

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

AMANDA E. BEAL
COMMISSIONER

Maine's Animal Welfare Program Review for 2020

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
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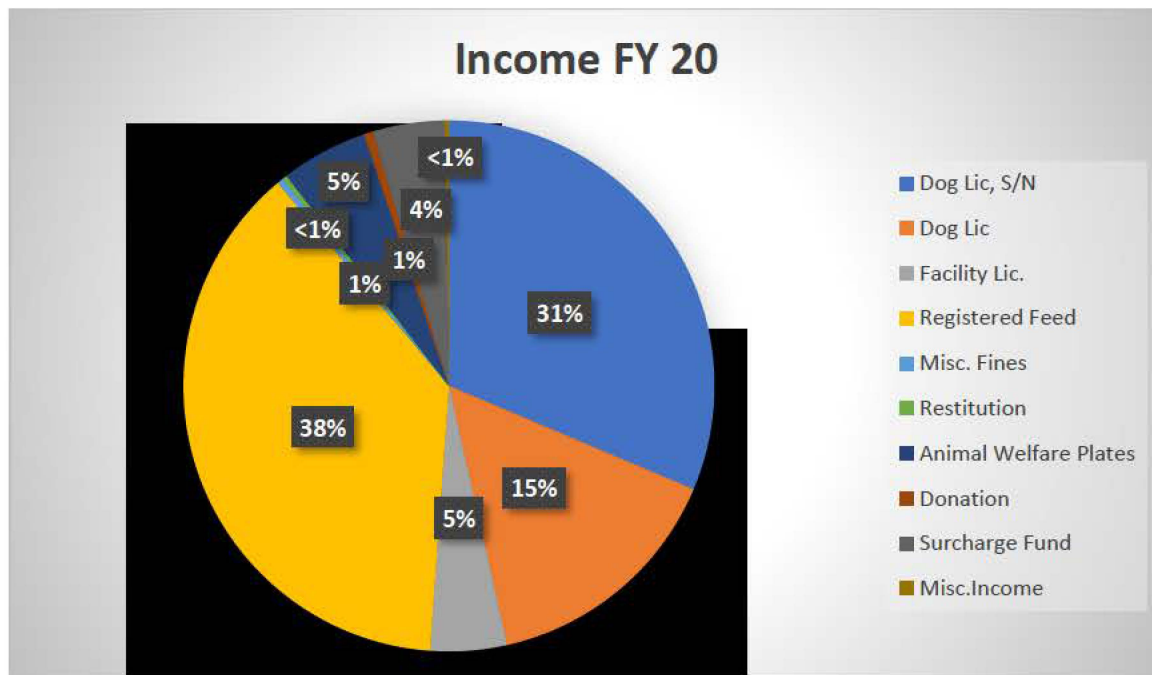
Note from the Director

2020 was a very challenging year for everyone. COVID-19 has changed many things about how the Maine Animal Welfare Program responds to and plans for our operations. This spanned not just using PPE and social distancing, but also how this pandemic affected all our community partners that we work with at the animal shelters, veterinary offices, animal control officers, the courts, law enforcement, other state agencies, and the public at large. The Maine Animal Welfare program is only successful because of the partnerships we have created, and we want to acknowledge all of the hard work by these partners and our staff. As I write this, there is hope on the horizon for us all with the COVID-19 response, but we still have many challenges we need to face and find ways to respond no matter what the future may hold in store for us.

