

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

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

AMANDA E. BEAL
COMMISSIONER

Maine's Animal Welfare Program Review for 2019

Our Mission: The Animal Welfare Program (AWP) 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:

Liam Hughes	Director
Chrissy MacFarland	District Humane Agent Aroostook County
Douglas Radziewicz	District Humane Agent Washington, Hancock Counties
Rachel Croce	District Humane Agent Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset Counties
Rae-Ann Demos	District Humane Agent Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties
Angela Rogers	District Humane Agent Franklin, Oxford, Androscoggin Counties
Rick Hunyadi	District Humane Agent York, Cumberland Counties
Rachael Fiske DVM	Assistant State Veterinarian
Leonard Goodine	Secretary Associate
Danielle Trask	Office Associate II

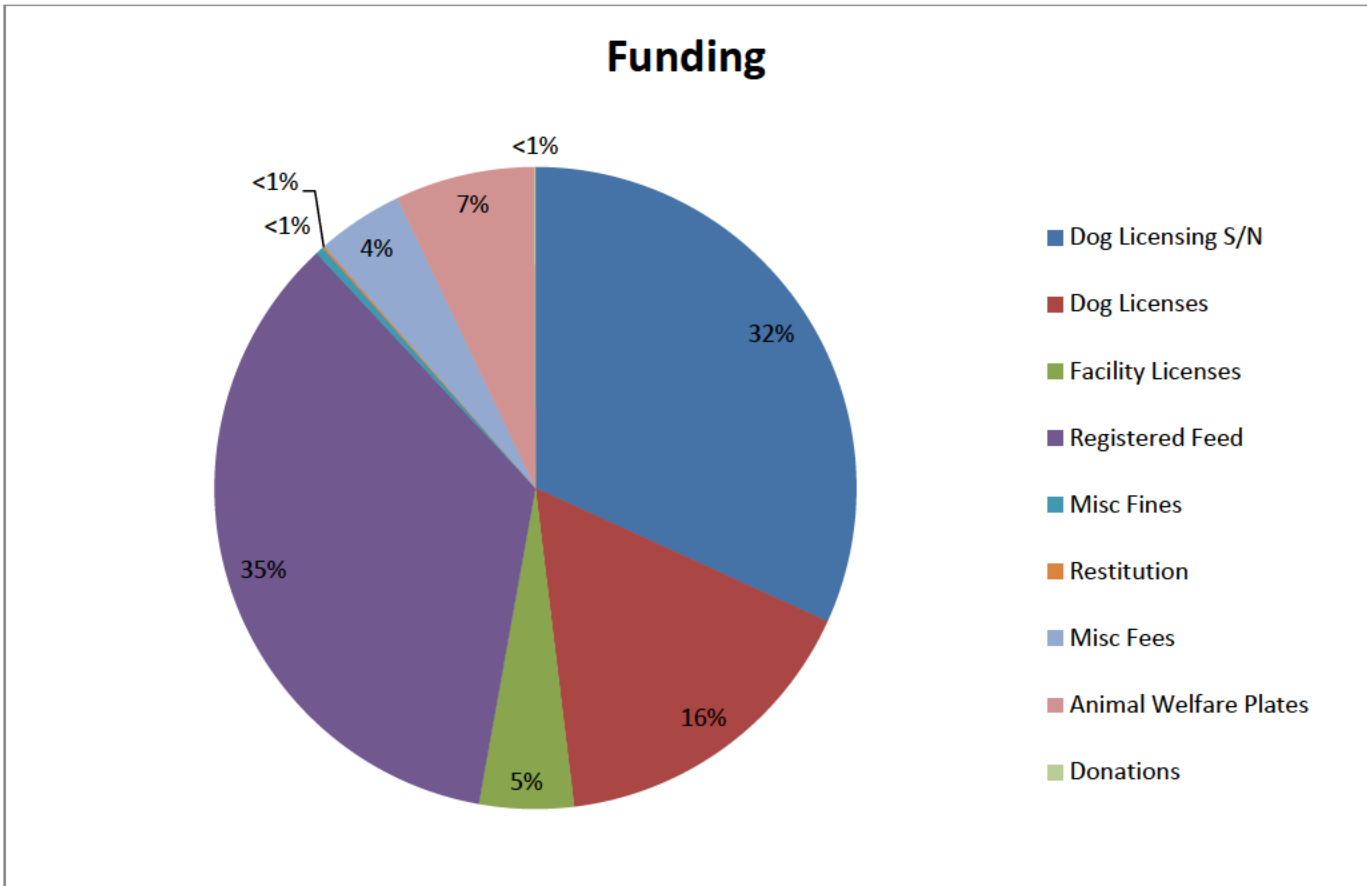
LIAM HUGHES, DIRECTOR
ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM
90 BLOSSOM LANE, DEERING BUILDING



