



LOUISIANA ANIMAL  
WELFARE COMMISSION

*Governor's Office of Community Programs*

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17732 Highland Road Suite G-Box 237, Baton Rouge, LA 70810

(504) 568-8315

February 1, 2016

Dear DeSoto Parish Officials,

The Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission (LAWC) performed an inspection of the DeSoto Parish Animal Shelter on November 3, 2015. The inspectors included Ms. Ashley Delrie, LAWC's director of the inspection program, and me, LAWC vice-chair and state public health veterinarian with the Department of Health and Hospitals.

DeSoto's interim shelter director is very knowledgeable in his field and is attempting to continuously improve the facility. Animals appear to be cared for according to the standards put forth in Louisiana's Revised Statutes. The facility's procedures regarding cleaning are sufficient and the facility is modern and well maintained.

LAWC's inspection process involves two components. The first portion of the inspection deals with compliance with Louisiana law and LAWC shelter management guidelines. The second part of the inspection is concerned with shelter development of "standard practices" related to humane programs, community outreach, leadership, enforcement of laws, and progress toward becoming a very high quality shelter, one of the best in the state. Both sections are intended to provide valuable feedback to shelters and serve as a guide for future development.

Please see the attached Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission (LAWC) Inspection Form. The shelter was judged to meet LAWC and state standards for animal shelters. Inspectors did identify two major deficiencies. All animals leave the shelter unvaccinated for rabies. There is no follow-up documentation that ensures compliance with state rabies vaccination requirements. Also, animals are permitted to leave the shelter, either through adoption, rescue, or reclamation, without heartworm status being known. The first deficiency reduces the effectiveness of the shelter as a functioning asset for public health. The second could result in potentially ill animals being unwittingly transferred to the public.

The "good performance" rating in the shelter development section recognizes the direct involvement of the shelter in community outreach and partnerships, public education, and utilization of available tools to improve shelter programs and reduce the euthanasia rate. LAWC recommends that the shelter manager and persons in government responsible for staffing and supporting the shelter examine this portion of the inspection report in detail.

Final inspection ratings may be appealed. Any inspection under appeal will include the words "under appeal" next to the assigned rating in the rating box, until the issue can be addressed at a regular meeting of LAWC. The results of the inspection will be available on the LAWC website, [lawc.la.gov](http://lawc.la.gov).

Sincerely:

Gary A. Balsamo, D.V.M., M.P.H. & T.M.

State Public Health Veterinarian/Assistant State Epidemiologist

Attachments:

LAWC Inspection Form

Shelter Development Evaluation Form

*...to ensure and promote the proper treatment and well-being of animals*

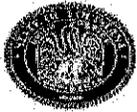
Name of shelter: DeSoto Parish Animal Shelter	Contact person: Harold Renfro, Interim Shelter Director
Phone: 318-871-2900	Email address: harold_renfro@yahoo.com

Physical address: 404 Liberty Lane  
Grand Cane, LA 71032

Name of inspector: Ashley Delrie, LAWC Shelter Inspection Director, Dr. Gary Balsamo, State PH veterinarian (LA Dept. of Health & Hosp.)	Date of inspection: November 3, 2015
	Initial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Re-inspection <input type="checkbox"/>

Critical	Major	Minor		Category
				<b>A. Animal euthanasia</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A9	No written protocol is available for euthanasia, in house or in the field
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>B. Management</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B4	There is no routine, documented inspection of the shelter regularly conducted by parish officials.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	B17,B18	There is a lack of WRITTEN standard operating procedures for shelter activities (cleaning, housing, animal intake, scanning, animal care, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B23	Parish ordinances have not incorporated state shelter standards into local law
				<b>C. Records</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C8	There is no daily documentation of the health status or the adoption status of each animal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>D. General structure</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>E. Water and electric power</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E7	No back-up generator is presently available to the shelter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>F. Waste disposal</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>G. Storage</b>

