



Irvine Animal Care Center

Shelter Consultation Summary

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Irvine Animal Care Center Consultation

The following document serves as a summary of findings from a limited onsite consultation conducted at the Irvine Animal Care Center on December 15th and December 16th 2014, by Dr. Jyothi Robertson of JVR Shelter Strategies, LLC and Dr. Chumkee Aziz of the UC-Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program. It also includes limited recommendations from a site visit conducted by Megan Webb of JVR from February 12th to February 14th, 2015. This document was written in March 2015 and was initially finalized as a dynamic report on July 2nd, 2015. A secondary review of the volunteer section of this report occurred in December 2015 by Hilary Hager of JVR to ensure consistency of recommendations made in this document with those made during onsite visits by Ms. Hager.

The recommendations made here are based on current best practices and available research in the field of shelter medicine. Some of the recommendations cannot be easily adopted due to structural limitations or personnel limitations of the facility that were determined after the initial recommendations were made. It is important for management to understand that shelter medicine is a growing discipline that is developing new research daily. Policies and procedures should be continuously evaluated in the context of IACC's population data to assure that practices adopted are creating a positive impact and increasing the number of lives saved while working within the "care-ing capacity" of the organization. This document does not examine population data or statistical analysis of the shelter population. This document should be viewed as a dynamic report that will require ongoing evaluation based on what is most current in the field.

Executive Summary

The following list is a summary of pertinent findings.

- The Irvine Animal Care Center should assess its mission and goals, as they pertain to the policies of the organization and the needs of the community. The composition of the Intake population is contingent on the mission as it specifies pathways chosen for individual animals. As an open admission facility, the IACC does not limit its intake. At the same time, as a transfer-in facility, IACC has the flexibility to designate the categories of animals it serves from other communities, such as senior animals, special needs animals, or juveniles. The choice should be based on capacity calculations, including staffing, housing, and resource capacity, along with the set mission of the organization.
- Develop a medical and behavioral point system to assist with intake decisions for transfers. Designate a Fast Track and Slow Track for animals so that adequate resources can be allocated to each of these populations. Creating a formal process for Intake will keep the organization from exceeding its capacity to care for the animals.
- Perform daily medical rounds and daily population rounds.
- Track the rate of infectious disease in the shelter; use these calculations to quantify the impact of policy changes.
- Improve cat housing, cleaning/disinfecting protocols of cat housing, and medical strategies for treating feline upper respiratory infection (URI) to increase cat welfare, reduce stress and associated infectious diseases, and make daily cleaning more efficient.
- Improve dog housing, cleaning/disinfecting protocols of dog housing, and medical strategies for treating canine upper respiratory infections to reduce the rate of infectious diseases and make daily cleaning safer and more efficient.
- Ensure that the animals most vulnerable to acquiring infectious disease in the shelter (puppies and kittens) are moved into foster care as soon as possible. Establish a Foster-on-Deck program to have fosters available when situations arise.
- Expand on the existing volunteer program to create predictability and develop consistent opportunities for volunteer engagement.
- Conduct a facility needs assessment to determine the best long-term plan for the organization.

Recommendations

Overall Policy

1. Continue the community discussion of determining the mission and role of the shelter. Once the mission and role are determined and are approved by shelter management, policy can be established to meet the goals set. Policy will be determined in part by analyzing shelter statistics to determine optimal capacity (numbers of animals, optimal staffing levels) to ensure that the goals are met within the shelter's "care-ing" capacity.

Intake & Processing of Animals

1. Continue the process of moving dog intake to Building 4.
 - a. Discontinue the use of outdoor overnight kennels near the freezer.
2. Consider a second intake area in Building 3 for Third Chance dogs. This would allow more efficient processing of these dogs and minimize contact with stray animals from Building 4.
 - a. Current Building 3 has a washer/dryer area. Repurpose this area or kitchen area as an intake area. Consider moving the industrial washer/dryer to Sally Port.
3. Ensure that necessary supplies are available for complete processing of intakes
 - a. A computer station and refrigerator are available in designated area.
 - b. Vaccines, microchip scanner, deworming medications, scales should all be easily accessible in the intake area.
4. Once statistics are calculated, an exact number of holding kennels for intake and holding can be determined and allocated.
 - c. Plan for Third Chance intake by allotting extra staff and intake kennels for intended increase.
 - d. Use statistical analysis to determine optimal number of Third Chance animals to bring at any given time.
 - i. These numbers will be provided by JVR.
5. Move overnight cat intake to cat isolation trailer.
 - a. For those cats coming overnight that cannot be brought into the facility because officers lack access, a secondary intake area can be created in one of two areas
 - i. Current cat kitchen
 1. This is not an ideal situation since this space would be better utilized as an isolation area, but was initially discussed with previous management.
 2. May be a temporary solution.
 - ii. Cat isolation trailer

1. The current trailer is not an ideal location for isolation. This area could be better utilized for the overnight intake cats since they would not need to reside in this area for a long time and officers could have direct access to the room.
 - b. Ideally, animals will not be brought in overnight by police officers, who do not have access to all areas. In the future, animal control officers may process overnight intakes.
6. Public should be discouraged from bringing animals during off-hours.
 - a. These animals will have a lag time prior to receiving a vaccination, which increases the risk that they may be susceptible to pathogens.
 - b. Depending on statistics, the location may be chosen to ensure that there are an optimal number of appropriate housing units for incoming overnight intakes.
 - c. When stray animals are brought during hours when staff is present but closed to the public, staff should have the capacity to intake these animals efficiently.
7. Promptly process all intake animals by the medical team.
 - a. Intake exam resources
 - i. <http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/examine-animals-intake>
 - ii. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/48>
 - b. During the site visit, there were very few animals that entered the facility. When intake numbers are low, it is advantageous to have a medical team member process the intake, as opposed to non-medical staff.
 - c. Statistical analysis of the number of intakes daily will assist with solidifying this recommendation.
 - d. Further details regarding exact protocols will be given to intake staff and management directly.
8. Overview of possible intake areas (ensure each area has intake table and proper materials for intake)
 - a. Stray/surrendered cats – Intake room for cats (cat stray)
 - b. Overnight cats – trailer
 - c. Third Chance cats – Intake room for cats
 - d. Kittens – kitten room
 - e. Stray / surrendered dogs – Building 4
 - f. Overnight dogs – Building 4
 - g. Third chance dogs – Building 3
 - h. Puppies – designated area in Building 4
 - i. Note that some owner surrenders may already be processed and ready for adoption depending on circumstances.

