

## Our Mission:

To improve the lives, health, safety, and well-being of animals under our care and within our community, be timely and compassionate in our response to customer needs and concerns, to educate and empower the community through outreach and public awareness, and to provide for the health and safety of the people of Ventura County.

**Jackie Rose**  
Director

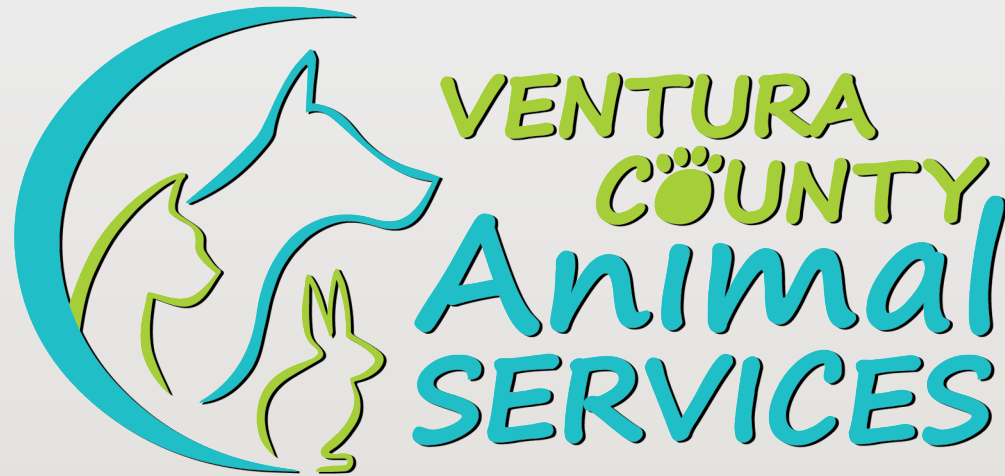
**Donna Gillesby**  
Deputy Director

**Camarillo Animal Shelter**  
600 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93010

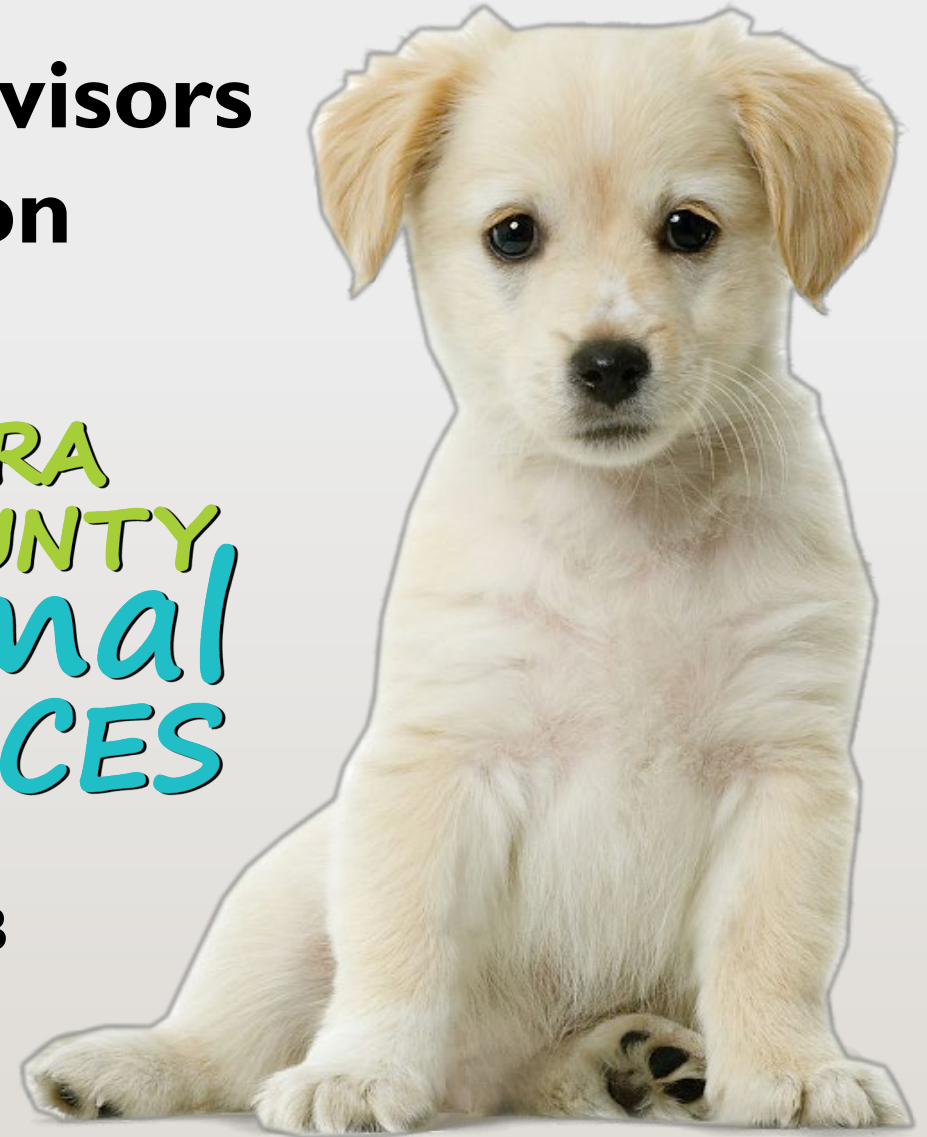
**Simi Valley Animal Shelter**  
670 W. Los Angeles Ave.  
Simi Valley, CA 93065

[www.vcas.us](http://www.vcas.us) | 805-388-4341  
[info@vcas.us](mailto:info@vcas.us)

# Board of Supervisors Presentation



September 12, 2023



# PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

1. Response to Recent Allegations
2. Opportunity to Provide Information Regarding Current Best Practices
3. Recognition of Staff and Volunteers

## Key Topics

- Staff Qualifications
- VCAS Service Philosophy
- Euthanasia Decision Processes
- Feline Services
- Volunteer Involvement
- Overview of Animal Services Foundation of Ventura County





# TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Director: Jackie Rose, JD, MS, CAWA--Director

- 35+ Years in Executive Leadership Positions (Non-profit and Government) with 16 Years in CEO/Director Positions in Animal Welfare Industry
- Certified Animal Welfare Administrator (Association of Animal Welfare Advancement)
- Vice President, CalAnimals

## Senior Leadership Team

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| • Donna Gillesby—Deputy Director               | 31 Years |
| • Eline Britz, DVM—Managing Veterinarian       | 5 Years  |
| • Kimberly Flavin—Animal Care Manager          | 14 Years |
| • Bryan Bray, CACO—Field Services Manager      | 20 Years |
| • Carla Faulkner—Client Services Manager       | 12 Years |
| • Randy Friedman—Media & Marketing Manager     | 9 Years  |
| • Phil Rarick—Administrative Services Director | 5 Years  |

## Other Key Staff

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • Lucy Mrvichin, CPDT, IAABC-SBA —Canine Care Coordinator | 19 Years |
| • Carol Almos—Volunteer Coordinator                       | 6 Years  |



# **No-Kill v. Socially Conscious Sheltering**







# TYPES OF ANIMAL WELFARE AGENCIES

## Public/Municipal Shelter

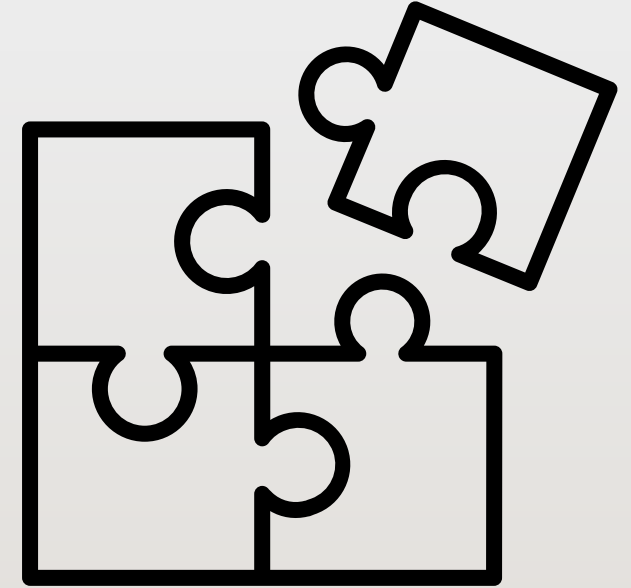
- Open Admission
- Stray Animals (including loose and O/S aggressive animals)
- Confiscated Animals & Emergency Care
- Sheltering, Adoptions, RTO, Community Support, Humane Education, Animal Control Services, Licensing, etc.

