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November 6, 2025

Council File No.: 25-1253
Council Districts: All
Contact person and phone:
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The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Arts, Parks, Libraries and Community Enrichment Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Mandy Morales, Legislative Assistant

**SUBJECT: CF NO. 25-1253 - DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES REPORT ON THE CURRENT
RULES FOR ALLOWING ELECTED OFFICIALS AND THEIR STAFF INTO DEPARTMENT
FACILITIES, INCLUDING NON-PUBLIC AREAS**

Recommendation for Council Action:

NOTE AND FILE this report as this report is for informational purposes only.

SUMMARY

There have been questions regarding whether Councilmembers and their staff are required to schedule appointments or obtain special permission to visit Department of Animal Services (Department) shelter locations, even when accompanied by Department personnel. While staff and customer safety are of the utmost importance, unclear or burdensome procedures for requesting and gaining access may hinder effective oversight. This report will provide clarity on this issue.

BACKGROUND

The Department operates six City-staffed Animal Care Centers. Each location is open to the public from Tuesday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm on the weekends. Visitors are able to come and view adoptable animals in any of our facilities during these operating hours.

"Creating a Humane LA"

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Visit our website at www.LAAnimalServices.com

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In addition to these public-access areas in our department facilities, each of our facilities also has non-public areas where only authorized personnel and those granted permission may access. The Department has implemented a policy to ensure that all visits to non-public areas in our facilities are conducted safely, without disruption to shelter operations, and in compliance with Department confidentiality and animal welfare standards.

Animal Care Center non-public areas include but are not limited to: medical treatment rooms, isolation/quarantine areas, animal holding areas, euthanasia rooms, locker rooms, and administrative offices. Access to non-public areas by individuals other than authorized personnel, including non-Department City officials, members of the media, or other external parties, must be requested and scheduled in advance by appointment and approved by the General Manager or their designee. Authorized visitors must always be accompanied by Department staff when in non-public areas. Unscheduled or unannounced visitors requesting access to non-public areas may not be accommodated due to safety, staffing, and operational concerns.

The following procedures establish the process for granting visitor access to the non-public areas in Department facilities:

Appointment Requests

All requests for access to non-public areas must be submitted at least 48 hours in advance to the General Manager or their designee. Requests from media must be submitted to the Department's Public Information Director. For requests received less than 48 hours in advance of the visit, the General Manager or their designee may grant access if circumstances allow (e.g., staff resources and visitor safety).

Requests for access must include:

- Purpose of visit;
- Names and affiliations of all visitors;
- Requested date, time, and shelter location; and
- Specific areas requested for access.

Review and Approval

The General Manager or their designee, or the Public Information Director, will review the request to ensure the visit will be safe, aligns with Department policies, and will not interfere with Department operations. The District Supervisor or Shelter Manager overseeing the requested visit location will confirm staff availability for the requested visit and confirm that it will not disrupt any essential and/or pre-planned shelter operations.

Escort Requirement

Authorized visitors must be escorted at all times by a designated Department employee. No authorized visitor may enter non-public areas unaccompanied.

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Safety and Confidentiality

Authorized visitors must comply with all posted safety rules, wear required personal protective equipment when applicable, and follow Department staff instructions at all times. Photography, videography, or live streaming is permitted only in pre-approved areas and with prior written authorization from the Public Information Director or the General Manager.

Denial of Access

Access may be denied or rescheduled due to staffing limitations, safety concerns, or operational priorities. In cases where access is denied, the Department will offer to reschedule the visit when conditions permit.

CONCLUSION

The Department of Animal Services is fully committed to accommodating City officials and their staff wishing to visit any of the facilities. The aforementioned policy and procedures were established to ensure the safety and security for all visitors, staff and animals, as well as to maintain operational efficiency.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Annette G. Ramirez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Annette" and last name "Ramirez" clearly legible.

Annette G. Ramirez
Interim General Manager