



————— KC PET PROJECT —————
ANIMAL SERVICES DIVISION
 — A SERVICE FOR THE CITY OF KCMO —

KCPP Animal Services Division Report for January 2023

Citations Issued

In January 2023, officers issued eight (8) verbal warnings for violations and ten (10) official Notice to Correct Violation warning tickets to residents. Forty-one (41) citations were entered into the Thin Blue Line (TBL) system for review and issuance by the City Prosecutor. **One (1) case of animal cruelty was submitted to the State Prosecutor’s office for felony prosecution.** Prior to the issuance of citations, verbal and/or written warnings for violations are presented by officer, and citations are not submitted for issuance if compliance with animal ordinances is achieved within the given corrective action period established by the officer.



Animal Services Division Calls for Service

Officers were dispatched to **1,202** calls for service in January 2023 (an 8% decrease in calls from last month) and closed 1,167 unique cases (a 1% increase from last month).

Total Calls by Case Type Responded to in January 2023

Calls related to stray/roaming animals continue to comprise over half of our monthly call volume from residents. Approximately 116 (17%) of the 671 stray/loose animal calls were related to public safety concerns, such as reports of aggressive dogs or animals in the roadway.

Case Type	January '23	December '22
Enforcement	43	50
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect	257	347
Other Services (PD/Fire/MAST)	93	104
Stray Animals/Animals at Large	671	648
Wildlife	40	37
Bite – Non-Domestic Animals (bats, etc.)	11	25
Bite – Domestic (dogs/cats)	87	93

Dog/Cat Bites in January 2023

- ❖ Number of bites from dogs/cats occurring on their own property or inside a home: 60
- ❖ Number of bites from dogs/cats occurring off property, i.e., stray dogs at large: 20
- ❖ Number of bites from dogs/cats in which bite location is unclassified: 7

Stories From the Field

January was an eventful month for our officers. On January 9th, Animal Services Officers concluded a month-long investigation of a large pig living within the city limits on Holmes Rd. The initial call was reported after a structure fire in the area, allowing KC Fire Department personnel to view the backyard of the residence. Animal Services Officers responded to the home numerous times, and verified the pig was still residing on the property and was healthy. Then on January 9th, our Animal Services Dispatch team received a call stating the residents of the home had been evicted and had left the pig behind. After confirming the eviction with authorities, Cruelty Investigations Officers Redford, LaDue, and Manager Rohrback responded to the home to rescue the abandoned pig from the backyard.

“Large Marge” turned out to be a very overweight Vietnamese Potbellied Pig that had been living at the home, comfortably enjoying her bed of fallen leaves. Manager Rohrback, having experience with potbellied pigs, got her to follow him using treats. Marge was social and very sweet and was able to be safely secured in a travel crate where she was transported to KC Pet Project.

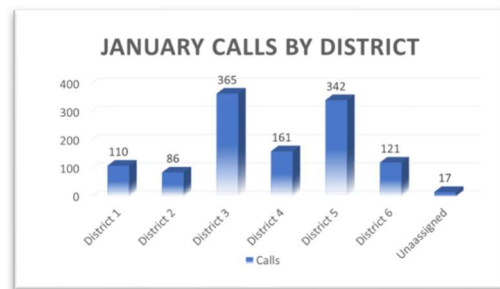
Marge served a five-day stray hold before being transferred to Kansas City Pig Rescue Network.



Total Number of Calls by City Council District for January 2023

In January 2023, calls from Council Districts 3 and 5 represented more than half of our overall call volume.

Council District 1	110
Council District 2	86
Council District 3	365
Council District 4	161
Council District 5	342
Council District 6	121
Unassigned	17



Call Results for January 2023

Results for Calls with Animals	January '23	December '22	% Change
Animals Impounded by Officers	191	158	21% increase
Wildlife Relocated/Transferred Out	19	22	14% decrease
Animals Returned Home by Officers	20	22	9% decrease

Twenty (20) loose/lost dogs that could be returned in the field were reunited with their owners by officers, rather than impounding them at the shelter. This practice allows our officers to build trust-based relationships with our community, keeps pets safe at home, and allows for connection to resources, if needed. Additionally, it preserves limited shelter resources for those animals truly in need of sheltering.

