

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*1. Shelter Facilities
& Maintenance*

1. Shelter Facilities & Maintenance

General Overview

Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) consists of three facilities throughout the 3,789 square mile county in the following locations:

- 5743 Overpass Road, Goleta,
- 548 West Foster Road, Santa Maria, and
- 1501 West Central Avenue, Lompoc.

Each facility is unique in size and accessibility and the distance between the facilities is considerable, with Santa Maria and Lompoc the closest to one another at 21 miles. At the Santa Barbara location there is one area of county land that is occupied by a partner organizations which was not extensively reviewed.

1.1 BUILDING EXTERIOR, GROUNDS AND LANDSCAPING

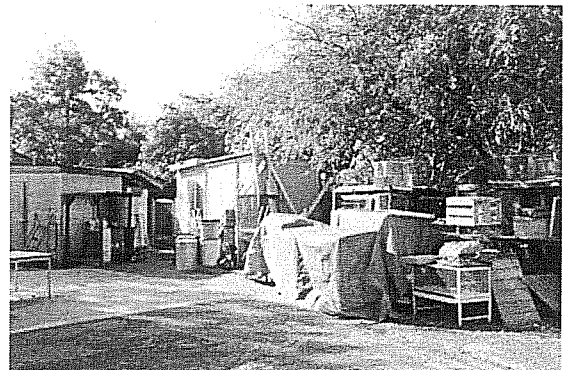
Observations:

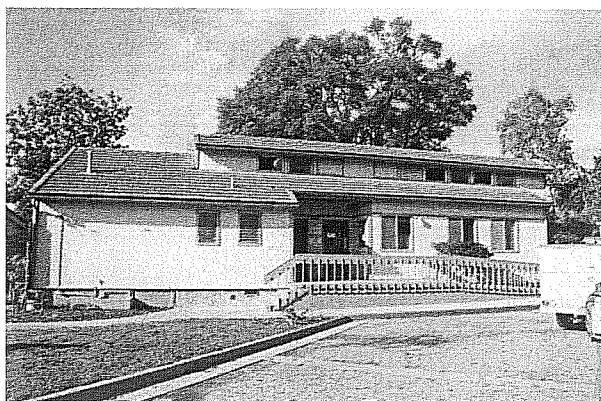
The buildings and grounds at each of the SBCAS locations were well kept and maintained. Especially in the front and public facing areas, the grounds and landscaping were neat and aesthetically pleasing, and the vegetation was lush and attractive. Each of the facilities stored cages, cleaning chemicals and other miscellaneous items in outdoor and rear facing areas, as detailed below.

Santa Barbara

The team was informed that the main building was erected in the 1940s, the hexagonal building in the 1960s and the trailer where the Animal Shelter Assistance Program (ASAP) is located was erected in the early 2000s. The main dog kennel located adjacent to the main building was renovated in 2009. The paved walkways between the buildings and throughout the grounds were free and clear of debris and were observed being washed down during the site visit. The pathways inside the gated area where rabbits were housed were mulch covered ground.

A paved area behind the facility was accessible to vehicles between the main building and the ASAP building. A high chain link gate enclosed the area. Inside and to the left were two chain link dog kennels that were used by ACOs. Within this area were several sheds, two large metal, portable storage units, a double door stainless steel refrigerator and a walk-in freezer. The refrigerator and sheds were utilized by Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter (BUNS) and the sheds contained hay for the rabbits and PVC pipes and other spare parts, presumably for maintaining the rabbit housing areas. Outside the front of the shed holding PVC pipes





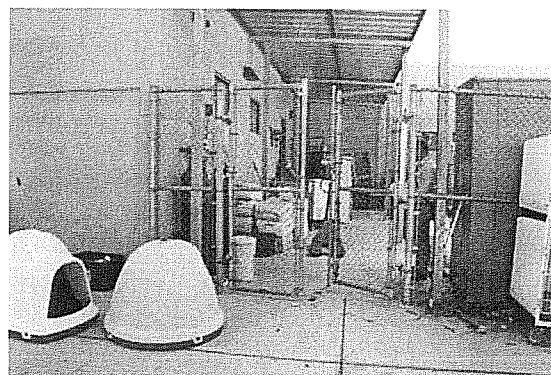
were several garbage bins also filled with PVC pipes, and lumber and other miscellaneous debris was stacked and leaning on the right of the shed. Left of the shed that stored hay were several black garbage bags piled that BUNS volunteers told the team were filled with compost that was hauled once a week to local farmers. Between the BUNS sheds and dog and cat food storage unit were stacks of cages and traps, some covered by blue tarps. To the right of the walk-in freezer were several barrels holding TripleTwo (cleaner/disinfectant), covered by a lean-to roof. Scattered

around the area were several hand trucks.

Landscaping was provided by a private company contracted by the county that came once a week. It was brought to the team's attention that the grounds were inundated with gopher holes that posed potential tripping hazards to the staff, volunteers and patrons.

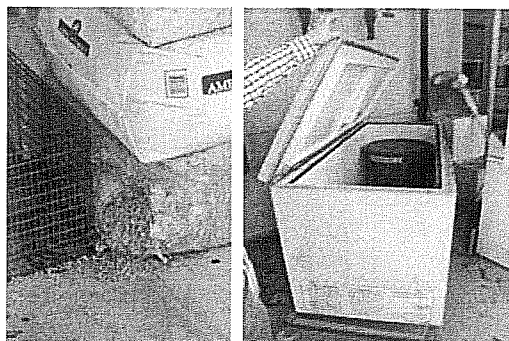
Santa Maria

The Santa Maria building was erected in 2005 by the county and is the largest and newest of the three facilities. Less than ten years in use, the facility was visibly and functionally fitting. The single level, tan structure was attractive and inviting. The paved walkways at the front of and between the buildings were free and clear of debris.



At the rear of the building was a shed where rabbits were housed, a rabbit play yard in front of the shed with a sign that read the "Rabbit Resort." Across the path from the rabbit area were several chain link enclosures where the chickens were housed. Four dog play yards occupied the land across the parameter of the building beyond this area. Each of these areas were in good condition and appeared to be well kept.

The Santa Maria location had a large, secured parking area to the right of the facility. The parking lot was surrounded by a tall chain link fence. The parking area was nicely paved and there were very few vehicles parked there during the site visit. A horse trailer, an emergency response trailer, and the Project PetSafe trailer were parked at the rear of the parking lot and facility. Inside the parking lot at the rear along the fence were a few banks of old, cat cages and an old refrigerator. A couple of sheds, a storage unit and framed tarps stored items on the other side of the chain link fence. Within a gated area nearer to the building were scattered various items, seemingly this was used as overflow storage. This area was poorly maintained and cluttered with traps, cages, carriers, an old freezer, oxygen tanks, animal bedding



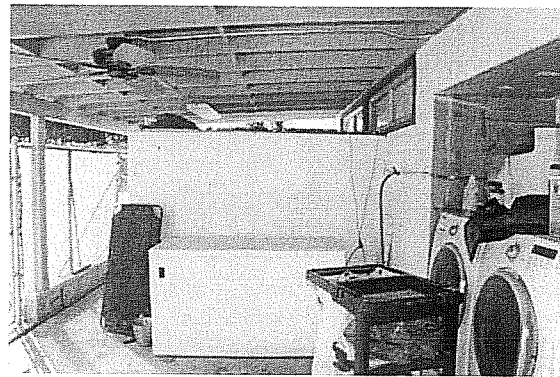
and dog igloos. Some stacks of crates had standing water, the small animal bedding chips had been infiltrated presumably by rodents and the deep freezer was grimy and had an empty biohazard can inside. Landscaping was provided and arranged by the county and the grounds and landscaping were neat and aesthetically pleasing.

Lompoc

The Lompoc facility was renovated in 2013 and the team was told that during the 8 month renovations the operation continued in a trailer at the front of the structure. The renovations did not include remodeling or replacing the dog kennel. The walkways and areas around the throughout the facility were free and clear of debris and in good condition.



At the rear of the building was a shed used for storage, a shed where rabbits were housed, and a rabbit play yard in front of the shed. Next to the rabbit area were several enclosures where the chickens were housed. A couple of meet-and-greet yards with cinder block and chain link fences occupied the area adjacent to the dog kennel on the left side of the building, when facing the building. Dog play yards occupied the land on the opposite side of the building, the right when facing the building. Each of these areas was in good condition and appeared to be well kept. There was a concrete padded area with a roof overhang on the right side of the building where miscellaneous items were kept, such as the deep freeze used for animal remains, an extra washer and dryer and carts utilized during cleaning. Some items cluttered the tops of the washer and dryer and a few miscellaneous items were placed there: a stretcher, a stainless steel bucket, an orange extension cord, and a blanket were piled atop the run that was formerly a night drop area.



The team was told that volunteers provide most of the landscaping and basic maintenance at the Lompoc location.

Recommendations

- SBCAS and General Services are commended for their superb landscaping.
- Clean, de-clutter and functionally organize all outdoor areas of the facilities.
 - Assign responsibility and uphold accountability to manager to maintain these areas in a manner that minimizes accumulation of debris.
- Sort and recycle, donate, sell or throw away any items currently kept outside and not in use or have an anticipated use as contingency.
 - Host two clean-up weekends per year to keep areas from re-cluttering. Engage community, volunteers, and schools in this event.
- Consider only humane alternatives to controlling the gopher problem at the Santa Barbara loca-

tion. Underground fencing may be the best technique to eliminating their presence in the lawn at the front left of the property.¹

Discussion:

Animal services facilities receive a lot of wear and tear and foot traffic by humans and animals. The responsibilities that animal services facilities carry out can be hard on the buildings and grounds they occupy and it is of utmost importance that they are maintained at an outstanding level on a very regular basis.

First impressions are lasting, and as visitors approach SBCAS, the impression they receive should be warm, friendly, and inviting. The facilities and grounds should be maintained so that they are attractive and welcoming to the public. The external maintenance levels of the physical building itself can be, or can appear to be, reflective of the strength and level of care of the internal programs. This can also be said for private and rear facing areas of facilities. Staff and volunteers deserve to work in clean and orderly environments and will perform their duties more effectively and with care if the surroundings are attractive and pleasant.

Clutter, piled debris and disorganized work spaces can posed hazards to employees, volunteers and shelter residents which can result in injuries. In addition, areas that are difficult to clean and disinfect can propagate infectious diseases and attract rodents and insects that can carry zoonotic diseases. The empty freezers, if unused and kept should have the doors removed.

Controlling clutter is the law. OSHA section 1910.22(a)(1) states: “All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.”

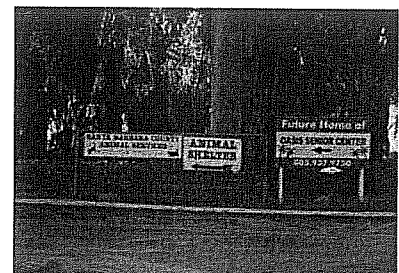
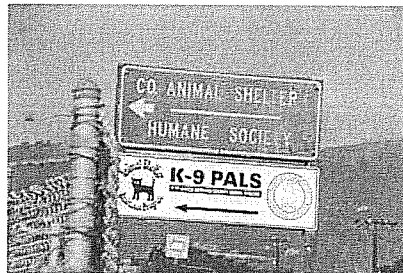
Clutter is the first thing OSHA compliance officers see when they walk in your door. In fact, several hundred citations are issued each year.

Appendix 1.A: Housekeeping checklist

1.2 EXTERNAL AND DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

Observations:

Signage maintenance was reported to be the responsibility of the county, but animal services employees were responsible for noting what signage might be needed and requesting the signage. Each of the facilities was easily found with GPS technology.



There was no consistent, branded directional or external signage noted.

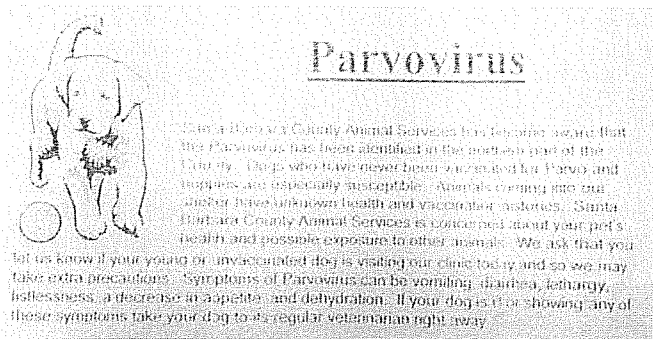
¹ <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7433.html>

Santa Barbara

Driving from N Patterson Road toward Overpass Road, there was signage at the corner of Overpass Road and S Patterson Road. The signs were printed on both sides. A faded blue sign read: “Co. Animal Shelter and Humane Society and the other read *Animal Shelter Assistance Program, K-9 Pals, and Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter.*” Overpass Road twisted and turned and approximately half way from S Patterson Road and SBCAS, another sign with address numbers 5399, read: “*Humane Society, Education Center and County Stray Animal Shelter.*” In a patch of grass on the left of the driveway into the parking lot was a sign that read: “*Santa Barbara County Animal Services*” and the chain link fence behind the sign had several banners: two for Science Diet and one for BUNS. The signage on the building near the entry doors included operating hours, where to find animals within the facility, and a welcome sign. Two encased bulletin boards included a note on volunteering, adopting and fostering and the other was used by BUNS and included photos of rabbits and guinea pigs for adoption. There was no signage or instructions for after-hours emergencies at the entrance of the facility.

Santa Maria

The team did not see signage for the facility until they turned from Orcutt Expressway, left onto West Foster Road. Fastened to a chain link fence at the driveway were two signs, one was the SBCAS-branded sign seen at each of the locations that read: “*Santa Barbara County Animal Services*” and the other had a large red arrow and read: “*Animal Shelter.*” A white sign in front of the parking lot of the building read: “*Santa Maria Animal Center, Santa Barbara County Animal Services,*” that had a different logo than the sign seen at the other locations. The building had signage along the front at each doorway that read: “*Education Center, Animal House the Wendy McCaw Animal Adoption Center, Animal Drop Off, and Animal Care Foundation Spay and Neuter Clinic.*” County signage indicating that it is illegal to abandon your animal in English and Spanish was posted under the “*Animal Drop Off*” text. To the right of the Animal Drop Off doorway and to the left of the Clinic Entrance doorway was a large glass window that had several signs posted. The signage ranged from the vaccine clinic schedule and prices of vaccines to information about licensing. An Idexx box was mounted to the Clinic Entrance doorway at eye level and a sign to the right of the door noted, “*No emergency care is available at this facility,*” and it provided information for where to go for emergency care. At the lobby entrance there were two laminated signs on the doors. On the left, a sign with the hours, and on the right a sign that read, “*Warning Parvovirus Outbreak, Keep your puppy off the ground if the dog is under 1 year of age, or the dog has not been fully vaccinated against parvo, An alarming number of parvovirus cases are being reported in the Santa Maria area, If your puppy or dog is exhibiting any signs of illness, please consult your veterinarian, Parvovirus is most commonly seen in young puppies but can effect an unvaccinated dog of any age.*” There was no date on the sign or an indication of whether or not the sign was meant for customers entering the facility with a puppy or if it was a warning for people who have puppies or dogs in general who may or may not be with them during their visit to the facility. The team was concerned that there was too much detail on the sign for the average person to absorb and



that it may not be entirely understood by a member of the public who may not understand for example what “fully vaccinated” means. There was also a flyer on the resource materials table titled “Parvovirus” that included more detailed information about parvovirus being identified in the northern part of the county.

Lompoc

The team did not see signage for the facility while on West Central Avenue and actually passed the facility not realizing where it was. The yellow, single level building is low and several vehicles were parked in front, concealing the signage. Once the team corrected their mistake, they turned around and parked on the unpaved area in front of the dog play yards to the right of the building. The team approached the building and noticed that there were several types of signage, all very different. The SBCAS-branded sign was posted on the left portion of the front of the building, an awning read: “*La Paws,*” and on the left of the parking lot, a banner fastened to a wooden fence where the garbage and recycling receptacles were kept read: “*Companion Animal Placement Assistance, Welcome to the Lompoc Animal Shelter, Hours Mon-Fri 9-12:30, 1:30-4:30, Sat 10-4, During non-business hours search for a lost pet or find an adoptable pet visit Petharbor.com or Petfinder.com, CAPA Animal Shelter.*” A red sign on the front door read: “*OPEN, Monday thru Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Closed for lunch 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday – Closed.*” The facility was therefore referred to in three ways: “*La Purisima Animal Welfare Services*” (“*La PAWS,*”), Santa Barbara County Animal Services and “*Companion Animal Placement Assistance,*” or “*CAPA.*” The team felt that the signage indicating three different organization names was confusing and would potentially perplex visitors. There was no signage or instructions for after-hours emergencies at the entrance of the facility.

Recommendations:

- Utilize consistent, branded, county approved, directional signage.
 - Consider adding the mileage to the facility.
 - Add highway signage directing patrons to the Santa Maria facility from all four directions. (Orcutt Expressway and East and West Clark Avenue and Orcutt Expressway at East and West Foster Road.)
 - Add signage on West Central Avenue in Lompoc in both directions toward the facility. Even though the facility is painted bright yellow, when the parking lot is full it is not easy for a new visitor to locate.
- Provide signage on the front door of Santa Barbara and Lompoc directing people to emergency resources when the shelter is closed. Include the names, phone numbers, and website of any relevant agencies, i.e., emergency veterinary hospitals, etc.
- Remove parvovirus signage from the front door at the Santa Maria facility unless there is a specific and current outbreak at the facility.
- Move the Idexx box from the clinic door to another location that is not on the door at eye level at the Santa Maria location. Perhaps mount it onto the building to the left or right of the same door.
- Condense the signage at the Lompoc location to reflect that it is Santa Barbara County Animal Services. There is a way that the county can reflect the work that partner or volunteer organizations do on behalf of SBCAS that does not contribute to confusion.

- All hand-made signs should be consistently logo'd, in a specified font, written in an appropriate tone, laminated and approved by a manager before being posted.

Discussion:

Exterior and directional signage is an important component to brand messaging, corporate identity and marketing. It is an essential piece to a business's overall marketing strategy. Signage should be specific, concise and easy to read from a distance.

Animal shelters are often the first place people seek when they need advice about any animal-related situation. Exterior signage should be designed and installed with the intention of welcoming and accommodating shelter visitors. Visitors should be able to find the shelter and access the service they desire simply by following signage. Visitors to animal shelters can sometimes be in distress due to an animal-related emergency or concern. Providing clear, prominent signage that immediately directs the visitor to the appropriate location will greatly enhance the level of client service.

Informational signage within the shelter should convey relevant content, in a manner that is friendly, understandable and succinct. Handmade signs are often necessary inside the shelter to direct visitors, display warnings and safety concerns, remind staff and volunteers of policies and to share valuable information. Despite the content, they always should be branded and neat. Signs can influence external perceptions of visitors, leave impressions about animal care as well as influence workplace atmosphere.

