

Frequently Asked Questions Long Beach Animal Care Services Operational Updates



What is Long Beach Animal Care Services and what do they do?

Long Beach Animal Care Services (LBACS) is a bureau within the City of Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine that provides animal control, care services, programs and resources to communities of Long Beach, Los Alamitos, Cerritos and Signal Hill. LBACS supports the health, safety and wellbeing of animals by providing quality care to approximately 4,000 animals annually. It also helps animals find their forever homes through adoption; in 2024, LBACS facilitated positive outcomes for 2,159 adoptable animals.

What is happening with the partnership with spcaLA?

On Feb. 24, 2025, the City of Long Beach terminated its Lease and Leaseback agreement with spcaLA, ending a 26-year partnership. Concurrently, the City announced details about how it plans to enhance and expand the future operations of the LBACS campus to create long-term benefits for the animals that come under the City's care and the services LBACS provides to Long Beach and other locally serviced communities.

Why did the City enter into contract with spcaLA?

The City first entered into a contract with spcaLA in 1998 to address the overwhelming euthanasia rates that Long Beach, among other municipal shelters, was experiencing at the time and to help find more positive outcomes for animals entering the facility.

What is a Lease and Leaseback agreement?

The City owns the land where the LBACS campus is located. Pursuant to the agreement, the City leased the land to spcaLA for an annual price of \$120 in exchange for the organization to construct and operate a modern state-of-the-art campus that provides both animal control facilities, managed by LBACS, and an adoption center, managed by spcaLA. Under this agreement, it was the understanding that both organizations would work together to assist the other in fulfilling their primary goals at the time. Under the agreement, the City pays 50% of operating costs for the entire campus and is afforded the right to share with spcaLA the common areas of the campus.

What services did spcaLA provide on behalf of LBACS?

Per the Lease and Leaseback agreement, since 2001 spcaLA has been responsible for overseeing operations of the animal adoption center located on the LBACS campus (7700 E. Spring St.) while the City focused on critical animal control issues, stray animal intakes and care services for the community. Pursuant to the agreement, spcaLA was also responsible for campus groundskeeping and maintenance.

Why did the City terminate its partnership with spcaLA?

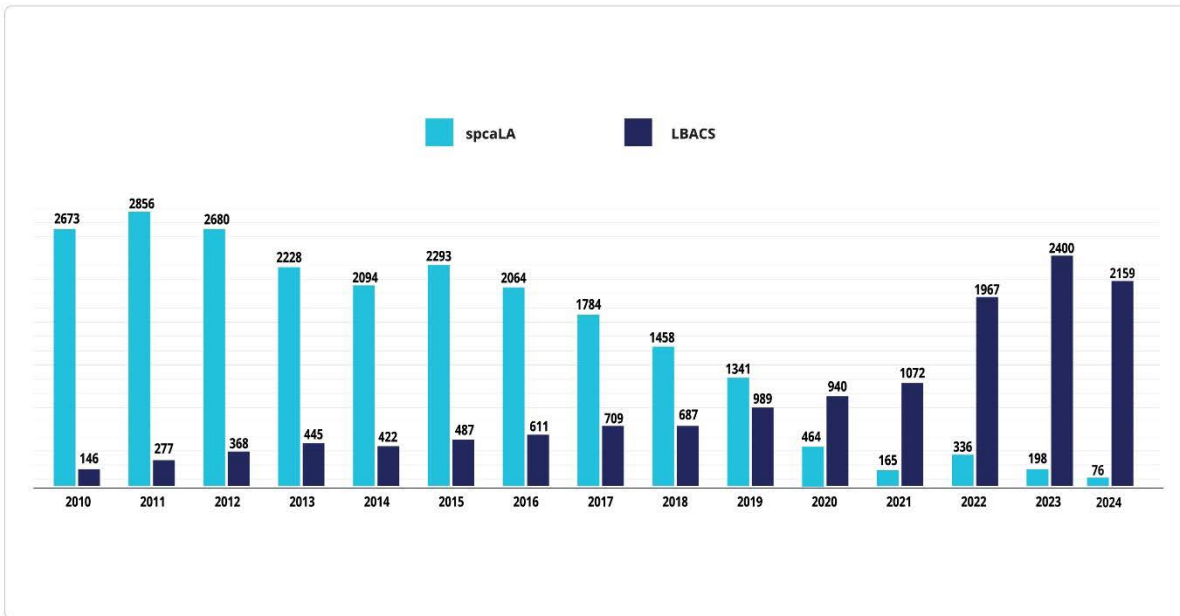
The Lease and Leaseback agreement was terminated for the best interest of the animals under the care of LBACS and the communities the City serves. While there are other ongoing concerns and contract violations that led to this termination, the City would like to address three:

