



5/20/14

Date: _____
Submitted in PAW Committee
Council File No: 11-1345
Item No.: 7
Deputy: Adam R. Lid

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May 20, 2014

Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee

**Attn: Councilman Paul Koretz, Chair
Councilman Felipe Fuentes, Member
Councilman Mitch O'Farrell, Member**

**Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

Re: May 20, 2014 Item Nos. 7 and 8 with Regard to LAAS Reports on Northeast Valley Animal Shelter Run by Best Friends and Adoption Fee Waivers for New Hope Partners

Gentlemen:

My main concern with Best Friends' running of the Northeast Valley Animal Shelter has to do with the transporting of animals to out-of-state shelters, and the difficulty in receiving adequate and accurate reporting numbers from the LAAS.

With all of the emphasis on making Los Angeles "no kill," LAAS has placed a priority on moving animals out of the shelter without any true consideration of their final destinations. I certainly sincerely congratulate Best Friends on adopting out 3,570 animals in 2013. But 2,239 transfers out-of-state is a very high number, and doesn't take into account the number of animals transferred by other New Hope partners, and should cause us all to be apprehensive. While LAAS in its Draft Report on Transporting Animals from LA Animal Services Shelters (attached) does look at requirements for transferring animals, (as does the new New Hope Program guidelines) it does not go far enough. For example, one of the shelters transferred to by Best Friends is the Greenhill Humane Society in Oregon. Attached is a page from their most current statistics listed on their website for 2011-2012. It shows that they too transfer out animals. We clearly should not be transferring animals out to shelters that transfer out animals. This then becomes a ponzi-type scheme.

Under the current contract with Best Friends at page 10 (attached) it says that "Animal transfers to other rescue groups will be limited and must be approved by the Department." On page 13 (attached) it says that "With respect to animals being housed for transport to other municipalities or organizations, the City shall be solely responsible for (a) organizing such transfers; (b) medical, veterinary, and other costs and certificates associated with transporting the animals; and (c) staffing the transports. Operator, may, at its sole discretion elect to assist organizationally, logistically, or medically with such transports, but shall have no contractual obligation beyond housing, feeding, and general care-taking of the animals at the shelter."

In LAAS' draft report on transporting animals, it says that the "Department relies on transporters to evaluate receiving agencies," and that "Best Friends transports animals to receiving agencies that they have vetted themselves."

Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee

May 20, 2014

Page 2

With the high number of transfers done by Best Friends last year, and with others being transferred out by other New Hope partners as well, I strongly urge you, in concert with the Animal Services Commission, take a very close look at transports. I have attached a "Best Practices" policy from the National Federation of Humane Societies as a great starting point.

It seems from the Best Friends' contract itself, that transfers are much more than the called for "limited" and that the City is not following its part of the contract to be responsible for such transports. We need to start looking at the animals' needs, not our own desire to reach "No Kill." We seem to be worrying more about getting animals out of the shelters by any means possible. Remember all of us working on behalf of animals, are doing so because we don't want to see so many killed. But I believe in responsible adoptions.

Let me close with a quote from the May/June 2014 Edition of HSUS' "allanimals" from an interview with Dave Duffield and Richard Avanzino of "Maddie's Fund,": Q. "What do you see as the biggest challenges to ending the euthanasia of healthy and treatable pets in the U.S.?" Answer by Avanzino: "...it's challenging as to why so many animals are coming into our system, but it's our job to basically see that they go home to somebody that will love them for a lifetime. We have to be committed to their survival and their placement with people that will care and nurture and love them."

Thank you for your time.

On behalf of the animals,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Taylor", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Taylor
Executive Director

Greenhill Humane Society Animal Statistics

ONE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS ANIMALS
ARE BEING TRANSFERRED

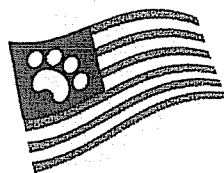
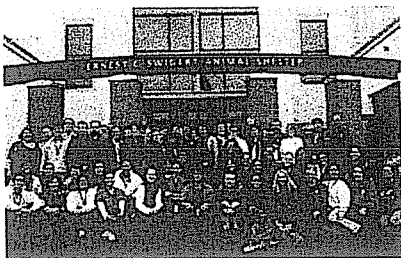
Start Date	7/1/2011 12:00 AM
End Date	6/30/2012 11:59 PM
Site	All

Annual Live Release Rate: 93.54%

The Annual Live Release Rate does not include 113 owner/guardian requested euthanasia and 5 dogs and cats that died or were lost in the shelter/care.

