



SHELTER  
ANIMALS  
COUNT

THE NATIONAL DATABASE

# 2025

## MID-YEAR ANALYSIS

Comparing January - June 2025  
to January - June 2024



Dear Animal Welfare Community,

As we reach the midpoint of 2025, the data tells a story that is both familiar and urgent. Intake is slightly down, adoptions remain strong but stagnant, shelters and rescues continue to face mounting pressure to move animals through the system as resources are stretched thin. Even as progress is made in some areas, many of the issues that have defined the last several years—crowded facilities, limited resources, and slower outcomes—remain unresolved.

At Shelter Animals Count, we believe that understanding these trends is the first step toward meaningful change. This report represents the collective effort of nearly 14,000 organizations across the country. The data submitted by our organizations allows us to present a clear picture of where we stand as an industry, how that compares to this time last year, and where we're heading through the remainder of 2025.

What's new in this year's mid-year report is how we're using data to go deeper. Thanks to expanded animal-level data, we're identifying differences by size, age, and intake type—revealing where the challenges are concentrated and where solutions can have the greatest impact. We're also layering in organization type to better understand the roles different sheltering models play across the system.

To everyone working on the front lines of animal welfare: your work matters. The challenges are real, but so is the progress being made. We hope this report serves not just as a snapshot of the current landscape, but as a tool to guide decisions, shape strategy, and ultimately improve outcomes—for animals and the people who care for them.

Thank you for being part of this effort.

With appreciation,



**Stephanie Filer**

Executive Director

Shelter Animals Count



# HIGHLIGHTS

## Community Intakes Slightly Decreased, But Remain High

An estimated 2.8 million dogs and cats entered shelters and rescues during the first half of 2025, marking a 4% decrease compared to the same time period in 2024. Despite this decline, intake levels remain high enough to keep many organizations at or near capacity. Nearly half of all intakes (48%) occurred at government shelters, with the remainder spread across shelters with contracts (23%), rescues (16%), and private shelters (13%). (Pg. 6-7)

## Adoptions Continue to Lead, But Show Modest Decline

In the first six months of 2025, 1.9 million animals were adopted, a 1% decrease from 2024. Adoptions remained the primary community outcome, representing 69% of all outcomes nationwide. Government shelters accounted for the largest share of adoptions, followed by rescues, private shelters, and shelters with contracts. (Pg. 15-16)

## Non-Live Outcomes Down Slightly

A total of 366,000 dogs and cats had a non-live outcome in the first half of 2025, a 2% decline compared to 2024. Most non-live outcomes were due to shelter euthanasia—while the remaining were animals that died or were lost in care. Vulnerable populations such as kittens continue to be overrepresented in these figures, with 65% of cat non-live outcomes being kittens under 5 months of age. (Pg. 20)

## Transfers Hold Steady, With Slight Decreases In and Out

Transfers have remained relatively stable in the first half of 2025. 625,000 animals were transferred into shelters, while 468,000 were transferred out, both down slightly from the previous year. Rescues received the majority of incoming transfers (53%), while government shelters facilitated most transfers out (57%). (Pg. 18-19)

### Report Reading Tip

To improve readability, many figures in this report are rounded to the nearest 1,000. On the Stats at a Glance pages, numbers are rounded to the nearest decimal point. Some totals may exceed 100% due to rounding.

### Animal-Level Data from Shelter Animals Count

Beyond high-level totals, Shelter Animals Count analyzes Animal-Level Data—detailed records on individual animals—from organizations using select shelter software systems integrated with SAC's API. This data enables a more nuanced view of sheltering trends by capturing details like age, size, intake type, and outcome.

Throughout this report, animal-level data is used to uncover insights not visible in aggregate reporting—such as length of stay differences by dog size and organization type, kitten outcomes by age group, and outcome patterns tied to specific intake types.

# Shelter Animals Count's Enhanced Scientific Model

Shelter Animals Count (SAC) has introduced an advanced scientific model that elevates our ability to analyze and interpret data from animal shelters across the country. Leveraging cutting-edge machine learning technology, this new model enhances our commitment to providing meaningful insights and fostering data-driven decision-making in animal welfare.

## Why We Updated Our Model

In 2024, SAC released national estimates based on organization and species-level medians. While these estimates were thoroughly validated and instrumental in identifying high-level trends, we recognized an opportunity to deepen our analysis. The updated model enables a more nuanced understanding of the data, helping us uncover patterns and insights that can drive significant improvements in animal welfare outcomes.

## How it Works

Our enhanced model uses machine learning—a technology that teaches computers to identify patterns and make estimations based on large volumes of data. This approach allows us to analyze shelter data with unprecedented precision, delivering:



### Deeper Insights:

Granular analysis of species-specific trends, regional differences, and organization-level impacts.



### Improved Accuracy:

More reliable estimations, even for underrepresented data sets.



### Actionable Information:

Insights tailored to the needs of shelters, rescues, and other animal welfare organizations.

## Transition to New Model for 2024 Report

The transition to our new model may result in slight differences in previously reported numbers, but the overall trends remain consistent. This updated approach also provides increased accuracy in our estimations, offering organizations a more precise understanding of key metrics.

## Frequently Asked Questions about the New Model:

### What kind of data does the model use?

The model analyzes anonymized data from shelters and rescues across the country. This includes organization-level data (e.g., intake and outcomes) and species-specific information. Monthly data for intakes and outcomes from more than 6k organizations for the years of 2016-2024 is included in the model to determine intake and outcome totals for all organizations across the country.

Demographic data that was identified to be associated with intakes and outcomes are therefore included to more accurately predict intakes and outcomes.

### How does machine learning improve the model?

In 2024, SAC released national estimates based on organization and species level medians. These estimates, while thoroughly validated, were limited to high-level trends. To dive deeper in the data, SAC used machine learning to enhance the model.

Machine learning is more powerful because it can a) process and learn from multiple pieces of data, b) find hidden patterns, and c) make predictions that are more accurate for specific situations or groups rather than providing a one-size-fits-all number like the median does.

To learn more about the estimation model, visit our website at [shelteranimalscount.org/estimation-model](https://shelteranimalscount.org/estimation-model)



# INTAKES

SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT 2025 MID-YEAR REPORT

In the first half of 2025

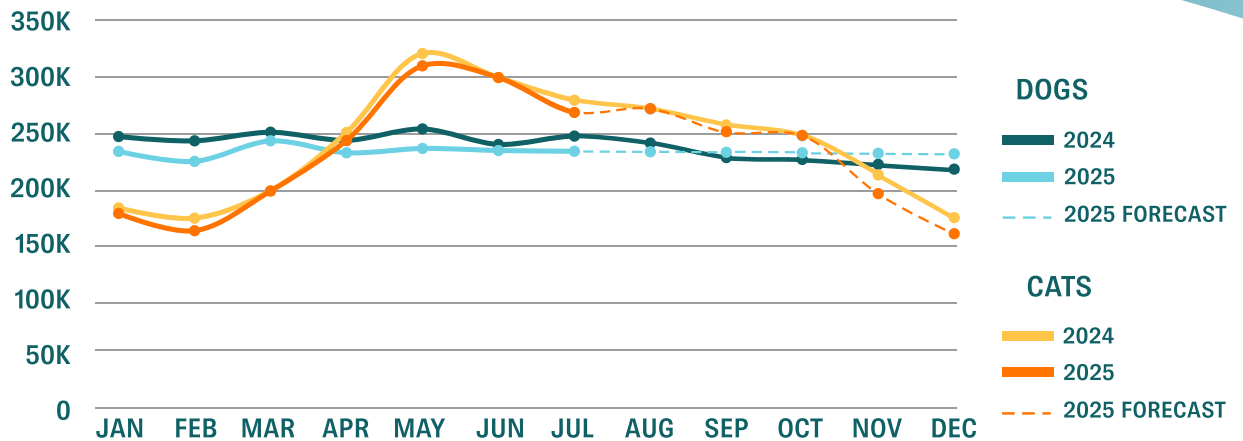
# 2,807,000

dogs and cats entered shelters and rescues nationwide.

4%

compared to  
the first half  
of 2024

In the first half of 2025, an estimated 2.8 million dogs and cats entered shelters and rescues across the country—a 4% decline compared to the same period in 2024. Dog intakes have shown steady month-over-month decreases so far this year, with every month tracking below last year's figures. Cat intakes tell a similar story, staying slightly lower than 2024 for most months, though the difference has narrowed heading into the busy summer season. Based on our forecasting, community intakes are expected to stay on a similar track through the rest of the year, continuing to test the limits of space, staffing, and resources.



