

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY  
ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM  
28 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0028

WALTER E. WHITCOMB  
COMMISSIONER

PAUL R. LEPAGE  
GOVERNOR

LIAM HUGHES  
DIRECTOR

## Maine's Animal Welfare Program review for 2014

**Our Mission:** The Animal Welfare Program ensures the humane treatment of animals through communication, education, and enforcement of animal welfare laws.

**What we do:** Animal Welfare develops and implements policies and programs to effectively address complaints of animal cruelty, to inspect and license animal shelters, pet stores, kennels, animal research facilities, and to enforce the licensing of dogs.

### Staff

Director: Liam Hughes

District Humane Agent Aroostook County: Chrissy MacFarland

District Humane Agent Washington, Hancock Counties: Douglas Radziewicz

District Humane Agent Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset Counties: Rachel Croce

District Humane Agent Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties: Rae- Ann Demos

District Humane Agent Franklin Oxford Androscoggin Counties: Angela Young

District Humane Agent York, Cumberland Counties: Danielle Jersey

Support Staff: Lynn Fortin

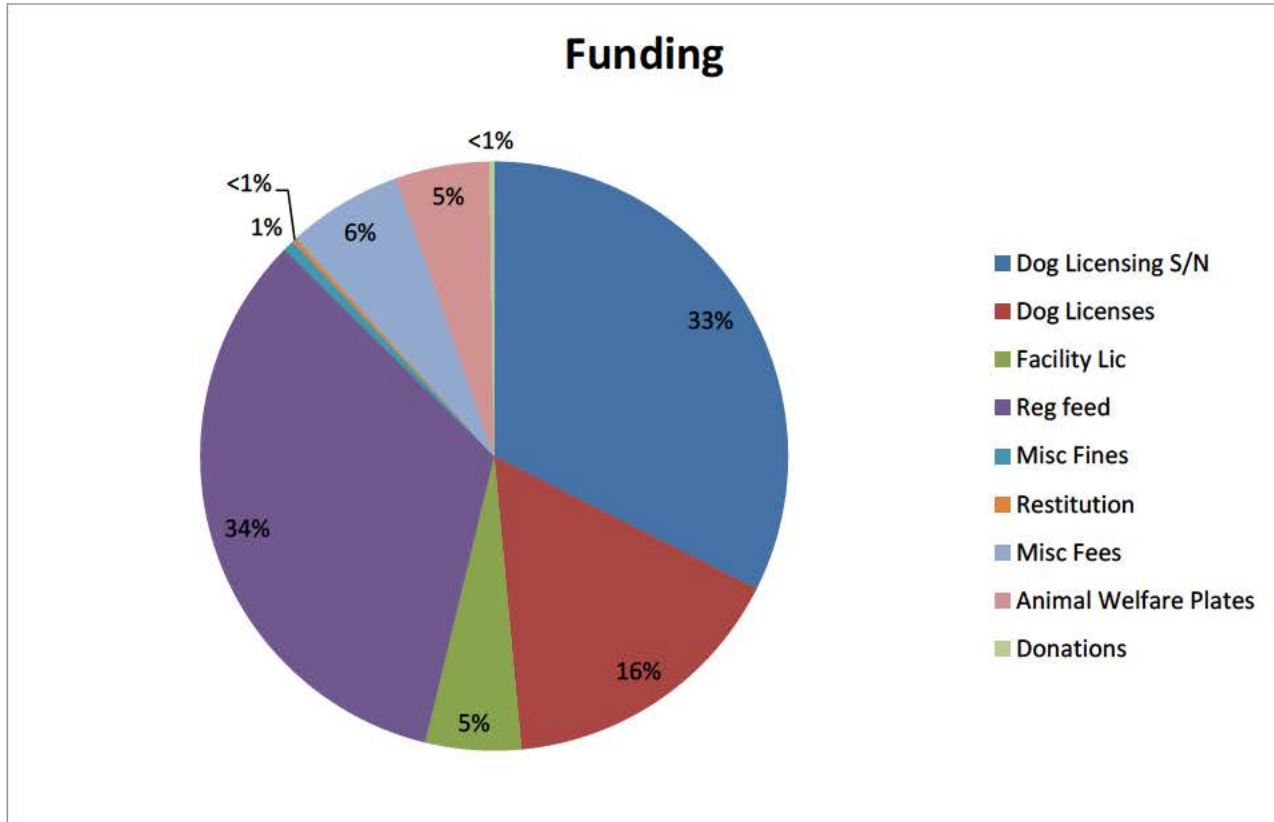
Vacant Position: Veterinarian

Vacant position: State Humane Agent

Vacant position: Planning and Research

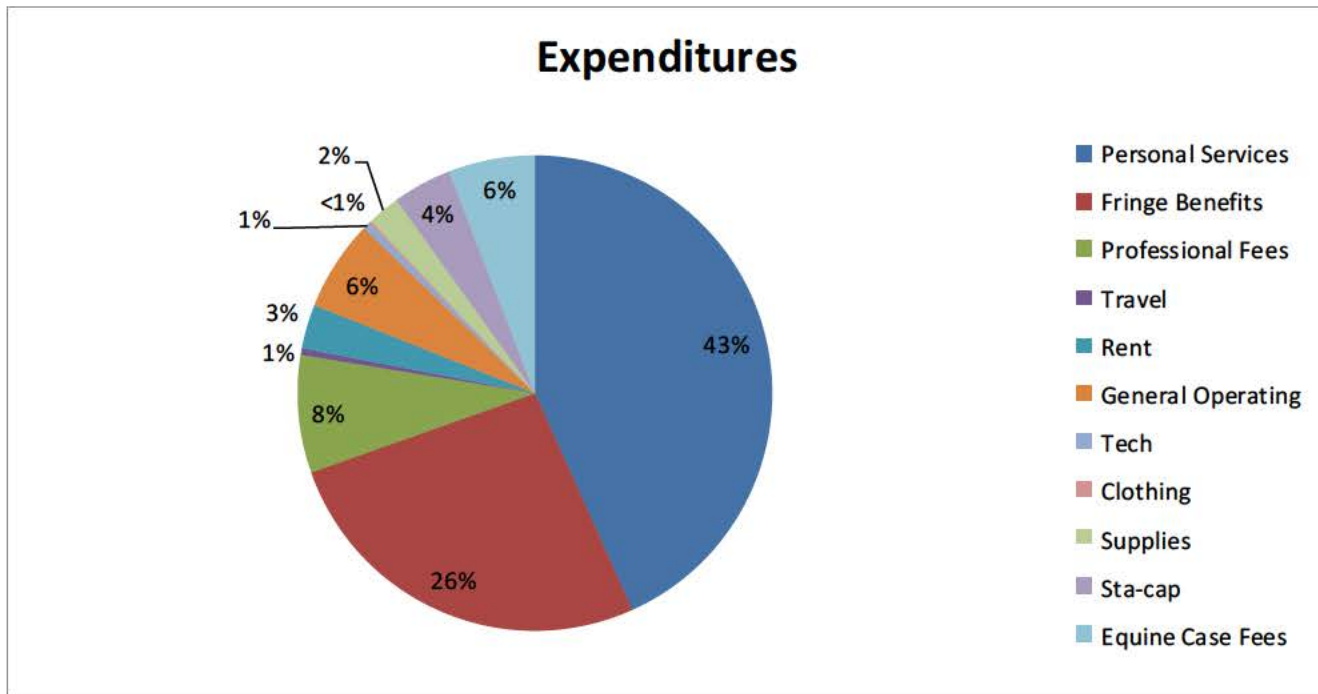
## Income 2014

A majority of the income for Animal Welfare comes from dog licensing and pet food surcharges. In the fiscal year for 2014, Animal Welfare received the following funding.



