibility of the true owner, if found within 30 days.

Conditions include, but are not limited to the following:

Friendly healthy dog with no injuries or visible medical issues
CCH

I hereby agree to accept responsibility for the continued monitoring and treatment of [REDACTED], a DOG. I also agree to *furnish proof* that I have taken this animal to a licensed veterinarian (medical conditions) of my choice, *no later than NO FOLLOW UP REQUIRED* for the specified condition(s) above. In addition, I agree to return the dog to the true and rightful owner, whenever the owner is identified.

I agree to keep the animal in my care and provide the animal with the same type of care provided by the City of San Jose Animal Care center, medical treatments/inoculations (by a licensed veterinarian only), indoor only confinement and restrained, supervised exercise (on-leash walks, or outdoor play in an enclosed yard or area).

I understand that I am responsible for permanently and properly caring for, sterilizing, and licensing this animal after 30 days and/or notifying the City of San Jose Animal Care Center of any transfer of ownership after 30 days of taking the animal into my care.

I understand that failure to provide the specified care above may constitute a breach of this agreement and that the City of San Jose Animal Care Center maintains the right to remove the animal from my possession at any time and that I may be subject to fees, fines and/or criminal prosecution for animal cruelty and/or neglect.

Please send a copy of this waiver along with proof of follow up care to:

*San Jose Animal Care Center
Attn: Shelter Manager, A1361164
2750 Monterey Road
San Jose, CA 95111
OR email documents to sjrescue@sanjoseca.gov - Subject Line: Found Report Follow Up*

SIGNATURE

STAFF WITNESS

Shelter Intake Limits Offload Public Responsibility to Residents

Shelter Intake Is Replaced by Mandatory Finder Adoption

EXAMPLE: San Jose Animal Services: 1254 Stray/Found animals Declined Acceptance in the Shelter (Remained in Public Care), Finders were mandated to Formally adopt.

Fiscal Year	Intake: Found Animal Shelter Data Portal			Outcome: Found Animals Animal Shelter Data Portal			Public Facing Website Official Animal Population Dashboard		
	cat	dog	other	cat	dog	other	cat	dog	other
FY 21/22	24	113	3	19	90	2	0	0	0
FY 22/23	50	246	6	42	192	3	0	0	0
FY 23/24	58	240	1	40	188	0	0	0	0
FY 24/25	39	387	1	49	393	1	0	0	0
FY 25/26	16	70	0	12	73	0	0	0	0
Total	1254			1104			0		

1254 found Animals were not accepted in shelter, were told to be kept by finders. Because they are never formally taken into shelter custody, they **are excluded from the official published shelter intake and outcome statistics that reflect the total number of animals each year**). The Animals are reflected in Public report [Animal Population Dashboard](#)

Data Gaps and Overpopulation Risk:

Out of 1254 animals **Mandatory remaining in public custody**, a total of **989 were unaltered or listed with unknown sex status**, directly contributing to continued overpopulation. These animals were assigned shelter IDs and could be located within shelter systems. Multiple animals were lost abandoned by finders.

In addition, numerous animal finders report on social media that found animals were never formally recorded, were not assigned shelter IDs, and received no guidance on next steps — including how to locate original owners, obtain vaccinations, or pursue spay/neuter. These untracked cases create a growing population of unrecorded “ghost” animals, increasing public health risk and undermining any accurate assessment of shelter outcomes.

Shelter Intake Limits Offload Public Responsibility to Residents

Some shelters Intake Is Replaced by Mandatory Finder Adoption



PROCEDURE ESTIMATE

05-21-25

This document lists procedures to be performed on Mumoos Sam Sugano. This estimate only approximates the cost of this visit. It does not include any treatments that may be deemed necessary upon examination and commencement of the included treatments. You are responsible for all fees incurred during this visit included or not on this estimate.

The following is a list of the treatments and/or supplies expected to be required during this visit and their approximate cost.

If you have any questions concerning this estimate please do not hesitate to ask.

Procedure or Dispensed Item	Qty	Charge	To
HealthChek CBC, Chem 25		228.80	
Technician Service Fee		22.80	
Exam/Office Visit, Courtesy		0.00	
Hospitalization with Nursing Care/ IV		102.16	
Cerenia inj	2.50	28.99	40.59
I.V. Fluids Set-up		52.00	
Iv Catheter Placement		76.00	
Intravenous Fluids Per Liter		62.84	
Fluid Monitoring Unit		49.60	
Induction and Intubation		125.90	
Canine OVH 51-76 Lbs		381.64	
Nursing Care with Anesthesia per 15 min	4	235.20	352.80
Package Of Suture Material	2	71.20	
Inject Micro Chip & Enrollment		59.20	
Rimadyl (carprofen) injection		6.64	
Rimadyl 100mg Chew tablet	14	17.76	21.31
Buster Click Collar 25 cm		3.41	
Buprenorphine 0.3mg/ml injection	3	55.00	73.33
Tax...		0.31	
Total estimate charges...		\$1579.45	

Actual total may vary between: \$1579.45 and \$1730.53
Generated: 05-21-25

EXAMPLE: Pitbull Mumoos was found and brought to the shelter on May 07 2025. Not accepted in shelter. Finder Record created, animal not microchipped or sterilized by shelter. **Shelter mandated finder to sign a contract to assume the ownership in 30 days, in spite of clear finder's intent to rehome the animal. Finder immediately gave dog away to another person, due to their medical condition.**

The new Mumoos foster was desperately trying to find a New home or foster for her, but was struggling to afford \$1500 for spay, vaccination and microchip. They were looking everywhere for help and support which was not provided by the San Jose shelter.

After desperate pleas by Mumoos caretaker to multiple rescues, Local private rescue, which rely on donations rather than government funding, provided help to Soli and Mumoos. They covered all expenses and supported the responsible adoption process. This happens far too often, the majority of community pleas can not be answered by rescues.