Facility Use and Repurposing of Animal Spaces

This list is a compilation of different spaces that could be better utilized or repurposed in the existing facility. More detail is provided in specific sections that pertain to the usage of these areas.

1. Building 4 Intake Area
 - a. Area to be utilized for all intake of stray and overnight animals that will occupy Building 4.
 - b. Purchase an industrial dishwasher for dog areas.
 - i. Industrial dishwashers have 60 to 90 second wash cycles and can be fitted with bleach to disinfect. This will save staff time and properly disinfect bowls.
2. Building 4 Reactive dogs
 - a. Move reactive dogs to the far right side of the building to minimize their viewing other dogs.
3. Building 3 Washer/Dryer room or Kitchen area
 - a. Repurpose this area as a new intake area for Third Chance animals and healthy owner surrenders that do not need a stray hold.
4. Sally Port
 - a. Purchase an industrial washer and dryer to place in Sally Port.
 - i. The current cat washer and dryer are not efficient and dryers were broken at both site visits.
 - ii. Sally Port can be more efficiently utilized and is often a location where shelves are placed, and where volunteers can work more effectively.
 - iii. The current area where the laundry is placed is very small and has a strong odor that permeates the clean laundry. The sally port would be a better area for volunteers to assist with laundry and perform tasks.
 - b. Purchase an industrial dishwasher to place in Sally Port.
 - i. The current dishwasher breaks down and is not efficient for the high volumes necessary in the shelter.
5. Cat Kitchen
 - a. Repurpose this room as Cat Isolation for sick cats.
 - b. This area has a drain and is currently not being utilized efficiently.
 - c. Place an exam room table and scale in this space along with a small refrigerator for any necessary supplies.
6. Cat Ringworm Room
 - a. Repurpose this room as the cat/small animal kitchen.
 - b. Place shelving to efficiently utilize the space.
 - c. A refrigerator can be placed in this area for rabbit food. Ensure that people do not place human food in this area.
7. Outdoor dog pens
 - a. Remove coverings on outdoor dog runs.
 - b. Covering actually increases frustration for the dogs. Allowing at least two sides of visualization is better than closing three sides.
8. Cat Housing

- a. Stainless steel shoreline cages without double compartment housing should have portals installed.
 - i. <http://sheltermedicine.com/documents/new-portals-order-information-and-instruction-for-install>
 - ii. Double compartment housing that separates food and bedding from litter has been shown to significantly reduce the incidence of feline upper respiratory disease in cats and reduce overall length-of-stay for cats.
 - b. Retrofit stainless steel banks that are currently not being utilized.
 - c. Consider purchasing some larger, stainless steel banks for kittens or eventually, for feline isolation areas.
 - i. <http://www.shor-line.com/index.php/products/detail/741.html>
 - d. Cages with wooden bases and frames should be discarded.
 - i. Wooden frames/floors cannot be effectively disinfected.
9. Intake room across from vet room
- a. This area can remain a medical station for processing owner surrendered animals, doing medical exams, and rechecks.
10. Kitten room
- a. This area can remain a kitten area. Additional shelving can be placed to store items for kittens.
11. Vet administrative offices and volunteer spaces
- a. In addition to the desks in the medical room and medical area across from vet room, there is an additional office for vet staff. This area may be better utilized for other purposes.
 - b. The volunteer manager should have a private office to meet one-on-one with volunteers. Volunteers also need a space to train new mentors, put their items, and sign in. Rethink the volunteer spaces and administrative offices.

Cat Housing As It Pertains To Welfare

1. For cats, humane housing and maintenance of a low-stress housing environment requires at least 8 square feet of floor space for individual housing and at least 18 square feet of floor space in group housing.
 - a. ASV Guidelines p.8;
 - b. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/facility-design-and-animal-housing#cats>
2. Although the housing floor space for each cat is adequate throughout IACC, consider using dividers in the single-compartment cages to create a double-compartment unit and thereby allow cats to eliminate away from their food/water/bedding. This type of double-compartment housing also allows for less handling of the cats and therefore less stress, fewer stress-associated infectious disease occurrences, and less chance of infectious disease transmission via fomites. It also makes daily care more efficient and it facilitates spot cleaning. A secondary process is to install portals in existing smaller cages to make double sided compartment housing.
 - i. <http://sheltermedicine.com/documents/new-portals-order-information-and-instruction-for-install>
3. The indoor/outdoor runs currently being utilized for cats is ideal housing for this species. The runs at IACC provide adequate floor space and allow for vertical movement as well as free access to both the outdoors and indoors.
4. The cats at IACC living in the indoor/outdoor runs appear to be thriving, despite the long length-of-stay for many of these animals. Stress-induced behaviors (such as excessive grooming and stress-induced feline upper respiratory infections) were not present in this population at the time of either site visit. The healthy condition of these cats demonstrates that housing, enrichment, and cleaning protocols for this population of cats were adequate and appropriate at the time of the site visit.
 - a. The concept of length-of-stay and how it impacts health will be discussed when reviewing statistics.
5. Cats were also housed in stainless steel Shoreline cages of varying dimensions (58" wide x 28" deep x 33" height) and (28" wide x 33" deep x 33" height). These cages will be modified as specified.
6. Stray cats were also housed in black wire cages (27" wide x 28" deep x 42" height). These cages had wooden bottoms that are difficult to disinfect and are not appropriate housing for cats. They are no longer being utilized for this purpose and should be discarded.
7. Group housing should allow for at least 18 square feet (1.8m²) of floor space per cat and the opportunity to maintain a distance of 3-10 feet (1-3 meters) distance between themselves and other cats.
 - a. The number of cats per group housing area can be calculated using the following calculator
 - i. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/documents/handy-dandy-group-housing-calculator-for-cats>

