

## OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED ANIMAL SERVICES FEES

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The individual proposed fees were developed in consideration of: 1) the estimated cost of performing the service, 2) the desire to ensure greater accountability for animal owners who allow their animals to create a chronic burden to Animal Services operations and the County, 3) legal restrictions and requirements for fees (Proposition 26) and 4) prevailing fees for animal services being charged in our region, as an indicator of “reasonableness.” The following overview reflects the proposed fees and an explanation of the services provided.

### **ADOPTIONS:**

Dogs & Cats: On average, dogs and cats that have been determined to be adoptable remain in the shelter for four (4) to seventeen (17) days respectively. Costs incurred for adoptable dogs and cats include daily board and care, required medical expenses (including, as necessary: sterilization, vaccination, health testing, etc.), as well as implantation and registration of a microchip, enabling future identification of the animal and the animal’s owner. The proposed fees will not provide for full cost recovery, particularly if the animal requires sterilization and/or other medical treatments. Adoption fees based upon full cost recovery would likely discourage successful adoptions; therefore, we strongly recommend against such an approach. We consider the proposed fees to be reasonable in view of the prevailing range of adoption fees in our region and in the interest of placing as many animals as possible.

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Dog Adoption	\$120
Cat Adoption	\$80

Other Small Animals: Other small animals, such as rabbits and birds, normally come into the shelter when they are no longer wanted by owners. The Department recommends no change to the current fee; this will continue to provide some recovery of the cost of board and care while these animals are held for adoption.

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Other Small Animals	\$15

Large Animals / Livestock: On average, large animals/livestock that are deemed adoptable remain at the shelter or contracted facility for sixteen (16) days. The proposed fee will provide some recovery of the cost of board and care, but may not provide for full cost recovery, particularly if the animal requires veterinary expenses.

Fee Type	Proposed
Small Livestock - Sheep, Goats, Pigs, and Other	\$40
Large Livestock - Horses, Cows, Mules and Other (Highest Bid Over Minimum Threshold Amount Set by Chief Animal Control Officer)	Highest Bid

Hold for Adoption: The Department recommends establishing these fees to 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 have first right of refusal. The fee will be the equivalent of one day’s board plus administrative costs for processing the hold, and will not be applied to the adoption fee.

The interested party must fill out an adoption questionnaire and is subject to approval by the shelter supervisor as meeting the adoption criteria specific to the animal being adopted.

The dog or cat must be adopted by the interested party no later than close of business the first day the animal is available for adoption. If the interested party fails to come to the shelter and adopt on the first day, then the animal is available for adoption to any other potential adopter on the following day.

The Animal Services staff will inform the interested party that not all animals evaluated by the shelter staff become available for adoption for reasons such as behavior issues or medical problems. The “Hold for Adoption” fee will only be refunded if the animal is not deemed eligible for adoption.

Fee Type	Proposed
Hold for Adoption – Dog	\$44
Hold for Adoption – Cat	\$35

**DOG LICENSING:**

Regular Dog Licenses: The majority of licensed dogs in the County are altered and the proposed one (1) year fee for altered dogs reflects a modest increase from the current annual fee. As an incentive to purchase a three (3) year altered dog license the fee is less than three times the cost

of a one (1) year license. A three (3) year license is preferable as it runs concurrent with most adult dog rabies vaccinations and encourages owners to keep dogs continually licensed.

The proposed one (1) year fee for unaltered dogs reflects a more significant increase from the current annual fee. There is greater potential for the community and Animal Services operations to be impacted on a short and long term basis by unsterilized animals because of their instinct to roam (often resulting in impounds and/or other issues) and reproduce (often resulting in unwanted offspring). More than ninety percent (90%) of animals impounded at the shelter are unaltered, and many of these are not properly licensed. As an incentive to purchase a three (3) year license, the fee is less than the cost of purchasing three (3) one-year unaltered licenses consecutively.

A limited number of the local veterinarians sell County dog licenses on behalf of Animal Services. To further encourage such sales, we recommend that the Board increase the rebate from \$2 to \$5 per license for veterinarians who sell licenses. To qualify for the rebate program, the veterinarian must supply Animal Services with rabies vaccination data for all dogs cared for within the veterinarian's practice, not just those whose license was purchased through the veterinarian (County of El Dorado Ordinance 3692 §17, 1987 & Ordinance 3446 §5(part), 1984). Animal Services will maintain this data in its animal management database and utilize this information to ensure continued rabies vaccination and licensing pursuant to the County ordinance. The rebate amount to be paid to the veterinarian will be calculated only on the number of licenses sold by the veterinarian's practice.