	<u>Dogs</u>	<u>Cats</u>	<u>Total</u>
A BEGINNING SHELTER COUNT 7/1/2011	25	104	129
INTAKE (Live Dogs & Cats Only)			
B From the Public	370	871	1241
C Incoming Transfers from Organizations within Community/Coalition	317	330	647
D Incoming Transfers from Organizations outside Community/Coalition	0	0	0
E From Owners/Guardians Requesting Euthanasia	28	97	125
F Total Intake [B + C + D + E]	715	1298	2013
G Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia (no placed for adoption)	22	91	113
H ADJUSTED TOTAL INTAKE [F minus G]	693	1207	1900
<hr/>			
I ADOPTIONS	627	994	1621
J OUTGOING TRANSFERS to Organizations within Community/Coalition	0	0	0
K OUTGOING TRANSFERS to Organizations outside Community/Coalition	33	4	37
L RETURN TO OWNER/GUARDIAN	15	93	108
DOGS & CATS EUTHANASIED			
M Total Euthanasia (includes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia)	36	199	235
N Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia	22	91	113
O ADJUSTED TOTAL EUTHANASIA [M minus N]	14	108	122
P SUBTOTAL OUTCOMES [I + J + K + L + O] Excludes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia	689	1199	1888
Q DIED OR LOST IN SHELTER/CARE	1	4	5
R TOTAL OUTCOMES [P + Q] Excludes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia	690	1203	1893
S ENDING SHELTER COUNT 6/30/2012 11:59:00 PM	28	108	136

This is their most current statistics on their website 2011-2012



The NATIONAL FEDERATION of HUMANE SOCIETIES



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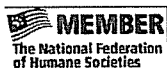
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Companion Animal Transport Programs -- Best Practices

Overview

The National Federation of Humane Societies (NFHS) has identified animal transfer programs as one of the key strategies to achieving its 2020 Vision to find a home for every healthy and treatable animal on a nationwide basis by the year 2020. Animal transfer at its most basic level is a supply and demand equation. We believe however, that there is much more to consider when establishing a successful transfer program that benefits communities, adopters, over-crowded source shelters, destination shelters and most importantly, companion animals.

Potential Barrier to Transfer Programs.

Animal transport can be an important component in reaching the goal of the 2020 Vision but there are several over-arching issues that could significantly impede our ability to transfer animals. Many state veterinarians have a serious concern about animals being moved across state borders without proper health certificates and the required vaccinations. Local authorities are concerned about unscreened animals that may pose a public health or safety risk entering their jurisdictions. Several states are proposing licensing programs for all organizations participating in transferring animals as a means of regulating the practice and some jurisdictions have even discussed regulation to stop transfers altogether.

It is incumbent on all organizations working to alleviate pet overpopulation to insure that all stakeholder concerns are adequately monitored and addressed if transfer programs are to be a widely accepted tool in our effort to find homes for all healthy and treatable animals. To this end, the NFHS encourages collaboration among all stakeholders to provide input for our efforts to promote the best practices which will ensure the safe and effective transfer of animals between organizations. Animal transfer is an important tool in reducing pet overpopulation but if we are not vigilant and don't guard against abuses, the industry could potentially lose this valuable tool.

Finding the Right Partner.

Philosophically, participating agencies must weigh the implications of animal transport carefully and find the right balance for their organization and community. Some of the key questions to be answered are:

1. Does transporting animals into a community consume resources which could be used to home local animals with special needs?
2. Does the potential to save more lives take precedence over local animal placement?

3. What programs are provided to help source communities break the cycle of overpopulation?
4. Can broadening the mix of available animals bring more adopters to the shelter?
5. Does a transfer program provide a greater opportunity to educate both source and destination communities of the need for caring homes?
6. What role can transport play for cats?
7. What obligation does the destination shelter have in assuring that the root causes of pet overpopulation are being adequately addressed in the source community?
8. Should transfer partners be local, regional or long-distance?

