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Broward County Animal Care and Adoption

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2019-2021

Issued March 28th, 2019



Together, We Can Save More Lives
Adopt-Foster-Volunteer-Rescue-Donate

Mission Statement

“To rescue pets in need, protect the community, and save lives”

Background

Broward County Animal Care and Adoption Division (ACAD) has made important progress with its lifesaving programs since the passing of Resolution 2012-271 by the Board of County Commissioners, and its stated intent of becoming a No-Kill Community. Under new leadership, a new mission statement--with renewed goals and objectives--has been developed, to bring people and pets together to truly create a no-kill community in Broward County.

The new mission statement reflects the priorities of the Division. It is a guide to staff and members of the community, to create lifesaving solutions for pets, engage the community in our work, deliver quality customer service, and provide excellent care to all dogs and cats in our shelter

Strategic Direction Provided by the Board of County Commissioners

In 2012, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) commissioned the development of a strategic plan, with the goal of Broward County becoming a “No-Kill” Community. Although the Board Resolution provides the framework for ACAD to develop and prioritize programs, new innovative ideas, partnerships, and resources are necessary moving forward, to increase the live release rate. It is important in the new framework of this Strategic Plan to establish the definition of a “No-Kill” shelter for our community.

Defining “No-Kill” for Broward County

A “No-Kill” shelter is a shelter that saves all healthy, treatable and rehabilitatable animals. ACAD believes that every healthy or treatable animal should be saved. Past nationwide studies concluded that approximately 10 percent of the dogs and cats entering animal shelters will have medical conditions causing irreparable suffering or are dangerous dogs and cannot be safely released into the community. In such cases, those animals must be humanely euthanized. We now know that some shelters are successfully maintaining higher Live Release Rates (LRRs) once the community is fully engaged in the mission.

The County’s goal is to achieve a 90% or higher (LRR) benchmark by 2020. Meaning at least 90% of the dogs and cats entering the shelter are expected to be released alive, either through placement into new homes from adoptions, our community cat programs, rescued by our partners, or reunited with their owners.

While each community decides how to report the statistics, in Broward County we take a transparent approach based on counting and reporting the total number of “noses in” and “noses out” by using the Asilomar Accords Live Release Rate and definitions.

A New Approach to Strategic Planning

This strategic plan focuses on specific priorities previously established by the Board, but it also incorporates stakeholders and community input in the process. In 2012, the Board identified the following strategic priorities:

- Pet Retention Programs
- Medical and Behavioral Programs
- High-Volume, Affordable Spay/Neuter Services
- Comprehensive On-site and Off-site Adoption Programs
- Large-scale Volunteer Foster Care Programs
- Public Relations/Community Involvement Programs
- Pet Redemption Programs
- Rescue Group Transfer Programs
- Volunteer Programs

These strategic priorities are in the process of being accomplished. However, new and updated goals and objectives are necessary for the shelter to achieve and sustain a save rate of 90% or greater and reach the industry standard of a “No-Kill” status.

The strategic priorities in this updated Plan will build on the current strengths of the agency, and implement the strategic opportunities to partner with stakeholders and the community advocates that can support the community and shelter to achieve its goals. These updated strategic priorities will be carefully tracked through the development of performance measures and specific metrics, to ensure we are succeeding in our mission. Each goal and objective includes background and statistics, and identifies measurable results with associated costs, including:

- 1. Providing shelter and second chances for all pets, none of whom are turned away**
- 2. Provide an opportunity for lost pets to be reunited with their owners**
- 3. Continued and enhanced support and development of low-cost spay/neuter, vaccination and licensing services**
- 4. Engaging volunteers and donors to assist in our mission**
- 5. Increasing community educational outreach that promotes pet retention and decreases shelter intake**
- 6. Creating and maintaining a supportive workplace culture to enhance training and professional development among staff**
- 7. Develop collective partnerships that support our 501(3)c rescue partners**
- 8. Reduce animal abuse and cruelty**

Animal Care Strategic Priorities

Goal 1: Provide shelter, care, and second chances for pets, none of whom are turned away

Objective 1.1: Reduce length of stay

Background: Currently, some pets are available to be adopted the same day of intake, however, the length of stay of each pet is contingent upon many factors, including the specific intake type, police assist, owner surrender or stray, and health and age. Additionally, it has been claimed that some pets are not returned home due to reclaim fees. To reduce the length of stay, ACAD will first enhance the capability of our clinic to make these pets “timely medical ready”. In addition, Rescue Partners will play a larger role in reducing the length of stay by pulling the most “at-risk” animals. These partners will receive marketing, supplies, and social media support from the Division, increasing traffic on their social media site and directing donations towards them. ACAD will also review its reclaim fees and proposed modifications as necessary to increase reunification with owners.

Strategy:

- Pets will be spayed and neutered and ready to go home with their adopters the same day of surgery
- Promote Rescue Partners through incentives, including use of the Division social media platforms by highlighting the partnership and pets rescued from ACAD, including out-of-County rescues and “sister shelters”
- Reclaim fees will be modified to include a “courtesy period” so that pets who are quickly picked up from the shelter, will be returned without any incurred fees, as long as they are spayed or neutered.

Schedule for Implementation:

- Same day spay and neuter surgeries and adoption have been implemented since July 2018
- Promotion of Rescue Partners on social media platforms was initiated in November 2018

Measurable outcome:

- Track the numbers of pets rescued by each partner monthly and summarize results in yearly performance statistics

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the tracking of rescued pets will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget.

Objective 1.2: Develop larger “Return to Field” program for all healthy outdoor cats

Background: The Division was in a partnership with two local Rescues for the implementation of the “Return-To-Field” (RTF) Program. Since the inception of the Program in FY16, more than 4,800 cats have been sterilized and re-released into their communities. The RTF programs helped the shelter increase by 21% the number of cats saved from FY16 to FY18. However, the success of

the RTF program, and its capacity to grow, is constrained by the limited amount of surgeries that our Rescue Partners are currently able to perform. ACAD will increase the number of surgeries through strategic partnerships. The RTF program has designated areas of the shelter to prevent disease outbreaks and has a designated staff member--the "Community Cat Coordinator." This position is new and was developed specifically to oversee the Community Cat Programs to maximize the live release rate of feral cats entering the shelter.

