



KC PET PROJECT

## ANIMAL SERVICES DIVISION

— A SERVICE FOR THE CITY OF KCMO —

### KCPP Animal Services Division Report for March 2023

#### Citations Issued / Enforcement

In March 2023, officers issued a record **one hundred seven (107) criminal citations** through the Thin Blue Line (TBL) system for review and issuance by the City Prosecutor. In addition, officers issued forty-three (43) verbal warnings for violations and ten (10) official Notice to Correct Violation warning tickets to residents.

Prior to the issuance of citations, verbal and/or written warnings for violations are presented by the officer, and citations are not submitted if compliance with animal ordinances is achieved within the given corrective action period.



#### Directed Patrol Areas

Frequently, our Animal Services Division receives reports from residents of roaming dogs or dogs that have become a public safety concern or nuisance problem for a specific neighborhood. However, many times officers are unable to locate the animal(s) when they arrive. To resolve on-going cases of this nature and to provide continued enforcement efforts, directed patrols are established whereby officers schedule frequent drive-bys through these identified areas looking for the animals (when witnesses to the offense are unwilling to testify, but still wish to file a complaint). *The following locations are currently identified as **Directed Patrol areas** where officers are looking for dogs reported as roaming, public nuisances, or aggressive dogs that haven't yet been located:*

##### Council District 1



- 4500 block of NE Parvin Road
- N. Main Street / NE 53rd Street
- 4200 block of N Walrond Ave

##### Council District 2



- MO-152 / North Amity Ave

##### Council District 3



- 3400 block of Monroe Ave
- E 23rd Street / Van Brunt Blvd
- 200 block of Garfeild Ave
- 4300 block of Benton Blvd

##### Council District 4



- W 33rd Street / Pennsylvania Ave
- E 9th Street / Ditman Ave
- 400 block of Wallace Ave

##### Council District 5



- 1100 block of E 83rd Terrace
- Blue Hills Park
- 3100 block of E 80th Street
- Indiana Ave / E 72nd Street

##### Council District 6



- Currently None Listed

## Community Presence

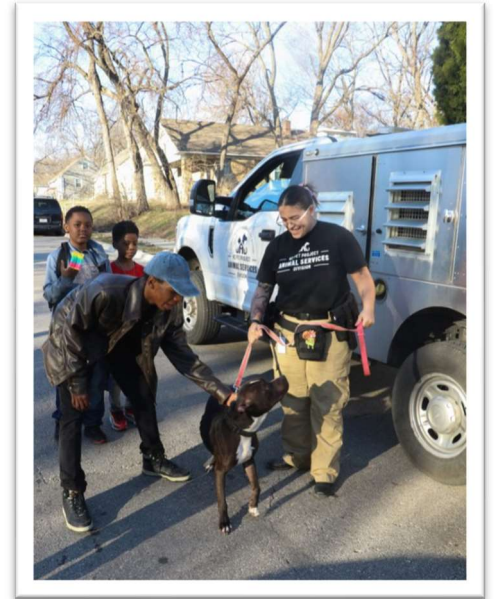
Animal Services Officers had 10 operational patrol vehicles in use daily in March. Officially marked patrol vehicles spent **666 hours** out in the community and traveled a total of **13,360 miles** throughout the city providing essential field services to the community.