- ii. The calculator places the number of cats at a certain level based on the size dimensions of the room. It does not take into account stress, infectious disease potential, or other factors that leads to limiting the number of cats in any one space.
 - b. Typically, no more than 10 cats should be allowed in a group area of appropriate space. Many people recommend fewer cats in group housing areas due to infectious disease potential and stress. It is often recommended to have a larger number of small group areas as opposed to one large group area.
 - i. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/facility-design-and-animal-housing#cats>
 - c. At the time of the site visit, Kitty Klubhouse was housing 9 cats which is an appropriate number of cats for this group area.
 - d. Cats in the group housing area seemed to be appropriately matched and no signs of fighting or stress were apparent in the population on either site visit. Volunteers appeared to be carefully monitoring the behavior of animals in this room to ensure that all cats were thriving.
 - e. Continue the process of having multiple feeding stations, water bowls, and cat litter boxes in various places throughout the room.
 - f. Continue to closely monitor the behavior and food intake of all cats in group settings. Daily monitoring sheets should be filled by staff and volunteers. Initially, when cats are placed into group areas, consider weighing them periodically to ensure that they are not losing weight, since food monitoring can be challenging in group settings. This can be accomplished for all cats in group areas and a set of protocols specific for monitoring these cats should be approved by the staff veterinarian.
 - g. It is best to have an all-in/all-out system for group areas so that there is not a constant cycle of disease. At IACC, disease should be tracked to determine the risk of having some of the longer-term slow track animals housed in this room in a semi-cyclical fashion. Track the adoption rates of cats in this area versus other areas to plan for this population.
- 8. It is important to note that at both site visits, all cats including the single cat in isolation, appeared to be very healthy. Cats did not have ocular or nasal discharge as is commonly seen in shelter felines due to stress induced feline herpes virus. A few cats had soft stool but did not have severe levels of diarrhea necessitating movement to isolation areas. The overall condition of the cats was excellent. In our combined experience, having a large number of healthy long-term cats without signs of stress or illness demonstrates a high level of care for cats that is often not present in open-admission shelters.

Dog Housing As It Pertains To Welfare

1. Dog housing at IACC consists of double-sided guillotine runs that have indoor and outdoor access. This type of housing is very good because it allows the dogs the choice of an indoor space or outdoor space and additionally, allows separation of food/bedding from areas of defecation/urination. Furthermore, it allows for easy cleaning with minimal transmission of fomites or disease. It is also considered appropriate housing for dogs that are not walked or taken out of the kennel since the dogs have open access to outdoors and indoors.
 - a. <http://www.shelternvet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf>
 - b. ASV Guidelines p.8
 - c. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/facility-design-and-animal-housing#cats>
2. At the time of both site visits, each run had a total of one dog per run, which is the appropriate number of dogs for this space.
3. The condition of building 4 and some of the runs are in disrepair. Paint is peeling and should be replaced. The drains were being checked at the time of the first site visit. Lighting was dark in the building, compared with other locations. Specific details were discussed with management and are in the process of being updated.
4. Dogs should have an opportunity to hide from visual access to other dogs and humans. Partial screens, hiding boxes, or crates placed in runs for smaller dogs can reduce anxiety in dogs. Full barriers are not recommended and may in fact increase adverse behaviors such as barking and jumping.
5. Dog housing at IACC is considered appropriate in both size and structure. Despite this, there were dogs present that appeared to be stressed likely due to a lack of enrichment opportunities for these animals. No dogs appeared to have severe kennel cough or canine infectious respiratory disease (CIRD), which is often common in shelter settings, and can indicate poor housing and sanitation practices. Dogs that were being treated for CIRD had either very mild signs or none present. A few dogs appeared severely stressed and/or ill during the second site visit and there was question as to their overall welfare. These dogs were discussed at length with management and various medical decisions were made to obtain further diagnostics. The dog walking program will likely assist with reducing kennel anxiety. Further enrichment opportunities are outlined in the Behavior and Enrichment section of this document. In the combined experience of the authors, it is our opinion that the current housing situation for dogs is appropriate but there are more enrichment opportunities and modifications that could occur to enhance the overall welfare of the dogs at IACC.

Cleaning and Sanitation

Observations of IACC's sanitation practices in feline, canine, and rabbit housing made it apparent that IACC staff and volunteers are dedicated to maintaining a clean and comfortable environment for animals, staff, volunteers, and the public. Cleaning and disinfection by well-trained staff and volunteers is a key component to infectious disease control. Utilization of protocols that minimize stress improves the overall welfare of animals in shelters. At IACC, the dog areas and cat areas were all exceptionally clean during both site visits. The proper use of double-sided guillotine runs and ensuring that one dog is housed per run, facilitated ease of cleaning in Buildings 3 and 4. The majority of cat housing allowed for appropriate cleaning, but stainless steel banks, isolation areas, and kitten areas did not have appropriate housing at the time of the site visit to allow for ideal cleaning situation.

1. Continue to utilize Accelerated hydrogen peroxide (AHP), which is effective against the primary infectious diseases in animal shelters, for all cleaning and sanitation.
 - a. Utilize AHP in all housing areas
 - b. Include high-contact surfaces
 - i. Countertops, door knobs
 - ii. Exam tables, intake counters, transport vehicles
2. Verify that appropriate concentrations of AHP are being utilized.
 - a. 1:64 is a disinfection level that should be used to disinfect cat cages in between animals.
 - b. Different foamers should be utilized for specific situations. Foamers distributing 1:64 levels should be used for daily disinfection of dog kennels and 1:16 should be used for deep cleaning.
 - c. Foamers should be checked regularly with test strips.
 - d. The AHP station currently has a high and low button. Specify the concentration being used at each level.
 - e. Do not store concentrated accelerated hydrogen peroxide near bleach. Combining the two by mistake can lead to the production of toxic fumes.
3. Review cleaning protocols for dogs.
 - a. At the time of the site visit, all dog kennels were being deep cleaned daily. Consider a spot cleaning process for those dogs that are remaining in the same run. This will allow more time for staff to walk and enrich dogs.
 - i. Currently spot cleaning occurs in the afternoon and this process should continue to ensure that the runs are kept clean throughout the day.
 - ii. In a spot-cleaning process, the same blanket and bedding can remain in a run if not soiled. Additionally, the entire run does not need to be sprayed if it has not been soiled.
 - b. Continue to use the double-sided guillotine doors to effectively clean animals while minimizing contact.
 - i. Double-sided guillotine doors allow staff to enter one side of the run without contacting the animal.