Strategy:

- A Part-Time relief vet will be hired to perform additional surgeries
- Revise the workflow of RTF rooms at the shelter consistent with newly developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Monitor disease protocols and track in Chameleon the outcome of each re-released cat

Schedule for Implementation:

- A Part-Time relief vet has been hired and is expected to commence by April/May 2019.

Measurable outcome:

- A minimum of 20 surgeries per day will be required by the Division. This will increase the number of surgeries available to the RTF program by 50%.
- Increase favorable outcomes for the Program by an additional 30% from its current performance

Cost:

- Cost for the increased amount of surgeries is projected to be approximately \$180,000 per year. The approximate cost is currently funded at the same levels as allocated in the Sterilization Trust Fund Programs. No additional funding from the County will be required. Cost saving measures will be employed to do more in-house surgeries, decreasing the cost from third-party vendors.

Objective 1.3: Develop a targeted marketing/media campaign ahead of kitten season

Background: A full-scale community cat program must include targeted strategies for the population most at risk of dying in the shelter: underage kittens. While the RTF and TNR Programs have been on-going since 2015 with satisfactory results, more efforts are needed to reduce intake and increase positive outcomes for kittens. ACAD staff has developed a "Kitten Campaign" that will air on local cable networks focusing on targeted areas. Outreach includes social media postings, flyers in all libraries, plus integrating volunteers to distribute information in all 31 cities in Broward County. The ACAD website will also be updated with foster videos and new information provided by Best Friends and industry best practices. Customer Service staff will also be re-trained to emphasize our current "Foster-to-Adopt" diversion program. This diversion program will provide a "Foster Milk Kit" and information to residents that find kittens by encouraging them to foster.

Strategy:

- The Division will obtain quotes and pricing from local networks and prepare a targeted campaign for social media
- Posters and flyers will be distributed by Volunteers and Animal Care Officers to local Pet Supermarket stores, veterinary offices, and areas of high kitten intake
- Emphasis will be placed on certain target markets, such as senior communities and students, to become Foster Parents.
- ACAD website will also be updated with new videos, foster care information, flyers etc.
- Information on ACAD website will be shared with Broward Call Center, field officers, and customer service staff, to prevent unnecessary impoundments of kittens from the field.
- Admission staff will provide foster kits to Good Samaritans who find kittens and encourage them to foster until they are ready to be sterilized and adopted
- ACAD will engage all 31 municipalities to post information about our kitten campaign on their respective websites

Schedule for Implementation:

- The targeted campaign will commence by February 2019
- ACAD website will be updated with new videos and materials by May 2019
- ACAD staff will receive updated foster education by April/May 2019
- Foster Milk Kits are currently pre-assembled and ready in the Admission lobby

Measurable outcome:

- Live Release Rate for kittens will be compared against past yearly kitten season data

Cost:

- The marketing and media campaign is funded through our current Marketing budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Objective 1.4: Vaccinate all pets entering shelter for disease prevention

Background: A strategic partnership with national welfare groups, including Maddie's Fund and Best Friends Animal Society, resulted in the development of disease prevention and animal flow protocols that have shown improved outcome for shelter pets. New vaccination protocols are currently being developed to ensure that every pet entering the shelter is fully vaccinated, including injured and RTF cats. These new protocols will ensure that each pet is protected against potential diseases within and outside the shelter. The protocols will be reviewed on a continuing basis and updated to suit shelter needs and increase live release rate.

Strategy:

- The Division will prepare and finalize SOPs regarding vaccinations and the flow of pets through the shelter
- Pet vaccinations and outcomes will be tracked in Chameleon

Schedule for Implementation:

- Vaccinations protocols are currently being implemented and SOPs have been written
- Animal flow SOPs were finalized in October 2018

Measurable outcome:

- Shelter disease outbreaks will be tracked monthly

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the development of the SOPs and tracking will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Objective 1.5: Increase ACAD adoption events at the shelter and offsite.

Background: Currently, ACAD has a partnership with Pet Supermarket to adopt cats in each Broward County store. From FY16 to FY18, more than 4,039 shelter cats have been adopted at these locations. For the same Period of Record (POR), 17,904 cat and dog adoptions have been conducted at the shelter. Unfortunately, not enough events are conducted for medium-large size dogs. The goal is to have weekly adoption events throughout the community, adding weekly dog adoption events at Pet Supermarket, shopping malls and monthly adoption events at Animal Care and Adoption. These efforts should help to reduce shelter capacity and increase adoptions.

Strategy

- A full-time Program Coordinator hired by ACAD will conduct offsite events
- An Adoption Van may be acquired via grant funding, donations, or capital budget requests
- An analysis will be conducted for POR FY16 to FY18 of all adoptions to identify optimum attendance to shelter and off-site events, and to adjust timing and scope of events accordingly to maximize adoptions
- Monthly adoption event goals will be set for shelter staff and volunteers

Schedule for Implementation:

- Conduct analysis by the end of July 2019
- Obtain an Adoption Van by December 2019 if funded, or donated
- Monthly adoption event goals will be set by May 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Increase by 20% the number of adoptions at ACAD events as the minimum target

Cost:

- The Adoption Van may be acquired via grant funding, private donations, or capital budget requests. The baseline analysis will be conducted by ACAD staff. Funding for event marketing and promotional materials are TBD, however a dedicated funding source is already included in the current shelter budget.

Objective 1.6: Implement pet enrichment programs

Background: A new position for an “Enrichment Supervisor” has been created to facilitate and supervise Dog Playgroups and other enrichment engagements for continued physical and mental stimulation for all shelter pets. It has been proven that play groups and enrichment/behavior programs are a much-needed necessity in shelters. Playgroups and social interactions reduce stress and promote the psychological well-being of pets, keeping them healthier and more adoptable.