PHONE: (207) 287-3846
FAX: (207) 624-5028
WWW.MAINE.GOV/DACF

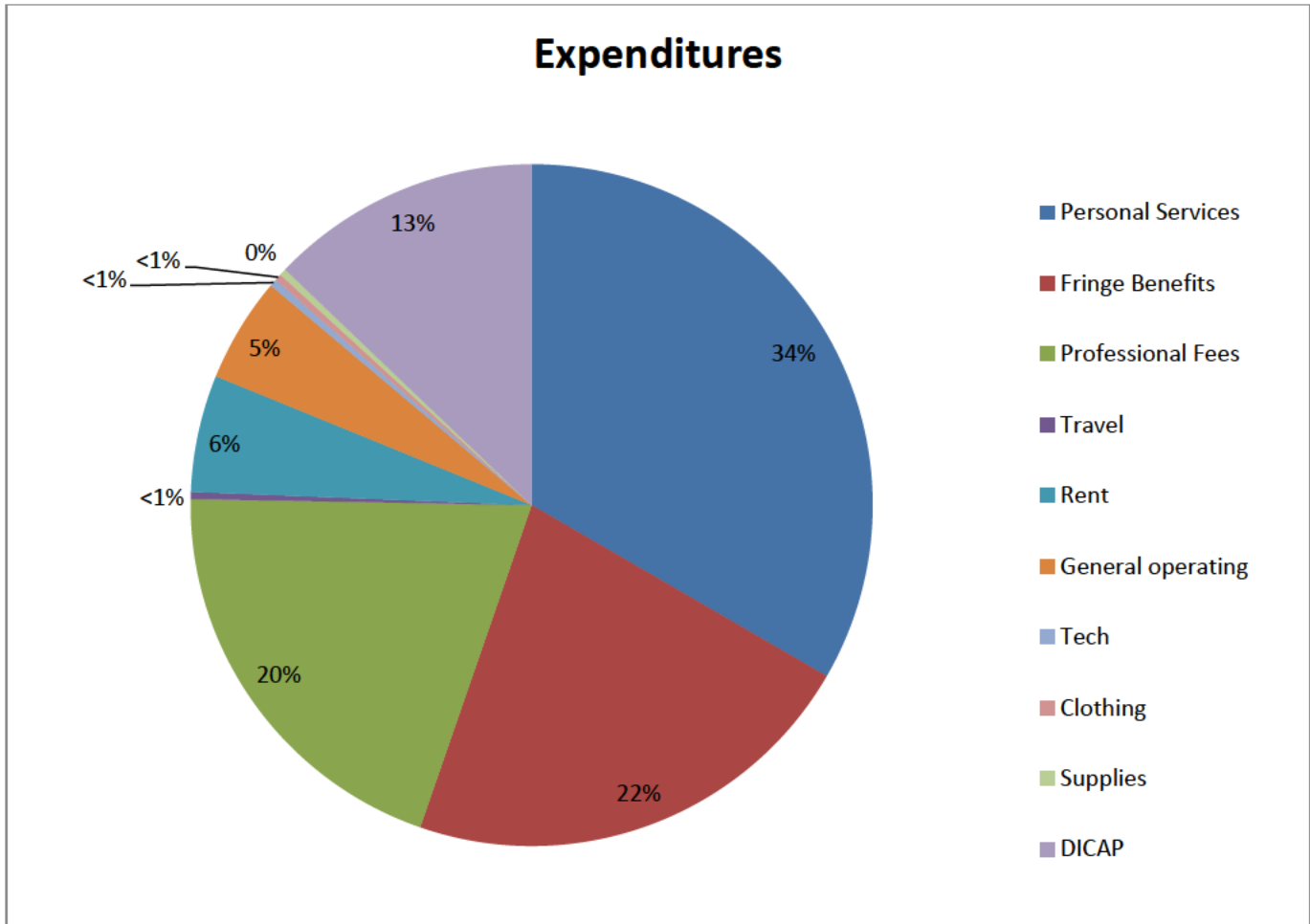
Income 2018/2019

A majority of the income for the Animal Welfare Program comes from dog licensing and pet food surcharges. In the Fiscal year July 2018-June 2019, AWP received the following funding depicted in the chart below.