1.3 PARKING AREAS/WALKWAYS

The facility perimeter lighting was observed in daylight hours, with the exception of the Santa Barbara location, which was observed one evening and ample light appeared to be provided.

Santa Barbara

The paved parking lot provided 5 parking spaces in front of the main building, which included one designated handicap spot. Three more parking spaces were in front of the ASAP building. Emergency and fire zones were not marked, but the curb from the driveway to the side of the building were painted red. The driveway and parking lot was in good condition with the exception of some cracks, but with no visible need for repairs. Employees parked their vehicles in the parking lot of the humane society next door, or on street parking. Agency vehicles were also parked in the parking lot of the humane society next door. "No parking" was painted on the pavement in front of two dumpsters; however, during the site visit vehicles were parked there, presumably because there were not always enough spaces to accommodate visitors. The team was told that if the waste pick up was taking place when there were vehicles blocking the dumpsters, they would be signaled and given the opportunity to move the vehicles. There were three exterior lights on the front of the facility and several lights on the front of the ASAP building. There appeared to be adequate lighting for safety and security of the shelter.

Santa Maria

The paved parking lot provided 28 parking spaces in front of the main building, which included two designated handicap spots. Twelve more marked parking spaces were located within the secure parking lot where agency vehicles were parked. Emergency and fire zones were not marked. The driveway and parking lot was

in excellent condition. Employees parked their vehicles in the parking lot in front of the building or they could park in the secure lot. There were lights mounted on the front of the facility and five tall lights on around the front parking lot and four within the secure parking lot. There appeared to be adequate lighting for safety and security of the shelter.

Lompoc

The paved parking lot provided eight parking spaces in front of the main building, which included one designated handicap spot. Approximately six more vehicles could be parked in the gravel area in front of the dog play yards. Emergency and fire zones were marked and the driveway and parking lot was in good condition. During the site visit there were agency vehicles parked in one of the areas marked as “no parking.” There were four lights mounted to the building and one light on the flag pole. There were two street lights that were nearby that likely provided ample light at night.

Each facility had different areas for parking as well as different procedures for handling animal control functions and parking animal control vehicles. In all shelters, animal control vehicles were parked as space permitted at times using space commonly viewed as regular customer parking.

Field Services Parking - Santa Barbara

At the Santa Barbara shelter, during business hours, the vehicles would be pulled in directly in front of the main shelter entrance in an area not marked for parking (IMG0330, IMG0679). If needed, animal control vehicles were also parked inside the adjacent Humane Society lot. Vehicles would be pulled in to the rear gate to facilitating loading / unloading of animals or materials (IMG0649). ACOs also loaded / unloaded animals while parked in front of the shelter entering through the side gate nearest the dog kennels. After hours, vehicles were parked in the Humane Society lot which was secured by locked gates and fenced. The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.

There is an area in the rear of the shelter for ACOs to pull their vehicles to clean them directly adjacent to the temporary housing kennels for day drops.



Field Services Parking - Santa Maria

The Santa Maria facility has a secure fenced, access controlled, powered rolling gate parking area for animal control vehicles. In addition to the standard animal control vehicles, this area houses a large stock trailer (used to transport livestock and large supplies), a disaster response trailer (stocked with emergency supplies) and an emergency command post trailer. ACOs park vehicles inside the fenced compound when handling an-

imal control functions. The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.

There is a concrete pad adjacent to the shelter located inside the secure area and outside the intake door with hose bib for washing vehicles; however, the area is not covered nor is there specific drainage for runoff. The ACOs have access to the power washing system in this area as well.

Field Services Parking - Lompoc

The Lompoc Valley facility has a secure fenced areas adjacent to the shelter (IMG5612, IMG5615); however, vehicles are parked in front the shelter unless loading / unloading animals / materials. Vehicles were observed parked in the “NO PARKING” red-lined areas immediately in front of the shelter entrance (IMG 5614). The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.

ACOs generally offload only fractious animals through the side entrance. Deceased animals are unloaded on the side adjacent to CAPA and the exercise yards. There are no covered areas for unloading. A hose is available adjacent to the CAPA area for vehicle cleaning.

Recommendations:

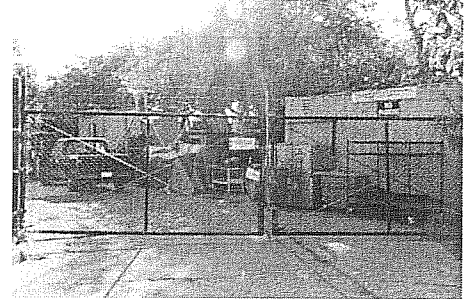
- Designated areas for ACO parking should be established, clearly marked, and utilized for that purpose.
- Covered areas should be created to allow for ACOs to unload animals / materials as well as clean vehicles in all weather conditions.
- Vehicles should not be parked in “No Parking” areas.
- Contact the Fire Department on the proper designation of emergency parking for fire and emergency equipment and ensure that the areas are marked accordingly at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations.
- Designate employee and volunteer parking areas allowing patrons and visitors access to the most convenient spots.

Discussion:

Agency vehicles should not violate parking ordinances or block fire lanes or egress points.

Ample, convenient parking for patrons is good customer service.

American Disability Act has requirements for the design of parking spaces. Section 4.1.1(5) of the Standards specifies the minimum number of accessible parking spaces to be provided including van accessible parking spaces.



1.4 ADA COMPLIANCE/HANDICAPPED ACCESS

Observations:

SBCAS appeared to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Doorways throughout the facilities were sufficiently wide, thresholds did not present obstacles, and the floor surface was level. The handicapped parking signs and spaces met measurement and visibility guidelines. There were no automatic door openers on the entrances. Each facility had satisfactory wheelchair access. The facilities were on one level; there were no obstacles that would have restricted handicapped access.

Recommendations:

None at this time

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

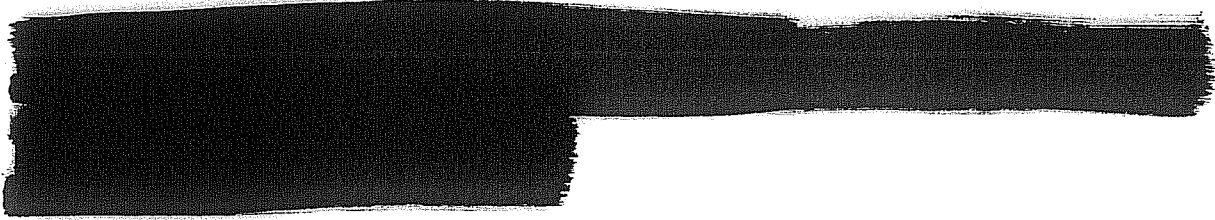
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1.6 INTERNAL SIGNAGE

Observations:

Internal signage throughout the facilities was mostly professionally produced or computer generated, but some consisted of handmade signs. Signs posted throughout the facilities were a mix of computer generated signs on 8.5 x 11 sheets of white paper taped to doors and walls, metal reflective signs, plastic signs and handmade signs. Some of the signs did not present a professional appearance and were outdated or not dated at all.

Recommendations:

- Create handmade sign template with the SBCAS logo.
- Replace all signs with new template, laminate and hang using velcro tabs.
- Evaluate the message tone and strategic placements for important messages.
- Add dates to signs that require them
- Assign a staff member to approve all signs prior to posting.
- Ensure that internal signs comply with the ADAAG, which has requirements for character proportion and height placement.³

Discussion:

Signage, even handmade, presents an opportunity to communicate consistent brand messaging and can set the tone of the organization. Their purpose is to share important information in a manner that is helpful and engaging. Interior signage should be clear, noticeable and standardized with a common color, shape and size. Signage should assist clients as well as employees and volunteers using positive images and language.

1.7 LOBBY/RECEPTION AREA

Observations:

Santa Barbara

Clients entered the lobby through one of two doors. The door to the left opened to a small area where there

² www.pearsonitcertification.com/articles/article.aspx?p=30077&seqNum=6

³ www.access-board.gov

was access to a restroom, the staff room, the outside rear of the building, the administrative offices and small lobby to the reception desk. The door to the right entered directly into the small lobby and reception desk. This was the only public entrance into the building and was, therefore, used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The lobby had a small, but open atmosphere with more than ample space for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. There was no seating available in the lobby. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. Some educational and other materials were available at the front desk.

Santa Maria

Clients entered the lobby through double glass doors. These doors and the door to the spay and neuter clinic were the only public entrances into the building. The lobby was used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The lobby's atmosphere was bright and cheery with more than ample space for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. The employees behind the front desk were somewhat hidden behind the high counter. Employees had to make an effort to look and in some cases stand up to see and greet visitors. There was some seating available in the lobby, to the left near a table with informational materials. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. A lot of educational and other materials were available opposite the front desk on a table and in a rack.

Opposite the front counter and educational materials were the adoptable cat areas. Two large chain link cages were placed in the lobby to the left where some adoptable cats were housed. Beyond the adoptable cats and to the left were public restrooms.

Lompoc

Clients entered the front of the building through a single door. The small area inside the door was more like an entryway than a lobby and this area was used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The entryway was enclosed by a counter and behind the counter were desks and other office equipment. The atmosphere was bright and cheery and while it was small, it was large enough for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. There was no seating available nor would there have been space for seating. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. The team determined that if there were more than a couple of transactions taking place, they would be required to use other spaces within the facility to manage them. The entryway/lobby lacked educational and resource materials such as posters and pamphlets. Opposite of the front counter was a hallway to the public restroom which was easily accessible. When the team arrived a cage of adoptable rats was on the front desk counter.

Recommendations:

- Increase the selection of educational materials in the lobbies. Make sure to include information in Spanish and English regarding rabies vaccination, spay/neuter, laws pertaining to animals, responsible pet ownership, behavior and training, list of local veterinarians, and upcoming events. Providing written materials is an easy way to educate the public. Continually develop educational and informational materials for public use, or take advantage of materials made available by national organizations.
- Remove some of the clutter atop of the front desk at the Santa Maria location. The counter is a bit high and somewhat camouflages the employees. Employees should make extra effort to greet all

visitors because of this design.

- Ensure that all educational materials are branded with the name and address of SBCAS.
- Implement cleaning and closing check list so the area is kept pristine at all times of day.
- Replace tower information racks with attractive commercial display units that hang on the walls. Good utilization of wall space will free floor space as well as reduce obstacles for effective floor maintenance.
- All homemade signs should be laminated when possible, properly logo'd and neatly displayed.

Discussion:

A lobby is often a visitor's first impression and can create a lasting positive effect. Lobbies should be welcoming, odor-free, neat and comfortable and have educational materials available but displayed in a manner that does not overwhelm the client.

A cheerful, helpful staff member or volunteer, wearing a clean, logo'd uniform, greeting the public will also have a favorable impact, and the organization will be seen by the community as user-friendly and professional.

1.8 OFFICE AND DISPATCH AREAS

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures 3.42 "Work Stations," included responsibilities on keeping work stations clean, neat and organized. The team observed that public facing work stations in each of the facilities was neat and organized.

Santa Barbara

The main, administrative building included a front desk area, two cubicles and two offices with doors that were for the Director and the Supervisor. The two cubicles had three desks and were shared by ACOs and other employees. The front desk area included an L-shaped desk and provided what appeared to be ample room for the tasks performed there.

Santa Maria

There were a number of offices throughout the expansive facility. Behind the front desk was an office for the Supervisor. On the opposite side of the building was a line of offices. The offices were of ample size and appeared comfortable and provided what the employees required. A large education room located opposite the public restrooms was equipped with tables and chairs and was a nice space for staff, community or volunteer meetings.

Lompoc

In the lobby beyond the front desk area, were two desk areas and a conference room. A small office to the left was for the Supervisor. A small desk area was available for people to fill out lost or found reports, or adoption applications.

Dispatch area

There was no designated dispatch area for any facility. Clerical assistants, officers and supervisors entered calls into the Chameleon software from various locations including desktops and laptops (both in the office and in the field).

Recommendations:

- Dispatch concerns will be addressed in the Field Services Section

1.9 STAFF BREAK ROOMS

Observations:

Santa Barbara

The staff break room was located directly off of the entryway of the building to the left. A restroom, storage/data room and the small dog behavior evaluation room connected to the staff break room. A conference table, rolling chairs, refrigerator, kitchenette and metal employee lockers filled the room.

Santa Maria

The staff break room was located along the hallway opposite the adoptable dog kennel, on the side of the building where the education room and administrative offices were located. The room had a full kitchen and a round table with chairs. The kitchen and table areas appeared to be clean and orderly. The inside of the refrigerator did not appear to have been cleared out or cleaned any time recently.

Lompoc

The staff break room was located along the hallway opposite the dog kennel on the way to the exam room and cat rooms. The room had a kitchenette, restroom and small table and chairs. A spray bottle of bug spray was observed on top of the refrigerator in between two boxes of cereal and peanut butter. The sign outside the door identifying the room read "Break Room, Cleaning." The double sink to the right as you enter the room had a hand written sign that said, "This sink animal use only please." The only other sinks in the building were in the restrooms, dog kennel, euthanasia room and conference room.



Recommendations:

- Develop a cleaning schedule for the break rooms and ensure that the refrigerators are cleaned out and old items discarded weekly.
- Discontinue utilizing the sink in the break room to clean up animal items such as bowls and litter boxes. Consider utilizing one of the sinks available in the other areas of the facility, or have a sink installed in the intake room. This is an OSHA Violation.
- Do not store toxic chemicals, cleaning supplies or solution or any other such item next to or in the same areas as human food. This is an OSHA violation.

Discussion:

Space is at a premium in most animal facilities. Employers are not required to provide a break room for staff. However, if the employer allows staff to store, prepare or consume food on the premises, then the employer must provide a space that is free from biological and chemical hazards.

1.10 WASTE DISPOSAL/STORAGE

Observations:

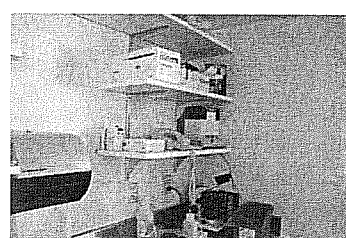
There was no SOP on general waste disposal, but SBCAS had policy 6.06 “Disposal of Medical Waste and Sharp Objects,” and each facility maintained proper receptacles for disposing of needles, scalpel blades and other sharp objects. Each of the facilities had extra storage units on the facility grounds, but items tended to pile up even outside of those storage units. While some of the storage sheds were organized and neat, others were piled with clutter of various items. There also appeared to be ample cabinet space in the animal food preparation areas, exam rooms, and other rooms at each location while at the same time items cluttered the counter tops.



Santa Barbara



Santa Maria



Lompoc

Santa Barbara

There were two dumpsters in public view in a dedicated space in the parking lot between the ASAP building and the dog play yards adjacent to the four public parking spaces. One was for general waste and the other was recycling. The team was told that the county was responsible for waste pick-up. It appeared to the team that the county contracted out waste management and recycling services to a local company whose information was on the dumpsters. The dumpster was reported to be emptied once a week, on Thursdays, but the team was told that they sometimes came twice a week. The site visit took place on a Monday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.

Dog and cat food was stored in two main areas at the facility: a large, portable storage unit in the back area of the facility and a small shed at the rear of the dog kennel.

Santa Maria

There were two dumpsters inside a roof covered, walled area to the right of the secured parking lot. One was for general waste and the other was recycling. The team was told that the city was responsible for waste pick-up and the receptacles were labeled, “City of Santa Maria.” The dumpster was reported to be emptied twice a week. The site visit took place on a Tuesday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.

The waste dumpster was near empty, and the recycling dumpster was over full.

Dog and cat food was stored in a storage room off of a hallway beyond the medical suite. In-use dog and cat food bags



appeared to be left out, in open bags at all times near kennels and cat rooms. The team observed the open bags and bins on Tuesday both in the morning and evening at closing and again on Thursday.

Lompoc

The city provided three 50 gallon rolling garbage bins at the Lompoc location. They were stored next to a wooden fence to the far left of the parking lot in front of the building. There was a large, green recycling bin in the street; presumably, it remained there at all times. The team was told that the city was responsible for waste pick-up and the garbage was reported to be emptied twice a week and the recycling once a week. The site visit took place on a Wednesday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.

Animal food was stored in a storage room at the back of the facility that also stored old paperwork and various other kennel, cleaning and office supplies.

Recommendations:

- The team commends SBCAS for designating a concealed area for waste and recycling at the Santa Maria location. Similar efforts should be made at the other locations.
- Implement SOPs for waste disposal and storage in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and best practices for employee, volunteer, and visitor safety.
- Immediately implement precautions for animal food storage that requires secure covering of all food containers.
- Put in place a rotation system in the food storage areas to reduce the risk of spoilage and infestation. Ensure that when new food supply arrives that the new food is placed at the bottom of the pile. Date the bags when they arrive with the date that they arrive and use them in date order.
- Provide proper storage areas of equipment and supplies by their use.
- Dispose of any supplies or products that are not regularly utilized.
- Review the items that need to be stored. Designate space for needed items and do not accumulate obsolete items.
- Create inventories of items in storage. An inventory is especially critical to emergency preparedness and an evacuation plan. Inventories are also required when any kind of audit and/or review are completed. Having inventories of equipment and items in storage would be beneficial during

the budgeting process as well as understanding if there was loss of resources.

- Inventory management should be an assigned task.
- Chameleon has an inventory management system included in the shelter software

Discussion:

Good waste management and storage habits are imperative in an animal shelter. Employees will benefit from having what they need on hand, in an environment that is clean and orderly. Do not be afraid to throw out what you may never use.

Clutter makes work areas difficult to disinfect and can contribute to the spread of disease. Clutter can also pose a workplace hazard for employees and volunteers and may increase risk for OSHA citations. Clutter reduces employee efficiency and productivity.

Storage areas provide for a means to control inventory and reduce waste. Employee theft must be mitigated by securing high value items, such as food and medical supplies. Inventory management systems are imperative to reduce operating expenses, preventing overages and shortages and allows for accurate yearly budgeting.

Appendix 1.D: Veterinary Inventory Management Guide

1.11 GENERAL FACILITY MAINTENANCE

Observations:

Service requests were submitted by Supervisors to General Services via the county website. Requests could then be monitored via the online system. The team was informed that General Services promptly responded to their maintenance requests and that they were pleased with their relationships with General Services and the various contractors. If General Services were unable to maintain or repair something within the facilities, they contracted private companies. No preventative maintenance records were kept onsite at any of the facilities and the employees were not aware of schedules for regular or annual preventative maintenance of items such as HVAC (heating, ventilating, air conditioning) filter changes, or plumbing and electrical maintenance.

The walk in cooler at the Santa Barbara location was in physical disrepair at the door and hinges, and the cooler at the Santa Maria location, while newer, was not set at a high enough temperature and the team smelled the decaying remains of animals when they arrived onsite and throughout the day when they were in the corridor near the euthanasia room. The cooler was located outside on the other side of the euthanasia room and there was no direct access from the building to the cooler.