Clearly, this is much more than just supply and demand. Shelter resources, community attitudes and the humane mission of participants all impact the decision to establish transfer programs. Ultimately we all strive to show that every life has meaning and value.

Key Elements.

The Best Practices committee of the NFHS has worked for a number of months on creating the guidelines you see. We have sought to engage state veterinarians, source and destination agencies and third party facilitators in collaborating on and influencing this output. We have identified 4 key elements that we feel are crucial to all transport programs.

The NFHS believes that in all transfer programs there are several key components that must drive all decisions relating to transfers. These are:

- A. Public health and safety must be the primary concern;
- B. All transfer agencies must be registered 501-C-3 agencies or be a municipal agency;
- C. All participants must be committed to abiding by all local, state and federal regulations;
- D. Humane standards of care must be afforded to every animal being transported.

General Requirements for Source (Shipping) and Destination (Receiving) Shelters:

1. Source and Destination shelters should establish a solid working relationship, both for philosophical alignment and ongoing communication. The agencies should have general agreement about the types of medical and behavioral evaluations that are important to each organization.
2. Source and receiving shelters must have 501 c (3) or pending status, or be a municipal agency.
3. Throughout the process, effort should be made to enhance Source shelter standards. In particular the Receiving and Source shelters should work together to create a plan for addressing the overpopulation issue in the community of origin. Ultimately, the Source shelter should benefit from the transport partnership.
4. The Receiving shelter must:
 - a. Have a community demand for adopters for dogs and puppies.
 - b. Not euthanize animals of the species being transferred for time or space.
 - c. Have a strong infrastructure to receive large groups of animals.
5. There should be a designated coordinator at both ends of the transport. This is essential; the role of the coordinator is to:
 - a. Organize timing, number, and types of dogs and puppies.
 - b. Evaluate any health or behavior considerations.
 - c. Maintain good communication between the agencies.
6. Prior to each transport, develop a transport census:
 - a. Source shelter should share lists with photographs of animals being considered for transport.
 - b. When the final transport list is generated, the description and history of the animals should include: physical description, intake date, reason for surrender, health and behavior status, and any other available information.
 - c. Transport coordinators should develop a mutually acceptable protocol and timeframe for approving the animals who will be transported.
7. All animals scheduled for interstate transport must travel with a valid health certificate and be transported in accordance with state laws.
8. Sick animals are not eligible for transport.
9. Each animal should be treated with dignity and respect throughout the process.

Land Transport.

The following Transport Guidelines are recommended for land transport.

- a. Transport vehicles must be cleaned and sanitized to industry standards prior to transport.
- b. Proper climate control must be maintained—the vehicle must be able to provide heat and or a/c to the animal housing areas and there must be sufficient air ventilation.
- c. Temperatures should not fall below 60° F or above 85° F. Thermometer must be placed in an area where kennels are located and be easily visible.
- d. Animals should be transported in separate enclosures (except in the case of litters) with solid, leak-proof bottoms and adequate bedding. Animals should be able to comfortably stand up, lie down and turn around.
- e. Ensure access to fresh water for every animal at breaks.
- f. At a minimum, stop every 4-6 hours in a safe area to perform a visual check and to clean transport kennels, feed, and water the animals.
- g. Puppies should be fed a small meal or snack every 4-6 hours.
- h. Adult dogs should be walked or exercised on trips longer than 8 hours.
- i. Maximum transport time to a kennel (intermediate or final destination shelter) should be no more than 12 hours.
- j. All trips should be made with a minimum of (2) drivers and sufficient personnel to appropriately handle and care for all animals.
- k. Driver and staff safety is of utmost concern. Drivers should travel with cell phones, maps, preferably GPS and emergency equipment.
- l. The organizations should have an agreed upon contingency plan to address weather, mechanical or other unexpected situations that may go awry during the transport.

- m. There must be appropriate Identification on each animal and its carrier during transport.

A Tiered Approach.