	Funding
Dog Licensing S/N	\$475,226.00
Dog Licenses	\$242,684.00
Facility Licenses	\$71,065.00
Registered Feed	\$525,960.00
Misc. Fines	\$6,207.00
Restitution	\$1,655.00
Misc. Fees	\$64,926.00
Animal Welfare Plates	\$105,020.00
Donations	\$539.00

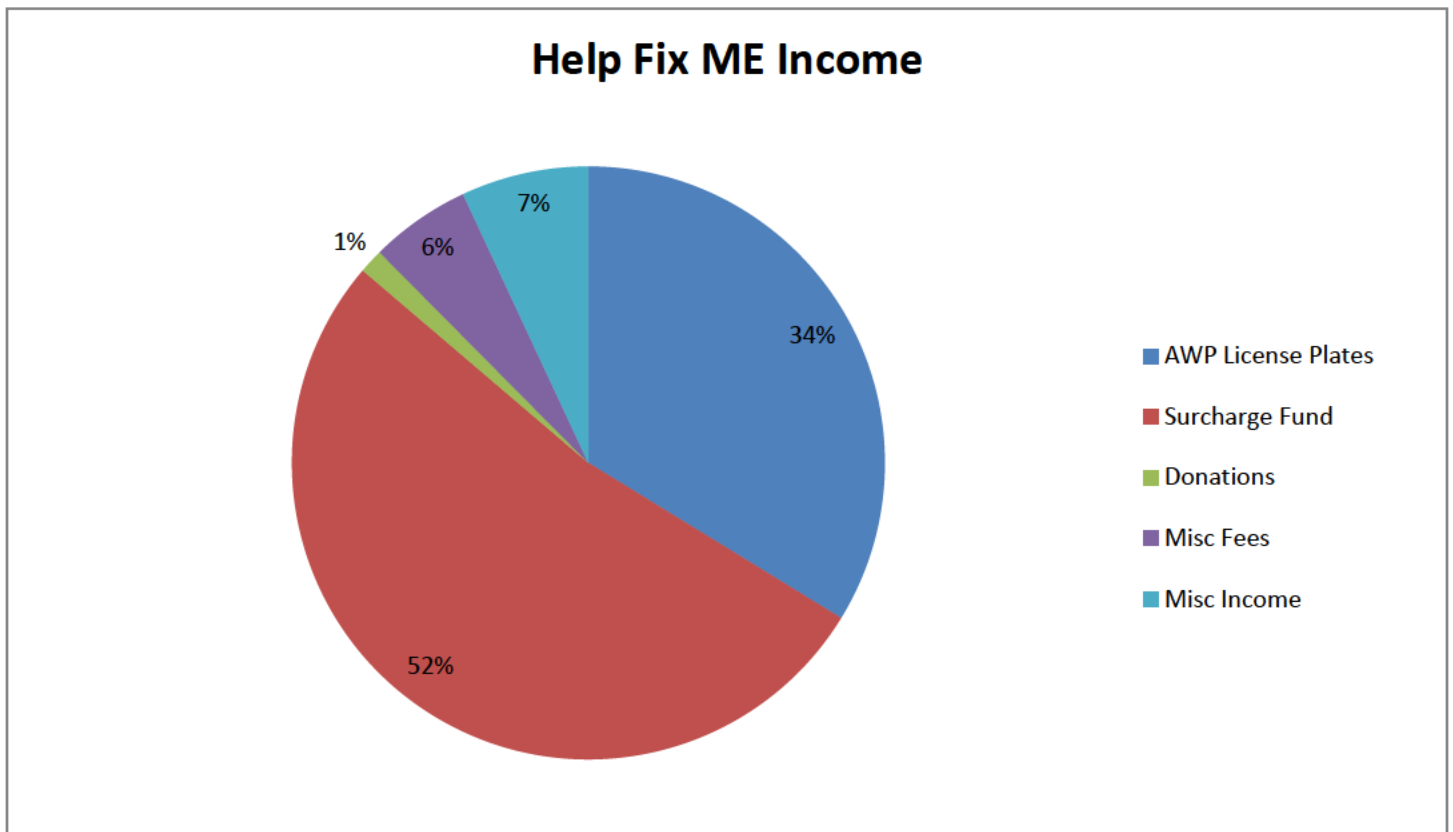
Expenditures 2018-19



	Expenditures
Personal Services	\$453,804.00
Fringe Benefits	\$298,331.00
Professional Fees	\$271,739.00
Travel	\$4,611.00
Rent	\$75,467.00
General operating	\$67,682.00
Tech	\$4,778.00
Clothing	\$4,395.00
Supplies	\$4,456.00
DICAP	\$174,775.00

