



Calgary
Humane
Society

2025

Six Month Progress
Report to our Community

Introduction

At **Calgary Humane Society (CHS)**, our ultimate goal is to create a **more humane world—one where all lives, animal and human alike, are treated with compassion, respect, and dignity.**

We envision an empowered community with the courage to advocate for animal welfare. Our mission reflects this vision:

Protect animals. Support people. Create a more humane world.

Strategic Focus: Prevention

Prevention is not just part of our name—it has been our mandate since 1922. [Our strategic plan, launched in 2024](#), is rooted in sustainable solutions that:

- Address the underlying reasons animal families struggle to care for their pets
- Strengthen the human-animal bond and keep animals in loving homes
- Tackle the root causes of cruelty and neglect
- Promote legislative, policy, and societal changes that foster compassion for all living beings

We believe that viewing all life holistically leads to meaningful impact and stronger communities.

Guiding Assumptions

Our work is driven by four core assumptions:

- Animal welfare is deeply connected to community well-being
- Sustainable change requires collaboration across sectors
- Empowered individuals and communities can drive systemic change
- Organizational strength and transparency builds trust and long-term impact

Purpose of This Report

This **Progress Report** provides an update on the actions taken over the past six months to advance our strategic goals. Thanks to the unwavering support of our Calgary community, we have exciting progress to share. Your generosity has made a tangible difference in the lives of the animals we serve—and the people who care for them.



Community Support – Keeping Animals with Families

Strengthening the Human – Animal Bond

Animal surrender rates in Calgary have risen sharply in recent years, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Calgary Humane Society identified several key drivers behind this trend:

- **Post-pandemic lifestyle changes:** As people returned to work and travel, many found themselves unable to care for pets acquired during lockdown.
- **Unregulated breeding:** Breeders who met pandemic demand were left with unsellable litters.
- **Economic hardship:** Rising inflation and limited access to veterinary care made pet ownership unsustainable for many families.

A detailed analysis of Calgary Humane Society's intake data revealed that **the majority of animals were surrendered due to human-centered challenges** (circumstances involving the owner or family of an animal) and have absolutely nothing to do with their beloved pet.

Owner Surrender Reason Analysis - 18 month study (2023-2024)			
Animal Centered Intakes		Societal Centered Intakes	
Behaviour/Aggression	170	Housing insecurity	619
Allergies	171	Too many animals	597
Change in lifestyle	106	Economic	582
Personal problems	33	Death/Medical	664
Unwanted/poor fit	269	Abandoned	334
Total	749	Total	2,796
% of Total	21%	% of Total	79%

The team determined that if we could address these human-centered reasons families look to relinquish their animal, we could potentially reduce our owner surrendered intakes by 64%! This insight led to the development of a targeted intervention strategy.

Response to the Problem

Calgary Humane Society launched the **Continued Companionship Program (CCP)** as part of its 2024–2027 Strategic Plan. The program aims to prevent unnecessary surrenders by supporting pet owners through tailored services.

Pilot Success

- In December 2023, Calgary Humane Society obtained a small grant to focus on Calgary seniors and test the demand for these critical services. Partnering with Calgary Seniors Resource Society, we were able to support **52 seniors** at risk of surrendering their pets due to financial and social isolation.
- The pilot demonstrated clearly to our team and the Board of Directors a strong community need which led to a waitlist for future services of over 200 individuals. Our Board of Directors therefore strategically utilized a portion of our reserves to allow the Calgary Humane Society team to develop a suite of programs tailored to the needs of our community.