Strategy

- A full-time enrichment supervisor has been hired to conduct playgroups and enrichment programs
- Additional Kennel Staff is being hired to assist with playgroups, as well as additional trained volunteers
- Dog assessments and playgroups will be conducted daily
- Playgroups will enlist the assistance of trained shelter staff

Schedule for Implementation:

- A full-time Enrichment Supervisor was hired in December 2018
- Playgroups are projected to be fully implemented by March 2019 or when additional needed personnel are in place

Measurable outcome:

- Track and summarize the number of playgroups conducted in Excel format on a monthly basis for shelter performance measures and grant funding
- Include within the annual report for the public and County Commissioners as part of ACAD performance measures
- Track assessments completed for individual pets

Cost:

- Cost for supplies and equipment is projected to be approximately \$10,000 per year. The projected cost is currently funded by grants, donations, and current operating budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Objective 1.7: Update practices, including technology, to best identify the needs of our pets.

Background: Currently ACAD does not have specific classifications for pets entering the shelter. While specific notes regarding the animal health, temperament and behaviors are captured in the shelter software--Chameleon, comprehensive categories and definitions of what a healthy and treatable animal is, according to the Asilomar Accords definitions, have not yet been developed during the intake and exam process. A Pet Evaluation Matrix will be developed as part of this objective. This Matrix will help ACAD gather valuable data that will aid in meeting and exceeding the standard of care provided in the shelter. In addition, to better target community areas of need, ACAD will continue to utilize data mining techniques to develop and implement strategies to identify

patterns of adoption, redemption, and service call data for predictive analysis.

Strategy:

- Conduct an analysis of the shelter data from FY17 to FY19 to classify and recognize different categories of pets as “Healthy;” “Treatable and Manageable;” “Treatable and Rehabilitatable;” and “Unhealthy and Untreatable.” (see Appendix A).
- Utilize the shelter data analysis to identify which pets are most at risk by:
 - Age
 - Species
 - Size (adult dogs only)
 - Specific Problem

Schedule for Implementation:

- Conduct and finalize shelter data analysis by May 2019
- Prepare the “Pet Evaluation Matrix” by June 2019
- Continue to utilize data mining techniques to develop and implement strategies to identify patterns of adoption, redemption, and service call data for predictive analysis.

Measurable outcome:

- Utilize results of baseline and shelter data to identify characteristics within ACAD shelter classifications to assist in maximizing positive outcomes for all animals, as per LRR.
- Issue quarterly summary of community-wide adoption, redemption and service call patterns.

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the development of the Matrix and analysis will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget.

Objective 1.8: Capacity for Care and Sanitation Protocols

Background: Capacity for care goes beyond providing adequate physical space. Additionally, capacity for care also includes providing appropriate care, extended veterinary attention, enrichment and caregiver attention—all of which contribute to a good quality of life for shelter pets. There is a consensus that increased staffing levels may be needed to improve the capacity of care and the level of sanitation. Additional staff is being hired to adequately meet shelter needs.

Strategy:

- Incorporate Best Friend’s qualitative and quantitative approach to reach an optimum level of capacity for care: reduce the number of shelter pets to recommended numbers and hire additional staff as needed in order to suitably handle kennel inventory levels
- Train Volunteers to assist Animal Care staff as needed
- Continue to focus on reducing shelter intake through managed intake, pet retention programs, foster and rescue programs
- Enhance shelter enrichment program to embrace more volunteers in support of adequate playtime for each dog
- Continue to enhance diversion support in Intake and Field

- Conduct a professional workload analysis and review SOPs to ensure that proper sanitation protocols are being followed

Schedule for Implementation:

- Hire additional staff beginning February 2019
- Conduct workload analysis and review sanitation SOPs by April 2019
- Continue to increase adoption, foster and rescue efforts on an ongoing basis

Measurable outcome:

- Utilize Best Friends' recommendation, in coordination with appropriate County staff, as a benchmark for achieving optimum capacity of care
- Updated sanitation protocols are currently in place. Monitor and report disease outbreaks.

Cost:

- Staffing costs will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. Considerations for an increase in staffing will be explored in the proposed budget for FY20/FY21.

Goal 2: Provide an opportunity for lost pets to be reunited with their owners

Objective 2.1: Establish an effective "Help Line" for the community

Background: This goal will be accomplished by establishing a community Help Line completely supported by volunteers. Volunteers will work with our staff utilizing the Chameleon software and with the shelter's website to match lost pets with their respective owners. The Help Line will be developed to incorporate scripts and helpful information for the public on a range of services and options our Agency offers. At the Admission lobby, ACAD staff will work towards increasing owner reclaims by working with volunteers on the Help Line, and to facilitate the reunification of lost pets with their respective owners by providing alternatives such as waived fees, spay/neuter services through SNIP, and free microchipping. Emphasis will be placed on utilizing the Help Line for post-adoption follow-up to ensure customer support and pet retention of adopted pets.

Strategy

- Recruit volunteers for the Help Line
- Develop scripts and training material for volunteers to assist shelter staff disseminating helpful information to residents
- Provide owners spay/neuter and educational alternatives to fines
- Offer reduced fees or other alternatives for reclaims
- Offer spay/neuter services as an incentive for reclaiming a pet
- Waive fees, at the Director's discretion, if the owner has already spayed/neutered a pet
- Continue conversation-based adoptions to ensure adopters are supported through the adoption process, and that the needs and lifestyles of new adopters are addressed in order to prevent pets being returned to ACAD

Schedule for Implementation:

- The Help Line materials and volunteer recruitment will be completed by June 2019
- Alternatives to owner reclaims such as waiver of reclaim fees is completed.
SOPs will be reviewed and revised as needed to optimize the numbers of Return to Owner (RTO) pets.