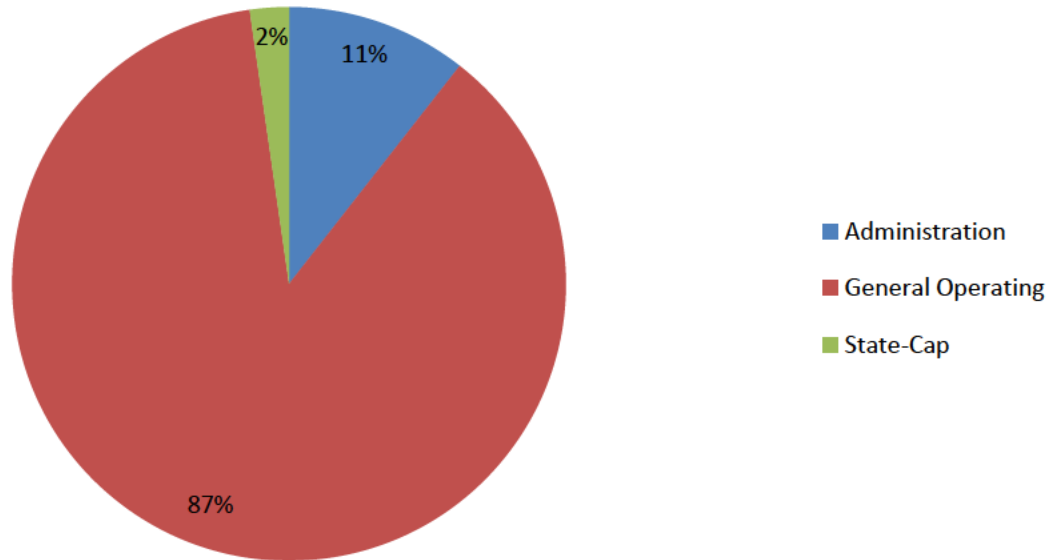
Companion Animal Sterilization (Help Fix ME)

The Help Fix ME (HFM) program has been in operation since 2005 and has helped spay and neuter 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 to help reduce the number of unwanted pets euthanized in 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/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 2018-2019.



Help Fix ME Income	
AWP License Plates	\$105,020.00
Surcharge Fund	\$163,200.00
Co-Pays	\$4,134.00
Pet Shop Surcharge	\$17,050.00
Tax Check Off	\$21,605.00

Help Fix ME Expenditures



Help Fix ME Expenditures	
Administration	\$18,559.00
General Operating	\$152,992.00
State-Cap	\$3,994.00

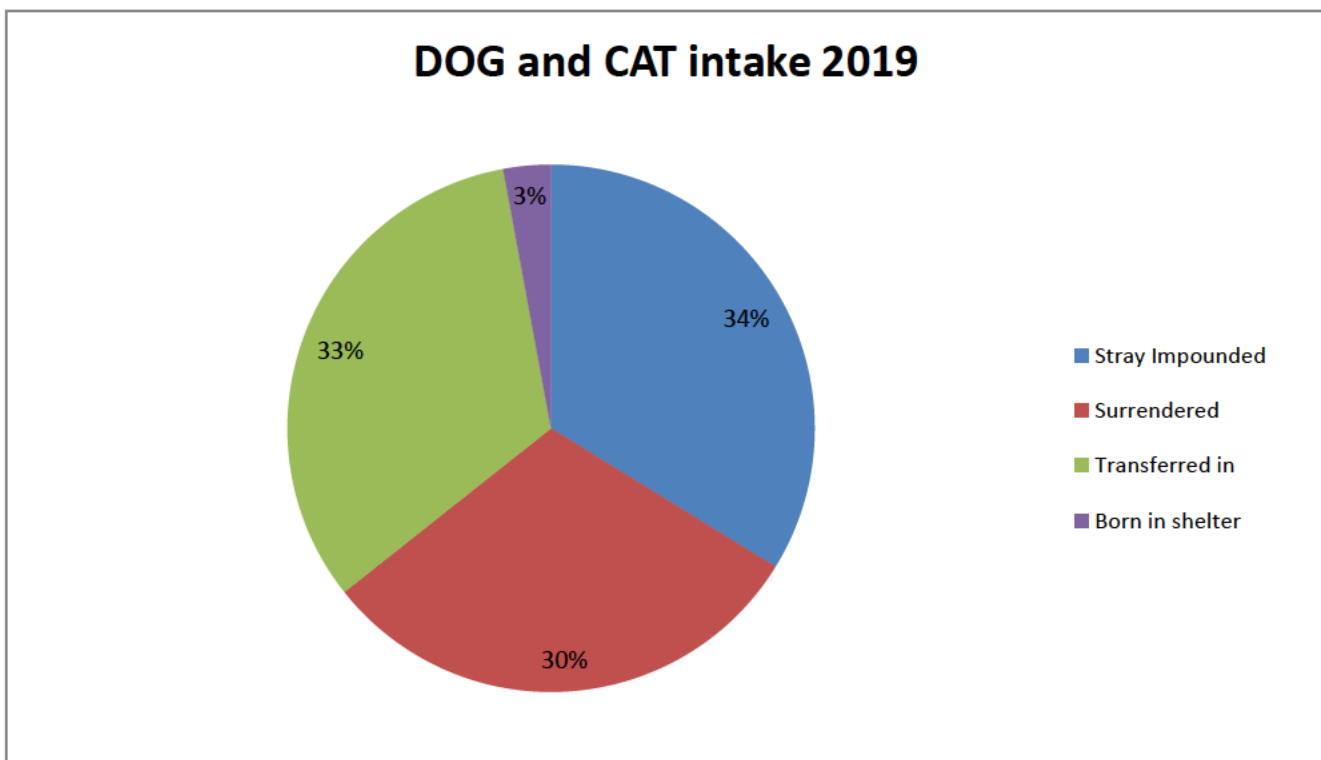
During the calendar year of 2019, Help Fix ME issued 1558 vouchers totaling \$142,572 used to spay and neuter dogs and cats in Maine. AWP conducts animal shelter surveys annually which have shown a majority of animals in the shelters are cats. Dogs being altered are predominantly large mix breed dogs such as pit bull type dogs, commonly found in Maine shelters.

