



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 22, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **2019 Pima Animal Care Center - Safety Report**

Attached please find the 2019 Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) – Safety Report. Historically PACC had important deficiencies, which resulted in significant claims and payouts. Part of these were associated with a very outdated physical plant and antiquated animal husbandry practices. Since taking occupancy of our new building, I have asked the Director to produce a public facing safety report that summarizes the performance of the department.

The attached document summarizes what has been again a very positive year for PACC. Its evolving culture of safety has been cemented with policies and procedures geared toward ensuring the safety of the public, as well as shelter staff, volunteers and foster caregivers. I am happy to report that despite taking in nearly 19,000 cats and dogs and saving 92 percent of the pets who entered the shelter, PACC has not seen a significant increase in bites in the community or in the facility. In fact, by a number of metrics safety both in the facility and across the county is improving with regards to companion animal bites. In addition, both workers compensation and third party claim pay outs are trending down. Again, this is in the context of an increasing number of pets in the facility and placed in the community.

I believe the Board will be pleased to see that PACC continues on this positive trajectory.

CHH/lab

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Kristen Hassen, Director, Pima Animal Care Center

Date: May 18, 2020

To: Chuck H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

From: Kristen Hassen 
Director

Via: Francisco Garcia 
Deputy County Administrator

Re: Pima Animal Care Center 2019 Safety Report

I am writing to share the 2019 safety report for Pima Animal Care Center. In 2019, PACC took in nearly 19,000 cats and dogs and saved 92% of the pets who entered the shelter system. Over the past decade, PACC has been collecting data on shelter euthanasia; animal placement through adoption and rescue; the number of people injured for any reason in the shelter; and the number of bites in the shelter and the community. Because PACC has implemented a number of policies and procedures geared towards ensuring the safety of the public, as well as shelter staff, volunteers and foster caregivers, PACC has not seen a significant increase in bites in Pima County over the past 10 years.

The attached report which shows the data related to intakes, outcomes and bites in our community from 2012 to 2019. The report not only shows data, but also includes information from the Pima County Department of Risk Management which shows the total of number of claims made due to bites or other injuries. Finally, the report explains the steps PACC has taken to reduce claims and to increase safety both in the facility and out in the community.

Overall, safety in the facility is increasing, based both on the number of bites and the number and nature of safety incidents. Additionally, bites in the community are not increasing and the percentage of adopted or rescued dogs who later bite has remained constant between 1.5 and 1.9%. This past year, PACC was evaluated during the annual risk management safety inspection and PACC scored 254 out of a possible 256.

The report includes a more detailed summary of the information shared here. As PACC continues to make strides in providing comprehensive safety training to staff and volunteers; conducting routine site inspections; and building volunteer-driven programs to increase behavioral support to shelter and owned dogs and cats, we anticipate future data confirming that public safety and lifesaving are consistent and in Pima County, we continue to work to create a safe, humane community.

c: Jan Leshner, Chief Deputy County Administrator

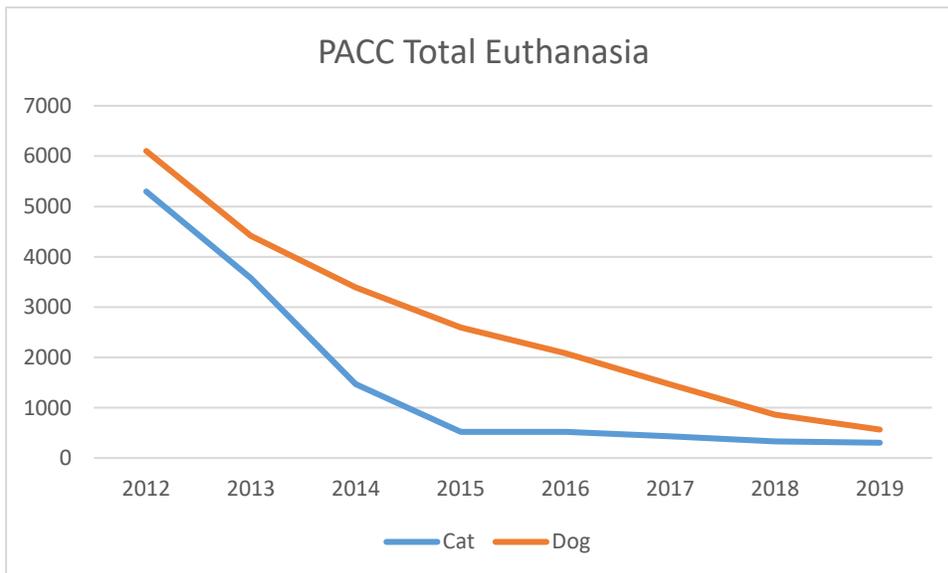
Pima Animal Care Center 2019 Safety Report*

Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) is sustaining their role as a national leader in best practices in municipal animal sheltering and field services, providing care for pets both in the shelter and in the community. PACC consistently saves over 90% of the pets entering the facility, while euthanizing pets who are medically suffering or pose an immediate threat to public safety.

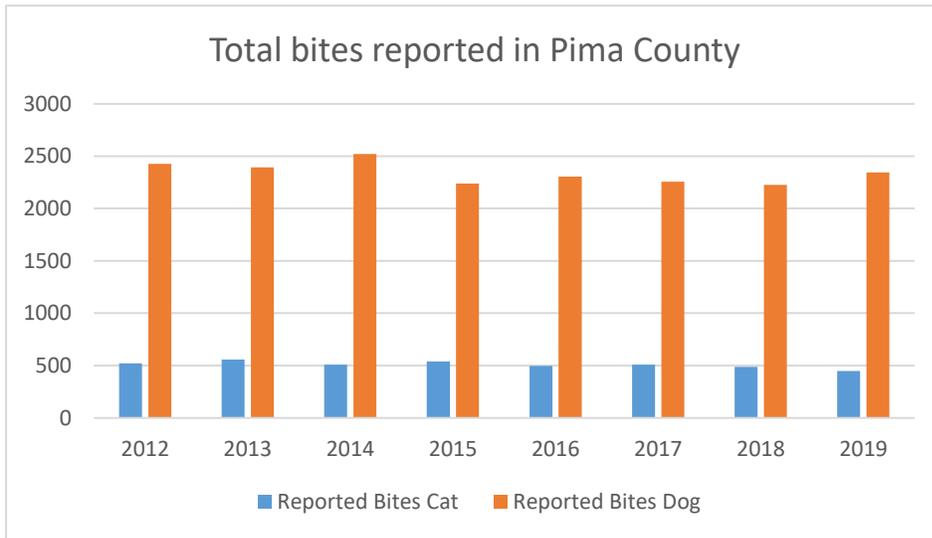
The PACC team hold safety as a top priority, and selected to include ***create and maintain a culture of safety*** as one of five cultural expectations. This includes safety both within the facility and in our community. PACC's cultural statement is included at the end of the report.

In 2019, PACC placed more than 17,000 pets in the community. Due to improved counseling to adopters, more thorough awareness of animal histories, and greater documentation of observed behaviors, the number of reported bites in the shelter has decreased.

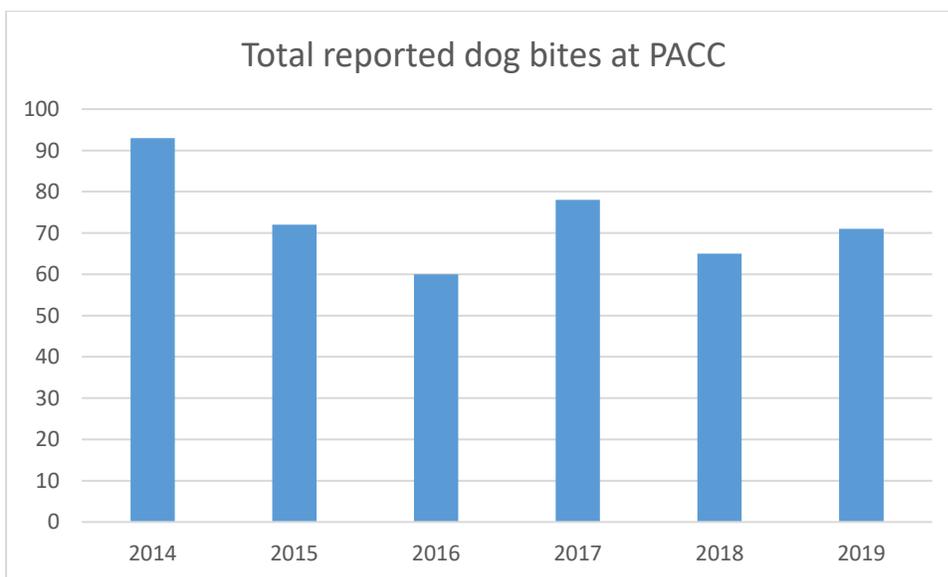
Euthanasia: PACC has reduced pet euthanasia dramatically over the past decade. In 2019, 304 cats and 565 dogs were euthanized. PACC saved roughly 92% of the pets who entered the facility last year.

