



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Joe DeVries
Deputy City
Administrator/Acting OAS
Director

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL – Revisions to the
Animal Control Ordinance

DATE: September 9, 2025

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Sep 11, 2025 06:32:57 PDT)

Date: Sep 11, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt An Ordinance Amending Oakland Municipal Code 6.04 (Animal Control) To: (1) Reduce The Holding Period For Impounded Animals To 72 Hours; (2) Remove Requirement For Oakland Animal Services To Accept All Surrendered Animals; (3) Allow Finders Of Stray Animals To Temporarily Keep And Care For Found Animals In Lieu Of Delivering To Oakland Animal Services; (4) Require Outdoor Cats And Impounded And At-Large Dogs To Be Spayed Or Neutered; (5) Authorize Oakland Animal Services To Waive Fees Based On Financial Need; And (6) Make Other Minor Amendments Consistent With State Law

REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL

On July 15th, the City Council requested that staff: 1) meet with stakeholders regarding implementation to discuss concerns and receive suggestions on implementation prior to the second reading of the proposed ordinance 2) provide the administrative protocols that will be in place during the implementation, and 3) provide data on pet owner surrenders on a quarterly basis to demonstrate the impact of the revisions. This supplemental report is responsive to those requests.

Stakeholder Engagement

OAS leadership met with stakeholders, particularly those involved with cat rescue organizations and the East Bay Pet PAC, on August 7th, 2025, to discuss the implementation process. Also, on August 13th, the leadership team met with all interested Oakland Animal Services (OAS) volunteers and addressed an extensive list of questions that were solicited in preparation for the meeting. Also, through collaboration with Friends of Oakland Animal Services (FOAS), a staffing plan to assist with the implementation was approved by the FOAS Board and announced on August 1, 2025 (**Attachment A**).

Regular meetings with all volunteers will continue bimonthly during the implementation period to ensure alignment and to determine key areas where additional volunteer support is needed.

City Council
September 15, 2025

One specific request that was made by volunteers is to examine how they can take on new roles at OAS to provide additional support to the staff without jeopardizing labor agreements or exposing OAS to additional liability concerns. The leadership team is developing a short list of duties where support is needed, including tasks such as cleaning cages and assisting with laundry needs, and has initiated conversations with the City's Employee Relations team and City Attorney to explore this possibility for increased volunteer support.

Administrative Protocols

1. Owner Surrenders:

OAS is transitioning to an appointment-based intake system, which is the industry adopted best practice because it allows for managed intake and leads to better outcomes for animals. The team is currently reviewing a software product that allows for easy online appointments to be made and will streamline work for the Public Service Representatives and allow them to spend more individualized time with pet owners in need. In-person scheduling will still be available for those with access challenges. By requiring owners to first schedule an appointment before surrendering their pet, it allows the newly created FOAS support staff to contact the owner, conduct an evaluation, and offer services that may prevent the surrender. This also allows staff to schedule a surrender at a future date when the shelter is at capacity, as has been done recently. OAS is drafting an intake protocol for urgent surrenders that need to be scheduled quickly and will have that in place when the appointment system is launched, likely by early October, and it will be posted publicly.

2. Impoundment:

The ordinance revision reduces the period from 7 days to 72 hours when an animal that was at large in the community arrives at the shelter. Studies show that 90% of stray animals are found within the first 72 hours. However, the administrative protocol will extend that period by the length of time the shelter is closed, such as a City Holiday or on days when the shelter is only open by appointment (currently Tuesdays and Wednesdays). Therefore, if an animal is impounded on a Sunday morning and that Monday is a City Holiday, the hold period would extend until the following Saturday before the animal could be placed for adoption or with a rescue organization. This time extension will be publicly posted upon implementation.

3. Spay/Neuter:

No new protocols are required for these changes; however, staff will be trained in the new guidelines, and any published material will reflect the changes, including compliance notices that Animal Control Officers (ACOs) post or send to pet owners who are in violation of the ordinance. Separately, OAS and FOAS are exploring a new initiative to expand free/low cost spay and neuter services for the community through a license agreement for the use of OAS facilities by FOAS.

