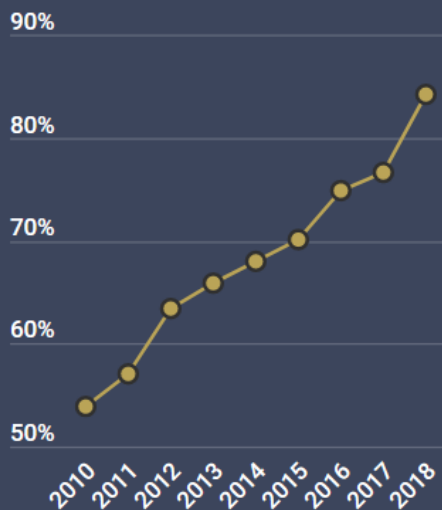




DuPage County
ANIMAL SERVICES
Saving Animals. Serving People.

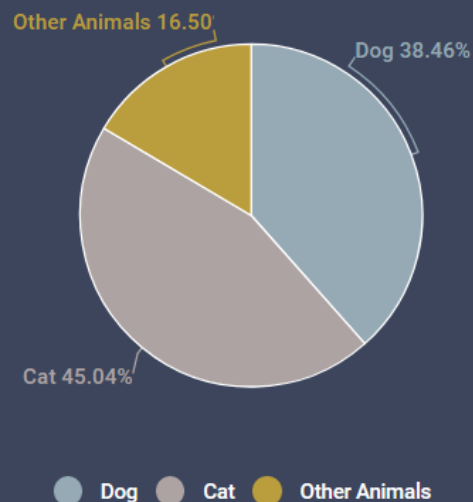
2018 YEAR-END SHELTER DATA

Live Release Rate



2018 marked the highest Live Release Rate (LRR) in DCAS's history. LRR represents the percentage of animals with positive outcomes (Adoption, Rescue Transfer, Return to Owner) as compared to those that are euthanized. While we have made great strides toward lifesaving, and care, we still have a ways to go. And we can't do it alone.

Animal Diversity



2,218 animals entered the doors at DCAS in 2018. Dogs and Cats represent the two largest animal populations housed at DCAS. However, more than 16% of animals arriving at our door represent small animals - classified as 'Other' - including rabbits, birds, guinea pigs, hamsters, reptiles, barnyard animals, and other exotic pets.



Action Is Louder Than Words

In 2018, DCAS celebrated our highest Live Release Rate ever...84.27%. This means that more than 84% of the animals that walked through our doors left via adoption, rescue transfer, or were returned to their owner. While it was not easy, this is a major accomplishment for an open admission shelter that does not have the ability to choose which animals we accept and does not refuse an animal based on the # of available cages, health, temperament, or age. Achieving higher Live Release Rates becomes especially challenging when done responsibly without sacrificing public safety nor trading quality of life for quantity of life. It is for this reason that we are pushing the creative envelope when it comes to lifesaving by launching programs like DCAS's S.T.A.R., Orange Paw, Under Dog to Wonder Dog, Working Cat, Shelter-Neuter-Return, and Mobile Veterinary Services programs, to name a few. These innovative programs would not be possible without the dedicated staff, DuPage Animal Friends, rescue partners, volunteers, fosters, and key stakeholders who work hard to secure as many "saves" as possible.



The Pet Retention Solution

With owner surrenders representing more than 56% of DCAS animal intakes, it is clear that pet retention (the ability or willingness for a pet owner to retain ownership of his or her pet(s)) is as large an issue in and around DuPage County as pet over-population. Barriers to pet retention that might cause an owner to surrender their pet to a shelter may include:

- Financial Constraints
- Lack of Affordable Veterinary Care
- Lack of Available Pet-Friendly or Breed-Friendly Housing
- Behavioral or Training Issues
- Absence of Tools to Responsibly Re-Home Their Own Pet

For this reason, in 2019 (and beyond) DCAS will focus efforts on ways to prevent pets from being surrendered to the shelter, reunite lost pets with their owners, provide resources to assist community members with keeping their pets, and address common issues and laws that impact pets and pet owners.



The Lifesaving Link: Community

As we push beyond the 84% Save Rate, each life saved requires more time, resources, and an individualized approach. The animals most at-risk of losing their lives are generally those with behavioral issues and/or medical issues that could be treated or managed IF the necessary resources (financial, foster home, rescue placement, special needs adopter, etc.) were available. Animals that fall into this category often include: pit-bull type dogs with behavior issues, senior animals, hospice and special needs animals, animals requiring training, socialization or behavior modification, etc. Saving more lives is a top priority for DCAS going into 2019. However, it will require that community members roll up their sleeves and play an active role in saving lives through specialized volunteering, foster, and adoption. We cannot do it alone.

Saving More Lives: The Big Picture

DCAS's ability to save more lives is dependent upon a wide variety of factors. While we are proud of the progress we have made, some individuals take our success for granted and assume their pet is "safe" if surrendered to DCAS. Additionally, our positive reputation has led many other shelters and rescues to recommend that owners bring animals to DCAS instead of another shelter in their own community. While we are flattered, these actions lead to:

- Increased DCAS shelter intake
- An even greater need for resources which are already strained (such as rescue, foster and behavior consult)
- More lives that need saving and require more individualized planning
- The need for a larger facility to accommodate longer-term stays and the behavior/training needs of a growing population of hard-to-place animals

Now more than ever, the animals need members of our community to take an ACTIVE role in lifesaving efforts by fostering, adopting, volunteering or donating where it is needed most.

Stay informed of the latest updates and calls to action by subscribing to receive the DCAS e-newsletter and following DCAS on social media. Thank you for being a part of the solution.

[www.dupageco.org/Animal Services](http://www.dupageco.org/Animal%20Services)