



COLAHI: Supporting the Pack of Two

DACC Programs for the Pet Owner
Experiencing Homelessness

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Human-Animal Bond

Research has shown that in the homeless population the dog and owner, in effect, become a **pack of two**.

There is a mutual easing of anxiety, as pet and human spend all their time together. This provides security for both. Theirs, in fact, is a reciprocal dependency. They each offer the other a form of safety.

For many people experiencing homelessness, a pet may be their closest and dearest companion, carrying them through difficult and stressful situations. Their pets are their family.

Non-pet friendly housing is an identified barrier to homeless pet owners.

Pet owners may refuse or delay seeking services if there are no pet inclusive options available to them.





“No one should be faced with the decision of having to give up a family member while in a housing emergency.”

Kristen Hassen

Director, American Pets Alive!



The Los Angeles County
HOMELESS INITIATIVE
REAL HELP. LASTING CHANGE.

**The Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC)
is a committed member of the LA County Homeless Initiative**

DACC participates in strategies to:

- ❖ Assist pet owners with direct services
- ❖ Provide referrals to service providers and outreach

Services are provided **FREE OF CHARGE** and are available to pet owners experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness at all points of interaction with the Department at our Animal Care Centers, and with our Licensing, Enforcement and Field Response units.





DACC offers several services and activities related to the Homeless Initiative.

- Referrals to service providers
- Basic wellness veterinary care
- Higher level veterinary care on a case-by-case basis
- Emergency boarding/kenneling
- Waived return to owner fees
- Pet supplies
- Pet Licensing



Referral to Service Providers

As part of a holistic approach to addressing the issues that affect people experiencing homelessness, DACC staff are trained in referrals to service providers.

- ❖ Training provided by the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA) details the procedure for contacting service providers when a person states they are homeless.
- ❖ The referral allows the person to access resources through the Coordinated Entry System (CES), including assessment of housing and other needs.



Basic Wellness Care

- Comprehensive vet exam
- Vaccination and deworming
- Spay/neuter surgery
- Microchip placement
- Medical grooming

These services are made available at no cost to pet owners experiencing homelessness, delivered at our ACCs or at our Vet@ThePark events.





Advanced Medical Care (on a case-by-case basis)

Advanced medical care, treatment beyond the basic wellness need, is provided on a case-by-case basis.

Depending on scope of treatment, prognosis and ability to care for the pet during and after treatment, higher level care can be made available through the Care Voucher Program or at the Animal Care Centers.





Emergency or Temporary Housing

The best option is to keep pets and people together whenever possible; however, there may be times that a pet owner experiences an emergency or requires temporary need to board their pets.

DACC offers two options:

- Owners are assisted through the ACF Care Voucher Program where pets can be boarded up to two weeks at a partner kenneling facility to be paid using a voucher
- Pet may be boarded at any of our 7 animal care centers at no cost to the pet owner for a specified period of time.



Boarding at the ACC

As part of participation in the program, pet owners are asked to consent for the following services for their pet:

- ☐ Spay or Neuter surgery
- ☐ Vaccines
- ☐ Microchip placement
- ☐ Behavior assessment for their pet
- ☐ Pet owners may opt for their pet to be interacted with and walked by staff and volunteers.
- ☐ Pet owners must provide multiple contact numbers and remain in close contact with DACC.

Boarding at the ACC



Animals with behavior or medical issues beyond the scope of the Animal Care Center's ability to care or treat will not be accepted into the program.

At intake, staff will alert the medical and behavior teams if a condition or behavior exists that needs to be assessed.

The behavior and enrichment team will determine whether the animal is available for interaction by staff and volunteers.

The medical team will provide weekly monitoring of the pets while in DACC care. Each ACC will keep a daily care sheet for the pet, logging food, walks and other medical items. Records will be maintained for up to three years.





Case management is a vital component of the COLAHI program.

One staff member is assigned at each ACC to monitor length of stay and work with pet owner on exit plans.

If the pet owner does not claim their pet by a specified date, the animal will be placed for adoption or other placement recommendation





Documenting the stories of the individuals and families helped by the program is important in creating a database of information. Future services and interdepartmental collaboration may benefit from the information collected.

- At intake, the program is explained to the pet owner and a consent for photographs is obtained.
- Photos at intake and at release are taken by staff. The intake photo of the pet will not be posted while in care as pet has an owner.
- Owners have the option to decline the photo request.



Waived Return To Owner (RTO) Fees

RTO fees are waived when reuniting a pet with an owner experiencing homelessness.