Program Expansion in 2024

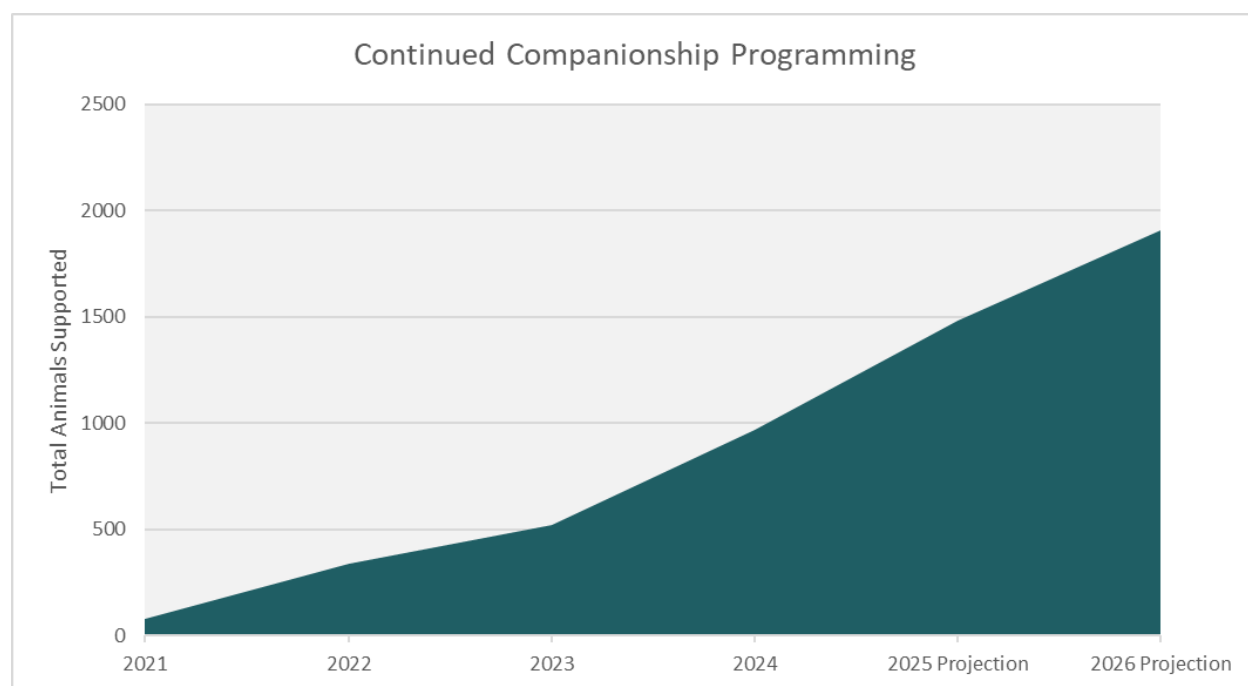
- **PAWWISE:** A no-cost spay/neuter program approved by the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association for those facing financial challenges to access vet care
- **Wellness Clinics:** Delivered in all city quadrants through veterinary partnerships
- **Food Bank Enhancements:** Now includes prescription diets
- **Emergency Support Programs:** Expanded Pet Safekeeping, Emergency Boarding, Rosco's Keep Them Home, and Phoenix Fund
- **Post-Adoption Services:** Behavior support and in-home consultations

Utilization Growth

Program usage increased **85% in 2024** compared to the previous year.

Continued Companionship Programming						
	Actual				Projection	
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
PSK/ EB *	70	147	163	173	180	185
Keep Them Home	11	14	7	14	20	25
Seniors Program	-	-	52	303	480	500
SN/Wellness Clinics	-	-	-	49	250	500
Consultations	-	-	-	55	65	100
Food Bank	-	178	299	372	485	600
Total Animals Supported	81	339	521	966	1,480	1,910

*Petsafekeeping and Emergency Boarding Program



Future Actions & Measurable Goals

Calgary Humane Society is committed to scaling the Continued Companionship Program to meet growing demand and ensure no family is forced to surrender a beloved pet due to lack of support.

2025–2026 Goals:

- Reach **1,910 animals** through CCP by the end of 2026
- Expand senior and low-income family support services to 500 families in 2006
- Increase veterinary partnerships to 20 clinics by the end of 2025 from the current nine for broader clinic access
- Strengthen post-adoption support to ensure return rates do not exceed 5% of total animals adopted

Long Term Goal:

The long term goal of the CHS Continued Companionship Programming is to ensure no family faces the surrender of their animal unless it is their choice to do so, not because they have no other options.

Your Support Has:

- **Prevented animal suffering** by keeping pets in loving homes
- **Supported vulnerable populations**, including seniors and low-income families
- **Reduced shelter intake**, freeing resources for animals in crisis
- **Created systemic change** in how communities care for companion animals

Together, we can ensure that no pet is surrendered because their family feels they have no other choice.