The NFHS recognizes the varying level of resources available for shelters and rescue groups across the country. Therefore we have broken our recommendations into a three tiered approach, beginning with the most basic requirements and expanding to include additional requirements as resources of the partners allow.

While the level of resources is certainly important in determining how robust a transport program can be, we believe the critical relationship between the participating agencies combined with their joint expectations and their joint resource capabilities will ultimately determine which Tier level the transfer partnership is able to achieve.

Tier 1: Basic, minimum standards for transporting animals in a healthy and safe manner.

1. Public health is of primary concern in transport programs. The following medical considerations should be in place prior to transport; vaccines should be done on intake and in compliance with appropriate vaccine handling protocols.
 - a. Rabies vaccination administered by licensed veterinarian for all animals 16 weeks or older, or in compliance with state standards for the Source shelter, unless contraindicated for health reasons.
 - b. Conduct a visual exam to rule out the existence of bite wounds, open sores/wounds, runny eyes or runny nose, kennel cough, diarrhea, dermatitis or lethargy.
 - c. If an animal has recently been spayed or neutered, there has been other surgery, or it is recuperating from other medical treatment, the animal should have at least 48 hours recovery time before transport. Surgery other than spay/neuter is not recommended prior to transport.
 - d. Each animal has a valid health certificate signed by a licensed veterinarian.
2. Puppies should be at least 8 weeks old at time of transport unless they are being sent with their mother.
3. Each animal should pass the minimum behavior requirements; puppies and dogs should not exhibit aggression.
4. All animals must be identified with a tape collar or other tag at the source shelter, prior to transport. ID must also be included on the transport carrier for each animal.
5. Records must be shipped with the animals. These should be kept in individual, plastic or other waterproof sleeve, prior to transport. Records should include:
 - a. Health certificate
 - b. Intake form including vaccinations and medical records
6. All animals must be sterilized either by the Source shelter if possible or by the Destination shelter prior to adoption.

Tier 2: Moderate standards for transporting animals from source shelters with more than basic resources.

1. All Tier 1 Requirements should be in place.
2. Additional health requirements should include:
 - a. Perform a heartworm test and disclose results to Receiving shelter.
 - b. Bordatella vaccine (injectable or intra-nasal)
 - c. Inoculation with a minimum of parvo and distemper.
3. Dogs should receive a basic behavior assessment looking for aggression to people or animals or resource guarding.
4. Records should include:
 - a. Behavior evaluation form
 - b. Other information including the animal's history, photos, etc.
 - c. Receiving shelter should keep written statistics that track the origin and disposition of all animals transported. Outcome statistics should be shared with the source shelter on an agreed to frequency.

Tier 3 Advanced standards for transporting animals from source shelters with supported resources.

1. All Tier 1 and Tier 2 Requirements should be in place.
2. The Medical exam should include:
 - a. A fecal exam. Deworm any positive animals and give a general dewormer to all animals prior to transport, regardless of fecal exam results
 - b. Application of flea and tick preventative (e.g. Revolution, Advantage Frontline or Advantage Multi.)
 - c. Parvovirus titer
3. Microchip each animal prior to transport.
4. More extensive Behavior assessments conducted prior to census creation and transport using a mutually acceptable assessment tool.
5. Conduct adoption follow-ups on all animals relocated/imported

Goals and Measurement of the Transfer Best Practice.

The NFHS's goals are;

- A. to assist and educate Source shelters in reducing pet overpopulation in their communities;
- B. to improve the quality of transfers that occur;

- C. to ensure that transfer programs are conducted in a manner which fully embraces and meet all local, state and federal regulations pertaining to public health and animal safety.
- D. to promote transfer best practices to achieve the above.

The NFHS believes it is important to monitor the use of these best practices and we propose to do this through surveys. Annually we will survey shelters to see;

1. Do they participate in animal transfers
2. If so, are they a Source or Destination agency
3. Have they heard of or read the NFHS's transfer best practice;
4. Did the organization adopt this best practice;
5. If they have adopted, at what Tier level;
6. The frequency of transfers and the number of animals transferred annually.

"There is a strong voice for animals when we all speak as one"™

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ARTICLE 3
TERMS OF THE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

Section 3.1. Right of Use.

