



PRESS RELEASE **December 7, 2020**

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COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES' RESPONSE TO COVID-19 STAY-AT-HOME ORDER **Standard Operations are Temporarily Modified**

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – In an effort to keep shelter animals, staff, and the community safe during the COVID-19 outbreak, Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) has modified operations and created a proactive plan to mitigate unnecessary gathering of people.

In-person services are available by appointment only at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria Shelters, effective immediately. No in-person services are available at the Lompoc Shelter as it is temporarily closed through January 31, 2021. Phone lines at all three shelters remain open during normal business hours and staff will assist the public with information, resources, and appointment scheduling.

In-person services by appointment only include: fostering, adoptions, limited intakes and return to owner of animals already in the care of the shelter. Stray intake will be limited to dogs and only sick/injured cats or underage kittens. The public is strongly encouraged not to pick up healthy stray cats and bring them to the shelter. All measures will be taken to return animals to their owners in the field instead of impounding them; owner surrender intakes will be by appointment and only in the case of an emergency.

If you are interested in adoption or fostering, please go to www.PetHarbor.com to view available animals. If you would like to schedule an interaction with one of our dogs, cats or rabbits, please call one of the shelter locations, Santa Barbara at (805) 681-5285, Lompoc at (805) 737-7755, or Santa Maria at (805) 934-6119.

If you need to renew or purchase a dog license, please call one of our shelters and staff can assist you over the phone or review online at: <http://countyofsb.org/phd/animal/licensing.sbc>

Animal Control Field Operations will respond to priority calls only per the recommendations of the National Animal Care and Control Association. As members of the public safety community, we have an obligation to perform our sworn duties during disasters both natural and man-made. Priority calls include law enforcement assistance, injured or sick stray animals, cruelty and neglect complaints, bite complaints, dangerous and aggressive dog complaints.

Staff will be on site during our normal operating hours to answer questions by phone only and address any concerns you may have relating to Animal Sheltering or Animal Control. We thank you for your support and understanding during this challenging time.