Measurable outcome:

- Track the number of volunteers actively recruited and working on the Help Line
- Track the number of RTOs in Chameleon software and prepare a summary report to be included in the shelter annual performance measures
- Track the number of post-adoption returns

Cost:

- Staffing costs for volunteer recruitment and training will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Goal 3: Continued and enhanced low-cost spay/neuter, vaccination and licensing services**Objective 3.1: Increase spay/neuter, vaccination, and licensing services**

Background: With the purpose of spaying and neutering as many pets as possible, in 2016 ACAD developed a new Animal Care WebPortal that provides Broward County residents access to the County's free or low-cost sterilization services. Through the Animal Care WebPortal, residents get vouchers for spay/neuter services for owned pets and community cats. Once a resident has created a profile in the portal, a voucher is immediately generated, and it can be printed right away. Residents can redeem the voucher at any veterinary hospital of their choice listed on our website. The application process and voucher generation generally take less than 3 minutes to complete. Since its launch in April 2016, the Spay Neuter Incentive Program (SNIP) has provided over 17,309 spay/neuter surgeries and added 3 new SNIP veterinarian providers in FY18. In FY18, ACAD has spayed and neutered a total of 19,065 pets between all the sterilization programs and in-house surgeries. The goal for FY19-FY21 is to increase availability of low-cost spay/neuter services through SNIP by adding new providers, and to expand the collaboration and partnerships with the Humane Society of Broward County (HSBC) and Rescue Partners. Expanding low-cost/free vaccination clinics and increasing the sales of licenses will be also part of this strategic priority.

Strategy

- Increase the number of SNIP partners by engaging in direct marketing
- Provide SNIP vouchers for free sterilizations to Rescue Partners that rescue ACAD pets
- Establish focus areas by identifying neighborhoods with a high concentration of unvaccinated pets and unlicensed pet owners
- Explore the use of current SNIP partners' mobile clinics for "Neighborhood Sweeps" and vaccination efforts in focused areas
- Conduct bi-monthly Rabies Clinics throughout the community, with emphasis given to focus areas, including the refurbished Pompano shelter location

- Collaborate with local municipalities, with emphasis given to focus areas to increase the awareness of spay/neuter and licensing services by adding it as a link under the municipal official website
- Increase licensing sales to support the Sterilization Trust Fund by hiring a new part time veterinarian for additional Rabies Clinics in underserved areas
- Advise income-challenged owners of pets in need of medical care that financial assistance may be available through the Broward County Animal Care and Advisory Committee's medical assistance program
- Continue to partner with HSBC on grant applications to fund low-cost accessible sterilization programs, especially for cats and large-breed dogs that represent a large proportion of animal intake at the shelter
- Continue to advance the partnership with HSBC to provide low-cost sterilization programs and services, especially targeting locations producing a high number of stray dogs or community cats

Schedule for Implementation:

- Recruitment efforts to engage new SNIP partners are occurring and will be conducted throughout FY 2019 and beyond
- Develop a Rescue profile in the Animal Care WebPortal for each partner that rescues a pet from our shelter. Implementation will start in the Summer of 2019 and will continue through FY21
- Bi-monthly Rabies Clinics will be initiated by June 2019
- Explore contract amendments with current SNIP mobile clinics to add a full range of vaccinations. Target date to be finalized by the Board by October 2019
- Analysis of current and past licensing sales will be conducted by May 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Add a minimum of three (3) new SNIP partners for the sterilization programs in FY19
- Track the number SNIP vouchers and pets saved by Rescue Partners
- Conduct a minimum of 18 rabies clinics in FY19
- Bring amendments to present new grants to expand the current SNIP contracts to the Board by June 2019
- The Data Analyst will track the number of intakes, potentially unvaccinated pets and pet owners in the focus areas to create a baseline for FY20 and FY21
- Document "Neighborhood Sweeps" conducted, and the number of pets vaccinated
- Increase licensing compliance
- Performance measures to the SNIP program, in partnership with the HSBC
- Track number of clients utilizing the medical assistance program

Cost:

- Implementation costs will be calculated once partnerships and Rabies Clinic schedules are finalized. Current and alternative funding sources (grants, donations, etc.), will be explored for present and future budgets.

Goal 4: Engaging volunteers and donors to assist in our mission

Objective 4.1: Implement larger scale Foster Program

Background: A special and vital kind of volunteering is providing temporary foster care to litters of puppies or kittens who are too young to be put up for adoption, animals who are shy, those that need a little extra TLC, or those that need special medical care. A well-developed Foster Program can dramatically increase the shelter's lifesaving capacity. Every month we receive pets that require special care. Some of these dogs and cats have sustained injuries or are ill. Others are too young to be placed right into adoption. Foster volunteers provide much needed care and can make a lifesaving difference for such pets. In FY18, ACAD fostered 2,777 pets. The need for recruiting, training, and retaining foster volunteers is always a challenge that must be constantly evaluated and improved. The goal of this strategic priority is to increase foster volunteers and to grow our current foster program.

Strategy

- Increase the number of foster volunteers by conducting weekly recruitment events
- Expand current volunteer job descriptions to include all supportive positions to shelter staff and operations
- Engage the Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) to approve The Kitten 101 foster program with low classification, non-violent inmates
- Engage more local schools and universities to approve community hours through foster programs for students
- Participate in Best Friends Mentorship Program

Schedule for Implementation:

- Recruitment efforts to engage new volunteers are underway and weekly on-boarding has commenced.

Measurable outcome:

- Foster Coordinator will track the number of weekly on-boarding of new foster volunteers and the number of pets in active foster care
- Goals and targets will be established by the Division by April 2019 and will be on-going
- Number of fostered pets via FDC program
- Number of fostered pets via community service student program(s)

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the volunteer recruitment and training will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Objective 4.2: Volunteer participation in all areas of the shelter

Background: While some volunteers might have limited time, it is our experience that all of them want to make a real contribution. Volunteers need real jobs that make a real difference. At ACAD,

we have job descriptions for key volunteer opportunities that make expectations clear. Our Agency offers bi-monthly, one-hour orientations and general animal handling training sessions. The goal of this strategic priority is to increase volunteers in every aspect of the shelter, and to grow our current volunteer program in each operational section of the shelter. Volunteer participation will be expanded in all areas of the shelter.

Strategy

- Increase the number of volunteers by conducting weekly on-boarding
- Specific job descriptions have been expanded to include volunteer veterinary-related services that help ACAD staff with daily routine animal check-ups
- Engage local schools and universities to approve volunteer programs for students
- All job descriptions have been expanded to include all areas of the shelter to provide supportive positions to shelter staff and operations
- Participate in Best Friends Mentorship Program to help advance the volunteer program to the highest level of best practices.