Pet Supplies

DACC collect donations of food, crates, toys and other supplies and distribute them to pet owners experiencing homelessness or at risk of being homeless. These supplies help the pet owner provide the basic needs of their furry family member





PET LICENSES

- Pet Owners experiencing homelessness do not need a physical address to get a pet license.
- Licenses can be listed at a PO Box or other alternate address .
- License fees cannot be waived but may be subsidized by another party or organization .

Inter-agency referrals



➤ **LA County Department of Public Social Services (Homeless Service)**

DPSS offers various Homeless Programs and Services designed to assist families and individuals who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.

CalFresh and Medi-Cal

www.dpss.lacounty.gov/en/homeless

➤ **Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)**

LAHSA is the lead agency in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care, which is the regional planning body that coordinates housing and services for homeless families and individuals in Los Angeles County.

www.lahsa.org

➤ **Housing Equality & Advocacy Resource Team (HeartLA)**

A non-profit firm providing assistance, education and policy advocacy to keep people and pets housed together.

www.heartla.org

➤ **Better Together Forever**

A non-profit organization offers resources and referrals to at-risk, under-resourced, under-served, housing-challenged pet parents in Los Angeles, California so that they can keep their pets, keep them safe and healthy and NOT have to surrender them to an animal shelter, give them up, or abandon them on the streets.

www.peopleandpetsbtf.org



DACC is committed to reducing barriers for pet owners experiencing homelessness and those at risk of becoming homeless by providing services and/or connecting to resources to help keep the family together.

Questions ?



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL | redefining CARE

Pets Are Family (PAF)
Community Service Programs

- **Medical HelpLine**
 - Trained Counselors at 661.575.2812
- **ACF Care Voucher**
 - Financial Assistance for medical, boarding, grooming, pet supplies
- **Spay/Neuter Voucher**
 - Discount voucher for spay or neuter services
- **Pet Food Pantry**
 - Free Pet Food
- **VET@The Park**
 - Free pet medical wellness consult & services
 - Free Spay & Neuter services
- **Good Neighbor Cat Program**
 - Free medical services for neighborhood cats

Email : Fcorvino@animalcare.lacounty.gov

INCREASING LANGUAGE ACCESS

Community Services Cluster Meeting

7/20/2022

Background

- Effort commenced in early 2022
- Increase meaningful access to the departments' information, efforts, and services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- LEP persons do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English



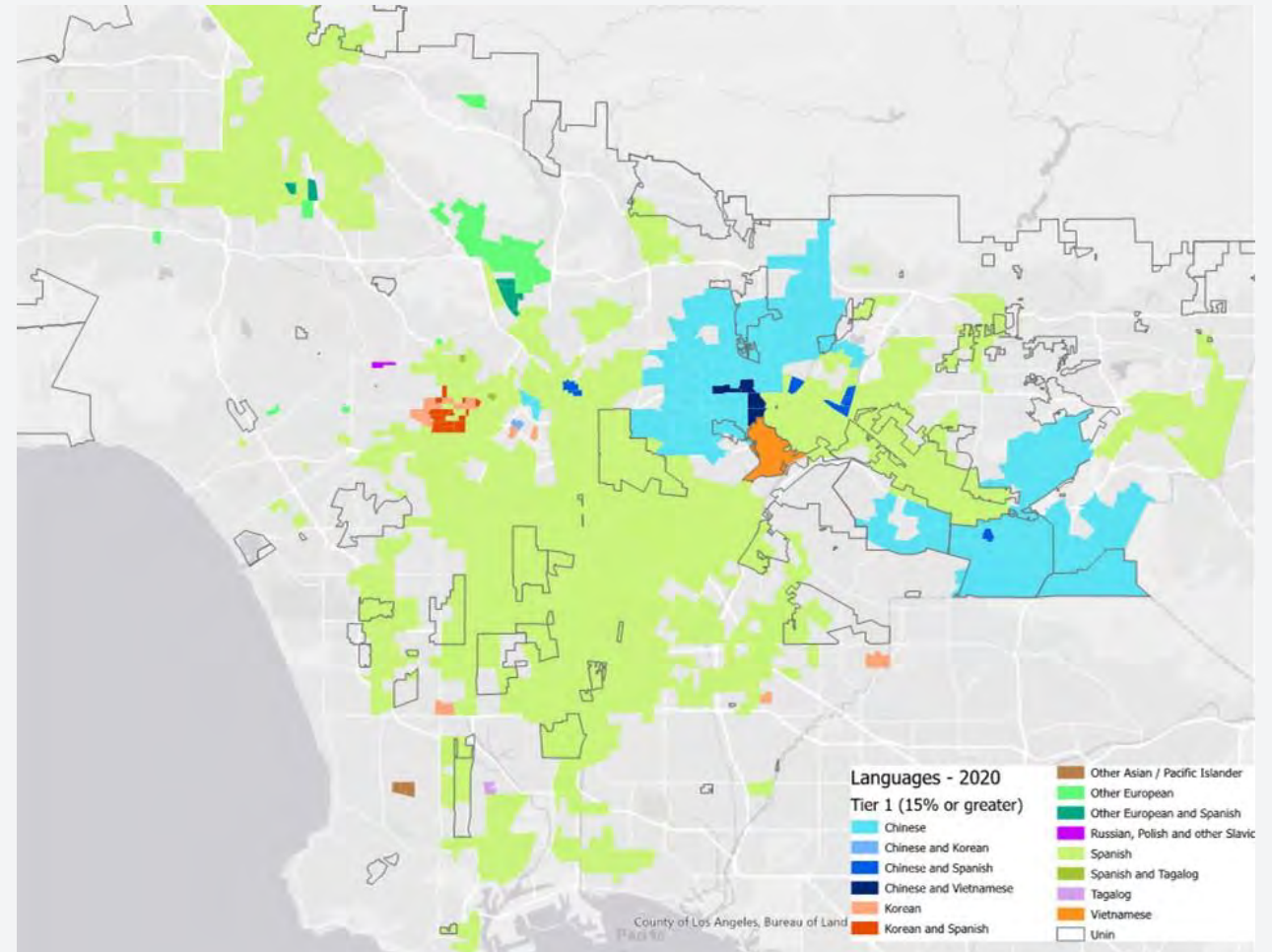
Why?