34% Registered feed	\$462,640.00
33% Dog License spayed and neutered	\$447,026.00
16% Dog License	\$221,479.00
6% Misc. Fees	\$87,380.00
5% Facility License	\$72,485.00
5% Animal Welfare Plates	\$70,955.00
1% Misc. Fines	\$8,824.00
<1% Restitution	\$3,508.00
<1% Donations	\$3,498.00

## Expenditures 2014

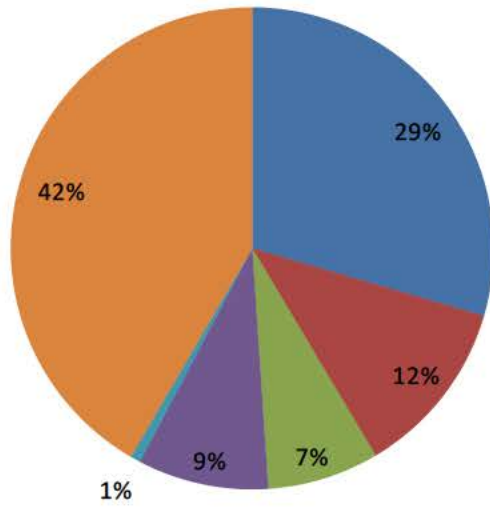


43% Personal Services	\$363,059.00
26% Fringe Benefits	\$220,740.00
8% Professional Fees	\$67,045.00
6% General Operating	\$51,835.00
6% Equine Case Fees	\$49,394.00
4% State-Cap Administrative	\$33,762.00
3% Rent	\$25,125.00
2% Supplies	\$18,402.00
1% Tech	\$4,348.00
1% Travel	\$3,879.00
<1% Clothing	\$1,348.00

## Companion Animal Sterilization (Help Fix ME)

Also known as **Help Fix ME** the program has been in operation since 2005 and has helped with the overpopulation of dogs and cats across the State of Maine. The Goals of the Help Fix me program are to assist responsible pet owners to keep their pets and help reduce the numbers of unwanted pets euthanized in the animal shelters. It is designed to help those that meet the low income criteria. Thanks to a growing movement in responsible pet ownership and spay and neuter programs from many of the animal shelters and humane groups across the state, pet spay and neutering is more available to the public and the number of unwanted pets in the animal shelters is down to record lows. Below is the income for fiscal year 2014.

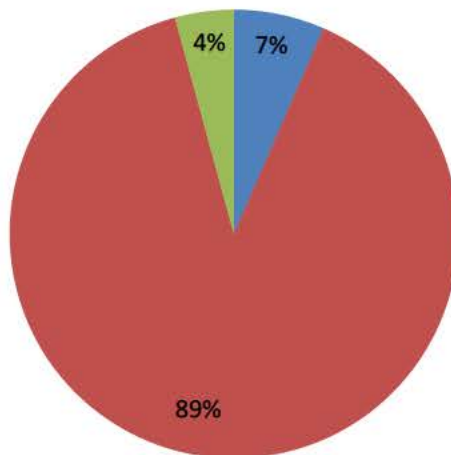
## Help Fix Me Income



- AWP License Plates
- Co Pays
- Pet Shop Surcharge
- Tax Check Off
- Donations
- Pet Food Surcharge

42% Pet Food Surcharge	\$100,000.00
29% AWP License Plates	\$70,955.00
12% Co Pays	\$28,675.00
9% Tax Check off	\$21,069.00
7% Pet Shop Surcharge	\$17,960.00
1% Donations	\$1,614.00

## Help Fix ME Expenditures



- Administration
- General Operating
- Sta Cap

89% General Operating	\$228,293.00
7% Administration	\$16,769.00
4% State-Cap	\$10,844.00

During the calendar year of 2014 Help Fix ME issued 2968 vouchers for spay and neutering. Animal shelter surveys that this department does every year have shown a majority of animals in the shelters are cats. 90% of the Help Fix ME funding has been dedicated to spaying and neutering cats for 2014. Dogs that are being altered are predominantly mix breed dogs such as huskies, labs, and hounds that are commonly found in the shelters of Maine.