- ii. One dog should be housed per double-sided run.
 - iii. Use of the guillotine door also increases staff and volunteer safety during cleaning.
 - c. Do not place dogs in wet runs. Squeegee the runs to remove excess water before returning dogs to runs.
 - d. Ensure that the water bowls can be removed and cleaned. If the plastic ones cannot be removed, replace with stainless steel bowls that can be washed/removed.
 - e. Ensure that the outdoor pens are sufficiently cleaned and disinfected between new occupants. Although solid waste is removed between occupants, apply accelerated hydrogen peroxide to these areas to disinfect any residual waste.
 - f. Dog Cleaning Protocols
 - i. [http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Dog%20run cleaning protocol 5 2011.pdf](http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Dog%20run%20cleaning%20protocol%205%202011.pdf)
 - ii. Note that this example has an additional step as specified in the introductory paragraph because it is written for shelters that do not currently use AHP. Since IACC uses AHP, the secondary step will not be necessary.
4. Review cleaning protocol for cats
- a. Cat housing should be spot cleaned to minimize stress.
 - b. Do not remove all bedding and toys from cats on a daily basis unless soiled or in between occupants. The act of spraying down a cage and removing all bedding is very stressful to cats and can lead to increased incidence of stress-based illness such as Feline URI.
 - c. Do not use scoopers to clean cat feces. Although some staff said that individual scoopers were used for each cage/run, the practice of using individual scoopers was not observed during either site visit. Some staff used gloves and baggies to clean out the feces which were changed in between cages.
 - i. Create a consistent policy that minimizes spread of contaminants from one litter box to the next.
 - d. At the time of the site visit, cats housed in single compartment cages were either removed from cage and placed in a separate carrier (such as in isolation), or the cage was completely cleaned with the cat remaining inside. Both these techniques increase the risk of disease transmission and also increase stress.
 - i. Housing for cats should allow easy cleaning without disturbing the cats. Single compartment housing is more challenging to clean so double-compartment housing is preferred to minimize risk of disease transmission and reduce stress and animal handling.
 - ii. ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care pp7-9
 - 1. <http://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf>
 - e. Detailed spot cleaning instructions for cats

- i. <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/339>
 5. The order of cleaning should be from most susceptible animals, to least.
 - i. Healthy Juveniles
 - ii. Healthy Adults
 - iii. Sick Juveniles
 - iv. Sick Adults
 - b. If the same staff is being utilized for Building 3 and Building 4, clean adoptable animals prior to stray animals. If there is sufficient staff, assign separate staff to each building.
 - c. Ensure that written protocols for cleaning/disinfection, which include the order of cleaning, how to spot clean occupied housing units, how to thoroughly clean/disinfect vacated housing units, and when to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during cleaning, are provided to all staff and volunteers and that proper training is provided on these protocols.
 - d. ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care pp.14-17
 - i. <http://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf>
 - e. Basic instructions for cleaning and disinfection
<http://sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/sanitation-in-animal-shelters>
 6. Thoroughly clean and disinfect all toys, food bowls, litter pans, and any other objects that are in contact with animals.
 - a. Use AHP and/or high temperature industrial washers/dishwashers to clean.
 - b. Clean in between occupants or if heavily soiled.
 7. Utilize hand sanitizers and disposable exam gloves throughout the facility to reduce infectious disease transmission. Use separate set of gloves when handling any young, vulnerable, or sick animal.
 - a. Hand washing signs
 - i. <http://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/shelter-services/tools-tips-fact-sheets/>
 8. Continue to use separate cleaning equipment in sick wards to prevent contamination with healthy areas.
 - a. While it is advantageous to have specially designated cleaning supplies for ill animals, IACC has too many categories of supplies for specific illnesses. At the site visit, there were separate supplies for canine distemper, giardia, parvovirus, and a range of other pathogens. Some of these pathogens are not common at IACC so designating supplies for them is unnecessary. Furthermore, in other situations, pathogens such as giardia are commonly found in the environment and even in healthy, non-clinical animals, so designating specific supplies for these commensal organisms may be unnecessary. The choice of supplies for specific disease conditions should be discussed with the staff veterinarian.

Volunteer Program

1. City staff committed to an immediate reopening of the volunteer program. Three orientations beginning early March have been scheduled for a total of 50-75 people. It is our recommendation that multiple steps be taken prior to and during the process of adding more volunteers:
 - a. The volunteer training materials and policies/procedures need to be revised and finalized.
 - b. The process for selecting and removing volunteers must be discussed and finalized.
 - c. A functioning communication system, such as an online message board, needs to be implemented.
 - d. Mentors need to be selected, trained and utilized.
 - e. A new scheduling system for training volunteers needs to be implemented.
 - f. All current volunteers should receive any new training, policies and procedures.
 - g. Staff must be trained on working with volunteers and policies/procedures and they should receive performance evaluations on working with volunteers.
 - h. The first scheduled volunteer orientation beginning on March 7th should be called a “shelter open house” not a volunteer training.
 - i. Schedule meeting for one hour or less. An example of an itinerary for this meeting is as follows:
 1. Introductory remarks: Welcome – building the program, this is a chance to learn about the different ways that people can help IACC including foster program, donations, and volunteering.
 2. Explain that an open house needs to be attended to proceed to the next step of training.
 - a. Pull people for the training from the open-house.
 3. Give background on the organization.
 4. Discuss ways volunteers may help the organization.
 5. Bring a few volunteers to talk about their experiences.
 6. Break up into groups of 15 people each for tours of the facility.
 7. Have a sign up list that all participants fill.
 - a. These are the people who will get a formal application to become a formal volunteer and will be invited to the volunteer training.
 - ii. Determine selection criteria for volunteers.
 - iii. Examine job descriptions for volunteers and requirements.
 1. Physical
 2. Mental
 3. Emotional

Note: Specific sample forms and recommendations will be given.