1. Over the years, spcaLA has taken control of more than 50% of the campus, forcing the City to incrementally decrease its operating footprint which has caused strain on LBACS and negatively impacted operations by keeping the shelter at or over capacity and affecting the health and wellbeing of shelter animals. Currently, the City has unrestricted access to only approximately 19% of the campus. The City has repeatedly attempted to address these concerns with spcaLA, to no avail.
2. spcaLA is in violation of Long Beach Municipal Code Section 6.16.190(J)(3) requiring the reporting of animal adoptions, transfers or sales, with the last report submitted to the City occurring on or before April 1, 2020. Animal adoption reports are an accountability measure required by the City to ensure proper reporting and transparency of operations within City limits. spcaLA has neglected to submit these reports for nearly five years, which are required by law. They have also been unwilling to provide any insight into their operations which has caused ongoing strain on our partnership.

- Over the years, spcaLA has drastically decreased their intake of LBACS animals to be adopted out. For reference, in 2011 they took 2,856 adoptable animals and in 2024 they took only 76, an over 97% decrease. This forced LBACS to increase its animal adoption efforts to mitigate shelter overcrowding and other animal welfare circumstances while also continuing to conduct critical animal control and care services. Per the contract, animal adoptions was spcaLA's primary responsibility.

Has spcaLA decreased their animal adoptions?

Since 2011, spcaLA has decreased its intake of LBACS animals available for adoption by over 97%, forcing LBACS to handle both animal control and care services and adoption efforts. See chart below for comparative data of spcaLA's decreased intake of adoptable LBACS animals since 2010.



Above: Bar graph depicts the decrease in spcaLA's intake of adoptable Long Beach Animal Care Services animals (light blue). Comparatively, graph shows the increase in positive outcomes, identified as the number of adoptable dogs and cats adopted by community members from the LBACS facility or transferred to rescue organizations for adoption, performed by Long Beach Animal Care Services since 2010 (dark blue).

How long was the Lease and Leaseback agreement valid?

Prior to the termination, the Lease and Leaseback agreement between LBACS and spcaLA was effective through July 1, 2053. The campus opened to the public in 2001.

When will spcaLA conclude operations at the LBACS campus?

In a good-faith effort, the City is allowing spcaLA up to 30 days to relocate its operation, instead of the legal standard of three days, out of compassion and safety for the animals under spcaLA's care. spcaLA was notified on Feb. 24, 2025, therefore has until March 26, 2025, to relocate.

Why is this happening now and what other steps were tried before the Lease-Leaseback was terminated?

The City has tried many times over the past several years to address specific violations and implement a corrective course of action, including legal correspondence between the City and spcaLA and formal requests for the shared space, but to no avail.

What will happen to the animals under spcaLA's care?

Animals housed in the main adoption center are under the purview of spcaLA, therefore spcaLA has the authority to take the animals with them when they relocate. The City will ensure all animals are cared for through this transition, whether by spcaLA or the City, and will take action to continue adoptions and certain public-facing programs.

Does this mean the adoption center is closing and adoptions will no longer be available on the campus?

Through their deadline to relocate on March 26, spcaLA will continue to oversee operations of the main adoption center located on the campus. Therefore at this time, it is unknown if spcaLA will immediately cease their operations at the adoption center or will continue operations until their deadline to relocate. That decision is under the purview of spcaLA. There will be no changes to the City's adoption programs, which currently adopt out the vast majority of Long Beach animals.