Schedule for Implementation:

- Recruitment efforts to engage new volunteers are in process and weekly on-boarding commenced in November 2018

Measurable outcome:

- Specific job descriptions have been expanded to include all areas of the shelter
- Volunteer Coordinator will track the number of new volunteers with the objective to increase by 10% above the established goal for each subsequent month
- Weekly goals and monthly targets were established by the Division in December 2018
- Number of volunteer hours via student program(s)
- Completion and Implementation of Best Friends Mentorship recommendations

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the volunteer recruitment and training will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. No additional funding from the County will be required.

Goal 5. Increased community educational outreach and partnerships that promote pet retention and decrease shelter intake.

Objective 5.1: Enhance counseling and alternative resources during potential pet surrender situations

Background: Intake diversion is one of the most challenging preventative measures that ACAD staff faces on a daily basis. Currently, staff engages in counseling before residents surrender their pet. This process involves scheduled owner surrender appointments and providing resources when available (food, supplies, breed specific rescues, etc.). Although staff efforts have helped reduce the number of pets relinquished by owners from 2,256 in FY17, to 781 in FY18, the goal of our Agency is to further reduce that number. ACAD believes that many potential surrender situations can be resolved in ways that will keep pets out of the shelter, if enough resources are provided to

the pet owner and the community at large. Residents must realize that shelters should be the place of last resort. When a lost pet is found in the community, residents should make every effort to get the pet back home instead of automatically bringing it to ACAD. In addition, mass communication techniques, including television, radio, general advertising and social media are emphasized as effective tools for educational outreach to support all aspects and measures of Division programs.

Strategy

- Staff and volunteers will collect and share information and options for pet retention alternatives
- Establish focus areas by identifying neighborhoods which result in a high concentration of intake and low return to owner
- The shelter website will be updated to provide a comprehensive list of resources
- Staff will engage in counseling in situations involving a potential pet surrender
- A list of available resources (medical, food, training behaviors, etc.), re-homing opportunities information, and links on our website will be offered to the pet owner
- If appropriate, a list of Rescues that specialize in specific breeds/pets will be provided
- Utilize the Help Line volunteers to collect and disseminate information
- Continue and improve utilization of mass communication techniques including television, radio, general advertising, social media and community outreach with emphasis given to focus areas, for educational outreach to support all aspects and measures of Division programs.
- Provide comprehensive information to residents/municipalities regarding surrender options—other than ACAD—for rehoming a lost pet

Schedule for Implementation:

- Update website on a quarterly basis with information on services, new breed specific rescues, and programs
- Develop and disseminate educational and informational brochures targeting a variety of pet retention services and options in both English and Spanish by July 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Track with goal of reducing the number of owner surrenders by 50 % by the end of 2019, by 60% by 2020, and by 70% by 2021 from FY18 baseline data

Cost:

- Implementation costs will be calculated once partnerships and Rabies Clinic schedules can be finalized. Current and alternative revenue sources (grants, donations, etc.), will be explored in present and future operating budgets.

Objective 5.2: Increase Community engagement of Field Officers to encourage pet retention

Background: Achieving and stabilizing a “No Kill” goal by 2020 requires the effective deployment of both human and financial resources in the communities we serve. This priority recognizes the

need for community engagement and assigning of our field officers to a section/area of the County for approximately 3-6 months. Such assignment will enable Field Officers to become familiar with the needs of the community, and provide resources as requested. These community liaisons may be viewed as a stable presence in the assigned area, providing preventive and social services. Currently, Field Officers occasionally assist with the transport of cats to Pet Supermarket stores. This practice will be reduced in an effort to support the shelter's goal of increasing community engagement.

Strategy

- Field Supervisors will establish a rotating schedule for Animal Care Officers (ACOs) for each area/section
- Field Supervisors will spend time on the road with ACOs to better build a relationship with officers and understand the needs of the community
- ACAD will implement staffing modifications to improve response times and enforcement. This includes revising ACO schedules, with deliberate coverage in high call areas, allowing more ACOs in the field to coordinate faster responses
- Supplies and resources will be provided to the Field Officers to directly assist pet owners in the field and in their assigned communities
- Field Officers will be given the opportunity to attend community-based meetings in order to discuss neighborhood animal control issues and improve relations between officers and the community
- The transport of pets to Pet Supermarket stores will be reduced and considered a lower priority call. A dedicated staff member and volunteers will assist with transport to Pet Supermarket, or similar locations

Schedule for Implementation:

- Field Officer community engagement programs implemented February 2019
- Reduction in number of transports to stores is already in effect

Measurable outcome:

- Field Supervisors will track the number of pets helped in the community to create a baseline for FY20 and FY21
- Monthly targets and metrics of success will be established by the Division by May 2019
- Schedule and track the number of community-based meetings that are attended by officers

Cost:

- Staffing costs will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget. Additional sources of revenues (including grants and donations) will be explored to purchase supplies for Field Officers.

Objective 5.3: Transfers from Municipalities

Background: Currently, several municipalities with Animal Control programs transfer pets to ACAD for shelter and care. There are no formal agreements currently in place between these Municipalities and the County for these types of Animal Services. Municipalities that have these Animal Control

Programs are not compensating the County or ACAD for these services. Partnerships and more formalized agreements might be sought for these transfers.

Strategy:

- Meet with municipal Animal Control management and Officials to discuss ways to mitigate animal intake within their community
- Discuss ways to minimize transfer to ACAD
- Where needed, establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which details the transfer of pet to ACAD

Schedule for Implementation:

- Initial meeting with municipalities in June 2019
- MOU's in place Fall/Winter 2019

Measurable Outcome:

- Fewer pets picked up in the municipality
- Reduction in Intake to ACAD from Cities/Municipalities
- Establishment of agreements that might include compensation for pet transfers to ACAD

Cost:

- Implementation of this Objective will be at no cost to ACAD.