The license fees shown below apply to new, renewal, or transferred licenses. A separate fee is applicable to obtaining a duplicate copy of a valid license.

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Dog License - Altered / One (1) year	\$20
Dog License - Altered / Three (3) year	\$50
Dog License - Unaltered / One (1) year	\$100
Dog License - Unaltered / Three (3) year	\$150
Veterinarian Rebate for License Sale	(\$5)
Duplicate Dog License	\$18

Dog License Penalties: The penalties listed below are intended to encourage dog owners to comply with the County’s licensing ordinance. The applicable penalty is applied in addition to the purchase cost of a license.

Fee Type	Proposed
Delinquent License Penalty (30 days past due / added to cost of license)	\$20
<i>Additional Penalties for Dogs At-large Without Valid License</i>	
Expired License (after 30 days)	\$20
Never Licensed	\$100

Potentially Dangerous Dogs (PDD) / Vicious Dogs (VD): In 2002, the Board of Supervisors passed an enhanced dangerous/vicious dog ordinance, which allows an owner of a dog deemed potentially dangerous or vicious to keep the dog under certain conditions. One of the requirements is that the owner must purchase a PDD/VD dog license. PDD/VD cases involve extensive investigation, evidence gathering, case preparation, and courtroom testimony.

Follow-up inspections are also necessary to determine that the animal is being maintained in a secure enclosure and that the owner is complying with all other court ordered requirements. These fees help to offset the significant costs associated with handling these cases and registering these dogs and are intended to provide incentive to owners to effectively deal with dog behavioral problems.

Fee Type	Proposed
Potentially Dangerous Dog (PDD) / Vicious Dog (VD)	
PDD/VD License/Investigation - 1st year (single dog)	\$700
PDD/VD License/Investigation - 1st year per additional dog(s) involved in same incident/investigation, and Annual Renewal	\$200
PDD/VD Replacement License	\$20
PDD/VD Collar	\$25

**KENNELS:**

Non-Commercial: The non-commercial license applies to hobby breeders and owners of five (5) or more dogs, and/or five (5) or more cats.

**Commercial:** The commercial license applies to large scale breeding operations of a commercial nature housing five (5) or more dogs, and/or five (5) or more cats. In either case, a kennel license is required by County ordinance and the license must be renewed annually. Oftentimes, a license had not been obtained by an existing kennel owner and is part of a complaint. Staff must work with Development Services and attend a Planning Commission meeting. Animal Services staff must maintain records and prepare/mail an annual invoice for the license. Field staff must inspect the facilities to ensure they are in compliance with County ordinances. Follow-up inspections are necessary if kennels are not in compliance with requirements pertaining to proper care and cleanliness of a kennel. Such inspections are time consuming and may require more than one Animal Control Officer. In addition to driving to and from the kennel facility, on-site time must allow for thorough inspection of the kennel. If violations are observed, photographs or video documentation may be necessary. The proposed fees will offset the cost of licensing and associated inspection activities.

Fee Type	Proposed
Non-Commercial Kennel License	\$305
Commercial Kennel License	\$355
Kennel Re-inspection*	\$205
<i>* If required within license year due to violations – fee charged for each re-inspection.</i>	

**IMPOUNDS:**

**State Impound Penalties:** These State established penalties, when applicable, are added to the County impound fees. The amounts collected are deposited into a designated Special Revenue Fund within the County and are used for spay/neuter education and services.

Fee Type	Proposed
State Established Impound Penalties	
1 <sup>st</sup> Impound of Unaltered Dog or Cat	\$35
2 <sup>nd</sup> Impound of Same Unaltered Dog or Cat	\$50
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Subsequent Impound of Same Unaltered Dog or Cat	\$100

**County Impound Fees:** In order to hold owners responsible, impound fees will be calculated based on impound incidents occurring from the same household.