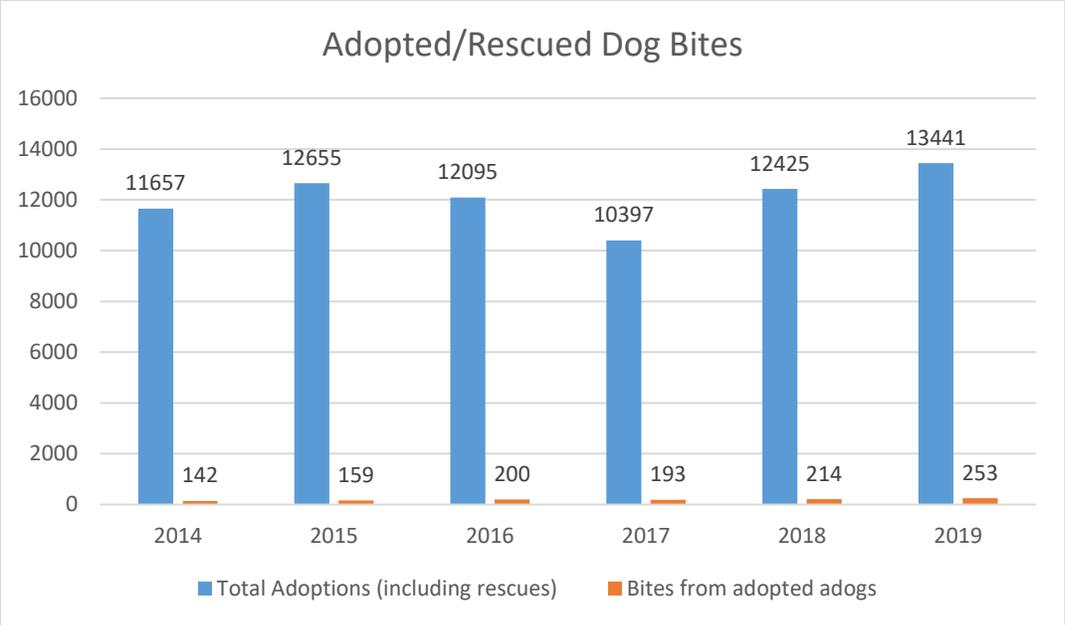


Total Bites: In 2019, there were 2,346 reported dog bites and 448 reported cat bites in Pima County.