Since 2017, HFM has been issuing vouchers based on the allotments issued to the program. During the next budget cycle, we will be working to increase the allotments and find ways to improve the program.

Animal Shelter Survey

Since 2011, the Animal Welfare Program 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. Over the past few years, these surveys have found that the live release rate has increased, and the euthanasia rate has decreased dramatically. This is in part due to the hard work of the animal shelters and animal control officers (ACOs) throughout the state that help the Animal Welfare Program educate pet owners and share information about spay and neuter programs.

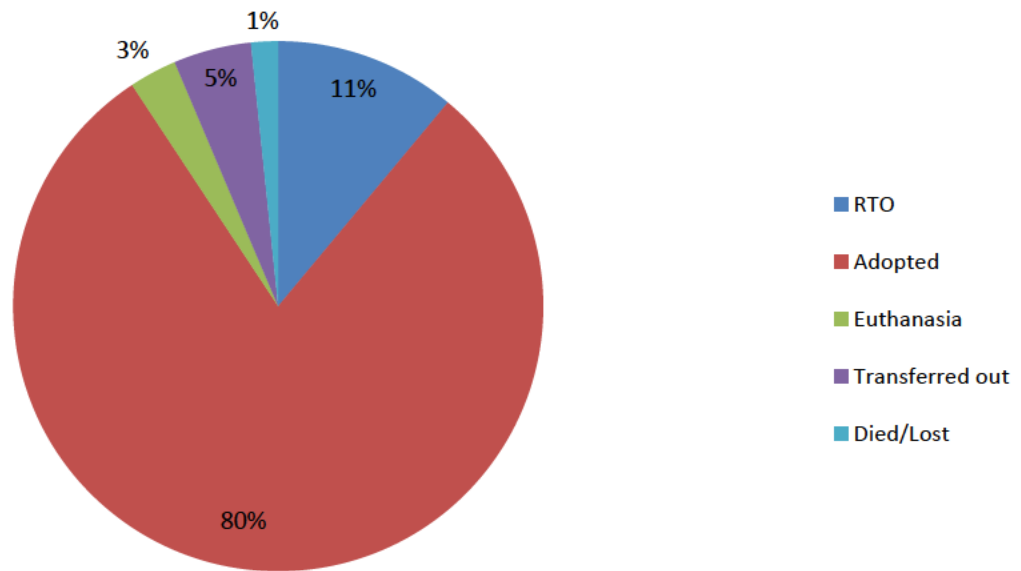
The live release rate refers to the animals that are not euthanized but placed in forever homes. This number shows that Maine is doing great work preventing the euthanasia of unwanted animals.