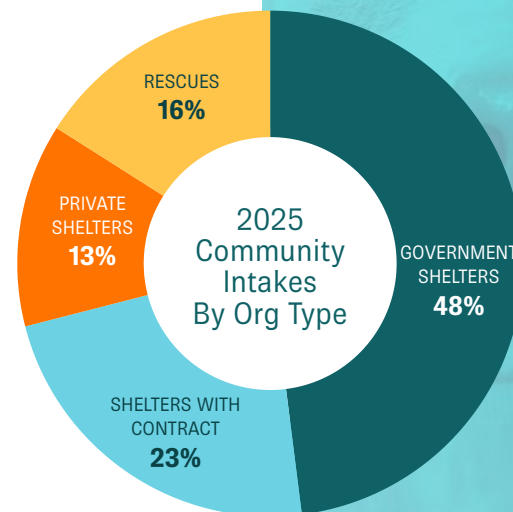
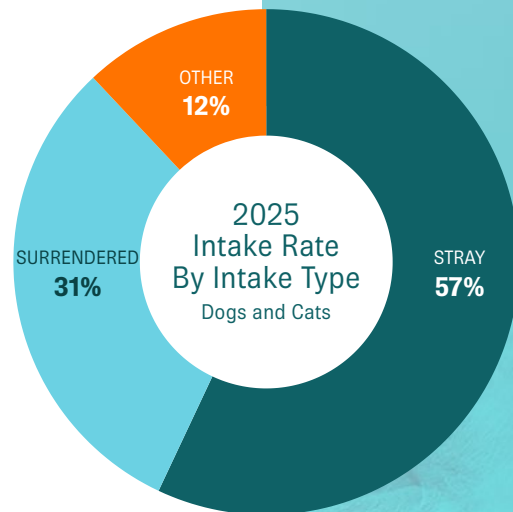
*\*Community intakes tally all intakes except transfers to ensure a clear count of animals received directly from the community, avoiding double counting during total intake calculations.*

# Combined Species Intake Rates

So far in 2025, stray animals continue to make up the largest share of community intakes, accounting for 57% of all entries—slightly lower than the same period in 2024. Owner surrenders have risen slightly to 31%, compared to 30% last year, while intakes from other sources remain relatively stable at 12%.

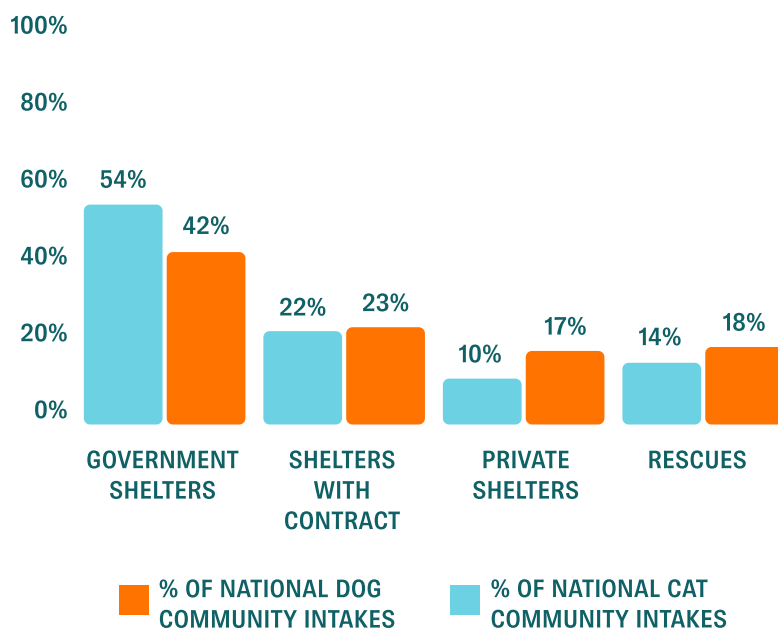
When looking at where these intakes are occurring, government shelters account for nearly half (48%) of all community intakes, followed by shelters with municipal contracts (23%), private shelters (13%) and rescues (16%).

When we break down the intake by organization type and look at species specifically, we see some differences. Government shelters take in 54% of all dog intakes but 42% of cat intakes—highlighting the difference in intake volume by species. Shelters with municipal contracts accounted for roughly 22% of intakes for both species, while private shelters handled 10% of dog intakes and 17% of cat intakes. Rescues made up the remaining 14% of dog intakes and 18% of cat intakes.



**Tip:** Throughout this report, we include both the change in the number of animals and what percentage increase/decrease that represents. We also include rates and rate changes, which allows us to see the change in occurrence, independent of the actual numbers. (For example: there has been a 4% decrease of community intakes, which equates to 109,099 fewer cats/dogs, while the intake rates on this page show the proportion of intake sources, regardless of fluctuations in total intakes).

Community Intakes by Org Type by Species:



# 1,410,000 DOGS

entered shelters and rescues in the first half of 2025

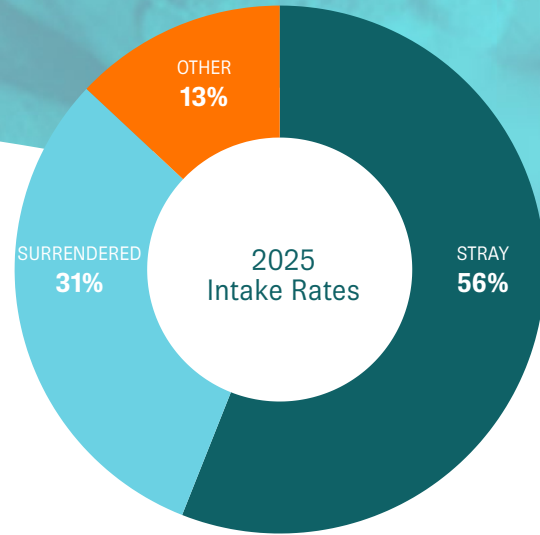
**5%**  
compared to  
the first half  
of 2024

In the first half of 2025, approximately 1.4 million dogs entered shelters and rescues across the country—a 5% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. Month over month, intakes have consistently trailed 2024 figures, with each of the first six months showing fewer incoming dogs than the prior year.

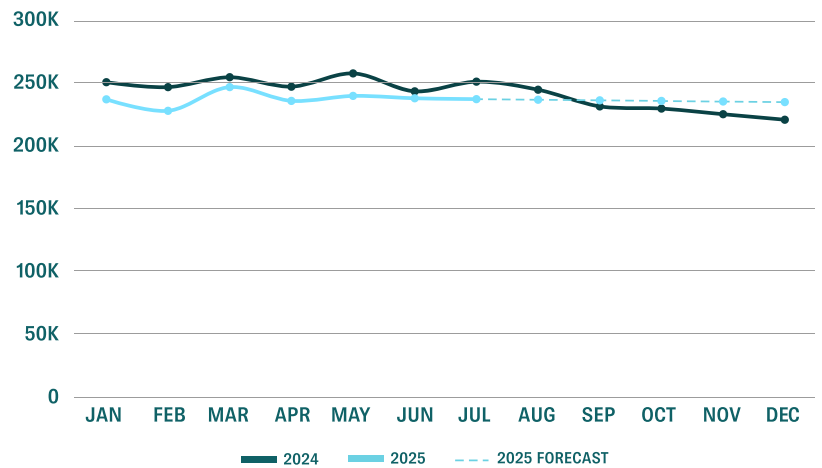
Stray dogs continue to make up the largest portion of dog intakes, though their share has slightly declined—from 57% in 2024 to 56% in 2025. Meanwhile, owner surrenders have risen to 31%, up from 30% last year, and intakes from other sources remained stable at just over 13%.

Forecasting for the second half of the year suggests that intake volume will remain consistent, keeping steady pressure on shelters even as fewer dogs arrive than in previous years. Additional breakdowns by dog size and age in this report will further illustrate how different populations are driving trends and operational challenges.