The Santa Maria facility was much larger than the other facilities and for that reason required more staffing, not only to provide for the animals, but also to keep the facility in good working order. The team was told that prior to the site visit a deep clean of the facility and grounds was conducted. Despite this, the team noted a few areas that needed attention, such as the overall cleanliness of the euthanasia room whose floor did not appear to have been swept or washed down recently. The cleanliness of the insides of the refrigerators and freezers also needed attention. For example, one freezer that contained human food had a large amount

of dead ants.



Each facility had other areas of improvement for maintenance, organization and cleanliness as outlined in sections Waste Disposal/Storage, Dog Housing and Cleaning and Disinfecting.

Recommendations:

- Develop a written protocol for maintenance requests to include how staff should communicate maintenance issues to management. Maintain a written log of all requested and completed repairs. Hold the staff and volunteers responsible for communicating maintenance issues.
- Develop SOP for daily cleaning of each area, to include a check list and sign off sheet. Assign accountability and conclude each day with a closing walk-through.
- Address cooler temperature setting in Santa Maria.
- Reach out to General Services to determine which items have a preventive maintenance schedule for each facility. Establish preventative maintenance schedule calendar. Management should walk through the facility on a monthly basis and inspect kennels, cages, floors, walls, doors, equipment, lights, and the HVAC system, including the vents.
- Develop a plan for maintenance and cleaning of all drains and the septic system with daily, weekly, and monthly checks and procedures.
 - Maintain drains and trenches by checking them daily. Treat drains with a bio-enzyme to promote safe drainage and prevent clogging. Bio-enzyme treatment of drains will also help prevent odor emanation and curtail expenses by proactively addressing drainage issues and lessening repairs.⁴

Discussion:

Animal Services facilities, like other municipal buildings, require constant attention and funds to be adequately maintained. Routine problems, such as drains clogging, guillotine doors not functioning properly, hoses breaking, and light bulbs burning out, commonly occur and must be addressed. Animal Services facilities can be difficult to maintain due to the high volume of animals and people utilizing them. The County has a responsibility to ensure that the facility is kept in a manner that is functional, safe, and attractive, and that crucial equipment is maintained and in good operating condition.

⁴ www.htproducts.net

A higher price will be paid to make up for months or years of neglect. Routine inspections will decrease the number of costly repairs that have to be initiated because something was overlooked. It is much more cost effective to have a solid, preventative maintenance program in place rather than wait until something breaks or is constantly deteriorating.

1.12 HVAC (VENTILATION/TEMPERATURE) SYSTEM AND AIR EXCHANGE

Observations:

As previously mentioned, facility maintenance, including HVAC systems, were managed by General Services. There were no specs available nor was there an SOP related to air flow and management; each facility was unique in the systems it employed. Employees were not aware of fresh air exchanges per hour in the animal areas where HVAC was supplied. Santa Barbara County enjoys a temperate climate. With low precipitation and mild temperatures, SBCAS is able to take advantage of the climate to the benefit of the animals' health and wellbeing. For the year 2014, the maximum average temperature was 78 degrees and the minimum average temperature was 52 degrees.⁵ During the AHA site visit in January, the temperature was as high as 70 degrees during the day and as low as 41 degrees at night.

Santa Barbara

Vents were present in the main kennel, but the team did not determine if the system was utilized. A thermostat was present in the center aisle of the kennel and venting was supplied the length of the building. Dutch doors were on both sides of the kennel and the tops were kept open during the day and the guillotine doors in the runs were kept open overnight; therefore, it is assumed that the system may have only been used for heating if temperatures dropped or cooling if temperatures were unnaturally high. No HVAC was observed by the team in the hexagonal building. A wall heater and fans were observed, but they were not being utilized during the site visit. It was reported to the team that there was no air conditioning in administrative building; fans were utilized when they were needed.

Santa Maria

SBCAS' newest facility was entirely air controlled. Large amounts of dust were observed on the vents and walls around the vents at the Santa Maria facility. The team was told that employees often vacuum the dust from the vents. HVAC units were on the roof of the building. The team did not access the roof to inspect the units.

Lompoc

Heating was supplied in the dog kennel, but cooling was not possible. It was reported to the team that there was no air conditioning in the lobby, but that would be added soon. The building did not have trees or any other natural covering from the sun, which shined directly into the main lobby for most of the day and reportedly became very hot in the summer especially. The rear of the facility did not receive as much direct sunlight and therefore did not naturally get as hot. For this reason, no ventilation was being added to the

⁵ www.wunderground.com

medical room or euthanasia room. The cat rooms were located at the front of the building as well; however, they had air conditioning and ventilation.

Recommendations:

- Review the air systems with an HVAC specialist from General Services. Technical data about the air handling systems should be reviewed and understood for each facility. It is essential to understand how the air moves within the shelter environment, because it plays a major role in managing disease and providing animal and human comfort. If there are disease outbreaks in any animal population, knowledge of the air system will help to correct the problem.
- Provide the following air changes per hour:
 - Public areas: minimum of 6–8 changes per hour
 - Animal housing areas: minimum of 12–14 changes per hour
- The best environment would be created using 100% fresh air. Where fresh air is prohibitive, filters and other purification systems should be utilized to purify returned air.
- Maintain an ambient air temperature between 68 and 72 degrees in the lobbies, administrative areas, and areas housing puppies and kittens. Install lockable thermostat covers to minimize the changing of temperatures in animal housing areas and prevent anyone from turning vents on and off.
- Ensure that the filters are being changed every month on a regular schedule.
- Put into place a preventative maintenance program for all air handlers and vents.
- Review recommended air exchange rates for animal housing facilities. Compare existing design specifications and make adjustments where possible.⁶
- Consider building a screened outdoor area that is safe and secure to be used for cats so that they can also enjoy access to fresh air on occasion. Ensure that the area is free from sound and sight of dogs and barking. If there is no viable option, keep this in mind for future building or remodeling projects.

Discussion:

Santa Barbara County is fortunate to have a mild climate and therefore maintains a comfortable temperature year-round. Many residents and businesses function without the use of air conditioning as a result of the temperate climate.

Even a well-designed kennel or cattery is only as effective as the air circulation and ventilation it employs. Many diseases in a shelter setting are airborne, and when these diseases are spread to other populations in the facility, the entire shelter is put at risk. No amount of cleaning will prevent the spread of disease in the face of an inadequate ventilation system.

Air quality is a very important aspect of maintaining animal health in facilities that house many animals. Enclosed animal housing areas that do not move air at an appropriate exchange rate can pose a greater risk of

⁶ www.designlearned.com

disease because re-circulated and exhaust air can harbor infectious agents. Providing good quality air is essential and well worth the investment.

Heating, cooling and humidity control systems should be serviced regularly as part of a facility's preventive maintenance program. These systems are crucial, not only to provide for the animals' health and comfort, but also for that of the staff and visiting public. A means of circulating the air must always be in operation in all enclosed animal housing areas.

The inability to control temperature in the shelter may also contribute to disease problems. There are advantages to having indoor/outdoor kennels and moving fresh air through animal spaces, but there are also disadvantages, such as not being able to eliminate moisture and the introduction of dirt, dust, and pollutants. SBCAS is fortunate that it has a temperate climate whereby the use of indoor/outdoor kennels at Lompoc and Santa Barbara gives the dogs constant access to fresh air and contributes to their good health.

1.13 DOG HOUSING

Observations:

Santa Barbara

There were two free standing dog kennels—the main kennel and the hexagonal kennel—and adjacent to the main kennel there were five chain link outdoor kennels with a lean-to roof over them. Renovated in 2009, the main kennel was a similar color and style to the administrative building and the building that ASAP occupied, tan with brown borders. It consisted of 36 indoor/outdoor runs that were numbered inside and outside 1-18 on one side and 19-36 on the other. There were two Shor-line banks in the center walkway with 2 cages each. The team was told that sometimes small dogs were housed in these cages. At the time of the site visit, only one cage was occupied. The dog runs were T Kennel brand with four foot high walls with fencing above that and topped. The inside run size was 46 inches wide to 52 inches deep and the outdoor portion was 46 inches wide and 67 inches deep. A four foot high chain link fence with a fastened fabric visual barrier spanned the length of the outside of the kennel, which prevented visitors from touching the dogs. The fence was approximately four feet from the front of the dog runs, creating a sufficiently wide walkway to access the dogs for walks and the runs during cleaning. Trench drains were located under the guillotine doors and covered with a stainless steel plate. The floors throughout the kennel were pitched toward the trenches and were composed of unpainted concrete which appeared to be in good condition. Florescent tube lighting was provided in the walkway inside the kennel and sky lights provided light to both the inside and outer portion of the dog runs. The tops of the runs and tops of the Shor-line cages were observed to be somewhat cluttered and not recently cleaned. While the team did not observe any protruding or sharp objects in the runs, during the site visit a dog (Maple A383291) cut her paw pad inside the run. The team was told that she appeared to be stressed out and was “tearing up” her run. A staff member immediately brought it to the attention of the Supervisor.

The hexagonal building, which was referred to as the “Pillsbury building,” housed protective custody case dogs. During the site visit there was a dog who required cage rest for a medical issue who was housed in this kennel because the runs were smaller than those in the main kennel and the dog needed a smaller enclosure for cage rest. The kennel had 8 indoor/outdoor dog runs numbered 37-44. The runs were made of chain link and their inside dimensions varied and were oddly shaped due to the shape of the building, but were approx-

imately 27-31 inches wide and 40 inches deep and the outside dimensions were 35-44 inches wide and 5 feet deep. This building also included a kitchen and a small room with a bank of two Shor-line cages. No animals were housed in the Shor-line cages during the site visit. The team thought that the Pillsbury building was challenging in terms of its overall condition and design as it related to providing animals with appropriate sized housing and utilizing space well within the complex. The building did not appear to have been renovated or improved in many years and the structure itself was in a state of degeneration and disrepair that, for example, prevented the floors from being effectively cleaned and disinfected due to wall edges eroding or completely missing from the parameter of the room.

The five chain link runs adjacent to the main kennel were positioned on a large concrete pad. It was reported to the team that a private nonprofit organization who has had a relationship with SBCAS for many years erected the kennels for the purpose of providing a larger space for dogs to spend time outside of their runs; however, the team was told that the runs had been used as permanent housing for quite some time. The concrete pad did not appear to have any drains or trenches. When the team observed cleaning, the water and cleaner/disinfectant that was rinsed and washed away rolled off of the side of the pad and onto the ground where there was a fence; on the other side of the fence was Overpass Road. The team was told that the concrete pad was poorly sloped and that fluids such as urine tended to pass from one run to the next. The team was told that volunteers from the group who erected the five runs provide the daily cleaning and care to the dogs who reside in those runs. See more in the section “Cleaning and Disinfecting.”

Santa Maria

There were two kennel areas for dogs, one where adoptable dogs were housed and the other where stray dogs and dogs which were not yet ready for adoption were housed. There were also three dog isolation rooms with four T Kennels in each room. The team was given an overview map that was labeled “Cat Cage Numbering,” that also had some of the dog, rabbit and barn animal locations. The map did not include a layout of the dog kennels, but the team noted from the animal inventory that there were runs numbered 1-71 for dogs. There also were 12 dog runs in a kennel off of the clinic.

Like the Santa Barbara location, T-Kennels with guillotine doors were used; however, the runs at Santa Maria were indoors. The smaller side of the runs measured 46 inches wide and 36 inches deep and the larger side was the same width and 70 inches deep. Some of the kennels had covers over them (the same bars as the sides and doors) and others did not have covers. On a few kennels the team observed sheets of plywood balanced over the top of the runs, presumably to deter dogs from jumping and/or climbing out of the runs. There were trench drains under the guillotine door that were covered by a stainless steel plate.

Speakers were placed in each of the kennels and music piped through. The kennels and runs were in decent repair; however, the plates that covered the plumbing in several of the kennels had fallen off of the wall and were propped against the wall on the floor, leaving a hole in the wall with visible plumbing. Bunches of lavender were on the walls in the adoptions kennel, but most of them had long dried and were not emanating a scent. One of the plastic vases that the lavender had been placed in fell off the floor and someone had placed the lavender in the hole in the wall with the plumbing. When the hoses were not in use, they were loosely coiled around the plumbing pipes.

In the center of the building was a courtyard that was open to the outdoors. In the courtyard was a small dog play yard with a patch of grass and dirt and in the center of the yard was a concrete pad with four dog yards

separated by iron gating and each had a dog igloo inside. During the site visit the team only saw one dog in one of those yards throughout the entire day. That particular dog was out for several hours and appeared to be enjoying himself in the fresh air. There did not appear to be drains on the concrete pad, but there was a drain in one of the flower beds near the concrete pad.

Lompoc

The dog kennel consisted of 30 indoor/outdoor runs with guillotine doors. Runs 1-9 and 16-24 were in the front part of the kennel and beyond that there was a hallway that was referred to as “the hub” that had been recently renovated and updated to include state of the art stainless steel tables, a large bathing sink, grooming table, hot water heater, washer and dryer and a few other appliances. On the other side of “the hub” were runs 10-15 and 25-30. The trench drains were positioned in front of the kennels on the inside and on the fence side of the walkway on the outside. Like at Santa Barbara, a four foot high chain link fence with a fastened fabric visual barrier spanned the length of the outside of the kennel, which prevented visitors from touching the dogs. There was no quarantine for dogs.

The dog kennel was in poor condition. The chain link and poles were rusted in many areas, paint was chipping off of the cinder block walls, and the cement walkways were cracked in many areas. The inside portion of the runs ranged in sizes and were approximately 42 inches wide and 36 inches deep, and the outside portions measured 35-73 inches wide and up to 10 feet deep. The runs all had barriers between them so that dogs were not nose to nose. The inside barriers were cinder block and were 48 inches high and 5 ½ inches thick. The outside runs had either cinder block barriers or composite material appropriate for dog kennel use. The condition that the kennel was in was not ideal for the dogs and also is not such that it can be cleaned and sanitized effectively, as there are cracks and crevices that were impossible to effectively clean.

Recommendations:

- Clearly designate areas and create SOPs for:
 - Adoptions - healthy animals available for adoption
 - Healthy Holding - strays and owner surrenders until able to be moved to adoption. These animals can be viewed by public prior to release date.
 - Isolation- animals who are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious disease.
 - Quarantine - ideally two designated areas, one for bite holds and the other for animals that were exposed to infectious disease.
- Separate young animals (< 5 months) from general population.
- Create SOP and decision matrix on where dogs are placed after intake. (Adoptions, holding, isolation, quarantine)
- Create SOP for each area to include:
 - Maximum capacity of animals allowed
 - Clear definition of who is responsible for cleaning, feeding, monitoring.

- Create a cleaning work station in each kennel. Attach animal handling and cleaning equipment to the walls. Brooms, dustpans and animal restraint equipment sitting on the floors in the corners of the rooms can create obstacles. |
- Implement deep cleaning SOP and schedule. Deep clean and degrease kennels once a week, including removing dust, dirt and miscellaneous items from the tops of cages and runs. See section “Cleaning and Disinfecting” for more information.
- Create SOP for group housing with clear guidelines on selection
- Repair any cracked and/or peeling concrete in the dog kennels at the Santa Barbara and Lompoc locations.
- Repurpose or rebuild the “Pillsbury” building at the Santa Barbara location. The hexagonal building is in poor condition and the cost in updating the building would not be worth the result. The building is inadequately designed to meet animal housing requirements and it may serve the county best to demolish the building and replace it with proper dog isolation and quarantine, as the facility currently does not have isolation for dogs or a way to separate dogs who should not be housed with the general population for medical issues. See the section “Isolation and Separation” for more information.
- Contact General Services to determine the need for drainage on the concrete pads at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations.
- Immediately discontinue coiling hoses and storing them in the kennels on the plumbing at the Santa Maria location. It is likely that this practice is what caused the metal plates to come off the wall. Purchase wall mounted hose reels or holders for hoses.
- Contact General Services about repairing the plates on the kennel walls where the plumbing is exposed.
- Commence discussions and planning on replacing the old dog kennel at the Lompoc facility. The AHA commends the county for renovating the facility; however, the dog kennel does not meet the needs of the dogs in the way of size on the inside portions of the runs, and cleaning and sanitation due to the deteriorating concrete, cinder block, and chain link. If the county is not able to replace the kennel within the coming two to three years, see the recommendations below.
 - Repaint the kennel and run walls using a high quality coating that will stand up to hard use, daily cleaning, and harsh cleaning compounds. Consider using colors and patterns to help improve the aesthetics which will improve the environment.
 - Ensure that any items within the dog runs with excessive rust are replaced.
 - Regularly inspect the dog runs and ensure that there are no protruding parts that could injure a dog.

Discussion:

Shelters must provide an environment that supports the physical and mental health of the animals it houses.



The efficient and effective configuration is one that provides for separation of animals by species, age, medical status, behavior and predator-prey relationship. The enclosure should be free from hazards that may cause injury, limit visual and physical contact between animals, minimize disease transmission and provide comfort and security for the animals as they spend a large percentage of their time in these enclosures. The condition of the kennels also influences an animals' mental and emotional well being. Loud, chaotic environments contribute to stress. Stress is a precipitant of disease.

The kennel area is also where employees and volunteers spend a large degree of their time and this area is often open to the public. Creating a serene, quiet, safe environment that is functional and efficient will improve employee productivity. Minimize fomites by designating cleaning and feeding stations.

Segregation of animals based on age, medical condition, adoption availability increases flow through of animals and assists the management in managing shelter population. Additional information will be provided in the Population/Census Management section.

Caging, flooring, and lighting are often given less importance when other urgent needs of animal sheltering facilities arise. In an animal shelter, proper design of flooring and drainage, as well as design and placement of runs, etc., can be a powerful tool in the fight against disease, odors, and safety-related hazards for animals, staff, and the visiting public. The quality of animal housing is one of the most important aspects of preventive health care and disease control.

Animals in a shelter environment will also experience some level of stress due to the change in environment, separation from family, and daily handling by strangers. Shelter animals must be housed in a way that minimizes stress, provides for their special needs, affords protection from the elements, provides adequate ventilation, and minimizes the spread of disease and parasites. Additional information will be provided in the Behavior and Enrichment section.

1.14 CAT HOUSING

Observations:

Santa Barbara

Cat housing and care was provided by ASAP employees and volunteers in a building on the same property. The team was offered a tour and open access to the facility. The team observed three outdoor cat play rooms, 76 cages in the adoptions area and three smaller rooms that were used for new arrivals, isolation and separation for illnesses. One of the outdoor screened rooms contained a lot of porous items such as wood and wooden structures for the cats to jump and play on. The wooden structures had been significantly degraded and scratched over time. Inside a cabinet in the adoption room were small 3-4 ounce containers with an orange substance that were not labeled. The team determined that the substance was premixed Trifectant (cleaner/disinfectant). Overall, it appeared to the team that the facility and operations provided for the cats appropriately and effectively.