Watch the Dave Family's Story – CTV News

<https://calgary.citynews.ca/2025/07/25/calgary-humane-society-spay-neuter/>



Addressing Housing Insecurity for Pet Families

The Ongoing Challenge

Housing insecurity is one of the leading causes of pet relinquishment in Calgary. Families facing eviction, relocation, or financial hardship often find themselves unable to secure pet-friendly housing. This heartbreaking reality forces many to surrender beloved companions—not because they want to, but because they feel they have no other choice.

Despite the growing need, Calgary Humane Society has encountered significant barriers in addressing this issue:

- **Lack of collaboration** from property management companies
- **Limited inclusion** of companion animals in housing policy discussions
- **No formal protections** for pet families facing discrimination

This gap in housing support directly contributes to increased shelter intake and emotional distress for both animals and their families.

Our Response

Calgary Humane Society has taken proactive steps to advocate for systemic change and elevate the conversation around pet-inclusive housing:

Municipal Engagement

In response to the City of Calgary's announcement of a **\$30 million investment in affordable housing**, the CHS team requested a formal meeting to ensure companion animals are considered in future housing strategies.

Key Advocacy Questions

- Are companion animals included in current housing frameworks?
- Can Calgary Humane Society participate in municipal committees to represent animal welfare?

- Will the City co-develop educational tools for landlords and tenants alongside Calgary Humane Society?
- Is there appetite for new legislation protecting pet families from discrimination?

These discussions are in the **early stages**, but they represent a critical opportunity to shape inclusive housing policy and prevent unnecessary animal surrender.

Future Actions & Donor Impact

With donor support, Calgary Humane Society aims to:

Initiative	Goal
Policy Advocacy	Formal inclusion of pets in affordable housing strategies
Community Education	Develop tools for landlords and tenants to support pet-friendly practices
Legislative Reform	Propose protections for pet families facing housing discrimination
Municipal Representation	Secure CHS's seat at relevant policy tables

In 2026, Calgary Humane Society will continue to work alongside the City of Calgary and other community partners to:

- **Prevent animal surrender** by addressing housing-related barriers
- **Support vulnerable families** during times of transition and crisis
- **Drive policy change** that reflects compassion and inclusivity
- **Build a more humane Calgary**, where no family is forced to choose between shelter and their pet

Together, we can ensure that companion animals are not left behind in housing conversations—and that every family has the opportunity to stay together.

Animal Care and Adoption

Building Capacity to Reduce Shelter Stays and Improve Animal Outcomes

The Challenge

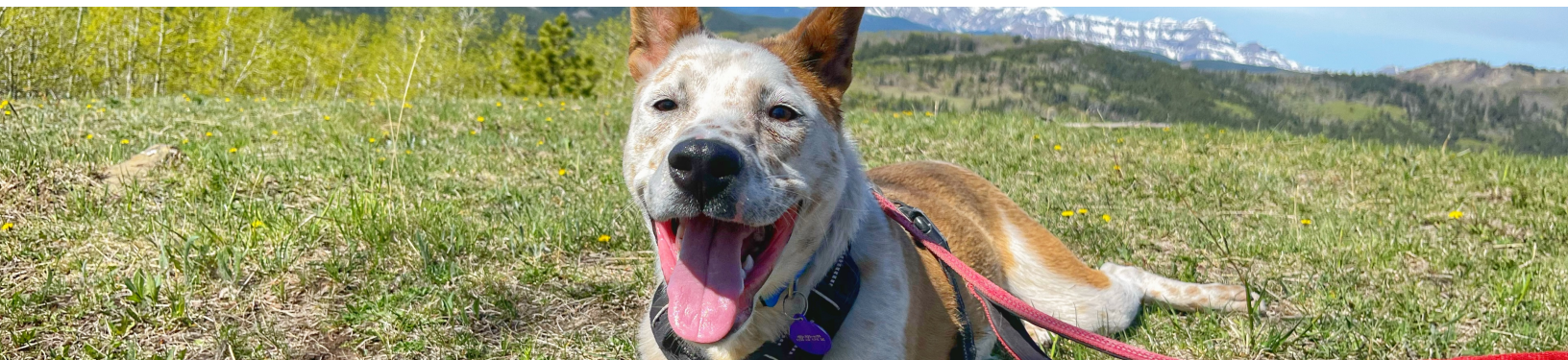
Research consistently shows that prolonged shelter stays negatively impact the physical and emotional well-being of animals. [Length of Stay \(LOS\) - Koret Shelter Medicine Program](#).