2. Turn first March “volunteer orientation” into an IACC “Open House” and cancel other dates. Attendance at an “open house” should be the first step for all new volunteers. This “Open House” should only be about 1 hour and include an overview of IACC and the many ways that people can help the organization, the role of the volunteer at IACC and the revision of the program, one or two volunteers to talk about their experience volunteering and a tour of the facility. Individuals who are interested in volunteering should sign up with their email to receive next steps to join the program.
3. Hire an individual to manage the volunteer program full time.
 - a. Review job description.
 - i. Some suggested skills/experience:
 1. Supervisory experience
 2. Conflict mediation
 3. Outgoing and highly social/friendly
 4. Public speaking experience
 5. Ability to pick up computer systems quickly
 6. Willingness to work weekends and adjust schedule regularly to touch base with all volunteers
4. Create an office for the person responsible for managing the volunteer program. This individual will need to regularly meet with volunteers one/one and will need a private space.
5. Create a volunteer agreement that all volunteers sign, outlining expectations, standards of conduct, and commitments they make when participating in the program.
 - a. Shelter management and a volunteer committee need to establish a process that volunteer program staff would follow with volunteers who are not abiding by the agreement.
 - b. Volunteers may be removed from the program.
6. Establish and implement a positive, solution-oriented, and collaborative culture in the volunteer program.
 - a. Working with volunteers, identify expectations in a “Workplace Culture Agreement” (samples provided). Expectations should include a process for resolving conflicts and for creating an environment of mutual respect.
 - b. Roll out new expectations to all volunteers in a re-training/re-certification process.
 - c. Present culture agreement and expectations to all future IACC volunteers.
 - d. Hold all volunteers accountable and ensure they abide by the established cultural norms in order to continue volunteer service.

7. Create job description for mentors - basic, dog, cat and rabbit mentors. Example “The role of the mentor is the collaborate with staff to orient and train new volunteers. Mentors answer questions from volunteers and communicate issues between staff and volunteers. They also work closely with the volunteer staff to provide input on issues affecting the volunteer program. Mentors must:
 - a. Be willing to be available to train new volunteers at least four hours a month
 - b. Attend regularly scheduled mentor meetings with volunteer staff
 - c. Utilize online message board and respond to volunteer/staff emails
 - d. Have a proven strong working relationship with staff and volunteers
 - e. Have excellent customer service skills and a proven ability to talk to the public about the IACC
 - f. Have a warm, welcoming personality and a positive, solution oriented approach to issues
 - g. Be able to safely handle dogs, cats or rabbits (basic mentors would not need to have ability to handle animals - they train on basics of volunteering and assist with “open houses”)
 - h. Have volunteered at least 50 hours at IACC

8. Establish a mentor program.
 - a. Recruit 8 to 10 mentors from the volunteer program. Request volunteers to apply.
 - b. Create mentor agreement and have mentors sign it.
 - c. Mentors should assist in defining the role of volunteers and provide input to the requirement lists.
 - d. Mentors should provide input on handbook. Mentors should help determine basic hourly commitment, scheduling requirements, reasons to remove a volunteer from the program, etc.
 - e. Create a simple checklist for training volunteers for mentors to track training.
 - f. Order mentor uniforms (such as bright, easy to identify polo shirts).
 - g. Set up “Sign Up Genius” (signupgenius.com) account and train mentors on how to use it for putting in availability and volunteers in training to sign up to train with mentors.

9. Re-assess all existing volunteer opportunities to ensure they are designed in such a way as to maximize the engagement and effectiveness of IACC volunteers.
 - a. Work with operations staff on needs assessment.
 - b. Revise existing position descriptions so the roles meet operational needs.
 - c. Redesign training programs for various roles to ensure consistent and high quality training of volunteers to prepare them for service.
 - d. The following article written by Megan Webb provides details about different volunteer job positions and requirements for each. A checklist of skills is included for each position.

- i. http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_2010/take-time-for-training.html
 - e. Identify additional roles that will best serve the program mission, provide opportunities for advancement for volunteers, and provide ongoing support to the volunteer program itself, such as:
 - i. Volunteer ambassadors - these volunteers are responsible for welcoming new volunteers and introducing new volunteers to other volunteers and staff
 - ii. Crew members - advanced volunteers who work with animal care supervisors to give feedback about animals. Their roles must be clearly defined.
10. Revise dot system and roll out at #9. The current dot system for categorizing handling levels is too complicated. One suggestion is to only have animals with one dot for “Advanced”. These are animals that require a more experienced volunteer to handle - this can be because the animals is fearful, high energy, etc. The reason for the dot should be described on the animal’s cage. Have “advanced” mentors to train volunteers on handling more challenging animals.
11. Train all staff on the volunteer program including the handbook, expectations on how staff should work with volunteers, how to address concerns with volunteers (this process should be defined and staff need to know that issues will be handled), introduction of mentors, how to answer the “no kill” question and Q/A.
12. The volunteer program should make a shift towards a regular schedule to better anticipate volunteer coverage and meet animal care needs. Not all roles will require a set schedule, and accommodation should be made for volunteers who joined the program before this change to allow their ongoing participation. Work to create consistency and predictability related to volunteer schedules.
- a. Consider requiring volunteers to come in to the facility on a weekly or twice per month basis.
 - b. A minimum four-hour commitment per month is a typical requirement for volunteer programs
 - i. Contact volunteers that do not meet a time requirement so that they know they were missed.
 - ii. All volunteers need to be able to meet this time commitment.
 - iii. The time commitment is to ensure that everyone is coming regularly to fully be integrated as part of the IACC team.
 - c. Run monthly reports to identify volunteers who have not completed four hours or the designated time commitment.
 - i. Contact these individuals to determine if they would like to continue with the program
 - d. Clean up volunteer database (Volgistics) addressing volunteers who have not met minimum requirements.
 - e. Use Volgistics to schedule volunteers, create and review reports, and create custom reports.