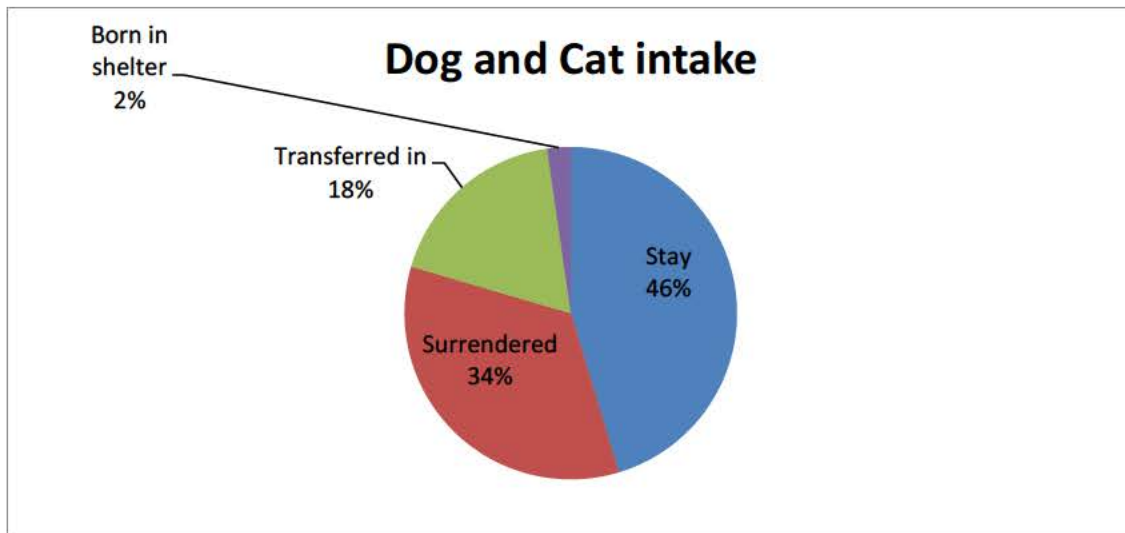
- 2611 Cats altered
- 357 Dogs altered

Help Fix Me vouchers can be used all over the State of Maine. This is a list of the counties where many vouchers were sent to in Maine.

Androscoggin – 59  
Aroostook – 416  
Cumberland – 152  
Franklin – 162  
Hancock – 99  
Kennebec – 256  
Knox – 93  
Lincoln – 85  
Oxford – 112  
Penobscot – 327  
Piscataquis – 106  
Sagadahoc – 140  
Somerset – 288  
Waldo – 101  
Washington – 104  
York – 48

## Animal Shelter Survey

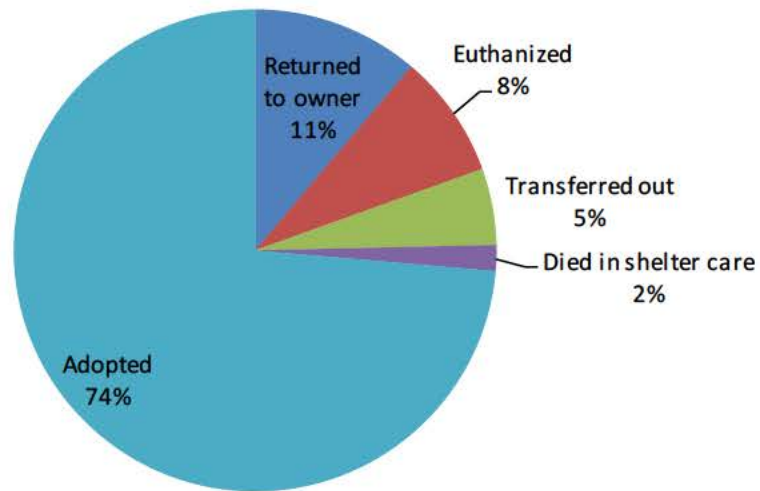
Over the past 4 years, Animal Welfare has been conducting surveys of the animal shelters to find out how many animals are being euthanized and how many are adding to the live release rate. During the time we have been doing the survey we found that the live release rate has gone up and the euthanasia rate decreased dramatically. This is in part due to the hard work of the animal shelters and animal control officers throughout the state that help animal welfare educate pet owners and share information about spay and neuter programs. The live release rate refers to the animals that are not being euthanized and these number shows that Maine is doing great work preventing the euthanasia of unwanted animals and finding ways to place animals in forever homes.



