



# The Delaware Office of Animal Welfare

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## MISSION:

The Office of Animal Welfare (OAW), established in 2013, protects the health, safety, and welfare of companion animals, and promotes the human-animal bond in the state of Delaware. An agency of the Division of Public Health, the OAW coordinates programs and policies that protect animals from abuse and neglect, reduce pet homelessness, and improve the quality of care provided by shelters, rescues, and foster care systems. The office works in partnership with all levels of government, animal control providers, and animal welfare organizations to address emerging issues for the protection of animals and the public.

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Successfully consolidated State companion animal programs for improved efficiency and performance, and delivered over 18,000 spay/neuter certificates to persons with low incomes.
- Established first-ever enforcement provisions for the Shelter Standards law and launched a comprehensive shelter oversight program.
- Developed training and certification requirements for animal control officers and cruelty investigators working in the state.
- Hosted the first Delaware State Spay Day, which offered over 100 free surgeries and rabies vaccinations statewide to pet owners with low incomes.
- Re-established the state Dog Control Panel for potentially dangerous dog cases.
- Delivered comprehensive recommendations for improving animal control and cruelty enforcement functions in the state.
- Launched the new Animal Welfare License plate for improved spay/neuter fundraising.
- Worked with the Attorney General's office and Delaware Animal Care and Control to define improved communication processes for more effective animal cruelty prosecution.

## OUR PRIORITIES:

- Consolidate animal control and cruelty enforcement services for improved sustainability, accountability, and effectiveness.
- Reform the Delaware Animal Response (DAR) program to ensure state preparedness concerning animals in disasters.
- Launch a comprehensive training and certification program for animal control and cruelty officers.
- Expand access to spay/neuter and vaccination services to reduce free-roaming or stray cats, ensure all low-income Delawareans have access to low-cost or free spay/neuter services, and increase our community resiliency to rabies.
- Inspect all animal shelters to ensure adherence to Shelter Standard laws and offer a humane euthanasia certification course to euthanasia technicians employed by shelters.



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