Shelter Intake Limits Offload Public Responsibility to Residents

Building up community Frustrations on Social Media. Examples. found animals illustrate public confusion, lack of help or guidance from Shelters

12:18 in Sustai... Filters Posts You've Seen Most Re... Sustain Our Shelters · Follow Rising contributor Sarah Bauer · Mar 17 I'm pretty frustrated with this shelter. Someone found a Pomeranian and brought him in, and after a brief look, the shelter told the finder it was a female. The shelter was full and couldn't take him, offering very little guidance beyond telling the finder they had to keep the dog or find someone to hold him for the 30-day private party stray hold. They didn't take a photo, just had the finder fill out a found report—which, again, incorrectly listed the dog as a female—and sent them on their way.

I saw the post in a lost and found group and offered to help since I have a large Pomeranian-loving audience. We found him a foster because the finder couldn't keep him. The foster picks him up and immediately

12:19 in Sustai... Filters Posts You've Seen Most Re... picks him up and immediately realizes... he's a NEUTERED MALE.

To make it worse, the finder wasn't told to post on 24PetConnect or PawBoost—which should be standard. I went ahead and did that for them, which is fine, but why isn't the shelter telling people this?

- Why aren't they taking photos and posting them anywhere on their site?
- Why don't they know how to correctly identify a dog's gender?
- Why is there nowhere on their website to update or correct info?
- Why is there no public internet access to these found reports?
- How are people supposed to find their lost pets when the shelter has no room?

What the actual eff?

27 72 comments Like Comment Send

12:20 Sarah's post Top contributor Unfortunately this has been the norm for so long now I think the staff feels this is the policy for lost pets 😞 18w Like Reply 7

I have had 2 friends visit SJAC recently. Different days with different pets.

Both were told "You saw the sign?" (Not taking healthy animals.)

The one bringing the dog was turned away without the shelter registering it. (Nextdoor members made a match, dog reunited)

The one bringing the 10-12wk old kitten asked "to get it scanned" so they let her inside. Once inside. the other

comment as E...

Community Reports issues and Intake Gaps:

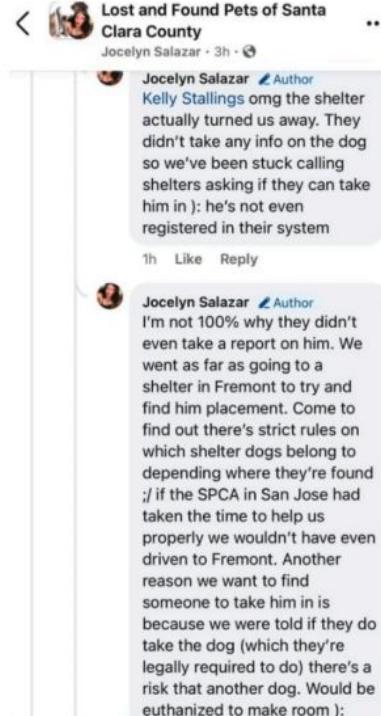
A common complaint on social media is that individuals who find animals are told the shelter will **not accept the animal**, and are sent away **without any clear guidance or formal intake**. In many cases, the animal is **not recorded, not assigned an ID**, and **not entered into online “found” databases**, making it difficult or impossible to locate the original owner.

As a result, members of the public are left to assume responsibility for **care, vaccination, spay/neuter, and owner search** — or, in some cases, abandon the animal. Some turn to rescue groups for help, but rescues are already overwhelmed and unable to absorb the growing volume created by limited shelter intake.

Shelter Intake Limits Offload Public Responsibility to Residents

Common Public Comments on Social Media Examples Regarding Found Animals Illustrate Public Confusion, Lack of Help or Guidance

More examples of shelters turning away animals:



Increasingly, individuals who bring **found dogs to shelters are turned away without intake, support, or guidance**. Animals are sent back into the community with untrained finders who are often **unable to house, medicate, or safely rehome them**. At the same time, some shelters report improved “no-kill” outcomes or promote new sheltering models — **not by increasing lifesaving capacity**, but by **declining intake** and leaving animals outside the shelter system.

Impact: Found animals are returned to the public **unsterilized and unvaccinated**

- Finders are left to rehome animals on their own or abandon them
- Animals are not tracked, protected, or counted in shelter statistics
- Public safety, animal welfare, and disease risks increase

Key Issue:

Declining intake without support shifts responsibility from public agencies to private individuals, creating hidden harm while masking true system overload.

Growing Communities Pleas to Overwhelmed Rescues

Shelter Intake Restrictions Drive Community Members to Social Media and Overwhelmed Rescues

Sun, Nov 16, 2025, 6:17 PM

Hello,

I have two dogs I need to rehome. They are both pit mix's. Lately it's been extremely hard on my mental health and my relationship as it has started to build resentment. We really need help. I'm at my wits end I tried to keep it together but my dogs behavior definitely changed once we brought another dog into the home. I can no longer deal with the mental overload and it's hard to take care of them and give them the proper love, attention and time that having a dog requires. I don't know what to do anymore and I'm starting to resent the dogs with how much stress they cause me. I also was recently diagnosed with ADHD and I've just really been struggling with life and I know my dogs deserve better. It hurts my soul to the core but I just don't have the mental capacity to take care of them properly. It hurts so bad but I need to do what's best for them and best for myself and my marriage.

About the dogs.

King is a 9 year old male, pitbull/corgi mix. His birthday is May 2nd, 2016. He is a sweet old man who just wants all the love and attention. He loves belly rubs and can be quite a pill. He doesn't like baths, the rain or his nails being cut. I've tried but he tries to bite my hands. I've only had him for almost a year. Other than that he's been with other family members and friends. He is a barker but all bark no bite unless it comes to cutting his nails he gets really stressed. He does have a lump on his thigh but family has told me it's non cancerous. He is already neutered. As for vaccines I know he got shots when he was a baby but not since then. He is microchipped with my info I believe. He is probably like 35/40lbs, blond coat.

Stella is a dog I've gotten from the shelter. We got her during Covid and I had a lot more time to be with her. She is an amputee surgery done at the humane society before I got her. She is a good dog but she tends to mimic other dogs behavior which she picked up from King. She used to be super friendly but now she barks sooo much especially at people and other dogs. It was a huge adjustment for us. She is super needy and super anxious and requires a lot of attention. She hasn't been to the vet since we lost our insurance for her but overall pretty healthy. Probably about 43/45lbs. She is an Australian pitbull mix. DOB 8/23/18 she's 7. She is crate trained but she drooling a lot in the crate and can't have a bed because she will chew up anything in there with her.