<https://volgistics.acuityscheduling.com/schedule.php?appointmentType=237009>

13. Schedule meetings to meet with all volunteers. All volunteers who would like to continue their service at IACC will need to attend one of these meetings and complete recertification paperwork. The meetings should include an update on IACC, a review of the new handbook, introduction of new opportunities, Q/A, signing of agreements. It will be important to have key staff in attendance. Make sure there is food!

14. Create a specific space for the volunteers to include the volunteer computer, an area for training, lockable cupboards / lockers for personal items, filing cabinet for mentor information. The mentors should have an area where they can train volunteers that does not interfere with staff lunch/break area.

IACC strives to promote each animal's behavioral well-being. Behavioral health is as important as physical health. Recognizing overt behavioral concerns is critical for maintaining animal welfare, as well as maintaining the safety of the staff, volunteers, and public.

The overall goals for IACC's behavior program should be to increase the likelihood that an animal will be adopted and stay in its new home, decrease the likelihood that an animal who is a public safety risk will be placed in a home, and increase the quality of life for the animals in the shelter.

Although formal behavior evaluations can be a useful tool in certain cases, there is increasing awareness of the limitations of behavior evaluations. Shelters can be stressful settings for animals and this may affect the behavior of an animal within a shelter. There are also concerns regarding the reliability of behavior evaluations depending on the training of the assessors, the handling of the animal, and whether the results of behavior evaluations are truly predictive of future behaviors in a home. In light of these concerns, consider a holistic approach to evaluating and managing canine behavior, including daily behavior observations, taking into account each animal's known history, implementing playgroups, and providing post-adoption follow-up for any behavioral concerns. The location of behavior exams should be large enough to allow the animal ample room to move. The current location is not ideal for this purpose. As the program is increased and developed, consider building or allocating a specific location for training and behavior evaluations to occur that is large enough to accommodate multiple animals.

Resources and references:

1. Playing for Life – Animal Farm Foundation and Aimee Sadler:
 - a. <http://www.animalfarmfoundation.org/pages/Playgroups>
 - b. <http://dogsplayingforlife.com/dpfl-manual/>
2. Canine and Feline Behavior Assessments and Surrender Forms
 - a. <http://www.sheltermedicine.vet.cornell.edu/Resources/Assessment.cfm>
3. Bennett, Sara L., et al. "Investigating behavior assessment instruments to predict aggression in dogs." *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* 141.3 (2012): 139-148.
4. Behavior Log
 - a. <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-adoption-programs-behavior-enrichment/tracking-progress-behavior-modification>

Daily environmental enrichment provides a way to improve the environment and behavioral care of confined animals by reducing stress and providing physical and mental stimulation. It allows for the shelter to uphold every animal's right to freedom from fear and distress and freedom to express normal behavior.

Continue to provide out-of-kennel time for dogs, cats, and rabbits. During out-of-kennel time, engage dogs and cats with toys and games. It is important to remember, however,

that enrichment strategies must be tailored to each animal's individual situation and needs. Use each animal's history and behavioral observations to determine what types of enrichment will be safe and stimulating for each animal.

Resources and references:

1. Canine enrichment log
 - a. http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Portals/0/CSD%20PDFs/2.1.6_Canine%20Chronicle_Activity%20Log%20Template.pdf
2. Feline enrichment log
 - a. <http://www.sheltermedicine.vet.cornell.edu/Resources/documents/CatEnrichmentLogSheet.pdf>
3. Training program for dogs
 - a. <http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Home/DogWelfare/Enrichment/TrainingandMotivation.aspx>
4. Leash walking instructions
 - a. <http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Portals/0/CSD%20PDFs/LeashEtiquetteDocument.pdf>
5. Best Friends Enrichment Kit
 - a. http://bestfriends.org/uploadedFiles/Content/Resources/Resources_for_Rescuers%281%29/Adoption/Individual_Resources/enrichment.pdf

Provide all animals with at least one form of in-kennel enrichment daily. Ideally, in-kennel enrichment would be provided at a consistent time each day. For dogs, this may include a kong or PVC toy filled with peanut butter, treats, or a bone. For cats, this may include a stretch-n-scratch toy, hanging construction paper/pipe cleaner toys, or toys covered with catnip. A rotation of toys maintains novelty and can be mentally stimulating.

Resources and references

1. In-kennel enrichment ideas
 - a. http://www.animalfarmfoundation.org/files/Kennel_Enrichment_E-Book.pdf
2. Kong Care shelter program
 - a. <https://www.kongcompany.com/pet-partner-programs/order-kong-cares/>
3. Cat toy suggestions
 - a. <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-adoption-programs-behavior-enrichment/enrichment-shelter-cats>
 - b. <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/56688>
4. Cat shelter enrichment suggestions
 - a. <http://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/files/2011/11/simple-shelter-enrichment-for-cats.pdf>
5. Feline enrichment program
 - a. <http://www.sheltermedicine.vet.cornell.edu/Resources/documents/EnrichmentProtocolforCats.pdf>

Continue to provide comfortable housing for all animals. All dogs and cats in kennels should have raised beds. All cats in cages should have soft bedding.

Provide visual barriers for fearful/anxious dogs or dogs with severe barrier reactivity/aggression. Removing the trigger for the fear/anxiety or barrier reactivity can make dogs more comfortable and help them to feel more secure in the kennel environment. Provide all cats with a hiding space. Small dogs should be given a crate within their run or another similar hiding/den-like space.

