

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**28<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**"Los Angeles County: Ahead of the Curve"**

**2014 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: ANIMAL CRUELTY PROSECUTION PROGRAM**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** 2007  
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2013)

**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner.

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It has been said that pets are humanizing; they remind us we have an obligation and responsibility to preserve, nurture and care for all life. No wonder more than one-third of all American households has a pet. It is a sad truth that animals, like people, are all too often the victims of neglect, cruelty and abuse. The connection between abuse of animals and other violent behavior is well documented. Animal cruelty, especially in young adults, is a strong predictor of future aggression and anti-social behavior. Proper investigation into acts of animal cruelty followed by appropriate rehabilitation can help prevent future violent acts. In recognition of the link between animal cruelty and other acts of violence, and to ensure that those who mistreat animals are appropriately prosecuted and punished, the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (LADA) established the Animal Cruelty Prosecution Program (ACPP) in 2007. Through specialized training of prosecutors, law enforcement, and animal control officers, targeted rehabilitation programs, and public outreach, the ACPP is helping to protect the animals of Los Angeles County. The ACPP serves as a model for similar programs throughout the country and places the LADA at the forefront of animal cruelty prosecutions.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> LADA- Animal Cruelty Prosecution Program 210 W. Temple St., Suite 1800, Los Angeles, CA 90012	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 974-3716
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<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Deborah Knaan	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 974-3716 <b>EMAIL</b> dknaan@da.lacounty.gov
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<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Priscilla Cruz, Interim Director Bureau of Administrative Services	<b>DATE</b> 7/14/14	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-202-7621 <b>EMAIL</b> pcruz@da.lacounty.gov
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<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Jackie Lacey, District Attorney	<b>DATE</b> 7/15/14	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-974-3500
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**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project.

**CHALLENGE**

Crimes against animals have too frequently been overlooked. Under current law animals are considered property. It was not uncommon for law enforcement to look at acts of animal neglect, cruelty and abuse as a property crime; or no crime at all if the animal belonged to the offender. Animal care and control officers, while well intentioned, lacked a formal understanding of criminal complaints and the types of evidence needed to obtain convictions in these matters. Prosecutors, handling dozens of cases involving human victims, were unaware of the serious societal ramifications of animal neglect, cruelty and abuse. Once a conviction was obtained, there were no targeted rehabilitation efforts for juvenile offenders, or adults who committed criminal acts of negligence towards animals. To protect the animals, successfully prosecute and rehabilitate the offenders, and better serve the people of Los Angeles County, the LADA started the ACPP.

**SOLUTION**

The ACPP has ensured that crimes involving animal neglect, cruelty and abuse will be properly investigated and prosecuted. This has been accomplished by raising awareness within the office, the law enforcement and animal care and control community and with the public, of the importance of animal cruelty crimes. The ACPP works directly with first responders, forging critical partnerships with law enforcement, animal control agencies, animal welfare organizations and other prosecuting agencies across the county. The ACPP has also worked with both the juvenile and adult courts to ensure that those who neglect or abuse animals receive the necessary education to prevent repeat offenses. Finally, the ACPP has reached out to provide information about a common danger to animals and to provide an alternative way to report acts of neglect, cruelty and abuse.

At the foundation of the program are the 31 specially trained prosecutors who serve as the animal cruelty designees. The designees, assigned to District Attorney's Offices throughout the county, are required to attend a day-long training on prosecuting animal-related crimes. This specialized training enables these designees to apply their training and experience in the field of general criminal prosecution to the unique issues presented by cases involving animal neglect, cruelty and abuse. The designees receive continuing training on issues related to the investigation and prosecution of crimes against animals and have access to an extensive library of legal reference material made available through the LADA's intranet system. Overseeing the entire ACPP program is the Animal Cruelty Coordinator, a Deputy District Attorney with extensive experience in animal cruelty prosecutions and animal

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control operations.

To coordinate the successful prosecution of cases involving animal neglect, cruelty and abuse, the ACPD utilizes a specially designed database which affords ready access to information regarding declined cases, continuing investigations, and pending cases. To reinforce the significant and negative impact these cases have on our community the ACPD has developed standard dispositional guidelines to ensure that each case, no matter where it occurs in the County, will be treated appropriately and uniformly, based on the severity of the conduct, not the vagaries of personal opinion.