If anyone could help that would be amazing. We are looking for immediate rehoming as soon as possible. The humane society gave us your info to reach out. Here's some photos of them.



Puppies > Inbox Follow UP

Tue, Jan 6, 2:24 PM (2 days ago)

to info

Hello,

I was given this email by the san jose humane society. I am reaching out because my dog just had 8 puppies and I do not have the resources to keep them. I am seeing urgent help with rehoming them. Please advise. Thank you.

Rescues are bombarded by pleas, from people who were not helped by Municipal Shelters. Common, frequent examples:

Example 1: This animal was adopted from shelter, but was not taken back. Instead shelter gives out the 'list of local rescues' - overwhelming local rescues with public requests.

Example 2.: Someone who had 8 puppies litter, was referred to local rescues by the shelter.

When public shelters decline intake and provide only local rescue contact lists, untrained members of the public are left to manage found animals without guidance, oversight, or capacity—creating safety, welfare, and liability risks.

Growing Communities Pleas to Overwhelmed Rescues

Unchecked Backyard Breeders Shift Responsibility to Communities & Rescues

Surrendering golden doodle puppies X  

 Inbox X

 Fri, Nov 14, 2025, 10:59AM ★ Smile Left More

to

Hello,

My dogs (mom is standard poodle 60lb, dad is golden doodle 50lb) had a litter of 3 golden doodle puppies, the puppies were born on 4/3, we don't have the energy to care for the new puppies, therefore I need your help in finding them a forever home. Please let me know if you can take them in. My number is I can be reached by text or email.

Thank you,



Impact of Intake Denials and Unregulated Breeding:

When public shelters decline intake and provide only lists of local rescues, **untrained members of the public are left to manage found animals without guidance, oversight, or capacity**, creating significant **public safety, animal welfare, and liability risks**.

In this environment, even backyard breeders increasingly contact rescues with **unsold litters**, often designer or high-demand breeds. Puppies that are not sold by **3–6 months of age** are frequently discarded to shelters, rescues, or abandoned in communities.

The absence of meaningful breeding guardrails and enforcement **normalizes irresponsible breeding**, floods shelters and rescues with animals, and shifts the financial and social cost to communities—while illegal and backyard breeding continues with **little to no legal consequence in California**.

Growing Communities Pleas to Overwhelmed Rescues

Shelter Intakes Restrictions Drive Social Media Rehoming, With no Guidance, or Any Help or Spay-Neuter, Microchipping or Disease Like Rabies Monitoring

 Melissa Cardenas Hdz
3h

Foster needed for this little guy.
We got him checked for a Microchip but none was found. Our local Shelter is at capacity and we unfortunately cannot keep him 😞
Hes a sweet boy. Very loving but needs some TLC ❤



 Rebecca Castillo
Baltic Way · 1w · ⓘ

Found German Shepard male found him he almost got ran over took him to shelter he is chipped but not current please if anyone can help my elderly mother found him and she took to shelter they don't have room to release him back were she found him 1 (669) 252-6979 found Phelan and 7 street. San Jose



 Phelan Avenue
San Jose, CA

!!URGENT:Need Help Rehoming ASAP!!    info@angelsfurryfriends.org

Oct 30, 2023, 6:50PM    

to EveryPetDream@gmail.com, info, info, info, info, info@angelsfurryfriends.org, staff@coppersdream.org

Hello there!

I'm sending this email to as many as possible rescues I can find, the human silicon valley animal shelter gave me a list so I'm giving this a shot.

My sister recently moved away and I took in her dog for the time being. I've tried **rehoming** her myself, contacting a few rescues, and even taking her to the shelters both hssv and san jose animal care center. Both shelters denied her saying to continue reaching out to rescues.

I haven't been able to contact many rescues before and the ones I did manage to find have told me to hang onto as long as possible. Even then they have fosters that are full and can't take her in.

I've held onto her for as long as I can but where I live is not dog friendly and my landlord has found out and threatened eviction if I cannot find a solution soon. I really don't wanna get into more trouble with my landlord since I do live with other people that have had nothing to do with this.

ABOUT SNOW:

She's a more elderly dog but still loves to play and is extremely energetic for her age. She's about 8-9 years old now and the most well socialized dog anyone can meet. She loves kids, cats, dogs, any animal!! My sister had a toddler that Snow has loved since birth and Snow has had raised kittens before as well. My sister has also had a pet rabbit before that loved Snow. She's a very easy dog but she is a velcro dog so she attaches to whoever loves her most!! We've never gotten her spayed because she does have a level 6 heart murmur that we've been told if she goes under anesthesia just once she will not be able to wake back up. Before she's had 2 litters of puppies (this is a big mistake in us but both times is by the same dog, he was scheduled to get neutered once before the first litter and then got injured so couldn't and then once he finally healed from the first injury he got to her again) Her puppies I've been able to **rehome** with a rescue before so that's why I'm trying again with her. I did at first only reach out to the rescue that took her puppies and then another one that they sent me to but both were full unfortunately. Snow is such a bundle of joy and I love her so much, she is one of the dogs we had growing up but sadly none of us can keep her. We're guessing she's a chihuahua rat terrier mix with white wired fur. she weighs about 6-7 pounds?... she's definitely lighter than 10 pounds.

Please help!! I love Snow but I'm at risk of eviction and need help getting her out before the end of this week!!

Photos are attached to the email

Thank you.

5 Attachments · Scanned by Gmail



As shelters deny intakes, assistance, growing numbers of found animals are increasingly rehomed through social media, bypassing rabies control, vaccination checks, and disease monitoring—placing animals and communities at risk of neglect, abuse, unsafe placements, and the spread of contagious diseases outside any regulated system.

Rampant Backyard Breeding With no Guardrails or Enforcement, Overwhelms Communities, Shelters and Rescues

Example: 17 Purebred Doberman Dogs at Once at Just 1 Shelter, Devastated Volunteers Communities Reach Out Pleading the Rescues, Communities

P phillip and macaria ... May 31, 2025, 7:55 AM     to Ev, Diane, Art, Marilyn, Mike@smartepicstrategies.com, Phillipnmacaria

We have 17 Dobermans at the Riverside location.
17.. these beautiful animals need human touch and interaction.
This mama looks like she was dumped by a backyard breeder. She came into the riverside location with several other Dobermans from the same location.