	<b>Dogs &amp; Cats</b>	<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Cats</b>
<b>Stay</b>	<b>13,699</b>	<b>3,730</b>	<b>9,969</b>
<b>Surrendered</b>	<b>10,331</b>	<b>2,659</b>	<b>7,672</b>
<b>Transferred in</b>	<b>5,496</b>	<b>3,436</b>	<b>2,060</b>
<b>Born in shelter</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>635</b>

Stray and surrendered intake numbers for animal shelters are trending down compared to 2013. Animals transferred into shelters reflect dogs being imported from shelters in the southern United States and cats being transferred from shelters in northern Maine.

## Dog and Cat Outcome



	Dogs & Cats	Dogs	Cats
<b>Returned to owner</b>	<b>3,334</b>	<b>2,669</b>	<b>665</b>
<b>Euthanized</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>2,094</b>
<b>Transferred out</b>	<b>1,528</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1,241</b>
<b>Died in shelter care</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>489</b>
<b>Adopted</b>	<b>21,912</b>	<b>6,756</b>	<b>14,572</b>

When Animal Welfare discusses the euthanasia rate we also discuss the live release rate for animal shelters. The live release rate is the number of animals leaving the shelters thanks to the work the shelters do with fostering animals, transferring them to other shelters and facilities for adoption, and trap neuter and return programs that have reduced the number of unwanted feral and community cats that used to fill the shelters.

The live release rates for the past four years are

- 2011 72%
- 2012 80%
- 2013 88%
- 2014 90%

Animal Welfare has noticed that many of the animal shelters in the State of Maine have begun to partner up and work together on certain issues. Many shelters in southern Maine with high cat adoption rates have started transferring cats from Aroostook County where cat adoption rates are much lower.



## **Animal Complaints in 2014**

243 animal complaints were received by the Animal Welfare program in 2014. Animal Welfare staff has been working with the public and local Animal Control Officers to help resolve complaints of neglect, abuse, and animal/human conflicts throughout the year. Through efforts to educate the public on **pet owner's responsibilities and resources available to them we have** been able to reduce the number of animals seized by the state and improve the quality of life for the people and animals.

This past year Animal Welfare has reevaluated how it receives and documents complaints. Multiple complaints on an address during the same time are now tied into one complaint and information is now added to the complaint rather than starting a new complaint report.

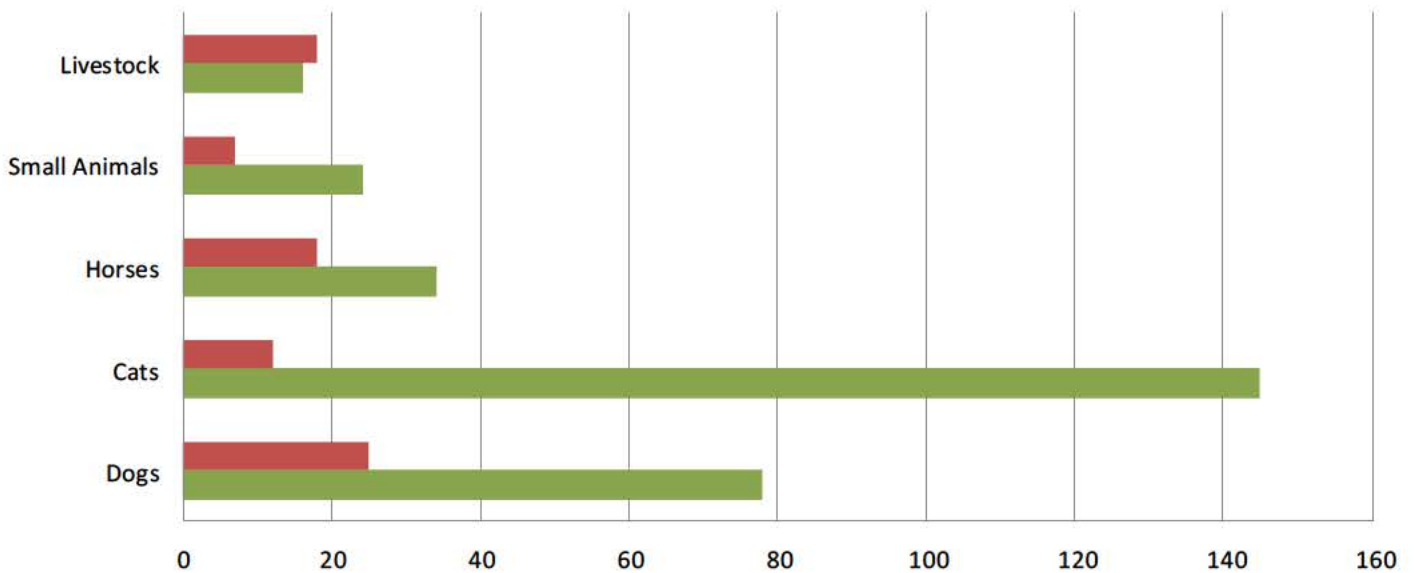
297 animals that were surrendered from animal owners that found themselves unable to care for animals appropriately or where overwhelmed by the costs of the animals care were quickly placed into local animal shelters and rescues where most have been able to be rehomed.

