



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
*City of Chicago*



***REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE:***

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***COMMISSION ON ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL  
SHELTER OPERATIONS AUDIT***

**MAY 2013**



Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL *City of Chicago*

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May 1, 2013

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 (IGO) has completed an audit of the Commission on Animal Care and Control (CACC) shelter operations. CACC plays a critical role in protecting the health and safety of both animals and people in Chicago, and the shelter houses roughly 300-600 animals at any given time, depending on the season. These animals include lost pets, stray animals, and animals impounded as court evidence in abuse or neglect cases. While approximately 92% of the animals are dogs and cats, the shelter also houses birds, livestock, and other animals.

Due to the nature of its mission, CACC is the subject of great public interest and the focus of that interest and activity is the shelter facility at 2741 S. Western Avenue. The shelter is required by ordinance to hold animals for a minimum number of days depending on their circumstances. While adoptions and reunions with owners are preferred outcomes, CACC does euthanize animals a) in situations where the animal has a severe medical condition or is aggressive, b) at the request of the owner, or c) due to resource limitations based upon the number of animals and capacity of the shelter.

Based upon the results of our audit, we concluded that animals were housed for the minimum time frames required by ordinance, giving owners a chance to reunite with their stray or confiscated pets. However, we also found that:

- CACC was understaffed by 29.5% according to National Animal Control Association guidelines for minimum daily time spent cleaning and feeding animals;
- Veterinary examinations were not performed within 24 hours of arrival for 38% of animals involved in neglect and abuse cases as required by CACC policy;
- Animals that had been adopted more than a month prior to the audit were incorrectly shown in CACC's Chameleon data system as still housed at the facility.

We thank CACC management and staff for their cooperation during this audit and commend them for initiating action to address the problems identified during the audit. The majority of top management had been in place for less than 16 months at the time of our audit. I hope they are able to use the audit results to improve CACC shelter operations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ferguson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General  
City of Chicago

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

The objectives of the audit were to answer the following questions:

- Does CACC have the appropriate number of staff to care for the quantity of animals it houses?
- Are veterinary examinations conducted within 24 hours of the intake date for animals involved in criminal court cases?
- Are animals housed for the minimum time frame required by relevant laws and policies?
- Are animals accurately tracked in the Chameleon system?

Based upon the results of our audit, we conclude that:

- CACC was understaffed by 303 staffing hours, or 29.5% less than the staffing level called for under National Animal Control Association guidelines for minimum daily time spent cleaning and feeding animals;
- CACC failed in 38% of the cases tested to meet its policy of conducting veterinarian examinations within 24 hours of arrival for animals involved in neglect and abuse cases;
- CACC housed animals for the minimum time frame required, giving owners a chance to reunite with their stray or confiscated pets;
- The Chameleon data system, through which CACC tracks animals, incorrectly showed five animals that had been adopted from 42 to 118 days prior to the IGO audit were still housed at the facility.

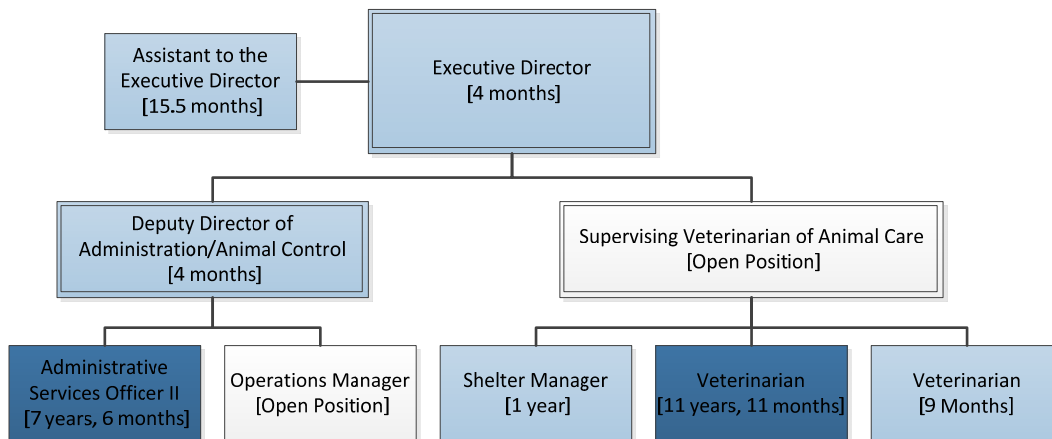
The specific recommendations related to each finding, and CACC's response, are described in the Audit Findings and Recommendations section of this report.