Santa Maria

The Santa Maria facility housed cats in several locations within the facility. Cats available for adoption were housed off of the lobby to the left in a series of 4 rooms, two with white Shor-line cage banks that had storage underneath and two small colony rooms, and a couple of free standing chain link cages housed a few cats

in the lobby. More cats were housed in the same white, composite Shor-line cages farther down the hall to the right, opposite the volunteer room. Opposite that wall were two small stainless steel banks of cages. Portals had been installed in the stainless steel cages to allow more space for the cats. The stainless steel cage banks were free-standing, on wheels. This left the top and the spaces between the cages vulnerable to dust and general debris. Across the outdoor courtyard at the rear of the facility were three more cat rooms which held 10 cages per room. These stainless steel Shor-line cages were built onto the wall, approximately two feet off of the ground. At the time of the site visit the room with cages 101-110 was being utilized for cats for adoption. Feral cats were housed in the rooms next to this room. On the side of the building where the stray dog kennel was there were three more cat rooms: two isolation and one feral cat room. During the site visit there were a couple of cats in the isolation room and the feral cat room was housing one cat. When the team asked why the feral cats were not being housed in the feral cat room, they were told that it was because it was noisier where the feral cat room was located. There was a room within the clinic that had a bank of 10 cat cages.

Lompoc

There were two cat rooms at the Lompoc facility, one adoption room and one stray cat room and one CD&E (?) cat cage in the hallway on the way to the rooms. The cat adoption room had a bank of white, composite Shor-line cat cages on wheels with portals and the portals were open to allow the cats two spaces. One of the cage doors was missing. Cats were also free roaming in the room. The stray room held two free-standing banks of stainless steel Shor-line cages on wheels. This left the top and the spaces between the cages vulnerable to dust and general debris. This room also allowed cats to free roam, mostly during cleaning. See the section, “Cleaning and Disinfecting” for more information.

Both cat rooms were part of the recent renovation and were in excellent condition. The walls were painted yellow and the floors were covered with blue welded sheet flooring, most likely some brand of vinyl or similar flexible, non-porous material. The flooring is rolled about five inches up the walls to help create a smooth cove where the walls and floors meet in the corners of the rooms and at the base of the door frames. The floors were in superb condition and free of marks or any other damage. The cat rooms had plenty of natural light and also had florescent light fixtures which provided ample light.

A room beyond the reception area and to the right was called, “Cat Clinic.” There was a bank of old, composite cat cages in the room. The team was told that the room was used as a treatment room and for the contract veterinarians.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS for the adequate housing provided for cats at each of the facilities, including at ASAP. See section, “Dog and Cat Care” for more information on the care of cats as it relates to housing.
- Clearly designate, in all locations, and create SOPs for:
 - Adoptions - healthy animals available for adoption
 - Healthy Holding - strays and owner surrenders until able to be moved to adoption. These animals can be viewed by public prior to release date.
 - Isolation- animals who are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious disease.

- Quarantine - ideally two designated areas, one for bite holds and the other for animals that were exposed to infectious disease.
- Feral Cat room - though keeping feral cats caged indefinitely can be inhumane.
- Separate young animals (< 5 months) from general population.
- Create SOP and decision matrix on where cats are placed after intake. (Adoptions, holding, isolation, quarantine, feral)
- Create SOP for each area to include:
 - Maximum capacity of animals allowed
 - Clear definition of who is responsible for cleaning, feeding, monitoring.
- Create a cleaning work station in each kennel. Attach animal handling and cleaning equipment to the walls. Fomite control in cat areas is very important in minimizing disease transmission.
- Implement cleaning SOP and schedule. It is very important to keep cat rooms clutter free for ease of cleaning and reducing disease transmission.
- Consider replacing porous items in the outdoor cat play yard. Non-porous surfaces that can be easily disinfected and are durable enough to withstand repeated cleaning are ideally only used in areas housing kittens or cats who are infectious or who are newly admitted with an unknown health history.
- Over time, consider transitioning from the stainless steel cat cages to the composite double cages, and add portals to stainless steel cages, as much as possible.

Discussion:

Cat housing places a crucial role in maintaining health and emotional well-being. SBCAS has made a concerted effort to ensure that adequate housing standards for felines are met. Cage size has been proven to have a correlation to behavioral health and disease incidence.

Feral cat housing has unique requirements as these animals often can't be touched. Adequate hiding space is mandatory, providing visual barriers to humans and other cats (Hide Perch and Go boxes, grocery bags, feral cat dens). Double sided cages allow for safe cleaning. Feral cats should only be housed long term if there is a clear behavior plan for socialization and rehoming. Keep the lights off, the noise minimized, and the activity to a minimum. Feral cats will be discussed in detail in the Behavior and Enrichment section.

Learn more: Shelter Guidelines: Housing for health and wellness -

<http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2011-06-30-000000/shelter-guidelines-housing-health-and-wellness>

Appendix 1.E: Isolation

Appendix 1.F: Population Segregation



1.15 SMALL ANIMAL HOUSING

Observations:

The team was informed that at all three facilities they had ample storage of specialty caging for all types of animals and the team observed everything from humane traps to large parrot cages. There were no dedicated rooms for any species with the exception of rabbits and guinea pigs; therefore, they had to “make do with what they had.” This resulted in housing animals in human areas at some of the locations, such as in the staff room at the Santa Barbara location. The rabbit cages at each of the facilities varied in size, but most were approximately 30” x 30” x 18” galvanized steel cages.

Santa Barbara

Rabbit and guinea pig housing and care was provided by BUNS volunteers in an area on the same property. The AHA team was offered a tour and open access to the area. The team observed 24 rabbit play yards of which three had rabbit hutches within them and several wood and metal rabbit hutches with approximately 82 housing units. The ground in this area of the complex, including the walkways, was of mulch. The rabbit play yard ground was also of mulch. This provided a comfortable walking path, but it occurred to the team that the area could not be cleaned or disinfected. The rabbit play yards were padded with layers of hay and mulch and when the team pulled up some of the material it was wet and damp underneath.

Santa Maria

As previously noted, rabbits were housed at the “Rabbit Resort,” in a large shed located at the back of the property near where the chickens were housed. The inviting area was decorated with nice potted plants and had a fence around the front area where the play pens were located. Each pen was named a different city, state or area of the world, such as “New York,” “Hollywood,” and the “North Pole.” There were 36 enclosures in the shed.

The cages were made of galvanized wire with wire floors that allowed droppings to fall into the sliding metal trays below the floors. Water bottles hung on the sides of the cages, and the lower portions of the cage walls had a 3-inch metal splash guard to help prevent debris from falling from one cage into the cages below. Cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the sliding trays were lined with paper. The rabbits were given flattened cardboard and a litter box with Timothy hay to serve as resting areas.

The only other small animals being cared for at the Santa Maria location were a few adoptable rats and a few parrots. When the team arrived the rats were in cages within one of the stainless steel Shor-line banks outside the cat adoption room. Later in the day, they were moved to a table near the door leading to the courtyard on the adoptable dog side of the building. A small x-pen was placed around the cages and the team was told that visitors often stick their fingers in the cages. One employee told the team that the large, brown rat was not friendly and would try to bite. The parrots were being housed in the clinic in appropriate caging.

Lompoc

Rabbits were housed in a shed located at the back of the property near where the cocks and hens were housed. There were 24 cages and 2 hutches within the shed. Water bottles and food dishes hung on the sides of the cages, and the lower portions of the cage walls had a 3-inch metal splash guard to help prevent debris from falling from one cage into the cages below. Cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the sliding trays were lined with paper. The rabbits were given a litter box with Timothy hay to serve as

resting areas. The shed was well insulated and had ample natural light coming in from the windows and sky lights.

A few young, adoptable rats were available for adoption. When the team arrived the rats were in one small cage positioned on the front desk. During the site visit the team observed an Animal Welfare Attendant upgrading them to a larger cage.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that appropriate caging is available for each species of small or exotic animals that SBCAS may be required to house. Create a supply inventory in order to determine what is in stock and what may be required for the future. Include where the items are stored; discard any housing that is not suitable.
- Phase out the use of wooden rabbit hutches. Rabbits like to chew on wood and it is important that they chew on untreated wood. Wood is also porous and cannot be properly cleaned and sanitized.
- Increase the size of the rabbit cages. The minimum recommended cage space for a single rabbit is 2' x 2' x 4'.
- Replace the mulch and hay in the rabbit play yards on a regular basis. Avoid adding layers upon layers as the materials build up over time and may retain moisture which may lead to mold growth, which may affect the health of the rabbits.
- Ensure adequate separation of predator-prey species.

Discussion:

Small animals, pocket pets and birds have unique requirements for housing and temperature control. These are prey species that stress easily.

Learn more about avian care at:

<http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-01-22-200000/overview-avian-care-shelters>

1.16 WILDLIFE/EXOTIC HOUSING

Observations:

The department handles wildlife calls on a routine basis for injured, nuisance and deceased animals. They entered this operation when state and local agencies stepped back and later discontinued most services. During the site visit, the ACOs responded to trapped skunks, deceased raccoons and deceased skunk calls on a regular basis. They utilized improvised equipment including towels / blankets, appropriate traps and disposal bags where necessary.

Wildlife was either release on scene or transported to the appropriate shelter for euthanasia. Deceased animals were transported to the shelter for storage and later disposal.

There was no housing or housing area for wildlife at any of the SBCAS locations.

Recommendations:



- As noted in the field section, SBAS should discontinue provision of this service and refer callers to appropriately licensed and permitted nuisance wildlife services, state game officials or local solid waste agencies in the cases of deceased animals.
- Create a separate area to temporarily house wildlife. There may be times when a rehabilitator or veterinarian cannot accept wildlife immediately, and such animals would require temporary housing at the facility.

Discussion:

The housing and care of wild animals typically is regulated by fish and game and permits may be necessary. The issue of animal control responding to wildlife calls will be addressed in the Field Services section of this report.

1.17 LIVESTOCK/EQUINE HOUSING

Observations:

There were no livestock or horse barns or suitable housing available for these animals at any of the SBCAS facilities. There was no SOP available for livestock or equine housing. The team was informed that land next to the Santa Maria facility could accommodate a barn that would meet the needs of the livestock and equine that the county handles; however, due to the California tiger salamander, which is an endangered species native to Santa Barbara and Sonoma counties, the land there was not permitted to be developed.⁷

SBCAS had a horse trailer that could accommodate four horses that was stored at the Santa Maria facility. The team was told that most of the equine cases were neglect cases and year to year it varied how many horses were taken in. The team was told that last year there were approximately 27 horses, but a couple of years before that they rehomed 660 wild mustangs. Horses are boarded at various facilities in the county including in foster homes. Many of the foster homes eventually adopt the horses. Depending on the cases, the boarding costs were covered either by the county or private donors. The team was told that there were nine horses in custody during the site visit; however, the animal inventory that the team received on January 14th, 2015 included only four horses (A368974, A368979, A356180 and A375510) one of whom had been in care for 735 days.

Chickens were housed at all three facilities during the site visit. They were housed at the rear of the facilities each in different types of pens. The set up at the Santa Barbara facility included two small wooden hutches with x-pens around them. At the Santa Maria facility they were housed in chain link pens with tarps covering the tops, and at the Lompoc facility they were housed in pens with fitted roof tarps. Even though there were chickens observed at each location, the animal inventory did not reflect that there were any currently in care.

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 2, 2.11 “Activities - Loose Livestock” stated “Small livestock, such as goats, sheep and pigs, can generally be transported on the animal control truck and be housed at Animal Services.” The team was informed that livestock such as goats were temporarily kept in the dog play yards behind the facility at Santa Maria and to the right of the facility in the dog play yards at the Lompoc

⁷ ecos.fws.gov

location.

Recommendations:

- Develop an SOP for the housing of livestock and equine and adopt it for each facility, with the exception of Santa Barbara. Each species should have housing and feeding guidelines that provide for their respective needs.
- Consider housing all chickens at the Santa Maria and Lompoc facilities because the housing quality and space is the most ideal at those locations.
- Take steps to determine alternatives to erecting a barn next to the Santa Maria facility if building there is prohibited. Assess the statistics of stray and impounded livestock and equine in order to determine if building a county barn is necessary.

Discussion:

If the SBCAS is designated as the lead agency for housing and care of livestock and horses then establishing MOU's with local farms in advance may be worthwhile. If outside farms are tending to these animals while in the custody of the county, assurances must be in place that adequate housing and care are being provided. Systems must be in place for rehoming and permanent adoptions as long term care of these species is costly.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

*2.0 Shelter
Operations*

2. Shelter Operations

General Overview

Santa Barbara County Animal Services has an in-depth policy and procedures manual that covers many areas of general shelter operations. However, the employees and volunteers seem unclear on many of the procedures and there is conflict and difference of opinion as to what are best practices. In addition, there are two internal partners providing animal care on the Goleta property that have their own standard operating procedures.

2.1 AFTER-HOURS SURRENDERS

Observations:

SBCAS discontinued the use of night surrender drop boxes a few years ago at each location. The team was informed that after the change, once in a while, citizens left animals on the property after hours, but that practice has been minimal. The AHA team commends SBCAS for discontinuing the use of night surrender drop boxes.

The animal welfare community is moving in the direction of encouraging shelters to provide services that correspond to regular working hours and an organization's resources that also have the best interest of citizens and their pets in mind. Many animal shelters are implementing intake by appointment programs in order to better counsel owners who may be seeking to relinquish their pets, obtain quality background history on pets, and ensure a manageable flow of incoming animals. See section "Animal Intake" for more information on intakes by appointment.

Recommendations: None

Discussion: None

2.2 INTAKE - ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION AND PROCEDURES

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, 4.01 "Animal Impounds at the Shelter." Few animal intakes were observed by the AHA team during the site visit; therefore, each step of the process was not evaluated. Animals were able to be accepted during business hours which were posted on the front of each facility. All animal intakes took place in the main lobbies of each of the facilities. The team spoke with employees at each location to determine what steps were taken at intake; the steps were consistent at each facility with the exception of facility-related differences, namely animal housing. SBCAS had a "Pet Relinquishment Form" that was used for all intakes (stray, owner relinquish, or euthanasia request). Other intake forms included dog, cat and rabbit background information forms, a protective custody intake form, and an equine identification form. The cat background form ("Cat Owner Turn-In Information Sheet") was basic and could have gone into more depth. Only two of the forms were translated into Spanish. A large sign in each of the facility lobbies indicated the fees associated with several services including relinquishment, which was \$49 for dogs and cats. Animals were not fitted with identification of any kind after being taken in.

As previously mentioned, two cage cards were printed and one was placed on the animal's enclosure and one was kept at the front office. These cards were generated in Chameleon and an identification number was generated for the animal and a photo was taken and included in the record. The team did not observe an owner relinquishment during the site visit; however, they were told that employee communication to the former owner regarding disposition was not consistent each time an animal was relinquished between facilities and among employees at the same facility. Each facility Supervisor expressed interest in employees being able to spend more time counseling owners who visit the facilities to relinquish their pets. They each felt that if they were able to spend more time counseling, they may be more successful with helping keep the animals in their loving homes.

SBCAS Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.01 "Animal Impounds at the Shelter," thoroughly described the intake procedures. Section D, number 6, stated "Housing the animal in the appropriate location in the shelter. Do not kennel animals that appear similar in appearance in the same kennel." Section P, "Housing" stated "Animals should be housed in the appropriate area of the kennel and with compatible animals, if not housed singly." Number 1 stated, "Healthy puppies 4 months and younger should be housed with puppies of compatible size and temperament in the main kennel." Number 4 stated, "Healthy male dogs should be housed alone or with other compatible male dogs in the main kennel in the Stray section." There were not separate SOPs that apply to each location for the intake process. During the site visit all dog runs were occupied in each of the facilities. Many small dogs were paired up and large dogs were housed singly.

Santa Barbara

The team did not observe any animal intakes during the site visit at the Santa Barbara facility. The SOP applied to all of the facilities; however, it referred to "the Stray section," which Santa Barbara did not have. The SOP also referred to handling and housing cats, which is the under the care of ASAP at the Santa Barbara facility. The team was told that when a dog is relinquished at the front desk, the Kennel Attendants are summoned by a ringing that broadcasts over the property and they then go retrieve the dog to be placed in the kennel. The team did not observe or gain a verbal account of the steps that were taken between moving the animals from the front desk to their respective housing.

Santa Maria

The team observed one intake during the site visit. A stray dog was being dropped off after closing time. The team and employees were in the lobby in the process of leaving the facility and one of the employees who had just left came back in and got a form and a clipboard and went back to the parking lot. A few minutes later, he came back in with a small dog and the paperwork indicating where the dog was found. The team observed the dog's intake exam, vaccinations and dewormer being administered, as well as him being placed in a kennel. Because there were no available runs, the dog was placed in a run with another small dog. The Santa Maria facility had an entryway that was separate from the main lobby that said "Animal Drop Off." That doorway was blocked off, not in use for its intended purpose, and the team was told that the room beyond the door was utilized sometimes for conversations with owners who were surrendering their pet and also for dog behavior evaluations. The team was told that when an animal is relinquished at the front desk, the Kennel Attendants are summoned on their hand radios and they then go retrieve the animal to be placed in

their respective area.

Lompoc

The team did not observe any animal intakes during the site visit, but they were informed that once an animal is taken in, the employee takes the animal to the Exam Room and completes a cursory exam and administers vaccines and anti-parasitics. The animal would then be placed in the appropriate housing for the species and size.

Recommendations:

- Create intake SOPs for each facility so that they are consistent and relevant to each. The majority of the procedures will be exactly the same, but when there is information that is not relevant to one location or another it may result in employees not following procedures effectively due to there being too much or irrelevant information.
- Standardize all intake forms, and include as much background information on the animals behavior and medical conditions. This information assists in the delegation of *fast track* or *slow track* animals, determines where the animal should be housed after intake, and helps establish an adopter profile.
- Train employees on surrender counseling. Ensure that all employees at all locations are delivering consistent messaging to relinquished pet owners. Transparent, consistent messaging will give citizens confidence in the process, or will allow them to make other plans for their pets if they choose not to relinquish at SBCAS. This can reduce intakes if these counsellors can solve problems for the pet owner.
- Track and regularly assess the reasons owners provide for surrendering or returning their pets. Knowing why people relinquish their pets can help SBCAS determine what type of community outreach is needed. For example, if a large number of owners are relinquishing pets due to behavior issues, SBCAS may consider developing an educational training program to help guardians resolve basic behavior problems that can interfere with the human/animal bond. Such information can be highly publicized within the community and can provide pet guardians the information they need before they become frustrated and turn over their pets to the shelter. Understanding the reasons for pet relinquishments can help SBCAS create intervention programs or refer them to other organizations or businesses in order to help keep people and their pets together.
- Translate all intake and background forms into Spanish. 2013 census data states that 44.1% of Santa Barbara County residents are Hispanic or Latino.¹
- Place identification bands on all animals upon intake and include the identification number on the band. There are several types of collars available and SBCAS should decide which will work best. The most commonly used can be purchased from ACES.² Cage cards are not a reliable method of

¹ quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06083.html

² www.animal-care.com/index.cfm/id/10/?keywords=bands&category=&search=Go

identification when housing large numbers of animals. Paperwork can easily be lost, switched, or become damaged or faded and animals of the same breed and color, such as black cats or black labs, can look alike. It is imperative that animals be properly identified. Identification is invaluable if an animal is moved without a cage card or if he or she were to escape, and it also prevents errors such as accidental euthanasia.