## Non-Profit Shelter (without county/city contract)

- Limited/Managed Intake
- Owner Surrender Animals
- Sheltering, Adoption, Community Services, Humane Education

## Rescue Agency

- Pre-Selected Admission of Animals from Shelters
- Sheltering (shelter or foster-care)
- Adoption





# **SHELTERING PHILOSOPHIES**

## **No Kill Approach:**

- Initially began in late 1970's - 1980's in response to public outcry of shelters who were euthanizing animals based on time/space considerations.
- Growing confusion over the definition of No-Kill
  - 90% LRR
  - 100% No-Kill?
- Best Friends Animal Society—Largest organization promoting No-Kill
  - CEO Julie Castle—States:
    - Killing = “Lethal methods used as a means of pet population control or to make a shelter’s operations more manageable.”
    - Euthanasia = “Reserved for animals who are suffering an irremediable medical condition, and a veterinarian determines that there is no chance of the animal recovering an acceptable quality of life” AND “in a municipal shelter setting those animals whose aggressive behavior is genuinely too dangerous for him or her to be a candidate for rehabilitation and rehoming.”
- Proponents of No-Kill often utilize language that is divisive and shame-based.



# Best Friends Animal Society: Dashboard



Pet Lifesaving Dashboard

## Ventura County Animal Services

This shelter has reached the no-kill benchmark of 90% or above.

A message from this shelter: "Ventura County Animal Services is an open-admission municipal animal shelter. We began the transition to a lifesaving organization in 2013 from a traditional pound-style shelter by ending the humane euthanasia of healthy or adoptable animals. No longer are companion animals humanely euthanized due to length of stay, number of animals or breed. We have had a 90%+ live release rate since 2014. Our biggest need is Foster families. [www.vcas.us/foster](http://www.vcas.us/foster)"

[Visit this shelter's website »](#)

### SHELTER STATUS: NO-KILL

Total Pets Entering  
**4,589**

Total Cats Entering  
**1,940**

Total Dogs Entering  
**2,649**

Total Pets Saved  
**4,174**

Total Cats Saved  
**1,668**

Total Dogs Saved  
**2,506**

Total Save Rate   
**90.96%** + 0.5%

Cats Save Rate  
**85.98%**

Dogs Save Rate  
**94.60%**

No-Kill Gap  
**--**

Data Year Prior Year  
**2021 2020**

In the case of missing 2022 data, stats will reflect the most current year we have from 2021 or 2020.



A plus sign (+) indicates the number has increased. A minus (-) sign indicates the number has decreased.



# **SHELTERING PHILOSOPHIES**

## **Socially Conscious Sheltering Approach:**

- Developed in 2018 and founded on principles of inclusion, collaboration, support and respect.
- A compassionate, transparent and thoughtful model outlining how animal shelters, rescues and key community stakeholders can best support vulnerable animals in their care and in their community.
- Ethical decisions surrounding euthanasia are not based a single metric (LRR) but instead based on effective pathway planning of each animal coupled with mindful attention to capacity for care and resources.
- Alleviate suffering and make appropriate euthanasia decisions
  - Not acceptable to let a medically suffering animal languish in a cage until it dies a natural death when humane euthanasia is available.
  - Not acceptable to house a known dangerous animal who cannot be safely placed in community for years.



# SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS SHELTERING PRINCIPLES



1. Place every healthy and safe animal.
2. Ensure every unwanted or homeless pet has a safe place to go for shelter and care.
3. Assess the medical and behavioral needs of homeless animals and ensure these needs are thoughtfully addressed.
4. Align shelter policy with the needs of the community.
5. Alleviate suffering and make appropriate euthanasia decisions.
6. Enhance the human-animal bond through safe placements and post adoption support.
7. Consider the health, wellness and safety of animals for each community when transferring animals.
8. Foster a culture of transparency, ethical decision making, mutual respect, continual learning and collaboration.

# SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS SHELTERS

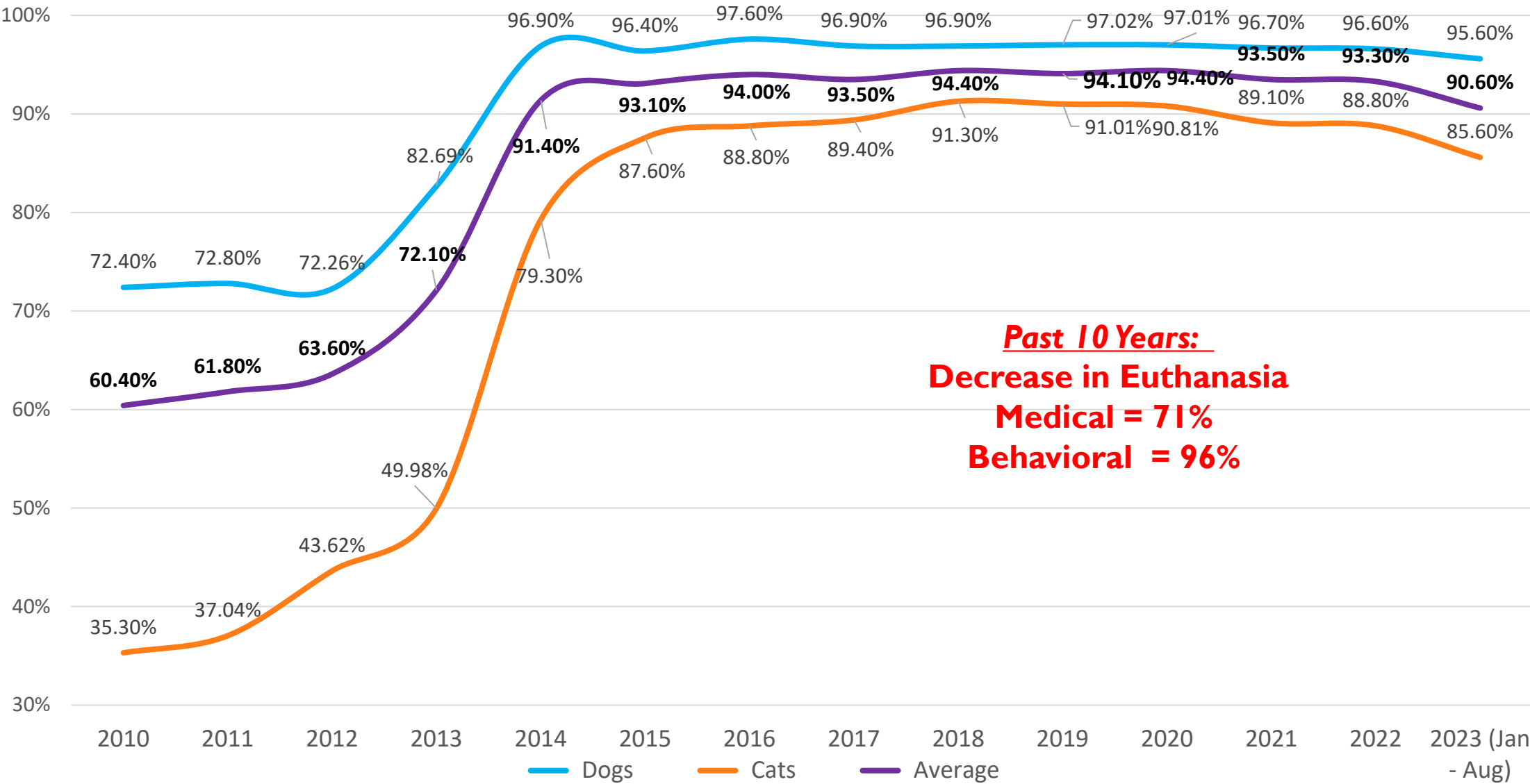




# VCAS LIFESAVING TIMELINE

- In June 2012,VCAS began the journey to increase the live-release rate for animals by increasing adoption and transfer options and decreasing euthanasia due to time and space. Directed by the BOS to work towards a No-Kill status (90% LRR).
- In January 2014,VCAS attained 90 LRR.
- Since 2014,VCAS has maintained a LRR of 90%+ for dogs and has steadily increased the LRR for cats to 90%.
- October 2019,VCAS embraced a new framework known as Socially Conscious Sheltering (SCS) to support and sustain our lifesaving efforts and clearly message our commitment to providing quality care and services to the people and animals of Ventura County.
- Best Friends Shelter Collaborative Program—Requested/Contracted to be a Mentor Agency for another municipal agency who has not yet obtained/maintained 90% LRR