(a) The City and Operator acknowledge the Operator's right to use the Care Center to provide spay/neuter services, adoption services and Animal Welfare Services to the community in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and that the City may monitor to ensure compliance.

Section 3.2. Northeast Animal Care Center Operations.

(a) *Use.* Except as otherwise specifically provided herein, including without limitations the public purpose requirements of Section 3.15, the Operator shall, at all times during the Term, (i) be responsible for all aspects of the Northeast Animal Care Center Operations; and (ii) cause the Northeast Animal Care Center Operations to be performed in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and applicable Law (*provided, however, that the Operator may contest the application of any Law by appropriate proceedings*). The Operator shall, at all times during the Term, provide the programs at the Northeast Animal Care Center in accordance with the Operating Standards and in compliance with any other requirement of this Agreement (including closures related to maintenance or repair activities as required by the Operating Standards) or for temporary closures required to address emergencies, public safety or temporary events.

(b) *Costs and Expenses.* Except as otherwise specifically provided herein, the Operator shall, at all times during the Term, pay or cause to be paid all costs, expenses, and taxes, if any, relating to the Northeast Animal Care Center Operations as and when the same are due and payable.

(c) *Scope of Services.* The Operator shall conduct the Operations at the Northeast Animal Care Center according to all federal, state, and local laws; shall comply with the terms of the Injunction; shall take no action that it knows shall cause the City to be in violation of the Injunction, shall use its best efforts to take approximately 3,000 animals annually from the Department of Animal Services for adoption through its Operations at the Northeast Care Center; shall use its best efforts to annually provide approximately 6,000 spay/neuter services for adopted animals and animals owned by members of the public, and shall provide related veterinary medical services; shall provide all staffing, equipment, and supplies; shall obtain all permits, licenses, and registrations required to provide the services described herein at the Northeast Animal Care Center; and shall coordinate with Department staff to provide these services:

1. Primary Function - On-site pet adoptions and periodic pet adoption events:
 - o With the exception of animals being housed there by the City temporarily whether for transports or as a result of an Emergency, animals at the Northeast Animal Care Center will be the legal property of Operator until they are adopted out to the public or transferred to a rescue group. Animal transfers to other rescue groups will be limited and must be approved by the Department. Animals sent for fostering must

Current Agmt between City
and Best Friends
dated as of Dec. 30, 2011

(f) *Equipment and Supplies.* Operator shall obtain, at its own expense, all equipment and supplies to be used in the operation of the Northeast Animal Care Center, including all food, medical supplies, medicines, cleaning agents, microchips, tools, anesthesia machines, autoclaves, and any other necessary tools, instruments, supplies, and equipment. Operator shall maintain in good working order, at its own expense, all equipment used in the operation of the Northeast Animal Care Center, and shall ensure that repairs or replacement of equipment does not unreasonably interrupt its services.

(g) *Equipment Purchase Option.* At the end of the term of this Agreement, and upon mutual agreement, Department may purchase from the Operator, at a mutually-agreed depreciated price consistent with equipment of comparable age and use, Operator's equipment used in the operation of the Northeast Animal Care Center. However, the Department shall be under no obligation to make such purchases.

(h) *Cost of Supplies, Services and Personnel.* The cost of setting up, staffing, maintaining and performing services under this Agreement shall be the Operator's sole responsibility. Notwithstanding the foregoing, City shall reimburse Operator for additional staff, labor, veterinary and other expenses, including but not necessarily limited to overtime wages, incurred by Operator in the event (a) the average number of animals being housed for transfer pursuant to subparagraph (i) below exceed seventy (70) animals in any 2-week period; or (b) if, as a result of Emergencies, Operator is required to house more than one hundred (100) animals for more than a forty-eight (48) hour period. Operator shall attempt to minimize any additional expenses through the use of volunteers; however, within 30 days of the end of such Emergency, City shall reimburse Operator for such additional expenses. Alternatively, City may use its own staff, under the direction of Operator, to provide additional resources to mitigate or avoid reimbursing Operator in the event of the above occurrences. In the event of such Emergency situation, Operator and City shall use their best efforts to cooperatively manage the facility and expenses.