Liam Hughes
Director of Maine Animal Welfare

Funding for the Animal Welfare Program

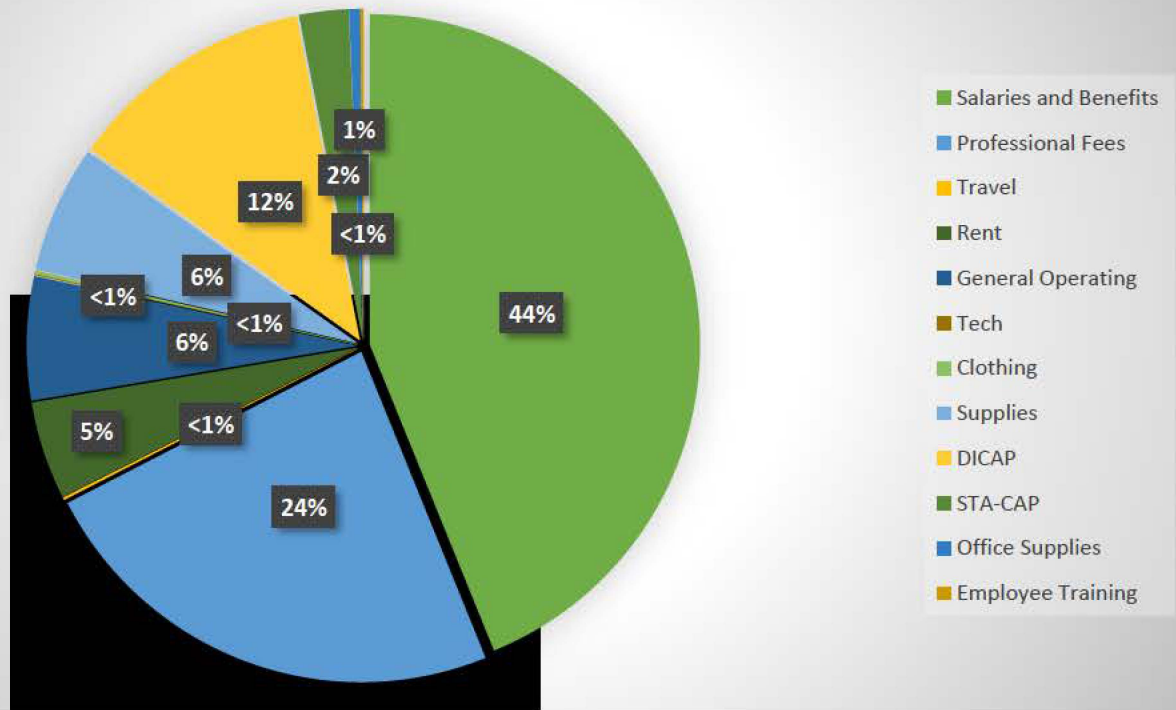
Note: Finance and other data are collected either based on fiscal or calendar year. When referring to fiscal year it refers to data collected from July 1 to June 30. When referring to calendar year the data are collected from January 1 to December 31.



Income Fiscal Year 2020

Dog Licenses Spayed Neutered Dogs	\$456,756
Dog Licensing Un altered Dogs.	\$220,006
Facility Licenses	\$67,864
Registered Feed	\$549,000
Misc. Fines	\$5,779
Restitution	\$4,037
Animal Welfare Plates	\$76,940
Donations	\$8,494
Surcharge Fund	\$63,252
Misc. Income	\$3,803