## Animal Services Division

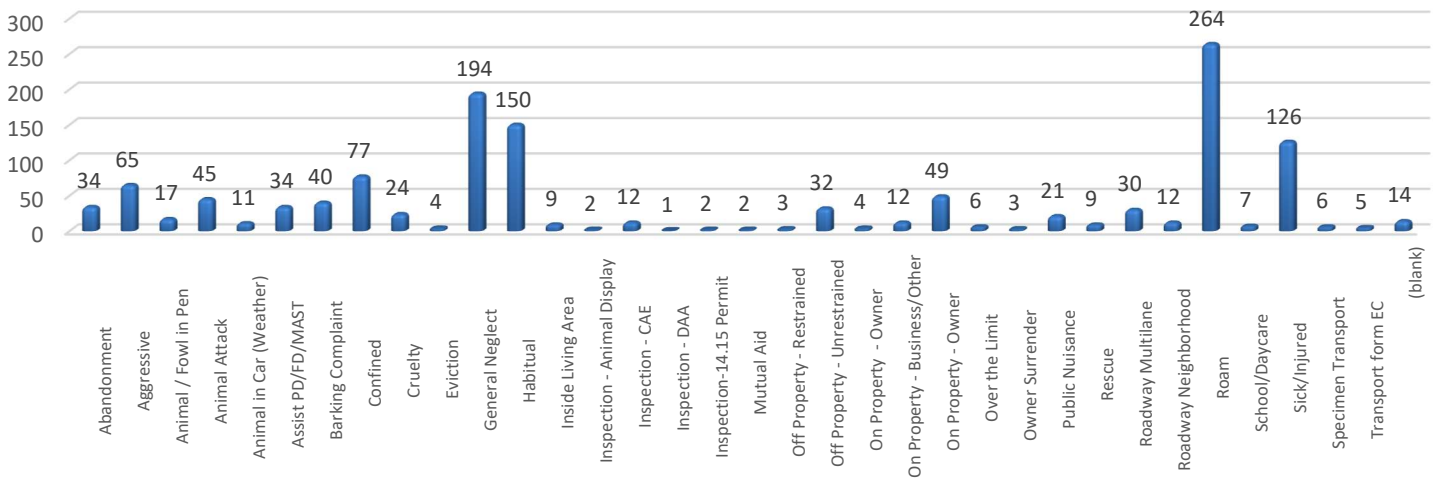
- ✓ Officers were dispatched to **1,326** unique Animal Services cases in March 2023 (an 18% increase in calls from last month).
- ✓ Officers and dispatchers created 1,875 unique case activities in March 2023.
- ✓ *549 follow-up activities were conducted to ensure compliance and/or case closure.*

## Total Cases by Type Responded to in March 2023

Calls related to stray/roaming animals continue to comprise over half of our monthly call volume from residents. Approximately 107 (18%) of the 604 stray/loose animal calls were related to public safety concerns, such as reports of aggressive dogs or animals in the roadway.



## Unique Animal Services cases for KCMO in March 2023



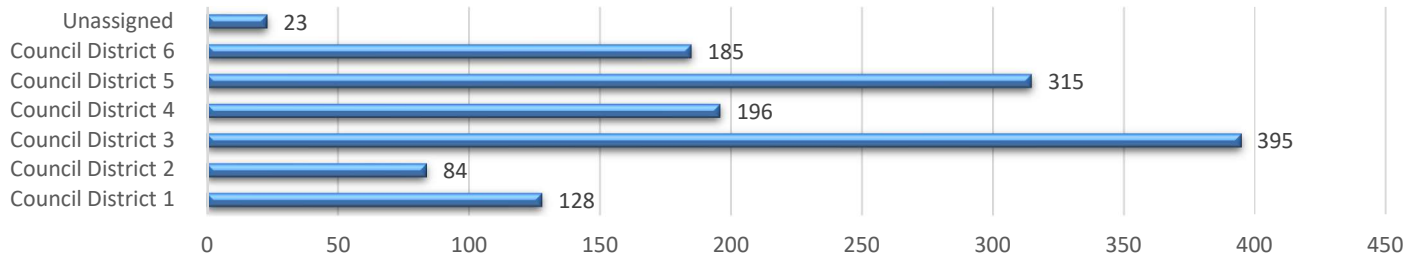
## Dog/Cat Bites Reported & Investigated in March 2023

- ✓ Number of bites from dogs/cats occurring on their own property or inside a home: 61
- ✓ Number of bites from dogs/cats occurring off property, i.e., stray dogs at large: 33 (a 13.7% increase from last month)
- ✓ Number of bites from dogs/cats in which bite location was not indicated: 6
- ✓ Animal bites cases investigated and closed: 96

In March 2023, Bite Investigations Specialist, Rachel Leyh, received and investigated 71 animal bite cases reported from the Health Department. It is required by law that all local medical treatment facilities report patients who require care due to an animal bite. **A total of 7 specimens were submitted to the KCMO Health Department for rabies testing and all results came back negative.**

## Total Number of Animal Services Cases by City Council District for March 2023

Cases by Council District March 2023



## Animal Impoundment Results for March 2023

Twenty-four (24) loose/lost pets (22 dogs, 1 cat & 1 pig) 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.