Animal ID: A1858428
Name: Olivia
Gender: Male
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 1 year
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.18
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: 10000 Block Cook Ave, Riverside, Ca



Animal ID: A1858809
Name: Dev
Gender: Male
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 2 years
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.20
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: Van Buren X Clay



Animal ID: A1859842
Name: Olivia
Gender: Female
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 1 year
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.25
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)



Animal ID: A1859844
Name: Dev
Gender: Female
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 3 years old
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.27
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: 20500 Block Old Elsinore Rd, Perris, Ca



Animal ID: A1859845
Name: Olivia
Gender: Female
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 3 years old
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.27
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: 20500 Block Old Elsinore Rd, Perris, Ca



Animal ID: A1859848
Name: Dev
Gender: Male
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 4 years old
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.27
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: 20500 Block Old Elsinore Rd, Perris, Ca



Animal ID: A1859847
Name: Olivia
Gender: Female
Breed: Doberman Pinscher
Animal Type: DOG
Age: 3 years old
Brought to the shelter: 2025.05.27
Status: Found and in Shelter Care (Riverside County Animal Control - Riverside Shelter)
Location Found: 20500 Block Old Elsinore Rd, Perris, Ca

Purebred Dogs Flooding Shelters

In one case, **17 Dobermans entered a single shelter at once**. Volunteers urgently circulated photos and pleas to rescues and the public to prevent euthanasia.

Unregulated backyard breeding continues to flood shelters, overwhelming rescues and communities.

Lack of Animal Identification Fuels Overpopulation and Cruelty

In our estimate **90% or more of animals entering California shelters have no identification or microchip**, making it nearly impossible to trace irresponsible owners, illegal breeders, or cases of neglect and abandonment.

Without identification:

- Animals cannot be returned to owners
- Illegal and backyard breeders face no accountability
- Cruelty and abandonment go untraceable

Example – Duchess (German Shepherd):

Duchess was found tied to a fence with no identification. When animal services picked her up, she exhibited extreme fear—losing bowel control when frightened—indicating prolonged mistreatment. Her body condition suggested she may have been used for breeding and then discarded. She was placed on a euthanasia list due to overcrowding. After rescue, Duchess proved to be a loving, adoptable dog—but required **extensive rehabilitation** to recover from trauma.

Why Mandatory Microchipping Matters

- *Enables rapid identification and reunification of lost pets*
- *Deters illegal breeding and abandonment*
- *Improves enforcement of animal welfare laws*
- *Reduces shelter overcrowding and euthanasia*

Mandatory microchipping of all owned animals is a low-cost, high-impact prevention tool that protects animals, supports communities, and strengthens accountability across the system.



Sharp Return To Field Expansion & Juvenile Kittens inclusion in RTF

RTF is intended for **healthy, unowned adult free-roaming cats**, not juveniles.

Underage kittens held in shelter custody for weeks should be transferred to rescue, placed through shelter adoption, or released only after reaching a safe survival age. What We Are Seeing across California, shelters are increasingly **holding kittens for 3-4 weeks and then returning them to the field while still under 4 months old (≈16 weeks)**.

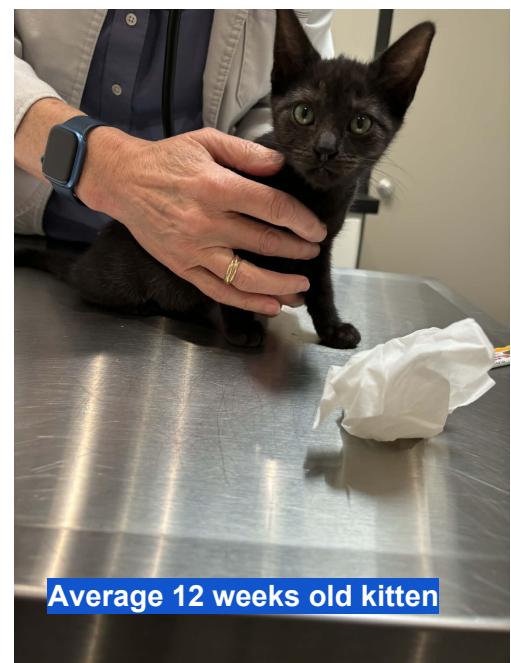
Why This Signals a System Failure

- **Custody confirms responsibility**
These kittens are impounded and fully managed by shelters.
- **Survival risk remains high**
Even at 16 weeks, many kittens lack the physical, social, and environmental resilience needed for outdoor survival. Kittens are easy prey, can not forage for food.
- **Safer pathways are bypassed**
Rescue transfer and shelter adoption remain appropriate, humane options.
- **Mortality is displaced, not reduced**
Deaths occur outside shelter systems and go unrecorded.

Policy & Legal Implications

California law requires humane, age-appropriate care and lawful disposition once custody is assumed (Food & Ag Code §31752; Penal Code §§597, 597.1).

The rapid expansion of RTF for juvenile animals reflects system overload—not humane reform—and highlights the urgent need for clearly defined, development-based statewide standards.

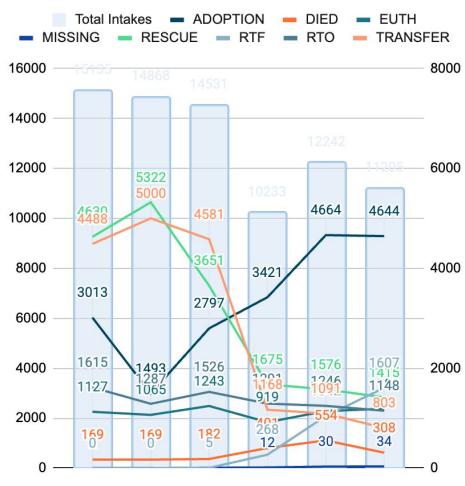


Sharp Return To Field Expansion & Juvenile Kittens inclusion in RTF

Return-to-Field After Shelter Custody: Legal & Welfare Breakdown

EXAMPLE: San Jose Animal Services: RTF increased 28,300% since 2021, with animals held in shelter custody for days or weeks prior to release — indicating absence of statutory standards and misuse of RTF under crisis conditions.