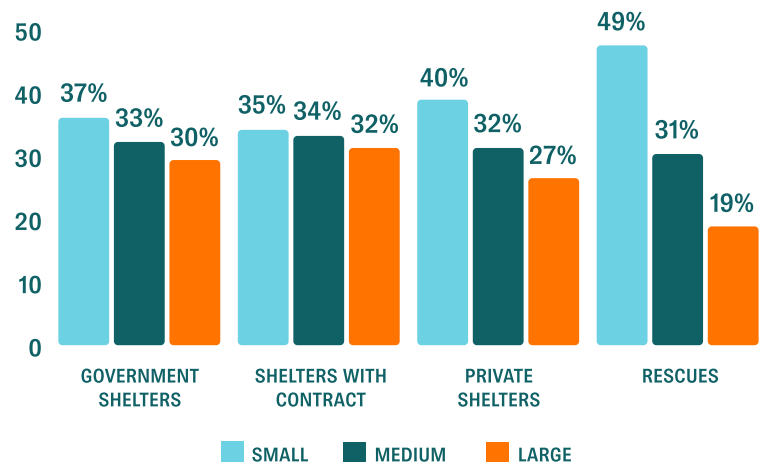
Community intakes for dogs have decreased for all organization types. This is primarily due to a decrease in stray intakes, while shelters with contract and private shelters have seen small increases in owner surrenders (2% and 1% respectively).



Dog Community Intake Counts – 2024 and 2025 (with 2025 forecasting)



Proportion of Org Type Intakes by Dog Size



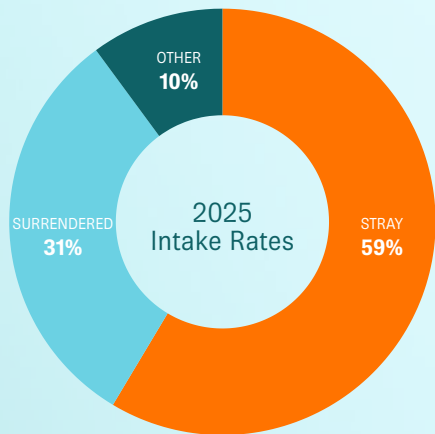
# 1,397,000 CATS

entered shelters and rescues in the first half of 2025

**3%**  
compared to  
the first half  
of 2024

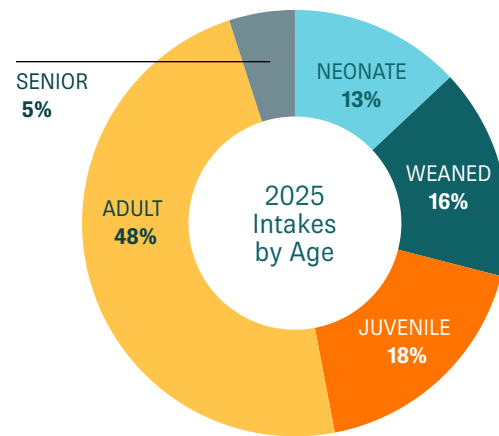
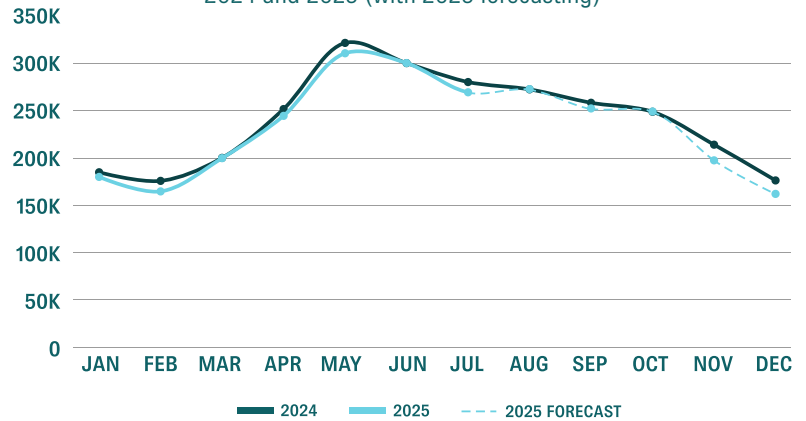
In the first half of 2025, an estimated 1.4 million cats entered shelters and rescues nationwide—a 3% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. Intake patterns have remained relatively consistent, with stray cats continuing to make up the majority at 59%, nearly unchanged from last year. Owner surrenders have increased slightly to 31%, while intakes from other sources declined modestly to 10%.

Though overall intake is down, the volume of cats entering shelters—particularly during peak kitten season—continues to present demands on space and resources. Further analysis of age and intake type using animal-level data throughout this report will offer a clearer picture of which populations are driving trends as we head into the rest of the year.



*\*This data is made possible through Shelter Animals Count's Animal-Level Data, which captures detailed information on each animal in shelters and rescues—including age, size, intake type, and outcome—helping to identify trends and support data-driven decisions in animal welfare.*

Cat Community Intake Counts  
2024 and 2025 (with 2025 forecasting)



Proportion of Org Type Intakes by Cat Ages - 2025

	Neonate	Weaned	Juvenile	Adult	Senior
Government Shelters	18%	20%	17%	41%	4%
Shelters with Contract	12%	15%	17%	50%	7%
Private Shelters	11%	16%	19%	49%	5%
Rescues	7%	12%	24%	52%	4%

**Neonate:** Under 4 Weeks      **Weaned:** 4 to 8 Weeks      **Juvenile:** 8 Weeks to 5 Months  
**Adult:** 5 Months to 7 Years      **Senior:** 7+ Years



# OUTCOMES

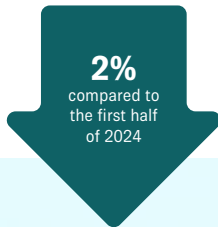
SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT 2025 MID-YEAR REPORT

In the first half of 2025

# 2,788,000

dogs and cats had a **community outcome** (excluding transfers)

This is a decrease of 47,000 outcomes compared to the first half of 2024.

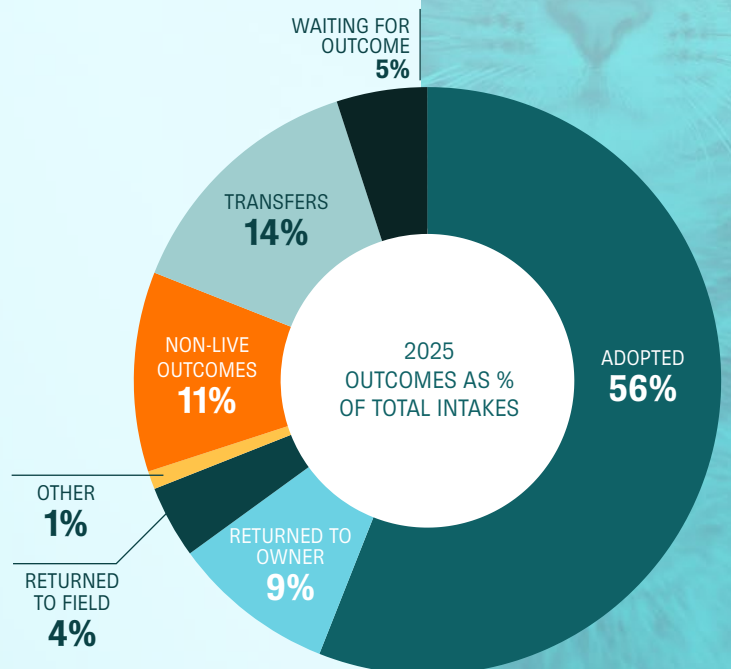
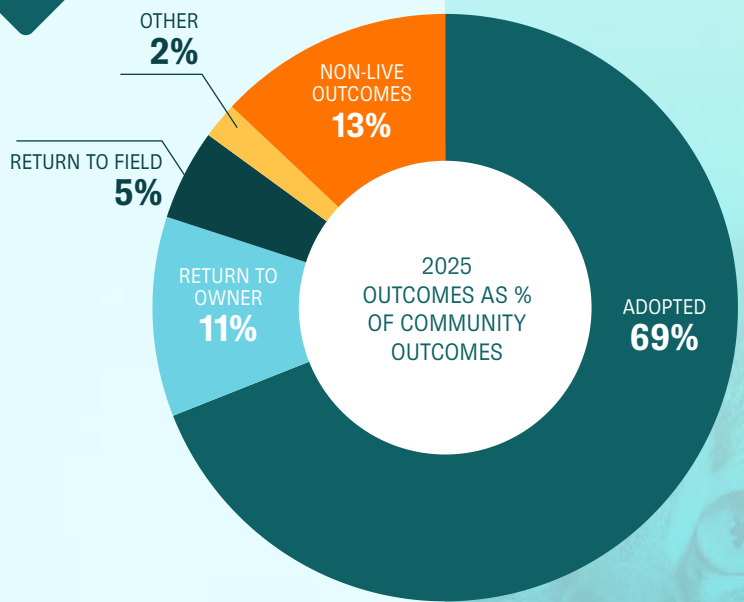


### 2 Ways to Look at the Data:

The top graph shows the outcome type rates based on all of the community outcomes that occurred. These percentages can be used to calculate how many animals were represented in each piece of the pie, out of all of the community outcomes that occurred (2.8M). The bottom graph shows the status of all cat/dog intakes that occurred, the outcomes that have occurred, including transfers out, and also accounting for the percentage of animals that are still waiting for an outcome (this is the gap that is resulting in high shelter populations: 5% gap or 175k more animals have arrived than have left). These percentages can be used to calculate how many animals were represented in each piece of the pie, out of all of the total intakes<sup>1</sup> that occurred (3.4M on pg 18).