Objective 5.4: Increase Marketing Efforts

Background: While marketing has increased to include more social media and advertising, the effort has not been focused or comprehensive. The primary focus for 2019 will be "Updating the Narrative," as ACAD staff promote the positive contributions the agency has made and will continue to make with the intent to increase adoptions, rescue partnerships, fostering, etc. Resources provided by Best Friends marketing experts and within the local community will be utilized for this purpose.

Strategy:

- Promote ACAD programs and policies through social media. Staff will contribute videos, stories, and happy endings currently not known by members of the public
- Incorporate recommendations from Best Friends and local marketing experts and resources
- Prepare specific "calls to actions" to give citizens tangible ways to get involved in the shelters' efforts in achieving and sustaining No-Kill status

Schedule for Implementation:

- Marketing efforts have begun for Foster Program recruitment
- Strategic and focused marketing efforts will continue through 2019

Measurable Outcome:

- Measure results from advertisement efforts by tracking numbers of adoptions, fosters, volunteer recruitment, and shelter visits
- Measure the response to specific “calls to actions” by participants and adjust strategy as needed for maximum recruitment

Cost:

- Expenses for advertisement, as needed, to be funded through marketing budget line for 2019. Additional funding might be requested for FY20 and FY21.

Goal 6: Create and maintain a supportive workplace culture to enhance training and professional development among staff

Objective 6.1: Clear expectations for all ACAD positions/Improved Communications

Background: A workplace culture agreement was established in our Division May 2018, in order to encourage every staff member to be in support of the shelter’s lifesaving mission. Moving forward, clear expectations will be delivered through leadership support and mentoring in all aspects of the Agency operations. ACAD will look for opportunities, sponsorships and scholarships through National Animal Welfare networks to enhance and grow best practices and skill sets in no-kill sheltering. On a monthly basis ACAD will also recognize and award employees who support the shelters’ mission. Additionally, communications from management to staff will be enhanced to further improve ACAD’s culture into one in which staff feels more valued, and thus, more effective.

Strategy

- Support continuing education and training for all staff by seeking partnerships with National Animal Welfare organizations for training opportunities and conferences
- Encourage staff to pursue grants and scholarships that will enhance and grow best practices and skill sets
- Develop and implement employee award and recognition programs
- Solidify the chain of command to ensure decisions are clearly conveyed and understood by staff, and feedback from staff is properly addressed through the correct path
- Host quarterly meetings for all staff
- Share monthly reports outlining important stats and stories and distribute them to the entire staff via email and posts on bulletin boards

Schedule for Implementation:

- Completed review and revision of job descriptions to better match shelter needs and staff in February 2019
- ACAD management will engage with staff to go over in detail the expectations of the newly revised job descriptions
- Employee award and recognition programs will be developed by April 2019
- Establishment of all-staff quarterly meetings and information by May 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Staff retention and number of work-related training attended will be used as yearly metrics of success to measure the performance of staff

Cost:

- Current budgets and additional sources of revenues (including grants and donations) will be explored to enact these job training and mentoring programs.

Objective 6.2: Conduct Training on Standard Operating Procedures to Call Center

Background: Many of the calls being dispatched to the Field Officers come through the County's 311/Call Center team. Individuals taking these calls may not have adequate training in Field Activities. Additionally, many calls do not contain enough information so that the Officers can fully address the call.

Strategy:

- Meet with Supervisors to plan training schedule for County Call Center staff
- Development of a standardized list of questions for each call type to ask callers
- Training sessions will be conducted in small groups so as not to disrupt Call Center operations
- Review option of establishment of ACAD in-house dispatch position to work in conjunction with Call Center staff

Schedule for Implementation:

- Meeting with Supervisors by the end of April 2019
- Develop standardized list of questions and answers by May 2019
- Training sessions to be held June 2019

Measurable Outcome:

- Reduction of the average completion time for calls placed in the system (currently 37 minutes)
- Measure success of standardized questions by tracking proper responses and update/revise as possible

Cost:

- No cost to ACAD for training
- Possible cost to budget to add a BCAC Dispatch position TBD

Objective 6.3: Mandated Training for Officers

Background: Florida State Law 828.27 (4)(a)(1) mandates that all Animal Control Officers receive 40 hours of approved training to become a certified officer. Once certified, according to Florida State Law 828.27(4)(a)(3), the Officer must receive four (4) hours of continued education every two years

to maintain ACO status. Most ACAD officers have not received the required Continuing Education (CE) training in the past years.

Strategy:

- Review the dates of initial certification for all ACAD ACOs
- Determine which ACOs have received CE training credits within the last two years
- Based on certification/CE information, determine which staff has to renew the Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) certification program, or acquire CE training
- Establish an SOP to ensure proper CE training is provided annually

Schedule for Implementation:

- April 2019 to determine status of each ACO on staff
- Training for all ACO to be finalized by May 2020

Measurable Outcomes:

- Proper training scheduled and received for all ACOs with CEs and FACA Certification updated
- SOP established

Costs:

- Cost to ACAD for Certification/CE training for each ACO
- Possible travel costs based on training site

Goal 7: Develop collective partnerships that support our 501(3)c Rescue Partners

Objective 7.1: Formalize an agreement with strategic partners, non-profit organizations, and national partners to be part of a “Coalition” or “Alliance”

Background: Achieving and sustaining a “no-kill” goal by 2020 requires increasing the entire community’s awareness of the continuing animal care issues that Broward County faces. More importantly, it also requires increasing the level of participation and involvement by community leaders and partners that can effectively advocate the mission and goals of ACAD to save all healthy and treatable animals entering the shelter. While there is much support and cooperation from the community at large, there has never been a formalized alliance with strategic partners, non-profit organizations, or national partners to be part of a “Coalition” or “Alliance.” The proposed strategic priority will be to develop a formalized “Broward County Animal Care Alliance” (BCACA) with guiding principles and commitments from all participating partners and community leaders. A one-page document will lay out the foundation for a collaborative platform to find meaningful solutions and input from private shelters, the veterinarian community, other animal welfare organizations, and the public. All participants will be asked to adhere to the standards set forth in the guiding principles and commitments of the Alliance. This collective partnership will support our 501(3)c partners and ACAD mission. The “Coalition” or “Alliance” should also include out-of-County transfer partnerships, such as “sister shelters.”