Despite the initiatives put in place to keep animals with the family who loves them, the team at Calgary Humane Society understand that some animals truly need our support and compassion. When we have determined an animal genuinely requires our intervention, we are committed to providing them with the highest standard of care, while also minimizing the time animals spend in shelter. To do this we depend upon our volunteer and foster networks to support an animal's ongoing wellbeing—two critical pillars of our care model.

However, several challenges have emerged:

- **Limited volunteer capacity** to support daily enrichment and training
- **Decline in foster availability**, especially for large breed dogs, due to complex behavioural concerns and housing restrictions in the city of Calgary
- **Barriers to adoption** for behaviorally complex animals

These issues directly affect our ability to meet our goal: ensuring no animal remains in shelter longer than 14 days.

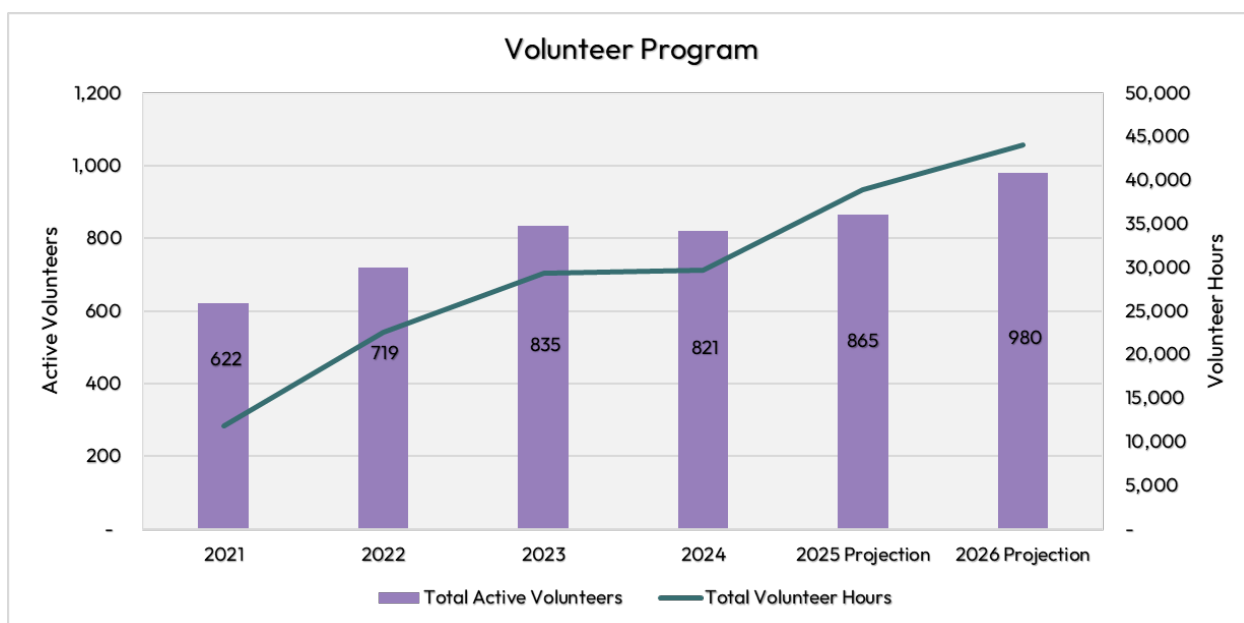


Our Response

Calgary Humane Society has implemented a multi-faceted strategy to grow and strengthen our volunteer and foster programs:

