

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

WALTER E. WHITCOMB
COMMISSIONER

Maine's Animal Welfare Program Review 2016

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, inspect and license animal shelters, pet stores, kennels, animal research facilities, and 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

Office Staff: Lynn Fortin, Sara Thompson

Veterinarian: Dr. Rachael Fiske DVM

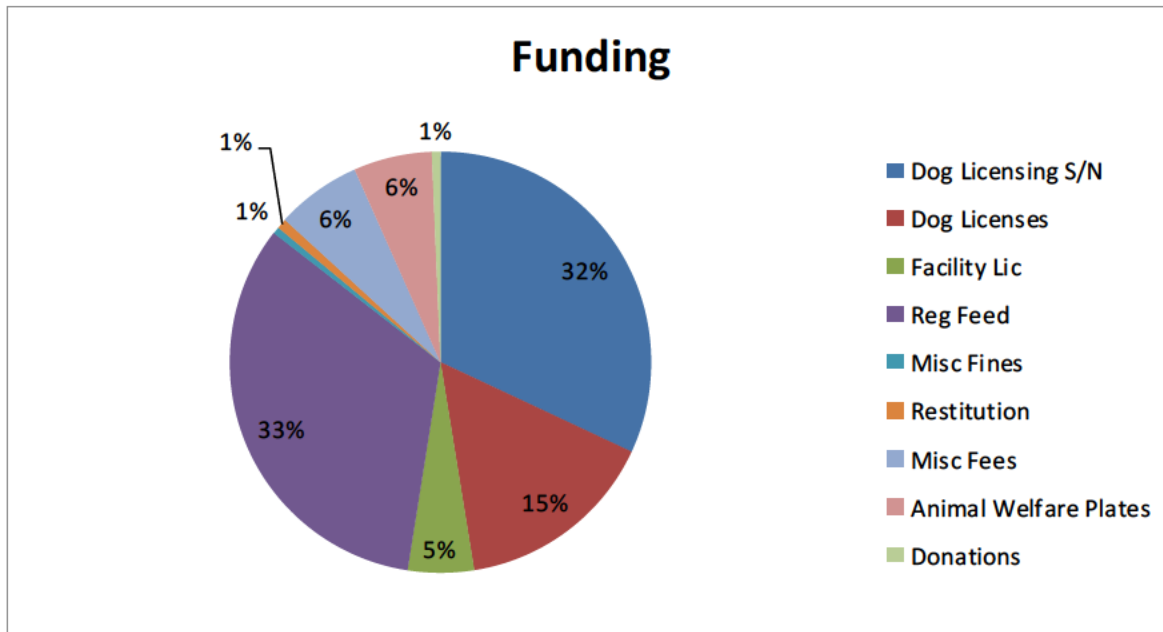
LIAM HUGHES, DIRECTOR
ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM
90 BLOSSOM LANE, DEERING BUILDING



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Income 2016

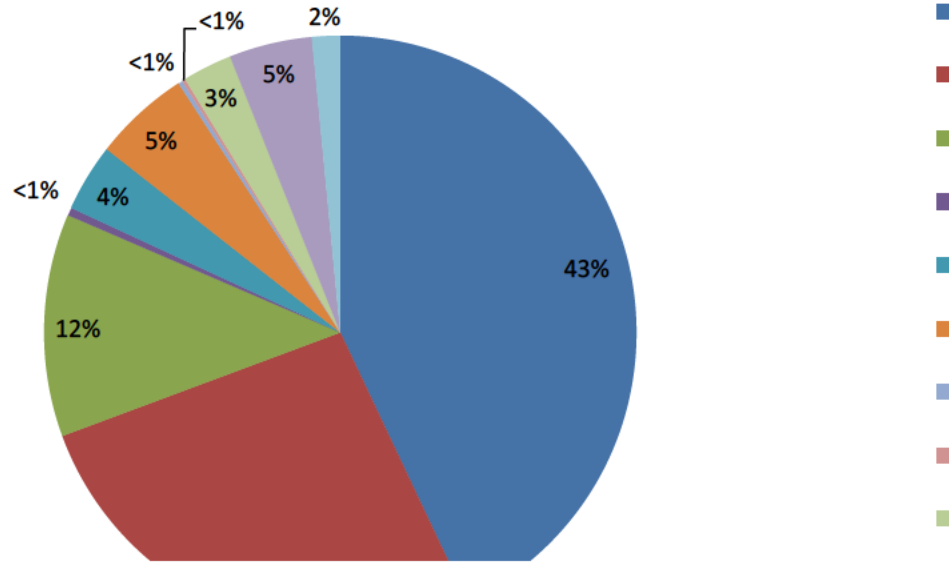
A majority of the income for Animal Welfare comes from dog licensing and pet food surcharges. In the fiscal year for 2016, Animal Welfare received the following funding.



| | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 33% Registered feed | \$471,610.00 |
| 32% Dog License spayed and neutered | \$457,169.00 |
| 15% Dog License | \$220,799.00 |
| 6% Misc. Fees | \$93,135.00 |
| 6% Animal Welfare Plates | \$85,980.00 |
| 5% Facility License | \$72,562.00 |
| 1% Donations | \$9,383.00 |
| 1% Misc. Fines | \$7,586.00 |
| 1% Restitution | \$11,105.00 |

Expenditures 2016

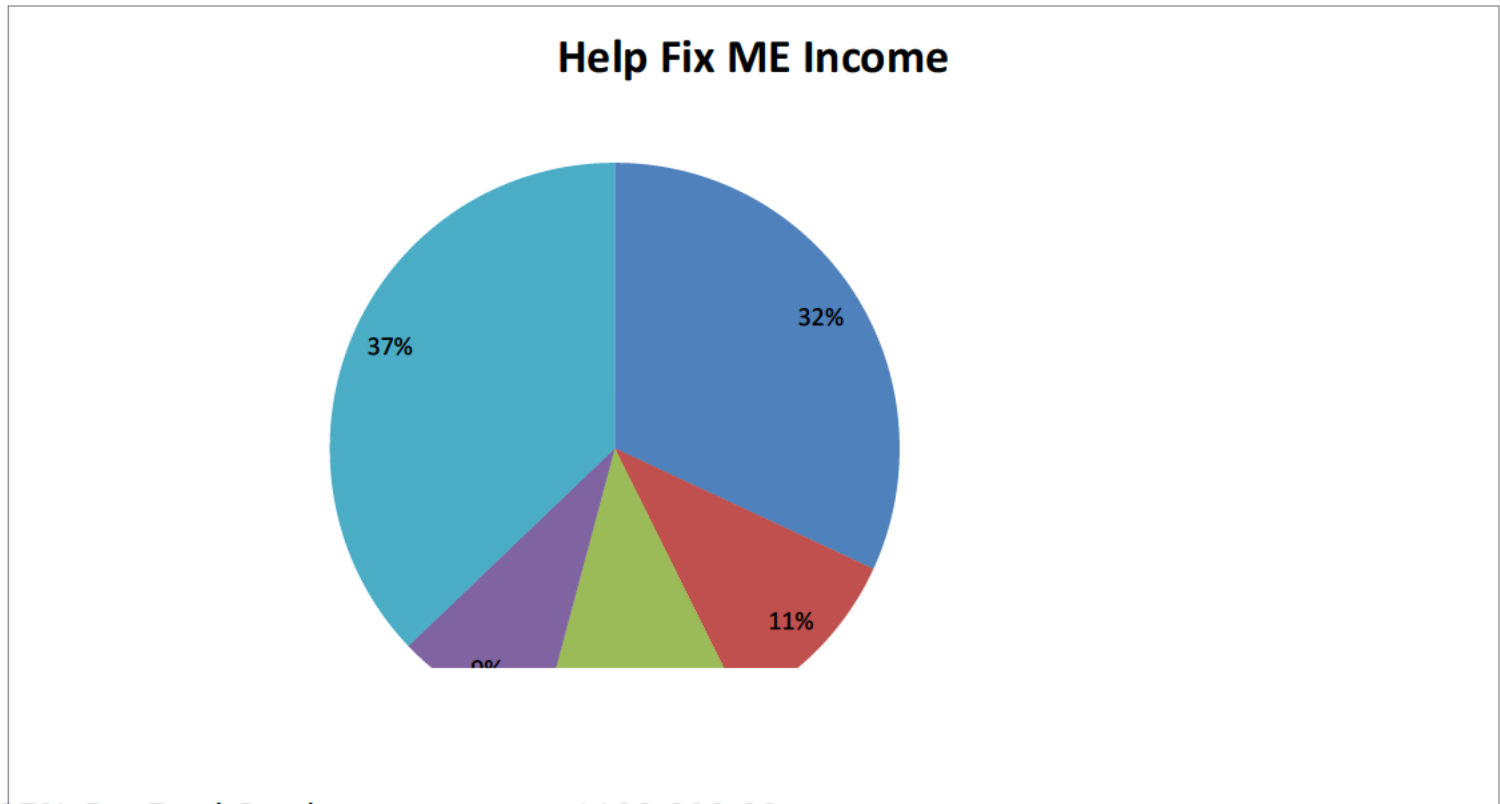
Expenditures



| | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 43% | Personal Services | \$407,318.00 |
| 26% | Fringe Benefits | \$250,147.00 |
| 12% | Professional Fees | \$114,981.00 |
| <1% | Travel | \$4,043.00 |
| 4% | Rent | \$34,978.00 |
| 5% | General operating | \$49,681.00 |
| <1% | Tech | \$2,263.00 |
| <1% | Clothing | \$1,667.00 |
| 3% | Supplies | \$25,733.00 |
| 5% | State-Cap | \$42,911.00 |
| 2% | Equine Case Fees | \$14,477.00 |

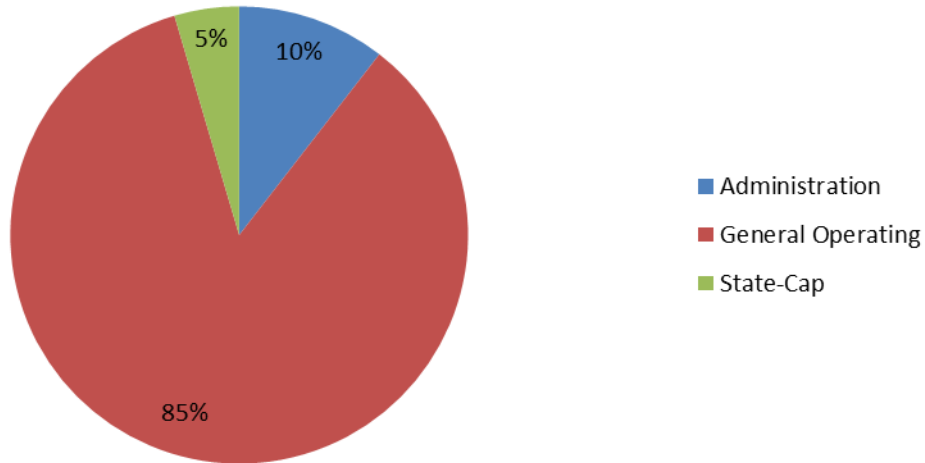
Companion Animal Sterilization (Help Fix ME)

Also known as **Help Fix ME** the program has been in operation since 2005 and has helped thousands of dogs and cats across the State of Maine. The goals of the Help Fix me program are to assist responsible pet owners with keeping their pets and help reduce the numbers of unwanted pets euthanized in the animal shelters. It is designed to help people on government assistance or those that meet the income criteria. Thanks to responsible pet owners and spay and neuter programs from many of the animal shelters and humane groups across the state, euthanasia rates are at record lows. Below is the income for fiscal year 2016.



| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 37% Pet Food Surcharge | \$100,000.00 |
| 32% AWP License Plates | \$85,980.00 |
| 11% Pet Shop Surcharge | \$31,025.00 |
| 11% Co Pays | \$28,864.00 |
| 9% Tax Check Off | \$23,409.00 |

Help Fix ME Expenditures



| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 85% General Operating | \$228,004.00 |
| 10% Administration | \$28,173.00 |
| 5% State-Cap | \$12,265.00 |

During the 2016 calendar year, 1976 vouchers were used for spaying and neutering dogs and cats in Maine. Our department conducts annual animal shelter surveys which consistently show a majority of animals in the shelters are cats. Dogs that are being altered are predominantly large mix breed dogs such as huskies, labs and hounds that are commonly found in the shelters of Maine.