**Small Animal Impound:** Any animal found at large may be picked up and transported to the animal shelter. Upon arrival, the animal is scanned for a microchip and checked to determine if the animal has any other identification such as a rabies tag, County license, or generic identification tag. Animal Services staff must enter information into the shelter management

system to track the activity and information relative to the impounded animal. The animal is then placed at the shelter and provided with food and water. Shelter staff monitors and cares for the animal during its stay at the shelter. The impounded animal normally stays for a period of four (4) to seventeen (17) days. There are occasions when an animal may be held longer. The proposed impound fees offset costs associated with impounding animals. Daily board and care charges are added for the number of days the animal is held at the shelter (not including the day of impound).

If veterinary treatment is required upon impound, the veterinarian expenses are charged to the owner when the animal is redeemed, in addition to other applicable fees.

If an impounded animal is not redeemed, but adopted by a new owner, impound fees do not apply as the adoption fee is collected in lieu of the impound fee.

If an impounded animal’s owner is identified and fails to redeem their animal, the animal is then considered abandoned and Animal Services will attempt to collect appropriate impound fees.

Fee Type	Proposed
Impound – Small Animal (dog, cat, peacock, rabbit, etc.)	
1 <sup>st</sup> time (same household, per animal)	\$75
2 <sup>nd</sup> time (same household, per animal)	\$200
3 <sup>rd</sup> or more times (same household, per animal)	\$350

The following examples reflect how charges will be applied to a household. Although this methodology applies to both the small animal fee schedule and the large animal fee schedule, the following examples are based on the small animal fee schedule.

If a household has two animals and each one is impounded at separate times:

Household #1	Animal #1	Animal #2	Total Fee
First time	\$75		\$75
Second time		\$200	\$200

However, if both animals are impounded at the same time:

Household #1	Animal #1	Animal #2	Total Fee
First time	\$75	\$75	\$150
Second time	\$200	\$200	\$400

Or, if the household has two animals and one has been impounded previously, and then is impounded again with the second animal:

Household #1	Animal #1	Animal #2	Total Fee
First time	\$75		\$75
Second time	\$200	\$200	\$400

Small Animal Field Release: Currently there is no fee in place for this service. If an animal is found at large, it may be picked up and transported to the animal shelter. However, if prior to transport to the shelter an Officer is able to verify ownership and sterilization by licensing or through a veterinarian, then the stray animal may be released back to the owner for a fee. This would be in lieu of the animal being impounded at the shelter. This is intended to lessen the population of animals at the shelter and provide an incentive for animal owners to license their dogs and sterilize their pets. A field release would occur at the Officer’s discretion based on factors such as aggression, prior incidents of animals at large from the residence, and/or prior violations of animal-related County/City ordinances and/or State laws.

Fee Type	Proposed
Small Animal Field Release Fee	\$50

Large Animals / Livestock: Large animal/livestock impounds are performed primarily for public safety. A scenario that may require impound is when a citizen or law enforcement agency contacts dispatch to request removal of livestock from a roadway or non-owner’s private property. In such cases, Animal Services staff attempt to identify and contact the owner to facilitate return of the animal(s) prior to proceeding with impound.

Large animal/livestock impounds require special handling and are time consuming. They often take several hours and may involve multiple officers, plus vehicles and trailers, to safely secure, load, and transport the animals. Large animal/livestock impound cases often occur and/or involve Animal Services staff after regular business hours (8am-5pm Monday - Friday). The result is an increase in labor costs due to overtime requirements. Upon arrival at the shelter or a contracted shelter location these animals must be unloaded and placed in a holding area, where they are evaluated and provided with food and water. The proposed fees help offset increased costs associated with these large animal/livestock impounds. Daily board and care charges are added for the number of days the animal is held at the shelter (not including the day of impound). If an animal needs medical treatment, this can involve transportation to a local large animal veterinarian, or acquiring services of a veterinarian who will come to a shelter facility to administer care/treatment. Special transportation and veterinarian expenses are charged to the owner when the animal is redeemed, in addition to other applicable fees. If an impounded animal’s owner is identified and fails to redeem their animal, the animal is then considered abandoned and Animal Services will attempt to collect appropriate impound fees.

