

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE July 6, 2022

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Dallas Animal Services' Response to Resident Emails**

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers –

Dallas Animal Services' (DAS) is aware of resident messages distributed to your offices regarding the safety and care of our shelter animals. This specific set of allegations was initially received by the Animal Advisory Commission Chair on June 15, 2022; at that time, DAS management investigated the claims and worked with the Chair to respond directly to the resident. All claims were found to be false.

DAS is grateful for City Council's ongoing support, and we encourage all community members, stakeholders, and constituents to send their concerns to us, as continuous improvement remains a priority.

Our mission remains exceptional animal care and to save as many lives as we are able. Like many other shelters in Texas, we are battling Distemper cases and ongoing dog capacity challenges. We are anticipating an intake of 18,000+ pets this year and routinely see 60+ dogs arriving within a single day.

- DAS takes the care of and quality of life of our animals extremely seriously and follows industry best practices. Dogs are fed once a day in accordance with their weight and nutritional needs as outlined by our veterinarians. Our staff performs a deep cleaning each morning and then spot cleans rooms throughout the day, refilling water as they go. As part of this process, dogs are isolated to one side of their kennels using a transfer door in order to allow staff to clean the vacant side; then the door is lifted, dogs are moved to the clean side, and the other side is cleaned.
- Like many residents and businesses, DAS has faced air conditioning challenges this summer. We have worked closely with Building Services and have had technicians onsite consistently servicing the units. Our facilities staff monitors temperatures in each room twice a day and animal housing areas are always prioritized when repairs are necessary. The average temperature in the facility has been 72.8 degrees.
- Distemper cases significantly limit our large dog capacity because general housing rooms have had to turn into quarantine spaces, and the need for increased spacing between newly arriving dogs to reduce cross-contamination limits room occupancy. Unfortunately, when we reach capacity in our general population or sick isolation rooms, we must make difficult euthanasia decisions to ensure we keep the wider population healthy and can continue serving Dallas residents by taking in dogs.
- Understandably, many animal lovers in the community are frustrated by space euthanasia; so are we. DAS management is working to develop a new set of large dog capacity meters for our daily report card that show capacity in each of three areas: lost and found/intake holding, adoptions, and upper respiratory illness isolation rooms. We believe that these meters will better illustrate the space available within our building and help residents to better understand why space euthanasia occurs at times.
- We are striving to work with concerned residents toward collective solutions. If mishandling and improper care occurs, we want to get to the bottom of it as we agree it is unacceptable.

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Additionally, all municipal shelters in the state are required to undergo routine inspections by the Department of State Health Services. DAS' most recent inspection was on February 18, 2022 and we passed with 100% compliance. I have attached the inspection report and resulting certificate for your review.

If you, or any of your staff, would like a tour of Dallas Animal Services to better understand our challenges and get behind the scenes insight into our operations, I would be happy to oblige. Please email my Executive Assistant, Jillian Appelbaum, and she will get a visit scheduled.

Dallas Animal Services continues to be a leader among municipal shelters nationwide for its lifesaving and innovation, and we remain committed to compassion, public safety, and no shortcuts. Again, we are grateful for your support and that of our outstanding community who continues to show up for the pets of Dallas!

Sincerely,



MeLissa Webber
Director
Dallas Animal Services

c:

T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Deputy City Manager
Jon Fortune, Deputy City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager
Robert Perez, Assistant City Manager
Carl P. Simpson, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Genesis D. Gavino, Chief of Staff/Office of Resilience
Directors and Assistant Directors

DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

Date 2-18-2022 No. 03-168

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT _____

DALLAS ANIMAL SERVICES

Name

having complied with the provisions of Chapter 826, Health and Safety Code, and having been approved by Zoonosis Control, is hereby licensed

to operate as a Animal Quarantine Facility

located at 1818 WESTMORELAND RD DALLAS DALLAS
Street City County

Unless revoked for due cause, this license will expire 2-18-2023


Regional Zoonosis Control Veterinarian

Shall Be Publicly Displayed on the Premises
Non-Transferable