# Live Release Rate



**Past 10 Years:**  
**Decrease in Euthanasia**  
**Medical = 71%**  
**Behavioral = 96%**





# Euthanasia Practices



# **REASONS FOR EUTHANASIA**

## Population Management *(Does not apply to VCAS)*

- Agencies having to euthanize for time and space
- Most frequently due to lack of resources to meet the demands of the shelter/community

## Medical Suffering *(Applies to VCAS)*

- Irremediably suffering
- Extensive medical needs beyond a shelter's resources or capacity
- Poor Quality of Life

## Behavioral Concerns/Safety Risk/Liability *(Applies to VCAS)*

- Aggressive behaviors that pose significant risk to persons or animals
- Duty to protect the public, staff and volunteers
- Duty to protect the County/Agency from litigation/financial liability



# **SHELTER REVIEW & EUTHANASIA DECISION PROTOCOLS**

## **Shelter Review—Multi-Disciplinary Review:**

- Historical Information (Owner Surrender Reports, Bite Histories, Previous Impounds)
- Current Presenting Issues (Bite Quarantine, Behavioral Issues, Medical Issues)
- Quality of Life Considerations
  - Social Interactions
  - Affiliation
  - Ability to be Handled/Out of Kennel Time
- Available Pathways and Resources for Placement (Adoption, Transfer, Foster, RTO)
- Guidelines for Decision Making = Asilomar Accords (Healthy, Treatable, Unhealthy)

## **Shelter Review Cases**

- All recent bite incidents (within the past 10 days)
- End-stage disease and/or extreme severe medical issues
- Dangerous behaviors that create safety risk or Unmanageable stress/anxiety resulting in poor QOL.



# **SHELTER REVIEW &** **EUTHANASIA DECISION PROTOCOLS**

- Owner Surrender Information
- Finder Information about Animal
- Foster Care and Adoption History
- Bite History/Investigation Reports and Photos (if available)
- Bite Severity using the Dunbar Bite Scale
- Medical History
- Behavior Evaluation
- Dog -to-Dog Assessments, if available and/or relevant
- Review of History of Incidents
- Environmental Factors, including the kennel environment, home environment (adoption, foster), and other settings
- Other Factors, including length of stay in the shelter, age, fertility status, quality of life, rehabilitation, management options, and available resources.





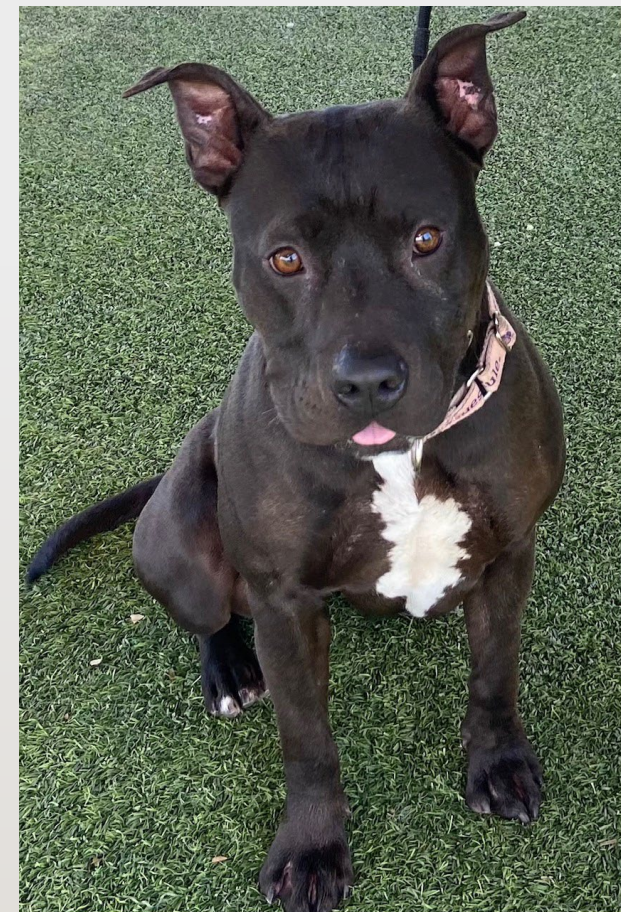
# **PLACEMENT DECISION MODEL**

## **Asilomar Accords**

	<b>Healthy</b>	<b>Treatable Rehabilitatable</b>	<b>Treatable Manageable</b>	<b>Unhealthy Untreatable</b>
Adoption	X	X		
Rescue/Transfer		X	X	
Euthanasia				X



VCAS Canine Behavior Matrix				
	HEALTHY	TREATABLE-REHABILITABLE	TREATABLE-MANAGEABLE	UNHEALTHY & UNTREATABLE
<b>Bite to Humans</b>	Bite (Level 1-2) caused by obvious provocation (ex. dog was being attacked or in pain)		Bite (Level 1-2) where triggers are well defined  Single incidence of redirection on human resulting in single bite (Level 1-2)	Bites (Level 1-2) where triggers are unidentified/poorly defined.  Bite (Level 3+)  Redirection on human resulting in multiple bites (Level 1-2) or multiple incidences of single bites (Level 1-2)  Redirection on human resulting in bite (Level 3+)  <i>Exceptions may be made on case-by-case basis</i>
<b>Resource Guarding</b>		Mild Resource Guarding (stiffens, gulps food)	Moderate Resource Guarding (growls, air snaps, and highly social)	Severe Resource Guarding (Bites Level 3+, or unsocial to humans)  <i>Exceptions may be made on case-by-case basis</i>
<b>Handling</b>		Minor handling issues (pulls away, avoids)	Moderate handling issues (growls, freezes, whips head, air snaps, bites leash, lunges)	Severe Handling Issues (Unable to handle without tools)  Bite Level 3+  <i>Exceptions may be made on case-by-case basis</i>
<b>Aggression</b>		Fear/Fear Aggression (mild)	Fear/Fear Aggression (moderate-serious with good learning curve with training, extensive forward progress)	Offensive Aggression to humans (outside of kennel, shelter, foster, previous home)  Defensive Aggression to humans <b>not responding to treatment</b> (no consistent, forward progress with treatment/slow learning curve)
<b>Aggression to Children</b>				Threat signals when unprovoked  Stalking Behavior toward Children
<b>Dog to Dog Behavior</b>	Social/No known dog issues  Shy/neutral  Doesn't like other dogs but shows no aggression	Fear-based Dog Aggression  Barrier Aggression	Barrier Aggression (includes leash reactivity) with no follow through or displays good learning curve  Killed small animals (birds, cats, rabbits)  Dog Selective  The following may be TM or elevated to UU depending on history, intensity, circumstances and size differential (between dogs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Killed cat(s)</li> <li>Killed dog(s)</li> <li>Killed livestock</li> <li>Killed poultry</li> </ul>	Offensive, uninteruptable dog aggression (This condition may be assessed in playgroup or based on history/other incidents)  The following may be UU or lowered to TM depending on history, intensity, circumstances and size differential (between dogs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Killed cat(s)</li> <li>Killed dog(s)</li> <li>Killed livestock</li> <li>Killed poultry</li> </ul>
<b>Common Behavior Issues</b>	Friendly/No Behavior Issues  Normal Dog Behavior (ex. playing, barking, jumping, initial shyness)	Mild/non-threatening Behavior Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House soiling</li> <li>Chewing, Digging</li> <li>Excessive Barking</li> <li>Occasional Escapes</li> <li>Poor leash manners</li> <li>Mouthy/Jumpy</li> <li>Mounting</li> <li>Kennel stress with signs of deterioration in kennel</li> </ul>	Moderate Behavior Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chronic house soiling</li> <li>Separation Anxiety (whines, pacing, no damage to dog or property)</li> <li>Escapes/Difficult to confine</li> <li>High Arousal</li> <li>Hyperactivity</li> <li>Overstimulation</li> </ul>	Severe Behavior Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any condition that results in poor quality of life in shelter care</li> <li>Separation Anxiety (injures self/property damage)</li> <li>Compulsive Behavior</li> <li>3+ TR/TM Medical or Behavioral Conditions</li> </ul> <i>Exceptions may be made on case-by-case basis</i>
<b>Legal</b>				Dangerous according to State Law
<b>Alignment with Socially Conscious Sheltering Principles</b>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not meet the definition of "Safe" for placement within the community (has exhibited behavior that is likely to result in severe injury or death to another person or animal)</li> <li>Behavior cannot be met with current resources</li> <li>Cannot live in harmony with other animals or people</li> </ul> <i>Exceptions may be made on case-by-case basis</i>