Well trained attorneys are only a part of the success of the ACPD. Thorough investigation is essential to a successful prosecution. The ACPD provides regular trainings to law enforcement, state humane officers, and animal control personnel across the county on proper investigative techniques and issues unique to crimes involving animals.

A third component of the ACPD is educating the public on issues of animal neglect, cruelty and abuse, and the negative impact it has on society. The ACPD conducts an annual public awareness campaign informing the public about the dangers, and illegality of leaving animals unattended in hot vehicles. There has also been a collaboration between the LADA and the County's 211 line, the largest information referral service in the nation. Through this collaboration residents with concerns about acts of animal neglect, cruelty or abuse, can make anonymous reports via the 211 line without directly calling the police.

A successful prosecution of animal neglect, cruelty or abuse does not end with a finding of guilt. Rehabilitation and education to prevent future mistreatment of animals is essential. Abuse of an animal, especially by a juvenile, can be a sign of anti-social behavior and a dangerous lack of self-control. In partnership with a local humane society, an already existing program for juveniles was redesigned for use within the criminal justice system. The "Juvenile Teaching Love and Compassion" (JTLC) program is an intensive 16-hour class taught by trained counselors who use shelter dogs to teach appropriate problem solving skills and instill compassion toward animals in juveniles who have demonstrated a history of anti-social behavior and/or mistreatment of animals. Juvenile offenders who meet specific criteria are referred to the program by animal cruelty designees and members of the LADA's Juvenile Offender Intervention Network program (a pre-filing diversion program for juveniles). Since May of 2011, 94 juveniles have completed the JTLC program.

Additionally, in direct response to the large number of neglect cases prosecuted county-wide, a 16-hour class was developed by the Animal Cruelty Coordinator.

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**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):**

**INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY – ENHANCES PROSECUTION AND REHABILITATION OF THOSE WHO COMMIT ACTS OF ANIMAL NEGLECT OR CRUELTY, IMPROVES THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY**

This class, mandated for everyone who is convicted of animal neglect and used throughout the county, teaches the skills needed to appropriately care for an animal. When a rehabilitation class will not adequately protect the safety of an animal, the court can impose a “Do Not Possess” order. Traditionally these orders were valid only during the probationary period, generally three years. If a defendant was sentenced to state prison the court could not impose the order at all. Under the auspices of the ACPP and with the support of the LADA the legislature enacted Penal Code section 597.9, which allows judges to impose a “Do Not Possess” order for up to five years for misdemeanors and 10 years for felonies, regardless of the actual sentence imposed.

During the investigation of animal neglect cases animals are routinely seized as evidence. Often these evidence animals were held for months, or years, while the cases made their way through the criminal system. Not only was there great monetary cost in housing, feeding and caring for these evidence animals, these animals occupied space which could have housed shelter animals. When there is no more room in the shelters animals must be euthanized. The ACPP and the LADA successfully proposed amendments to Penal Code section 597.1, which now allows prosecutors or animal control officers to seek termination of a defendant’s ownership rights prior to the completion of a criminal case. This beneficial change in the law, in conjunction with collaborative efforts of the ACPP and the Department of Animal Care and Control has significantly reduced the time evidence animals are held in shelters and releases them for pet adoption.

**BENEFITS**

Since the inception of the ACPP, 2,332 complaints against 2,550 defendants have been filed. Due in large part to the enthusiastic support of Marcia Mayeda, Director of County Animal Care and Control, and training provided to her staff and other law enforcement agencies, there has been a vast improvement in the quality of animal neglect, cruelty and abuse investigations within the County. Shelters are expending fewer resources on the housing of evidence animals. Furthermore, close collaboration between the animal cruelty designees, law enforcement and animal care and control officers has fostered mutual understanding and respect for the roles played by each party in the protection of the animals of the County. This collaboration has enabled successful prosecutions which in turn result in appropriate education, rehabilitation, and penalties for perpetrators of animal crimes. By bringing all of the stakeholders together the ACPP has improved the way animal crimes are investigated and prosecuted in the County.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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**FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY**

*(For single department submissions, do not include this page)*

<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL 5898 CHERRY AVENUE LONG BEACH, CA 90805	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  JANET YARBROUGH	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  MARCIA MAYEDA
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>