Source: [Animal Population Dashboard](#)



San Jose Animal Care & Services	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
ADOPTION	3013	1493	2797	3421	4664	4644
DIED	169	169	182	401	554	308
EUTH	1127	1065	1243	919	1141	1188
MISSING	2	1	7	12	30	34
RESCUE	4630	5322	3651	1675	1576	1415
RTF	0	0	5	268	1042	1607
RTO	1615	1287	1065	1287	1291	1148
TRANSFER	4488	5000	4581	1148	1168	803
Total Outcomes	15044	14337	13992	9155	11344	11147
Total Intakes	15135	14868	14531	10233	12242	11205

Return-to-Field (RTF) is increasingly being used as a population-management tool rather than a regulated animal-welfare practice. This shift is occurring in the absence of clear statutory standards, age thresholds, or uniform oversight, particularly for animals that have already been taken into shelter custody.

Releasing underage kittens to the field after weeks in shelter custody conflicts with these obligations.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Sets a Higher Standard

- Juvenile wildlife (e.g., raccoons) are heavily regulated and **released only when physically and behaviorally ready**
- **Typical release age: 4–6+ months**, based on survival ability—not calendar age
- Release governed by **state & federal rehabilitation permit standards**

Domestic juveniles are currently afforded fewer protections than wildlife. California kittens are returned to the field while still under 4 months old (\approx 16 weeks), **as early as 11 weeks old**.

Explosive Growth in Domestic Animals Return-to-Field After Custody

- **RTF increased 28,300%** (from 5 animals in 2021 to 1,607 in 2025)
- Animals were **held in shelter custody for days to weeks**, not briefly encountered

Clear Standards are needed To protect animal welfare, public safety, and legal accountability.

Sharp Return To Field Expansion & Juvenile Kittens inclusion in RTF

Return-to-Field After Shelter Custody: Legal & Welfare Breakdown



Friendly Cat Misclassified as "Feral" — Returned to Suffering

A sick, friendly cat was brought to the shelter by a concerned family and incorrectly categorized as feral. At intake, the family was assured the shelter would take custody and place the cat for adoption—but no intake paperwork was provided.

Just days later, the family received a call urging them to retrieve the cat, stating he was "ready to be released back to the street."

The cat was suffering from painful mouth abscesses and developed serious complications following a neuter surgery performed by the shelter, resulting in over **\$4,000 in veterinary bills** that had to be addressed by a local veterinarian. **The finders were warned that if they did not retrieve him, the shelter would release him back outside. Even if he were feral—which he clearly is not—he was sick, vulnerable, and in no condition to survive outdoors. Still, he was labeled "medically ready."** How many other cats are suffering the same fate?

This cat is exceptionally friendly and clearly not capable of surviving outdoors. His return to the unknown street by the Shelter would have placed him at serious risk and caused unnecessary suffering—leaving the family and rescuers scrambling to find help for an animal they were told would be protected.



to info@angelsfurryfriends.org ▾

Wed, May 7, 2025, 4:24 PM



We had been caring for a stray and were looking for the owner (on Pawboost/NextDoor) with no luck. He got a UTI and we had to turn him into the SJ Animal Center. They treated, **neutered** and provided all vaccines. We cannot keep him for a number of reasons (mostly will be moving out of the area soon). They are asking that we return him to the neighborhood, but that is not a good solution for him, as he is not a hunter and in his situation at our house was staying on our atrium where we had other cats and wild animals coming into the patio and scaring him. He did stay there all of the time and only went to the yard to do his business. He relied on us completely for food. He ignores birds and is very friendly. Do you have a foster who would be available for him? Thanks

Here is his link at the SJ Animal Center: <https://24petconnect.com/SNJSAllPets/Details/SNJS/A1380935>

San Jose, CA 95138
(408) 838-7461



ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

Costly Realities to Overwhelmed Rescues

Escalating Shelter Euthanasia of Adoptable Animals Forces Rescues to Seek Out-of-State Placement



One Transport of about 50 dogs from California

\$2,500.00

This sponsorship will cover the cost of transport for 50 dogs from overcrowded shelters in California to safety here in Oregon. With this sponsorship we will include your business logo on each dog's intake photo, which will be posted to our Facebook Page with an audience of approx. 50,000 followers.

Quantity:

1

[ADD TO CART](#)

[Share](#)



Dumplin

July 13 at 5:57 AM · [Share](#)

Calling All Rescues: WY, MT, NV, UT, CO, ID!

We run a steady SoCal → Oklahoma route every 2 weeks-- and we're looking to expand our impact north!

If you're a rescue in:

- Nevada
- Utah
- Colorado
- Idaho
- Wyoming
- Montana

...and you can take incoming SoCal dogs—we want to partner with YOU. Let's save more lives. Let's move more dogs. Let's Refuel Souls together.



PAWSNetwork has transport going north on Tuesday July 15. Loading 7:00am in Modesto and 9:00am in Sacramento--> Portland. We still have open crates...all sizes. PM me if you need transport help!



0 0 54 14 comments 13 shares

Costly Reality for Rescues. Dumplin - Contra Costa Shelter Euthanasia survivor, did not have Adoption applications for 1 year, after was rescues. She was just transported out of state Adoption, transport cost \$850. These costs are bankrupting rescues, while not solving crisis root causes.

To save animals from euthanasia, rescue groups now routinely spend **thousands of dollars per animal** to transport out of state. Out-of-state transport saves individual lives, but it is **not a sustainable solution**.