# CASE: Sequoia

4/19/2022—Impounded as a stray—No history

5/8/2022—Adopted & Returned due to bite to adopter.

- Trying to put shirt on Sequoia
  - Growled and grabbed hand—bit for 3-4 seconds
  - Friend pulled her off of victim and Sequoia went after friend.
- 911 called for victim



**6Year Old  
Female  
52 pounds**

5/18/2022— Shelter Review = Behavior was triggered and approved for adoption.



# CASE: Sequoia

May – November 2022

- Consistent FAS (Fear, Anxiety, Stress), limited handling due to various levels of aggressive behavior towards staff/volunteers.
- Placed on trazadone with little improvement and was discontinued.

11/5/2022—Bite to Volunteer

- Approved handler was attempting to leash
- Bite to middle finger and deep puncture to forearm
- Post incident continued aggression to this specific volunteer

11/17/2022—Shelter Review (Bite, QOL & Declining Behavior) = Email sent to rescues asking for placement within next few weeks.

11/20/2022 – 1/5/2023—Multiple conversations with a rescue agency about transferring Sequoia (included several meet and greet sessions for placement).



**6Year Old  
Female  
52 pounds**



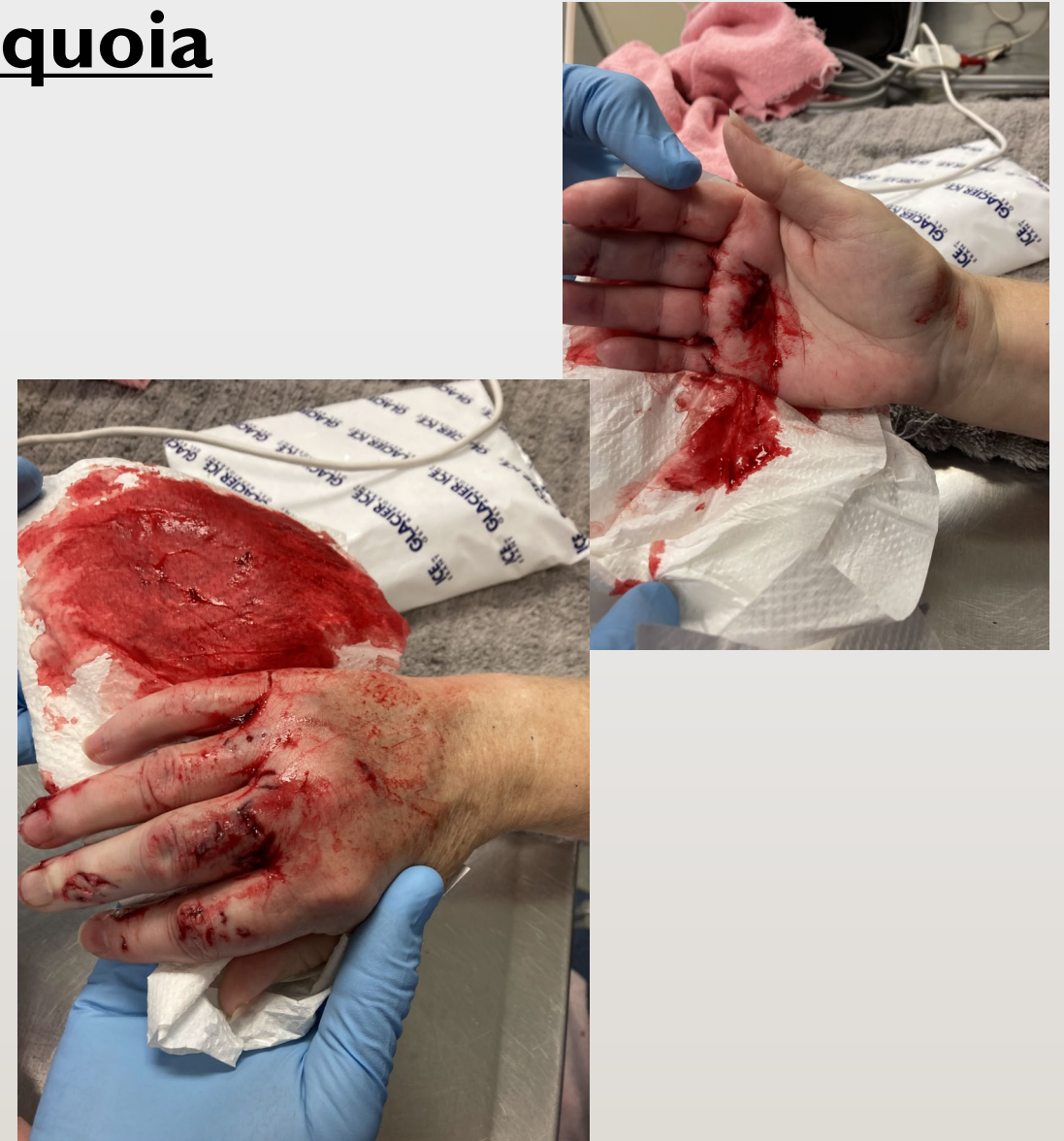
# CASE: Sequoia

1/5/23—Volunteer severely injured by bite while placing Sequoia back in her kennel after a walk

- While taking off leash, without warning or provocation, Sequoia attacked volunteer's hands resulting in multiple bites with shaking and holding during attack.
- Upon release, circled volunteer in kennel and would not let her leave. Staff member had to intervene to help volunteer get out of kennel.
- Volunteer received 25 stitches to both hands with severe injury to one hand.

1/23/23—Shelter Review held and determined that Sequoia was no longer placeable due to public safety risk.

1/27/2023—Humane Euthanasia



# CASE: Boston

4/16/2022—Impounded as a stray—No history

6/11/2022—Adopted

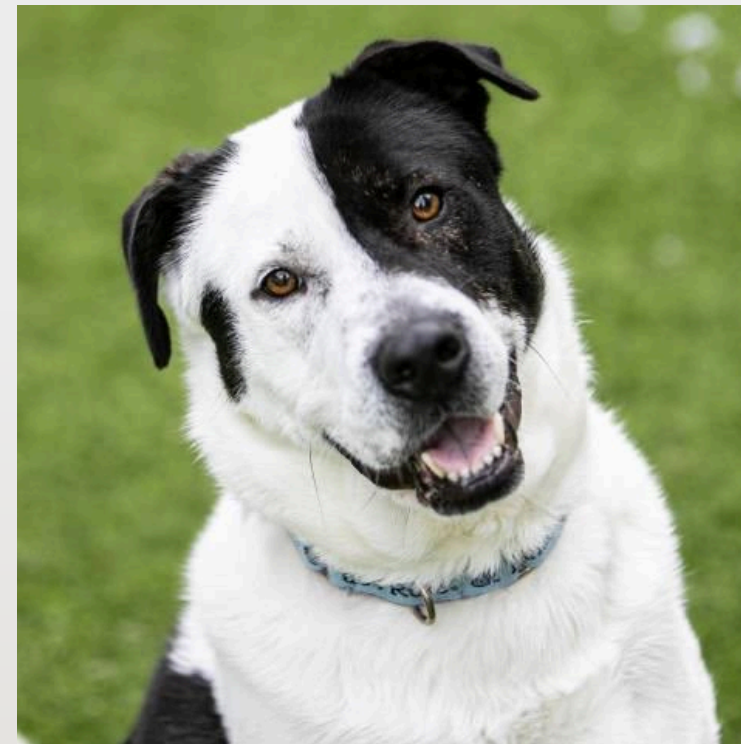
6/15/2022—Bit a Veterinary Technician while at a private vet for first appointment.