Strategy:

- Identify community leaders to participate in the Alliance and integrate with national, state and regional networks
- Prepare a draft document stating the guiding principles and commitments of the BCACA
- Obtain a commitment from partner agencies and organizations to build regional and community partnerships and publicize the Alliance
- Promote collaboration among all animal care and rescue organizations
- Identify and establish relationships with out-of-County rescue transport partners to organize and transport pets to northern No-Kill shelters

Schedule for Implementation:

- Issue draft document of Guiding Principles and Commitments by May 2019
- Organize transport to out-of-County and northern regions of the country implemented March 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Obtain a commitment to the Alliance from a minimum of six (6) agencies, non-profits, and/or national partners such as Best Friends Animal Society; ASPCA; Maddie's Fund; PetSmart; Petco, and local 501(3)c organizations
- Establishment of an on-going agreement with out-of-County transport rescues and shelters, and number of pets transported

Cost:

- Staffing costs for the development of the document and the meeting with potential partners will be absorbed by current allocated FY19 budget.
- Cost for transport rescues to be obtained through grants or donations

Objective 7.2: Increase Community Support/Outreach

Background: ACAD currently has traditionally received support through grants and local non-profits. However, in order to achieve and maintain a no-kill community, ACAD will expand its efforts to seek funds from individuals and community foundations. Additionally, ACAD will increase its level of engagement with the local community.

Strategy:

- Based on Best Friend's recommendations, develop a fundraising strategy that identifies ways to engage individuals and organizations
- Increase number of events in the community to benefit ACAD and its pets
- Explore Advantage Marketing opportunities that can help provide support for shelter needs and events
- Continue "Town Hall" Meetings on a bi-annual basis or when feasible
- Identify opportunities to attend Community functions
- Establish bi-monthly meetings with Volunteers and Staff

Schedule for Implementation:

- Issue draft document of fundraising strategy by July 2019
- Bi-annual meetings to be scheduled according to the Division priorities
- Meetings with Volunteers and staff commenced in February 2019

Measurable outcome:

- Increase in the funds generated to support No-Kill mission
- Number of events each year

Cost:

- Implementation of this Objective will be of minimal cost to ACAD budget

Goal 8: Reduce animal abuse and cruelty***Objective 8.1: Identify improvements to Division animal abuse and cruelty procedures and enforcement options***

Background: An important priority of ACAD is protecting the health and safety of the residents and their pets in Broward County. It is important to note that the enforcement of existing laws and ordinances and responding to calls for stray animals and cruelty cases may lead to increased intake volume at the shelter, therefore increasing the overall number of pets in our care. Although the strategies outlined in this plan are targeted at increasing the number of adoptions, rescues, and returns to owner, the fact remains that if more animals are taken into the shelter, the live release rate may decrease. During FY17 ACAD field officers responded to 16,951 calls. The shelter SOPs prioritize responses to calls based upon the level of emergencies and tasks performed by field staff. Currently, the shelter has four levels of priorities. Priorities 1 and 2 are considered the most important ones for animal abuse and cruelty. They include injured and/or sick, stray animals, police assist calls, abuse and cruelty cases, confined animals, rescues, etc. The goal of this objective is to review and update Chapter 4 Code of Ordinances that will improve the health and safety of residents and pets and strengthen the enforcement of animal abuse and cruelty.

Strategy:

- Conduct a complete review of current SOPs to prioritize investigations of animal abuse and cruelty
- Partner with Broward County Sheriff's Office (BSO) to implement Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and public relation campaigns against animal abuse and cruelty
- Work with the community and our Field Officers to prevent, identify, and report abuse and cruelty
- Update Animal Care Website to include a link to BSO anti-cruelty brochures and contacts
- Work with the Animal Care Advisory Committee and the community to revise Chapter 4 Code of Ordinances for implementation of effective animal care public policies

Schedule for Implementation:

- Conduct review of current SOPs and provide updates by May 2019
- Field Officer community engagement programs was implemented starting in December 2019
- Update Animal Care Website by May/June 2019
- Review of Chapter 4 will be conducted throughout 2019 and projected to be implemented in 2020-2021 after recommendations of the Animal Care Advisory Committee and adoption by the Board of County Commissioners

Measurable outcomes:

- Completed revised SOPs
- Availability of updated website with links by FY2020
- Revision of Chapter 4 Code of Ordinances following County's processes and protocols FY2020
- Number of abuse and cruelty cases

Cost:

- Current budgets and additional sources of revenues (including grants and donations) will be explored to fund the PSAs and any expenses related to this strategic goal.



APPENDIX A



A Guide to the Asilomar Accords Definitions: “Healthy,” “Treatable,” “Unhealthy & Untreatable”

The effect of the Asilomar definitions is not to draw lines between animals who can and can't be saved, but to put shelters on the same footing as their community: shelters that save all healthy and treatable dogs and cats in their care are meeting the standard of care typically provided in their own community. Shelters that go beyond this to save a portion of the “unhealthy & untreatable” are exceeding their community's standard of care and thus setting an example of humane treatment. These shelters aren't following their community – they're leading them.

Healthy

Definition:

*The term “**healthy**” means and includes all dogs and cats eight weeks of age or older that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for 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.*

Explanation:

Dogs and cats who meet the definition of “healthy” are **reasonably healthy, reasonably well-adjusted pets over the age of eight weeks**. These animals do not need medical, behavioral or foster care and are ready to be made available to the public for adoption. A dog or cat does not have to be cute and cuddly or easy to place to meet this definition: “healthy” is not the same as “easy to adopt.” The animal may be blind, deaf, old, or missing a limb, or she may be a pit bull that local laws or policies say can't be adopted out, but as long as the animal is reasonably healthy and reasonably well-adjusted, she meets the definition.