LBACS will continue to offer adoptions at their facility located on the same campus (7700 E. Spring St.), next door to the spcaLA adoption center. Patrons may visit the LBACS Animal Admissions entrance Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. LBACS will also continue its adoption events that take place throughout Long Beach and is actively engaging with partner rescue organizations to enhance adoption efforts, including bringing in organizations to support in-house adoptions and increasing community adoption events. Adoption events will continue to be added to the LBACS calendar and more information will be shared at a later date.

Does this mean LBACS will now operate with a higher animal intake capacity?

LBACS will not operate with increased animal intake capacity at this time but is hopeful that it will in the future. Once spcaLA has vacated the premises, LBACS will assess the conditions of the vacant space and address any necessary maintenance and facility needs so that it can expand operations to the rest of the campus. By having access to the entire campus, LBACS will first focus on improving the quality of life of animals already under our care by moving existing dogs and cats into larger living spaces, including larger, more spacious kennels for the dogs and cats into open shared rooms, and creating proper medical isolation rooms for sick animals, options currently not attainable due to the inequitable shared space.

Will LBACS services and programs be impacted as a result of this?

LBACS proudly offers over a dozen community-based programs and services. Services and operations will continue as normal, and costs of services will not be impacted. The City will share information about any future public impacts for the forthcoming campus expansion initiatives once those details are determined at a later date. The complete list of programs and services currently offered by LBACS is available at longbeach.gov/acs.

How will LBACS handle the maintenance and upkeep of the additional campus space?

In the short term, LBACS will utilize maintenance services from the City's Maintenance Operations Bureau while it works to identify medium- and long-term operational plans. Additional funding and staffing may be needed to support numerous ongoing operational expenses such as increased annual utility and grounds maintenance costs, animal food and supplies, and the beautification and renovation of new spaces.

What are the other operational changes being made for LBACS?

Moving forward, the future of LBACS is optimistic. With this transition, LBACS will:

- Boost the comfort and wellbeing of shelter animals by providing larger, more open living quarters for dogs and cats, which will in turn create calmer, friendlier demeanors and lead to higher adoption rates and lower euthanasia rates.
- Mitigate common shelter illnesses and health issues with the implementation of proper medical isolation areas for sick animals, reducing length of stay and increasing positive outcomes for shelter animals.
- Implement partnerships with rescue organizations to enhance adoption visibility and success by bringing in partners to support in-house adoptions, expand community adoption events and implement other animal care services on the campus.
- Strengthen partnership between LBACS, nonprofit partners and the community by increasing donations and financial support for shelter initiatives.
- Implement low-cost, high-volume pet medicine and medical care services by developing an in-house veterinary medical facility to provide easily accessible and affordable pet care options for community members and in turn foster responsible pet ownership and reduce intake rates.
- Decrease animal over population by implementing an in-house trap, neuter/spay and return program with a partner organization.
- Continue offering dog training classes to the public, including the addition of free dog behavior support via a nonprofit partner.

Does this transition impact the bureau's operating budget?

This transition is expected to result in an augmentation of the existing bureau budget to address the additional space and capacity needs. Specific amounts will be reviewed as part of the budget process. Funds may be needed to bring on additional animal care attendants and a full-time in-house maintenance team and used for numerous ongoing operational expenses such as increased annual utility and grounds maintenance costs, animal food and supplies, and the beautification and renovation of new spaces. LBACS currently operates with a full-time staff of 51 and an \$7.8 million annual budget.

What is the Compassion Saves service model?

The Compassion Saves service model focuses on protecting shelter animals by creating and fostering an environment of care. Through community outreach and collaboration, close partnerships with animal welfare organizations, education, guidance, supportive services and innovative programs, LBACS is making a lasting, positive impact and creating a better future for pets and animals in Long Beach.

Where can I learn more about Long Beach Animal Care Services?

More information about LBACS, including its many services, programs and events, is available at longbeach.gov/acs and by following @lbanimalcare on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Who can I contact with questions?

Questions from community members may be emailed to LBACSCommunications@longbeach.gov. Please allow five to seven business days before receiving a response.