## II. BACKGROUND

According to the City of Chicago 2013 Budget Overview:

The Commission on Animal Care and Control (CACC) protects public safety and ensures the humane care of animals through sheltering, pet placement, education, and animal law enforcement, and by removing stray, injured and potentially dangerous animals from the public way. ACC annually responds to approximately 60,000 animal-related service requests, and operates the Animal Care and Control facility, which houses approximately 20,000 stray animals, lost pets, animals involved in court cases, animals available for adoption, and non-domestic animals.

The 2013 CACC budget appropriation approved by City Council totaled \$4,992,064 and included \$3,896,481 for personnel services. The budget allowed for 72 full time equivalent positions although there were only 56 filled at the time of the audit. The current organizational chart of CACC shows that there are nine positions that make up the top three tiers of management. Of those positions, two were unfilled at the time of the audit, leaving seven individuals to manage operations.<sup>1</sup> As depicted in the following chart, five of the seven were in their positions less than 16 months as of August 2012. While the Executive Director had only been in the position for 4 months, she had previously served as Deputy Director from February 2000 to October 2011.



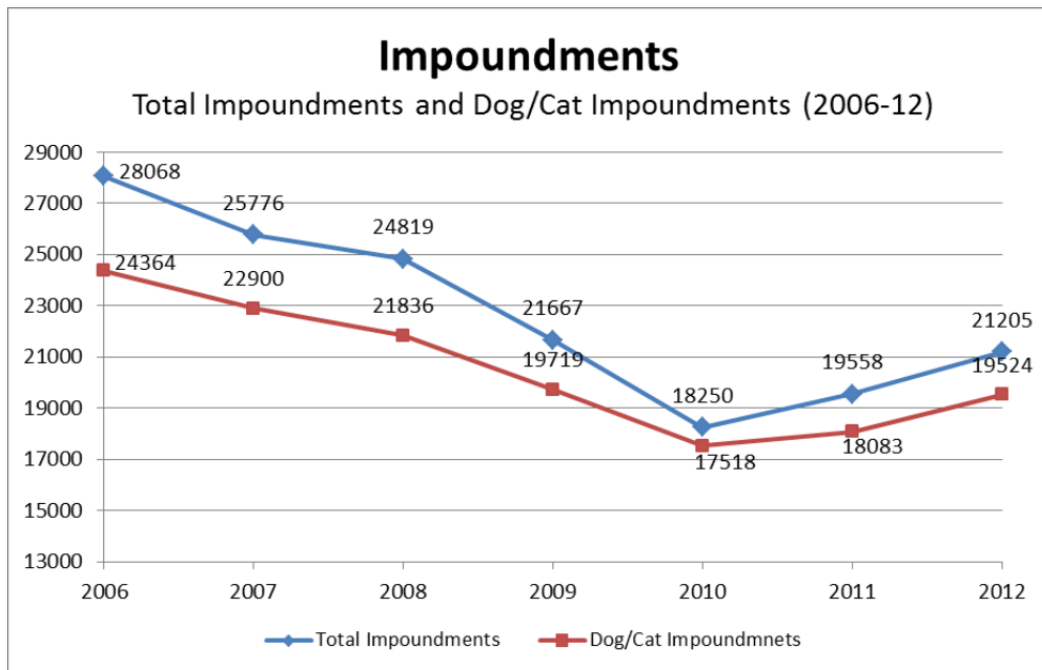
According to its General Orders, CACC's responsibilities include:

- Impounding, housing and caring of stray, unwanted and dangerous animals and responsible for the humane euthanasia of unadoptable animals;
- Investigating and assisting in the prosecution of animal cruelty complaints, dangerous animal complaints, and animal bites;
- Working with the Chicago Police Department's newly formed AACT (Animal Abuse Control Team) to eliminate animal cruelty, including illegal animal fighting in the city;

<sup>1</sup> The two open positions were subsequently filled in December 2012.