Volunteer Engagement

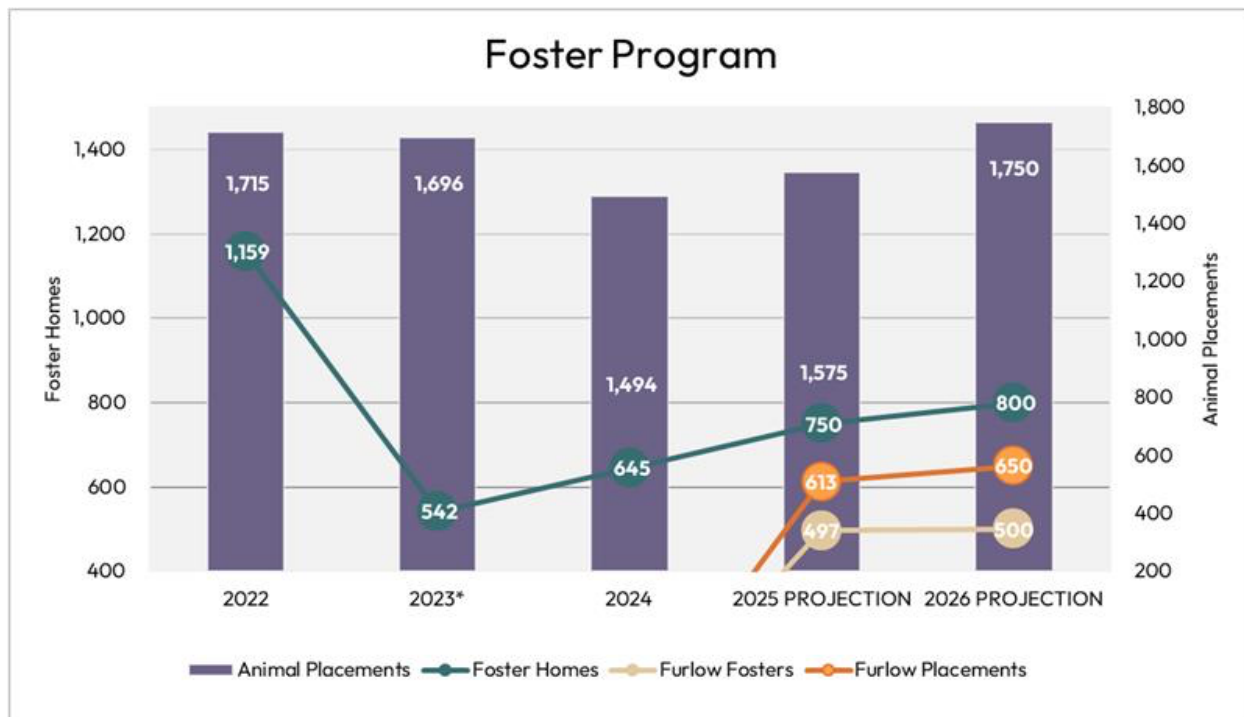
- Revamped volunteer roles to provide meaningful, animal-focused experiences which also enhance an animal's well-being, including Adoption Assistants, Canine Kennel Assistants, Littermates, Feline Friends, Piggie Pals, and Behaviour Buddies
- Introduced new positions that clearly demonstrate impact
- Delivered staff training to foster inclusive, collaborative relationships with volunteers
- Result: **Volunteer engagement has increased since 2023**, with a goal of close to **1,000 active volunteers by 2026**



Foster Program Expansion

- Expanded recruitment of foster families and provided specialized training to support vulnerable populations like kittens, puppies, and behaviourally complex dogs.

- Launched the **Fur-Low Program**: one-day field trips for shelter dogs to decompress and socialize.
- Result: Increased number of foster families and Fur-low volunteers leading to a significant reduction in shelter stay durations for dogs and cats – meeting our goal of a 14-day length of stay for dogs and cats!