Some rescue organizations report that **up to 50% of dogs pulled from the streets and euthanasia lists must now be placed out of state**, simply because California is overcapacity and local adoptive homes are unavailable. Rescues go above and beyond—absorbing high transport and care costs—to save lives, **but this is a symptom of systemic failure.**

Bottom line: California needs prevention, transparency, and accountability policies that reduce overpopulation and allow animals to be safely placed **within the state, rather than relying on costly emergency exports.**



ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

Growing Barriers to Rescues

Shelters Increase Requirements to Rescues

CITY OF SAN JOSE ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR HISTORY, WAIVER / RELEASE OF LIABILITY, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT ("RELEASE")

NOTICE: THIS RELEASE AFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS. PLEASE READ IT VERY CAREFULLY AND UNDERSTAND IT BEFORE YOU SIGN

DATE: 6/6/2025

Adopter or Shelter/Organization Transferee: Angel's Furry Friends Rescue
FIRST LAST NAME: ██████████
TITLE: Founder
ORGANIZATION NAME: Angel's Furry Friends Rescue
STREET: ██████████
CITY, ST: ██████████

Dog:
DOG NAME Dozer
BREED American Bulldog Mix
DOG ID#: A1365565
COLOR: Black, AGE: 3 Years, SIZE: 42.3 lbs, GENDER: Male

I, the undersigned, hereby understand and unconditionally agree, on behalf of myself / myself and my organization, (hereinafter the "ADOPTER / SHELTER ORGANIZATION TRANSFEREE"), and my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and estate, to all of the terms set forth in this Release.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISKS. The above-described dog has exhibited the following behavior while under the care and control of the City of San Jose Animal Care Services:

Dog is front of kennel, growling and jumping on kennel door. Once leashed, able to come out, dog has tense body posture when out of the kennel. While in the yard, dogs posture will loosen up after a few minutes, but would stiffen up to quick movements. Dog would go up and lean against handler allowing pets. Dog allowed paws to be checked, but dog tensed up when restraining. While attempting to restrain, dog turned and air snapped. Pulled away before contact was made.

Dog Bit and broke skin on 01/18/25. Circumstances of Bite: Volunteer was providing treats through the kennel when dog overbit on her (R) index finger resulting in a small puncture.



Public Duties Shifted to Rescues Through Expanding Barriers & Risk Shift to Rescues

- Liability releases transfer **behavioral and legal risk** from public shelters to volunteer rescues
- *Example:* Dog **Dozer**, with a documented bite history, was released to rescue **without a rabies vaccination**, contrary to shelter policy—placing public safety and legal liability on the rescue with no accountability for the shelter

Common Rescue Requirements, Growing obstacles to Saving lives (vary widely by shelter)

- Mandatory **\$1,000,000 liability insurance**
- Short-deadline **spay/neuter verification**
- Mandatory **outcome reporting**
- Duplicating DOJ requirements, that is relevant to fundraising, and takes months to obtain, blocking capable rescue groups, while growing growing shelter euthanasia
- Inequality in standards application towards rescues, lack of clarity in implementing barriers to rescue
- Disease exposure waivers (parvo, distemper)
- Restrictions on **inter-rescue transfers**, under threat of termination
- **Non-disclosure agreements** required by some public shelters
- **Courtesy Pull limits, set by some shelters**, are not supported by Current Legislation or Local ordinances

Inconsistent requirements and liability waivers **transfer statutory animal control responsibilities from public agencies to rescues**, contrary to the intended role of publicly funded shelters. While shelters routinely adopt out or transfer animals without prior spay-neuter, rescues are penalized for delays or prohibited from transfers altogether by some shelters. **These discretionary practices, penalising rescues—most common in high-euthanasia shelters—delay rescue access, reduce lifesaving capacity, and directly contribute to higher euthanasia rates**, rather than enabling coordinated collaboration.