- Assisting Chicago citizens in the removal of nuisance wildlife from their homes;
- Inspecting all animal-related businesses (pet shops, kennels, animal hospitals) in Chicago for compliance with city ordinances;
- Reuniting lost pets with owners through [the] redemption program;
- Evaluating, surgically altering, and vaccinating all adoptable animals;
- Issuing rabies vaccinations and proper licensing to all animals redeemed from [the] facility;
- Working closely with private humane organizations to optimize the placement of animals;
- Providing the public with information regarding responsible pet ownership and the humane treatment of animals through various publications;
- Participating in neighborhood activities or events to reinforce responsible pet ownership or specific animal related issues;
- Operates a Volunteer Program to assist in improving the placement of animals housed at [the] facility.<sup>2</sup>

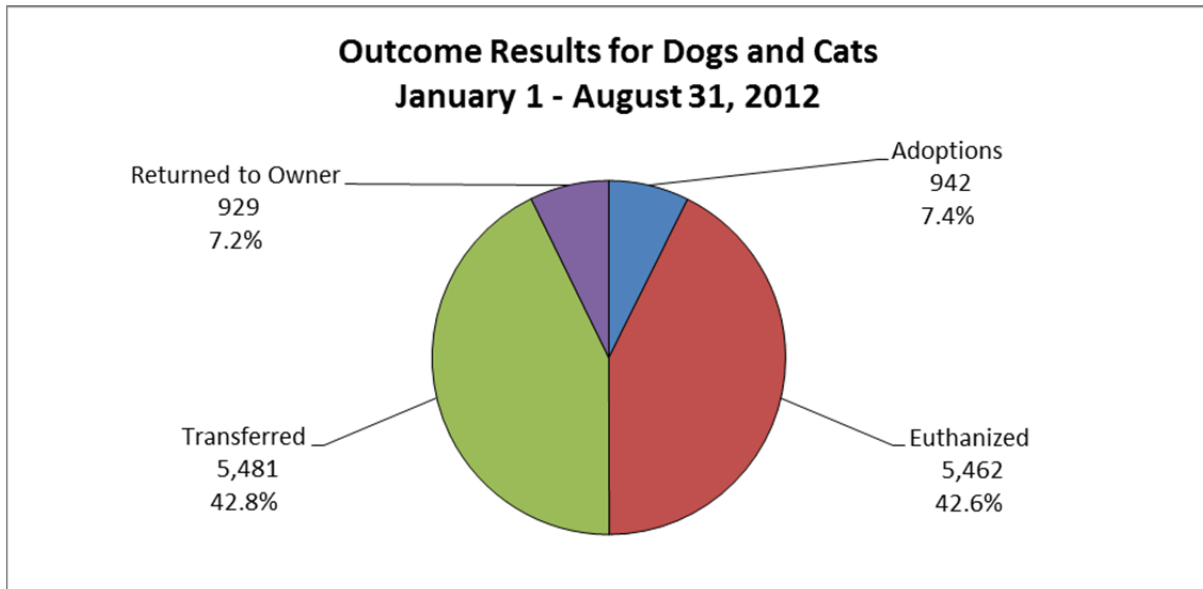
CACC plays a critical role in protecting the health and safety of both animals and people in Chicago, and the shelter houses roughly 300-600 animals at any given time, depending upon the season. These animals include lost pets, stray animals, and animals impounded as court evidence in abuse or neglect cases. While approximately 92% of these animals are dogs and cats, the shelter also houses birds, livestock, and other animals. The following graph, as reported on CACC's website, depicts both the total number of animal impoundments and the number of dog and cat impoundments between 2006 and 2012.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>2</sup> CACC General Order #001.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cacc/supp\\_info/cacc\\_data\\_statistics.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cacc/supp_info/cacc_data_statistics.html), accessed April 26, 2013.

For the time period between January 1 and August 31, 2012, CACC had a 57.4% live release rate.<sup>4</sup> As illustrated in the following chart, the live releases included animals transferred to other organizations, adopted, or reunited with the owner.



While adoptions and reunions with owners are preferred outcomes, CACC does euthanize animals a) in situations where the animal has a severe medical condition or is aggressive, b) at the request of the owner, or c) due to resource limitations based upon the number of animals and capacity of the shelter. Of the 5,462 animals euthanized from January 1 to August 31, 2012, 4,015, or 73.5%, were unhealthy and untreatable.<sup>5</sup>

Because CACC is licensed as an animal control facility by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, it must report “the total number of dogs, cats and other animals received, adopted, euthanized or reclaimed by the owner for the previous calendar year at the time of license renewal.”<sup>6</sup> CACC uses the Chameleon system to track information needed for operations and reporting, such as animal intake and outcome data, behavioral profiles, medical records, and location for each animal.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The live release rate is based on cats and dogs only.