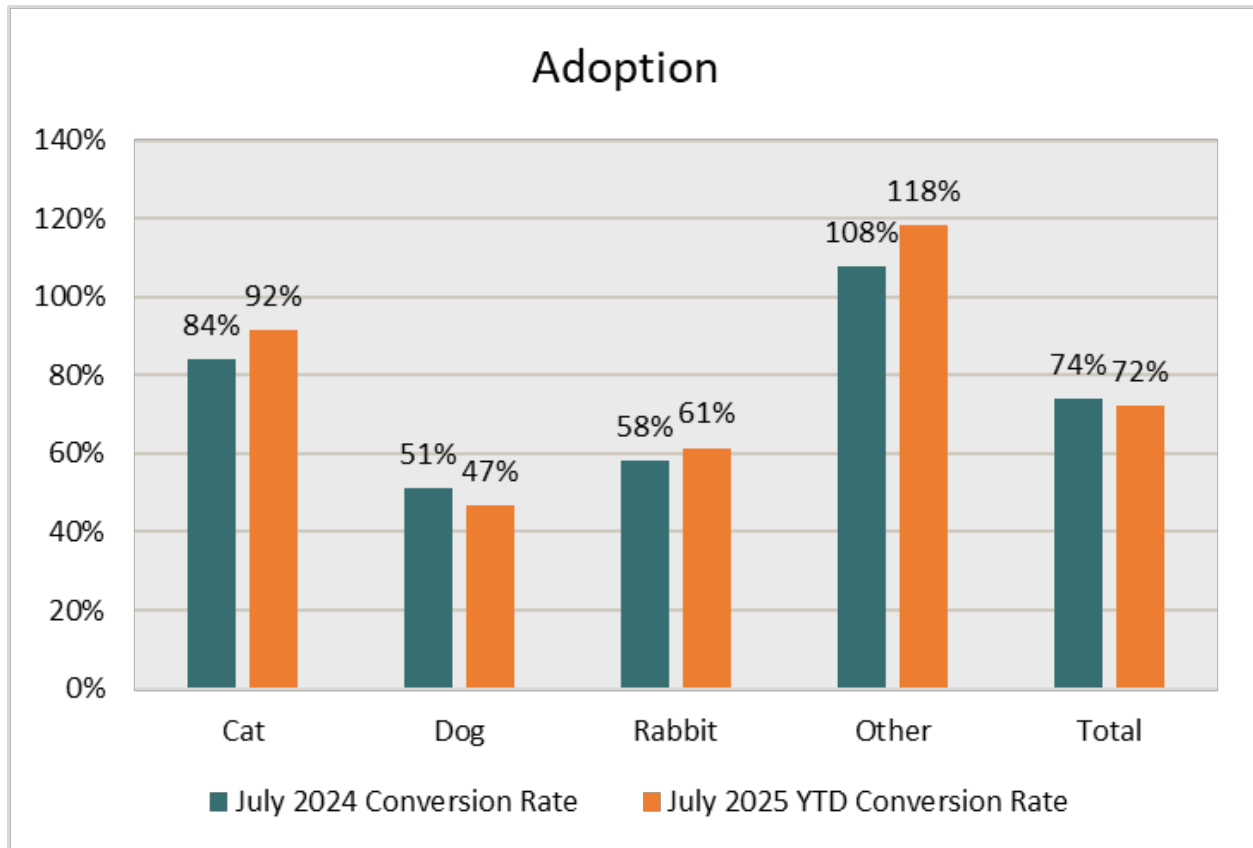


* Decrease in foster homes reflected in 2023 was due to a program audit and automation project implemented.

Average Length of Stay – Foster versus No Foster								
	2022		2023		2024		2025 YTD	
	Include Foster	Exclude Foster	Include Foster	Exclude Foster	Include Foster	Exclude Foster	Include Foster	Exclude Foster
Cat	26.1	14.2	28.8	16.6	25.7	16.2	21.1	12.5
Dog	25.8	14.6	24.1	14.6	23.2	14.0	22.4	12.3
Rabbit	84.5	20.7	65.9	31.2	63.6	20.5	41.4	15.0
Other	30.2	17.7	28.5	17.7	26.3	16.1	33.7	23.6

Adoption Innovations

- Implemented an **Adopters Welcome** approach to remove barriers and improve conversion rates (i.e. an adoption visit that results in an adopted animal)



- Introduced **Patient Paw Sleepovers** for trial adoptions of behaviorally complex dogs with great success.

Patient Paw Sleepovers			
YEAR	Completed	Adopted	Conversion
2022	7	4	57.14%
2023	25	16	64.00%
2024	46	27	58.70%
2025 Projection	79	48	60.76%
TOTAL	78	47	60.26%

- Result: Improved conversion rates across most species, with targeted efforts underway to increase dog adoption success.