Expenditures FY20

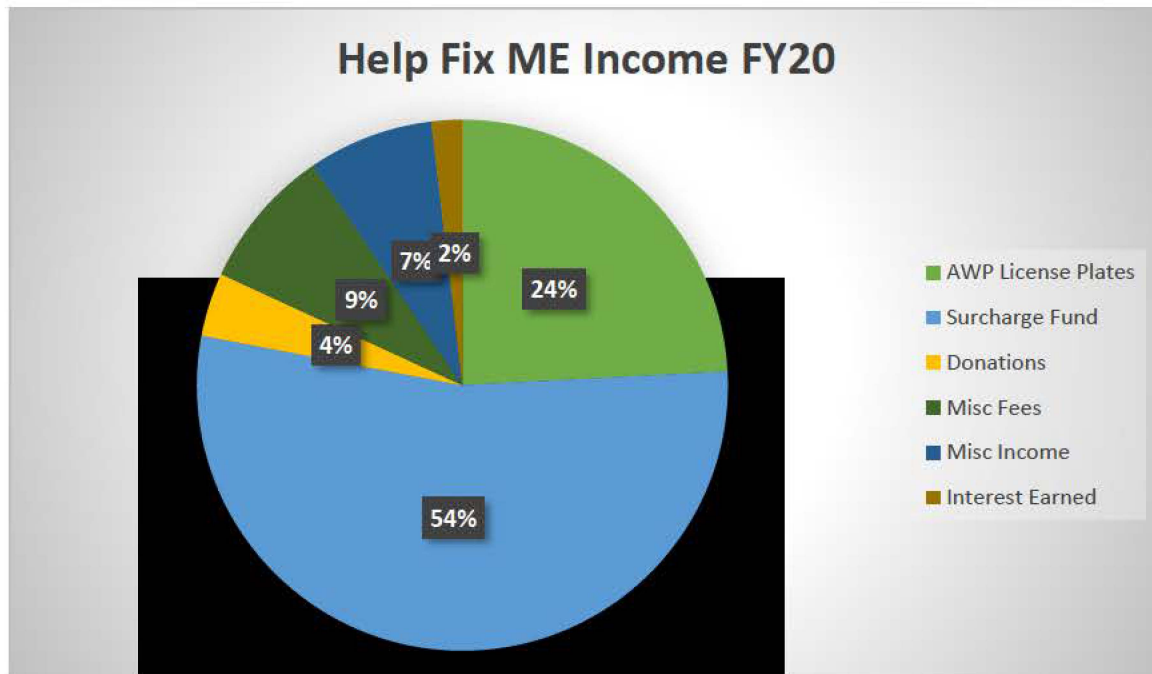


Expenditures FY20

Salaries and Benefits	\$842,203
Professional Fees	\$452,729
Travel	\$2,246
Rent	\$91,992
General Operating	\$115,995
Tech	\$1,297
Clothing	\$2,835
Supplies	\$119,288
Department Assessment Fee	\$232,382
Statewide Assessment Fee	\$46,126
Office Supplies	\$10,480
Employee Training	\$2,763
Misc. Expenses	\$3,169

Funding for 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 HFM program assists responsible pet owners to manage their pets and helps 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.

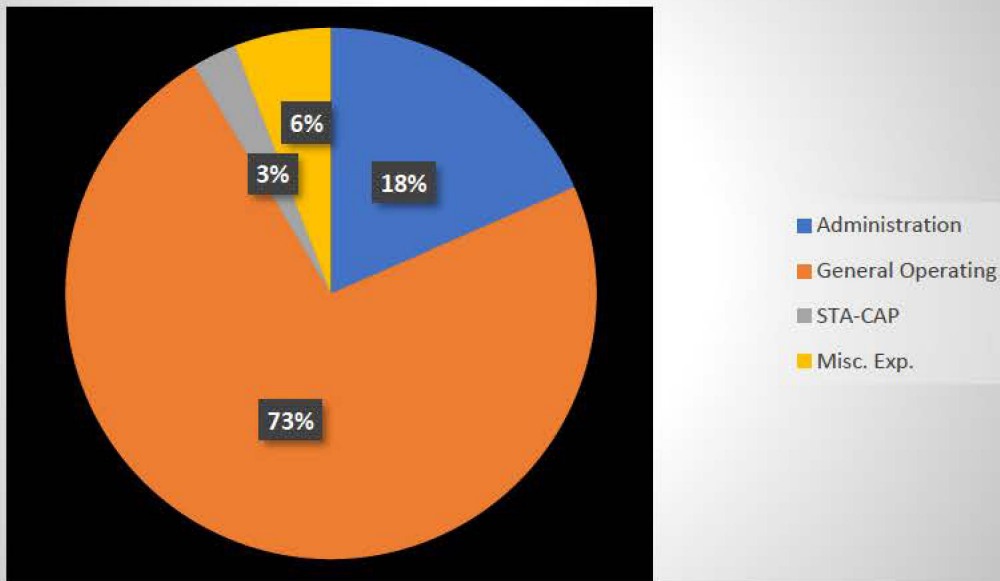


Help Fix ME Income FY20

AWP License Plates	\$76,940
Surcharge Fund	\$171,360*
Donations	\$12,320
Misc. Fees	\$27,475
Misc. Income	\$24,508
Interest Earned	\$5,948

* The total represents all FY20 income earned from the pet food surcharge including a FY21 transfer to the fund.

Help Fix Me Expenditures.



Help Fix Me Expenditures.