Stories from the Field

Animal Services Officers responded to a call with the KC Police Department on January 19th where the occupant in the home was found deceased. Our officers removed five (5) large pet rabbits and a dog from inside the home. The animals were transported to the shelter where they were examined, spayed/neutered and were able to be placed up for adoption.



Outreach and Community Support Activities

- ❖ On January 11th, Cruelty Investigations Manager, Rohrback represented the Division at the KC Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty Coalition meeting.
- ❖ On January 20th, Chief Johnson, along with Manager Rohrback, Supervisor LaDue, and Director of Community Programs Amanda Gatten, met with representatives from local domestic violence shelter’s Synergy Services and the Rose Brooks Center to discuss the re-launch of our ICU Program.

I.C.U. Program: Identify-Connect-Unite

Over the last 11 years, KC Pet Project has redefined what lifesaving means for animals in our community. Our Animal Services Division is striving to also become an industry leader for the social services/human components of field work. We recognize that many times keeping pets together with their families means the need for supportive services for people and meeting our community where they’re at.

I.C.U. stands for **Identify-Connect-Unite** and is a program launched in partnership with two local domestic violence shelters, Synergy Services and the Rose Brooks Center to train Animal Services Officers to recognize the signs of domestic violence and abuse in relationships. Animal Services Officers responding to animal abuse or neglect cases are taught to utilize specific screening questions to determine if domestic violence or abuse is also suspected to exist in the home. If the answer is “yes” to any one of the questions, a referral is made to local domestic violence experts who can intervene and connect the abused party into resources.

71% of domestic violence victims reported their abusers also hurt or threatened their pets.

In 2022, our Animal Services Division closed 2,236 cases alleging an animal cruelty event had taken place. We are looking forward to expanding our partnership with Synergy Services and Rose Brooks in 2023 to save the lives of more pets and people in Kansas City.

Other January Activities

- ❖ On January 6th, Officer Angelina Mingrone and Officer Terry Carlisle graduated from our in-house Animal Services Officer training academy and began their field training.
- ❖ On January 10th, Animal Services Officers attended “Stop the Bleed” training where they learned lifesaving first aid skills.
- ❖ On January 17th, our Animal Services Division welcomed new employee, Jacob Bell to our team. Jacob was formerly a firefighter and, upon completion of his training, will join our Cruelty Investigations Team.
- ❖ On January 19th, Chief Executive Officer Teresa Johnson and Chief of Animal Services Ryan Johnson attended a national webinar entitled, “*Bodies of Evidence: Issues Arising from Search and Seizure of Animal Bodies in Cruelty*”

Investigations” a thought-provoking discussion on the legal steps for collection and preservation protocols for evidence handling in animal cruelty cases.

Media Coverage/ Public Education/Community Engagement

- ❖ Tori Fugate provided training to new officers on social media protocols and working with the media at our Animal Services training academy in January.
- ❖ We had a total of 63 media stories and mentions during the month of January. Estimated media reach for the month for all animal services and sheltering stories was **267,793,574 million** people.

Animal Services Dispatch – Call Statistics

January 2023	Answered	Unanswered	Total Calls	Abandoned Rate %
IN > Dispatch – 311 Queue	585	51	636	8%
IN > Dispatch – Dispatch Q	2,019	134	2,153	6%
IN > Dispatch – Dispatch After Hours Q	251	62	313	20%
Dispatch INBOUND Performance	4016	840	4856	17%
Dispatch OUTBOUND Performance	1430	310	1740	18%
Total Performance for January 2023	5446	1150	6596	17%

- ❖ Our Animal Services Dispatch team answered **4,016** live phone calls, completed **1,740** outbound calls, and resolved **143** voicemails.
- ❖ The Cruelty Tips Hotline received **2** calls in the month of January.
- ❖ The top three reasons in 2023 for calls to Dispatch have been: 1) Reporting roaming stray animals (15%), 2) Case Follow-up (14%), and 3) Inquiries regarding ordinances, citations and/or complaints (13%).