			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>H. Primary Enclosures</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	H8	Some cages do not have tops. Animals may be tempted to climb when cage tops are not present.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>I. Feeding and watering</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>J. Pest control</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	J2	The process to remove ectoparasites from incoming and resident animals should be a written protocol.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>K. Rabies quarantine</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>L. Infection control and rabies vaccination requirements</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	L1	All animals leave shelter unvaccinated for rabies. There are no documented statistics or tracking of animals that leave the shelter unvaccinated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	L6,L7,L9,L11	Not all animals are checked for heartworms, HW prevention is not administered, and all animals are not vaccinated upon entry.
			<b>M. Population control</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	M4	At the time of the inspection, the director had instituted a system of following up with adopters to insure that animals were sp&neut.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		This procedure should be formalized and documented in writing.
Additional comments:				
Enforcement of animal ordinances is not consistent throughout the parish. Some municipalities do not take enforcement seriously. This is a modern, well-maintained facility. The interim animal control director is very knowledgeable and does an excellent job of maintaining a clean, and efficiently run facility. The major deficits relate to rabies vaccination policies and to the inability of the shelter to determine heartworm status (minimally by direct smear) of all dogs that leave the facility for rescue or adoption.				
Rating: Below standards <input type="checkbox"/> Meets standards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exceeds standards <input type="checkbox"/>				



## Shelter Development Evaluation

**Shelter Evaluated:** Desoto Parish Animal Control

**Evaluation Date:** 11/3/2015

**Director:** Harold Renfro- Interim Director

**Email address:** harold\_renfro@yahoo.com

**Contact number:** 318-871-2900

**Evaluator:** Ashley Delrie

**Email:** ashleydelrie@lawc.la.gov

Initial  Follow up

### The LAWC Shelter Development Evaluation

The LAWC Shelter Development Evaluation is a comprehensive assessment to measure the performance of a shelter on humane programs and initiatives, community outreach and partnerships, leadership, law enforcement, and the ability to offer the public a quality, effective shelter.

### Standard Practices

The standard practices section focuses on guidelines and standard practice areas that are recognized by the National Animal Care & Control Association, the ASPCA, and HSUS as essential practices that provide a high quality, humane, and effective shelter. Each shelter will be evaluated on their proficiency of each standard.

**Standard Practices are:**

Executive Leadership

Shelter Programs

Community Outreach & Partnerships

Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Planning

### Performance Ratings

Meets all standard practices

Meets most standard practices

Meets some standard practices

Meets few or none of the standard practices

Distinguished Performance

Good Performance

Average Performance

Poor Performance

***\*NOTE: Shelters/agencies that do not manage an effective adoption program will automatically be assigned a poor performance rating.***

## Standard Practices

### 1) Executive Leadership

Written statement of mission, vision, and a strategic plan that outlines short term and long term goals for the current fiscal year  
Yes  No

The Director demonstrates knowledge and awareness of the budget and practices appropriate stewardship of animal shelter funds  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively manages a shelter/agency website accessible to the public with up to date information, current adoptable animals, event information, and shelter program information  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency creates strategies specific to reducing the euthanasia rate  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency shows evidence of collaboration with local law enforcement agencies and other government agencies  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively educates and encourages the public to report all instances of animal cruelty and neglect.  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively communications to the public on how to properly report cruelty to the agency  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency has a clearly written protocol on how cruelty is reported, investigated, and prosecuted  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency works with local or parish law enforcement to facilitate the prosecution of cruelty cases to the fullest extent of the law.  
Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs an effective means to enforce compliance with local, parish, and state rabies ordinances  
Yes  No

### ***Mandatory Registration & Licensing***

**For municipalities where registration & licensing does not exist in the local ordinances:**

The shelter/agency or its governing body shall work to establish mandatory registration and rabies licensing of dogs and cats as recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association  
Yes  No

The Director should actively work with local government and elected officials to incorporate licensing into the local or parish ordinances  
Yes  No

The Director shall create and advocate a plan to educate the public and government officials about the benefits of mandatory licensing & registration  
Yes  No

**For municipalities where registration & licensing does exist in the local ordinances:**

The shelter/agency employs an effective means to enforce registration & licensing compliance and monitors compliance rate.

Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively employs methods to increase the compliance rate and educate the public on the law.

Yes  No

The shelter/agency institutes a fine for non-compliance with rabies vaccination and license registration.

Yes  No

License fees and fines are reviewed annually

Yes  No

## 2) Shelter Programs

The shelter/agency manages an **effective** adoption program that includes:

Daily adoption times Yes  No

Shelter adoption events Yes  No

Off-site adoption events Yes  No

Extended shelter hours on weekends & evenings Yes  No

Website utilization Yes  No

Social Media Yes  No

The adoption program features a fee Yes  No

The shelter/agency conducts humane education programs for schools, civic organizations, colleges, universities, and community organizations covering subjects on responsible pet ownership, shelter adoption, heartworm disease prevention, approaching and reporting strays, dog fighting, services performed by animal control, and the value of animal control in the community?