6/29/2022—Returned by adopter due to bite incident

6/29/2022 – 8/27/2022—Behavioral Evaluation

- Assess severity of behavior

8/27/2022—Made available for adoption and placed in Mutt Manners Program to help improve his leash reactive behaviors



**3 Years Old  
Male 55 pounds**



# CASE: Boston

8/27/2022 - 3/31/2023

- Consistently displayed on-leash reactivity/aggression towards unfamiliar people.
- Behavior was managed at shelter by avoiding people while dog was out for walks.
- Limited staff and volunteers were able to walk/handle.
- Exhibited several “near-miss” incidents and had displayed aggression to select individuals.
- No interested adopters during this time

2/16/2023—Email sent to rescues notifying them of need to find placement due to continued behavioral issues and lack of progress while at shelter.

3/21/2023—While being walked by a volunteer, Boston lunged at another volunteer who was approximately 6 feet away and bit her on the hand (while wearing a glove) causing significant injury. Bite was unprovoked.

3/30/2023--Shelter Review held and determined that Boston was no longer placeable due to public safety risk.

3/31/2023—Humanely Euthanized



# Volunteer awarded \$6.8 million after being mauled at animal shelter run by troubled L.A. agency

SUBSCRIBERS ARE READING >

MOVIES  
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Netflix has Oscar hopes for its Diana Nyad biopic. But swimmer's exaggerations cast a

CALIFORNIA

Erika Girardi, Secret Service and Amr Express engaged in corrupt conspir claims

BUSINESS  
FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Americans face an epidemic some, supermarket self-c'

MOVIES

We take an exclusiv restored Egyptian

CALIFORNIA  
FOR SUBSCRIBE

The weird



A pair of puppies wait to be fed at the North Central Animal Shelter, one of several L.A. Animal Services facilities. (Luis Sinco / Los Angeles Times)

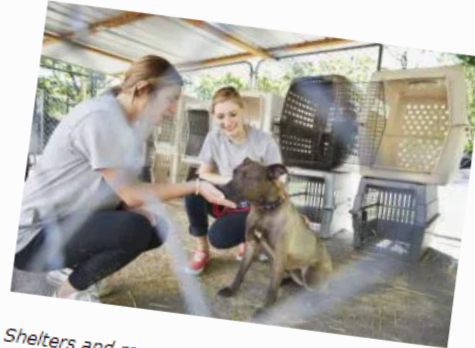
## A Budding Crisis in Animal Shelters?

By Nancy Kerns - Published: July 20, 2023 Updated: July 19, 2023



Whole Dog Journal—June 2023

4



The potential for the loss of liability insurance is closing shelter doors to volunteers.

Shelters and rescues – and obviously, their canine wards – benefit from enriching activities and handling provided by volunteers. But some shelters are concerned about increasing their liability exposure from having volunteers in their facilities. Photo by Camille Tokerud, Getty Images

As many of you know from personal experience, volunteers in animal shelters play an enormously valuable role in helping reduce the dogs' stress and increase their quality of life in innumerable small ways. The end goal is always to make the dogs feel any small amount better, in hopes of improving their chances of connecting with a human who will adopt them and get them out of the shelter! The most impactful thing these volunteers can do is to get dogs out of their small pens to exercise, de-stress, eliminate in a more comfortable setting, socialize with humans and sometimes other dogs, escape the loud noise in their kennels (if only for a few minutes), and perhaps receive some instruction on basic "good manners" behaviors.



Latest B





# Compliance with Hayden Act



# **ADHERENCE TO** **CALIFORNIA STATE LAWS (Hayden Act)**

## **Food & Agriculture Code Sec 31108(b)(1):**

- Except as provided in Section 17006 (irremediably suffering), any stray dog that is impounded pursuant to this division shall, before the euthanasia of that animal, be released to a nonprofit, as defined by Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, animal rescue or adoption organization if requested by the organization before the scheduled euthanasia of that animal.



# ADHERENCE TO CALIFORNIA STATE LAWS (Hayden Act)

## Food & Agriculture Code Sec 17005(a)

- It is the policy of the state that no adoptable animal should be euthanized if it can be adopted into a suitable home.
- **Adoptable animals include only** those animals eight weeks of age or older that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is impounded or otherwise taken into possession, **have manifested no sign of behavioral or temperamental defect that could pose a health or safety risk or placement as a pet and have manifested no sign of disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the health of the animal or that is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future.**

## Food & Agriculture Code Sec 17005(b):

- It is the policy of the state that no treatable animal should be euthanized.
- **A treatable animal shall include any animal that is not adoptable but that could become adoptable with reasonable efforts.**



# **ADHERENCE TO** **CALIFORNIA STATE LAWS (Hayden Act)**

## **Food & Agriculture Code Sec 31601—Legislative Declaration and Findings:**

- The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
  - (a) Potentially dangerous and vicious dogs have become a serious and widespread threat to the safety and welfare of citizens of this state.
  - (b) The number and severity of these attacks are attributable to the failure of owners to register, confine, and properly control vicious and potentially dangerous dogs.
  - (c) The necessity for the regulation and control of vicious and potentially dangerous dogs is a statewide problem, requiring statewide regulation, and existing laws are inadequate to deal with the threat to public health and safety posed by vicious and potentially dangerous dogs.