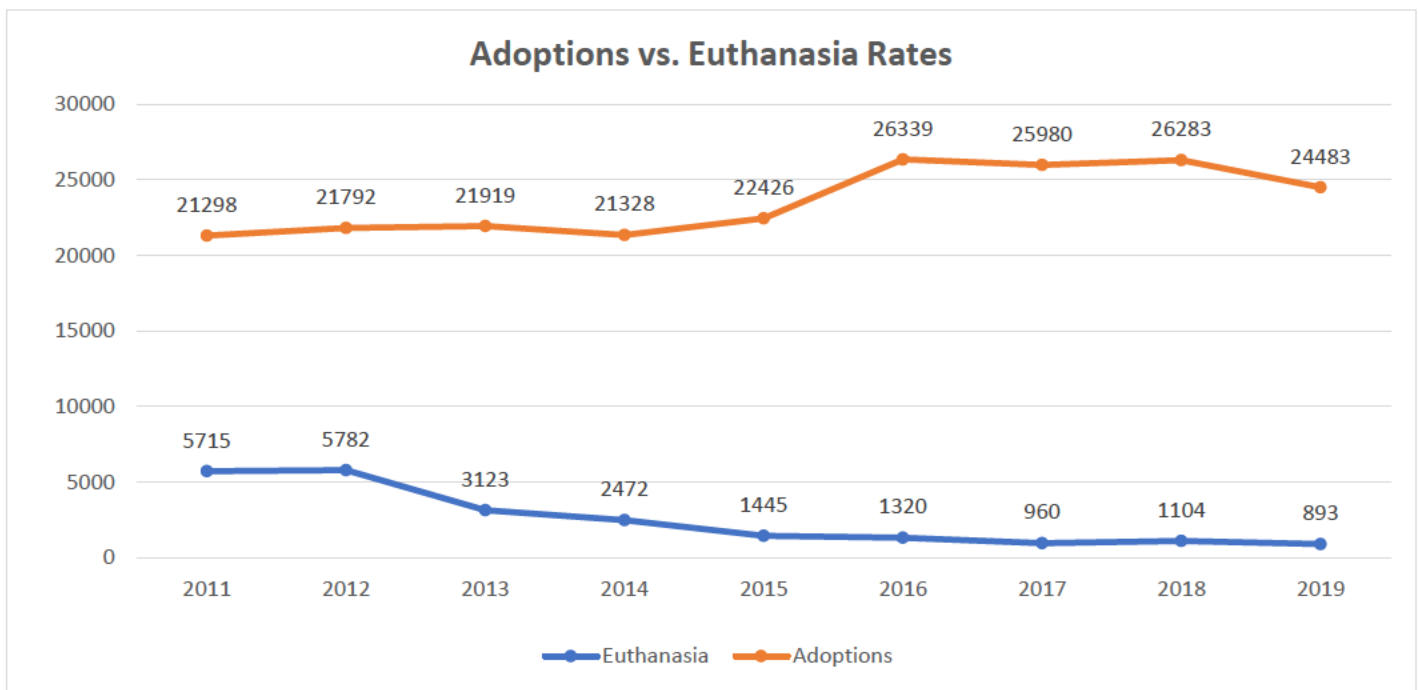
	Dog & Cat	Dog	Cat
Stray	11217	3075	8142
Surrendered	10134	2687	7447
Transferred in	10868	7075	3793
Born in shelter	966	126	840

Animals transferred into shelters reflect dogs and cats being imported from shelters in the southern United States and from around the State of Maine.

Dog and Cat Outcome 2019



	Dog & Cat	Dog	Cat
Returned to Owner	3398	2398	1000
Adopted	24483	9972	14511
Euthanized	893	300	593
Transferred out	1456	174	1282
Died/Lost	506	50	456



Live release rates for the past 8 years

2011	72%
2012	80%
2013	88%
2014	90%
2015	93%
2016	95%
2017	95%
2018	95%
2019	96%

It is important to note that animals being humanely euthanized in many of the animal shelters across the state is the result of sickness, disease, injury, or unmanageable aggression. The animals are not being euthanized for space or length of stay reasons. Many people do not understand the importance of having good euthanasia procedures and training to help end suffering of animals in the shelter system. Starting in 2020, Animal Welfare has started euthanasia training classes available to animal shelters and vet offices to ensure proper techniques are used as well as understanding of the issues around the topic of euthanasia that includes compassion fatigue and misconceptions of the procedure.

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 550 of these facilities in Maine and Humane Agents work with these facilities to maintain compliance and prevent disease outbreaks. Inspections completed in a timely manner are very important to the Animal Welfare Program. Staffing, scheduling issues and cruelty cases have slowed the response time for inspections. There is need for a full-time inspector for this program. AWP is still working on improving inspection times and responses. Some of the larger cruelty cases that Animal Welfare has investigated over the past year resulted from problems discovered during facility inspections.