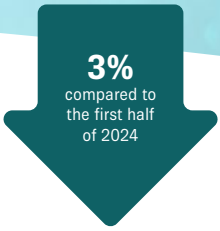
For example: Of the 2.8M animals who have been outcomed, 69% were adopted (1.9M cats/dogs) and at the same time, of the 3.4M intakes (pg 21), 56% were adopted... and 5% is still waiting in the shelter.

<sup>1</sup>Total intakes include community intakes and transfers in.



# 1,474,000 DOGS

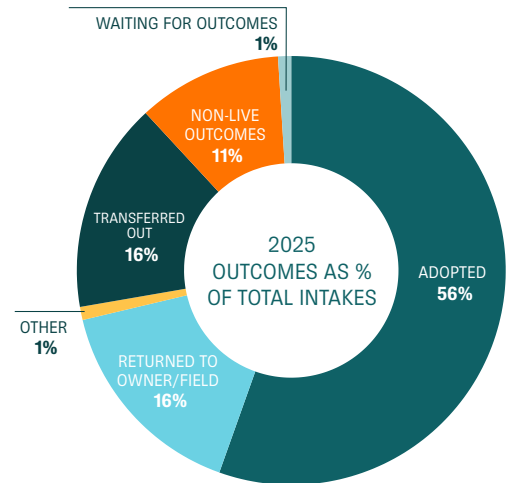
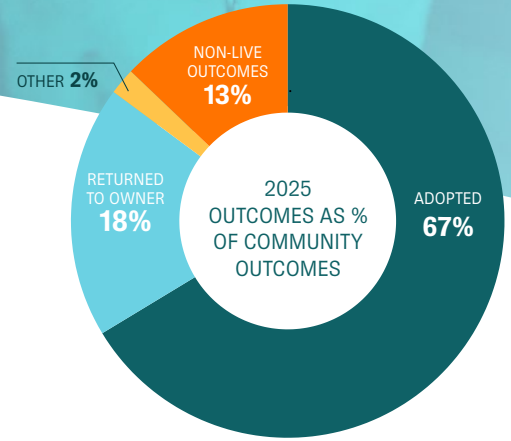
had a community outcome in the first half of 2025.\*



In the first half of 2025, 1.5 million dogs had a community outcome—a 3% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. Adoptions made up the largest share at 67%, followed by return-to-owner/field at 18%, and non-live outcomes at 13%, all relatively stable compared to last year.

When measured against total intakes, 56% of dogs were adopted, 16% were returned to their owner or field, and 11% had a non-live outcome. Less than 1% remained in care as of the mid-year point, indicating most dogs are receiving an outcome within the reporting period.

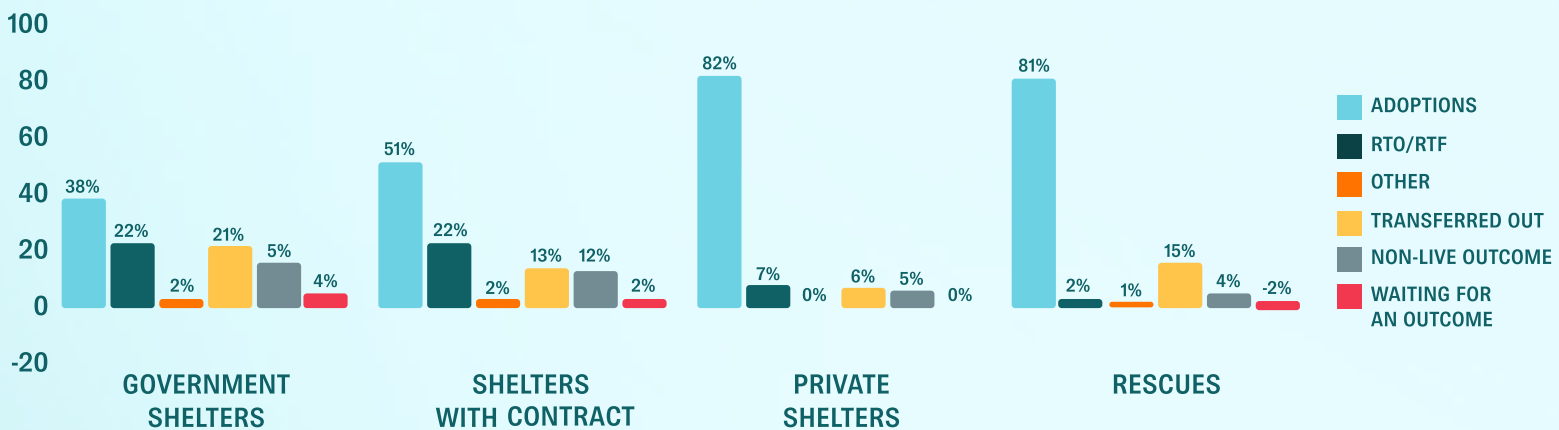
Outcomes varied by size: small and medium dogs had higher adoption and transfer rates, while large dogs were more likely to be returned to their owners but also had higher euthanasia rates. These differences highlight the ongoing need for size-specific strategies to improve outcomes across all populations.



### Top 10 Most Popular Dog Breeds Listed on Adopt-a-Pet:

American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Australian Cattle Dog, Chihuahua, German Shepherd Dog, Husky, Labrador Retriever, Mixed Breed (Medium), Shepherd (Unknown Type), Terrier (Unknown Type, Medium)

Outcome Rate of Total Intake by Org Type – Dogs



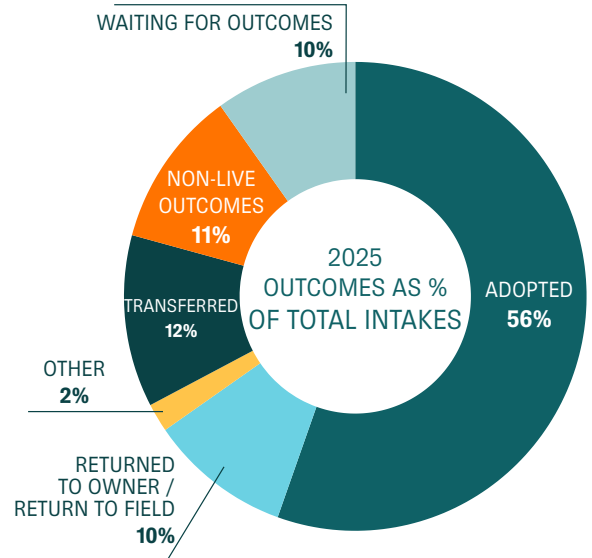
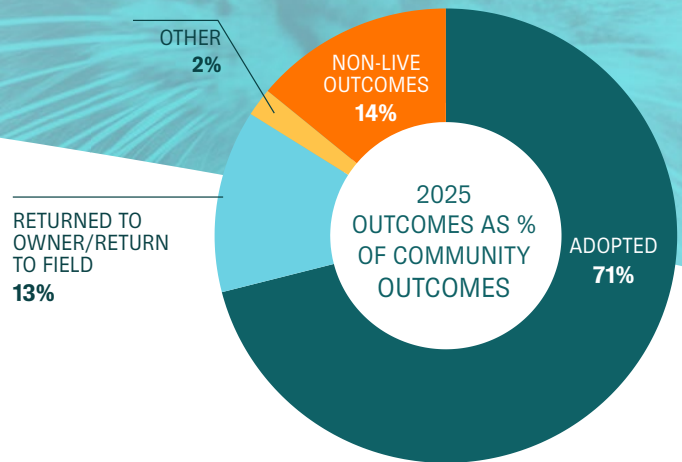
\*Community outcome totals do not include transfers to ensure a clear count of animals receiving a final outcome in their community, avoiding double counting.