- Consider using Martingale collars for dogs to prevent them from backing out of them. The benefits are that dogs will not tear off the collars and that volunteers will not have to put a collar on a dog each time they take him or her out (risking a poor fit and a dog escaping). When the dog leaves the shelter, the collar can be removed, washed and reused for another dog.
- Discontinue placing newly arrived animals into kennels with other animals without performing an introduction in a neutral area and conducting a thorough medical exam. This practice is unsafe both for behavior and medical reasons. See section, “Animal Handling and Care” for more information.
- Consider developing a program for relinquishments by appointment. Many humane societies, including those with government contracts, are developing and instituting such programs as a way to manage the intake flow of owned animals.³

Discussion:

Ideally, animal intakes should be separate from adoptions. Many clients are under emotional stress when admitting their animals to a shelter; therefore, they are best served in a more private area. Also, new sights, sounds, and smells at animal facilities stress arriving animals, which may cause them to react abnormally out of fear. Admissions staff must counsel owners upon intake, ask questions about the animal’s behavior, and any special needs that their pet may have. This information is invaluable in re-homing pets and requires focused attention.

Adopters also benefit from a separate space where adoption staff can give the new owners their undivided attention. Adoption personnel act as counselors as well, taking the opportunity to educate new owners on pet ownership, providing details on the adoption process, and offering additional information such as behavior training programs. The focus here is on giving new owners everything available to help keep the pet in the new home. The more separate intakes are from adoptions the better, so it is in the best interests of SBCAS to attempt to work with what they have currently to do this and consider this change in any future remodeling.

Intake by appointment programs require such resources that dedicated employees are managing them and animals would receive behavior assessments and intake exams while the owner is still present (but not in the same room). By allowing owners to be present at the time of the animal’s evaluation for placement, it means they can take a more active role in the future of their pet. They know their pet better than anyone, and by providing as much information as possible about them the owner will: 1) Have a clear understanding of how a shelter can assist them and their pet; 2) Ensure that the shelter can provide the best possible care for their

³ <http://www.animalhumanesociety.org/admissions/surrender-your-pet>

pet; 3) Allow SBCAS to move their pet more quickly through the shelter and into a new home. Without these programs, shelters have no control over the number of animals coming into their care each day. This can lead to a flood of animals into facilities on individual days, which causes increased stress and illness and reduced ability to find new homes for animals. The appointment process allows shelters to have a space ready for pets when they arrive.

Appendix 2.A Establishing a Re-homing Service

Appendix 2.B Surrender Counseling

Appendix 2.C Sample Re-homing packet

Appendix 2.I Intake Check List

Good webinar on how to counsel owner surrenders:

<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/webinars/1-800-my-cat-is-nutz>

2.3 ADOPTION SELECTION CRITERIA AND BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.13 “Care and Evaluation Committee Procedures,” included the following sections: background information, care and evaluation. SBCAS also had policy 4.21 “Feral Cat Temperament Testing and Assessment.” Procedure 4.21 provided instructions for assessing “fearful” cats to determine if they were feral or lost or abandoned pets. A Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form was to be filled out for each fearful cat. Behavior evaluations did not take place during the site visit therefore the team did not have the opportunity to observe.

Procedure 4.13 “The Care and Evaluation Committee Procedures” was a detailed document that included what the committee’s purpose and functions were as well as definitions of key terms such as adoptable, treatable and unadoptable. The concept of this committee appeared to be an effort of SBCAS toward managing the shelter population alongside volunteers, giving volunteers equal input in decisions made about individual animals and population management in general. While this appeared to be an admirable effort on behalf of the shelter, the team recognized that the endeavors of the committee did not appear to result in the stated goals, especially at the Santa Barbara location. While this is addressed in another section of the report in more detail, the team perceived that volunteers obtained far more influence and authority at SBCAS than similar animal services counterparts that the team’s breadth of experience in animal welfare had experience with. The team noted the following sections of procedure 4.13 that require reassessment with regard to compliance and implementation:

“Animal Services has a responsibility not to place potentially dangerous animals into new homes or to compromise the health and wellbeing of adoptable animals by holding animals with identified health or behavior issues for prolonged holding periods.”

“The group will discuss animals in the kennel that are of concern in regard to their adoptability. This

includes evaluation of recent arrivals and the ongoing evaluation of animals that are kenneled long term and are of concern.”

“The goal is for a consensus decision for recommended treatment, behavioral evaluation, observation of kennel stress or lethargy, release to adoption partners, or euthanasia.”

“Dominant dog breeds shall have a temperament evaluation and will not be placed up for adoption unless the following criteria are met: Kennel well with no cage aggression; no repetitive spinning, tail chasing or other neurotic behaviors, Friendly towards all people, including children, Get along well with other dogs of both genders, Have a low prey drive, Enjoy physical touch and handling.”

“Animal euthanasia is authorized by the Supervising Animal Control Officer or designee, based on input from the Care and Evaluation Committee and the judgment of the Supervising Animal Control Officer or designee.”

The AHA team was told that dog behavior evaluations were completed by volunteers at each of the locations. SBCAS facilities utilized four different Dog Behavior Evaluation forms. A Feline Behavioral Assessment form existed; however, the team did not observe these forms with the paperwork that went along with the cat records at the front offices at Santa Maria or Lompoc and was unsure if they were utilized—though the team was told that they were used when deciding on which cats to move to the adoption floor—at the Santa Maria location. The team did not observe the Feral Cat Temperament Assessment forms with the feral cat records. The Dog Behavior Evaluation form that was sent to the team prior to the site visit was labeled in the footnote “Santa Maria Animal Shelter Feb. 2011.” The team observed a similar, but slightly edited version of that form being utilized at the Santa Barbara location labeled “SBCAS Goleta Dog Eval Form1 06032013.” And two completely different dog forms were utilized at the Lompoc facility (Dog Behavior Evaluation and Power Breed and Power Breed Mix Behavior Evaluation) were labeled “CAPA Sept, 22 2011” and “CAPA/Lompoc Animal Shelter 12/14/10,” respectively. There were also forms in use at the Santa Barbara facility that appeared to be utilized for documenting behavior issues that included a space for the dog name and identification number, kennel number, dog handler name and the behavior issue. The term “power breed” was utilized in each of the facilities; however, when the team asked which breeds were included in that the answers somewhat differed. One staff member told the team with regard to SBCAS behavior evaluations and forms “we are all in different worlds.” The team reviewed the various Dog Behavior Evaluation forms and noted that the forms utilized at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria facilities were more comprehensive and would provide a good point-in-time evaluation. The forms utilized at the Lompoc facility were a mixed combination of assessment and recommendations for a future home.

Santa Barbara

As mentioned previously, the AHA team was concerned with the welfare of some of the dogs that were being housed long term at the Santa Barbara facility. The behavior evaluations that the team reviewed had taken place a few days after their arrivals, which in some cases had been a year to two years previous. The team was informed that behavior evaluations were performed in a small room off of the staff room. Volunteers were given authority to perform dog behavior evaluations and make recommendations on disposition. Prior to the site visit the team received information from a community stakeholder survey and several of the

comments included feedback that there was concern about the competency and experience of those who SBCAS had given authority to conduct behavior evaluations.

Santa Maria

Behavior evaluations were performed down the hall from the Supervisor’s office that had originally been an intake room that could be entered from the front of the building. Volunteers were given authority to perform dog behavior evaluations and make recommendations on disposition at the Santa Maria facility as well. The team was told that the volunteers were well trained and the team was not concerned with any behaviors dogs in the adoption areas exhibited. The team was told that the care and evaluation meeting focuses on questionable dogs and that the volunteers who attended the meeting tended not to spend too much time volunteering at the shelter. The Supervisor at the Santa Maria location expressed satisfaction with the weekly meetings and stated that they ended them only when there was agreement, however long that took.

Lompoc

The team was told that behavior evaluations were performed usually after hours by volunteers who were well trained to perform behavior evaluations. The team was not concerned with any behaviors that dogs exhibited at the facility. The team was told that volunteers never went to the care and evaluation meetings at the Lompoc location, but that they generally tend to give accurate, helpful feedback on their dog behavior observations. The Supervisor at the Lompoc location articulated concerns about placing aggressive or dangerous animals in the community and strongly believed it was SBCAS’ responsibility to ensure that aggressive animals are not rehomed. The team was told that staff and volunteers supported and concurred with this and preferred that all animals who are adopted are safe. The team was told that “power breeds” were given additional scrutiny; the evaluation form noted:

“Must go home with breed experience, or dog savvy owner unless otherwise noted. All Power breeds and power breed mixes must be thoroughly tested with cats, small dogs and medium or large dogs. All potential power breed/power breed mix owners must agree to supply dog with plenty of daily exercise, except in special circumstances, i.e. geriatrics is a factor, handicap or hospice dog.”

The regular evaluation and the breed specific evaluation were very similar except that the “power breed” evaluation included: barrier aggression-cage fighting, excitability in kennel, noise level of tolerance; and the other evaluation included: housing, new adopter’s level of dog experience, mental/physical daily exercise needs, escape oriented and additional training/socialization needs. The portions of the evaluation that were more suited as recommendations (for a new home/experience of adopter) included: housing, new adopter’s level of dog experience, mental/physical daily exercise needs, and additional training/socialization needs.

Recommendations:

- Hire a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT) experienced in shelter animals. Or,
- Ensure that trained staff members conduct behavior evaluations. Ensure that those conducting behavior evaluations have received training specific to evaluating animals in the shelter environment. Organizations that develop their own evaluation should do so in consultation with a veterinarian or behaviorist familiar with the science and theory of behavior assessments.

- Provide animals with treatable behavior conditions the opportunity to improve by creating and ensuring behavior plans are carried out consistently and within the prescribed timeline. The dogs that the team were told were “project dogs” at the Santa Barbara location did not have information about a “plan” or “timeframe for expected results” recorded in their paperwork.
- Review each Dog Behavior Evaluation form and create one form, for all breeds to be utilized at each of the SBCAS facilities so that there is a unified strategy and consistency throughout the county. Assess resource materials from other organizations and entities to create a SBCAS approved evaluation and process.⁴
- Review ASPCA’s Meet Your Match program and consider assigning animals a Canine-ality and Feline-ality color code. This will help match potential adopters as well as assign volunteers to handle these animals.
- Make actionable decisions on all long term residents. (More information in Population Management section)
 - Assess and determine next steps for improvement of the following items at the Santa Barbara location: who is conducting behavior evaluations and if the results are effective, how and why dogs are being kenneled for prolonged periods of time, how and who determines and approves euthanasia decisions (see more in section of the report covering this topic), and how the care and evaluation committee meeting procedures may or may not be leading to productive and effective population management.
- Consider modifying the goals and procedures of the care and evaluation committee meetings. It is uncommon that all staff members come to a consensus and absolute agreement about the disposition of animals in the care of shelters. Volunteers may not have valuable and necessary information that is required when making such decisions. Insights and knowledge of the organization’s resources including staffing (time and experience), foster parent availability and finances are such resources that are considered and those vary from shelter to shelter and in some cases day to day depending on the animal population at a given time. It is the county’s responsibility to provide staffing and resources to care for the animals in its charge. Volunteers must commit to support the county and SBCAS employees who are charged with this responsibility and the county must provide the resources required to manage and operate progressive and effective animal services facilities.
- Review and edit the care and evaluation committee meeting procedures and define such items as “potentially dangerous” as noted in section H. 3. of the document.
- Discontinue using language such as “dominant dog breeds” and “power breeds.” Any breed of dog can exhibit dominance and using terminology to describe specific breeds amounts to breed discrimination. It is important to primarily focus on the behaviors of dogs in tandem with their sizes to determine whether or not they would be safe pets in the community. Most adopters would like

⁴ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_2003/behavior_evaluation_resources.html

a dog without the following qualities, despite their breed or size: “Kennel well with no cage aggression; no repetitive spinning, tail chasing or other neurotic behaviors, Friendly towards all people, including children, Get along well with other dogs of both genders, Have a low prey drive, Enjoy physical touch and handling.”

- Enlist an experienced staff member or volunteer to conduct temperament evaluations of “fearful” cats, to help distinguish the fearful from the truly feral. Utilize the Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form and ensure the form is kept with the cat’s paperwork.
- Ensure that relevant staff members and volunteers watch the webinar “Friendly vs Frightened Pet”⁵ and read about the research project “Is That Cat Feral?”⁶

Discussion:

Behavior evaluations may help supervisors make euthanasia decisions, but the evaluations alone should not be the only input considered. Owner surrender surveys, experience the staff had during intake, veterinary reports and information from volunteers and fosters should be considered for making adoption and euthanasia decisions.

Behavior evaluations should only be carried out by trained staff, and conducted in a consistent manner to provide the most accurate information. Documentation of these evaluations should be kept electronically using shelter software. Behavior evaluations should occur routinely on all animals with increasing length of stays.

Daily Care and Evaluation Rounds with a committee that is properly appointed will help ensure that each animal receive a “decision memo” and resources are committed to moving that animal expediently to it’s final outcome.

Additional Resources:

Meet your Match <http://www.aspcapro.org/meet-your-match-resources>

2.4 ADOPTION PROCESS AND POLICIES

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures included the following procedures regarding adoptions process and policies: 3.15 “Pet Adoption Procedures,” 3.16 “Adoption of Animals with

⁵ <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2010-09-15-000000/feral-vs-frightened-pet>

⁶ <http://aspcapro.org/node/72247>

Medical Conditions,” 3.17 “Adoption of Animals with a History of Bite or Aggression,” and 3.18 “Placing a Hold (Wanted) on an Animal.” Chapter 1, 1.36 “Animal Adoptions by Staff Members” detailed the parameters for SBCAS employees adopting to ensure that the same policies and procedures are followed as they are for non-employee adoptions.

Procedure 3.15, “Pet Adoption Procedures” included the adoption procedures, requirements and restrictions. Animals could be adopted with a bite history or medical issues and a waiver was required to be signed. Adoption applications were to be filled out, approved and then appropriate fees collected. Staff members and trained volunteers conducted adoptions. There did not appear to be a dedicated adoption staff for handling adoptions at any of the facilities. Applications were taken on a first come, first served basis for “qualified adopters,” though “qualified” was not specifically defined in the procedure. The procedure noted that landlord approval, meeting all family members and other dogs already in the home were required. Yard checks were required for “power breeds” or at the discretion of the adoption counselor or Supervisor. All animals were required to be spayed or neutered prior to going to their new homes.

Animals were allowed to have holds placed on them (first, second and third hold). Finders had the option to place the first hold for adoption unless they were a staff member on duty or a volunteer. Exceptions were if the animal was being fostered.

Animals who were approved for adoption and who were “ready to go” were able to go home on the same day. Others who, for example, had not yet been spayed or neutered were added to the surgery schedule for the next possible date and were able to leave for their new home within 2-3 days. The team did not observe adoptions taking place during the site visit with the exception of the scenarios mentioned below.

The team reviewed the adoption applications for rabbits, cats, dogs and birds. The Santa Maria location had a small form “Adoption Wish List” which was a pet request form. The team did not determine if many adoptions resulted from the form or if the form was utilized often.

Santa Maria

The team observed a customer place a first hold on a puppy who would become available in a few days on January 17th, 2015. The customer provided an adoption application and the employees began processing the application. The landlord was called and a message was left.

Lompoc

The team observed customers who were interested in a dog in kennel number 9. The staff member working at the front desk pulled the kennel card and told them that they could fill out an application. The customer asked how much it would cost and the staff member replied “\$122 including the license.” The staff member explained that the dog hadn’t been evaluated yet. The staff member answered the customer’s questions, but did not add any more information such as when the evaluation would take place or when the dog might be available. After the customer asked more questions such as how old the dog was and if she was healthy, the staff member explained that she would be spayed and vaccinated and that would also be covered in the adoption fee. The customers left without filling out an application.

Recommendations:

- Read the article in Animal Sheltering Magazine’s “Who Let the Dogs Out?” The article discusses how you can skip rigid adoption criteria and focus instead on a conversation to determine how a potential match might work. According to the 2014 PetSmart Charities U.S. Shelter Pet Report, 12 percent of people who chose not to adopt in 2014 said the reason was because the adoption process was too difficult. Take some time to re-evaluate your organization’s policies and recognize who you could be turning away. See what changes you can make to let more adopters in and get more cats and dogs out of the shelter and into a happy home.⁷
- Read articles about and watch webinars and attend conferences on “open adoptions.”⁸
- After evaluating “open adoptions” and if the decision is made to update adoption policies and procedures, revise the adoption applications to coincide with changes.
- Implement a consistent adoption program and counseling process with a full time staff person in charge at the Santa Maria location. This staff member could liaise with Supervisors at the other facilities and train staff to embody excellent client service skills and have a genuine desire to help people. This program would include helping adopters select the right pet for their lifestyle, approving the adoption paperwork, and providing follow-up after adoption to ensure a smooth transition into the new home. Volunteers could also be trained to participate.
- Implement a process whereby staff and volunteers work with the public to match individual animals in the shelter that are known to have the characteristics that a potential adopter is seeking. For example, a customer who is active and enjoys running can be directed towards dogs who have a lot of energy and also enjoy running. Cats with special needs, such as a shyness or fearfulness, can be placed with an experienced owner in an environment that will provide socialization necessary to develop the cat’s full potential.
- Promote animals who generally get overlooked. Read how other shelters around the country have highlighted these animals in the articles, “Highlighting the Wallflowers” and “Overlooked No More” in Animal Sheltering magazine.⁹

Discussion:

A progressive adoption program does not put obstacles in place for potential adopters to overcome. While it is important to have guidelines to protect animals and ensure that each adopted animal is placed in a responsible home, it is also important to consider that strict adoption regulations means fewer adoptions. Although certain adoption criteria (such as whether or not a landlord will allow pets) are absolute, most are meant to serve as guidelines, enabling adoption counselors to work within each set of circumstances

⁷ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jan-feb-2015/who-let-the-dogs-out.html>

⁸ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar_apr_2008/opening_up.pdf

⁹ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar_apr_2007/101_highlighting_the_wallflowers.pdf,
<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jan-feb-2014/Overlooked-No-More.pdf>

individually. Exceptions to policies can be made by consulting with a supervisor. A consistent approach to exceptions is required in order to avoid any false allegations that the agency is either arbitrary or discriminatory. Evaluation of potential adopters can be based on three basic criteria: commitment to the life and needs of the pet; a desire for pet companionship; and understanding of providing the essentials for a healthy, happy pet.

With progressive programs, like ASPCA’s Meet your Match, (reference resource in 2.3) shelters are proactively assisting potential adopters to find a pet that aligns with their lifestyle reducing the number of animals returned to the shelter.

