

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 3.71
(ID # 27983)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, May 20, 2025

FROM : SUPERVISOR V. MANUEL PEREZ AND SUPERVISOR YXSTIAN GUTIERREZ

SUBJECT: SUPERVISOR V. MANUEL PEREZ and SUPERVISOR YXSTIAN GUTIERREZ:
Commitment to Become a No-Kill Community in which we Strive to Save Every Dog and Cat in
a Shelter who can be Saved and Where 90% of the Companion Animals that Enter its Facilities
Leave Alive, All Districts \$0.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt Resolution No. 2025-133 committing Riverside County to becoming a no-kill community in which we strive to save dogs and cats in County shelters who can be saved, and where 90% of the companion animals that enter County facilities leave alive.
2. Direct the Department of Animal Services to develop and launch a comprehensive public awareness campaign promoting the County's no-kill mission.
3. Direct the Department of Animal Services to report quarterly on the progress toward becoming a no-kill community from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, and to provide annual progress updates thereafter, on or before June 30 of each successive year.
4. Receive and file the Department of Animal Services' "Year-to-Date Highlights" comparing results from the first quarter of the calendar year to the same time frame the previous year.

ACTION:Policy

Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor 4th. District

5/16/2025

Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

5/16/2025

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Riverside County Department of Animal Services (DAS) has faced significant challenges in the last several years with high animal intakes, leading to overcapacity issues and insufficient staffing to provide the desired level of services. There has been a significant societal shift since the peak of COVID (during which shelters had many fewer animals) to now as more and more owners turn in their animals to our shelters or abandon them outright. This trend persists not only in Riverside County, but also across California and the nation; regardless, the impacts to Riverside County communities are real. These challenges have contributed to increased euthanasia rates, sparking criticism from animal advocacy groups and the public at large. In response to these concerns, the Board of Supervisors and DAS have made concerted efforts to transform the shelters and increase live release rates, including but not limited to:

- Funding the re-opening of the San Jacinto Valley Animal Campus;
- Funding the procurement of two spay-and-neuter buses;
- Increasing staff to enhance the adoption, foster, and pet support programs;
- Investing in numerous spay and neuter events, free adoption events, and unique foster programs that encourage the public to help;
- Increasing the number of Veterinary Medicine positions to increase spay-and-neuter opportunities, as well as medical treatment of shelter animals; and
- Enhancing efforts to provide meaningful information and data to the public, increasing transparency.

To address systemic issues, Riverside County engaged a consulting team of experts tasked with evaluating current policies, developing a strategic plan to increase live outcomes for animals, and assisting staff support. This collaboration shows the County's commitment to transforming DAS into a model of effective and humane animal care. With these additional resources, DAS has made positive progress in implementing lifesaving strategies. Steps include increased adoption events; rescue flights; partnering with Petco Love Lost to reunite lost pets with their owners; enhanced spay-and-neuter clinics; shifting shelter hours to be open Sundays and later in the week to enhance adoption opportunities; enhanced pet fostering programs; and return-to-owner fee waivers, among others. Other initiatives have also either started or will soon launch. Additionally, our County took a significant step with the hiring of a new Animal Services Director, Mary Martin, earlier this year.

These steps, done through the hard work of our dedicated Animal Services staff tasked with implementing these measures, have led to improving trends in our live release rate and decreasing euthanasia as shown in the DAS "January through March 2025 Impact Report," which compares results from the first quarter of the calendar year to the same time frame the previous year. While we are making real progress, the County can and must do more.

To guide our next steps, the County of Riverside resolves to become a no-kill community in which we strive to save every dog and cat in a shelter who can be saved and where 90% of the companion animals that enter its facilities leave alive. Additionally, DAS will develop and launch a comprehensive public awareness campaign promoting the County's no-kill mission. DAS will

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

report quarterly on the progress toward this goal for the first year and then provide annual updates thereafter.

While challenges persist, particularly regarding resource limitations and shelter capacity, the initiatives undertaken, ranging from expert consultations to community engagement and expanded services, demonstrate a multifaceted approach to addressing these important community issues. Continued collaboration among government entities, advocacy groups, and the public will be essential in achieving the goal of a humane and sustainable animal shelter system in Riverside County. By making this commitment, we affirm the value of every life and take a meaningful step toward a more compassionate and humane community.

Fiscal Impact

Progress toward the goal of becoming a no-kill community will require additional resources. DAS will be presenting a staffing enhancement plan and funding request as part of the Fiscal Year 2025/26 budget process, with additional requests being made as necessary. This plan will also result in an increase to our city partners through an increase in the contract rates.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Resolution 2025-133
- B. DAS Year-to-Date Highlights (April 2025)