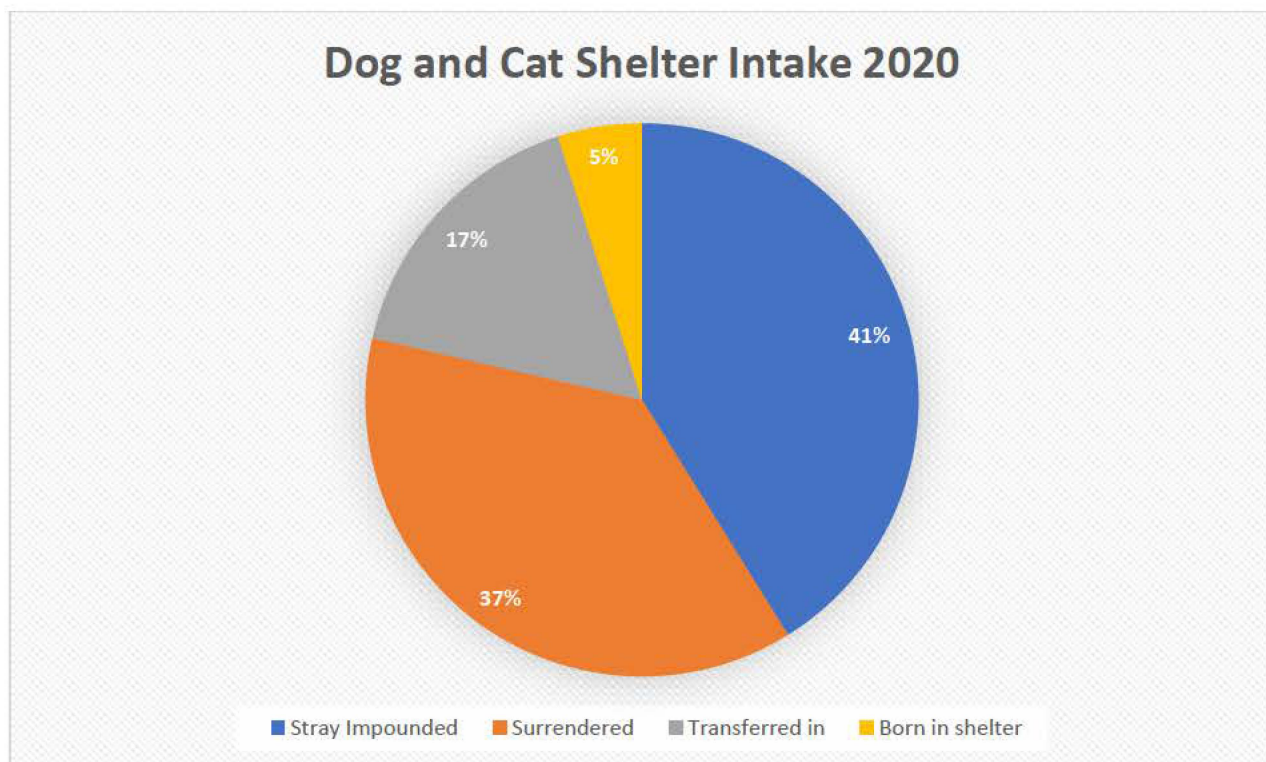
Administration	\$30,716
General Operating	\$121,317
Statewide Assessment Fee	\$4,539
Misc. Expenses	\$9,806

During the calendar year of 2020, HFM issued 1092 vouchers totaling \$115,852 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. COVID-19 has had some unexpected complications to the HFM program. During the initial lockdown phase of the pandemic response, appointments at veterinary clinics became hard to find and supply shortages disrupted many clinics. As COVID-19 response has improved, Clinics and vet offices have started to slowly make new appointments and mobile clinics are targeting underserved areas of the state.

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.