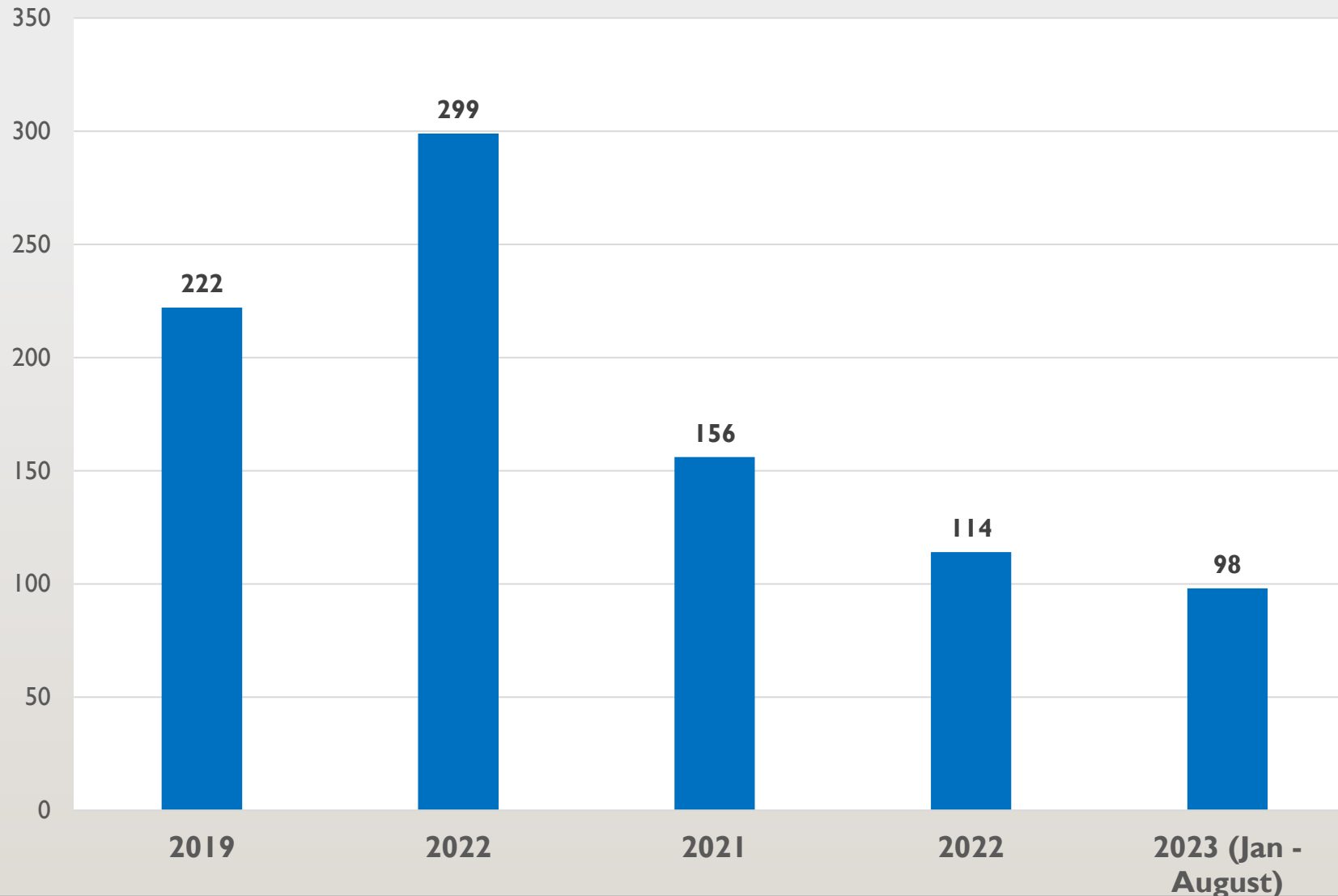




# VCAS DOG RESCUE TRANSFERS

Many rescues won't accept a dog with a bite history.

Many rescues are full and unable to find placement for their current animals.



Increased number of rescues who have closed due to liability claims and/or inability to get or retain business insurance.

Resource limited to increased requests animals with extensive medical care or behavioral needs.



# WHAT IF VCAS WAS 100% NO-KILL?

Do we adopt or transfer the dog knowing there is a high probability of risk to the public?

What is the impact on our staff and volunteers if they feel that we do not care about their safety?

Do we allow volunteers and/or staff to handle the dog, knowing there is a risk of injury to them or another animal on shelter property?

Are we prepared to defend potential litigation if the dog injures a person or another animal?

What do we do when our kennels are at full capacity due to a number of dogs who have no placement options?

How many people want to adopt a dog that poses safety risks for themselves, their families and their community?

How do we each “live with ourselves” when someone (staff, volunteer, public, animal) is seriously injured when we “knew” the animal posed a significant risk?

What is the QOL for an animal who spends the majority of its time in a kennel & has limited opportunity to “be a dog”?

What’s the impact on our city contract obligations when we are unable to accept dogs due to lack of space?

How do we provide quality care to dogs housed in the same kennel with multiple dogs due to lack of space?



# **Kitten/Cat Intake** **&** **Community Cat TNR Services**



# MILLION CAT CHALLENGE

- Best practice model launched in 2014 as a shelter-based campaign to save the lives of 1 million cats over five years.
- Joint project between UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program and Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida
- Over 1,000 shelters across the US participated-→Goal was reached and broadened to #allthecats = Finding the right outcome for every cat who comes to a shelter even if the outcome is never being admitted.





# CAT TYPES

National RTO  
Rate: 2% -5%

VCAS RTO Rate  
(2022) = 8%

65% - 85% of friendly cats  
brought to shelters are  
owned and being cared for  
in the community.




If cat looks healthy,  
high likelihood they  
are being cared for  
by owner or  
caregiver.

PLEASE DO NOT  
Kitten-Nap! Kitten  
litters don't travel  
together...they are  
not lost!

# NATIONAL ANIMAL CONTROL ASSOCIATION

## Position Statement

“It is the position of NACA that indiscriminate pick up or admission of healthy, free-roaming cats, regardless of temperament, for any purpose other than TNR/SNR, fails to serve commonly held goals of community animal management and protection programs and, as such, is a misuse of time and public funds and should be avoided.”

**NATIONAL ANIMAL**  
CARE & CONTROL ASSOCIATION

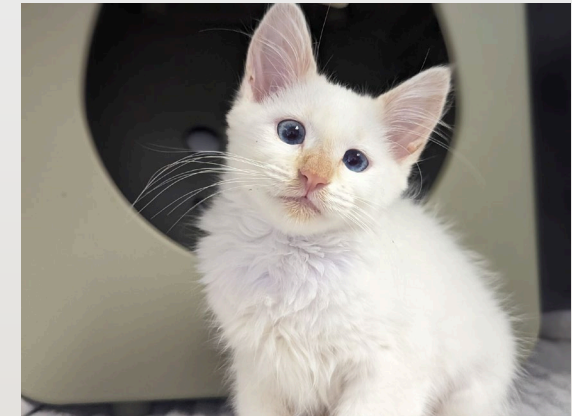
The National Animal Care & Control Association  
is committed to setting the standard of professionalism in animal welfare  
and public safety through training, networking, and advocacy.

### Animal Control Intake of Free-Roaming Cats

It is the position [policy] of the National Animal Care and Control Officers' Association that, at every opportunity, officers should [will] work to educate the public regarding humane and responsible co-existence and care of pet and community cats, to include education on the benefits and resources for spay/neuter and vaccination; responsible feeding and management practices for those choosing to care for community cats; and effective methods to humanely deter and exclude animals from homes, structures and targeted areas. It is the position of NACA that indiscriminate pick up or admission of healthy, free-roaming cats, regardless of temperament, for any purpose other than TNR/SNR, fails to serve commonly held goals of community animal management and protection programs and, as such, is a misuse of time and public funds and should be avoided.

- **Impoundment of healthy adult cats reduces the likelihood of reuniting families with pets:**  
Lost cats are 10-50 times more likely to be reunited with their owners if they stay in the neighborhood of origin than through an animal shelter. In fact, the most successful reunification method for cats is the cat returning home on its own. A family may not consider their free-roaming cat lost until the point when the cat is removed from the neighborhood and transported to a shelter.
  - **Impoundment of healthy adult cats may disproportionately impact under-served and marginalized communities**
    - Only 16% of participants in a program supporting low income pet owners have ever called or visited an animal shelter, and only 3% of pets in the same demographic were adopted from a shelter (compared to 30-40% for the general U.S. population), suggesting that impoundment is likely to be a one way journey for pets belonging to low income community members.
    - Only ~40 % of people in the lowest income bracket (<\$30,000 annual income) that lost cats were reunited with them, compared to > \$90% reunited for those making \$50,000 or more per year.
- **Impoundment has the potential to increase cat populations and impact:** The haphazard removal of individual cats is not population management. Removal of cats without concurrent control of the food source has been linked to paradoxical increases in cat populations by as much as 200%.
  - Kittens pose a greater risk than adult cats for shedding and spreading parasites with wildlife and/or public health implications (e.g. toxoplasmosis, Toxocara cati, Ancylostoma spp.),
  - therefore removing adult cats and destabilizing population age structures further increases risks to the environment.
- **Impoundment fails to resolve the inciting factors for nuisance situations:** if cats are simply impounded, community members may not be motivated to identify and remedy factors such as open garbage containers that may be attracting cats as well as nuisance wildlife. TNR programs that leave cats where they are have been associated with significant reductions in nuisance complaints.

[www.nacancat.org](http://www.nacancat.org) | P: 913.768.1319 | F: 913.768.137810960 California Oaks Rd, #242 Murietta, CA 92562



# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CATS

The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program/University of Wisconsin Outdoor Cat Population Calculator estimates the number of cats in a geographic area based on human population size.

Estimates for our eight (8) contracted cities and unincorporated areas of Ventura County:

- Indoor Cats: 1,052,017
- Indoor/Outdoor Cats: 701,345
- Outdoor Community Cats: 1,001,921





# VCAS FELINE SERVICES

Created and continually refine protocols, and messaging for the public, regarding how to best assist kittens/cats and when to bring them to shelter.

## I FOUND KITTENS!

Everyone loves kittens! Therefore, it's safe to say you would help any kittens you found in the neighborhood. However, we need your help before you begin taking action. Please consider the following: All kittens have mothers and their mothers are their best caregivers. She provides lifesaving milk, fends off predators, and keeps her little ones warm. Kittens should only be removed if it is warranted. So, when is it appropriate to move or remove kittens? Please use this helpful guide to determine your course of action. If you are unable to provide care for kittens you find, don't worry, we are here to help! You may bring them to the Ventura County Animal Services for care.