Appendix 2.D Report on Adoption Forum

Appendix 2.E Adoption Counselling

2.5 ADOPTION FOLLOW-UP AND COMPLIANCE

Observations:

SBCAS did not have an adoption follow-up program. The Supervisors at each of the facilities expressed interest in implementing such a program if time permitted, as they understood the merit of such a program. The team observed and understood that the resources did not exist during the time of the site visit for a program such as this to succeed. Even if managed by volunteers, there were no staff members that the team observed had the bandwidth to take on oversight of another program.

Recommendations:

- Develop an adoption follow up program. Place follow up calls on all adopted animals at one week and one month post adoption. Follow up calls will ensure that the placement has been successful and can proactively address behavioral problems or medical issues. Alternatively follow-ups could be conducted via online applications¹⁰ or through email
 - Create standard list of questions to ask new owner. Log answers in permanent record.
 - Assign staff or volunteer responsible for making calls
 - Establish call calendar
 - Create action plan if a problem or behavior is noted during these calls.
 - Take advantage pet behavior tip sheets from national organizations, which can be used to help counsel adopters on particular behavior issues they may be having with their new pet. SBCAS can put their own contact information on the back of these sheets, which can be emailed or mailed to adopters.
 - Maintain a list of area dog trainers and behaviorists that can be given as a

¹⁰ www.surveymonkey.com, www.questionpro.com, www.zoomerang.com

reference if an adopter is having a behavior issue with a newly adopted pet. This list can also be used for those who call the shelter and are thinking about relinquishing a pet due to behavior issues. The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) website allows one to search for members by zip code.

- During the adoption process inform the adopter that a follow-up call will be placed in a set timeframe and that if before then they have any questions they can call.
- Ask adopters to provide a photo of their new pet in his or her new home for SBCAS’s “adoption successes bulletin board,” which can be placed in the lobbies. Success stories show potential adopters that SBCAS is determined to providing good pets to homes and good homes to pets.

Discussion:

Adopters and community members are looking to SBCAS for direction and leadership. A simple adoption follow up program to address any behavior concerns or offer training advice, can move SBCAS toward that goal. Building relationships with adopters will lead them to feeling supported and to understanding that SBCAS cares about the animals and the community. Successful adoptions often lead to longtime supporters and donors. Adopters can become strong supporters of the shelter both financially and verbally, and if you develop a relationship early, you can keep them engaged and interested in your programs.

Link to adoption follow up questionnaire:

http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_1999/adoption_followup.html

<http://www.paws.org/cats-and-dogs/after-you-adopt/follow-up-survey/>

2.6 RELEASING AGENCY AND COMMUNITY ADOPTION PARTNERS

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, 3.52 “Adoption Partners,” included information on the policies and procedures for how SBCAS worked with adoption partners. During the site visit the procedure was in the process of being re-finalized after going through a thorough editing process which included feedback from adoption partners within the county. Adoption partners were required to apply and become approved prior to being authorized to have animals released to them. A form was to be filled out and copies of their 501c3 paperwork, mission statement and a reference were required. Fees were charged per animal and spay/neuter requirements were in place. Animals eligible for the adoption partner program were to be approved by the RVT or Shelter Supervisor prior to the groups being contacted. Animals with severe behavioral issues were not authorized to be offered to adoption partners. The Community Outreach Coordinator was listed in the procedure document as the one who was “often the point of contact” for adoption partners. Transportation to the adoption partners was carried out by the adoption partners, by SBCAS if the group was out of the county or by volunteers.

The team reviewed the draft “Adoption Partner Program” procedure 3.52. The document was updated and was far more comprehensive than the first version. Qualifications for approved adoption partners were enhanced to include the following: be organized and operated for the purpose of animal adoptions, have no criminal or administrative violations regarding animals, be in compliance with all laws related to animals, be in good standing with the local animal control agency. In addition, SBCAS would keep the following additional items on file: IRS determination letter, organization’s Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and online status report from the Secretary of State, copy of current adoption agreement, list of individuals authorized to transport animals on behalf of the adoption partner (full name, address, phone number), a list of authorized foster homes used by the agency (full name, address, phone number and number of animals house at the location), a list of current board of directors, references from one veterinarian and one animal care and control agency or open admission humane society/SPCA, and a statement of financial viability. In addition to the aforementioned additional inclusions that approved adoption partners must meet, the following were also required: dogs placed in foster homes within Santa Barbara County for over 30 days must be licensed to the adoption partner, dog licenses for adopted animals must be obtained within 30 days of when the new owner takes possession of the dog, owner information including name, address, phone number and microchip number were to be provided to SBCAS within 30 days of the animal being placed, adoption partners would remain liable for animals until the new owner information is submitted to SBCAS and adoption partners must renew their paperwork and agreement every two years or as requested by SBCAS.

Revisions to the original procedure with regard to approved animals for the adoption partner program included that 1) the Shelter Supervisor must approve animals before the adoption partner is contacted, 2) animals with a bite history were not permitted to be offered as well as the following: those irremediably suffering, those surrendered as owner request euthanasia, and dogs with a history of aggression or who were determined to be potentially dangerous or vicious by a judicial or hearing office pursuant to county code, 3) animals must be picked up by adoption partners within 3 days of notification of the animal, and 4) un-weaned animals required pick up on the same business day.

In addition to newly defined office procedures, the updated document included a section on adoption partner relations that required staff to interact courteously and professionally with the adoption partners and noted that disruptions by adoption partners would be referred to the Shelter Supervisor. The team was told that there were approximately 100 groups that SBCAS has worked with over time, many of them breed specific groups. The transfer fees were as follows:

Recommendations:

- The team commends SBCAS for working with community adoption partners and for revising the policy and procedures so that practices can be more proactive and relationships improved. It is important for SBCAS to hold adoption partners accountable to agreements, laws and routine procedures so that strong and effective partnerships can be maintained.
- Establish an immediate notification system by which Adoption Partners are notified when animals with emergent needs are brought in.
- Establish a notification system with Adoption Partners to given access to animals with profiles that would be considered less adoptable, or animals that are at high risk for shelter breakdown.

- Once the final copy of the new procedure 3.52 is officially approved by the county, all policies, procedures and forms should be presented to all interested parties and consistently followed.
- Continue to endeavor toward improving relationships with adoption partners. Maintaining community relationships requires acts and assumptions of good will on all sides as well as open communication and transparency. “A strong alliance of animal welfare groups can help improve the lives of animals and people in numerous ways.”¹¹
- Consider classifying the partnerships/relationships that SBCAS has with certain groups as adoption partners or contract services to the groups such as with BUNS, ASAP, K9-Pals and DAWG. See section “Governance, Management and Leadership” for more information and recommendations.

Discussion:

Animal shelters have established formal working relationships with adoption partners in many communities across the country. In order for these relationships to work acceptably, clearly stated expectations and a written formal agreement executed between all parties are necessary. Prior to the release of an animal to an adoption partner, shelters must be assured that the transfer is in the best interest of the animal and community. Differences of opinion, philosophical disagreements, mission-based differences, and high emotions may stand in the way of complete harmony, but it is considered necessary for placement partners and shelters to work well together.

Adoption partners can be strategically utilized to manage the shelter population. A proactive approach to moving animals out of the shelter, will reduce shelter census and length of stay.

2.7 LOST AND FOUND PROCEDURES

Observations:

Santa Barbara County’s website devoted one page to lost and found pets and included information and contact information for each facility. The webpage included information on how to connect with the shelters and search for and fill out lost reports and also offered some pet recovery tips.

The SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 2, Field Operations, 2.06 “Impounded Identified Animals,” Chapter 3, 3.06 “Lost and Found Animal Reports,” 3.07 “Lost and Found Hotline (Santa Barbara Shelter Only),” 3.11 “Identified Animals,” 3.13 “Reclaim of Animals (Redemption),” 3.14 “Waiving or Reduction Fees on Redemptions – Balance Due,” 3.32 “Reclaim of Animal After Regular Business Hours,” and Chapter 4, 4.10 “Release of Owner Animals.” The team did not observe lost or found reports being taken during the site visit; the team reviewed the binders where lost and found reports were maintained.

The team observed the lost and found procedures to be overall consistent between facilities, including that

¹¹ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_2009/101_strength_in_numbers.pdf

match making between lost reports and animal inventory was done “when there is time.” Procedure 2.06 clarified the role of ACOs upon picking up an animal with traceable identification including steps to return the animal to the home rather than taking them directly to the facilities. Animals with identification were required to be held for 10 days; animals without identification were held for 5 days. A red star is to be placed on the kennel card to identify animals who arrived with identification. Procedure 3.06 explained how lost reports, found reports and matches made were to be managed. The procedure stated that a “daily list” was maintained for lost and found reports and that the lost and found report forms are maintained in a binder. During the site visit the team observed the binders, but did not observe a separate list. Owners seeking a lost pet were to be encouraged to visit the facilities to seek their pet. By county code, citizens who find animals are required to turn them in within 24 hours. This procedure noted that “staff and volunteers shall assist in trying to match sheltered stray animals to lost and found reports, whenever time permits.”

Procedure 3.11 was the procedure to follow after 2.06. The procedure stated that if a match is made owners were to be notified immediately by phone, in person, door hanger or U.S. mail. Owner information and attempts made at contacting the owner was then to be recorded in the animal record in the comment or memo section in Chameleon. This procedure stated, “Kennel staff is responsible for alerting the office staff of an animal wearing a tag so they can be traced and following up on the animals that have not been reclaimed in a timely manner. They should communicate with the customer care staff to check on the status of the animal.” Procedure 3.07 pertained to the Santa Barbara location only. A lost and found hotline was in place to assist the public during non-business hours, which was paid for by the Santa Barbara Humane Society. An answering service took calls and faxed the information to SBCAS each day at 8:00 a.m. That fax was then faxed to Santa Barbara Humane Society. SBCAS staff were then required to manually create reports for the lost and found binder. Lost and found for cats at the Santa Barbara location was managed by ASAP.

The team was told that at the Santa Barbara and Lompoc locations there was no daily system in place for cross referencing the lost and found binders with the animals in care. The team was told that a certain employee at the Santa Maria location organized and maintained the lost and found binder and conducted daily cross checks. The team was not able to observe cross checking on the day of the site visit.

The statistical reports provided to the team included information on numbers of dogs and cats redeemed, adopted, euthanized and other outcome types.

For FY13-14 SBCAS received 1,343 owner relinquished animals and 5,525 stray animals. 66.6% of the animals SBCAS received in FY 13-14 were stray.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS on its return to owner rates, which are higher than the national average.¹²
- SBCAS is also commended for prioritizing returning animals to their owners before resorting to bringing them in to the shelter. This protocol helps reduce the number of animals entering the

¹² <https://www.aspca.org/about-us/faq/pet-statistics>

- shelter and also eliminates the need for owners to come to the shelter to search for their pet.
- Prioritize the lost and found program and rather than noting “whenever there is time,” in the Policy and Procedures Manual, require lost and found matches to be scanned on a daily basis, without fail.
 - Require one staff member to be responsible for the daily checking of lost reports against the animals in the facilities. This process can be added to the daily rounds that should be conducted. See section, “Animal Handling and Care” for more on daily population rounds.
 - Ensure that an employee scans all active lost reports for every stray animal entering the facility upon intake for possible matches.
 - Utilize Chameleon to track lost and found reports. Electronically managing lost and found provides for a much more efficient process than utilizing manual papers and binders. Any animal management software should have the ability to perform functions that are required of managing a lost and found program. If more software knowledge is required, reach out to Chameleon for instructions and/or training on using that part of the software.
 - Consider developing a program that focuses on working with pet owners who have lost their pet. Many animal services agencies have had overwhelming success with such programs, resulting in greatly increased return to owner rates. Staff and well-trained volunteers can do the following toward this effort:
 - Greet and assist visitors in completing lost reports
 - Escort pet owners through the shelter
 - Ensure that visitors review the DOA and “found pet” reports
 - Provide advice and counseling on how best to look for their pets
 - Maintain and update both the lost and found files
 - Perform daily lost and found checks on stray animals in the facility
 - Gather and assess articles and suggestions from groups around the country on best practices for lost and found programs. Develop processes around SBCAS’ capabilities and continue to build onto them on an ongoing basis.¹³
 - The Center for Lost Pets (thecenterforlostpets.com) provides a central location where people who have lost or found pets can connect. Pet owners can post lost pets and search for postings of found pets. Shelters can upload photos of stray animals arriving at the shelter. The site also provides advice and resources for how to find a lost pet. All services on the site are free.
 - Missing Pet Partnership (missingpetpartnership.org) is a national nonprofit devoted to reuniting lost pets with their families. The website includes recovery tips and a guide to finding pet detectives.
 - Create and utilize a Facebook page as a community Lost and Found resource.¹⁴

¹³ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep_oct_2009/many_happy_returns_to_owners.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/LostFoundDogs.VA>

Discussion:

Most municipal animal services facilities have high rates of stray animal intakes, in some cases close to 80% of animals are stray. For this reason, having a proactive lost and found program is essential to increase return to owner rates and decrease the shelter population. Animal shelters are moving toward taking a proactive role by assisting owners to find their lost pets.

Reuniting pets with their owners is a vital shelter service. The lost and found program must be taken seriously and time must be committed to its development. A successful lost and found program is crucial. Increasing the reclaim rate improves staff morale, helps to reduce the pressures on holding requirements, reduces animal care workloads, and helps relieve the pressures for space in the shelter.

2.8 FOSTER PROGRAM

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual included, Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.14 “Foster Care Program.” The procedure stated that foster parents were screened and approved and that fostered animals remained the property of Santa Barbara County Animal Services. The procedure further stated that Supervising Animal Control Officer or RVT approved animals for the foster program. Reasons for foster included: too young for adoption, pregnant, injured or sick, if shelter is at capacity, and socialization/behavior modification. Responsibility of the program was the Supervising Animal Control Officer, RVT and Community Outreach Coordinator. Foster parents were responsible for ensuring proper medical treatment and maintaining accurate records and all health concerns were to be brought to the attention of the RVT and Supervising Animal Control Officer. After hours urgent medical issues would be facilitated by the foster but approval is required for payment to be rendered by SBCAS. While this appeared to be the policy for the entire organization it is only applicable to Santa Maria.

Ninety five percent of animals in foster are kittens. In SB Love at Home provides foster services for dog and ASAP provides foster services for cats. In Lompoc, CAPA provides foster homes for dogs and VIVA for cats. These groups abide by their own standard operating, recruitment and training procedures for foster care, despite the foster animal being under the legal jurisdiction of the county. It should be mentioned that while these standards are not those of SBCAS, they are in fact exemplary, as in the case of ASAP.

It is the primary job of the SM Community Outreach Coordinator to find and train foster parents in SM. When foster families can not be found in SM, the COC will reach out to SB groups for assistance. This has come with severe criticism by the SB groups that this program is not growing sufficiently to meet the demands.

A second COC, was hired in SB but left hastily citing reasons indicating a perceived toxic environment cultivated and fostered by the dysfunctional dynamic between the volunteers, external influencers and County Leaders and the bullying of staff by volunteers that was not able to be addressed by shelter



management. That position is open and currently being recruited for.

Recruitment for SM foster parents is an ongoing process assigned to the Community Outreach Coordinator. Regular orientations are held, two per month, but turn out is low, with two being the maximum number participating. Sometimes no one shows up. Engagement in the community has been challenging as the demographics suggest that this is a working class population with the inability to commit to fostering nursing/orphaned kittens which is what is in the highest demand. And, when identified foster parents are needed to pick up animals, they are often unavailable or unreachable, thus preventing rapid transport of animals out of the shelter.

The team reviewed the foster parent application, the foster parent contract, foster manual and equine foster care agreement. The materials were sufficiently detailed and comprehensive and provided a strong foundation for a burgeoning foster program. The team was told that there was some training for fosters, such as for kitten foster parents.

The team was told that during the summer sometimes there are as many as 100 animals in foster homes.

Record keeping for foster care animals was difficult to assess due to the differences of program administration between all the various groups. It was not clear that all foster records were kept in Chameleon and available for the adopters. When running the Chameleon foster care inventory report it was not consistent with a paper log provided to the team in January.

Recommendations:

- Create an organization wide Foster Care Manual and Policy by collaborating with all internal partners to establish best practices for recruitment, training, identifying foster candidates, animal care, record keeping and medical management. This program should be standardized across all three sites no matter who is implementing it.
- Provide appropriate, standardized training to foster volunteers
- Accurately track foster animal inventory in Chameleon.
- Establish a coordinated plan and tracking system to ensure all foster animals receive the medical care they require to be immediately placed on the adoption floor once they become available.
- Engage in active marketing for foster recruitment in Santa Maria.
- Create “Foster On Deck” program (see appendix)

Discussion:

Animals who are candidates for foster care are those that are not ready for adoption due to age, medical condition or behavior quirks. These animals also would be at risk if placed into the shelter system as the resources available are not adequate to meet their special needs. Unweaned kittens/puppies present the largest challenge in terms of resource requirements and they are the most susceptible population in terms of

infectious diseases. Maintaining an active foster program saves lives and decreases the burden of animal care on the shelter.

Not only does a robust foster care program increase adoption rates and decreases the number of animals euthanized it can boost employee morale and enhance public relations within the community. Foster parents become adopters and supporters of the shelter.

A shelter's foster program is a tool to actively manage the shelter population and census. However, it entails an actively engaged foster community who can respond at a moments notices as every minute this susceptible population remains in the shelter it is an opportunity for them to get sick. Animals placed directly into foster care leaves cage space open which increases the capacity for care, decreases the infectious disease rate, allows more time for enrichment of sheltered animals and decreased staff burden.

Appendix 2.H Foster on Deck Program - Animal Rescue League of Boston.

2.9 FERAL CATS/TNR/COMMUNITY CATS

Observations:

SBCAS did not have a written procedure for how they handled community cats or worked with local feral cat/trap-neuter-return groups. The county rented traps to citizens, but it was unclear if citizens were educated to the extent that they understood the limitation that the county had on live outcome possibilities for feral cats. The California Food and Agriculture Code established mandates for assessing cat behavior and specific holding requirements for feral cats in shelters. In a shelter environment it can be quite difficult to determine whether a cat is truly feral or simply a terrified house pet. The team observed that all efforts were made to provide a quiet environment with minimum stimuli at the Santa Maria facility, but that the housing became long term and without a solid plan for those cats.

Please refer to sections "Cat Housing," "Dog and Cat Care" and "Adoption Selection Criteria and Behavioral Assessments" for more information on feral cats.

Santa Barbara

The team was told that community cats are less of an issue in the south part of the county. ASAP took on the responsibility of performing TNR in the Santa Barbara area; fewer than 100 cats were TNR'd in 2014. The criteria that must be met for a cat to qualify for TNR is the following: single cats only when there is one caretaker and a yard, there must be an indoor area for the cat to go at night to protect them from Coyotes, a site visit must be performed, and if the cat is being relocated she must stay in an enclosure in the area for 2 weeks before being released.