<sup>5</sup> The remaining 26.5% of the animals euthanized were categorized, per industry standards, as healthy (13.4%), treatable-rehabilitatable (7.5%), or treatable-manageable (5.6%). Each of these categories may include euthanasia at the owner’s request. An additional 239 unhealthy and untreatable animals were also euthanized at the owner’s request.

<sup>6</sup> Per Illinois Administrative Code (8 Ill. Adm. Code 25.90)  
(<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/008/008000250000900R.html>)

<sup>7</sup> Chameleon is a case management software system for animal care facilities.



### **III. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. Objectives**

The objectives of the audit were to determine the following:

- Does CACC have the appropriate number of staff to care for the quantity of animals they house?
- Are veterinarian examinations conducted within 24 hours of the intake date for animals involved in criminal court cases?
- Are animals housed for the minimum time frame required by relevant laws and policies?
- Are animals accurately tracked in the Chameleon system?

#### **B. Scope**

The audit focused on operations conducted within the shelter during the fall of 2012 and did not include field operations. We examined the following information:

- The number of animal intakes and length of stay from January 1, 2012 – August 31, 2012;
- Staffing as of November 16, 2012;
- All animals involved in court cases and housed at the facility on November 7, 2012;
- All animals processed as intakes from October 1 – 31, 2012; and
- All animals housed within the facility on October 29, 2012.

#### **C. Methodology**

Audit steps included:

- Interviewing individuals with knowledge of CACC shelter operations;
- Reviewing the Chameleon system for data related to specific audit objectives;<sup>8</sup>
- Comparing the current staffing level with national guidelines;
- Reviewing veterinary records related to animals involved in court cases to determine if an examination was conducted within 24 hours of intake;
- Comparing animals' length of stay to mandatory minimum hold times as required by the Municipal Code of Chicago or the Cook County General Ordinance; and
- Conducting an inventory of all animals housed at the facility.

#### **D. Standards**

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAS) 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 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.

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<sup>8</sup> We assessed the reliability of the relevant Chameleon data by interviewing CACC employees knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

**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 Inspector General's Office 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 the IGO 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.

**IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Finding 1: CACC Shelter Staffing was 29.5% below National Guidelines for the Humane Care of Animals**

CACC’s staffing was 29.5% below the level recommended by the National Animal Control Association (NACA) “to insure animals are properly cared for in a safe and humane manner and to maintain a safe working environment for employees.”<sup>9</sup> The NACA recommends that staff spend a minimum of 15 minutes per day per animal (nine minutes cleaning and six minutes feeding).<sup>10</sup>

CACC records showed that the shelter took in 14,164 animals in the 244 days from January 1, 2012 through August 31, 2012, and each animal was housed in the facility for an average of 10.12 days. Based on this data, the IGO calculated that CACC needs 1,028 staff hours per week to meet the cleaning and feeding standard recommended by the NACA:

**CLEANING AND FEEDING HOURS CALCULATION**

	14,164	Incoming Animals from January 1 to August 31, 2012
÷ by 244 days =	58	Incoming Animals per Day
× 10.12 day average hold period =	587	Animals in Shelter per Day
× 15 Minutes per Animal =	8,812	Minutes Needed Daily for Cleaning and Feeding
÷ 60 minutes =	146.9	Hours Needed Daily for Cleaning and Feeding
× 7 days =	<b>1,028</b>	<b>Hours Needed Weekly for Cleaning and Feeding</b>
÷ 35 hours <sup>11</sup> =	<b>29.4</b>	<b>FTEs (Full Time Equivalent Positions) Needed Per Week<sup>12</sup></b>

However, as of November 16, 2012, CACC employed only nine staffers with the primary responsibility of cleaning and feeding (Animal Care Aide I & II positions) and one additional employee (an Animal Care Clerk position) who spent an estimated three hours per week cleaning and feeding. The Shelter Manager estimated that those in Animal Care Aide I positions spend approximately 28-32 hours and Animal Care Aide IIs spend 26-30 hours at these specific tasks.

