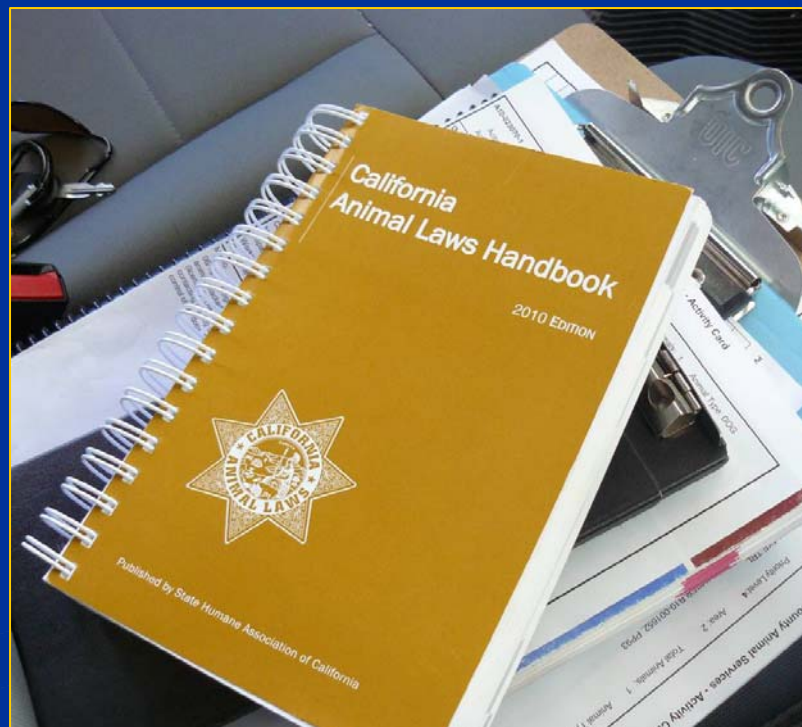




Health Services Department
Public Health Division
Animal Services Program

**Fee
Hearing**

February 28, 2011



Recap of October 25, 2010 Animal Services Workshop

Priority Services:

- Prevent rabies
- Protect against Potentially Dangerous/Vicious Dogs
- Respond to reports of cases of neglect/cruelty and injured animals at large
- Shelter stray/lost animals; reunite owners/pets; and ensure appropriate adoptions
- Control pet over-population (enforce spay/neuter laws)
- Ensure appropriate emergency/disaster response

Animal Services Enforces Laws/Ordinances/Mandates Protecting the Health and Safety of Residents and Ensuring Humane Treatment of Animals

- **County & City Ordinances**
- **Health & Safety Code**
- **Penal Code**
- **Food & Agricultural Code**
- **Civil Code**
- **Welfare and Institutions Code**
- **Emergency Response Mandates**

Rationale for Fee Review

- **Animal Services has not increased its fees in several years**
- **Many fees currently charged do not cover costs of providing services**
- **Some fees have fallen below amounts charged for like services in surrounding counties**
- **In late October 2010, staff committed to conducting a fee review study**

Fee Review Process

- **Evaluated full cost recovery**
- **Identified options to increase accountability for animal owners who allow their animals to create a burden to Animal Services operations and the County**
 - Increased fees for households with repeat violations
 - Penalties for non-compliance (e.g., dog-at-large never licensed)
 - Highest fees for potentially dangerous/vicious dogs
- **Considered legal restrictions/requirements** (Prop. 26)
- **Compared fees of surrounding counties/cities**
(Counties of Placer, Sacramento, Amador, and Yolo; Cities of Sacramento, Folsom, and Elk Grove)

Considerations for Fee Increases

- Fees set too low can result in Net County Cost
- Fees set too high will likely result in:
 - Residents unable to comply with legal requirements due to financial hardship
 - Increase in unclaimed and unlicensed animals
 - More animals at the shelter (increased sheltering costs)
 - Higher euthanasia rates
 - Potential decrease in revenue (owners not complying)

Fees Offset Service Costs

- **Adoption**
- **Dog Licensing**
- **Potentially Dangerous Dog**
- **Kennel Licensing**
(commercial/non-commercial)
- **Impound** (incl. State penalty)
- **Board & Care**
- **Microchips**
- **Quarantine Initiation/Admin**
- **Owner Release of Animals**
(surrender/euthanasia)
- **Dead Animal Pick-Up**
- **Vaccination Administration**
- **Staff Time** (hourly rates)

Dog/Cat Adoption

Description: Animal Services offers adoption of dogs and cats. All adoptable dogs and cats are spayed or neutered. They also receive daily board and care, vaccinations, health tests, behavior tests, and a microchip. These services, if obtained through a private veterinarian, would cost more than the fees charged through the shelter. The proposed fees do not provide full cost recovery (as this amount would discourage successful adoptions).