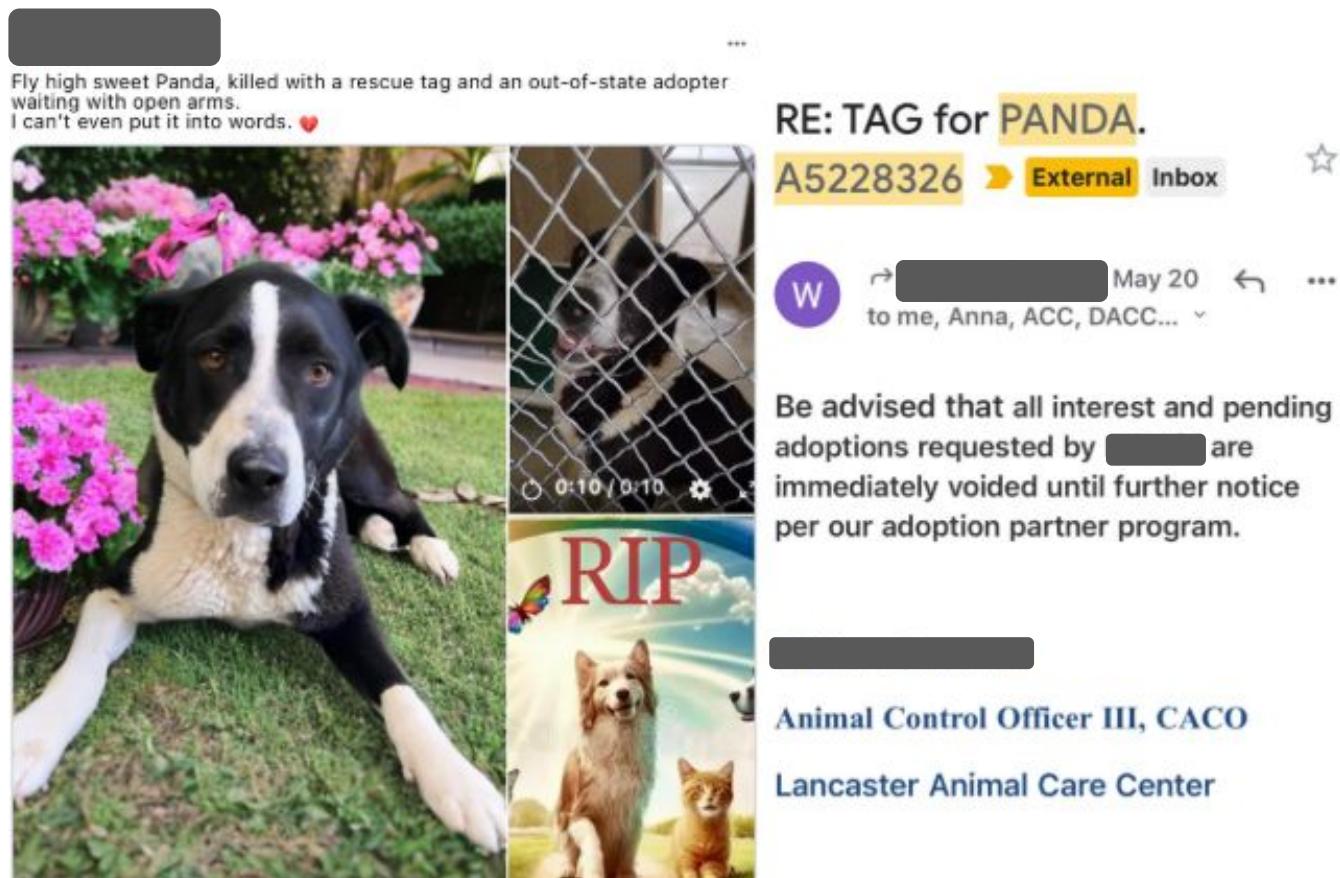
When Bureaucracy Kills

How California Shelters Are Blocking Rescues and Ending Lives

Shelters are publicly funded institutions, yet they increasingly operate behind closed doors, with opaque and inconsistent policies that punish the very rescue groups working tirelessly to save lives. This system is not just broken—it is morally indefensible. California's shelter crisis has evolved beyond overcrowding; it is now a bureaucratic machine that actively obstructs rescue efforts and accelerates unnecessary killing.

In shelters where dozens of animals are listed for euthanasia each day, rescues—who often have adopters waiting—are abruptly stripped of their ability to save lives. In one heartbreaking case, a dog who had interested adopters and a committed rescue group ready to pull was euthanized simply because the rescue's "pull privileges" were revoked without explanation. Their urgent request to intervene was denied. That beautiful dog named Panda died—not because there wasn't a home—but because no one could navigate or override a tangle of bureaucratic red tape.

This is the cost of a system more invested in rules than in results, and more committed to liability avoidance than lifesaving.



Fly high sweet Panda, killed with a rescue tag and an out-of-state adopter waiting with open arms.
I can't even put it into words. ❤

RE: TAG for PANDA.

A5228326 ➤ External Inbox

W May 20 to me, Anna, ACC, DACC... ▾

Be advised that all interest and pending adoptions requested by [REDACTED] are immediately voided until further notice per our adoption partner program.

Animal Control Officer III, CACO
Lancaster Animal Care Center

When Bureaucracy Kills

How California Shelters Are Blocking Rescues and Ending Lives

Example: “Courtesy Pull” Limits Blocking Life Saving Rescues

Chocolate was **only hours away from euthanasia** when a qualified rescue attempted to pull her from the shelter.

Despite having foster placement and transport ready, the rescue was **blocked due to a shelter-imposed “courtesy pull” limit** — an internal policy that is **not clearly grounded in state law or local ordinance**.



In many shelters, animals are listed as “at risk” for only **2–3 days**. During this narrow window, community members desperately circulate urgent pleas thousands of times across social media in hopes of locating a rescue willing to intervene. By the time a rescue is identified and submits a pull request, the **animal often has only hours remaining**.

At precisely this most critical moment, **bureaucratic barriers intensify rather than ease**. Rigid “courtesy pull” limits prevent animals from being saved even when qualified rescues are ready and able to act. Rescues are frequently required to submit extensive documentation that is already publicly available, despite holding valid **501(c)(3) status** and active **DOJ and FTB registrations**.

What is increasingly missing is an **equitable, transparent, and standardized framework for shelter–rescue collaboration**. Current legislation does not clearly define collaboration standards, information-sharing expectations, or proportional safeguards, leaving shelters to interpret requirements inconsistently across jurisdictions. This lack of clarity has resulted in fragmented practices that vary widely from shelter to shelter, often to the detriment of animals.

Well-equipped rescue organizations approach shelters with high euthanasia rates—often with foster placements, transport, and veterinary plans already secured—only to be declined. Some shelters further prohibit transfers between rescues, despite the fact that **inter-rescue networking is one of the most effective lifesaving tools statewide**, particularly in periods of increased abandonment and intake.

Stricter animal placement standards and improved welfare outcomes **are achievable**, but only through **clear, simple, and uniform information exchange** that does not overburden volunteer-run rescue organizations. Reliance on DOJ credentialing alone is insufficient as a safeguard against abandonment, neglect, or hoarding. **DOJ/FTB status does not reflect real-time capacity, placement outcomes, or animal movement. DOJ and FTB permit nonprofits to operate while applications are pending (often up to 6 months), yet shelters use pending status as an arbitrary barrier to block rescues from lifesaving work., while Allowing partnership to multiple Out of State Groups , who are not Registered with FTB/DOJ at all for years. This is double standard and bureaucracy overreach, costing lives.**

By contrast, transparent, timely information-sharing—including placement history, transfer reporting, and outcome tracking—provides meaningful accountability while enabling rapid, coordinated response. Without such a framework, administrative barriers continue to expand, lifesaving capacity contracts, and animals pay the price.

Rescues Support the System—They Do Not Replace It

Public Animal Control Is a Government Responsibility, Not a Volunteer Function

Shelter Vs. Rescue Capacity Comparison

	Public Shelters	Volunteer Rescue Groups
1	Funded by taxpayers	Operate entirely on donations
2	Have dedicated buildings and kennel space	No shelter buildings; animals in foster homes
3	Paid, full-time staff	All-volunteer teams, unpaid
4	Access to veterinary and medical resources	Limited access to affordable veterinary care
5	Mandated to provide animal care services	No legal mandate to accept animals

While rescues routinely step in to assist with shelter overflow, **volunteer-run organizations cannot substitute for publicly funded animal control responsibilities** as animal intake requests continue to rise.

Rescues already comply with extensive reporting and oversight requirements — including filings with the **IRS, California Franchise Tax Board, and the Attorney General's Office** — while simultaneously managing daily crisis intakes and maintaining primary employment outside of rescue work.

Shifting responsibility from **taxpayer-funded shelters with buildings, staff, and operating budgets** to small and medium-sized volunteer rescues offloads public duties **without corresponding accountability**. This practice funnels thousands of public requests to rescues, creating the false impression that volunteer organizations can absorb unlimited overflow.