\*\*This data is made possible through Shelter Animals Count's Animal-Level Data, which captures detailed information on each animal in shelters and rescues—including age, size, intake type, and outcome—helping to identify trends and support data-driven decisions in animal welfare.

# 1,314,000 CATS

had a community outcome\* in the first half of 2025.

In the first half of 2025, just over 1.3 million cats had a community outcome—a slight 0.3% drop compared to the same period last year. Outcomes by type have shifted very little: adoptions remain the primary path at 71% of all community outcomes, with return-to-owner/field up slightly to 13% and non-live outcomes holding steady at 13%. Looking at outcomes as a share of total intakes, adoptions ticked up to 56% while the percentage of cats still waiting for an outcome dropped below 10%, suggesting shelters are moving cats through the system a bit faster than this time last year.



Outcome Rate of Total Intake by Org Type – Cats

	Adoptions	RTO	RTF	Other	Transferred Out	Non-Live Outcome	Waiting for Outcome
Government Shelters	37%	3%	14%	2%	18%	17%	14%
Shelters with Contract	57%	4%	6%	2%	10%	10%	11%
Private Shelters	77%	2%	2%	1%	4%	6%	7%
Rescues	67%	1%	3%	1%	10%	6%	12%

\* Community outcome totals do not include transfers to ensure a clear count of animals receiving a final outcome in their community, avoiding double counting.

In the first half of 2025

# 2,422,000

dogs and cats had a community LIVE outcome

2%

compared to  
the first half  
of 2024

In the first half of 2025, approximately 2.4 million dogs and cats had a community live outcome, excluding transfers – which represents a slight decline of 2% (39,000 animals) compared to the first half of 2024.

So far this year 1.3 million dogs have had a community live outcome, which represents a decrease of 3% (34,000 dogs) over 2024.

Cat community live outcomes remained more stable, with 1.1M cats leaving organizations through live outcomes. This represents a less than 1% decrease (5,200 cats) from the same period in 2024.

Dogs and cats stay longest in foster-based rescue compared to other organization types.

Large dogs see longer median lengths of stay (LOS) than small or medium dogs in all shelter organization types. Government organizations see the largest differences between large dogs and other size dogs.

### Current Median Length of Stay (Days) to Adoption for 2025

	Dog Total	Small Dogs	Medium Dogs	Large Dogs	Cat Total
<b>Government Shelters</b>	15 Days	12 Days	16 Days	20 Days	14 Days
<b>Shelters with Contract</b>	14 Days	11 Days	14 Days	17 Days	14 Days
<b>Private Shelters</b>	14 Days	13 Days	15 Days	15 Days	16 Days
<b>Rescues</b>	22 Days	21 Days	24 Days	23 Days	20 Days

In the first half of 2025

# 1,927,000

dogs and cats were adopted

1%  
compared to  
the first half  
of 2024

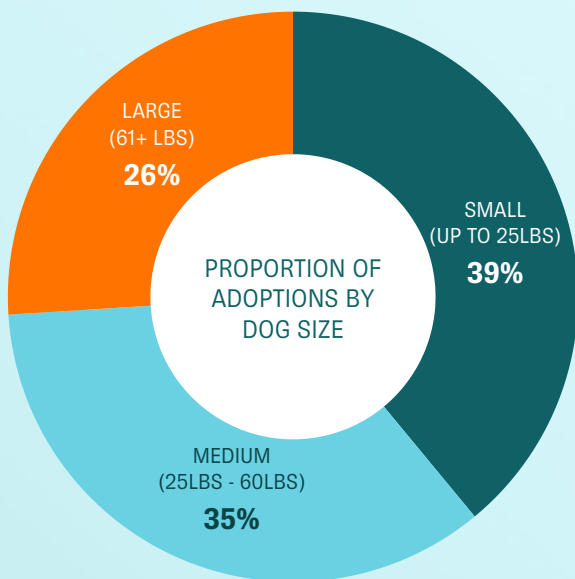
In the first half of 2025, about 1.9 million dogs and cats were adopted nationwide—a slight 1% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. Dog adoptions dipped modestly each month, while cat adoptions stayed mostly steady or slightly higher than last year during peak spring and summer months.

Not all populations are experiencing the same changes in adoption numbers. While large and medium dogs had decreases (9% and 3% respectively), adoptions increased for small dogs (6%).

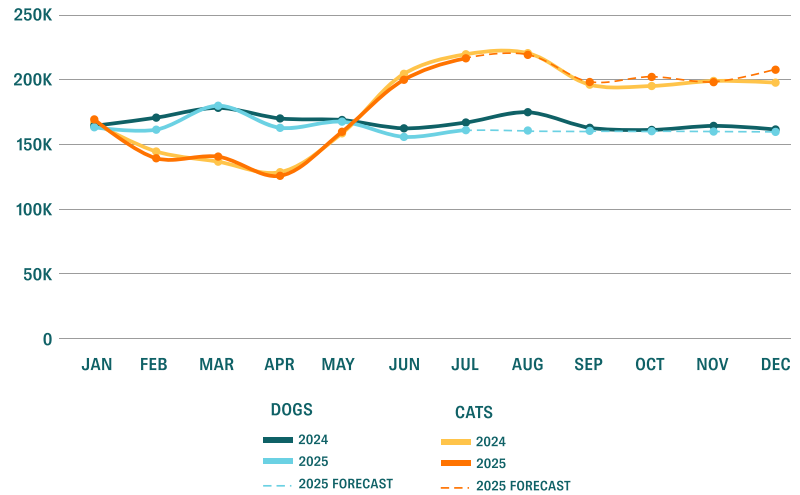
Similarly, fewer adult and senior dogs have been adopted (6% and 2% decreases respectively), while juvenile dogs saw an increase in adoption numbers (6%).

While cat adoptions are remaining steady compared to last year, there has been a shift in the age of cats being adopted. Juvenile cats saw a 6% increase in adoptions while adult and senior cats saw 7% decreases each.

Large dogs make up 29% of all intakes for organizations, but only 26% of all adoptions.



Adoptions by Month (2024 and 2025 with forecasting)

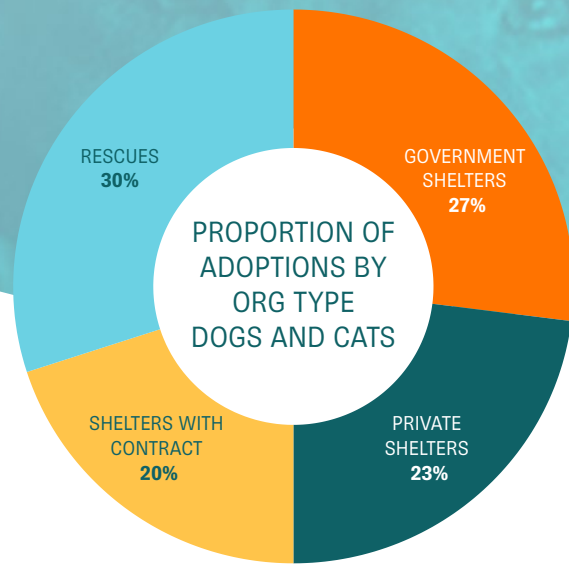


### Days in Care:

At the time of this report's release (August 2025), animals currently in shelters have been waiting a median of 43 days for cats and 47 days for dogs for an outcome. While these numbers vary by organization type, the trend is clear—animals are staying in care longer, waiting for an outcome.

- Government shelters report a median of **45 days for cats** and **46 days for dogs**.
- Shelters with municipal contracts show slightly lower medians: **40 days for cats** and **43 days for dogs**.
- Private shelters see similar patterns: **42 days for cats, 47 days for dogs**.
- Rescues, which typically operate without a brick-and-mortar facility, report the highest medians—**67 days for cats** and **75 days for dogs**.

These figures offer a real-time look at length of stay for the pets.