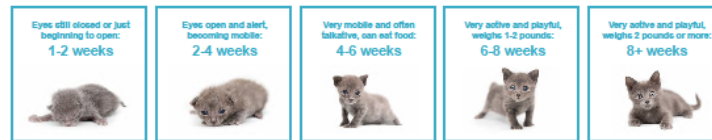
### DO THE KITTENS APPEAR SICK OR INJURED?

**YES:** Bring them to a veterinary clinic or VCAS for immediate help.

**NO:** Estimate the kittens' age by what they look like and continue below.



**EXAMPLE OF ILLNESS IN KITTENS**  
Dirty, crusty eyes, underweight, etc.  
Visit [kittenlady.org/kitten-oars](http://kittenlady.org/kitten-oars) for additional information.



### DO YOU SEE A HIDING OR NESTING AREA?

**YES:** Leave the kittens where they are. Avoid handling them and watch them from a distance to ensure mama cat returns after 6-8 hours. Leaving them with her greatly increases their chances of survival.

**NO:** If you don't see a nesting area or if the kittens are close to a street, gently move them to a safe place and observe them for 6-8 hours to ensure mom has returned.

### IF MAMA CAT HAS NOT RETURNED.

Choose **OPTION A** or **OPTION B**.

#### OPTION A: Care for the kittens as a Good Samaritan.\*

- GATHER SUPPLIES:** Bottles, nipples, formula, heating pads, etc. VCAS offers free KITTEN STARTER KITS for those in need. They are available at VCAS.
- HEALTH:** Take the kittens to a veterinarian for a check-up and vaccinations.
- EDUCATION:** Learn how to bottle feed, how to handle bathroom business, and all other aspects of essential kitten care, at [kittenlady.org/kitten-oars](http://kittenlady.org/kitten-oars).
- SPAY/NEUTER:** Kittens who are 8 weeks or older should be spayed/neutered before being adopted out. If you need no-cost or low-cost spay or neuter options, please visit [vcaas.us/communitycats](http://vcaas.us/communitycats) for a list of local organizations.
- FRIENDLY?** Visit [kittenlady.org/orphaned-1](http://kittenlady.org/orphaned-1) to learn how to socialize your kittens if needed. Some kittens over 8 weeks of age may remain feral. But don't worry, these cats will always have a place in our community! Visit [vcaas.us/communitycats](http://vcaas.us/communitycats) to learn about the TNR (Trap Neuter Return) program and our VCAS Working Whiskers program.
- ADOPTION:** You may bring the kittens to VCAS to be adopted or you may find them loving homes on your own. Visit [kittenlady.org/linkingsadoption](http://kittenlady.org/linkingsadoption) for helpful tips on finding loving homes for your kittens.

\*Financial Responsibility – If you choose to be the Good Samaritan, please be aware that you will be financially responsible for any costs associated with the care of the kittens.

#### OPTION B: If you are unable to care for the kittens.

If you are unable to care for kittens, don't worry, it's a big responsibility and we are here to help! You may bring the kittens to the shelter and we will care for them.

Thank you so much for caring about cats and kittens in need! If you have questions or need assistance in any way, please call us at (805) 388-4341. Experienced staff members are standing by! Ventura County Animal Services



## I FOUND A CAT!

Use this handy chart to help you make the right decisions regarding the cat you just found. **NOTE: Not all cats need to be brought to the shelter.**

### START HERE

**PLEASE** do not automatically take found cats to the shelter.

**IS THE CAT A KITTEN?**

**YES**

Visit [www.vcas.us/FoundKittens](http://www.vcas.us/FoundKittens).

**NO**

**IS THE CAT EARTIPPED?**

**YES**

An eartip identifies a cat who has been spayed or neutered through previous TNR efforts.

**NO**

**IS THE CAT SICK, INJURED, OR UNKEMPT?**

**YES**

**BRING THEM TO THE SHELTER**

A sick or injured cat may need urgent veterinary care. Bring them to the shelter for medical attention. If they are unfriendly and you need to trap them, visit [www.vcas.us/cats](http://www.vcas.us/cats) and click on Cat Trap Loan Program to obtain a humane trap from our agency.

**NO**

**IS THE CAT FRIENDLY?**

**YES**

**NO**

**NO ACTION NEEDED**

A healthy adult cat who is thriving in their environment and who has already been through the TNR process should be left to enjoy the freedom they have come to know.

**IS THIS A FAMILY'S LOST CAT?**

**IF THIS IS SOMEONE'S LOST CAT, IT IS VITAL TO HELP FIND THEIR FAMILY!**

Take their picture and share it on Next Door and Social Media. Post fliers around the neighborhood and ask neighbors if they recognize them.

**DID SOMEONE CLAIM OWNERSHIP AFTER YOU SHARED THEIR PICTURE?**

**YES**

**CONGRATULATIONS!** You found the lost cat's family!

**NO**

**OPTION 1:** Allow the cat to remain where they are but keep an eye on them. If they become thin or unkempt, bring them to the shelter.

**NO**

**OPTION 2:** If they truly look lost and keep hanging around your property, bring them to the shelter.

**TRAP NEUTER RETURN (TNR)**

These unsocialized cats should enter the TNR program where they are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, eartipped, and returned to their outdoor home where they were thriving. Visit [www.vcas.us/twr](http://www.vcas.us/twr) to learn more about this process.

**IMPORTANT:** Please monitor all community cats in your area. If any begin looking sick, thin or unkempt, bring them to the shelter for care.

**IMPORTANT:** NEVER return a cat to a high traffic or dangerous area. Take them to the shelter for TNR or our Working Cat Program.





# VCAS KITTEN FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

- Two (2) full-time positions (Foster Coordinator and Offsite Coordinator)
- January – August 2023: Admitted= 778
- Foster Homes = 109
- Average 150 cats/kittens per day in Foster Care
- All kittens receive bi-weekly medical wellness appointment managed by a team of dedicated volunteers working together with our veterinary team.





# **VCAS SPAY/NEUTER SERVICES**

## **TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) Services**

- Provide 20-26 surgeries/week for Community Cats managed by community members/trappers.
  - 2022 = 314 Surgeries
  - 2023 (Jan – August ) = 487 Surgeries
  - Trap Loan Program
- Provide ongoing funding to Simi Valley Non-Profit Spay/Neuter Clinic for community cats (number served is based on capacity).

## **Owned Pet Services**

- Provide vouchers to help pay for spay/neuter surgery for owned pets.
- Grant funding to provide no-cost spay/neuter surgeries to owned animals:
  - CDFA: Home with a Cone—335 Reclaimed Animals—Surgery at not cost at time of reclaim
    - *Awarded Grants: May 2021 & March 2023*
  - CDFA: Owned Pets in Community—100 Animals (Partnership with Simi Valley Clinic)
    - *Awarded Grants: March 2021, February 2022 & February 2023*