- 1633 Cats altered
- 343 Dogs altered

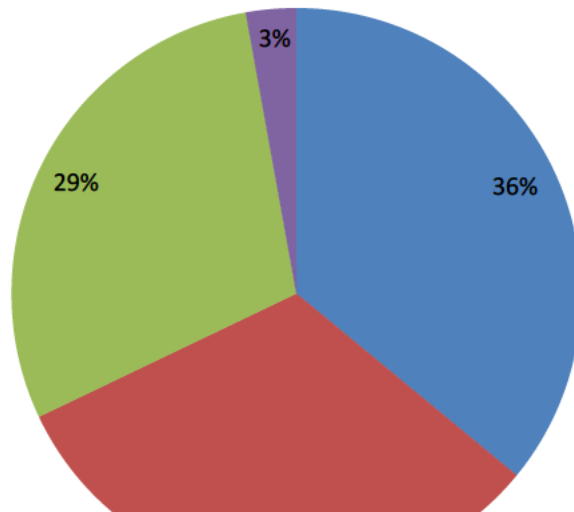
Help Fix ME vouchers can be used in many clinics across the State of Maine. In 2016 the Animal Welfare Advisory Council voted to increase the reimbursement rate for veterinarians **ten dollars** [GAI] for each procedure and have included an additional ten dollars (\$10) for flea and tick treatment as necessary.

Animal Shelter Survey

Since 2011, 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 each year. During the time we have been doing the survey we have found that the live release rate has gone up and the euthanasia rate has decreased dramatically. This is in part due to the hard work of the animal shelters and animal control officers throughout the state that help the Animal Welfare Program 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 this number shows that Maine is doing great work preventing the euthanasia of unwanted animals and finding ways to place animals in forever homes.

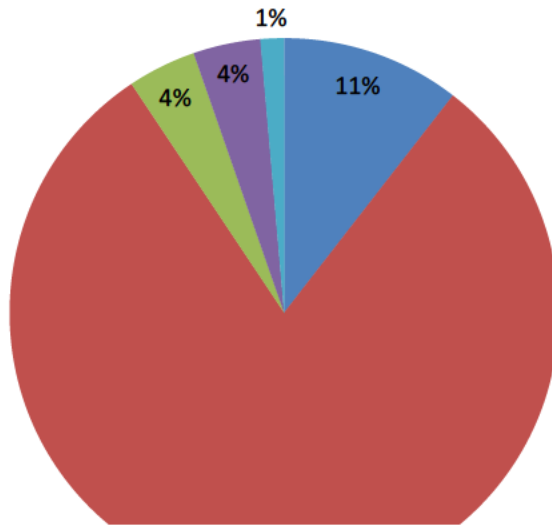
Dog and Cat Intake 2016



| | Dog & Cat | Dog | Cat |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Stray | 11833 | 3542 | 8291 |
| Surrendered | 10514 | 2905 | 7609 |
| Transferred in | 9628 | 6213 | 3415 |
| Born in shelter | 933 | 130 | 803 |

Stray and surrendered intake numbers for animal shelters have slightly increased compared to years past. Animals transferred into shelters reflect dogs and cats being imported from shelters in the southern United States and from around the State of [Maine](#)^{CR2}.

Dog and Cat Outcome 2016



| | Dog & Cat | Dog | Cat |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Returned To Owner | 3447 | 2614 | 833 |
| Adopted | 26274 | 9811 | 16463 |
| Euthanasia | 1319 | 349 | 970 |
| Transferred out | 1300 | 245 | 1055 |
| Died/Lost | 453 | 32 | 421 |

Live release rates for the past 5 years

| | |
|-------------|------------|
| 2011 | 72% |
| 2012 | 80% |
| 2013 | 88% |
| 2014 | 90% |
| 2015 | 93% |
| 2016 | 95% |

Licensed Facilities

The Animal Welfare Program is responsible for the licensing and inspection of all Animal Shelters, Pet Stores, Boarding Kennels, Breeding Kennels, and Research Facilities in the State of Maine. There are over 560 of these facilities in the state and humane agents are working with these facilities to maintain compliance and prevent disease outbreaks. Inspections completed in a timely manner are very important to the Animal Welfare Program.