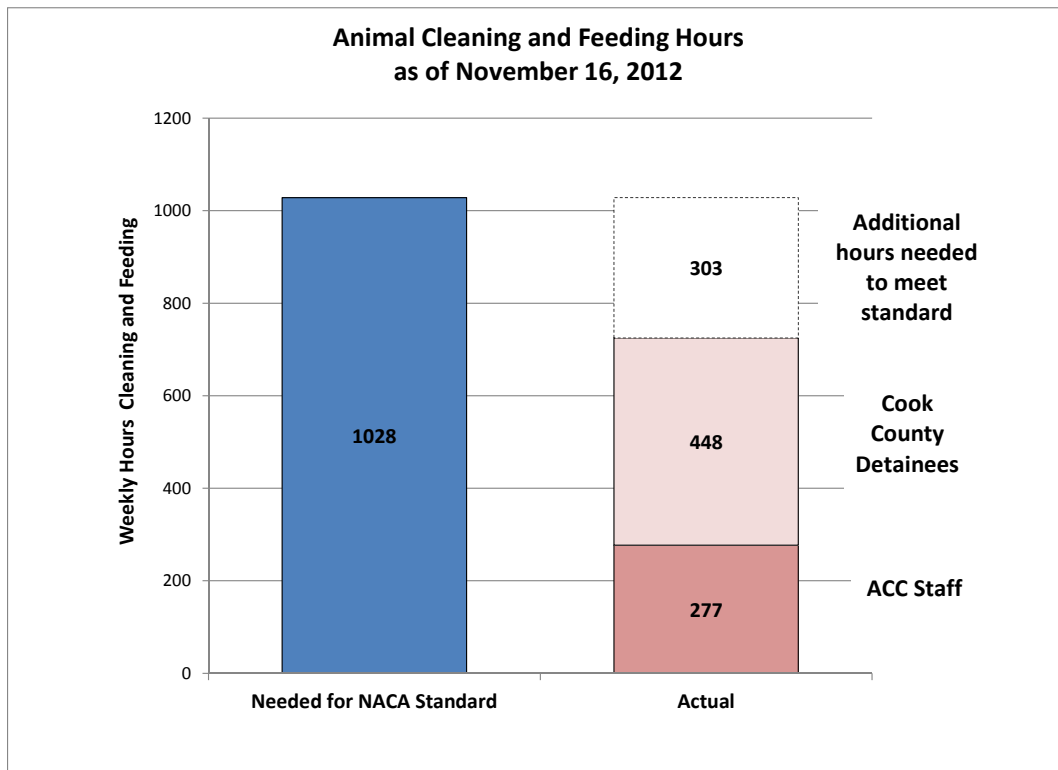
<sup>9</sup> NACA was formed in 1978 with the purpose of providing “training for all those involved with animal regulatory agencies and to provide a means for communication between all agencies involved with animals throughout the world.” See <http://nacanet.org/about.html>, accessed March 26, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> The *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters* published by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (<http://oacu.od.nih.gov/disaster/ShelterGuide.pdf>) cites this same recommendation and states that the Humane Society of the United States makes the same recommendation.

<sup>11</sup> The 35-hour work week is set by the City’s collective bargaining agreement with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees governing Animal Care Aide I and II positions.

<sup>12</sup> The NACA based their guidelines on 15 hours per week per staff person, allowing for staff to complete other tasks. The IGO, however, based our calculations on a full work-week because feeding and cleaning are the primary responsibilities of Animal Care Aides (I and II).

Assuming the higher of the Shelter Manager's estimates,<sup>13</sup> these ten employees combined accounted for 277 weekly hours, still leaving the CACC 751 hours, or 21.5 FTEs, short of the level called for by the NACA guidelines. A significant portion of that 751 hour shortfall is filled by CACC through an intergovernmental agreement with the Cook County Sheriff's Department under which Cook County Department of Corrections detainees provide cleaning and feeding services equivalent to 448 hours per week.<sup>14</sup> Even with the contracted services, however, CACC staffing was still short of NACA's recommended staffing level by 303 hours, or 29.5 percent. The following graph illustrates the actual and needed staff hours.



In May 2011, at the request of the immediate past CACC Executive Director, Purdue University's Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences visited CACC, assessed the behavior of several dogs and observed several animal welfare issues including soiled kennels, a very high noise level, and a lack of basic enrichment such as walks or training. They stated that, in their opinion, the underlying issue that led to a majority of the welfare issues is the inadequate number of caretakers available to manage the animals housed at the CACC. They concluded that:

It does not serve any good purpose to systematically admit and hold animals, without having enough resources and programs to keep them healthy, release, or adopt them. Under these circumstances, animals run a high risk of succumbing to

<sup>13</sup>We performed our calculation assuming the higher end of the Shelter Manager's range of estimates. Therefore, the staffing shortage we calculated is conservative and more may be needed to meet the NACA standard.