Fee Type	Proposed
Impound (Large Animal / Livestock)	
1 <sup>st</sup> time (same household, per animal)	\$175
2 <sup>nd</sup> time (same household, per animal)	\$300
3 <sup>rd</sup> or more times (same household, per animal)	\$450

Large Animal Field Release: Currently there is no fee in place for this service. If an animal is found at large, it may be picked up and transported to the animal shelter or contracted shelter facility. However, if prior to transport to a shelter facility an Officer is able to verify ownership, the animal may be released back to the owner for a fee. This fee would be in lieu of the animal being impounded at a shelter facility. A field release charge for a large animal(s) would be based on the following, plus the hourly rate established herein for the time any additional Animal Control Officer(s) involved.

Fee Type	Proposed
Large Animal Field Release Fee (plus add'l officer(s) charged at hourly rate x actual time incurred)	\$150

**BOARD & CARE:**

Small Animal: Animals held at the shelter must be provided with daily board and care. The living quarters (kennels/cages) must be regularly cleaned and disinfected by staff. Animals must be observed closely for any indications of disease or stress, and care must be provided as appropriate. The proposed fees offset the cost of normal daily board and care for impounded stray animals, as well as animals held by Animal Services in connection with animal abuse/neglect cases. If special housing, care, or veterinary treatment is required during the boarding period, these expenses are charged to the owner when the animal is redeemed, in addition to other applicable fees. The proposed daily boarding fees remain lower than boarding fees charged by local veterinarians.

Large Animal/Livestock: Animals held at the shelter or contracted shelter facility must be provided with daily board and care. Large animals/livestock require transportation to the contracted shelter, special food, handling, exercise, monitoring, medical attention, and clean-up. The proposed fee is intended to help offset the cost of normal daily board and care for stray impounded animals, as well as animals held by Animal Services in connection with animal abuse/neglect cases.

If a large animal requires medical treatment, this can involve special transportation to a large animal veterinarian or acquiring services of a veterinarian who will come to a shelter to administer care/treatment. Sometimes special housing is required, particularly in animal



abuse/neglect cases involving large quantities of animals. Special housing, transportation, and veterinarian expenses are charged to the owner when animals are redeemed, in addition to other applicable fees.

Fee Type	Proposed
Boarding Fee* for Dog	\$27
Boarding Fee* for Cat	\$18
Boarding Fee* for Other Small Animal	\$9
Large Animal / Livestock Boarding Fee per day	Per Contract
<i>*per day, not including day of impound</i>	

Owner Release: State law requires Animal Services to provide board and care for relinquished animals for a four (4) day period. The proposed fee will help offset the cost of such board and care, including shelter staff time, overhead, shelter, food, medical care, etc. The fee is charged to owners who relinquish animals that are no longer wanted; it is kept reasonably low to discourage the abandonment of animals. The fee is not charged to a non-owner who brings a stray animal to the shelter.

Fee Type	Proposed
Owner Release of Small Animal (no fee for strays)	\$60

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Microchips: This fee applies only when an animal owner requests this service to be performed at the shelter. The fee is intended to offset costs associated with implanting the microchip in the animal and registering the chip. This is strongly recommended as it enables future identification of the animal and its owner.

Fee Type	Proposed
Microchip (owner request)	\$25

Animal Products: The shelter has historically offered limited animal products (such as cat carriers), as a convenience to pet owners. It is recommended that this practice be continued and that such products be sold at our cost.

Fee Type	Proposed
Animal Products	At Cost

Quarantine: Any time an animal bites someone, or otherwise requires quarantine, an Animal Control Officer must respond to the residence and initiate quarantine by completing an Animal Bite Report and Quarantine Notice. This task, which is required by law, takes a substantial amount of time as the Officer must verify vaccination records and assess the ability of the owner to adequately house the animal. The officer must thoroughly review all of the requirements on the Quarantine Notice with the animal owner. The fee helps offset the cost of initiating animal quarantines.

An animal must be held at the shelter if it requires quarantine (for biting someone, exposure to wildlife, etc.) and the owner does not have an adequate enclosure to hold the animal for the period required by State rabies law. Caring for this type of animal is extremely labor intensive, often due to the animal’s behavior and the risk of exposure to staff. Two staff members are required to handle a quarantined animal when it must be removed from its cage for care or for kennel/cage cleaning. For safety and security purposes, a staff member must also be present to allow an owner to view a quarantined animal. Accordingly, the daily boarding fee will be charged in addition to the Quarantine Initiation/Administration fee in order to help offset the cost of normal daily board and care for a quarantined animal. If veterinary treatment is required during a quarantined animal’s stay at the shelter, the veterinarian expenses are also charged to the owner when the animal is released from quarantine, in addition to other applicable fees.