1. Impact of hiding boxes
 - a. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168159114002366>
2. Impact of housing design on stress in animals
 - a. <http://www.sheltervet.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Shelter-Standards-Oct2011-wForward.pdf>

Create a hand feeding program for dogs. Hand feeding and treat buckets gives the public a chance to interact with the dogs in a positive way when they walk by kennels and it rewards dogs for calm behavior. This, in turn, will improve kennel presentation and can help decrease barrier reactivity and barking in the kennel.

Resources and references

1. Treat buckets instructions
 - a. http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Portals/0/CSD%20PDFs/Treat_Buckets.pdf
 - b. <http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Portals/0/CSD%20PDFs/Treat%20Buckets%20Shy%20Dogs.pdf>
2. Cage sign example for handfeeding
 - a. <http://www.centerforshelterdogs.org/Portals/0/CSD%20PDFs/TreatBucketCageSign.pdf>

Train staff and volunteers in these enrichment practices. Ensure that staff and volunteers can recognize behaviors that indicate animal stress and suffering such as, hiding, decreased activity or appetite, withdrawal, barrier frustration or aggression, spinning, jumping, pacing. Remember that the single most important factor for reducing stress, preventing undesirable behaviors, and maintaining animal welfare is to reduce the length of stay in the shelter.

Initial steps to create a behavior program include the following:

1. Hire a person full-time to be focused on the behavior and enrichment program.
2. Duties of this person include:
 - a. Creating an animal behavior assessment program that includes the following components:
 - i. Cage-side monitoring
 - ii. Daily interaction log
 - iii. Formal assessment
 - iv. Playgroup logs
 - v. Intake behavior log
 - vi. Owner-surrender behavior history log

- b. Create an enrichment program for dogs
 - i. Basic training program to provide positive interactions with volunteers and public
 - ii. In-cage enrichment ideas
 - iii. Playgroups and dog-dog interactions
 - c. Develop an enrichment program for cats
 - i. In-cage enrichment
 - ii. Outdoor play enrichment as deemed appropriate
 - iii. Cat-cat interactions
 - d. Develop an enrichment program for rabbits and other animals
 - i. In-cage enrichment
 - ii. Outdoor play enrichment
 - iii. Social interactions
 - iv. Consider the particular species (Farm animals, rabbits) when determining the most appropriate enrichment opportunities.
3. Qualifications of this person should include
- a. Experience working with animals in a shelter/boarder setting
 - b. Demonstration of experience handling and evaluating animals of different temperaments, including aggressive animals
 - c. Broad understanding of the use of behavior assessments and minor behavior modification/training in animal shelters
 - d. Experience with safe handling of animals
4. Program created by the new hire should be reviewed by an animal behaviorist to ensure that the program fulfills the goals of the center.
- a. Utilize a local behaviorist if available.
 - b. Recommendations have been made to management regarding specific behaviorists that may be open to reviewing program details.
5. Consider having an additional behaviorist or trainer as a consultant to staff, to assist with difficult cases. It may be challenging to find someone with advanced background in these areas to hire full-time. In this circumstance, having the person with an advanced background in these areas on an as-needed basis may suffice for assistance with the design of a shelter program or with individual cases.

Capacity for Care (C4C), Population Medicine, and Length-of-Stay

The capacity of an organization to care for the animals in its facility is perhaps the most fundamental factor that must be defined. Capacity to care is based on an organization's resources, staffing, housing, and animals, as they all align with mission and goals. Operating beyond an organization's capacity to care is an unacceptable practice, according to the ASV Guidelines. The following concepts align together to allow an organization to operate within their capacity for care.

Daily Population Rounds

1. Daily rounds form the cornerstone of population health and optimal population flow. There are two types of rounds that should be conducted, and may be conducted by the same team depending on the composition of the rounds team.
 - a. Population rounds
 - i. Population rounds serve to ensure that every animal has an intended plan for the shelter stay and that there isn't a lag time on necessary procedures or processes.
 - ii. Length-of-stay is the critical component that is attempting to be reduced by improving population flow.
 1. As the length-of-stay (LOS) for any individual animal increases, the overall number of animals in the shelter increases. For example, if 5 dogs enter the shelter daily and they each reside 10 days, on any given day, there will be 50 dogs present. If the same number of dogs enter but now each dog stays 20 days, the inventory of the shelter has doubled. This increase has tremendous impact on staffing and resources. By decreasing the number of days each animal resides in the shelter, a larger number of animals can be served while utilizing resources more efficiently over time.
 2. Decrease LOS by decreasing time for animals to move from holding to adoption (critical flow-thru points)
 - a. Some critical flow points that were identified include the following:
 - i. Vet exam
 - ii. Spay/neuter
 - iii. Behavior exam
 - iv. Recheck vet exams post-illness
 - v. Illness (kennel cough procedures)
 - iii. Each animal should be identified in rounds and a "next step" should be identified for those animals not in adoption areas.
 - iv. Resource for population rounds:
<http://sheltermedicine.com/node/178>
 - b. Medical rounds
 - i. Each animal should be observed by medical personnel daily.

- ii. Daily observation sheets should continue to be utilized to monitor food intake, defecation, urination, and behavior.
 - iii. These rounds can occur concurrently with population rounds if a technician is present to assist with observations.
 - iv. Resource for medical rounds:
<http://sheltermedicine.com/documents/daily-population-wellness-rounds>
2. Details on conducting rounds effectively will be provided verbally as well as example forms.

Fast Track / Slow Track

Animals can be divided into different populations based on their adoptability in a shelter environment, with the ultimate goal being to decrease each animal's length-of-stay to live release. There are some animals that are deemed highly adoptable from the moment they enter a shelter. These are often young animals or purebred animals. Puppies and kittens are examples of highly adoptable animals. They are also more susceptible to disease due to their immune status, so minimizing their time in the shelter is advantageous on many levels.