Results for Cases with Animals	March '23	February '23	% Change
Animals Impounded by Officers	245	227	8% increase
Wildlife Relocated/Transferred Out	21	22	4% decrease
Animals Returned Home by Officers	24	22	9% increase

## Animal Services Dispatch Statistics

During the hours of 7 AM - 10 PM every day, the Dispatch team handles incoming calls automatically transferred through the city's 311 call center, as well as direct calls automatically transferred through KC Pet Project's call center, and our after-hours phone queue. We also receive reports via email through our website. The dispatch team is responsible for answering, documenting, and dispatching hundreds of calls a week and thousands of calls a month with a very dedicated team of six (6) staff operating 7 days a week. Each incident location of an animal-related call is confirmed via a KCMO District map, and each case is logged by council district.

When a case is created, the response priority level is assigned, and a Dispatch Specialist reviews current officer locations in the city, which officer(s) can respond, and how quickly that response needs to happen. All response and arrival times, as well as results, are recorded in Petpoint, our Case Management system.

March 2023	Answered	Unanswered	Total Calls	Abandoned Rate %
IN > Dispatch – 311 Queue	699	45	744	6%
IN > Dispatch – Dispatch Q	2,170	80	2,250	4%
IN > Dispatch – Dispatch After Hours Q	326	49	375	13%
Dispatch INBOUND Performance	3,195	174	3,369	5%
Dispatch OUTBOUND Performance	962	318	1,280	N/A
<b>Total Performance for March 2023</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>4,649</b>	<b>8%</b>

**Dispatch 311 Queue:** Incoming calls from the KCMO 311 menu that are routed to KC Pet Project for animal control related issues.

**Dispatch Queue:** Calls received from residents who call us directly to report an animal control related issue or concern.

**Dispatch After Hours Queue:** Calls received between the hours of 7pm- 7am that are primarily answered by a designated "on-call" officer.

## March Dispatch Highlights

- ❖ Our Animal Services Dispatch team answered **3,195** live phone calls, completed 1,280 outbound calls, and resolved 191 voicemails.
- ❖ The Cruelty Tips Hotline received 4 calls reporting animal cruelty.
- ❖ The top three reasons in 2023 for calls to Dispatch have been:
  1. Reporting roaming/stray animals (19%)
  2. Inquiries regarding ordinances, citations and/or division protocols (16%)
  3. Case follow-up questions (11%)

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*The Dispatch Team achieved a Call Abandonment Rate of just **8%** for March, which falls within national call centers best practices.*

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## Animal Cruelty/Neglect/Abuse Cases Under Investigation

As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, the Cruelty Investigations Team was actively investigating **32 open** animal cruelty cases:

- ✓ **2** reports of animal abandonment
- ✓ **20** reports of animal neglect
- ✓ **10** reports of animal cruelty

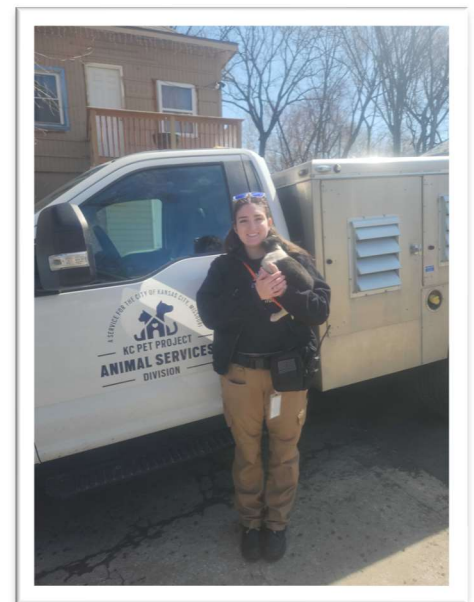
In March, the Cruelty Investigation Team **closed 283** animal cruelty case activities for our community, including 43 reports of animal abandonment, 213 reports of neglect, and 27 reports of cruelty.

## Animal Services Officer Highlight – Malissa Pennington

Animal Cruelty Investigator, Malissa Pennington, was born and raised in the Northland, attended Liberty High School, and graduating in 2018. After high school, Malissa moved to Hawaii and pursued a degree in Criminal Justice through Hawaii Pacific University. Malissa spent three years in Hawaii before moving back to Missouri during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Malissa went to work for the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame and Museum as the Special Events Coordinator, traveling the country and educating racing fans everywhere while coordinating events and social media. She has deep roots in racing – her father was part owner of the I-70 Raceway. At a young age, Malissa raced BMX bicycles and she entered the 2013 Missouri State Championship for the 13- to 15-year-old age bracket. She was the only female in that race, AND she won the state championship!

