

**NICK CULLEN
DIRECTOR**



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INTRODUCTION

The County of Kern Department of Animal Services (KCAS) operates three animal care centers in the County of Kern. The animal care centers are located in Bakersfield, Lake Isabella and Mojave.

KCAS operates on an open admission policy, accepting all stray and domestic animals regardless of their age, health, or temperament. Consequently, many animals that are sheltered in our care may be elderly, un-weaned, recovering from an injury or have behavioral concerns that limit placement options. Other animals admitted are highly adoptable and have a high likelihood to be placed.

KCAS values the efforts and the support that is offered by non-profit rescue groups, known as Rescue Partners (RP), that work cooperatively with the Department to facilitate additional placement opportunities for homeless animals. This policy statement is provided to ensure that clear communications and expectations are outlined and adhered to by KCAS and RP in an effort to maintain a successful rescue program.

PURPOSE OF RESCUE PARTNER PROGRAM

The RP program was developed by KCAS to collaborate supportive efforts in the placement of unwanted shelter animals. While KCAS has a strong adoption program and other outreach efforts that help to facilitate permanent placement for many of its animals, RP's play an integral role in assisting with animals that require additional marketing and placement assistance.

BECOMING A RESCUE PARTNER

KCAS welcomes applications for the RP program. To become eligible for the RP program, the organization must:

1. Be a non-profit (as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code) animal rescue organization
2. Be operated for the purpose of animal adoption
3. Have no criminal or administrative violations involving crimes against animals
4. Be in compliance with all animal related laws

APPLICATION PROCESS

Organizations interested in becoming RP's please submit the following package to KCAS, C/O Rescue Program, 3951 Fruitvale Ave. Bakersfield, CA 93308:

- 1) A completed and signed application form, provided by KCAS
- 2) A copy of the organization's IRS determination letter
- 3) RP's statement of purpose, indicating the primary breed/species that the organization rescues
- 4) A current copy of the adoption agreement used by the RP when adopting animals into new homes
- 5) A list of all individuals authorized by RP to pull animals. The list shall include their full name, address, telephone number and email address if applicable
- 6) References from one veterinarian and one animal care/control agency with which the applying RP has done business
- 7) If RP is located within unincorporated Kern County, KCAS will conduct a property/kennel inspection prior to approval
- 8) If RP is located within unincorporated Kern County, and it is determined that a Conditional Use Permit is required through the Kern County Planning and Community Development Department, CUP permit will be required prior to approval of the Rescue Application

KCAS will review the application and supporting documents and respond to the agency within four weeks. RP's will be notified regarding the status of their application via e-mail or telephone when the review has been completed.

RESCUE PARTNER RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to maintain a productive, cohesive partnership, KCAS has established criteria in which each RP is expected to adhere to. Failure of the RP to adhere to these expectations could result in the revocation of an RP's pulling privileges. The following expectations are in place to ensure efficient and effective operation of the rescue program:

- 1) The RP shall work cooperatively and respectfully with all KCAS staff and volunteers
- 2) The RP shall spay/neuter any unaltered animal prior to adoption in accordance with California Food and Agriculture Code sections 30503 and 31751.3
- 3) If an RP utilizes a foster care system within Kern County, the RP shall provide KCAS an up-to-date list of authorized foster care providers for their organization, including names, addresses and phone numbers. KCAS will do quarterly audits of all RP's in order to maintain accurate records. The RP is responsible for self-certification of such foster homes to ensure that all local ordinances and state laws are being adhered to. All authorized foster care providers must be aware that such information as is collected by KCAS is public information and may be released upon request under the California Public Records Act
 - a. RP may be suspended or application revoked upon determining that any conditions described herein are not being maintained by any foster care provider, that the foster care provider is in violation of any section of title 7 of K.C. Ordinance or that the Department receives three or more validated nuisance complaints within a six month period of time

- b. If the director intends to suspend or revoke RP application, a written notice to this effect shall be delivered in person or by certified mailing address of RP applicant, stating grounds for the proposed suspension or revocation
- 4) The RP shall ensure that animals released by KCAS shall be humanely and safely cared for
- 5) The RP shall allow unannounced inspections of the RP or foster facilities by KCAS
- 6) The RP shall keep records of subsequent rescued animals and outcomes of those animals from KCAS for at least three years and provide copies of such records to KCAS upon request
- 7) The RP shall provide to KCAS proof of alteration for each animal within 60 days of release, even if the animal is transferred to another party. Failure to comply could result in the revocation of the RP application
- 8) Any animal residing within unincorporated Kern County for greater than four months shall be licensed under RP
- 9) All animals pulled by RP are non-returnable
- 10) The RP and its representatives waive any and all legal rights it or they may have against KCAS or the County, including its employees and departments, arising out of any injury that any animal inflicts on individuals employed by or associated with the RP. The RP must agree to defend and indemnify KCAS or the County, including its employees and departments, in the event of such injury
- 11) The RP acknowledges that a failure to submit an updated agreement and/or application within 60 days of receipt may result in a revocation of pull rights with KCAS

PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

KCAS has implemented the following Policies and Procedures to provide clear communications and a standardized rescue program while maximizing the efficient use of limited KCAS resources:

Availability of Animals

KCAS is an open admission municipal shelter system that accepts all stray and domestic animals brought to the Department by residents of the unincorporated areas of the County. There is a consistent demand for animal housing space within each of our shelters. Holding animals for RP's can cause undue hardships on our goal to provide a clean, sanitary and safe environment for the animals in our care. KCAS cannot hold animals beyond availability dates for any RP merely because it is not convenient for the animal to be picked up.

Adoptions and rescues of animals are on a first come, first serve basis. Exceptions do apply when KCAS prepares a large scale rescue transport where 25 or more animals will be transported from the shelter to another location. Additional exceptions may be made, at the sole discretion of the Director, when it is evident that extenuating circumstances warrant additional hold time.

Rescue Fees

No "pull fee" will be charged for an RP to pull an animal from KCAS. The only fees applicable to an RP are if an animal has been altered by KCAS within the previous two weeks, the fee is \$40.00. If the RP is requesting a Rabies vaccination, there will be an additional \$5.00 charge per animal. RP may request a microchip for an additional \$15.00 charge.

Authorized Representatives

KCAS only allows registered RP's to rescue under the program. RP's may not extend their rescue privileges to third parties, who may be adopting for private purposes, or for another rescue organization that is not registered with KCAS as an RP. Animals may be rescued only by those persons authorized and listed in the RP application by the primary contact person for the RP. The RP is responsible for self-certification of their representatives. Representatives that fail to follow the rescue program protocols and policies may cause the RP's rescue privileges to be suspended or revoked. When an RP rescues an animal from KCAS, they are responsible for adhering to all program protocols and policies as well as laws regarding animal care and providing follow up information to KCAS on each animal.

COMMUNICATION

Maintaining courteous and professional communication between KCAS Rescue Coordinator and staff will ensure that we maintain a streamlined, effective rescue program.

CONCLUSION

KCAS is committed to collaborating with RP's to expand our services, outreach and increase opportunities to facilitate life-saving partnerships. KCAS sincerely would like to thank RP's for their continued support and commitment to saving animals.

I hereby certify that I have read the Kern County Animal Services' policy statement for rescue partners and agree, on behalf of myself and _____(name of rescue organization), that I understand the policy and the responsibilities required of

_____ (rescue organization). On behalf of myself and my organization, we agree to comply with all requirements as outlined in the policy statement.

Executed on _____, 20____, under penalty of perjury.

By: _____

Representing: _____(rescue organization)