(i) *Use by City.* The City may use some of the Care Center space at no cost to the City when City requests such space to temporarily house overflow animals in the event of Emergencies requiring temporary holding spaces for large animals or a large number of animals. In addition, City will be able to house animals that are being transferred to other municipalities or organizations outside of Los Angeles County. Operator shall cooperate with the City to make excess kennel and such other spaces available. Such use by the City will count toward the 100 minimum animals that Operator is required to have at any time. Operator shall house more than one animal per cage space when such housing is feasible and safe and maintain the Care Center in a manner that provides adequate space for such City use.

(1) With respect to animals being housed for transport to other municipalities or organizations, the City shall be solely responsible for (a) organizing such transports; (b) medical, veterinary, and other costs and certificates associated with transporting the animals; and (c) staffing the transports. Operator, may, at its sole discretion elect to assist organizationally, logistically, or medically with such transports, but shall have no contractual obligation beyond housing, feeding, and general care-taking of the animals at the shelter. Operator shall not be required to house animals that are medically or behaviorally unsuitable for transport and shall promptly notify the City of such animals.

DRAFT REPORT ON TRANSPORTING ANIMALS FROM LA ANIMAL SERVICES SHELTERS

Concerns about transporting animals have been raised by public:

1. Animals being transported out of Los Angeles may not be safe, it is claimed. There is concern that animals may be killed in receiving shelters or may end up in hording situations.
2. Formerly well-run receiving organizations may lose leadership or funding or for other reasons may no longer be suitable to receive animals from LAAS shelters. Recent reported cases of the poor conditions at Olympic Animal Sanctuary and Willamette Animal Rescue, which both have received transported animals from out-of-state public shelters, have increased concerns that LAAS animals could end up in similar situations.

Current Policies:

1. Department relies on transporters to evaluate receiving agencies. According to the recently approved changes to the New Hope policies, the New Hope partner will be expected to provide the following:
 - a) Date of "transport."
 - b) Method of "transport," (air or ground) and name of driver, if applicable.
 - c) Name, address, phone number and contact person of the receiving agency.
 - d) A signed agreement between the New Hope partner and the receiving group, stating the receiving agency will not kill to make space, will give the pet an adoption guarantee, will provide adopter contact information, and will consult the Department if the animal becomes seriously ill or faces a life-threatening problem.
(From Report to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners - Transport Activities - October 8, 2013).
2. Best Friends transports animals to receiving agencies that they have vetted themselves. Many are taken by Best Friends workers directly to receiving agencies, so Best Friends employees/volunteers can continually monitor facilities.
3. Pup My Ride is Best Friends program for transporting animals. The receiving organizations may change over time. There have been discrepancies between receiving agencies listed on the Pup My Ride website and the ones listed by Marc Peralta in recent conversation. This he explained is due to periodic changes being made in the program.
4. Per Marc Peralta, Best Friends will accept the return of any animal from the receiving agencies. One of Best Friends' receiving agencies does kill for reasons of space, but reportedly will not kill any animal for reasons of space for animals coming from Best Friends.

Recommendations:

That Department modify current policies to assure:

1. Initial vetting may be the responsibility of transporting organization but must be standardized by the Department. The requirements for all adopter/transporters are to be the same as LAAS requires for its own adoptions.
2. Reporting required by Department of NPHs that transport animals out of LA should be available to public.
3. Receiving agency must be 501(c)(3) or equivalent.
4. Receiving agency must report whether they have been investigated or cited for mistreatment of animals, failure to maintain appropriate facilities, etc.
5. Receiving agency must report to Department the name of the local Animal Control authority that have oversight of their organization.
6. Department and/or transporter must communicate with Animal Control authority in the community of the receiving agency to determine if the receiving agency is operating in good standing. The Department must record and maintain this information.
7. May wish to ask local Animal Control if transportation of animals from LA affects their efforts to find homes for their animals (are we just shifting the problem to someone else?).
8. Receiving agencies must be re-credentialed every two years.
9. Receiving agencies must report citations for infractions, loss of nonprofit status, and change in no-kill policies to LAAS immediately.
10. Department must assure that transported animals are microchipped and spayed or neutered with the same standards as LAAS requires for its own adoptions..