Kennel Inspections/Field Investigations of Commercial Animal Permits/Domestic Avocation Permits

Compliance Officer Oertwig issued no Animal Display Permits in January, but one (1) Commercial Animal Establishment permit was issued, and she conducted one (1) inspection. No Small animal permits, Domestic Animal Advocation permits were issued in January. No exceptions were made for section 14-15 to the keepers of fowl or other small animals.



Animal Cruelty/Neglect/Abuse Cases Under Investigation

As of January 31st, the Cruelty Investigations Team had 78 open animal cruelty cases under investigation:

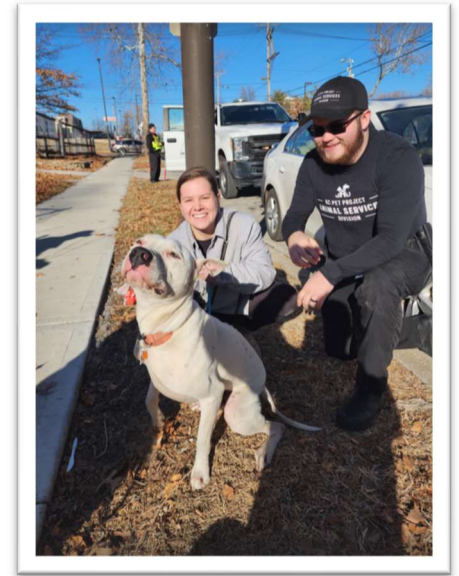
- ✓ **7** reports of animal abandonment
- ✓ **60** reports of animal neglect
- ✓ **11** reports of animal cruelty

In January, the Cruelty Investigation Team closed 223 animal cruelty case activities for our community, including 31 reports of animal abandonment, 173 reports of neglect, and 19 reports of cruelty.

Stories From the Field

On January 14th, we received a report of a dog abandoned inside a vacant home. Our officers immediately responded to locate the dog and do a welfare check. Upon arrival, officers did not see nor hear a dog inside the home. They left a notice and a phone number to contact us, and scheduled a follow up visit to the address. Officers identified and made contact with the property management company who owned the home and confirmed the property was vacant and no person or animal should be inside. We asked a representative of the company meet us at the home, as officers needed legal authorization to enter private property.

That same day, photos emerged on social media of a white dog in the window of the abandoned home. Our Animal Services Officers met the management company and volunteers with KC Dog Trappers at the property to remove the dog from inside the home and transported him to our shelter. Our Cruelty Investigations Team is working to locate the dog's owner and is pursuing animal cruelty/abandonment charges in this case.



Dangerous Dog Investigations and Declarations

In January, Dangerous Dog Case Administrator Jessica Steele issued three (3) dangerous or potentially dangerous dog declarations and attended one (1) appeal hearing through municipal court. As of January 31st, there were twelve (12) Dangerous or Potentially Dangerous Dog cases actively under investigation.

Stories From the Courtroom

On January 10th, Animal Services Officers LaDue and Collins testified before the Kansas City, Municipal Court for an animal cruelty case cited by our officers in August 2022.

Officers LaDue and Collins were on uniformed patrol in the city and had just been dispatched to a call. While stopped at an intersection, another vehicle drove up alongside their patrol vehicle and began honking and attempting to get their attention. The man told them his dog was hurt and had possibly been poisoned with antifreeze. LaDue and Collins followed the man to his home, where the dog named "Splash" was surrendered to KC Pet Project and immediately transported to our shelter's vet clinic for emergency veterinary care.

After KC Pet Project doctors conducted many diagnostic tests to identify the reason for this dog's condition, it was determined Splash was not poisoned with antifreeze, but was suffering from extreme neglect and starvation. Splash's condition was critical, and the dog ultimately had to be humanely euthanized due to severe/intractable pain and suffering. The owner of Splash was charged with animal cruelty under Chapter 14 of the Kansas City Code of Ordinances.

This case went to municipal court and Splash's owner was convicted of animal abuse. He was **sentenced to two years of probation, under which one of the terms was that he could not own any animals and was required to surrender the two other pets they had in their home.** Animal Services Officers will follow up to ensure the owner remains compliant with the order of the court until the end of his probationary period.

Submitted by,

Teresa Johnson, Pres/CEO, KC Pet Project

Ryan Johnson, Chief of Animal Services, KC Pet Project