1. Designate a "Fast Track" for highly adoptable animals to accelerate their movement to adoption.
 - a. During the intake exam, establish criteria to designate animals as Fast Track candidates. Criteria may include:
 - i. Age
 - ii. Breed
2. Prioritize Fast Track animals in their movement through the shelter
 - a. Surgery
 - b. Behavior evaluations
 - c. Move-to-adoption
3. The goal of the fast track program is to minimize the number of days these animals stay in the shelter. Not only does this open up resources for other animals, it minimizes the risk to these animals who are often young and more susceptible to pathogens present in shelter environments.
4. Designate a specific number of kennel spaces for Fast Track animals based on historic data.

There is another track of animals that can be classified as "slow track" animals. These are animals that require a bit of extra time before adoption. They may be older animals or those with specific medical concerns. They are animals that IACC has deemed adoptable, but finding the appropriate placement will take longer than the average 2 weeks. These animals require additional care, extra enrichment, and time devoted to finding them permanent homes.

5. Designate "Slow Track" animals at intake exam or after two weeks in shelter.
6. Allocate extra resources to these animals to minimize stress during their shelter stay.
7. Provide enrichment opportunities for slow-track animals

8. Determine the number of slow-track animals by keeping track of data for this population. Specific numbers to review include LOS to outcome for designated tracks. Based on the LOS data collected over a few months, staff can allocate resources and space to bring more slow track animals into the shelter.
9. References for Fast Track/Slow Track
 - a. <http://sheltermedicine.com/node/37>
 - b. <http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/fast-track-planning>
 - c. <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-10-08/fast-tracking-save-lives>
 - d. <http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/fast-track-faqs>

Foster program as it relates to population flow

Foster homes are an important mechanism by which to decrease the length-of-stay for animals at the shelter. Animals that may benefit from foster home situation include underage animals, medical patients, and behavior cases. A robust foster program can greatly enhance the quality of life for animals and allow for more animals to be served by the shelter.

One component of pathway planning and decreasing length-of-stay is to plan for intake. Kitten season is a prime example of one season that can be reliably anticipated yearly. Cats are induced-ovulators and undergo seasonal estrus, so shelters see an appreciable increase in feline populations during the spring and summer months. This population increase should be anticipated and steps should be taken to ensure the shelter is prepared.

1. Establish a Foster-on-Deck program. The basis behind this program is to have a series of foster homes lined up prior to kitten season to take underage kittens.
 - a. Fosters complete training on caring for kittens prior to kitten season and prior to being approved as fosters.
 - b. Fosters agree to accept kittens when their turn arrives (they do not choose litters themselves). An online shared document can be created to notify who the next person is to obtain a litter.
 - c. Fosters coordinator assists to determine best timing for the litter to return for surgery to minimize wait-time prior to adoption.
 - d. Information about the Foster-on-Deck program
 - i. http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_2011/asv_guidelines_foster_on_deck_system.pdf
 - ii. <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2012-08-08-000000/foster-vacation-planning>
 - iii. <http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2012-08-15-000000/getting-shelter-animals-ready-foster-care>
 - iv. <http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2012-09-29-000000/early-age-care-foster-animals>
2. A second population that greatly benefit from being placed in foster homes is those animals that require ongoing medical supervision or rehabilitation post-

- surgery. Create a program to establish fosters specific for medical cases. This program should involve training with the medical team.
- a. During both site visits, there were animals held at the shelter for medical reasons that would have benefited from a foster situation.
 - b. Coordinate the return of these animals with medical and intake teams to ensure that their length-of-stay in shelter remains short.
3. A third critical population to consider for foster are those animals with behavior concerns. This may include shy or timid animals that are anxious at the shelter, animals requiring more training for specific concerns, or animals that require more evaluation.
 - a. Foster homes selected for this population must have adequate training and experience to handle the particular concerns.
 - b. Foster coordinators should work with the behavior team to determine animals appropriate for fostering and when the animal should return.
 4. In some fostering situations, IACC may consider adopting animals directly from foster. This type of policy is useful in those situations where animals do not “show” well in a shelter situation.
 5. In order to adequately spend time with fosters and create a robust program, one specific person should be designated to manage this program. It is recommended that this person be a full time staff member that has animal related experience and a proven ability to work effectively with volunteers.
 - a. It is common for shelters to have separate volunteer, foster, and transport coordinators depending on if they are transporting many animals from other locations.
 - b. Irvine may not need three separate people to fulfill these roles at this current time, but as the Third Chance, volunteer, and foster programs grow, they may consider this option for the future.
 6. Ensure that fosters are scheduled to meet with the veterinarian as opposed to dropping in at unscheduled times.
 - a. The foster program was being primarily run out of the medical department at the time of the site visit, which led to procedures and surgeries being regularly interrupted.
 - b. Create a schedule for bringing foster animals back and allocate specific hours for drop-in appointments. Consider hours in the week that are outside of the typical working day (weekends or after-hours), since many fosters have full-time jobs limiting their ability to bring animals during regular business hours.

Euthanasia Policies

Irvine Animal Care Center euthanizes only a small fraction of its intake population on an annual basis. Animals are euthanized for unadoptable behaviors (such as severe aggression and a history of biting), and for medical causes necessitating euthanasia for humane reasons. Animals are not euthanized for space.

Euthanasia decisions can be incorporated into daily population rounds. A team approach is effective when making pathway planning decisions. A typical rounds team would consist of one person from the medical department, one person with behavior knowledge (this may require two separate people if behavior decisions are divided by species or in some shelters this may be the veterinarian since veterinarians also receive advanced training in animal behavior), and one other person in management. Team or committee members are often supervisors, managers, directors, or veterinarians. Decisions on euthanasia would be made by the entire team (3 or 4 signature committee consensus) to ensure that all avenues have been explored and exhausted prior to a euthanasia decision occurring. Communicate with volunteers and staff that have knowledge about the animal prior to a euthanasia decision being made to allow for clear transparency and open lines of communication. The one exception to this committee process is when a veterinarian deems there to be a medical emergency that necessitates immediate euthanasia. If there is a concern regarding a particular situation and consensus cannot be reached within the committee, the shelter manager often has the final decision-making authority.