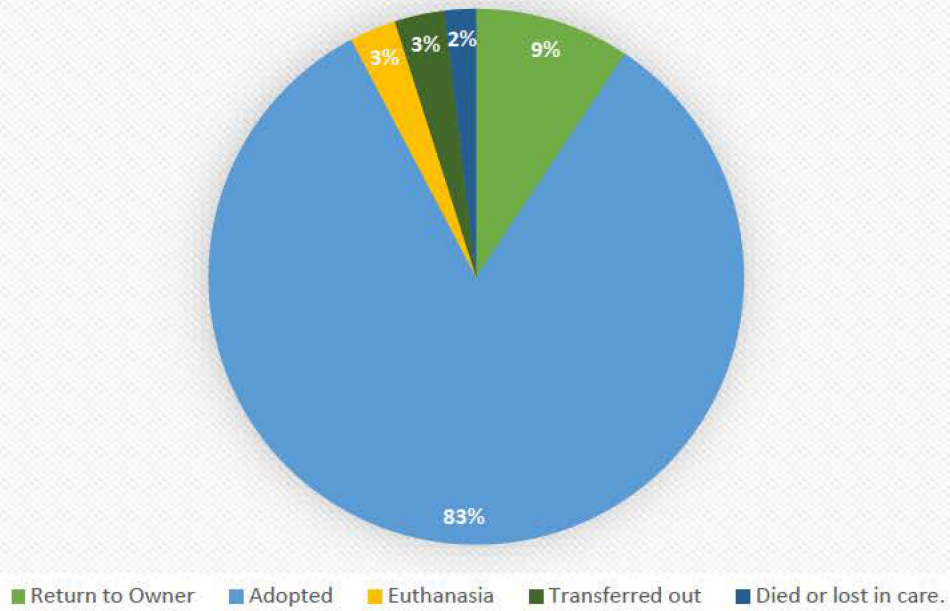
The live release rate refers to the animals that are not euthanized but placed in forever homes. This number shows that the people of Maine are doing great work preventing the euthanasia of unwanted animals.



	Dog	Cat	Total
Stray Impounded	2540	6813	9353
Surrendered	2271	6237	8508
Transferred in	6130	3618	9748
Born in shelter	181	934	1115

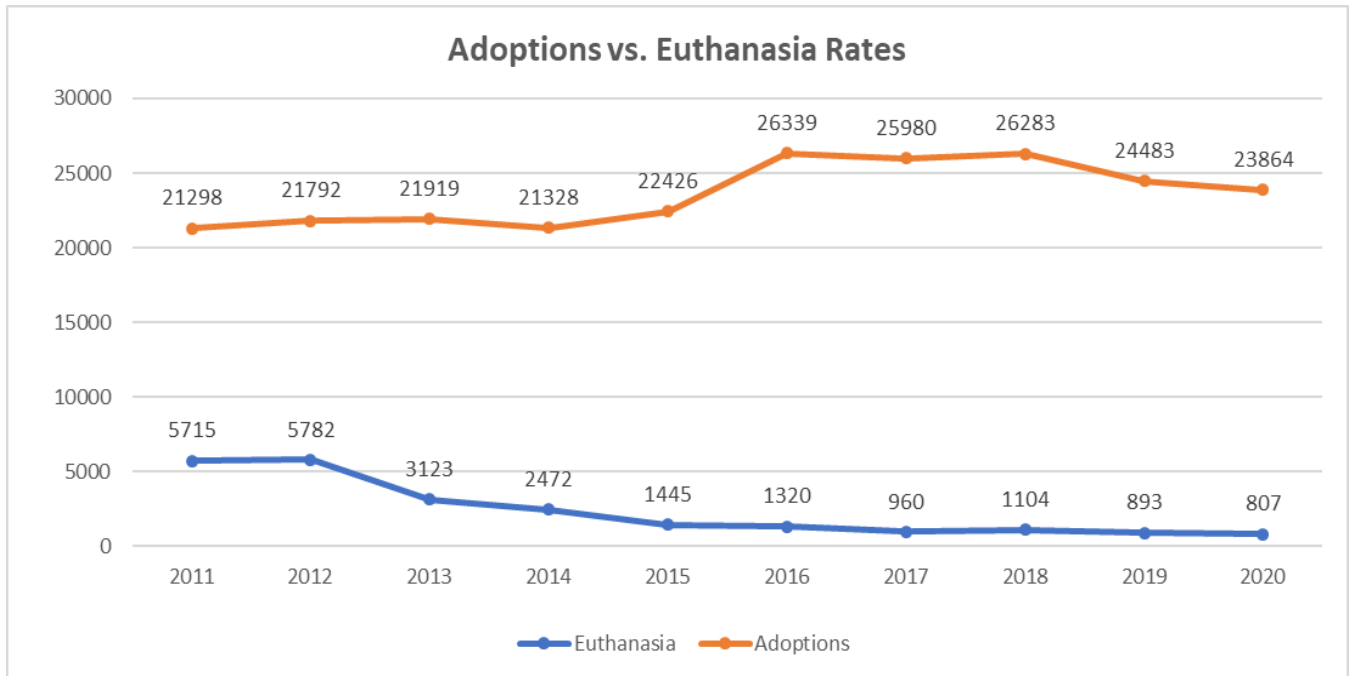
Animals transferred into shelters reflect dogs and cats being imported from shelters from outside the State of Maine and from within the State of Maine.

