

MCAS budget and staffing rationale narrative

In 2016 the Multnomah County Auditor engaged in an audit of Multnomah County Animal Services. They identified a number of findings, in the following areas:

1. Improve record keeping and data quality
2. Better protect the health and safety of people
3. Better protect the health and safety of animals in the shelter
4. Improve planning and measurement

MCAS submitted 3 new program offers for FY 24, reflecting a specific response to item 3, as it applies to staffing at the shelter. The text of the auditor's report, related to staffing instructed MCAS to *“Comprehensively study total staffing needs, and advocate to the Board of County Commissioners for increased staffing as necessary to help protect the health of the animals in shelter care, including: 1) increasing staffing for cleaning and feeding to meet National Animal Care & Control Association guidelines, 2) ensuring adequate staffing to provide the shelter's animals with daily enrichment and consistently prompt behavioral health care.”*

In 2018, the auditor returned for follow up review and the issue of staffing was not satisfactorily addressed, at that time.

The audit reports did not recommend a specific source for study, or recommend a specific staffing formula that would meet the safety and well being needs of the animals in care at the shelter.

In December of 2022, MCAS leadership engaged in review of industry best practices for staffing looking at the The Association of Shelter Veterinarians' Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, both the original document from 2010 and the updated standards from 2022. The 2022 guidelines state: *The time and skills of shelter personnel is another critical component of a shelter's capacity for care. Trained personnel must be scheduled to meet daily animal care needs and efficiently and effectively accomplish each critical task. A standard estimate such as 15*

minutes per animal per day may roughly calculate the time needed for cleaning and feeding in some facilities, but it does not account for variations in housing designs and sanitation protocols, the time needed for training personnel, and the provision of enrichment and additional care.

We also met with Dr Sandra Newbury, Head of University of Wisconsin Shelter Medicine program, who was lead contributor to the 2010 standard document. Dr Newbury recommended that minimum time for care and feeding should be 20 minutes per day per animal, with an additional 15 minutes per day of enrichment activity, per animal, for a total of 35 minutes per day. These time standards are consistent with Oregon Humane Society and their staffing model.

Of note, these calculations reflect only daily care and enrichment, they don't factor in additional duties, e.g. admissions, adoptions, play group etc, nor do they calculate vacancies related to unfilled positions, paid time off and education and training.

Based on these recommendations from national and local experts, MCAS leadership reviewed the average number of animals in care, per day, over the last year, and applied the recommended calculation of 35 minutes per day of direct care, approximate number of admissions and related time, adoptions and related time to inform a staffing recommendation. Additionally, we considered an ideal conditions environment, that has fewer animals in care, day to day, reduced admissions and short length of stay resulting in higher number of adoptions. The current state/ideal state comparison led to a recommended staffing range of 15.6-25.9 FTE per day in the direct care (Animal Care Tech 1 and 2) classifications. Current staffing plan assigns about 8 staff +/- 1 on any given day, for the animal care team. The additional 6 ACT 1 and 2 positions provide 3 more per day, for a total of 11 on most days. While this is not staffing to the recommended ranges mentioned above, it is consistent with an industry that is predicated on a strong volunteer corps. Both municipal and privately

funded shelters meet their staffing needs with a combination of paid staff and volunteers.

The additional 2 FTE client services staff reflect the addition of two specialized lobbies, admissions and adoptions, and the need for customer service support in those areas.

The final program offer request for an additional dispatcher for the field services team reflects the increase in calls/jobs coming to field services and strengthens the capacity for the dispatch team to triage and prioritize calls, in order to support field service officers and the community at large.

The budget/staffing rationale has been built on industry standards and a goal that the work plan being developed will produce outcomes and standard operating procedures that have MCAS closer to our “desired state” as described above.