Santa Maria

The team determined during the site visit that while SBCAS was intent on finding placements for feral cats, the resources were not readily available. Volunteers assisted SBCAS in providing ideals for outlets as well as



providing assistance on researching wineries and ranches in the county and reaching out to them to determine if they would be willing to take in feral cats to their barns. SBCAS had a charming flyer that said “Got Mice? Feral cats will work for food!!!” The flyer stated that SBCAS was looking for citizens who could provide safe ranch, barn or warehouse homes for these cats. It further explained that they were spayed or neutered, up to date on vaccinations, healthy and would only need caretakers willing to feed them and provide their basic needs. In addition, training and support was offered.

The team inquired as to why cats were held long term and were told that it was a combination of the idea that housing long term was not problematic and that some volunteers did not want the feral cats euthanized. When the team asked if it was reasonable to think that volunteers would understand if it was explained that there were no live outcome options and that housing feral cats long term is inhumane, the response was that they would understand.

The team was told that they had been fairly effective with releasing cats back to the area where they were trapped and that many citizens were interested once they learned more about community cats and how their presence can benefit communities.

Lompoc

Feral cats were not trapped, neutered and returned by ACOs or any SBCAS employees directly from the Lompoc facility. The team was told that they were fortunate to have the group “Viva” locally and that they provided the area with the much needed pathway for feral cats.

Recommendations:

- Obtain a copy of “Managing Community Cats: A Guide for Municipal Leaders.” The PDF version is free.¹⁵
- Strengthen relationships with community cat groups in the county and provide community education concerning the problem of feral cats and solutions.^{16,17} Build off of the clever flyer “Got Mice?” and create a campaign around the effort of placing these cats in ranches, barns and warehouses in the county. Most citizens are not interested in trapping cats and kittens so that they are euthanized. Citizens who take responsibility can make a huge difference by monitoring colonies or a cat or two and providing daily care for them. It is important that neighbors are consulted and given an explanation of this process and the benefits.
- Consider contracting for TNR services in the cities that have TNR ordinances.
- Maintain accurate records of feral cats and kittens handled by SBCAS, including their disposition. Over time, this data will help determine where resources are currently going and where they might be more useful.
- Elicit open dialogue with staff and volunteers regarding state code, humane housing of feral cats in

¹⁵ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/cats/managing-community-cats.html>

¹⁶ http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/feral_cats/

¹⁷ http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/feral_cats/tips/help_outdoor_cats_individuals.html?credit=web_id212453451

shelters and the resources available within the community. Recall that the code states “If the cat is determined to be truly feral, the cat may be euthanized or relinquished to a nonprofit, as defined in Section 501.”

Discussion:

Feral cats should not be housed long term in a shelter, as this is considered to be an inhumane practice unless there is a mechanism for socialization and behavior modification. SBCAS would be best served by providing trap, neuter, release programs and hosting seminars on the care and feeding of community cats. This will reduce shelter intake numbers, feline euthanasia, census and length of stay statistics.

Appendix 2.G - Feral Freedom, Creating a Community Cat Program

2.10 GIFT SHOP/SHELTER STORE

Observations:

SBCAS did not have gift shops in their facilities, nor did they maintain displayed items for sale for adopters such as leashes and collars.

Recommendations:

- At this time, the sale of pet supplies is not a priority. No action is recommended.
- At some point, consider setting up a portion of the lobby as a store front for pet merchandise.

Discussion:

Providing a store front of even a few items may bring the shelter to another level of client service. Not only would this provide clients with an adopted pet, it would also increase the new owner’s education of animals by having a selection of merchandise that would provide comfort for each pet—a martingale or gentle leader for a dog that pulls, crates for puppies that need to be house-trained, or litter boxes and items for cats such as toys and beds. The merchandise would be available to new adopters as well as the general public who may then see the shelter as a resource for pet supplies. If managed effectively, a retail store could generate some revenue to be utilized for SBCAS animal programs.

Appendix 2.F: Getting the edge in retail

2.11 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

Observations:

Santa Barbara County Animal Services Policy and Procedures Manual included six sections: Chapter 1 – General Administrative Procedures, Chapter 2 – Field Operations, Chapter 3 – Office Operations, Chapter 4 – Kennel Operations, Chapter 5 – Volunteer Services, Chapter 6 – Veterinary Procedures. The table of contents for each chapter noted that they were created from 2008-2011. The team was informed that the manual was currently under review and that SBCAS had held off on making changes to some procedures in anticipation of the AHA consultation so that recommendations could be utilized to edit the manual.

The manual was written in Microsoft Word and the layout was clear and easy to follow. The policies and

procedures were detailed, uniform, professional and sufficiently comprehensive. The content of some of the procedures required updating and those recommendations are included below or in the sections of the report where applicable. Each facility had multiple copies of the manual and all of the employees that the team spoke with were aware of the manual and where to find it.

While Standard Operating Procedures existed for some processes, they were not developed for all process, as this report identifies several areas where they are lacking.

There was no identified method of ensuring the SOP's were communicated to staff and volunteers.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS for developing and maintaining a comprehensive Policy and Procedures Manual. Standard operating procedures are always a work in progress take a serious commitment from management and staff to develop, train and keep them up to date.
- Continue to develop new SOPs and update current SOPs, as required. All current procedures and practices must be turned into written SOPs.
- Consider developing diagrams to supplement some of the procedure documents. Many people learn visually and for some complex processes a flow chart or diagram would be beneficial.¹⁸
- Develop and SOP on how SOP's are communicated to staff and volunteers so that all are trained to the same level. Provided training if needed to ensure all staff and volunteers are trained to the standard required in the procedure.
- Consider the following definitions while when revising the SBCAS manual:
 - *Policy.* A high level statement; a formal, brief statement that embraces an organization's general beliefs, goals, objectives and acceptable procedures for a specified subject area
 - *Procedure.* Describes a process that supports a "policy directive;" designed to describe who, what, where, when and why, by means of establishing organizational accountability in support of the implementation of a policy
 - *Work instruction.* Describes how to perform a process; process descriptions include details about the inputs, the outputs, and the feedback necessary to ensure consistent results
 - *Checklist.* A "to do" list¹⁹
 - *Guideline.* Aims to streamline particular processes; is not binding and is not enforced; allows for individual and subjective discretion; can be used to create a new procedure if there is an absence of one
 - *Workflow.* An orchestrated and repeatable pattern of activity enabled by the systematic organization of resources into processes that transform materials, provide services or process information

¹⁸www.lucidchart.com

¹⁹<http://atulgawande.com/book/the-checklist-manifesto>

Discussion:

A Standard Operating Procedures manual is one of the most useful documents that assist in streamlining responsibilities and ushering organizations toward operational excellence. SOP manuals list all of the tasks that are essential for success, how to do the tasks, and who is responsible for the tasks. SOPs are supportive toward: training new employees, ensuring continuity, and ensuring staff, volunteers and customers are getting the best possible experience.

The communication plan to effectively train the staff on a SOP is just as important as the document itself.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*3.0 Animal Care
and Capacity*

3.0 Animal Care and Capacity

General Overview

The cage capacity for all three facilities are as follows (assume one animal per cage and appropriately double-sized cat cages.)

Location	Dogs	Cats
Santa Barbara	48	162
Santa Maria	76	75
Lompoc	30	20

It is common practice during peak seasons to house more than one dog to a kennel and to decrease the cage space for cats by inserting the dividers which allow for less than optimal room to lay down, stretch, and have sufficient distance between food, sleeping areas and litter box.

SBCAS and it’s internal partners should be commended on their relatively low incidence of disease that often results from over-population.

3.1 DOGS/CATS

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.06 “Kennel Duty Assignments,” included a list of general duties and assignments as it pertained to animal care. The assignments ranged from an early morning walk through to check on animals to sanitizing and cleaning and feeding. Many of the assignments had separate, lengthy work instruction documents themselves, such as “E. Sanitize dog kennels” and “Clean and feed the miscellaneous animals.” Information and recommendations on those assignments will be covered in other sections of the report.

Santa Barbara

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 55 dogs in care (1 was in foster care) and 70 cats (7 were in foster care). The average length of stay for dogs was 200 days and for cats was 79 days. As previously mentioned, cat care was provided by ASAP.

Dogs were provided oval, plastic beds with blankets. The team did not see many enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit because the kennel was observed during the cleaning process, but noticed that there were Kongs, balls and other stuff toys in the area at the back of the main kennel. Stainless steel buckets supplied water for the dogs and stainless steel bowls for food. Dogs were walked and taken to the play yards throughout the day by staff and volunteers.



Codes were utilized to classify the dogs so that staff and volunteers were aware of who was permitted to handle certain dogs: “E” for Easy, “I” for Intermediate, “A” for Advanced and “I+” for Intermediate +. The team observed a few dogs who were exhibiting concerning behavior. A few appeared to be barrier aggressive, another (Tyson) was scared and shut down, hanging his head over, crouched in the back of his kennel, avoiding eye contact and avoiding attention when it was given. Tyson A357333 (categorized as “I+”) resided in the main dog kennel in run 001. He arrived at SBCAS March 22nd, 2013. The noises of the other dogs barking and noises in the kennel in general appeared to overstimulate him. Upon approach he softened and appeared to be a sweet dog who just happened to be overwhelmed in his surroundings to the point that his comfort level was minimal. Tyson’s paperwork from the main office included hand written notes from April 4, 2013 to October 7, 2014. His formal behavior evaluation had been conducted on April 1, 2013. The hand written notes consisted of information from volunteers about jaunts he was taken on alone and in large groups of dogs to events and to the beach. In February 2014 he was taken by a volunteer overnight. The notes in his record suggested that he is a high energy dog who got along well with people and other dogs and who required an experienced handler who would be assertive with him.

Marlena A368524 in run 013 appeared to exhibit severe kennel stress and barrier frustration; she arrived at SBCAS on November 22, 2013 and had the classification “I.” Marlena’s behavior evaluation was completed on December 2, 2013 and there were three handwritten notes in her record with the dates January 27, 2014, May 24, 2014 and June 1, 2014. The note from January 27 described a hike at the beach that noted, “Liked every person and dog that she met. Even walked with [person name] (her nemesis) for half the time.” The note from June 1, stated the following: “Walked one mile up State Street and reacted badly (bark-lunge) at every new dog. Likely wanted to meet them but too amped to do correctly. Did well with group of dogs at top of State Street. No bad reactions. Ran down State Street with no bad reactions. Did really well in crowd of people – dogs and finish line. Good in car.” During the site visit the team was told that Marlena is a “project dog” and that she presents aggressively at the kennel, but is okay with most people outside of the kennel. The team was told that the volunteer who she is not comfortable with is able to walk her if someone else hands them the leash once she is out of the kennel.

Santa Maria

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 89 dogs in care (9 were in foster care) and 58 cats (3 were in foster care and 4 were at PetSmart). The average length of stay for dogs was 89 days and for cats was 58 days.

Dogs were provided short, plastic platform beds with blankets. The team did not see enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit. Stainless steel buckets and bowls supplied water for the dogs and flat, wide metal trays that were built with the T-Kennels were utilized for feeding. Only one dog was observed being taken out of his run during cleaning and placed in one of the four play yards in the courtyard.

Due to the low number of cats in care at the time of the site visit, most cats were provided two or three cages by way of the open portals. This allowed the cats to have separate areas for their food dishes, litterbox and bed. The cats appeared comfortable and were provided enrichment items such as small toys and Stretch and Scratch cage scratchers. Cats in the colony rooms were provided scratching posts as well as all of the items offered to the cats in cages. The team was impressed with the quality of care and enrichment provided to the cats in the adoption areas.

The team observed that several cats were being housed in the two cat holding rooms with the cage banks C201-210 and C301-310. As previously mentioned, these cats were feral (or were categorized as feral when they arrived) and were housed in these rooms because the feral cat room was noisy. According to the animal inventory there were 10 cats in these two rooms. These cats were given “hide boxes” or feral cat dens to hide in. Procedure 4.21 “Feral Cat Temperament Testing and Assessment” will be discussed in the section “Adoption Selection Criteria and Behavioral Assessments.”

The team reviewed the kennel cards of these 10 cats who were all FIV/FelV snap tested, fully vaccinated, and altered (except for an already ear-tipped cat and a new arrival). The records did not include a completed Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form, which was noted in Procedure 4.21 to be required with each fearful, potentially feral cat record.

Name, Identification	Intake Date	Notes on the records
No name, A378151	7/29/14	“Mother cat feral, kittens feral”
Demona, A380249	9/16/14	None
Spookerella, A381408	10/14/14	None
Nora, A382426	11/11/14	Went to CARE for head trauma injury and received radiographs and bloodwork. Medication record card notes “*Caution*” and “very fractious striking and hissing” on the first full date of a course of medications 11/13/14.
Tonic, A382805	11/22/14	Note on Cat Veterinary Form “feral”
Gin, A382806	11/22/14	Note on Cat Veterinary Form “feral” and “nervous but able to scruff and pet”
Meowster, A383171	12/5/14	Box for feral checked off, comments: “no TNR”
Lily, A383259	12/9/14	Came from same location as “Meowster” and box for feral checked off and “(NTR)” written on relinquishment form
No name, A383921	12/29/14	Box for “feral” checked off on relinquishment form

Name, Identification	Intake Date	Notes on the records
Nightlife, A384353	1/12/15	Box for “injured” checked off on relinquishment form and box checked off “feral” with a question mark next to it. Comments: “Has been roaming neighborhood;” note on Cat Veterinary Form “nice cat”

Lompoc

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 40 dogs in care (3 were in foster care) and 17 cats (1 was in foster care). The average length of stay for dogs was 40 days and for cats was 91 days.

Dogs were provided PVC or aluminum Kuranda beds with blankets. The team did not see many enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit because the kennel was observed during the cleaning process, but noticed that there were Kongs and balls in “the hub.” Stainless steel bowls supplied water and food for the dogs.

The team was told that cat intakes declined since the renovation took place; during the renovation cats were taken to the Santa Maria facility. Like the Santa Maria facility, due to the low number of cats in care at the time of the site visit, most cats were provided two or three cages by way of the open portals. The cats appeared comfortable and some were provided enrichment items such as small toys and some were given “hide boxes.” The cats in the adoption and stray hold room who had been there for a while were allowed to roam the room during the cleaning process (for more see the section “Cleaning and Disinfecting”). The team was impressed with the quality of care and enrichment provided to the cats.

Three of the cats were listed as being located in receiving, three were listed in the adoption room and 10 were listed in the stray room. The team observed 4 cats in the stray room and the remainder in the adoption room (and one in the hallway cage and one loose in the conference room, “Desi” A374322). This indicated to the team that the locations of the cats needed to be updated in Chameleon.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement SOPs for all aspects of dog and cat care, designed to increase staff awareness and requirement beyond routine, cleaning and feeding. Utilize the Five Freedoms to start the process of educating each other and the community on basic animal welfare tenets.^{1,2}
- Allow all cats adequate space, with proper population management there should be no need to insert the cage dividers.

¹ <http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care/five-freedoms>

² <http://www.maddiesfund.org/behavior-problems-and-long-term-housing.htm>



- Consider contracting with the partner groups who have full care responsibility of SBCAS animals. SBCAS must either assume full responsibility of the animals in their care, or outsource to another entity rather than retaining custody and thereby creating a perplexing environment for visitors and a struggling relationship with the groups.
- Immediately develop a plan for re-evaluating all long term animals who have been in the care of SBCAS for more than 90 days at each facility. Develop solutions for each animal which may include any of the following options:
 - Behavior plan including who, how and when it will be implemented; a clear goal must be decided and if that goal is not achieved, other arrangements must be made within a specified timeframe.
 - Foster home to further determine “home-ability”³ and provide more information for the shelters or potential adopters (Dr. Emily Weiss suggests that shelter animals could be potentially labeled as “unadoptable,” but are often dogs and cats who may just be “un-shelterable” (or shelter challenged) and are quite home-able).
 - House dogs with barrier aggression only in foster homes; they do not present well in a shelter setting, create a stressful environment for other animals around them and are unlikely to attract adopters.
 - Transfer to an adoption partner who has resources and ability to provide the behavior or other type of care required.
 - Adoption specials for particular animals; develop an “overlooked animals” tracking system and push for live outcomes of those pets who are overlooked, but who are home-able. See section “Adoption Process and Policies” for more.
 - Perform euthanasia in cases where the animal is not treatable/manageable behaviorally or medically based on care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in your community.
- Utilize materials from the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program to calculate humane capacity and target length of stay for fast and slow tracking for each facility.⁴
- Provide training for all staff and volunteers on recognizing, reducing, and preventing stress in dogs which can cause a decline in health and adoptability.^{5, 6, 7} Document animals who are exhibiting signs of stress and what the signs are and develop behavior plans to improve their quality of life. If

³ <http://www.aspcapro.org/blog/2015/01/28/home-able>

⁴ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/37>

⁵ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/something.pdf>, “When Something Must Be Done,” Rondout Valley Kennels

⁶ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/stress.pdf>, “Stress Signals Checklist,” Rondout Valley Kennels

⁷ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/shelter.pdf>, “How Can Learning About Dog Behavior and Training Benefit Your Shelter?”, Rondout Valley Kennels

- housing in a shelter setting is not possible for some of the animals, prioritize moving them into foster homes with trained foster parents who have the ability to work with and rehabilitate them.
- Discontinue long term housing of feral cats at the Santa Maria location. Progressive community cat programs provide basic medical care and spay and neuter cats and release them within 24 hours of surgery. If the SBCAS does not currently have immediate outlets for feral cats, consider euthanasia after the stray holding period rather than utilizing resources for these cats and holding them long term. Housing feral cats in a shelter environment long term is not humane and ensuring staff safety handling fractious animals is challenging. Safely caring for a feral cat in a typical shelter cage is also terribly stressful for the cat.
 - Determine the dispositions of the cats housed in the two cat holding rooms with the cage banks C201-210 and C301-310. Consider reaching out to local TNR groups for assistance placing the cats currently in care, if not adoption candidates.
 - Maintain a list of willing recipients of feral cats and as soon as a feral cat enters the system contact the recipient to prepare for transport after surgery. If the SBCAS is not able to proactively plan placements for feral cats, the alternative cannot be to institutionally house them and wait indefinitely for an opportunity to arise.
 - When housing feral cats, for example, during the stray holding period, utilize feral cat dens.^{8,9}
 - Rotate dogs in the play yards in the courtyard at the Santa Maria facility. Do this by creating a formal outdoor activity chart. Dog rotations will be helpful for those dogs who are house-trained because they will stay on a schedule, which will attract potential adopters. Do not allow puppies to enter the play yard until they have been fully vaccinated.
 - Create enrichment programs for all animals for each location.^{10,11} Give all dogs a Kong or other washable toys every day. Toys provide vital enrichment for the dogs, and those who have a toy and a blanket in their run are more appealing to potential adopters. If toys are given to dogs who are sharing a run, those who guard their resources should be housed separate from other dogs. This will be discussed, in depth, in the Behavior and Enrichment Section
 - Add a towel or pillow case to the doors of the stainless steel Shor-line cages for small dogs in the center walkway in the main kennel at the Santa Barbara location. This way, these small dogs can have an area to avoid visual contact with other animals.