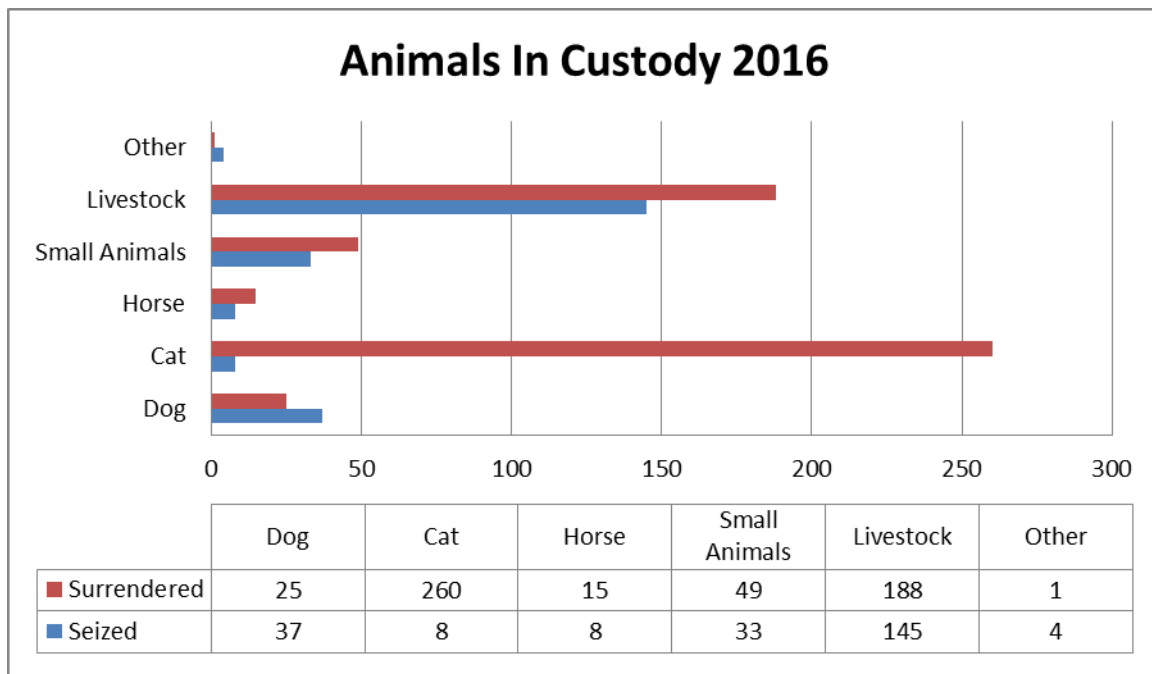
Animal Complaints in 2016

The Animal Welfare Program received thousands of calls in 2016. 357 animal complaints were taken and dispatched to the Humane Agents and Local ACOs. Animal Welfare Program 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 our efforts to educate the public on pet owner’s responsibilities and what resources are available, 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 we encounter. This method of enforcement is part of our community policing strategy that is showing positive results in reducing the number of repeat offenders.

In 2016, 538 animals were surrendered by owners that found themselves unable to care for them appropriately or were overwhelmed by the costs of the animal’s care. These animals were quickly placed in local animal shelters and rescues. 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 will begin working with the local District Attorney’s office to file for an ex parte order or a search warrant to take custody of the animals and gather evidence.

In 2016, 235 animals were seized by Humane Agents across the State of Maine. Once animals 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.



*Small Animals include rabbits.

There has been a growing trend in the public to count chickens and rabbits as common household pets. Over the past year, many of the livestock animals found in AWP custody have been fowl

Animal Control Officer Trainings and Improvements

Another responsibility of the Animal Welfare Program is to provide the Basic Animal Control Officer (ACO) Training and to help encourage them to seek additional trainings wherever possible. Twice a year our office conducts training that helps instruct the ACO in responsibilities, animal laws, dangerous dogs and bite cases, rabies, and officer safety. A wide variety of professionals such as District Attorneys, Veterinarians, Police Officers and other Certified ACOs serve as instructors to share experiences and firsthand knowledge to help prepare new ACOs. Trainings were held in Augusta and Orono this past year. Animal Welfare is currently looking into creating online training for ACOs and hopes to test a potential core competency online training in 2017.

Conclusion

The Animal Welfare Program has faced many challenging and difficult cases over the years and many members of the public have strong opinions on how animals should and shouldn't be treated. The State of Maine has been ranked once again in the top 3 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.