



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES NEW EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SHELTER ANIMAL CARE IN NEW YORK CITY**

*New funding will be used to construct a new adoption center for Animal Care & Control of NYC, double the current fleet of mobile adoption vans in Queens and the Bronx, and increase the organization's ability to fundraise*

**January 23, 2015** – The Health Department and Animal Care & Control of New York City (AC&C) today announced several changes that will improve the health and wellbeing of animals taken in by AC&C, one of the largest animal welfare organizations in the country. The City will provide more than \$8 million in capital funding to build a new adoption center at the Manhattan Care Center, modernize the Brooklyn Care Center, double the organization's current fleet of mobile adoption vans and expand AC&C's fundraising capacity.

The Health Department also announced changes to AC&C's Board of Directors. The Health Department is proposing that AC&C's Board of Directors – whose members are currently all mayoral appointees – be expanded from nine to 11 members. The two additional members would be appointed by the Board of Directors, instead of the Mayor. The Board is expected to vote on this proposal at today's board meeting.

"With Animal Care & Control of New York City taking in more than 30,000 animals every year, it's important that AC&C has the resources available to give every animal quality care," said Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett. "I'm pleased that these improvements will help AC&C increase its services and expand its adoption efforts to help even more animals across the city find a home."

"AC&C is committed to continual improvement and this additional funding will have a significant impact on our progress," said Animal Care & Control of NYC Executive Director Risa Weinstock. "We are so grateful to the Mayor, City Council and the Health Department for supporting our efforts and investing the capital that will drive greater success. In 2014, 80.7 percent of the cats and dogs AC&C cared for were adopted, reunited or transferred to placement partners, and in the month of December 2014, this number was over 87 percent. The City's substantial support enables AC&C to continue to expand and improve our services as a compassionate resource for pets and people in NYC."

The City will partner with AC&C to design and construct a building dedicated to the adoption of dogs, cats and rabbits on the site of an unused garage adjacent to the Manhattan Care Center. The capital funding will also enable AC&C to acquire mobile adoption centers that would be dedicated to the Bronx and Queens. The Health Department will also work with AC&C to redesign and replace the heating, air conditioning and ventilation system at the Brooklyn Care Center to improve air flow, help reduce the spread of diseases common in shelters, and maintain comfortable temperature and humidity.

AC&C is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that rescues, cares for and finds loving homes for animals throughout the five boroughs. AC&C has a contract with the City of New York to be an open-admissions organization, which means it never turns away any homeless, abandoned, injured or sick animal in need of help, including cats, dogs, rabbits, small mammals, reptiles, birds, farm animals and wildlife. It is the only organization in New York City with this unique responsibility. Since 2010, the Health Department has steadily increased its funding to AC&C from less than \$7.2 million per year to more than \$12.8 million. In addition to City funding, AC&C is committed to fundraising to provide additional care and services.

“On behalf of the Board of AC&C, I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for his deep commitment to animal welfare in New York City and his belief in the great work AC&C is doing under the leadership of Executive Director Risa Weinstock,” said Chair of AC&C’s Board of Directors Patrick Nolan. “This new capital funding strengthens our public/private partnership and will ensure that AC&C can continue to improve the services provided to New York’s neediest animals in partnership with our friends at DOHMH.”

“The ASPCA’s work with AC&C over the past several years to drastically reduce euthanasia rates and increase adoption numbers demonstrate how much we can accomplish for New York City’s homeless animals through diligent work and effective collaboration,” said Matt Bershader, president and CEO of the ASPCA. “We are grateful to Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Bassett, and Risa Weinstock for recognizing the value of investing in our sheltering infrastructure, and look forward to leveraging this opportunity and developing future capital investments with the goal of ending animal suffering across the city.”

The Health Department is committed to making other changes to support animal welfare. A new State Law allows New York City to set its own dog licensing fee for the first time in 40 years. The Health Department will work with the City Council to propose a reasonable fee that will enable the agency to eliminate cumbersome paperwork requirements, hold more dog licensing events to make it easier to get a dog license and offer multi-year licensing at a discounted fee for dog owners. Later this year, the Health Department will also begin enforcing a new law that sets high standards of care for animals in pet shops.

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