Discussion:

In general, SBCAS meets the basic physical needs of the animals in their care. The animals are provided with

⁸ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/73310>

⁹ <http://aspcapro.org/segregating-populations-5-tips-for-housing-feral-cats>

¹⁰ www.aspcapro.org (search “enrichment”)

¹¹ www.openpaw.org

food, water, shelter, a clean environment and a cadre of staff and volunteers that are dedicated to their well-being.

During the site visit in January 2015, all three shelters were operating at or above their cage capacity for dogs, and well below their cage capacity for cats.

In today's progressive sheltering movement, we need to set objectives to exceed the basic physical needs and incorporate emotional and behavior needs as part of the standards of care. In order for the animals to maintain their sociability in the shelter environment they must be provided not only with quality care, but also quality enrichment and exercise. It is here, SBCAS, has work to be done and this will be addressed in detail in the Behavior and Enrichment section of the report. This is especially true when average length of stay for dogs begins to exceed 2 to 3 months as is the case at SBCAS.

Dogs at the Santa Barbara facility and feral cats at the Santa Maria facility were of concern to the AHA team. A flyer written by Rondout Valley Kennels says the following, "With long term kenneling, it becomes unacceptable to merely provide for the physical health and needs of dogs in shelters. It is not enough to just hope for more adoptions, as the days pass by and the dogs deteriorate mentally. The behavioral and emotional wellbeing of the dogs in your care must be addressed daily, and their status at least maintained—but as the animal shelter's goal—improved. Without intervention, the dog will become less and less adoptable and its chances for a longer and longer shelter life will increase." UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program also states that long-term confinement of any animal, including feral or aggressive animals, who cannot be provided with basic care, daily enrichment and exercise without inducing stress, is unacceptable. Decisions must be made on these animals.

A shelter's capacity is not measured by the number of open cages, nor by square footage. It is calculated based on the resources available and the number of staff and volunteers assigned to animal care. Humane Society of the United States estimates an average of 15 minutes per animal to clean, feed and water. This does not include the essential time needed to address emotional and behavioral well-being.

Focusing on population wellness and humane capacity and developing processes and systems in order to maintain a steady flow of animals through the facilities is of utmost importance. Population Management will be addressed in another section. These enhancements signal to the community that SBCAS ensures that all animals' needs are being met and they will be more desirable pets as a result.

More Information:

Know your Capacity for Humane Care

<http://www.maddiesfund.org/know-your-capacity-for-humane-care.htm>

Maddies Fund Webinar - Fixing the Feline Housing Crisis <http://www.maddiesfund.org/fixing-the-feline-housing-crisis.htm>

Appendix 3.A: Calculating Shelter Capacity

Appendix 3.B: ASV Facility & Environment PPT

3.2 SMALL ANIMALS AND EXOTICS

Observations:



Rabbits were plentiful at each of the SBCAS facilities. As previously mentioned, cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the team observed that the rabbits received appropriate care at each of the facilities.

Each of the facilities housed and handled exotic animals under the same set of practices. The team was informed that basically they “make do with what they have” and go purchase specialty food or other items if they did not have it on hand. Each of the facilities appeared to have storage of many types of specialty cages and tanks; however, with the exception of a few rats available at the Santa Maria and Lompoc locations, none were in use during the site visit. At the Santa Barbara facility, the exotic animals were housed in the staff room, at the Santa Maria facility, either in the medical suite, the grooming room, or if available for adoption, in the lobby. At the Lompoc facility, the exotic animals were housed in the euthanasia room or if available for adoption, in the lobby. Exotic animals were either adopted from each of the facilities or transferred to adoption partner groups.

The team received feedback from stakeholders prior to the site visit that included concern for SBCAS’ ability to provide appropriate housing and care for exotic animals such as reptiles. The team would agree that the facilities were lacking in their resources to provide appropriate housing and care, most especially the Santa Barbara location whereby housing in the staff room was required due to space constraints.

The longest lengths of stay for a species at each facility were the rabbits. The rabbits’ length of stay was more consistent with a sanctuary rather than a robust rabbit adoption program. The team wondered if the sheer number of rabbits made adoptions challenging.

Santa Barbara

It appeared to the team that the care and operations provided for the rabbits and guinea pigs by BUNS was appropriate. During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 63 rabbits in care (3 were in foster care). Twelve of those had been in care for more than a year and three of the twelve had been in care for more than two years (one for nearly five years, “Petunia” A308214). There were 4 guinea pigs on the animal inventory from January 14th, 2015. The average length of stay for rabbits was 231 days.

Santa Maria

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 31 rabbits in care (4 were in foster care). Their lengths of stay ranged from 1 day to 786 days (at 786 days “Hothot” A354419). The team was informed that a volunteer cleaned and cared for the rabbits on a daily basis. When the team asked what happened if that volunteer was unable to make it in, they were told that the rabbits were assigned to one of the Kennel Attendants. During the site visit the volunteer cleaned and cared for the rabbits; however, the team was unable to observe or meet with the volunteer. The average length of stay for rabbits was 239 days.

Lompoc

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 15 rabbits in care (3 were in foster). Their lengths of stay ranged from 34 days to 656 days (at 656 days, “Charlie” and “Sally” A359315 and A359316 were in foster care, and “Purissima” A372878 was onsite for 306 days). The average length of stay for rabbits was 229 days.

Recommendations:

- Limit the number of rabbits shown in the facilities as available for adoption at a given time. Interestingly, limiting the number of animals shown on the adoption floor often increases the number of adoptions.¹²
- Implement a robust adoption program for rabbits. Investigate adoption partners to inquire about placement of some of the long-term bunnies.
- Consider contracting rabbit and guinea pig care and sheltering to a private organization located in a centralized area within the county.
- Train all staff in proper safe handling techniques for small and exotic animals to minimize potential injury to staff and the animals.
- Dedicate a space that has some flexibility so SBCAS can accommodate the needs of the various animals they may find in their care. House small animals and exotics in a low traffic area that is as quiet as possible. Most small animals and exotics are easily stressed, and any holding or adoption space should be located out of high traffic and noisy areas of the shelter. Staff access should be restricted to those who are trained to care for small and exotic animals. Housing, care and enrichment for small mammals and exotics is just as important as for dogs, cats and other pets.¹³

Discussion:

These exotic animals are typically prey species and have unique needs within the sheltering environment. A dedicated housing area needs to be identified.

Rabbit adoptions seem to be stagnant and the base census of rabbits with long length of stays is high. Aggressive marketing and promotion of these animals and other exotics that are difficult to adopt should be investigated as well as the option of transferring them to partners that specialize in these species.

For additional information:

<http://rabbit.org/working-with-pet-stores-to-promote-rabbit-adoptions-over-rabbit-sales/>

3.3 WILDLIFE

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, 3.48 “Activities Involving Injured, Sick or Dead Marine Animals,” included the reporting and handling procedures for marine animals. Marine mammals were never housed or cared for at the SBCAS facilities.

At the time of the site visit there was no wildlife on the premises. Non-mammal wildlife cases were

¹² <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-adoption-marketing-research-data/aspcaresearch-less-more-adoption-floor>

¹³ <https://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption/other-pet-adoption/facts-small-mammals-pets/>

transferred to California Fish and Game. They utilize educational resources from the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, a local organization that rescues, rehabilitates and returns birds and small mammals that are native to Santa Barbara county to the wild. This group also was able to transfer in animals from SBCAS. The team was told that if wildlife is brought to one of the facilities by a member of the community or an ACO and it is too late in the day for a transport to a wildlife facility, the animal would be kept in a transport cage and transported first thing the next morning.

Recommendations:

- Create SOPs for handling wildlife to ensure the safety of the ACO's. Prohibit volunteers from handling wildlife.
- Provide annual training to those individuals that will be called to handle wildlife, including zoonotic potential
- Ensure all those employees handling wildlife have rabies vaccines or current titers.

Discussion:

It is inevitable that animal control will be called to handle wildlife. Keeping employees safe and reducing risk of bites and infectious disease transmission is imperative and likely an OSHA requirement.

3.4 LIVESTOCK AND EQUINE

Observations:

There was no SOP available for livestock or equine care. There were no livestock or equine being housed at any of the SBCAS locations during the site visit, with the exception of some chickens. The chickens at the Santa Barbara facility were provided a make shift area behind the main, administrative building which was not ideal. During the site visit there were two birds and one of them did not have access to water for part of the day. Both the structures and care provided to the chickens at the other two facilities were more ideal for longer term confinement of these birds. Each bird, or birds if housed together, were provided with a “dog house” or igloo, hay, dirt, water and food.

As mentioned in the section “Livestock/Equine Housing,” horses were cared for at either boarding facilities or in foster homes. SBCAS had an information sheet “Large Animal Resources” which included information on large animal veterinarians in the county, emergency housing, transporting and remains disposal (for owners of deceased animals). SBCAS also had on hand the following forms: large animal initial investigation checklist, equine veterinary form, equine identification form and equine foster care agreement.

Recommendations:

- Develop an SOP for the care and handling of livestock and equine and adopt it for each facility, with the exception of Santa Barbara where they should not be housed.
- Animals housed at boarding facilities should have periodic in-home checks to determine that they are being treated at the standard of care set by SBCAS. If MOU's are not in place with these facilities, draft and implement.

Discussion:

It is important to ensure that these animals, while not directly under the care and supervision of employees, are being given appropriate care. If these animals remain in the custody of SBCAS, measures need to be in place to ensure limiting legal liability in the event that they cause harm to humans or property.

3.5 HUMANE CAPACITY

As part of the review of animal handling and care the team examined humane capacity by reviewing length of stay and population management practices. Observations and recommendations related to these concepts can be found throughout this report.

The animal population was observed to be managed passively rather than proactively, most notably at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations. Passive animal population management was most obvious with dogs and rabbits whose lengths of stay for some individuals exceeded a year and many several years. Noted in the respective sections above is the average length of stay for dogs, cats and rabbits based on the animals who were active and in care on the animal inventory dated January 14th, 2015.

Dog and rabbit capacity appeared to be the most challenging at each of the facilities. As previously mentioned, there were no empty dog runs during the site visit. The team observed that when an open run was needed, dogs were doubled or tripled up to accommodate a new intake. Either dogs who had been in residence were paired up, or a new intake was placed in a run with another dog. Anecdotal reports from volunteers and staff indicated that at one time, as many as 115 dogs have been housed in Santa Barbara.

By observation and through interviews, SBCAS operates on average above humane capacity, and this practice has become an acceptable culture. Partly due to the complex relationship between staff and volunteer organizations, animals are being allowed to remain sheltered for periods of time exceeding humane standards. In some instances, these animals are exhibiting behaviors indicating emotional distress and breakdown.

Appendix 3.C Behavior Problems with Long Term Housing

Recommendations:

- Calculate the humane capacity for each of the facilities. Utilize resources provided by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program to determine humane capacity.^{14,15} Operating beyond an organization’s capacity for care is an unacceptable practice. This will need to factor in employee and volunteer hours.
- Using Chameleon Software calculate and review the length of stay for each species monthly and annually. Length of stay by room should also be reviewed to determine if certain areas of the facilities have lower or higher lengths of stay than others. Determine target length of stay for dogs and cats and include the information in the humane capacity spreadsheet provided by UC Davis

¹⁴ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com>

¹⁵ <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care/calculating-your-humane-capacity>

Koret Shelter Medicine Program.¹⁶

- Institute daily population wellness rounds as a way to begin a proactive animal management program.^{17,1819} Create pathways for each animal upon intake.²⁰
- Institute fast tracking in order to maximize life-saving capacity.²¹
- Develop an Intake and Adoption Decision Making Criteria matrix.²² Dr. Kate Hurley at the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program provides the context for creating a decision criteria matrix:

Every year, hundreds or even thousands of animals enter the typical shelter. For each animal, multiple decisions are required: where to house the animal; whether rescue contact should be initiated; whether additional investment in the animal, such as medical treatment, is needed and affordable; whether the animal is a safe candidate for adoption or poses a risk to the public; etc. This easily amounts to dozens of decisions required each day. The most important and difficult decision that sometimes has to be made is the one to euthanize an animal. For shelters that limit intake, a similar dilemma is faced with the choice to admit an animal or not. We owe it to the animals and ourselves to ensure that these critical choices are made based on a well-thought-out set of criteria; developed in a rational manner with input from appropriate stakeholders; and designed to maximize the number of animals released alive while minimizing the holding time and suffering of animals that will ultimately be euthanized.

Discussion:

Dr. Kate Hurley explains the importance of humane capacity in the following way: “Understanding and maintaining shelter capacity is fundamental to provide humane standards of care, maintain animal health and maximize live release. Given the great number of homeless pets in need of care, it can be difficult to imagine defining, let alone providing, “sufficient” capacity for this seemingly infinite population. However, the problem of homeless animals is not really one of *holding* capacity, but one of *flow through* capacity. Of course we know this already: if a shelter simply admitted all animals that came through the door and never released them, virtually all facilities would soon be impossibly overcrowded. We know that ultimately the problem must be largely solved by reducing the number of animals in need of shelter through preventive programs, and by ensuring that the remaining homeless animals pass through shelters successfully to a

¹⁶ <http://www.aspcapro.org/stay>

¹⁷ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/78728>

¹⁸ <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/population-wellness-rounds>

¹⁹ http://www.aspcapro.org/sites/default/files/aspcapro_population_management_assessment_checksheets_0.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/48>

²¹ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/78849>

²² <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/developing-intake-and-adoption-decision-making-criteria>

positive outcome. Fortunately, sufficient capacity is a much more attainable goal once we realize that we do not need to “house our way out of overpopulation” but simply provide humane conditions for a finite number of animals as they pass through our care.”

We have added a section on Population Management to address this in depth.

3.6 ANIMAL HANDLING

Observations:

The SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, 4.02 “Animal Handling and Restraint,” 4.03 “Use of Restraint Equipment,” and 4.11 “Moving Impounded Animals.” Chapter 4, 4.22 “Moving Animals to the Adoption Areas (Santa Maria Animal Center),” included instructions on flow of animals from holding areas to adoption areas. Basic animal handling and restraint was included on the list of trainings in the “training academy” curriculum. The Care and Evaluation Committee will be discussed in the section of the report on Adoptions.

The team did not have the opportunity to observe employees or volunteers handling aggressive or fractious animals during the site visit. Each facility appeared to have some handling equipment, though where the equipment was kept was not consistent between the facilities and it was not clear if all employees were aware of where they would find the equipment if it was needed. Procedure 4.02 noted that the facilities should have the following equipment on hand: leash, trap, rolling cages, carrier, catch pole. Welborne or Freeman net, Snake hook or tongs, Cat grasper, Nets of various sizes, Muzzles, Gloves, Towels and blankets, Snappy snare. Procedure 4.03 detailed in what circumstances to use and how to use: leash, control stick, Welborne or Freeman Net Pole, Muzzle, Gloves, Blankets and towels, Assess-a-Hand, Easy Nabber. The team did not observe all of these items at the facilities. If they were present at the facilities, they were stored in various locations.

“A. Reasons to move animals include,” in Procedure 4.11, listed, “1. Creating space for incoming strays (this may be done by the impounding Officer).”

Santa Barbara

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees and volunteers handling dogs, cats and rabbits during the site visit. The team observed a drawer filled with prong collars at the back of the main dog kennel, but did not observe them being utilized. During the site visit there was some concern that prong collars would be utilized at SBCAS. There were no written procedures on the use of prong collars.

Santa Maria

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees handling dogs, cats and birds during the site visit. It was reported to the team that one employee is not appropriately trained to handle or care for cats and despite this is assigned to cats. The team was told that one staff member utilizes a syringe pole to encourage cats to move from one side of the cage to the other so that the divider can be added prior to cleaning. The team observed a drawer filled with prong collars in the stainless steel storage cabinet area off of the hallway near the stray dog kennel, but did not observe them being utilized. The team observed feral cat boxes in a couple of the feral cat cages. See section “Cleaning and

Disinfecting” for more on dog handling.

Lompoc

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees and volunteers handling dogs, cats and rats. The animals were handled properly and with utmost care and concern for their wellbeing. A safe handling guideline for volunteers was posted on the wall in the dog kennel.

Recommendations:

- Develop a written SOP for animal handling.
- Implement comprehensive training program for staff and volunteers on animal handling and restraint prior to deploying them to work with the animals and institute a yearly review. Training will reduce liability and work place injuries. The American Humane Association (AHA), the National Animal Control Association (NACA), the ASPCA, the HSUS and other national and local groups offer animal handling and restraint webinars, books, cds and videos online.
- Determine whether or not SBCAS will utilize prong collars and if so develop a procedure and training for their use. If not, remove all prong collars from the premises. Most progressive animal shelters prohibit the use of aversive training techniques or tools such as prong collars, pinch/choke chain collars, electronic collars, spray bottles and physical reprimands including alpha rolls. Consider applying the methods taught by Karen Pryor who provides online the “Shelter Training and Enrichment Course.”^{23,24}
- Provide trained staff with safety equipment and place the equipment in one or two designated areas in the shelter in case of an emergency. Ensure that all staff members know where to find the equipment.
- Place all animal handling equipment on a weekly maintenance program that includes the immediate repair or removal of any faulty equipment.
- Utilize the double-cage system that is in place to secure cats during cleaning or utilize feral cat dens. Humanely direct cats from one side to the other or clean the cage with the cat secured in the den.
- The AHA team commends SBCAS for utilizing the most essential animal handling equipment. Ensure staff safety and humane care of animals by providing access to the following additional animal handling equipment and ensure that staff receives instruction on the proper use of the equipment:
 - *Crates, Cages and Cardboard Carriers:* Many sizes and types of cages and crates should be available at all times for a variety of situations. Cardboard carriers can be used for a variety of purposes, including the transportation of diseased or deceased animals or providing a quiet environment for animals undergoing the euthanasia process.
 - *Caging and Transfer Systems for Unsocialized Cats:* Trap transfer cages, squeeze cages,

²³ <https://www.karenpryoracademy.com/shelter-training-and-enrichment>

²⁴ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/training-events/expo/expo-2014/expo-2014-handouts/Enrichment-pryor.pdf>

and feral cat handling systems are crucial equipment for animal care and control. These caging systems provide for the anesthesia, euthanasia, or transfer of feral and unsocialized cats without the need for human handling or intervention whatsoever.

- *Feral Cat Den*: Designed to provide an alluring safe place for feral and unsocialized cats to hide, these versatile cages allow for daily care, cage cleaning, monitoring, treatment, transfer, anesthesia, or euthanasia of feral or unsocialized cats with no handling necessary.²⁵
- *Stretchers*: Most animal stretchers have plastic or vinyl covers designed to help carry injured, anesthetized, or sedated animals safely and comfortably during transport. Many come with a cover that fits over the prone animal, attaching to the stretcher with a securing material, such as Velcro.

²⁵ <http://www.alleycat.org/page.aspx?pid=455>