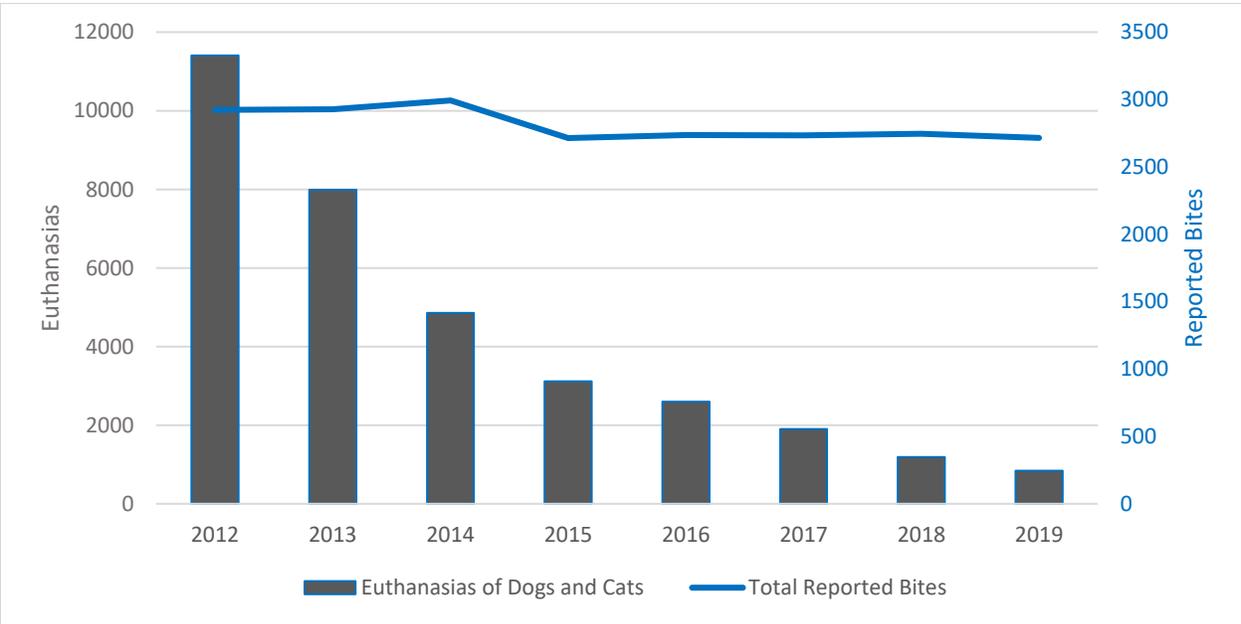


Total Dog Bites at PACC: In 2019, there were 71 dog bites at PACC. PACC has training and ongoing support for volunteers and staff to minimize bite and other safety incidents involving cats and dogs in the shelter. The use of playgroups and daily handling observations to document observed behavior helps staff and volunteers determine the safest way to handle pets. Any concerning behavior notes are posted on the service side of dog kennels to make it easy to access prior to interacting with a dog. PACC’s dog wellness team determines if any additional or different tools are needed to safely handle a dog, and ensures those items are available at each kennel entrance. Emergency safety equipment including additional leashes, cat gloves, air horns, and break sticks are placed strategically throughout the facility and are checked weekly.