Partially

The shelter/agency uses a proper owner surrender intake form that captures health history, behaviors, and general personality information about the animal

Yes  No

The shelter/agency adoption program educates the adopter on heartworm disease and the importance of administering heartworm preventative medication to the animal at the time of the adoption

Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively engages in promotional practices and utilizes a variety of communication tools to increase public awareness about the shelter and adoptable animals

Yes  No

The shelter/agency uses a shelter managed social media and website program to communicate to the public about shelter policies, promotions, events, programs, and other useful information

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs a shelter managed foster care program to care for pets at sites external to the

shelter itself

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs a rescue program to help reduce the shelter euthanasia rate

Yes  No

The shelter/agency has an efficient program in place to increase owner redemption rates

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs an effective volunteer program

Partially

The shelter/agency has a surrender prevention program, or provides references to those unsure of whether a pet requires surrender

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs an enrichment and/or socialization program for shelter inhabitants

Yes  No

The shelter/agency participates in an inmate/pet rehabilitation program

Yes  No

The shelter/agency participates in community programs at schools and centers

Yes  No

The shelter/agency participates in an animal transport program

Yes  No

The shelter/agency conducts, cooperates with, or recommends obedience training programs to adoptive owners or other pet owners in the community

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs a bathing and grooming program to those animals suffering from coat conditions affecting the health of the animals

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs a Return to Owner (RTO) program that helps return licensed animals to their rightful owners. A "Free Ride Home"

n/a- parish does not have a license law

### 3) Community Outreach & Partnerships

#### Spay & Neuter Outreach & Education

The shelter/agency employs an effective spay/neuter education program

Yes  No

The shelter/agency implements effective community initiatives to increase awareness about local resources for low cost spay/neuter services

Partially

The shelter/agency participates in an income based subsidized spay/neuter program

Yes  No

The shelter/agency implements community outreach spay/neuter initiatives targeting low income and high stray intake areas

Yes  No

The shelter/agency actively seeks out spay/neuter grant opportunities

Yes  No

The shelter/agency employs shelter based spay/neuter community incentives programs

Yes  No

#### Partnerships

The shelter/agency actively seeks out and develops partnerships with animal welfare organizations and rescue groups

Yes  No

The shelter/agency works to develop partnerships with the local business community

Yes  No

The shelter/agency works to develop partnerships with the local veterinarian community

Yes  No

The shelter/agency partners with local media to promote shelter adoption, spay & neuter education, and shelter resources

Partially

The shelter/agency conducts community reduced price rabies vaccination clinics

Yes  No

### 4) Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Planning

The shelter/agency maintains an emergency response plan for natural disasters and other catastrophic events (OEP & LDAF requirements)

Yes  No

The shelter/agency conducts drills and trainings to assure effectiveness of emergency response plan

Yes  No

## Performance Rating

Meets most standards

Good Performance

## SHELTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The goal of the shelter development evaluation is to highlight specific shelter practice areas where DeSoto Parish Animal Control agency is demonstrating a strong level of proficiency, and to identify other shelter practice areas that are in need of improvement. This will allow the agency, and DeSoto parish's local governing body, to conduct a thorough review of areas where the agency is currently successful, and other areas that are identified as in need of improvement. LAWC's goal with this evaluation is to give recommendations to the agency so a "working plan" of development can be created and implemented over time. LAWC will periodically, and during subsequent inspections, refer to this document to assess if the recommendations are being implemented and are helping to improve the agency. Our goal is to help the agency build on current areas of success, and offer support in areas of development.

It is evident that the DeSoto Parish Animal Control agency is working hard to provide the public with a quality, effective shelter. The agency demonstrated that it is efficient in some areas of the four (4) standard practices. The following is list of areas where the shelter is demonstrating a strong level of proficiency:

### Proficiency Areas:

- Shelter/agency website management
- Social media program
- Adoption program (accessibility & events)
- Surrender intake form & procedure
- Foster care program
- Rescue outreach & partnerships
- Micro chipping to increase return to owner rates
- Surrender prevention program
- Enrichment & socialization program- very impressive outdoor kennel space
- Partnership with the local veterinarian community
- Partnership with the local media to promote shelter animals
- Emergency preparedness & disaster planning
- Collaboration with law enforcement agencies
- Education of heartworm disease and prevention for potential adopters
- Professional, friendly, and knowledgeable staff
- Strong working relationship between local parish government and the director

### Areas of Development & Recommendations:

- Mandatory Registration & Licensing Ordinance- LAWC strongly recommends that the director/agency continue to work with the DeSoto Parish Police Jury to incorporate a mandatory registration & licensing law into the local animal ordinances.
- Strategic Planning- a written shelter plan outlining the agency's short-term and long-term goals should be in place and updated annually. A continues review of the plan should conducted to evaluate if the agency is achieving specified goals and to ensure that the goals are relevant to needs of the agency. The plan should be made available to public via the shelter website.

