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# EQUITY IMPACT PLAN ANNUAL REPORT

## CALENDAR YEAR 2024

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Department Name: Department of Animal Sheltering

Equity Lead(s): Lauren Krzywicki

Date: 11/27/24

### EQUITY IMPACT PLAN REPORT

#### DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

*Review your department's Equity Impact Plan for CY 2024 at [Equity Impact Plans | Topics \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/equity-impact-plans). Add each departmental goal below and describe: 1) what was done to make progress toward the goal, 2) with whom (partners), and 3) how work toward this goal was measured/evaluated and the results. If you have data for the performance measures listed in your CY 2024 Equity Impact Plan, report them. Add more goals as needed.*

#### **Goal 1: Continue to expand community outreach programs to improve quality of life for pets and people in underserved communities.**

The Pet Resource Center (PRC) under DAS expanded Vaccine and Microchip Clinics and the Pet Pantry Program. The number of Vaccine and Microchip Clinics held annually was quadrupled, being held once a month at both shelter campuses to reach different communities focused in Regions 1 and 2 of Fairfax County neighborhoods.

Through partnerships with Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) and Rising Hope Mission Church (RHMC), the PRC was able to take Pet Pantry services into communities in CY24. Once monthly, the PRC hosts Pop-Up Pet Pantries tabling alongside LCAC's and RHMC's food banks; providing pet food, supplies, and information about available pet resources.

These expansions resulted in a 102% increase in pounds of pet food distributed and 137% increase in pets served through the Pet Pantry. Vaccine and Microchip Clinics experienced a 271% increase in total pets served when compared to this time last year. A total of 4,929 pets were served Through the Pet Resource Center in CY24.

#### **Goal 2: Increase accessibility of DAS information and content.**

The DAS Communications team participated in eight off-site events to discuss DAS programs, adoptable pets, and volunteer opportunities. Communications hosted five age-inclusive classes and provided tours of the shelter to groups including residents from Sunrise Senior Living and Pawfectly Delicious: a bakery employing individuals with developmental and physical disabilities. Additionally, the DAS Communications team collaborated with Fairfax County's Language Access

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Program to bring regular posts about DAS program and services to the Korean Fairfax County Government social media pages.

The Pet Resource Center has increased accessibility to programs by creating numerous bilingual One Welfare and pet health literacy information. Additionally, the PRC has attended a total of 25 off-site events this year where this information was distributed and the PRC discussed pet resources available through the shelter and existing third-party pet resources.

DAS created adoption contracts available in Spanish and is working with the Language Access Program to have all other contracts bilingual. Additionally, DAS is working towards making all contracts accessible via mobile device.

### **Goal 3: Increase diversity of staff, volunteers, fosters, and applicants to match the county's diverse population.**

Volunteer roles were expanded to create more accessible duties for a wide range of skillsets and backgrounds. These roles were mainly comprised of community-engagement type duties that allowed for more of the senior population to engage with DAS and the community. Additionally, DAS recruited bilingual volunteers that played a crucial role in increased accessibility to resource-driven programs, with 48 new volunteers onboarded in 2024 that indicated they spoke a language other than English.

### **Goal 4: Increase access to veterinary care for Fairfax County residents.**

In regard to urgent care services, a list of approved conditions and fee schedule was generated. Contract veterinary clinic scheduling constraints has paused subsequent progress on this initiative.

The Pet Resource Center launched initiative to regularly host fee-waived Vaccine and Microchip Clinics off-site in communities that have a high vulnerability index, mitigating families' financial and transportation barriers to accessing veterinary care.

The Pet Resource Center partnered with three private veterinary practices to launch a Spay/Neuter Voucher Program in March (rollover goal from 2023 EIP). Spay/Neuter Vouchers include fee-waived spay or neuter surgery, routine post-operative care, core vaccinations, and microchipping. Since March 2024, 150 Spay/Neuter Vouchers have been distributed.

### **Goal 5: Expand access to affordable, pet-inclusive housing for Fairfax County residents. Lack of pet-inclusive housing is one of the top reasons pets become unnecessarily homeless.**

Staff collected information on current pet policies and pet-friendly units for housing units/programs available through the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Animal Services Advisory Commission submitted a letter to the Board of Supervisors describing how and why

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inequitable pet-friendly housing policies impacts human and animal welfare, and recommended action.

### COUNTYWIDE GOALS

*Report progress on Countywide goals related to the Regional Fair Housing Plan, if relevant to your department. As above, copy in each Countywide goal from your CY 2024 Equity Impact Plan, and describe progress made in CY 2024. If none, write "Not applicable."*

Not applicable.