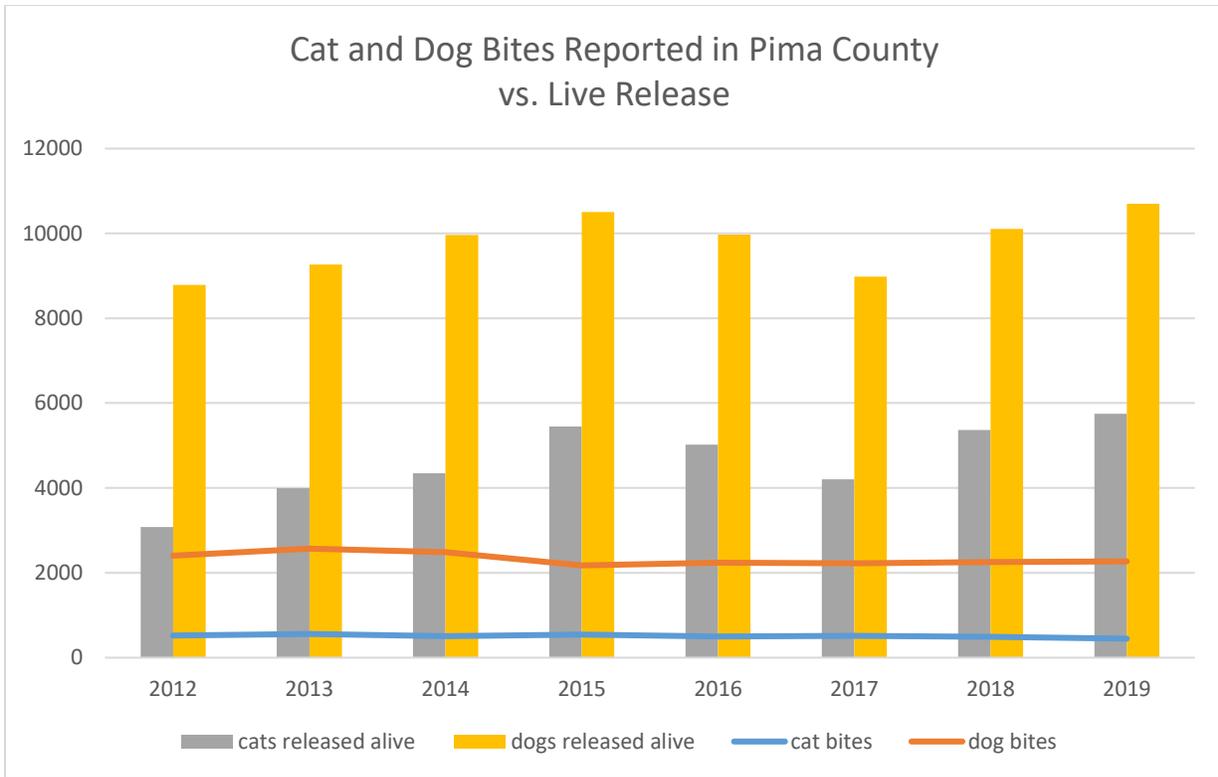




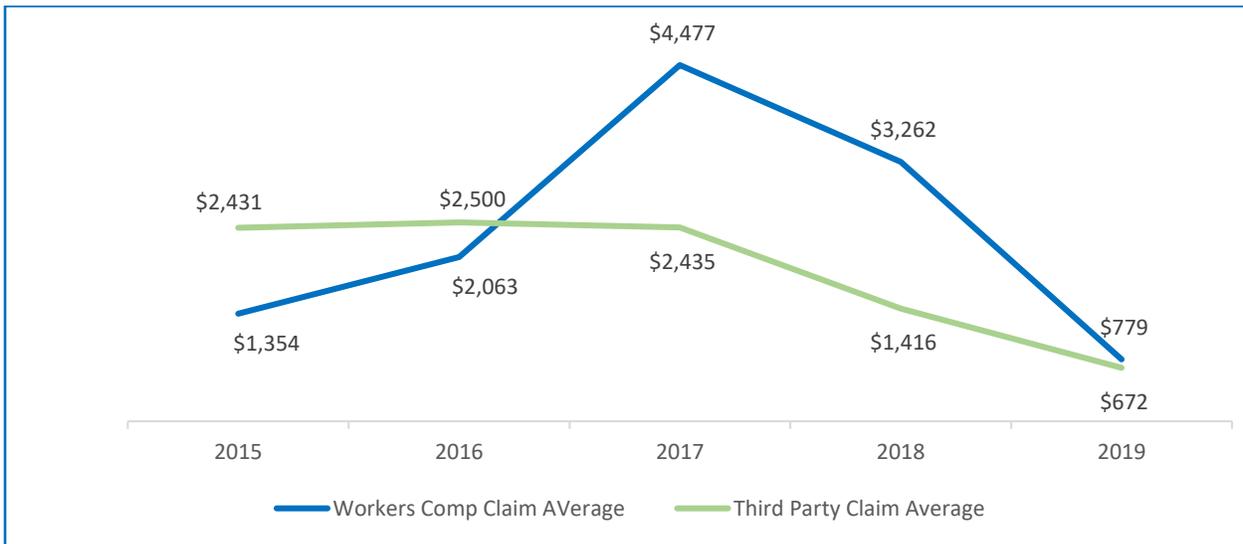
Euthanasia relative to dogs bites in the community



PACC pets released alive and dog bites in the community



Incidents and claims related to PACC: The cost per injury claim for 2019 dropped to under \$1,000 per incident for staff, volunteers and members of the public, indicating a decrease in the severity of injuries compared to prior years.