<sup>14</sup> The first agreement was passed by City Council in July 2011 (Ordinance O2011-5560) and provided 16 inmates for four hours a day, 365 days a year at a cost not to exceed \$231,059.87. The agreement was renewed by City Council in December 2012 as Ordinance O2012-8075 for the same number of inmate labor hours at a cost not to exceed \$323,651.84.

disease or stress-related behavior disorders and their quality of life is unacceptable.

When the IGO asked CACC why there was a shortage of staff assigned to animal feeding and cleaning, management stated that it had laid off staff in 2011 and had not requested additional animal cleaning and feeding positions in the 2012 budget. However, CACC also stated that it requested additional hourly positions in the 2013 budget to handle animal husbandry and front desk duties.

**Recommendation:**

CACC took action to address the cleaning and feeding staff shortage that existed in 2012 with its 2013 budget request for additional hourly positions. We recommend that CACC fill those positions as quickly as possible and ensure that sufficient hours are spent on cleaning and feeding to meet the NACA guidelines.

We also recommend 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).

**Management Response:**

*"CACC will continue to work with the City of Chicago Department of Human Resources and the City of Chicago Office of Budget and Management to hire all vacancies, including Animal Care Clerk hourly positions, in accordance with our 2013 hiring plan. CACC plans on hiring approximately 10 more part-time Animal Care Clerks by years end. The hiring plan was developed with the Office of Budget and Management to hire our most critical vacancies first and to account for seasonal fluctuations in animal impoundments. Animal Care Clerks work alongside Animal Care Aides and CACC medical staff to provide front line care to all of the animals that visit our shelter annually.*

*The animals at our shelter also greatly benefit from the work provided by voluntary participants in our partnership with the Cook County Sheriff's Office. In addition, CACC would like to thank our growing number of volunteers who provide vital socialization, exercise and grooming to the animals at our shelter on a daily basis. CACC will continue to identify new programs and work to garner additional volunteer support to ensure animals at our shelter receive the highest quality of care and treatment."*

**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**

CACC did not conduct veterinary examinations within 24 hours of intake for 13, or 38% of the 34 animals housed at the shelter on November 7, 2012 that were involved in neglect or abuse court cases. According to the Illinois State's Attorney's Office, it is important that a veterinarian examine such animals in a timely manner because veterinary documentation and testimony of the animals' condition may be used as evidence in the related court cases. If the examination is delayed, the condition of the animal may change and the evidence may be weakened or nullified.

CACC General Order #23 states that when an animal is impounded as court evidence, "Notification to the medical staff must be made at the time of such impoundment and a health report must be done by the veterinarian within 24 hours of impoundment and forwarded to the Operations Manager." A CACC veterinarian stated to the IGO that the courts sometimes accept veterinary reports completed up to 48 hours after intake depending on the circumstances.

Further research into the 13 exceptions revealed the following:

- Seven of the animals, although not examined within the 24 hours required by CACC policy, were examined within 48 hours;
- Five of the animals were not examined within 24 hours because, according to a veterinarian, the veterinary staff were either not notified of the arrival of the animal or were not provided the required documentation related to the animal;
- One of the animals was not examined within 24 hours as it was not identified as a "court case" animal due to confusion between it being a Cook County case versus a City of Chicago case.

**Recommendation:**

We recommend 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 recommend CACC review their veterinary examination procedures related to court case animals and implement management controls to ensure a) court case animals are correctly identified at intake and b) veterinarians are promptly notified of the intake of such animals.

**Management Response:**

*"CACC has an established history of working closely with the Chicago Police Department, the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and other law enforcement agencies to bring animal related offenders to justice. CACC has a thorough process in place to provide care and documenting evidence for animals brought to our shelter as part of criminal investigations. In reaching Finding 2, the Inspector General relies on CACC General Order #23, the now outdated standard operating procedure created in July of 2002. The 24 hour bench mark referenced by*

*the Inspector General was self-imposed as a safeguard to ensure staff veterinarians examine court case animals in a timely manner.*