Note that the definition of “healthy” says the animal must not show any sign of disease, injury, etc. either “at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession.” Consequently, if *at any time during an animal's stay in the shelter* he or she becomes ill or injured, is under eight weeks old, or develops a behavior problem or other specified condition, that animal does not meet the definition of “healthy.” For example, a friendly dog who appears healthy and well-adjusted when she arrives at the shelter, but later develops a serious case of kennel cough, does not meet the “healthy” definition. By the same token, an animal who arrives at the shelter with a serious case of kennel cough will not meet the definition, even if she is completely cured while under the shelter's care.

Treatable

Definition

*The term “**treatable**” means and includes all dogs and cats who are “**rehabilitatable**” and all dogs and cats who are “**manageable**.”*

*The term “**rehabilitatable**” means and includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy,” but who are likely to become “healthy,” if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.*

*The term “**manageable**” means and includes all dogs and cats who are not “healthy” and who are not likely to become “healthy,” regardless of the care provided; but who would likely maintain a satisfactory quality of life, if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care, including long-term care, equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community; provided, however, that the term “manageable” does not include any dog or cat who is determined to pose a significant risk to human health or safety or to the health or safety of other animals.*

Explanation

The definition of “treatable” is divided into two parts: “rehabilitatable” and “manageable.”

“Treatable-Rehabilitatable” includes sick, injured, and underage dogs and cats, as well as dogs and cats with behavior problems. “Rehabilitatable” animals are animals that could become reasonably healthy, well-adjusted pets, if given “the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.” Because this is a community-based standard, some animals who meet the definition of “treatable-rehabilitatable” in one community might not meet the definition in another. For instance, shelters in communities where pet guardians typically provide pets with very high levels of care would categorize more animals as “treatable-rehabilitatable” than would shelters in communities with lower levels of care. *The community-based definition helps to ensure, however, that shelters do not fall below standards in their community for determining which animals are treatable.*

“Treatable-Manageable” differs from “rehabilitatable” in that “manageable” animals are not expected to become reasonably healthy, well-adjusted pets, even if they are given care that meets the standard in their community. These animals are, however, expected to have a satisfactory quality of life if given such care. For instance, a diabetic cat may never be cured, but she is likely to have a satisfactory quality of life if given insulin shots. She cannot be categorized as “treatable-rehabilitatable” because she will always be diabetic. However, assuming insulin shots are typically provided to diabetic cats by caring pet guardians in her community, the cat would be classified as “treatable-manageable.”*

Feral cats may fall into the "treatable-manageable" category if they are provided care that meets the community standard. With greater collaboration between shelters and feral cat colony caregivers and with the rise of feral cat groups operating successful trap, neuter, and return programs, increasing numbers of shelters are returning ferals to their original habitats to be overseen by responsible colony caregivers. One shelter in Wisconsin actually finds homes for altered ferals as barn cats.

The definitions of both "treatable-rehabilitatable" and "treatable-manageable" refer to the standard of care "typically provided by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community." This standard of care is not the same as the most advanced care that might be provided by veterinary or behavior science. No doubt there are animals who could be saved by the latest advances in these sciences, but if such care is not "typically provided" by pet guardians in the community, these animals do not fall within the "treatable" definition. In other words, **"treatable," as defined in the Asilomar Accords, is not the same thing as "savable."** For more on how to go about determining the "care typically provided by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community," see **"Creating a Pet Evaluation Matrix for the Asilomar Definitions."**

Note also that there is nothing in the definition of "treatable" that says a shelter has to be able to provide treatment in order for an animal to be categorized as "treatable." In other words, **whether an animal meets the "treatable" definition does not depend on whether a shelter actually has the resources to treat the animal.** A dog with kennel cough meets the definition as long as reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community would typically treat their own dogs for the disease. The fact that a shelter may not have a medical clinic or veterinarian, is overcrowded, or can't afford to provide treatment is not a factor in determining whether the animal meets the definition.

**The definition of "manageable" excludes animals that pose a significant risk to the health or safety of people or other animals. These animals would be categorized as "Unhealthy & Untreatable."*

Unhealthy & Untreatable

Definition

The term "Unhealthy & Untreatable" means and includes dogs and cats who, at or subsequent to the time they are taken into possession,

- (1) have a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that poses a health or safety risk or otherwise makes the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet, and are not likely to become "healthy" or "treatable" even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community; or*
- (2) are suffering from a disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the animal's health or is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future, and are not likely to become "healthy" or "treatable" even if*

- provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community; or*
- (3) are under the age of eight weeks and are not likely to become “healthy” or “treatable,” even if provided the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.*

Explanation

The definition of “unhealthy & untreatable” covers **dogs and cats who do not fall into either of the categories “healthy” or “treatable.”** “Unhealthy & Untreatable” includes animals who are not likely to become healthy, well-adjusted companion animals, or animals who are not likely to have a satisfactory quality of life, even if they are given care typical of that provided by reasonable and caring pet guardians in the community.

Note that **just because an animal is categorized as “unhealthy & untreatable” does not mean the animal can’t be saved.** Nothing in the Asilomar Accords definitions prevents shelters from providing care beyond that typically provided by pet guardians in their communities. Animals categorized as “unhealthy & untreatable” due to serious behavior issues like dog to human aggression, for instance, may be placed in sanctuaries or other appropriate long-term care facilities, if available. Similarly, extensive medical intervention, foster care, and other treatment may be provided to rehabilitate seriously sick and injured animals so they too can be placed in loving homes. Many shelters can and do provide care that exceeds community standards and are thus at the forefront of humane change in their communities.

Some feral cats will fall into the “unhealthy & untreatable” category. Ferals, however, are one of the best illustrations of the fact that “unhealthy & untreatable” does not mean unsavable.

The effect of the Asilomar definitions is thus not to draw lines between animals who can and can’t be saved, but to put shelters on the same footing as their community: shelters that save all healthy and treatable dogs and cats in their care are meeting the standard of care typically provided in their own community. Shelters that go beyond this to save a portion of the “unhealthy & untreatable” are exceeding their community’s standard of care and thus setting an example of humane treatment. These shelters aren’t following their community: they’re leading it.