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Dog Adoption | \$90 | Range: \$85 – 150 | \$120 |
| Cat Adoption | \$75 | Range: \$50 – 110 | \$80 |

Activities Include:

- Administer tests (behavioral, heartworm, feline leukemia, etc.)
- Provide vaccinations (distemper/Parvo, bordatella, combo FVRCP, rabies, etc.)
- Deworm and apply flea/tick product
- Implant microchip
- Perform spay/neuter
- Enter adoption information into computer system
- Assist public with adoption process
- Process payment

Other Adoptions

Description: Animal Services offers adoption of small animals (rabbits, birds, etc.), small livestock (sheep, goats, pigs, etc.), and large livestock (horses, cows, mules, etc.). Adoptable animals receive daily board and care, health exams, and needed vaccinations. Small animals are housed at the shelters. Livestock are housed at the Grace Foundation in El Dorado Hills. We are not recommending a fee increase for adoption of these animals due to the difficulty in placing them even at current fee levels.

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|--------------------------|----------------|--|----------------|
| Small Animal Adoption | \$15 | Range: \$5-90 | \$15 |
| Small Livestock Adoption | \$40 | Placer and Amador were only comparable counties, and charge \$41 and 50% of value respectively | \$40 |
| Large Livestock Adoption | Highest Bidder | Placer was only comparable county, and offers large livestock adoptions to highest bidder | Highest Bidder |

Hold for Adoption

Description: Animal Services is proposing a new fee that would allow an interested party to place a hold on a dog or cat that he/she has brought in as a stray. If the animal becomes available for adoption, the interested party will be informed and will have one day (the first day the animal becomes adoptable) to pick up the animal. The proposed fee is anticipated to provide full cost recovery for the hold services.

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Hold For Adoption: Dog | N/A | None in counties and cities surveyed | \$44 |
| Hold for Adoption: Cat | N/A | None in counties and cities surveyed | \$35 |

Activities Include:

- Provide information/explanations to public
- Follow-up phone calls
- Process paperwork
- Process payment
- Boarding and care of the animal an extra day

Dog Licensing

Description: County ordinance requires dogs to be licensed for the purpose of identification and proof of rabies vaccination. Owners may purchase either a one-year or three-year license. The majority of licensed dogs in the County are altered. For unaltered dogs, the cost of a license is much greater due to the multiple problems associated with unaltered dogs (such as increased instinct to roam and bite, and ability to produce unwanted animals). The proposed fees do not provide full cost recovery for the licensing program (as this amount may discourage licensing compliance).

| Type of Fee* | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 Yr License - <u>Altered</u> Dog | \$15 | Range: \$10-18 | \$20 |
| 3 Yr License - <u>Altered</u> Dog | \$35 | Range: \$24-54 | \$50 |
| 1 Yr License - <u>Unaltered</u> Dog | \$35 | Range: \$25-150 | \$100 |
| 3 Yr License: <u>Unaltered</u> Dog | \$90 | Range: \$54-450 | \$150 |
| Duplicate Dog License | \$5 | Range: \$5-9 | \$18 |
| Delinquent/Expired License Penalty | \$15 | Range: \$10-100 | \$20 |

Activities include: Processing paperwork, updating computer systems, mailing, issuing renewal notices, etc.

**Additional penalties for dogs at-large without valid license (only one penalty is applied):*

- Expired license penalty (after 30 days) – proposed to increase from \$15 to \$20
- Never licensed penalty – proposed to increase from \$30 to \$100

Dangerous Dogs

Description: By County ordinance, owners of dogs deemed potentially dangerous or vicious are required to comply with numerous requirements, including maintaining a PDD or VD license. For PDD/VD cases, Animal Services prepares for and attends court proceedings, inspects the property to ensure that the dog is kept in a secure enclosure, verifies that the dog is wearing a designated collar and that warning signs are posted on the property, among other things. The current fees are anticipated to provide full cost recovery associated with handling these cases and are intended to provide incentive to owners to deal with problem dog behaviors.