In reality:

- Rescues operate primarily through **foster homes**, many already at capacity
- They lack facilities and stable funding
- They invest **thousands of dollars per animal** in veterinary care, training, and rehabilitation

By contrast, many publicly funded shelters **do not employ certified trainers or behaviorists**, yet make life-and-death decisions through processes that are often opaque and inconsistent. This imbalance leaves rescues carrying the **financial, legal, and emotional burden** of lifesaving, while shelters avoid full accountability and basic transparency.

Bottom line:

Rescues are partners — not replacements — for public animal control. Policy must reflect this distinction

Rescues Support the System—They Do Not Replace It

Survivors of the Euthanasia List

Snowball | San Jose | 1 y.o.

Once terrified at the shelter and placed on the euthanasia list, Snowball now has a very different life.

From his family: *“We absolutely adore him. He goes everywhere with us—sailing, park outings, even cozy TV nights. He’s truly a wonderful family dog.”*



Candy | Apple Valley | 1 y.o.

She is pure joy! Her adoptive family includes her in everything they do, and she’s the perfect family dog—loving every adventure along the way.



Dozer | San Jose | 3 y.o.

A joyful mix of energy and affection, Dozer forms a deep bond with his person. He’s intelligent, eager to please, and picks up new things incredibly fast.



Cash | Los Angeles | 1 y.o.

His kennel mate was found deceased in the kennel. After months without a single adoption application in California, Cash was rescued on his final day. He was adopted out of state, and his new family says, *“Cash has fit right into our family.”*



Rescues Support the System—They Do Not Replace It

Survivors of the Euthanasia List

Meena&Sara | San Jose | 1 y.o.

Were rescued from euthanasia from San Jose shelter. Meena was depressed, shepherds do bad at shelters, as they are intelligent and sensitive. As soon as she entered a foster home, she transformed in a happiest dog one can imagine.



McGee | Apple Valley | 1 y.o.

Was put on euthanasia due to space. From the foster family: *"The happiest and sweetest pup!"*



Gigi | Downey Shelter | 1.5 y.o.

Placed on euthanasia due to space. From her foster family: *"Gigi enjoys play time with her brother. They are in a constant play mode! :)"*



Austin | San Bernardino | 1 y.o.

Was on euthanasia list to clear space for newly incoming dogs. He never leaves his new family from site, is very attached to his people and loves them all.



These animals represent just a few of the lives saved from CA euthanasia lists - rescued through the tireless efforts of dedicated rescue groups, foster families and compassionate community members. But today, this network is overwhelmed. There are simply too many animals and not enough resources. Rescues are closing, fosters are full, and preventable deaths are rising. We urgently need your voice, your support, and your action. Please help stop the crisis and end the needless suffering of thousands of beautiful, adoptable animals across California.

California Animal Welfare Legislation: What Keeps Failing

Core Pattern:

Bills addressing breeder regulation, shelter transparency, and data reporting are **repeatedly introduced — and repeatedly stall** — despite growing public harm and little formal opposition.

Bill	Focus	Key Provisions	Outcome	Why It Failed
<u>AB 1482</u> / <u>(Bowie's Law)</u>	Shelter transparency & breeding	Online listing of all shelter animals; microchipping, vaccines, health checks before sale; breeder threshold lowered	Died in Senate	No registered opposition; limited advocacy; stalled in committee
<u>AB 702</u> / <u>AB 2425</u>	Backyard breeding control	Breeder permits, litter caps, microchipping, advertising rules	Failed to advance	AKC & breeder pressure; weak institutional support
<u>AB 595</u> / <u>AB 2265</u>	Shelter transparency	Public notice before euthanasia; study of overcrowding	Held in Appropriations	Resistance to shelter oversight
<u>SB 1459</u> / <u>AB 332</u> / <u>AB 631</u>	Shelter data reporting	Monthly or quarterly intake & outcome reporting	Failed / amended	Objections to reporting burden; lack of enforcement
<u>AB 1634</u> / <u>SB 250</u>	Spay/neuter	Mandatory sterilization with exemptions	Passed Assembly, died in Senate	Broad opposition despite prevention benefits
<u>AB 2723</u>	Microchipping	Mandatory microchipping at shelters	Passed Never introduced for communities	Narrow scope, low resistance

Why This Matters to Legislators:

- Unregulated breeding floods shelters with puppies and purebred dogs
- Lack of transparency masks overcrowding and euthanasia trends
- Prevention bills fail while costs shift to cities, counties, and volunteers
- No statewide system tracks shelters outcomes or accountability

What's Missing:

- A balanced, enforceable prevention framework
- Clear data requirements for publicly funded shelters
- Meaningful breeder regulation with accountability
- Legislative leadership willing to champion solutions

Bottom line: These are not new ideas. They are unfinished business — and the cost of inaction is now visible in every community.

A Call for Collaboration and Practical Reform

We are seeking an **honest, solution-focused dialogue** that brings the Legislature a **ground-level perspective** from rescue organizations working across California **alongside public shelters**, communities, and service providers.

Our coalition represents rescues operating daily in urban, suburban, and rural parts of the state, responding directly to community requests, shelter overflow, medical emergencies, and last-minute euthanasia cases. Our goal is **collaboration, not criticism** — and a shared commitment to **practical, prevention-based reforms** that protect animals, support communities, and ensure public accountability.

We look forward to working with legislators to develop **durable policy solutions** that address root causes and restore stability to California's animal welfare system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

We will be grateful for a 20-30 minutes zoom call with your Legislative Office.

Animal Rescuers For Change Team

All information and statement shared in this presentation is supported by factual records and documented communications, available upon request. To keep this presentation concise, only select examples are shown, though many more cases exist throughout California. Our organization receives overwhelming communication from communities and rescues across California and we feel it's highly important to share with your office.

Note on Privacy and Use

This public version of the presentation has **personal names and contact information redacted**, including those of private individuals and certain shelter officials, unless such information has already been publicly disclosed. We respect privacy and confidentiality and have limited identifying details to what is necessary for the purpose of this presentation.

Unredacted materials are being shared directly with legislators.

We encourage you to review this briefing, add your own experiences where appropriate, and contact your elected officials to ask them to **champion and author critical animal welfare legislation this year**.

January, 2025