In some cases, owners cannot accept the fact that what they are doing is causing harm to the animals or is a violation of the Maine State Laws. After every attempt to communicate to the owner of the animals what they need to do to improve has failed, or there is probable cause of **deliberate abuse, Humane Agents begin working with the local District Attorney's office to file** for an ex parte order or a search warrant to get custody of the animals and gather evidence.

Humane agents appeared in court over 20 times in the past year and won each case. The Animal Welfare Program typically recommends for sentencing that some sort of possession ban be put into place limiting the amount of animals the convicted violators have in addition to other fines and restitution.

In 2014, 80 animals were seized by Humane Agents across the State of Maine. Once the animals that have been seized by the state have been awarded to the Animal Welfare Program by the court, we work with our shelter and rescue partners to quickly rehome the animals just like they would be if they were surrendered to the animal shelters.

## Animals Seized or Surrendered to AWP 2014



	Dogs	Cats	Horses	Small Animals	Livestock
Seized	25	12	18	7	18
Surrendered	78	145	34	24	16

### Licensed Facilities

Animal Welfare is responsible for the licensing and inspection of all of the Animal Shelters, Pet Stores, Boarding Kennels, Breeding Kennels, and research facilities in the State of Maine. There are over 530 of these facilities in the state and humane agents are working with these facilities to maintain compliance and prevent disease outbreaks. Inspections are very important to the Animal Welfare Program to complete in a timely manner but staffing, scheduling issues and cruelty case have slowed the response time for inspections.

### Animal Control Officer Trainings and improvements

Another responsibility of Animal Welfare is to provide the Basic Animal Control Officers (ACO) Training and to help encourage them to seek additional trainings where ever possible. Every spring and fall our office puts on a training that helps instruct the ACO in their responsibilities, the animal laws, dangerous dogs and bite cases, rabies, and officer safety. A wide variety of professionals from their fields come to act as instructors such as District Attorneys, Veterinarians, Police Officers, and other Certified ACO's share their experiences and knowledge to help new ACO's prepare for the job ahead of them. Trainings were held in Augusta and Orono this past year.

This past fall Animal Welfare worked with the University of Maine Orono Witter Farm to have its first 5 day training for animal control officers. This training gave ACO's the opportunity to get hands on experiences with many of the animals they will encounter while working. The focus of the training is to give the ACO as much practical knowledge so they can perform their jobs professionally and safely.

**In conclusion**

The animal welfare program has faced many challenging and difficult cases over the years and **many members of the public have strong opinions of how animals should and shouldn't be** treated. The State of Maine has been ranked again as number 2 by the Animal Legal Defense Fund for having the strongest animal welfare laws in the country. Maine has been a leader in the animal welfare world for many years and it is our intention to continue those efforts using education and enforcement.