Dog and Cat Outcome 2020



Dog and Cat Outcome 2020

	Dog	Cat	Total
Return to Owner	1887	814	2701
Adopted	8892	14972	23864
Euthanasia	214	593	807
Transferred out	81	786	867
Died/Lost in care	45	502	547



Live release rate since 2011

2011	72%
2012	80%
2013	88%
2014	90%
2015	93%
2016	95%
2017	95%
2018	95%
2019	96%
2020	95%

It is important to note that the reason animals are being humanely euthanized in animal shelters across the state is because of sickness, disease, injury, or unmanageable aggression and not the lack of space or length of stay. In 2020, the Animal Welfare program held a euthanasia training class for animal shelter and vet office staff. The training covered proper euthanasia techniques and compassion fatigue. Future trainings will be available as requested.

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. In 2020 there were 545 of these facilities in Maine. The AWP Humane Agents work with these facilities to maintain compliance and prevent disease outbreaks. COVID-19, staffing, scheduling issues and cruelty cases have slowed the response time for inspections. AWP is always working on improving inspection times and responses. Some of the larger cruelty cases that Animal Welfare has investigated over the past few years resulted from problems discovered during facility inspections.

227 Boarding Kennels

128 Breeding kennels

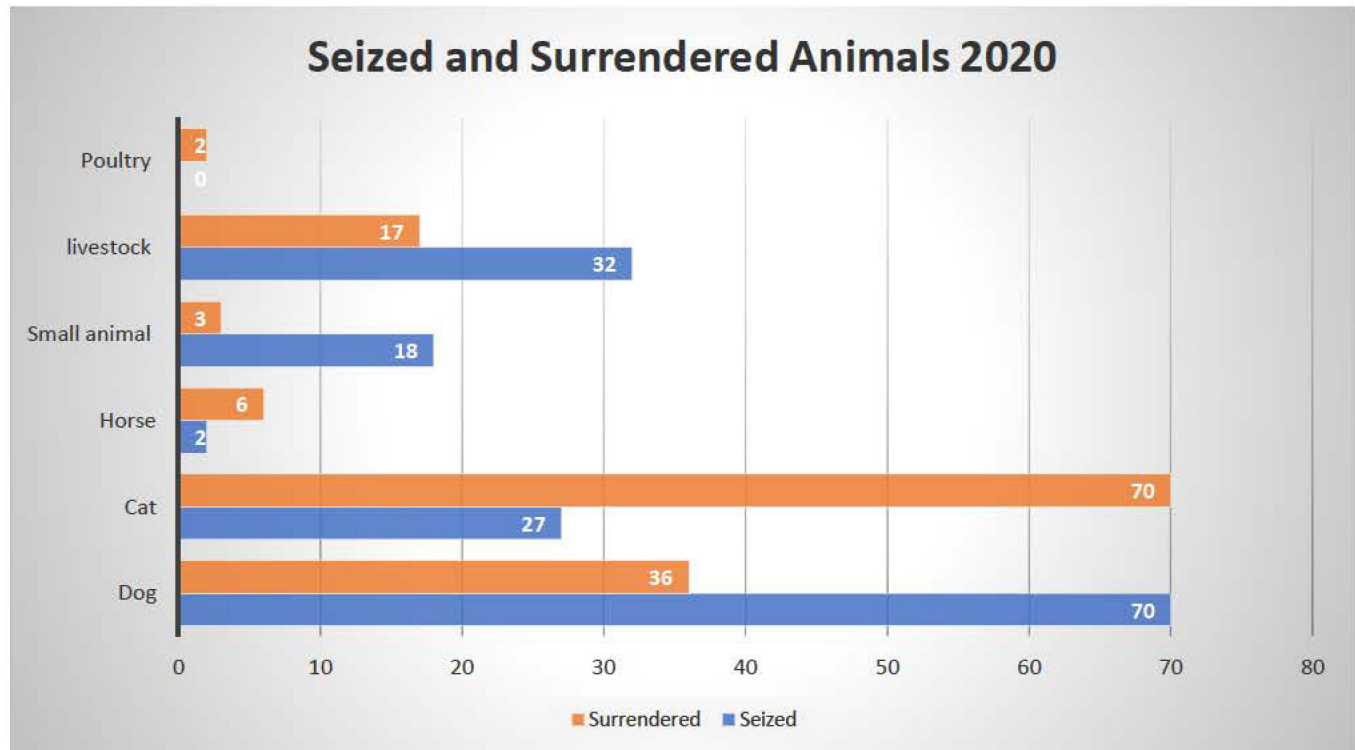
37 Pet stores

12 Research facilities

141 Animal Shelters and Rescues

Animal Complaints in 2020

The AWP Program received 293 animal cruelty complaints in 2020. Some of the biggest challenges that the AWP dealt with were complaints spanning the backlog of cases at the courts and reduced support from animal shelters and veterinary offices due to reduced staffing. This did not slow response from AWP staff or stop any investigations. Delays within the court system have resulted in animals being kept as living evidence for extended periods of time.

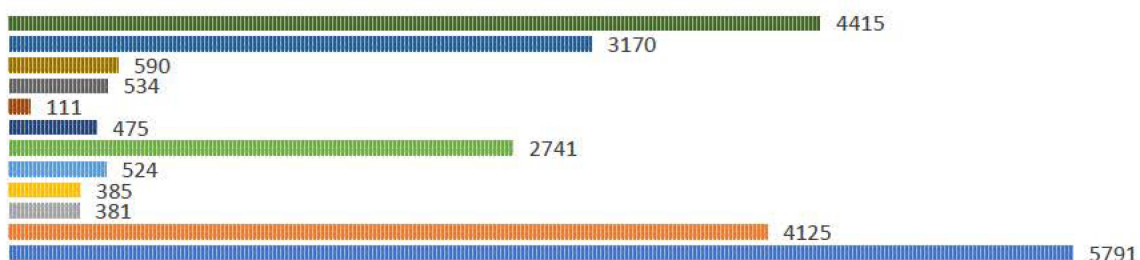


