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IGO Releases Audit of Animal Care and Control Shelter Operations

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (IGO) has completed an audit of the City's Commission on Animal Care and Control (CACC) shelter operations.

The audit found that although animals were housed for the minimum time frames required by ordinance, which provides owners a chance to reunite with their stray or confiscated pets, CACC still faces several challenges.

- CACC is significantly understaffed. According to the National Animal Control Association guidelines for minimum daily time spent cleaning and feeding animals, CACC was understaffed by 29.5%, or 303 staffing hours, at the time of the audit.
- 38% of neglected and abused animals under CACC care did not receive veterinary examinations within 24 hours of arrival as required by CACC policy;
- 5 animals were incorrectly shown in CACC's Chameleon data system as still housed at the facility, though they had actually been adopted more than a month prior to the audit.

"Managing the City's animal shelters can be difficult and thankless work," said Inspector General Joe Ferguson. "CACC's mandated mission of humanely handling and caring for the City's lost, stray, and impounded animals cannot be achieved unless it uses all of the resources at its disposal. This includes ensuring it is fully staffed to meet both national industry standards and its legal responsibilities."

The IGO made several recommendations for the CACC to improve its operations, including:

- After finding that 5 animals were incorrectly shown in CACC's data system as still housed at the facility even though they'd been adopted more than a month prior, the IGO recommended that CACC design and implement procedures to ensure adoption records are better input into the CACC data system. The IGO also recommended that CACC ensure staff follow up on all animals listed as missing during inventory.
- After noting that CACC faced significant shortfalls among its cleaning and feeding staff, the IGO recommended that the department work to fill those vacancies as soon as possible. Further, the IGO recommended that CACC routinely evaluate whether it is meeting appropriate guidelines for time spent cleaning and feeding animals, and to determine the more appropriate staffing strategies (hourly workers, salaried employees, and volunteers) to ensure those guidelines are met.

The full audit, and CACC's responses to the audit findings, can be found online at the IGO website: www.chicagoinspectorgeneral.org. Follow the IGO on Twitter [@ChicagoIGO](https://twitter.com/ChicagoIGO) for the latest information on how the IGO continues to fight waste, fraud, abuse, and inefficiency in Chicago government.

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