- Financial Stewardship- the Director should have a strong working knowledge of the shelter's budget and the ability to manage the budget effectively. This will allow the director to manage programs more effectively when funding is needed. A constant review of shelter's revenues and expenses should be conducted.
- Cruelty Reporting & Education- LAWC strongly recommends that the agency improve on its communication to the public on properly reporting animal cruelty to the agency. A written protocol should be developed and communicated to the public on an ongoing basis. An anonymous hotline or email reporting system should be considered. In addition, a "see something, say something" reporting program should be considered and be available on the agency's website. It is recommended that the agency develop a written protocol on how cruelty complaints are handled internally. All protocols and/or agency policies regarding cruelty should be added to the agency's policy manual. Strong collaboration with the sheriff's department is essential and recommended and should be included in the protocol.
- Rabies Enforcement- a tracking and follow-up system should be implemented to help ensure that animals that are adopted from the shelter are receiving rabies vaccinations. This requirement is specified in the DeSoto Animal Control adoption contract but there is no system in place to ensure compliance.
- Community Outreach & Education- the agency should consider improving its community outreach efforts. Humane education programs in schools, and with community & civic organizations, are an essential component to an effective agency. LAWC recommends contacting the Pet Education Project, a non-profit organization based in Shreveport, which specializes in educating children on responsible pet ownership. Developing a partnership with PEP will help the agency's humane education outreach efforts.
- Volunteer Program- continue to build on the current program. Utilize community events to help recruit new volunteers. Partner with local civic & religious organizations and schools to help in recruiting efforts.
- Transport Program- evaluate the benefits of participating in a transport program to help to reduce the euthanasia of healthy, adoptable animals.
- Service Dog Program- consider the benefits of developing a service dog program utilizing shelter animal to aid local wounded veterans in the parish. Many shelters employ similar programs with great success. The Patriot Dog Program in Lake Charles is an excellent program that could be used as a model of success. Consider partnering with the sheriff's department and the local veterans association.
- Heartworm testing should be performed on all animals eligible for adoption. Dr. Gary Balsamo will follow-up with Interim Director Renfro to schedule a training session.
- Vaccinations of all animals upon intake should be considered.

### **Spay & Neuter- Major Development Area**

- A full review of the agency's spay & neuter initiatives and programs is highly recommended.
- A spay & neuter voucher tracking system should be employed to ensure the agency is compliant with state sterilization laws.
- LAWC recommends a continued participation in the Robinson's Rescue SNIP subsidized program. However, an evaluation of the program's utilization and effectiveness is recommended. Transportation concerns should be addressed. Consider the option of using at least 10-20 % of grant monies to be allocated toward a public awareness campaign about the program. This will help to increase awareness and utilization of the program.
- A billboard or placing adds in the local newspaper could be helpful options to increase awareness about the SNIP program.
- Consider establishing a partnership with the local water or utility company to help with the dissemination of information about the SNIP and/or other spay & neuter incentive programs. Informational inserts into consumer bills can be an effective way to reach a large percentage of the

community.

- Seek out spay & neuter grant opportunities from local and national non-profits organization and local/state foundations.
- Leverage relationships with local media outlets to run public service announcements about spay & neuter resources available to the public.
- Consider the development of parish wide spay & neuter education program.
- Evaluate the public's accessibility to the current spay & neuter resources.
- Consider the benefits of hiring a part-time veterinarian to help with spay/neuter needs and/or building a small surgery suite onsite. This could prove to be the best use of taxpayer monies. Consult with Caddo Parish Animal Services to learn about their recent addition of a surgery suite and its effectiveness.
- Consult with Dr. Wendy Wolfson- LSU Shelter Medicine Program to help with spay & neuter needs. [wwolfson@vetmed.lsu.edu](mailto:wwolfson@vetmed.lsu.edu). 225- 578-9045. Utilization of the LSU mobile spay & neuter clinic could prove to be an effective tool in meeting the spay & neuter demands of the agency.

**Shelter Statistics- 2015 YTD:**

Euthanasia rate: 64.7%

Adoption rate: 17%

Died in custody: 2.68%

Returned to Owner: 3.5%

Transfer out (rescue release): 12%

Report filed on December 11, 2015

Filed by: Ashley Delrie