- Proactively contribute to the County's equity goals
- Increase access to LA County Planning's services
- Incorporate previously untapped community ideas into the planning process



Current Effort

- Language Access Policy and Implementation Guide
 - Defines meaning of language access
 - Aspirational goals
 - Expectations and protocols
 - Services available
 - Procedures to obtain and provide services

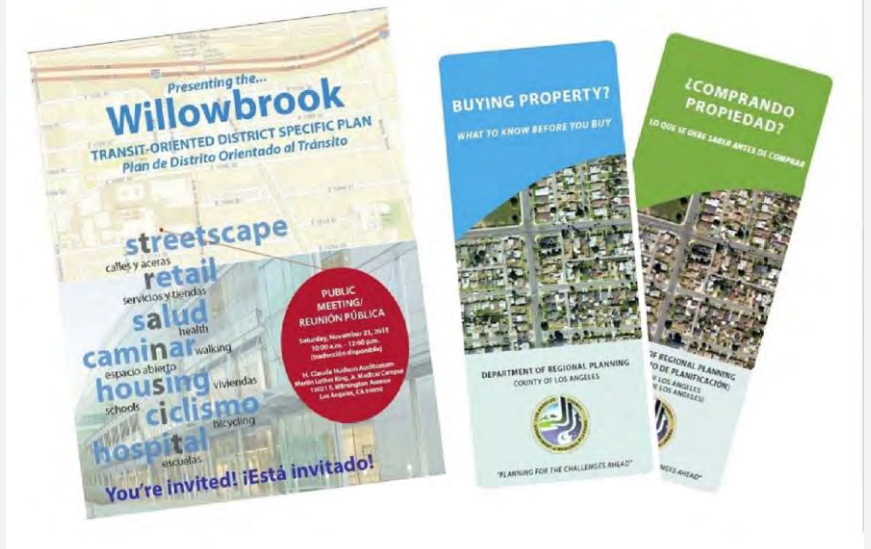


LA County LEP Communities Map

Services Available

- Immediate Customer Service Interpretations
- American Sign Language Interpretations
- Public Hearings and Community Meeting Interpretations
- Written Translations (Outreach Materials, Hearing Notices, etc.)
- Review of Translated Materials for Quality Control

Plus, website translation.



Language Access Committee

- Modeled after the Spanish Planning Committee (SPC)
- Purpose and role
 - Maintain and update the policy and implementation guide
 - Proactively seek, implement, and prioritize future opportunities to increase language access



Questions or Suggestions?

Contact Information

- Spanish Planning Committee Co-Chairs
 - Dennis Harkins - dharkins@planning.lacounty.gov
 - Alejandrina Baldwin - abaldwin@planning.lacounty.gov