

Date: November 22, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: Brent Dennis, Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Pet Adoptions at Long Beach Animal Care Services**

The COVID-19 pandemic required the Long Beach Animal Care Services (ACS), to adjust its operations. These modifications resulted in significant improvements in certain aspects of animal welfare and customer care that should continue regardless of the status of the pandemic. ACS leadership has been and remains involved in navigating the regional and national conversations and direction of shelter operations both pre- and post-pandemic, to ensure that the most efficient and life-saving operations are implemented at ACS.

Through the first three quarters of Calendar Year 2021, the ACS adoption appointment system yielded more adoptions than the same time period in the past three calendar years as shown in the data below.

- Q1 - Q3 2018 – 471 adoptions
- Q1 - Q3 2019 – 654 adoptions
- Q1 - Q3 2020 – 669 adoptions
- Q1 - Q3 2021 – 783 adoptions

The appointment system ensures customers are assisted and provided the attention they need to make an informed adoption decision. This change in practice has seen lower stress levels to the animals than previously experienced on high volume visiting days. While this is beneficial to the animals, we also recognize the value of providing opportunities for people to visit the shelter and have held two open house adoption days on September 30 and November 13, 2021. The two open house days have yielded nearly 50 adoptions and a third open house is scheduled for Saturday, December 4, 2021, from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. While the appointment system continues to be the industry standard best practice used by shelters both locally and nationwide, the open house concept has provided an opportunity to adopt for people who cannot or choose not to engage in the appointment system. ACS is looking at future opportunities to establish a regular schedule to hold open house hours where no appointment is needed.

ACS is currently working with its lead or “mentor” volunteers to bring on new volunteers while ACS works to mitigate significant staffing challenges in its rehoming division. No current volunteers are being turned away, and ACS is asking all those interested in volunteering to complete an application, which can be found on the [ACS website](#). All of the coordinator positions in ACS’ Rehoming team (Volunteer, Behavior and Enrichment, Adoption, and Foster) are currently vacant and the team is in the process of hiring for these positions. ACS has made

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significant strides in the recruitment and hiring process and are confident they can bring volunteers onboard in an expeditious manner before the close of this year. Additionally, once staffing is in place, ACS will have the capacity to hold regular adoption open houses and regular volunteer orientations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [brent.dennis@longbeach.gov](mailto:brent.dennis@longbeach.gov) or at (562) 570-3170.

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