Malissa has two cats, Cutlet and Mochi, and says it's her mission to give back to the community that has provided her with so many incredible opportunities. Welcome to the team, Officer Pennington!



## Dangerous Dog Investigations

In March 2023, Dangerous Dog Case Administrator, Jessica Steele, issued eight (8) dangerous or potentially dangerous dog declarations and attended two (2) appeal hearings. **Three (3) Municipal court citations were issued to residents for failing to meet the compliance requirements to owning, keeping, or harboring a dangerous or potentially dangerous dog as outlined by the city code.**

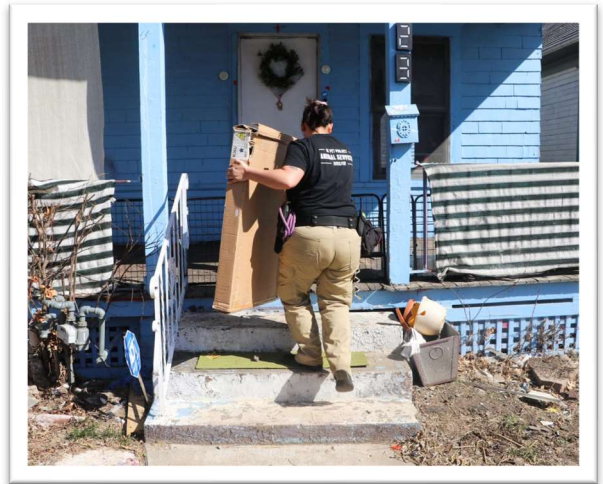
As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, there were 12 dangerous or potentially dangerous dog cases actively under investigation.

## Kennel Inspections/Field Investigations of Commercial Animal Permits/Domestic Association Permits

Compliance Officer Oertwig issued three (3) Animal Display Permits, six (6) Commercial Animal Establishment permits and conducted ten (10) inspections. No Small Animal permits or Domestic Animal Advocacy permits were issued in March. One (1) exception was made for section 14-15 to the keepers of fowl or other small animals.

## Media Coverage/Public Education/Community Engagement

- ❖ On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Chief of Animal Services, Ryan Johnson, and Chief Financial Officer, Michelle Erickson, attended the Peculiar High School job fair to speak with graduating students about opportunities available at KCPP and answer questions regarding careers in Animal Services.
- ❖ On March 27<sup>th</sup>, Chief of Animal Services, Ryan Johnson, attended the Tri-Blenheim Neighborhood Association Meeting to answer any animal related questions concerning the neighborhood.
- ❖ We added a Speaker Request Form to our website to encourage more neighborhood groups to submit requests to have members of our Animal Services Division or shelter staff present at their meetings – with the goal of having officers attend neighborhood meetings across all districts on a regular basis. We are scheduled to attend the Hickman Mills United Neighborhoods meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ Several social media and news stories in March featured the great work our officers are doing throughout our community. Officers work tirelessly behind-the-scenes every day helping residents with animal-related challenges and distributing resources in the community (right).
- ❖ On March 28<sup>th</sup>, Chief Executive Officer, Teresa Johnson, Chief Communications Officer, Tori Fugate, Chief Operations Officer, Chad Ackerman, and Chief of Animal Services, Ryan Johnson met with Ashely Scott, Director of Animal Control for Kansas City, Kansas and shared our best practices and current protocols for shelter and field operations.
- ❖ We had 38 media stories and news mentions during the month of March. Estimated media reach for the month for animal services and sheltering stories was **26,753,958 million** people.



## Stories from the Field

On Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, KC Pet Project's Animal Services Officers **seized 14 dogs from a large-scale cruelty case** at 11225 Crystal Avenue in KCMO. Animal Services executed a search warrant for the seizure of all the dogs on the property following an initial report of a sick dog at the home. Officers found a critically ill puppy on the property, and despite our veterinary team's efforts, the dog died due to the severity of its illness.

When our officers returned to the residence to check for other dogs, they discovered *six (6) additional deceased dogs* at that home. Officers could hear what sounded like many more dogs inside the home, but the homeowners were unwilling to cooperate with our Cruelty Investigations Team and failed to comply with corrective action instructions for ordinance violations. It was imperative that officers gained access to the home to determine the health and safety of the remaining dogs.