Third Party				Worker's Compensation			
	Number of closed claims	Total Pay Out	Cost per Claim		Number of closed claims	Total Pay Out	Cost per Claim
2015	4	\$ 9,725	\$ 2,431	2015	23	\$ 31,147	\$ 1,354
2016	9	\$ 22,500	\$ 2,500	2016	28	\$ 57,761	\$ 2,063
2017	3	\$ 7,305	\$ 2,435	2017	26	\$ 116,405	\$ 4,477
2018	13	\$ 18,407	\$ 1,416	2018	44	\$ 143,522	\$ 3,262
2019	8	\$ 5,377	\$ 672	2019	40	\$ 31,144	\$ 779

Additional safety measures at PACC: The veterinary clinic at PACC has increased the number of sharps disposal containers and all departments have been focused on improved handling of spills and wet floors. Overall facility cleaning and safety have improved, as documented in our annual Risk Management safety inspections. In spring 2019, eight areas of PACC were evaluated, and PACC scored 254 points out of a possible 256. The two corrections needed were installation of a single exit sign and removal of stored items from a top shelf that were impeding on the required clearance for sprinklers.

PACC currently has a Facility and Safety Manager who conducts weekly walk-throughs of the facility, checking that safety and emergency tools are available and in working order. Safe animal handling supplies include nets, catch poles, y-poles, bite resistant gloves, muzzles and leashes. Emergency equipment is stored in buckets throughout the facility, and each one contains extra leashes, air horn, whistle, and a bite or break stick. Additionally, each bucket has a tracking sheet that is signed during the weekly inspection.



Through 2020, PACC will continue improving safety within the shelter through development of a volunteer led behavior intervention team, and improvements to animal handling skills and protocols. Throughout the community, Animal Protection Officers will increase their visibility and participation at

schools and neighborhood events, providing information about what to do if you see a stray pet, and how to report concerns efficiently and effectively.

** For the purpose of this analysis, the word 'bite' indicates a legally reportable incident where an animal's tooth breaks skin. Biting animals are quarantined due to possible rabies exposure. Bites may or may not represent 'aggressive' behavior and may happen accidentally as dogs engage in play behaviors with humans and other pets. Dogs use their mouths to communicate and reportable bites simply indicate that a dog's tooth has broken skin on a human. Puppies and young dogs routinely and unintentionally bite during play behavior and dogs that are fearful, under-socialized, or feel threatened, may defensively snap at a handler. In addition, the stress endured by dogs and cats subjected to ongoing confinement to a kennel or yard, may result in undesirable jumpy/mouthy and reactive behaviors that can lead to biting. None of these behaviors are abnormal per se, or would be the sole rationale for euthanasia, as long as the bite injury is minor.*

Workplace Expectations



Support a collaborative organization

- Practice 'we' thinking. We achieve goals together or not at all.
- No ego! Acknowledge the skills, contributions and various roles of others.
- Support, mentor and uplift those around you.
- Set others up for success by sharing information and helping each other.

Create and maintain a culture of safety

- Take responsibility to correct issues and communicate concerns.
- Know your limitations and seek help when needed.
- Model safe, humane and kind handling of all animals at all times.
- Be thorough, careful and precise in your work.

Be compassionate and respectful

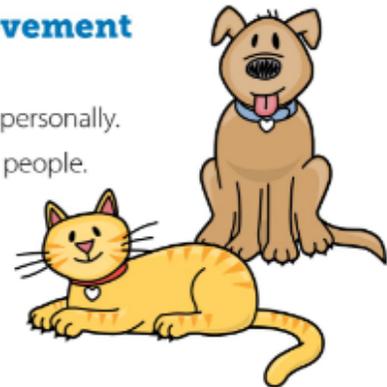
- Respect each other, our community, our resources and the pets in our care.
- Practice self-care.
- Treat every animal as if its life and wellbeing are as important as your own pets at home.
- Acknowledge the emotional aspects of our work by expressing and hearing feelings.
- Say 'thank you,' and 'good job,' and 'I appreciate you.'

Commit to healthy communication

- Communicate directly or upwards rather than gossiping with others.
- Understand differences are not wrong. Work through conflict and challenging conversations.
- Provide accurate, thorough, objective documentation and feedback.
- Give people the benefit of the doubt. Trust most everyone has good intentions.

Achieve excellence through continual improvement

- Strive to constantly improve the customer service experience.
- Be self-reflective and willing to learn and improve professionally and personally.
- Actively look for opportunities to make things better for animals and people.
- Don't let the fact that nothing is perfect stop you from trying to always make things better.



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