



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
City of Chicago



REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL:

***COMMISSION ON ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL
SHELTER OPERATIONS FOLLOW-UP AUDIT***

SEPTEMBER 2014

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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL *City of Chicago*

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September 03, 2014

To the Mayor, Members of the City Council, City Clerk, City Treasurer, and residents of the City of Chicago:

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed a follow-up audit of the Commission on Animal Care and Control (CACC) shelter operations. The purpose of the original audit, released in May of 2013, was to determine if CACC,

- had an appropriate number of shelter staff to care for the quantity of animals it housed;
- conducted veterinary examinations within 24 hours of the intake date for animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases;
- housed animals for the minimum time frame required by relevant laws and policies; and
- accurately tracked animals in the case management software system.

Based upon the results of our 2013 audit, we recommended that CACC,

- fill staff vacancies at the shelter as quickly as possible to ensure that sufficient hours are spent on cleaning and feeding to meet National Animal Control Association (NACA) guidelines;
- routinely evaluate whether the department is meeting the NACA guidelines;
- develop procedures to perform veterinary examinations of animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases in the required time periods in order to ensure full and timely documentation and evidentiary value of the reports;
- review its veterinary examination procedures related to court case animals and implement management controls to ensure a) animals related to neglect and abuse court cases are correctly identified at intake and b) veterinarians are promptly notified of the intake of such animals;
- design and implement procedures to ensure adoption records related to offsite events are brought back to CACC and processed in a timely manner; and
- research all animals noted as “missing” during an inventory and update the case management system to ensure it accurately reflects the animals housed at the facility.

In its response to the findings and recommendations, CACC described a number of corrective actions it planned to pursue.

The purpose of this follow-up audit was to determine the status of those corrective actions. The follow-up audit concludes that CACC has fully implemented corrective actions and, in doing so, corrected the issues that OIG identified in the original audit. We have summarized the four original audit findings and recommendations and detailed the status of corrective actions below.

We thank CACC for its cooperation during both the original and the follow-up audits.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Ferguson', is positioned below the word 'Respectfully,'.

Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General
City of Chicago

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I. FOLLOW-UP RESULTS

In August 2014, the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) completed a follow-up audit of the May 2013 audit of CACC shelter operations.¹ The follow-up audit was limited to the subject matter of the original May 2013 report. We have summarized the four findings of the original audit, the associated recommendations, and the status of their corrective actions below.

MAY 2013 FINDING 1: CACC Shelter Staffing was 29.5% Below National Guidelines for the Humane Care of Animals.

OIG Recommendation: We recommended that CACC fill the hourly positions added in its 2013 budget request as quickly as possible and ensure that sufficient hours are spent on cleaning and feeding to meet the National Animal Control Association (NACA) guidelines.

We also recommended that CACC routinely evaluate whether it is meeting the NACA guidelines for time spent cleaning and feeding animals and assess the optimal way to meet the guidelines in its budget requests (e.g., hourly staff, full-time staff, or contractual arrangements such as the agreement with the Cook County Sheriff's Department).

Status of Corrective Action: **Implemented. CACC Shelter Staffing was in Substantial Compliance with National Guidelines for the Humane Care of Animals.** CACC hired nine additional Animal Care Clerks dedicated to feeding and cleaning. CACC also increased the number of animals it transfers to other shelters, thereby reducing the average daily population of animals requiring care. Together, these changes have brought CACC into substantial compliance with the NACA standard.² OIG encourages CACC to continue monitoring and addressing shelter needs to ensure adequate staffing.

OIG found that CACC routinely evaluates its ability to meet NACA guidelines through the daily shelter population management processes and annual staffing considerations during the budget process.

¹ The 2013 audit report is available on the OIG website: <http://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/publications-and-press/igo-releases-audit-of-animal-care-and-control-shelter-operations/>

² OIG calculated that CACC's average shelter population requires 788.5 hours of feeding and cleaning per week according to NACA guidelines. CACC staffing levels as of May 16, 2014, provided for 768 hours of feeding and cleaning per week. Considering the 19.5 hour difference is less than one full-time equivalent position and that the calculation can also be adjusted by fluctuations in the number of animals housed, OIG determined CACC was in substantial compliance.

MAY 2013 FINDING 2: **CACC Failed to Comply with its Policy Requiring the Performance of Veterinary Examinations Within 24 Hours of Arrival for 38% of Animals Involved in Neglect and Abuse Court Cases and Housed at the CACC Shelter at the Time of the Audit.**

OIG Recommendation: We recommended that CACC develop procedures to perform veterinary examinations in the required time periods in order to ensure full and timely documentation and evidentiary value of the reports. We also recommended CACC review its veterinary examination procedures related to neglect and abuse court case animals and implement management controls to ensure a) neglect and abuse court case animals are correctly identified at intake and b) veterinarians are promptly notified of the intake of such animals.

Status of Corrective Action: **Implemented. CACC Complied with its New Policy Requiring Veterinary Examinations Within 48 Hours for Animals Involved in Neglect and Abuse Cases and Housed at the CACC Shelter at the Time of OIG Follow-up.** During the original audit, CACC finalized and implemented a new policy in conjunction with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, the Chicago Police Department, and the City of Chicago Department of Law which changed the 24-hour requirement to a 48-hour requirement. Therefore, during the follow-up audit, OIG evaluated shelter performance based on the new policy. OIG reviewed CACC medical records for animals that were housed at the CACC shelter on June 5, 2014, and involved in neglect and abuse court cases. Through the review, OIG found that CACC documented a veterinary exam for all animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases within 48 hours of intake, consistent with CACC policy. Since the original audit, CACC also hired an Operations Manager who is responsible for overseeing court case records and notifying medical staff when exams are needed.