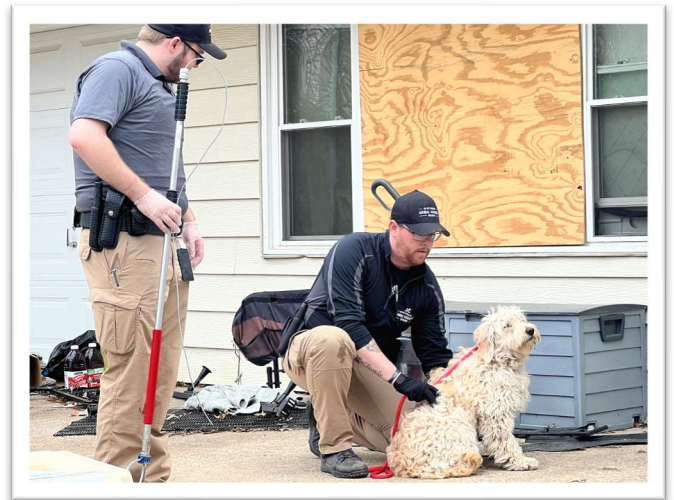


Chief of Animal Services, Ryan Johnson, led a critical incident briefing prior to the warrant execution to ensure all contingency measures were considered due to the inherent danger of executing warrants. Chief Johnson and his team executed the warrant the following day, granted by a Municipal Court judge, for the seizure of an unknown number of dogs inside the residence and the Kansas City Police Department worked cooperatively with our Animal Services team on scene to ensure everyone's safety by responding to keep the peace.

Once inside the home, Animal Services Officers found 14 dogs living in deplorable conditions. Dogs were being housed in inhumane, unsanitary conditions in a small interior room of the home in wire kennels stacked on top of one another. The room was dark with very little airflow. Dogs were housed in kennels that were too small, with dirty blankets and fecal matter inside each kennel. The ammonia smell was permeating the air outside the home.



To date, **36 criminal citations have been issued on this case through Municipal Court** for a variety of ordinance violations for the two residents in the home. One of our Animal Services Officers trained in mental health case management was also able to report one of the residents to the Missouri Department of Aging so they can offer assistance to the resident. The dogs are currently being held through KC Pet Project.



## Continuing Education

- ❖ On March 14<sup>th</sup>, the entire KCPP Management Team, including members of the Animal Services Division, underwent De-escalation Training, taught by former KCMO Police Academy instructor Kim Shaw-Ellis.
- ❖ On March 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, professionals from two local domestic violence shelters, Synergy Services and Rose Brooks, led a two-day training course at our Campus to re-introduce Animal Services Officers, Dispatchers, and our Pet Support Center team to the ICU (Identify-Connect-Unite) program. This program offers critical skills to recognize “the link” or co-occurrence between animal cruelty and domestic violence in the community.
- ❖ On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Kansas City, MO Fire Department provided specialized CPR lifesaving training to all Animal Services Officers and other KCPP staff.

# City Council District Overview for March 2023

## Council District 1:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **129**  
Animals Impounded: 14  
Zip code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64119  
Stray/Animals at Large: 56  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 31  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 11  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 2

## Council District 2:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **84**  
Animals Impounded: 9  
Zip code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64118  
Stray/Animals at Large: 33  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 15  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 13  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 2

## Council District 3:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **394**  
Animals Impounded: 76  
Zip code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64127  
Stray/Animals at Large: 220  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 71  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 23  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 7

## Council District 4:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **196**  
Animals Impounded: 21  
Zip code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64123  
Stray/Animals at Large: 109  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 33  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 12  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 10

## Council District 5:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **312**  
Animals Impounded: 59  
Zip Code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64132  
Stray/Animals at Large: 170  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 68  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 23  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 8

## Council District 6:

Total Unique Animal Services Cases in District: **185**  
Animals Impounded: 24  
Zip code with greatest number of case activities by Officers: 64134  
Stray/Animals at Large: 91  
Cruelty Investigations/Neglect: 33  
Dog/Cat Bites Investigated: 13  
Other Services (Police/Fire/MAST): 5

Note: Numbers shown above in each district for stray animals, cruelty investigations/neglect cases, dog bite investigations, and other services were some of the most common Animal Services case types reported last month in the districts.

Submitted by,

Teresa Johnson, President/CEO/Chief Lifesaving Officer, KC Pet Project

Ryan Johnson, Chief of Animal Services, KC Pet Project