222 Boarding Kennels

135 Breeding kennels

48 Pet stores

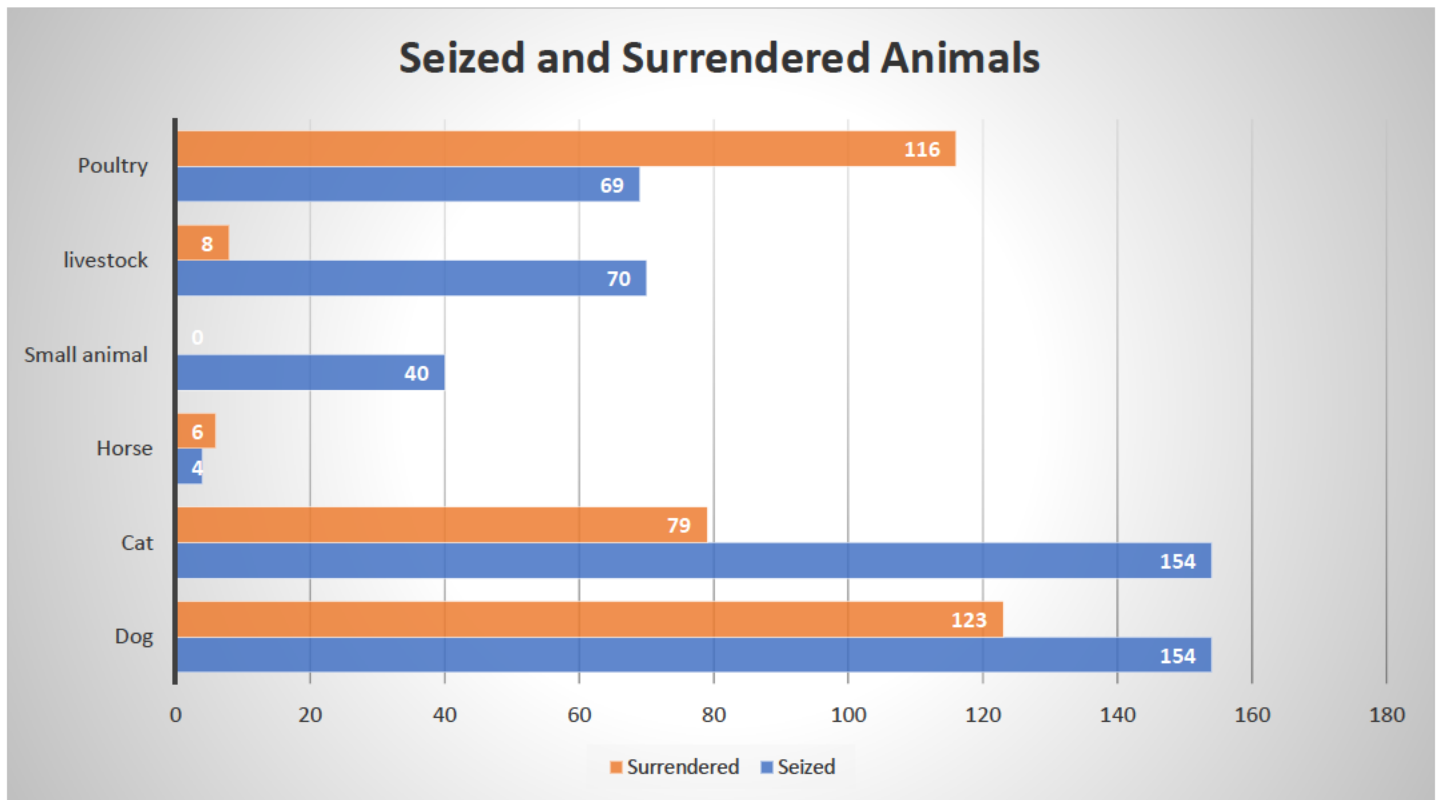
11 Research facilities

134 Animal Shelters and Rescues

Animal Complaints in 2019

The Animal Welfare Program receive 399 animal cruelty complaints and dispatched them out to the humane agents and local animal control officers. AWP staff has been working with the public and local ACOs to help resolve complaints of neglect, abuse, and animal/human conflicts throughout the year. Through our efforts to educate the public on what the pet owner's responsibilities are and what resources are available to them, AWP has 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.