4. Licensing and Fee Waivers:

A fee waiver protocol is in draft form that identifies fees that can and cannot be waived and incorporates a reduction in the percentage of a fee that can be waived when an animal has been impounded multiple times by OAS. Once the protocol has been fully reviewed by the City Attorney, it will be posted publicly.

Data on Owner Surrenders

Although the ordinance has not yet taken effect, OAS began tracking owner surrender requests that were denied or delayed in a separate database after the first reading of the ordinance in late July. The table below provides the date, species, reasons for denial or delay, and any services offered. Once the appointment-based system is implemented, a dashboard of this data will be much easier to generate. Additionally, for the Council's review, **Attachment B** is a report providing the reasons for all of the almost 600 owner-surrendered animals taken in by OAS since the beginning of the year. OAS will continue to provide this information in subsequent memos.

Oakland Animal Services owner-surrender animals denied or delayed 07/27/25-09/07/25

DATE	Species	Reason for denial or delay	Services/ Options provided
7/27/2025	cat	Adult Feral Cat (Female)	Intake of 3 feral kittens and signed feral mom cat up for the Community Spay/Neuter Clinic list
7/27/2025	cat	No ID	none
7/27/2025	3 puppies	No ID	none
7/28/2025	dog	Found in Berkeley	none
7/31/2025	1 cat	No space	Information taken for a callback on 8/4; cat was taken in: ACR 81858
7/31/2025	7 cats (mama + 6 kittens)	No space	Information taken for a callback on 8/4; called back on 8/3 and offered intake.
7/31/2025	1 cat	No space	Information taken for a callback on 8/4; cat was taken in: ACR 80497
8/1/2025	2 dogs (chihuahua)	No space	information taken for a callback on 8/4; called back on 8/3 and offered intake
8/2/2025	2 cats	Found in San Leandro	EBSPCA information given
8/3/2025	1 cat	Owner lived in San Leandro	EBSPCA information given, as well as rehoming information
8/4/2025	1 cat	Feral cat	Advised that cats are free to roam, but he seeks TNR options; provided cat S/N info sheet.
8/8/2025	4 adult cats to surrender	No space	Info given to try to privately rehome the cats and asked that they check back with OAS after the adoption weekend on Monday to see if we have space avail.
8/10/2025	1 adult cat	healthy, appears owned	Instructed to put the cat back, as the cat seems owned and very healthy if it appears to decline to

			bring back, also told her staff would check in with her in a week or two
8/18/2025	3 adult cats	No cat space per Mgmt.	Let them know we will make contact around the 1 st of Sept to intake 3 owner surrender cats due to losing her housing.
8/21/2025	1 adult cat	no space	advised OAS could take cat on 9/1/25
8/24/2025		No space	advised OAS would contact to take cat after 9/1/25
8/24/2025	1 cat	no space	advised OAS would contact to take cat after 9/1/25
8/25/2025	2 juvenile cats	no space	advised OAS would contact to take cat after 9/1/25
8/30/2025	1 sweet juvenile cat stray	no space	advised OAS would contact her after 9/5/25
8/31/2025	1 six-year-old cat	no space	advised OAS would contact after 9/10/25
8/31/2025	3-year-old Bengal cat	no space	advised OAS would contact after 9/10/25
9/4/2025	2 adult cats M/F	no space	advised OAS will contact after 9/15/25
9/5/2025	4 2-m kitten, 1 6-m cat	no space	advised OAS will contact after 9/15/25
9/5/2025	1 cat approx. 8 months old	no space	advised OAS will contact after 9/15/25
9/6/2025	kitten (8 weeks)	no space	advised OAS will contact after 9/15/25
9/6/2025	1 dog	no space	advised OAS would contact after 9/11/25
9/6/2025	3 cats	no space	advised OAS will contact towards the end of September
9/6/2025	1 cat- 3-year-old	no space	advised OAS will contact towards the end of September
9/7/2025	2 male cats – 2-year-old	no space	advised OAS will contact towards the end of September
9/7/2025	4 kittens (3m)	no space	advised OAS will contact towards the end of September

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Joe DeVries, Deputy City Administrator and Acting Oakland Animal Services Director, at (510) 238-3083.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe DeVries
Deputy City Administrator and Acting Oakland
Animal Services Director