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|---|-------------|---|--------------|
| PDD/VD License with Inspection - 1 st Year | \$500 | Range: \$111-300 | \$700 |
| PDD/VD License with Inspection - 1 st Year per additional dog(s) involved in the same incident/investigation and annual renewals | \$100 | Range: \$111-300 | \$200 |
| PDD/VD Duplicate/Transferable License | \$0 | Placer was only comparable county and they charge \$6 | \$20 |
| PDD/VD Collar (enables PDD/VD identification, per ordinance) | \$10 | None in counties and cities surveyed | \$25 |

Activities include: Canvassing neighbors, drive time to residence/neighbors/court/County Counsel, inspecting containment, notification letter, entering information into computer system, preparing/filing PDD/VD petition to court, preparing presentation of case, presenting the case in court, following up to confirm compliance, ordering and receiving PDD/VD license, processing paperwork, etc.

Kennel Licensing

Description: Non-Commercial license applies to hobby breeders and owners of five or more dogs and/or five or more cats. Commercial license applies to large scale breeding operations of a commercial nature. In either case, a kennel license is required by County ordinance and the license must be renewed annually. Animal Services inspects the kennels annually in order to renew the licenses. The purpose of the kennel licensing process is to ensure that the animals are kept in a safe, healthy, and humane manner. The proposed fees are anticipated to provide full cost recovery for kennel licensing.

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--|--------------|
| Non-Commercial Kennel License | \$100 | Range: \$50-193 | \$305 |
| Commercial Kennel License | \$150 | Range: \$100-193 | \$355 |
| Kennel Re-inspection | \$100 | Placer was only comparable County and they charge \$92 | \$205 |

Activities Include:

- Officer travel to and from kennel
- Officer inspection time
(Inspect for cleanliness/size/waste disposal, review kennel paperwork, discuss compliance issues, etc.)
- Administrative activities
(Process paperwork, enter information into computer, prepare and send license, process payment, etc.)

Impounds: Small Animals

Description: Pets that are allowed to roam free in neighborhoods create a public health threat (bites, rabies, roadway hazards, etc.). When Animal Services picks up a stray animal, a fee is charged to impound the animal at the shelter until its owner comes to claim it. Fees for repeat impounds resulting from the same household are substantially higher (to discourage owners from allowing pets to roam). The proposed fees do not provide full cost recovery.

| Type of Small Animal Impound Fee (Boarding and veterinary costs are also added) | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|--|-------------|--|--------------|
| 1st Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$35 | Range: \$15-80 | \$75 |
| 2nd Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$70 | Range: \$25-110 | \$200 |
| 3rd or More Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$120 | Range: \$75-161 | \$350 |
| Small Animal Field Release (upon verification of licensing and sterilization, as applicable) | \$0 | Placer was only comparable County and they charge \$92-105 | \$50 |

Activities include: Officer time associated with capturing animal and delivering to shelter, processing paperwork, updating computer systems, calling owner/veterinarian/microchip company, preparing and sending notification letter, cleaning/disinfecting transport equipment, processing payment, creating display kennel card, etc.

* The State of California also imposes an impound penalty on unaltered dogs and cats as follows:

- 1st Impound - \$35
- 2nd Impound - \$50
- 3rd (or more) Impound - \$100

Impounds: Large Animals

Description: Large animal/livestock impounds are performed primarily for public safety. Loose livestock often create hazards on roadways and can cause damage to private property. Rounding up loose livestock typically requires use of special equipment (trailers, etc.) and multiple officers. It is a very labor intensive activity. Livestock are impounded at the Grace Foundation until they can be claimed by their owners. The proposed fees do not provide full cost recovery.

| Type of Large Animal Impound Fee (Boarding/veterinary costs also added) | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|---|-------------|--|--------------|
| 1 st Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$75 | Range: \$40-118 | \$175 |
| 2 nd Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$150 | Range: \$60-187 | \$300 |
| 3 rd or More Impound – Same household, per animal* | \$225 | Range: \$90-291 | \$450 |
| Large Animal Field Release Fee | \$0 | Placer was only comparable County; they charge \$121-134 | \$150 |

Activities include: Officer time associated with capturing animal and delivering to Grace Foundation, processing paperwork, updating computer systems, calling owner/veterinarian, preparing and sending notification letter, cleaning/disinfecting transport equipment processing payment, etc.