Future Actions & Measurable Goals

Initiative	2025 Status	2026 Target
Active Volunteers	~900	1,000
Shelter Stay Duration	< 14 days for dogs/cats	< 14 days for all species
Dog Adoption Conversion Rate	~50%	60%
Active Foster and Furlow Placements	~2,100	2,400

Your support has allowed us to:

- **Improve animal welfare** by reducing shelter stress and length of stay
- **Empower community members** to make a meaningful impact
- **Expand foster capacity** to meet the needs of all species
- **Increase adoption success**, especially for animals with behavioral challenges

Together, we can ensure every animal receives the care and compassion they deserve while in shelter, and the chance to find the home they deserved right from the start.



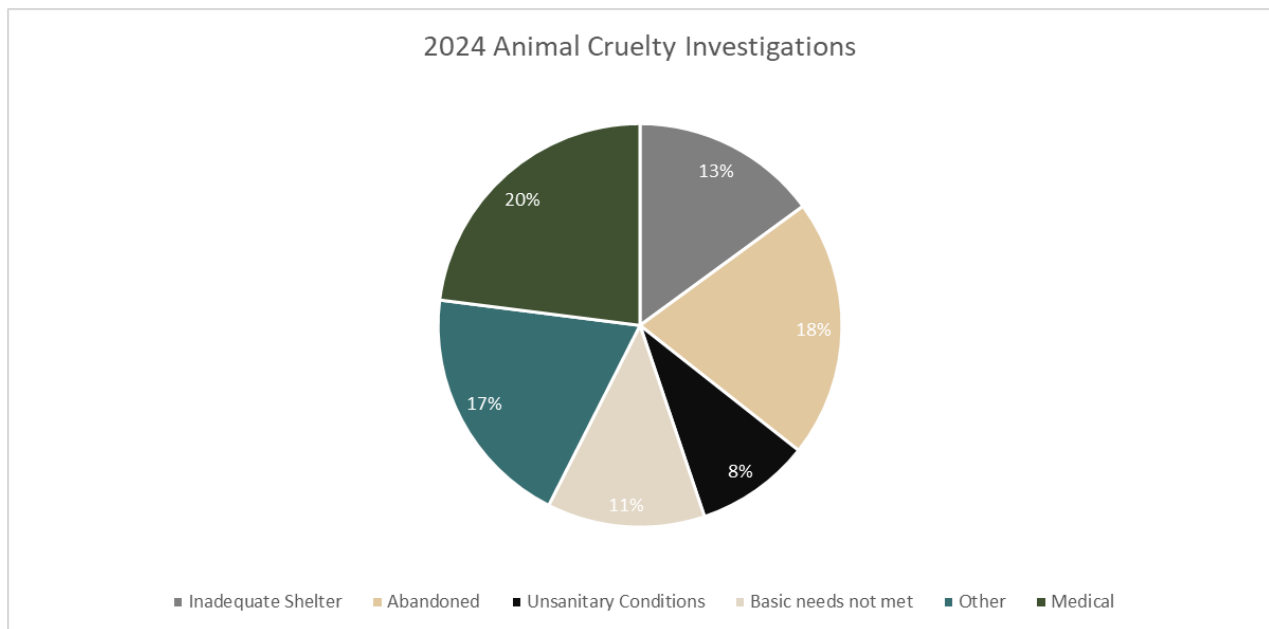
Calgary Humane Society Protection and Investigations Programs

Fighting Animal Cruelty through Advocacy and Legislative Amendment

The Calgary Humane Society Peace Officer team continues to play a vital role in protecting animals and educating the public on responsible pet ownership.

Investigations and Enforcement

- In 2024, CHS Peace Officers investigated **1,038 complaints** related to suspected animal cruelty, neglect, abuse, or abandonment.



2024 Animal Cruelty Investigations	
Complaint Type	2024
Abandoned	192
Abused	135
Unsanitary Conditions	82
Basic Needs Not Met	109
Inadequate Shelter	179
Medical	209
Other	132
Total 2024 Investigations	1,038

- **85%** of these cases were resolved through education, focusing on the **Animal Protection Act of Alberta** and responsible pet ownership.
 - **15%** of cases resulted in animal seizures, only after educational efforts and compliance opportunities were exhausted.
 - **3–5%** of investigations led to formal charges against animal owners.