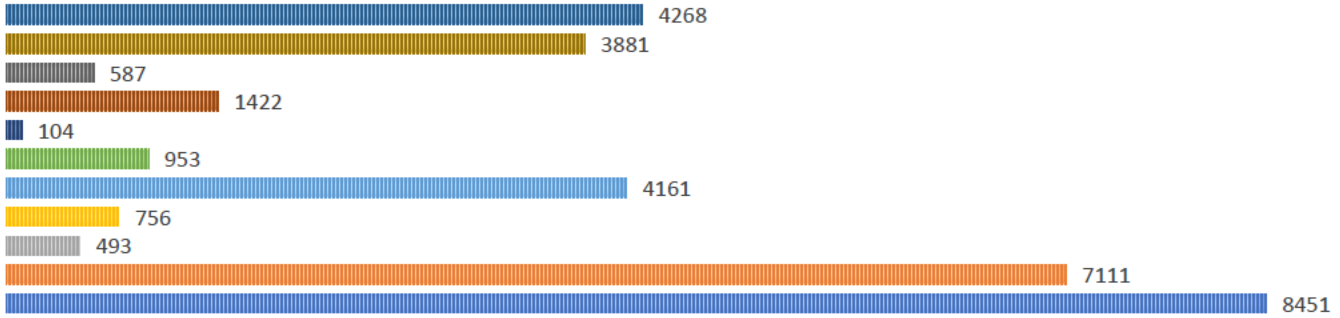
2019 Seized and Surrendered



It is important to note that in 2019, the Animal Welfare Program responded to several large cases that resulted in hundreds of animals taken into custody at once. AWP works with sheltering partners across the state to house and care for these animals, while the court process plays out and the final ownership of the animals can be determined. This process can be time consuming and expensive. Animal shelters across the state are at capacity throughout the year and space is very limited. Twice in the past year, AWP had to create and operate two temporary emergency shelters to house the animals being held in custody. This was a difficult challenge that the department was able to accomplish through planning, training and our relationships with our animal sheltering partners and other agencies throughout the state. More work needs to be done to create resources to house animals in custody safely while cases are heard in court.

Animal Control Reporting

ACO COMPLAINTS



Other	1
Wildlife Complaints	3881
Rabid Animal	587
Cruelty Complaint	1422
Owner Insitutionalized	104
Animal Trespass	953
Cat Complaints	4161
Vaccination Violation	756
Dangous Dog	493
Dog License	7111
Dogs at Large	8451

This is the second year of collecting and reporting data on ACO complaints. We had a better response rate this year and hope this will continue in the future. Hopefully this information will help explain to the public the complicated nature of the ACO position.

This survey also asked ACOs for potential training topics. Topics suggested included training on animal welfare laws and how to work with the court system and these will be included in future training sessions.

Animal Control Officer Trainings and Improvements

Another responsibility of the Animal Welfare Program is to provide the Basic Animal Control Officer Training and to help encourage ACOs to seek additional trainings wherever possible. Twice a year our office conducts a training that helps instruct new animal control officers on local ACO responsibilities, animal laws, dangerous dogs and bite cases, rabies, and officer safety. A wide variety of professionals including District Attorneys, Veterinarians, Police Officers and other certified ACOs serve as instructors to share their experiences and knowledge to help new ACOs prepare for the job ahead of them.

In 2019, Animal Welfare entered into a contract with JPMA Staff Development Solutions to create a training program that would give the best information available for animal control officers while keeping the training cost low for the municipalities.

Phase I of the training will consist of online training for the core competencies for new ACO trainees. These courses include basic instruction in animal issues as well as training in legal and liability issues that ACOs may encounter while performing their duties.

Phase II of the training will be a practical classroom training to enable trainees to interact with instructors to look at real world issues and examples of the information they learned online in Phase I. AWP will hold three Phase II classes this year.

Phase III of the training is still under development but will be led by Field Training Officers (FTOs). FTOs will be ACOs from around Maine that have been trained to act as a coach for ACO trainees while they gain experience and can help answer questions that may arise during their work in the field. This method of training also helps encourage networking between animal control officers and sharing information and resources. We hope to have this ready by the fall of 2020.

Animal Welfare Database Project

In 2019 a developer was selected to create a new AWP database. Contract discussions occurred and hopefully work will start this spring 2020

This database will be available free for all municipalities throughout Maine to use and to streamline the dog licensing process and payments and provide local ACOs a data base to enter complaint information. It is hoped that in the future this information can be shared with other ACOs, humane agents and law enforcement officials across Maine.

The plan is to have a Beta version of the dog licensing database available to select municipalities for testing by October 2020 and full release by 2021. The case management system should be available in 2021.

In Conclusion

Animal Welfare had some of its toughest challenges and largest cases in 2019. For the past several years we have been working with Maine Emergency Management and organizations such as the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs (NASAAEP) and The National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition (NARSC) to prepare for natural and man-made disasters. Many of the cases AWP deals with are considered Micro-Disasters especially dealing with hoarding cases or cases that involve large amounts of animals. Using the same training and equipment that would be used in a large-scale disaster we are able to move quickly and effectively to respond to almost any situation.

During the Solon collie investigation, AWP was able to partner with Oxford, Cumberland and York Counties emergency management and their County Animal Response Teams (CARTs) to help get supplies, manage volunteers, and track the animals in state custody. During this investigation AWP also received assistance from other programs in DACF and departments sending people to help with the care of the animals. The Dept. of Transportation deserves special recognition for their assistance in this case as well. DOT provided a safe location to house the animals as well as had their staff help gather equipment and supplies to assist in our efforts.

AWP could not have helped these animals if it was not for all the work that these other programs, departments, agencies, and animal shelters provided and for the teamwork that everyone showed.