*CACC's self-imposed benchmark of 24 hours reflected the resources available and quantity of cruelty impoundments received in 2002. Since that time, CACC has seen an increase in the amount of cruelty impoundments. From 2011 to 2012 alone, CACC saw an 18% increase in confiscated animal impoundments. Prior to this audit, CACC began efforts to streamline departmental processes related to court case impoundments. In February 2013, CACC finalized and implemented FO-9c in conjunction with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, the Chicago Police Department, and the City of Chicago Department of Law. FO-9c instructs staff veterinarians to examine and complete a report detailing the findings for cruelty impoundment as soon as possible, with a self-imposed bench mark of 48 hours from time of intake.*

*During the audited period CACC operated for nine months with critical vacancies at both the Supervising Veterinarian and Operations Manager positions, despite intense efforts to identify qualified candidates. The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring completeness of cruelty case records and notifies shelter and medical staff of cruelty impoundments from the field. Our Supervising Veterinarian serves the dual role of performing veterinary examinations as well as monitoring the performance of all shelter and medical staff, to ensure evidence is properly obtained and any remaining examinations are completed by staff veterinarians. Operating nine months without a Supervising Veterinarian, left two staff veterinarians to provide evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment for the over 15,000 animals impounded at our shelter during that time. In addition to working towards the self-imposed benchmarks for completing cruelty reports, these veterinarians provided urgent treatment, administered vaccines, and performed necessary surgeries for every sick and injured animal in our custody and care. During this nine month window, our two veterinarians worked as efficiently as possible to complete all required duties, including generating veterinarian reports for cruelty impoundments.*

*To offset the limited veterinarian resources available at CACC and promote compliance with self-imposed benchmarks, the department has formed a partnership with the Veterinarian Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Illinois. Where feasible, CACC will submit specimens from deceased animals believed to be victims of cruelty to the University of Illinois for necropsy, allowing CACC veterinarians to re-dedicate resources to treating animals at our shelter. CACC is also looking to expand opportunities to partner with veterinary schools in the area to more efficiently maximize the private sector expertise to support the goals of CACC.*

*CACC's newly hired Supervising Veterinarian and Operations Manager will continue to closely monitor the cruelty impoundment process and ensure completion of veterinary reports in a timely manner. CACC will also continue to work with the Chicago Police Department and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and other agencies to receive training and ensure effective communication and maximization of limited resources."*

**Finding 3: CACC Held Animals for the Mandatory Minimum Time**

All of the 1,084 stray or confiscated cats and dogs received by CACC during October 2012 were either held the mandatory minimum hold time or had specific reasons precluding CACC from holding them.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, we found the following:

- 838, or 77%, were held at least the mandatory minimum hold time as required by the City of Chicago Municipal Code or the Cook County General Ordinance;
- 99, or 9%, had medical conditions requiring transfer to facilities that could provide specialized care;<sup>16</sup>
- 62, or 6%, were euthanized (see explanation below);
- 60, or 6%, were returned to the owner;
- 15, or 1%, were dead upon arrival to the facility; and
- 10, or 1%, died at the facility.

The following table details the reasons that 62 animals were euthanized and provides the CACC Deputy Director’s explanation for each reason.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Deputy Director Explanation</b>
Severe Medical Condition	50	“Euthanasia based solely on medical assessments are almost exclusively prepared and/or reviewed by CACC staff veterinarians. In emergency situations, where an animal arrives severely ill or injured, a vet assistant may be forced to make the decision to euthanize the animal to prevent suffering...” <sup>17</sup>
Feral or Aggressive	10	“Severe aggression and other behavioral problems, while arguably rooted in the mental faculties of an animal, have observable physical manifestations. The department believes that an animal exhibiting certain behavioral problems, including severe aggression, may be in a ‘critical physical condition’ warranting euthanasia. The Municipal Code of Chicago’s separate exception to the stray hold allowing euthanasia for ‘humane reasons’ may also encompass certain animals, ‘feral’ or otherwise, who are exhibiting signs of severe aggression or suffering from other behavioral maladies.” <sup>18</sup>
Neonatal Kitten	2	“It is extremely difficult for young kittens to survive without their mother, as they depend on the mother for nurturing and nutrition. Kittens are much

<sup>15</sup> Stray animals are required to be held five days per Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC) §7-12-060 However, if there is reason to believe the stray actually has or had an owner (for instance, if the animal has an implanted microchip), then the required hold time is seven days per Cook County General Ordinance §10-9. Confiscated animals (animals obtained because the owner was evicted from their home, was deceased, or was a felon) are also required to be held seven days per CACC policy.

