

# Department of Animal Sheltering CY 2023 Equity Impact Plan



**Leadership Sponsor:** Reasa Currier, Shelter Director

**Equity Lead(s):** Karstena Munzing

**Departmental Equity Guiding Statement:** The Department of Animal Sheltering is committed to applying an equity lens to our policies and practices, and working to ensure that Fairfax County residents and pets have access to animal welfare services, and to opportunities that strengthen the human-animal bond. We believe that everyone has the right to enjoy the love and companionship that comes from sharing one's life with a pet.

**Context:** DAS is continuing to see pets brought to the Shelter (for surrender or temporary courtesy holds) because residents cannot access the basic services and amenities listed below, and/or because they're experiencing homelessness or other hardships.

- Lack of access to affordable veterinary care.
- There are currently no low-cost spay neuter options for residents of Fairfax County, aside from DAS' limited services.
- Lack of access to pet-friendly housing without size or breed restrictions, including shelters for people experiencing homelessness.
- Lack of access to affordable pet retention supplies (food, medication, preventatives, grooming, training).
- Lack of pet friendly housing is one of the top reasons that pets become unnecessarily homeless. With 36% of U.S. households renting, and 72% of renters owning pets, families Fairfax County families shouldn't have to choose between their pet and a place to live.
- Lack of access to accurate and quality information about the above items.

At Fairfax County Animal Shelter, we are committed to providing the highest quality of care to the animals in our shelter, while also working to tackle the root causes of animal homelessness in our community. Our programs are focused on closing the service gap that exists for people and pets in underserved areas. Families with pets face numerous barriers from lack of access to veterinary care to lack of availability of pet-friendly housing. We are deepening our relationships with community partners and other county agencies to create a system of wrap around services so families with pets don't fall through the cracks. Our work is anchored in the belief that pets are family, and we look forward to expanding our programs and services over the coming year that help people and their pets stay healthy, happy, and together.

## **Long-term Outcome(s):**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural and Recreational Opportunities                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity  | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing and Neighborhood Livability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient and Effective Government                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifelong Education and Learning     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility and Transportation         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety and Security                 |

**System-Level Infrastructure:**

- Policies, practices, and efforts of Animal Protection Police/FPCPD as they relate to DAS's policies, practices, and efforts in the community, and ongoing communication between agencies regarding these items.
- Policies and practices of the Health Department as they relate to DAS's efforts in the community, and ongoing communication between agencies regarding these items
- Policies, practices, and outreach efforts of the human services agencies, specifically related to pets owned by residents utilizing their services, and ongoing communication between agencies regarding these items

Agency compliance with current state and county laws and state veterinary board guidance related to the types of pet services that can be offered by municipal animal shelters

## DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SHELTERING CALENDAR YEAR 2023 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN

Goals	One Fairfax Area of Focus	Actions	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources and Supports	Responsible Parties	Performance Measures
1. Continue and expand community outreach programs to improve the quality of life for pets and people in underserved communities	1,7	1a. Staff and resource PAWS so it serves as a core function of DAS. Add an additional FTEs to support the program and create continuity and redundancy.	Human Resources, PAWS Coord, Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, money, time, volunteers	DAS leadership HR	# and types of services provided, # events hosted, # pets/families served, # repeat clients, # referrals from clients and other FFX agencies, # FFX Co agency collaborations, # nonprofit and mission-based organization collaborations, % of clients with positive opinion of program and services received, % of available appointments filled, # of additional requests for services when applications are full, # of individuals turned away from events due to capacity, # of waitlist clients
		1b. Continued implementation of programs via events, outreach to target communities, ongoing coms with clients	PAWs Coord	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, money, time, volunteers	PAWS Coord Outreach manager	
		1c. Provide adequate staffing/support to events	PAWS Coord, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Buy-in, time, staff	DAS Leadership	
		1d. Increase capacity of program to serve the target number of individuals/families to meet program goals and bandwidth	PAWS Coord, Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '26	Staff, money, time, volunteers	PAWS Coord, DAS Leadership	
		1e. Remove transportation and technological barriers preventing individuals from accessing services	PAWS Coord, Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, time	PAWS Coord	
		1f. Research ways to improve program implementation	PAWS Coord,	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, time	PAWS Coord	

<b>2. Increase accessibility of DAS information and content, including digital content to include other languages and accessibility features</b>	15	2a. Perform audit of website to identify opportunities to increase accessibility	Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, time	Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	# existing content items that have been improved for accessibility or translated, # languages content items are available in, # content items created # of multilingual materials and content created, # of website pages reviewed, # of accessibility updates made to website
		2b. Establish multilingual social media presence	Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Staff, time	Outreach Mgr	
		2c. Create multilingual informational materials and other materials to increase accessibility for all DAS services	DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '25	Time, staff, money	DAS Leadership	
		2d. Implement ASL interpreters and language translators at live events and presentations as needed	Outreach Staff, Outreach Mgr, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Money	Outreach Staff	
<b>3. Increase diversity of staff, volunteers, fosters, and applicants to match the county's diverse population</b>	17	3a. Advertise job postings in locations and methods that are accessible to diverse audiences, regardless of access to technology or familiarity with FFX regular job posting locations	Human Resources, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Time, staff	Business and HR Mgr	# of overall applications to posted positions, % of applicants who speak a second language, # of organization disseminating job postings
		3b. Develop a list of professional organizations which can advertise job postings to communities not already reached and/or diverse communities	Human Resources, DAS Leadership	Jan '23 – Dec '23	Time, staff	Business and HR Mgr	
<b>4. Expand access to affordable, pet friendly housing for Fairfax County residents</b>	18	4a. Work with the Department of Housing and Community Development and other stakeholders to develop a pet friendly housing policy for Fairfax County supported affordable housing units	HCD, DAS leadership (possibly DCEs and CEX)	Jan '23- Dec. '25	Collaboration and engagement from HCD and stakeholders	PAWS outreach coordinator, DAS director, HCD director	# of affordable housing units that allow pets
		4b. Develop resources and support for families with pets in crisis due to housing	HCD, DAS, community stakeholders (NGOs, churches, etc)	Jan '23- Dec. '25	Collaboration and engagement from HCD and stakeholders	PAWS outreach coordinator, DAS director, HCD director	# of families with pets who received support/assistance

<b>5. Increase access to veterinary care - including wellness care and low-cost spay/neuter for Fairfax County residents</b>	18	5a. Create a spay /neuter /wellness care voucher program in partnership with private veterinary practices located in underserved communities	DAS, Pender Veterinary, Private Veterinary hospitals	Jan. '23- Dec. '25	Buy-in from veterinary practices, time, staffing to administer the voucher program, funding for the vouchers	PAWS Coordinator, DAS director	# of pets receiving care
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Director's Signature: Reasa D. Currier