MAY 2013 FINDING 3: **CACC Held Animals for the Mandatory Minimum Time.**

OIG Recommendation: No recommendation made.

Status of Corrective Action: No corrective action necessary.

MAY 2013 FINDING 4: CACC Failed to Timely Process Adoption Records Resulting in an Inaccurate Inventory of Animals.

OIG Recommendation: We recommended that CACC design and implement procedures to ensure adoption records related to offsite events are brought back to CACC and processed in a timely manner. Furthermore, we recommended all animals noted as “missing” during an inventory should be researched and updated to ensure the Chameleon system accurately reflects the animals housed at the facility.³

Status of Corrective Action: **Implemented. CACC Accurately Tracked Animals in its Inventory for All Animals Housed at the CACC Shelter at the Time of OIG Follow-up.** OIG observed CACC staff conduct a daily inventory of animals housed at the shelter and found that CACC was able to account for all animals in its care. Since the original audit, CACC implemented new procedures meant to ensure the accuracy of its animal inventory. For example, CACC requires two inventory updates for offsite adoption events—one when the animal has been moved offsite and another if the animal is adopted. As part of routine inventory procedures Animal Care Clerks now also perform daily reviews of exception reports in order to identify and resolve any discrepancies and update the inventory to ensure the accuracy of records. In addition, Animal Care Supervisors conduct a manual daily count of animals in the shelter and match the total against the day’s inventory records to ensure completeness. Finally, the Chameleon system distributes an automated email each afternoon to the Shelter Manager and CACC management to keep them informed of any animals noted as “missing” during an inventory so that problems may be identified and resolved quickly.

³ Chameleon is a case management software system for animal care facilities.

II. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

“CACC thanks the Inspector General for the opportunity to have critical processes reviewed. We will continue to work towards improving operational protocols, maximizing limited public resources, and leveraging community partnerships to benefit the animals temporarily housed at our shelter as we further our mission of protecting public safety and ensuring the humane care of Chicago’s animals.”

III. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

A. Objectives

The objectives of the follow-up audit were to determine if corrective action had been taken to address the findings that OIG identified in the original audit. Specifically, OIG followed up to determine if CACC,

- had an appropriate number of shelter staff to care for the quantity of animals it housed;
- conducted veterinary examinations within 48 hours of the intake date for animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases; and
- accurately tracked animals in the Chameleon system.

B. Scope

The follow-up audit was limited to the subject matter of the original May 2013 report. Specifically, OIG followed up only on the objectives from the original audit that resulted in a recommendation. Therefore, OIG did not follow up on the original audit objective (finding 3) to determine if CACC housed animals for the minimum time frame required by relevant laws and policies.

Neither the follow-up audit nor the original audit included an examination or review of field operations.

C. Methodology

For all aspects of this follow-up audit, OIG met with CACC management and staff to gain an understanding of CACC shelter operations.

To determine if CACC had adequate staffing for feeding and cleaning, OIG calculated the NACA standard using CACC shelter statistics for the period from June 1, 2013, to May 31, 2014. OIG then compared shelter staffing as of May 16, 2014, against this standard.

To determine if CACC conducted veterinary exams within 48 hours of intake for animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases, OIG reviewed veterinary records for all animals involved in neglect and abuse court cases and housed at the CACC Shelter on June 5, 2014.

To determine if CACC accurately tracked animals in the Chameleon system, OIG observed an inventory of all shelter animals and reviewed related documentation.⁴

D. Standards

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our

⁴ In the original audit, OIG assessed the reliability of the relevant Chameleon data by interviewing CACC employees knowledgeable about the data. OIG determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of the original and follow-up audit reports.

findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

E. Authority and Role

The authority to perform this audit is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030 which states that the Office of Inspector General has the power and duty to review the programs of City government in order to identify any inefficiencies, waste, and potential for misconduct, and to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of City programs and operations.

The role of OIG is to review City operations and make recommendations for improvement.

City management is responsible for establishing and maintaining processes to ensure that City programs operate economically, efficiently, effectively, and with integrity.

CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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To Suggest Ways to Improve City Government	Visit our website: https://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/help-improve-city-government/
To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in City Programs	Call OIG's toll-free hotline 866-IG-TIPLINE (866-448-4754). Talk to an investigator from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Or visit our website: http://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/fight-waste-fraud-and-abuse/

MISSION

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) is an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency whose mission is to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of programs and operations of City government. OIG achieves this mission through,

- administrative and criminal investigations;
- audits of City programs and operations; and
- reviews of City programs, operations, and policies.

From these activities, OIG issues reports of findings, disciplinary, and other recommendations to assure that City officials, employees, and vendors are held accountable for the provision of efficient, cost-effective government operations and further to prevent, detect, identify, expose and eliminate waste, inefficiency, misconduct, fraud, corruption, and abuse of public authority and resources.

AUTHORITY

The authority to produce reports and recommendations on ways to improve City operations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030(c), which confers upon the Inspector General the following power and duty:

To promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the city government by reviewing programs, identifying any inefficiencies, waste and potential for misconduct therein, and recommending to the mayor and the city council policies and methods for the elimination of inefficiencies and waste, and the prevention of misconduct.