This chart reflects animals taken into custody by the Animal Welfare Program and does not reflect animals taken into custody by Animal Control Officers.

Animal Control Officer (ACO) Reporting

This is the third year of collecting and reporting data on ACO complaints. This information shows the different types of complaints Maine ACOs are responding to and helps AWP to plan for future trainings and look for potential issues that need to be addressed through rule, law or procedural changes.

ACO COMPLAINTS 2020



	1
Other	4415
Wildlife Complaints	3170
Rabid Animal	590
Cruelty Complaint	534
Owner Insitutionlized	111
Animal Trespass	475
Cat Complaints	2741
Stray Livestock	524
Vaccination Violation	385
Dangous Dog	381
Dog License	4125
Dogs at Large	5791

In Conclusion

2020 started off as a normal year for all of us, but as COVID-19 spread throughout the world, accompanied with the uncertainty and fear, we found more complicated challenges, supply shortages, and lockdowns as spring arrived. Over the summer, as we all adjusted to the new normal, AWP's Humane Agents were still busy responding to complaints and working with their clientele.

One very positive note was how our community partners have responded to the pandemic. Animal shelters and veterinarians began curbside service to help with adoptions and treatments. At one point during 2020, most of the animal shelters in Maine had very few adoptable animals in their facilities because of the incredible work done through their volunteers and foster homes.

We also had an opportunity to work with other state agencies, including the Dept. of Transportation, along with the Cumberland County CART team (county animal response team) helping to construct an emergency shelter to house animals during a potential emergency. Without these partnerships between Government agencies and non-governmental organizations, we could not complete the AWP mission to ensure the humane treatment of animals through communication, education, and enforcement of animal welfare laws.