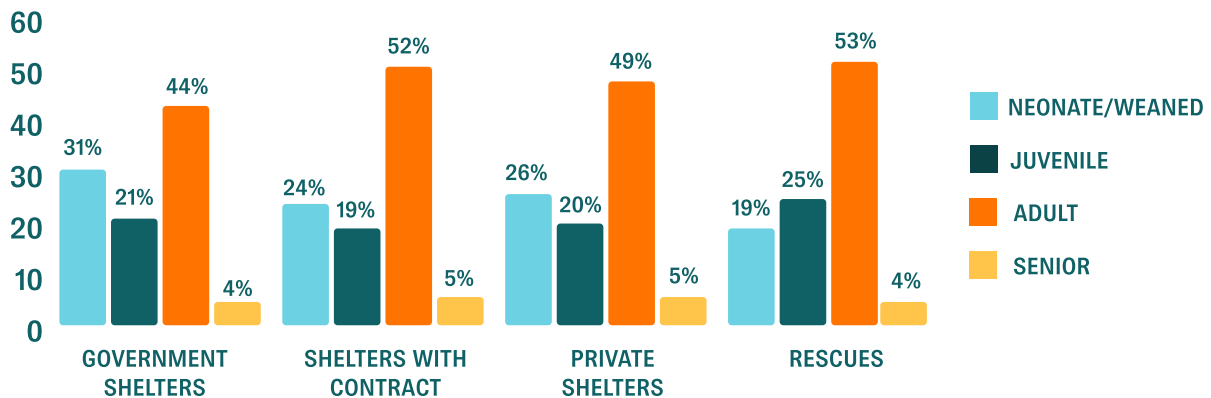
Compared to 2024 data, all organization types saw a decrease in dog adoptions (down 4% for government, 4% for shelters with contract, and less than 1% for private shelters and rescues). Cat adoptions decreased at government shelters and shelters with contracts by 2%, private shelters decreased by less than 1%, while rescues increased adoptions by 2%.

Adoption Rate by Org Type

	Dogs 2024	Dogs 2025	Cats 2024	Cats 2025
<b>Government Shelters</b>	38%	38%	37%	37%
<b>Shelters with Contract</b>	50%	51%	57%	57%
<b>Private Shelters</b>	79%	82%	75%	77%
<b>Rescues</b>	80%	81%	65%	67%

Government animal service organizations have the lowest adoption rates of all organization types when looking at all intake types. Government and shelters with contracts have maintained adoption rates year-over-year while Private and Rescue organizations are seeing increases for both dogs and cats.

Proportions of Adoption by Age of Cat at Intake – Cats

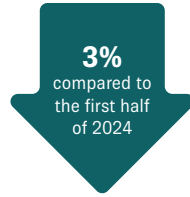


When looking at adoptions by age at intake, adult cats make up the majority of adoptions across all organization types, followed by kittens. Government animal service organizations see a higher percentage of kitten adoptions compared to other organization types.

In the first half of 2025

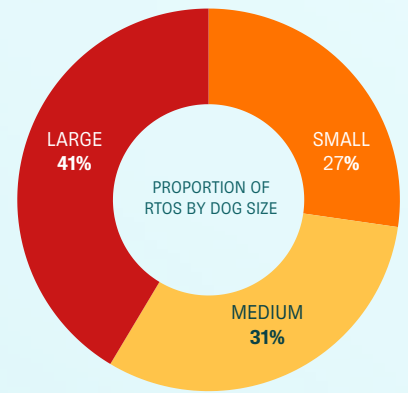
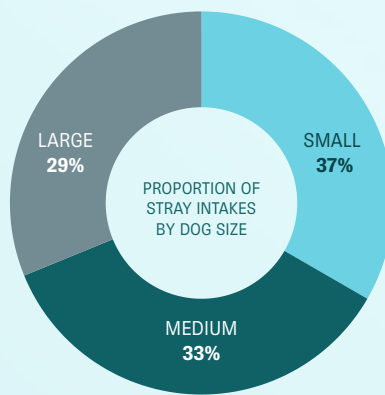
# 317,000

dogs and cats were returned to their owners\*



Return-to-owner (RTO) rates varied by species and intake type. Of all dogs entering organizations, they were returned to their owners 16% of the time, while the rate for cats overall was 4%. Among animals that come into shelters specifically as strays, 34% of stray dogs and 6% of stray cats were returned home.

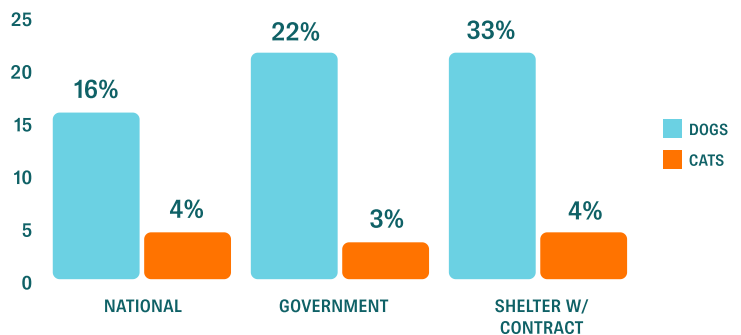
Large dogs make up the smallest share of all stray dog intakes (29%) yet the largest share of all RTOs (41%).



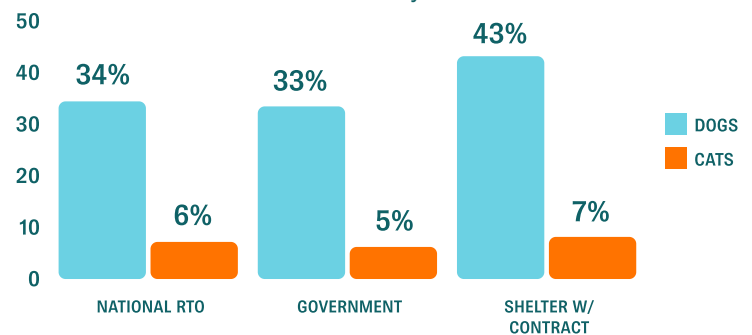
Since government and shelters with municipal contracts account for 89% of all stray dog intakes and 91% of all returns to owner, these organizations are impacting RTO data the most. Both org types have seen a 4% decrease in the number of dogs returned to their owner compared to 2024. As a percentage of total intake, these organizations have a rate of return to owner of 22% in 2025, six points higher than the national total.

\*Cats returned to field are not included. This is solely return to owner data.

RTO % of Total Intake



RTO % of Stray Intake



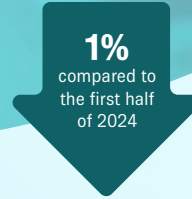
In the first half of 2025  
**625,000**

dogs and cats transferred **in**  
 to sheltering organizations



In the first half of 2025  
**468,000**

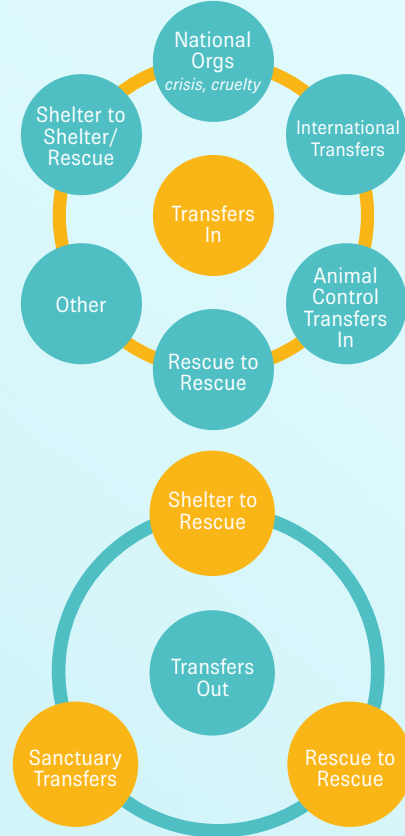
dogs and cats transferred **out**  
 of sheltering organizations



The animal transfer system has seen slight declines compared to the same period last year, but it remains a significant part of shelter operations. Government shelters continue to lead in transferring animals out, while rescues remain the primary recipients of transferred animals, highlighting the ongoing reliance on collaborative partnerships to manage shelter populations.

**IN:** In the first half of 2025, 625,000 dogs and cats were transferred into sheltering organizations, a slight drop from the same period of time last year (less than 1%). Of these, 353,000 were dogs—down just over 1,400 compared to 2024—while 271,000 were cats, about 1,800 fewer than last year.