Fee Type	Proposed
Quarantine Initiation / Administration (daily boarding fee will be charged in addition to this fee if animal is held at the shelter facility)	\$75

**Rabies Testing:** This fee is charged to the owner of an animal that has bitten someone but the owner declines to quarantine or the animal does not fit the criteria for quarantine. The fee includes: impounding animal; euthanasia; the removal of the head of the animal by shelter staff, and transporting the head to the Public Health Laboratory; testing of the brain; and reporting to victim(s), animal owner, and State Public Health. It also includes the subsequent transport and disposal of the animal.

Fee Type	Proposed
Fluorescent Rabies Antibody* (small animal)	\$160
Fluorescent Rabies Antibody* (large animal)	Varies due to size / weight
<i>*includes euthanasia and disposal</i>	

**Veterinary Care:** Animals that are impounded or seized may require veterinary care and services. Animal Services passes these fees on to the animal owner.

Fee Type	Proposed
Veterinarian Fees	As charged

**Euthanasia:** This fee is charged to owners who release an animal deemed by Animal Services to be unadoptable due to behavioral or health issues. The fee helps to recover costs associated with euthanasia, including staff time, tranquilization and euthanasia drugs, ancillary supplies, and disposal of the deceased animal.

Fee Type	Proposed
Euthanasia (owner release – animal unadoptable)	\$60

**Dead Animal Pick-Up:** Animal Services will perform pick up of dead animals on County roads and roadsides and will charge Department of Transportation (DOT) for all costs associated with performance of this service pursuant to Board of Supervisor’s Policy G-3 Dead Animal Disposal, which includes the applicable hourly rate for officer time as established in this Board item (as updated each fiscal year), for the actual time incurred.

Dead owned animals are the responsibility of the animal owner. Dead animals on private property, including private roads, are the responsibility of the property owner. If requested by an animal owner and/or property owner, and resources are available, Animal Services may assist

with the pick up and disposal of such dead animals if the County vehicle and staff can safely and reasonably access the location of the dead animal. The property owner will be charged as shown below.

Fee Type	Proposed
Dead Animal Pick-Up Fee	Hourly Rate*
<i>*Hourly rate for Officer(s) time established in this Board item times actual time incurred, plus disposal cost as applicable. (See below for current year proposed rate.)</i>	

Vaccinations: Animal Services conducts rabies/vaccination clinics on a regular basis and in conjunction with licensing events. This fee will cover the cost of the Animal Services time; actual cost of vaccine(s) will be a separate additional charge to the owner. The vaccination administration fee will help offset the cost of providing this service.

Fee Type	Proposed
Vaccination Administration Fee*	\$10
<i>*fee represents kennel attendant time to administer vaccination. Cost of vaccines will be an additional charge.</i>	

Public Records Requests: Animal Services provides copies of records to the public upon request in accordance with the California Public Records Act pursuant to Government Code 6253 (a). These records are frequently related to pending criminal and/or civil cases regarding animal bites, or violations of County Ordinance with regard to Animal Services. The fee for service is based on “direct cost of duplication or a statutory fee, if applicable” to cover Animal Services’ cost to provide said copies of records.

Fee Type	Proposed
Public Records Requests	*Varies
<i>*Hourly rate times actual time incurred.</i>	

Animal Services Staff Rates: The hourly rate is charged when Animal Services responds to assist with and/or impound an animal when the owner is at fault. A common example is a call from law enforcement when an owner is being arrested and an animal in their possession requires impound. Another scenario is loose livestock, often requiring the involvement of multiple officers. The hourly rate is also charged when Animal Services conducts a seizure of animals to bring them into protective custody due to suspected animal abuse or neglect. The hourly rate may also be charged for significant additional staff time involved in transporting and caring for these animals.

Fee Type	Proposed
Animal Services Staff Hourly Rate	
Kennel Attendant	*\$90
Animal Control Officer Hourly Rate	*\$100
<i>*adjust annually based on adopted budget</i>	