**Fees may be higher if more than one officer is needed to assist in capture and transport of animal.*

Board & Care

Description: The proposed fees help offset the cost of daily boarding and care for impounded animals, as well as animals held in connection with abuse/neglect cases. The proposed fees are anticipated to provide full cost recovery for boarding.

| Type of Boarding Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|--|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Dog | \$10/day | Range: \$10-20 | \$27/day |
| Cat | \$10/day | Range: \$10-20 | \$18/day |
| Other Small Animal (rabbit, bird, etc.) | \$10/day | Range: \$10-20 | \$18/day |
| Livestock | \$10/day small livestock \$30/day large livestock | Range: \$15-26 | Per contract |

Activities Include:

- Cleaning kennels or cages (twice a day)
- Changing bedding
- Providing food/water for animals
- Charting animal's progress
- Entering animal's information into computer system
- Ordering and receiving food, bedding, products
- Walking dogs
- Medicating animals

Owner Release Fee

Description: Owners may release unwanted animals to Animal Services for a fee. If the animal is adoptable, it is placed up for adoption. Animal Services also charges a euthanasia fee to owners who release an animal deemed by Animal Services to be unadoptable due to behavior or health issues. The proposed fees help offset the cost of board, care and other expenses until it can be placed up for adoption, or for euthanasia if the animal is not adoptable. There is no fee charged if a person finds a stray domestic animal and surrenders it to Animal Services.

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|---|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Owner Release of Small Animal (no fee for strays) | \$40 | Range: \$10-75 | \$60 |
| Owner Release with Request for Euthanasia (animal not adoptable) | \$55 | Range: \$10-95 | \$60 |

Activities Include:

- For owner release - Answer questions/provide information, prepare paperwork, enter information into computer, board and care of animal, contact veterinarian/verify vaccinations, etc.
- For owner release (animal not adoptable) – Answer questions/provide information, prepare paperwork, enter information into computer, prepare animal for euthanasia, perform euthanasia, disposal of animal, etc.

Miscellaneous Fees

| Type of Fee | Current Fee | Comparison Fees | Proposed Fee |
|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Microchip (owner request) | \$25 | Range: \$20-25 | \$25 |
| Animal Products (primarily cat carriers) | At Cost | Placer County is only comparable county and they charge cost + 25% | At Cost |
| Quarantine Initiation/ Administration (plus boarding fee) | \$50 | Range: \$25-115 (plus boarding) | \$75 |
| Small Animal Fluorescent Rabies Antibody – Euthanasia & Disposal | \$0 | Placer County is only comparable county and they charge \$156 | \$160 |
| Large Animal Fluorescent Rabies Antibody – Euthanasia & Disposal | \$0 | Placer County is only comparable county and they charge \$156 | Varies |
| Veterinary Services | As Charged (and \$50/hour for veterinarian services at shelter) | Sacramento was only comparable county and they charge \$50 | As Charged |
| Dead Animal Pickup (plus actual disposal cost) | \$111.55 | N/A | Hourly Rate X Actual Time |
| Vaccination Admin Fee , plus vaccine cost (for vaccines not provided as part of adoption) | \$6 for rabies vaccine offered at rabies vaccination clinics | Range: \$8-20 | \$10 |
| Staff Hourly Rate: Officer | \$50 | | \$100 |
| Staff Hourly Rate: Kennel Attendant | \$50 | | \$90 |

Potential Impacts

- **Increase annual fee for service revenue by well over \$300K (if service quantities remain similar to FY 09-10 experience)**
- **Ensure greater accountability for animal owners who allow their animals to create a chronic burden on Animal Services operations and the County**
- **Reduce General Fund support of operations**

Recommendations

- **Approve proposed fee increases**
- **Authorize Department to adjust Officer and Kennel Attendant hourly rates each fiscal year (for changes in salaries, benefits, overhead costs, etc.) based on adopted budget**
- **Grant authority to Chief ACO to approve waived, discounted, or deferred payment of fees in unusual, limited circumstances when in best interest of animal (summarized in annual report to CAO identifying any such instances)**

Questions?