

REVISED MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

APRIL 7, 2026

AND KATHRYN BARGER

Proclaiming April 11th National Pet Day and Dog Therapy Appreciation Day in Los Angeles County

Pets are considered by many to be integral members of families; however, animals also serve as integral members of society. Dogs, in particular, serve critical roles as working members of various sectors including police, military, search and rescue, farming, and service/guides. Therapy is another critical service that dogs provide. Due to the mental health benefit experienced by engaging with pets, trained therapy dogs visit people in various settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, and schools. Therapy dogs help provide psychological and physiological therapy by providing comfort and joy. From working with a child learning to read to serving as a source of comfort to patients recovering from cancer to visiting a senior in assisted living, therapy dogs and their handlers work together as a team to improve the lives of the people they visit. The training required for therapy dogs to become certified is extensive and ongoing.

Despite the roles animals play in society, every year thousands enter shelters in Los Angeles County for various reasons ranging from death, illness or incarceration of a pet's owners to housing or financial changes to physical separation and lack of

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reunification. The past year has been especially challenging in Los Angeles County with the effects of the January 2025 fires still being felt, impact of extreme immigration tactics by the federal government, and fiscal uncertainty. Systemic and social issues that impact humans have a ripple effect on pet ownership. Although the Fiscal Year has not yet ended, Fiscal Year 2025-2026 has already seen 24,805 animals admitted to Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control (DACC). DACC has reported that among the top reasons for owners surrendering their pets are consistently housing and financial concerns.

Only 41.83% of animals that have exited the LA County animal care and control system have been adopted.¹ The rest have been rescued or euthanized. Large intakes, such as the 300 plus animals rescued in a large operation in Antelope Valley in March 2026, put a strain on the animal care system and put animals currently in the centers at risk. It is pertinent that as Los Angeles County celebrates the joy pets and therapy dogs bring to our lives, that we also uplift the many animals in our County's Animal Care Centers waiting for a family and further shine a light on the services available to help pets and families remain united. Every pet adoption saves a life, is more cost-effective than buying and combats backyard breeding and illegal puppy mills.

IWE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Proclaim April 11th as National Pet Day in Los Angeles County.

¹ <https://lacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/93ed457640874411959941957a39f428>

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2. Proclaim April 11th as Dog Therapy Appreciation Day in Los Angeles County.
3. Encourage the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) to commemorate both National Pet Day and National Dog Therapy Appreciation Day by:
 - a. Uplifting the positive impact of pet ownership via all avenues of external communication available to the department, including animal care center specific social media.
 - b. Elevate awareness about Backyard Breeding Policies, Pets Are Family Program, Pet Pantry service at Animal Care Centers, spay/neuter programs, and other pet ownership retainment programs across communication platforms and pre-scheduled in-person events for the April 11th commemoration.
4. Encourage the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (CEO) to uplift National Pet Day and National Dog Therapy Appreciation Day throughout the month of April by promoting pet adoptions at DACC centers, and the fact pets are spay/neutered and fully vaccinated at DACC centers, by posting on social media, internal communications such as intranet banners, and all other applicable communication outlets; and identify a permanent space in the intranet that will clearly promote pet adoption to employees.
5. Encourage the Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources (DHR),

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in collaboration with DACC, to work with all County departments to spread awareness to employees about the need to adopt, benefits of adopting from DACC centers and include in new hire packets.

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