Reasons for Animal Cruelty Investigations						
# of Investigations	2021	2022	2023	2024	Projections	
					2025	2026
Abandoned	174	228	273	192	195	190
Abused	133	112	144	135	110	108
Dirty Conditions	62	74	77	82	74	73
Basic Needs Not Met	110	95	116	109	115	110
Inadequate Shelter	228	163	149	179	168	152
Medical	286	292	253	209	206	190
Other	172	202	142	132	172	195
Prohibition	0	29	38	0	60	135
Total Investigations	1,165	1,195	1,192	1,038	1,100	1,153

Despite the anticipated increase in case numbers, the program's primary focus remains prevention through education and community engagement.

Proactive Initiatives and Offender Management

In 2025, the CHS Peace Officer team is prioritizing proactive strategies, including:

- **Adding one additional Peace Officer** to the team roster, enhancing team capacity.
- **Active Offender Management**, which has increased by **60%** compared to 2024. This has led to multiple charges for contempt of court and breaches of court orders, ensuring accountability among previously convicted individuals.
- A strategic enhancement of proactive **inspections**, such as prohibition checks, with a goal to **double these efforts by 2026**.

Community Engagement and Education

The CHS Peace Officer team has invested in public awareness through:

- Educational sessions
- Public service announcements
- Social media campaigns

These initiatives aim to reduce reactive investigations by **5% in 2025** and ultimately prevent animal cruelty before it occurs.

Vision and Impact

The Peace Officer team is committed to building a **socially conscious community** in Calgary—one that values compassion and accountability. This work is made possible through strong partnerships with:

- Social service agencies
- Veterinary professionals
- Law enforcement agencies
- Other not-for-profit organizations
- And the generous support of our donors

Together, we are all working toward a future where **no animal suffers from cruelty or neglect**.

Advocacy Milestone – Modernizing Alberta’s Animal Protection Act:

We are pleased to share a significant advocacy milestone achieved by the CHS team in 2025. After more than a decade of persistent efforts, Calgary Humane Society has successfully initiated formal discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture to update Alberta’s Animal Protection Act—a legislative framework that has remained unchanged for over 20 years.

This long-overdue update is critical. Alberta’s current legislation lags behind other provinces that have proactively modernized their laws to better protect animals and enforce cruelty prevention measures. Calgary Humane Society was invited to present its concerns and recommendations directly to ministry officials, marking a pivotal moment in our mission to strengthen animal welfare across the province.

To support this initiative, the CHS team submitted a comprehensive 32-page workbook outlining section-by-section recommendations. Key areas of focus included:

- **Clarification of Definitions**
- **Review of Generally Accepted Practices**
- **Expansion of Enforcement Authorities**
- **Guidelines for Animal Disposition**
- **Formalization of the Role of Humane Societies**
- **Enhancement of Penalties**
- **Allocation of Costs of Care**

It is a goal of the ministry to have these recommendations finalized and drafted by spring 2026. This is a timeline the CHS team is excited about and a goal we will support wherever possible to inform the necessary amendments to modernize the Act.

This progress represents a major step forward in our collective effort to end animal cruelty in Alberta. We are proud to be helping to lead this change and are deeply grateful for your continued support, which makes this work possible.

Conclusion

The past six months have marked a period of meaningful progress and transformation at Calgary Humane Society. From expanding community support programs and advocating for pet-inclusive housing, to reducing shelter stays and driving legislative reform, every initiative has been guided by our unwavering commitment to creating a more humane world.

These achievements are not ours alone—they are a direct result of your generosity, trust, and belief in our mission. Your support has empowered us to:

- Keep families together by preventing unnecessary animal surrenders
- Improve the lives of vulnerable animals through compassionate care and adoption innovation
- Advocate for systemic change that protects animals and strengthens communities
- Lead the modernization of Alberta's Animal Protection Act

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain focused on scaling our impact, deepening our partnerships, and ensuring that no animal suffers from cruelty, neglect, or abandonment. With your continued support, we will build a future where every animal is safe, every family is supported, and every life is treated with dignity.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. Together, we are creating lasting change—for animals, for people, and for our community.