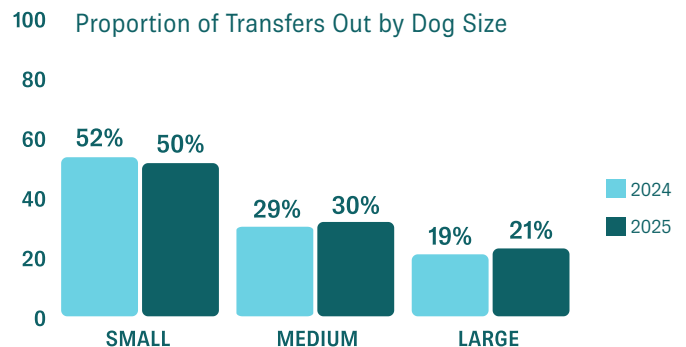
**OUT:** So far in 2025, 468,000 dogs and cats have been transferred out to other sheltering organizations, marking a 1% decrease compared to the first half of 2024. Dog transfers out totaled 276,000, slightly lower than last year's 277,000, while cat transfers out declined more noticeably to 193,000 from 198,000.



Understanding the data of animals moving within the transfer system is complicated. In many cases, we have excluded transfers throughout this report so we could analyze the intakes and outcomes that are occurring from the community and avoid double-counting.

What sizes of dogs make up transfers out so far this year?

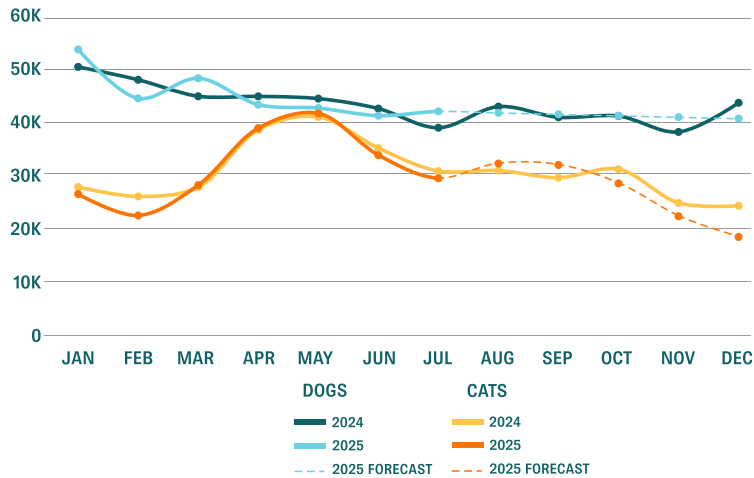
There is a small shift in the proportion of transfers out that are large dogs (increase of 2 percentage points).



# Transfers

## TRANSFERS OUT

Transfers Out by Month for Dogs and Cats with 2025 Forecasting



### Top 5 Transfer In States from January – June

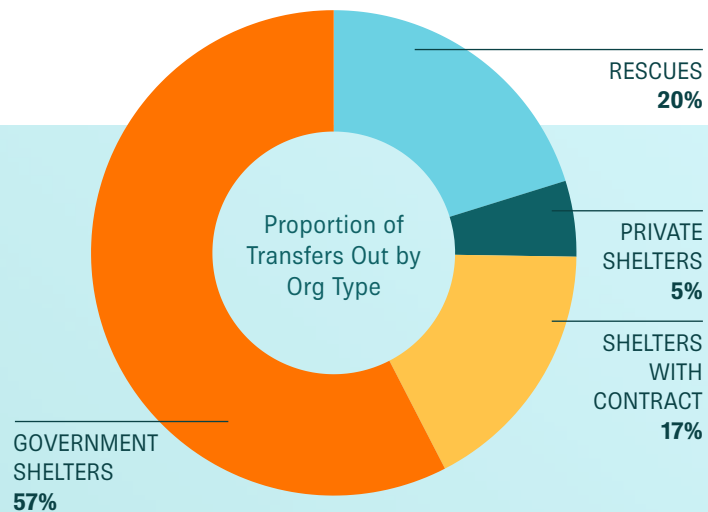
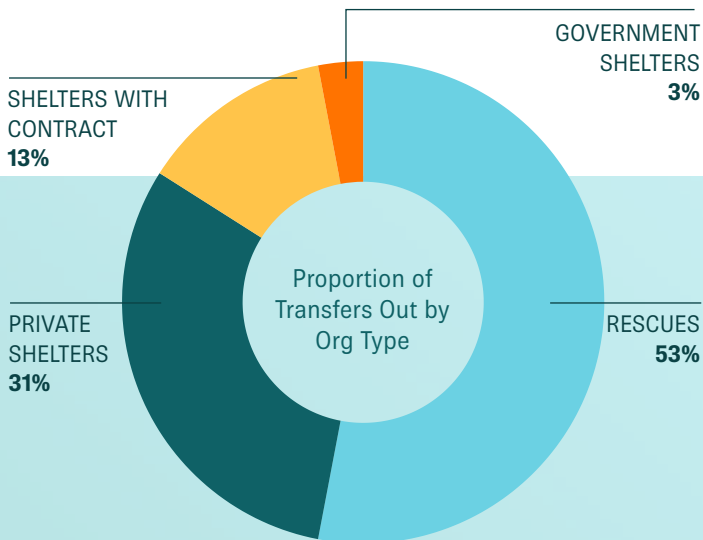
(transfers in from other states):

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Massachusetts | 4. Colorado  |
| 2. New York      | 5. Wisconsin |
| 3. Virginia      |              |

### Top 5 Transfer Out States from January – June

(transfers to other states):

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Texas      | 4. South Carolina |
| 2. California | 5. Georgia        |
| 3. Kentucky   |                   |



In the first half of 2025

# 366,000

dogs and cats had a non-live outcome.



**2024**  
5% down (9.2k)

**2%**

compared to  
the first half  
of 2024



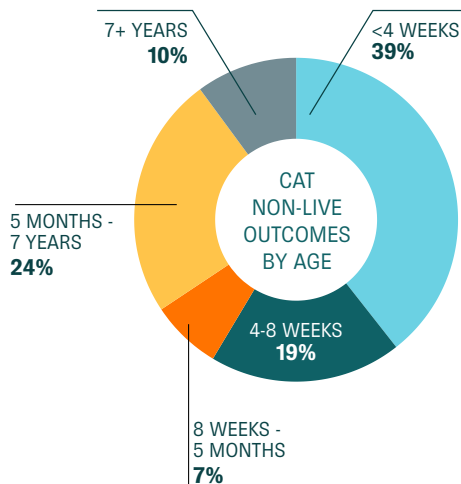
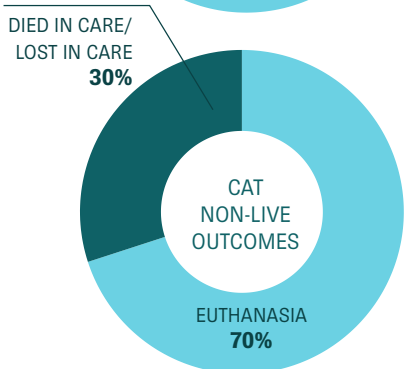
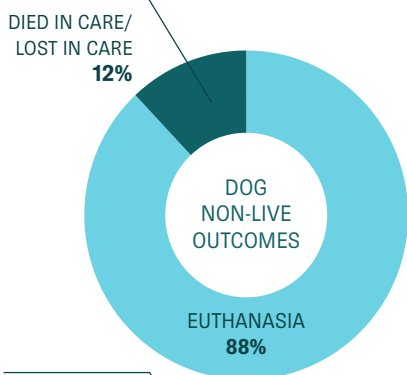
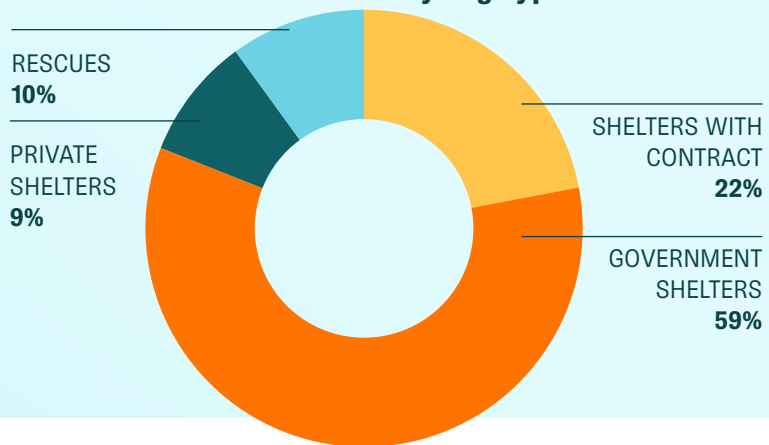
**2024**  
0.7% up (1.2k)

In the first half of 2025, 366,000 dogs and cats had a non-live outcome, marking a 2% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. While this slight drop signals some stabilization, a deeper look reveals key differences by species and shelter type.