<sup>16</sup> MCC §7-12-070 allows CACC to transfer animals to other facilities “equipped and willing to impound animals.” When such transfers take place, a photo of the animal is posted on a “Lost Pets” bulletin board and available for viewing during tours of the facility.

<sup>17</sup> CACC’s General Order 21 establishes protocol for the disposition of impounded sick/injured animals.

<sup>18</sup> MCC §7-12-060 states, in relevant part, “...nor shall any required holding period apply to any animal received for impounding in obviously critical physical condition or for which immediate euthanasia shall be deemed proper for humane reasons by the executive director or the executive director’s designee.”



	more susceptible, compared to adult cats and dogs, to experience starvation, depression, or illness stemming from malnutrition. Thus, if a kitten is too young to eat on his own, euthanasia may be required to prevent the animal from suffering.”
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**Management Response:**

*“CACC will continue to abide by all mandatory stray hold requirements as part of the process to reunite lost pets with their owners. Once an animal becomes property of our shelter, CACC will continue to work with volunteers, and Homeward Bound transfer partners to continue to increase the number of live animal outcomes. CACC will also continue working with community partners, encouraging spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership in an effort to reduce the number of homeless animals in Chicago. For more information about CACC’s progress over the last five years and current programs to promote live outcomes, please visit our website at [www.adoptchicago.org](http://www.adoptchicago.org).”*

#### **Finding 4: CACC Failed to Timely Process Adoption Records Resulting in an Inaccurate Inventory of Animals**

During an inventory of animals on October 29, 2012, the IGO found that the Chameleon system showed 640 animals as housed within the facility although there were actually only 635. The discrepancy resulted from five animal adoptions that had occurred 42 to 118 days earlier at off-site events although the transactions had not been processed in the system. IGO auditors were able to confirm the adoptions of three of the five animals by reviewing adoption records.<sup>19</sup> The adoptions of the two remaining animals could not be confirmed because no documentation related to the adoptions could be found. Instead, CACC staff relied on their memories to recall that the two adoptions took place during specific off-site adoption events. The Shelter Manager stated that there was a particular front desk employee who did not ensure that the adoption transaction paperwork was properly routed for entry into Chameleon.

Despite CACC's assertion that it conducts animal inventories several times each week, the five inaccuracies above had remained unresolved until the time of the IGO audit. The Supervisor of Animal Care Aides, who conducts the inventory "three or four times a week," stated that he performs the inventory but does not research any animals noted as "missing" in Chameleon. The Shelter Manager stated that he had not resolved the inaccuracies because he knew they were due to a delay in entering information related to offsite adoption events. Instead he resolved the records by assigning the animals to a location code that was not used, thereby preventing the animals from appearing as "missing" in Chameleon.

#### **Recommendation:**

We recommend 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, 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.

#### **Management Response:**

*"Through the Audit, CACC identified a slight vulnerability in maintaining Chameleon records at off-site animal adoption events. As a way to increase animal adoptions and bring awareness to each community, CACC routinely hosts off-site adoption events throughout the city. For in-shelter adoptions, CACC's policy is to enter adoption information in Chameleon at the time of adoption. Unfortunately, CACC does not currently have the technological capabilities to access the Chameleon shelter software system from off-site events. Thus, Chameleon records are updated several hours after an event once staff returns to the CACC facility. Our audit findings indicate that due to this time lapse, potential error or omission can occur in the updating of an individual Chameleon record. The audit noted this type of error in less than 1 percent of the records (5 of 640 animals) audited. To reduce this vulnerability, CACC has created an "Offsite" Report, which allows staff to track animals at off-site events and ensure updating of Chameleon records immediately after the adoption events.*

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<sup>19</sup> We reviewed the adoption contract signed by the adopter of one animal and receipts showing the payment of adoption fees by the adopters of the other two animals.

*CACC has taken additional steps to further improve the accuracy of all Chameleon shelter inventory records, CACC shifted from manual to digital animal inventorying in January of 2013. Digital inventorying is currently conducted twice daily. CACC has also worked to create a report identify all animals listed as “missing” in the Chameleon system. Routine digital inventorying, the Missing report, and the Offsite report will work in conjunction to ensure accuracy of Chameleon shelter inventory records.”*

**CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

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**MISSION**

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

- Administrative and Criminal Investigations
- Audits of City programs and operations
- Reviews of City programs, operations and policies

From these activities, the IGO issues reports of findings, and disciplinary and policy 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.*