# Volunteer Retention





# VOLUNTEER/FOSTER SERVICES



Number of  
Current  
Volunteers:  
452

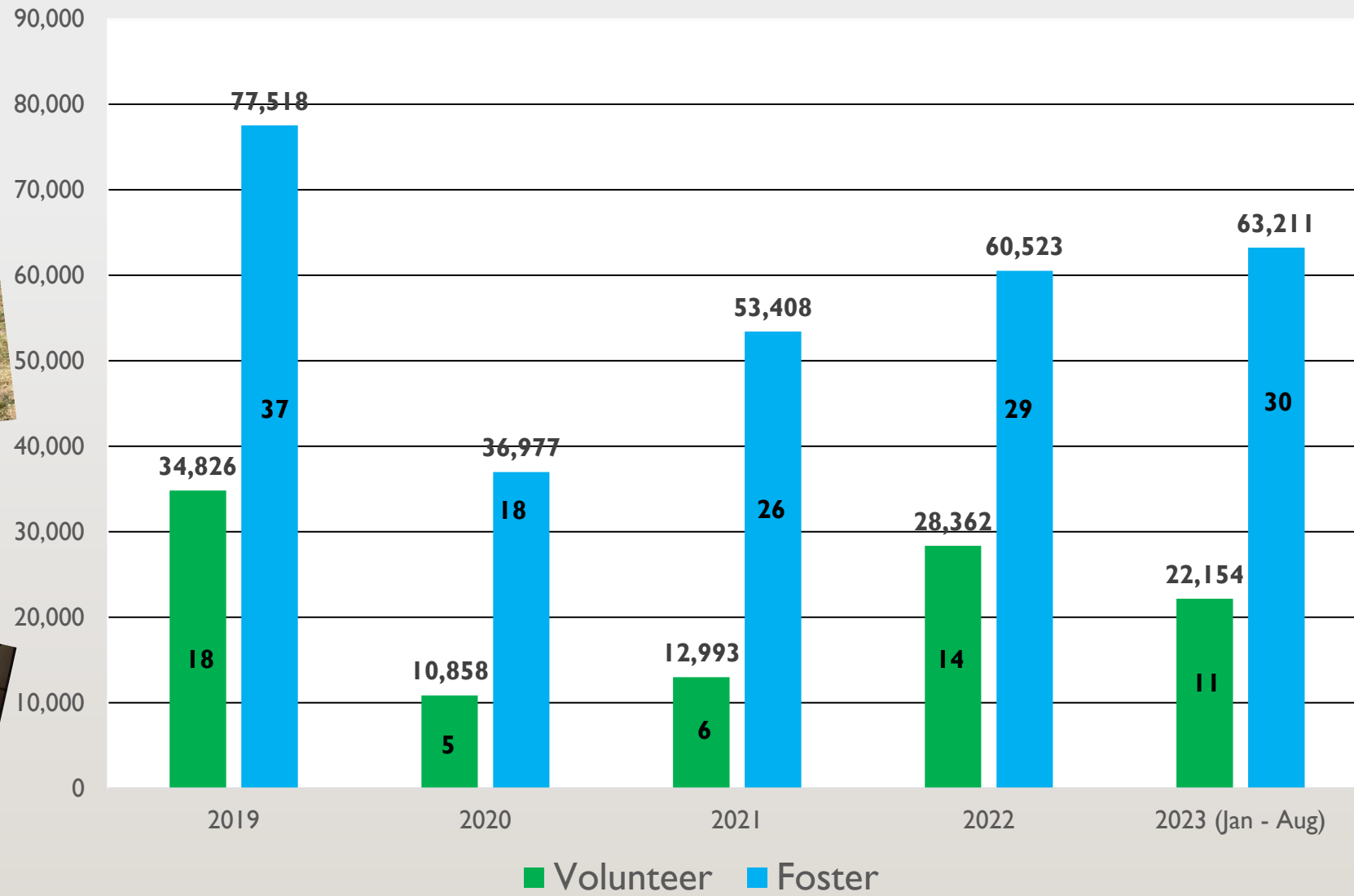


New  
Volunteers  
March 2022 –  
August 2023:  
320





# TOTAL HOURS/FTE







# CLEAR THE SHELTERS

*August 26, 2023*

115  
Animals  
Adopted

118  
Volunteers







# **Animal Services Foundation** **of Ventura County**



# ANIMAL SERVICES FOUNDATION OF VENTURA COUNTY

ASFVC is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization solely dedicated to supporting the efforts and mission of VCAS

## Historical Summary:

- 1998: Incorporated--Originally named the Animal Regulation Volunteer Auxiliary
- 1999: Received IRS Determination Letter for 501(c)(3) status
- Renamed to the "Friends of Ventura County Animal Services"
- Renamed to "Animal Services Foundation of Ventura County"

## Board of Directors:

- Currently has seven (7) board members
- All board members serve as volunteers and do not receive any type of compensation

## Donations:

- Compliance with IRS Requirements







# **ASFVC BY-LAWS** **OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE**

**To provide financial support for the Ventura County Animal Services (VCAS), a public animal shelter system, owned and operated by the County of Ventura, through the following activities, among others:**

- a) Soliciting contributions and raising funds for the support of VCAS
- b) Acquiring property by gift, devise, bequest, purchase, or otherwise for the benefit of VCAS; and
- c) Holding property, making investments, and applying income or making property available to VCAS.

*The financial support for VCAS contemplated by this statement of purpose shall supplement, rather than substitute for, other financial support available to VCAS.*

**To enhance the image and visibility of VCAS, generate support for its endeavors and improve the service of those in the communities which it serves, through the following activities, among others:**

- a) Creating and maintaining community awareness of VCAS;
- b) Supporting the endeavors and projects of VCAS;
- c) Educating the public (Be an Ambassador) regarding the importance and activities pertaining to critical animal welfare issues and VCAS;
- d) Conducting such public forums and other educational activities as VCAS shall, from time to time, deem appropriate.



# 2023 BUDGET

## VCAS EXPENSE ALLOCATIONS

	Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Foster Care	Transfers	Pet Retention	General	Total
Veterinary Care	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000			\$50,000	\$10,000	<b>\$105,000</b>
Supplies	\$15,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	<b>\$40,000</b>
Travel					\$3,500			<b>\$3,500</b>
Intake/Transfer Fee					\$2,500			<b>\$2,500</b>
Marketing							\$20,000	<b>\$20,000</b>
Volunteer Support			\$1,000				\$17,000	<b>\$18,000</b>
Fundraising & Education							\$5,000	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$57,000</b>	<b>\$194,000</b>



# NOTABLE PROJECTS

2015: Play Yards at Simi Shelter = \$10,000

2016 : Purchase Bunny Cages = \$37,000  
Purchase of Disaster/Fire Response Equipment = \$11,625

2018: Puppy Playground = \$165,000

2019: Commercial Laundry Washer/Dryer at Simi Shelter = \$18,000

2020: Cat Kennel Portals and Purchase of New Kennels for Small Dogs = \$19,800

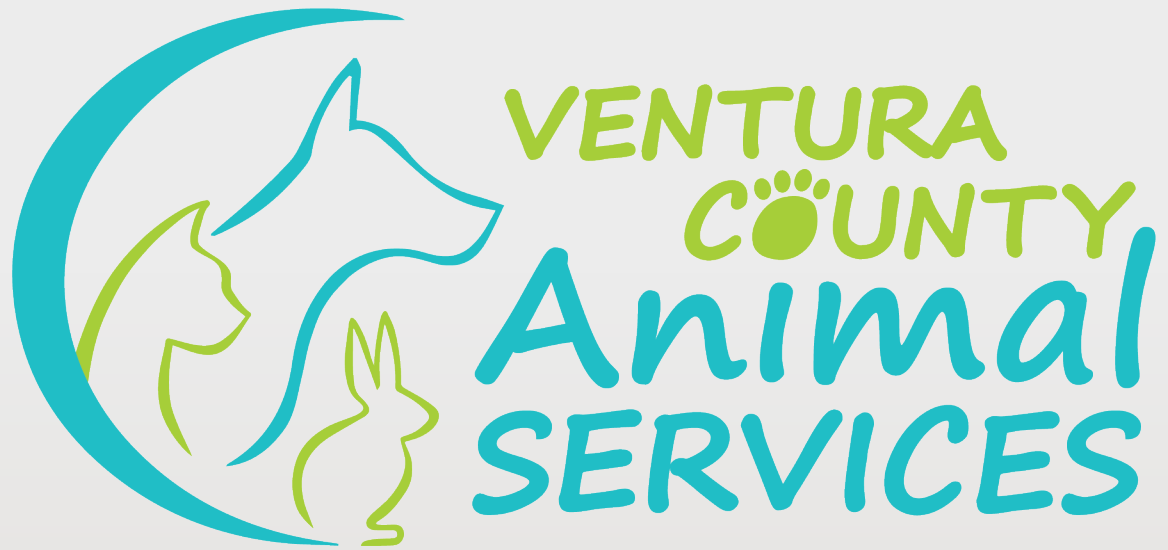
2023: Purchase of Dog Kennel Privacy Panels for Simi Shelter = \$8,550  
Purchase/Installation of Dog Play Yard Catch Pen = \$3,100







***We all WANT every animal  
to find their forever home!***



Thank you!