For dogs, non-live outcomes declined by 5% (approximately 9,200 fewer dogs), whereas cats experienced a small increase of 1% (around 1,200 more cats) compared to 2024.

Government shelters and municipal contract shelters account for the majority of non-live outcomes, at 59% and 22% respectively. Rescues were at 10% and private shelters were at 9%.

### Non-Live Outcomes by Org Type:



### Animal Level Data for Non-Live Outcomes by Species

Animal-level data gives added context. For dogs, 88% of non-live outcomes resulted from shelter euthanasia, and 12% died or were lost in care. In contrast, for cats, 70% were due to shelter euthanasia, while a notable 30% stemmed from dying or being lost in care.

Among cats with non-live outcomes, 39% were under 4 weeks old at intake and 19% were 4-8 weeks - an increase of 2% in both age groups compared to 2024. Juveniles held steady, while adult and senior non-live outcomes fell by approximately 2 percentage points in both age groups. With these insights, organizations and communities can better understand where early interventions and resource investments are most critical.

# INTAKES

First half of 2025 totals with percentage change to first half of 2024.

Category	2025	2024	% Change	2025	2024	% Change
<b>Stray/Lost</b>	785k	847k	7.3%	818k	841k	2.8%
<b>Owner Surrender</b>	438k	441k	0.8%	437k	436k	0.3%
<b>Other Intake</b> <i>e.g. seized, born in care</i>	187k	196k	4.3%	143k	156k	8.4%
<b>Transfer In</b>	353k	355k	0.4%	271k	273k	0.7%
<b>TOTAL INTAKES</b> <i>includes transfers in</i>	1.76M	1.84M	4.1%	1.67M	1.71M	2.2%

# OUTCOMES

First half of 2025 totals with percentage change to first half of 2024.

Category	2025	2024	% Change	2025	2024	% Change
<b>Adoption</b>	991k	1.0M	2.3%	936k	941k	0.5%
<b>Return to Owner/Field</b>	274k	284k	3.8%	173k	171k	1.1%
<b>Other Live Outcome</b>	23k	22k	2.5%	26k	28k	8.1%
<b>Transfer Out</b>	276k	277k	0.5%	193k	198k	2.5%
<b>Euthanasia</b>	164k	173k	5.4%	126k	128k	1.2%
<b>Died/Lost in Care</b>	22k	22k	0.9%	53k	50k	5.5%
<b>TOTAL OUTCOMES</b> <i>includes transfers in</i>	1.75M	1.79M	2.5%	1.51M	1.52M	0.6%

**GAP**

13K DOGS

162K CATS

175K PETS were added to sheltered populations after the first half of 2025.

## OUTCOMES % COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Outcome Type	Dog 2025	Dog 2024	Cat 2025	Cat 2024
<b>Adoption</b>	67.2%	66.9%	71.2%	71.4%
<b>Return to Owner/Field</b>	18.6%	18.7%	13.1%	13.0%
<b>Other Live Outcome</b>	1.6%	1.5%	2.0%	2.2%
<b>Shelter Euthanasia</b>	11.1%	11.4%	9.6%	9.7%
<b>Died/Lost in Care</b>	1.5%	1.5%	4.1%	3.8%
<b>Community Live Outcomes</b>	87.4%	87.1%	86.3%	86.5%
<b>Non-Live Outcomes</b>	12.6%	12.9%	13.7%	13.5%

## OUTCOMES % TOTAL INTAKES

The percentage of animals entering the shelter that are leaving by a certain outcome type. May not equal 100% due to animals without outcomes.

Outcome Type	Dog 2025	Dog 2024	Cat 2025	Cat 2024
<b>Adoption</b>	56.2%	55.2%	56.1%	55.1%
<b>Return to Owner/Field</b>	15.5%	15.5%	10.3%	10.0%
<b>Other Live Outcome</b>	1.3%	1.2%	1.6%	1.7%
<b>Transfers</b>	15.6%	15.1%	11.6%	11.6%
<b>Shelter Euthanasia</b>	9.3%	9.4%	7.6%	7.5%
<b>Died/Lost in Care</b>	1.3%	1.2%	3.2%	3.0%
<b>Live Outcomes</b> <i>includes transfers out</i>	88.6%	87.0%	79.5%	78.4%
<b>Non-Live Outcomes</b>	10.6%	10.6%	10.8%	10.5%

# Shelter Animals Count Accomplishments in 2025

In the first half of 2025, Shelter Animals Count continued to lead the way in advancing data-driven practices within the animal welfare industry. Through new initiatives, expanded resources, reports, and collaborative efforts, we empowered organizations to make a greater impact in their communities.

## Robust 2024 Year-End Analysis and Advanced Animal-Level Data

- Released the most comprehensive year-end report yet
- Included animal-level data for deeper insights
- Added detailed breakdowns by organization type (shelters vs. rescues) and regional analysis to show local trends alongside national figures
- Published companion animal-level data blogs, including:
  - Kitten intake and outcome data, regional analysis, and more
  - Spay/neuter at intake analysis
  - Puppy intake and outcome trends
  - Additional species- and age-focused deep dives to help organizations target programs where they're needed most
- Gave stakeholders actionable benchmarks to compare performance, spot gaps, and strengthen community impact

## Unlocking Animal Data Series (Powered by Hill's Pet Nutrition)

- Launched a focused series of blogs and webinars on topics that help organizations understand, interpret, and use shelter data in practical ways
- Covered issues like kitten intake data, length of stay, foster trends, and barriers to adoption
- Series to continue on for the rest of the year

## Adopter Experience Webinar

- Featured panelists and data from Shelter Animals Count, Adopt-a-Pet, Hill's Pet Nutrition, Human Animal Support Services (HASS), and Humane World for Animals
- Addressed real barriers adopters face during the process
- Shared survey results and strategies for improving the adopter journey
- Provided tangible ideas to boost outcomes

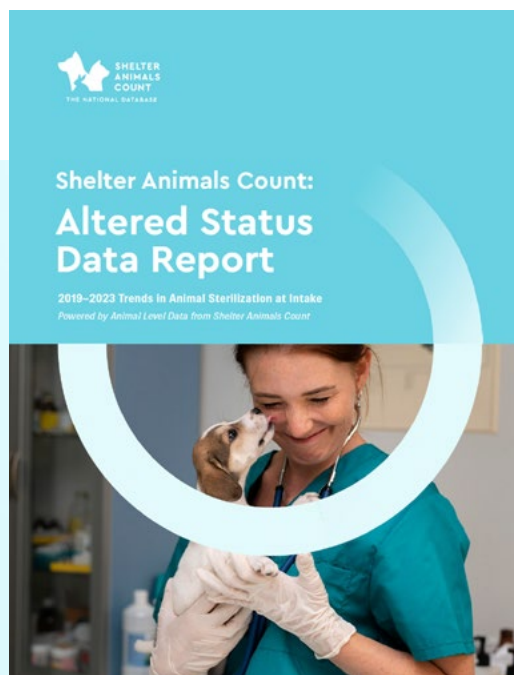
# Shelter Animals Count Accomplishments in 2025

## Major Conference Highlights

- Team members of Shelter Animals Count have delivered multiple high-profile presentations so far in 2025:
  - Three sessions at Animal Care Expo, including a main stage presentation
  - Tableau Conference
  - Texas Unites for Animals Conference
  - Best Friends Animal Society Conference
  - Online Kitten Conference
  - Additional virtual presentations reaching broad industry audiences

## Altered Status Report

- Released in June 2025
- Detailed trends in spay/neuter status at intake
- Broke down data by species, sex, and trends over time
- Provided guidance for targeting resources and community outreach efforts



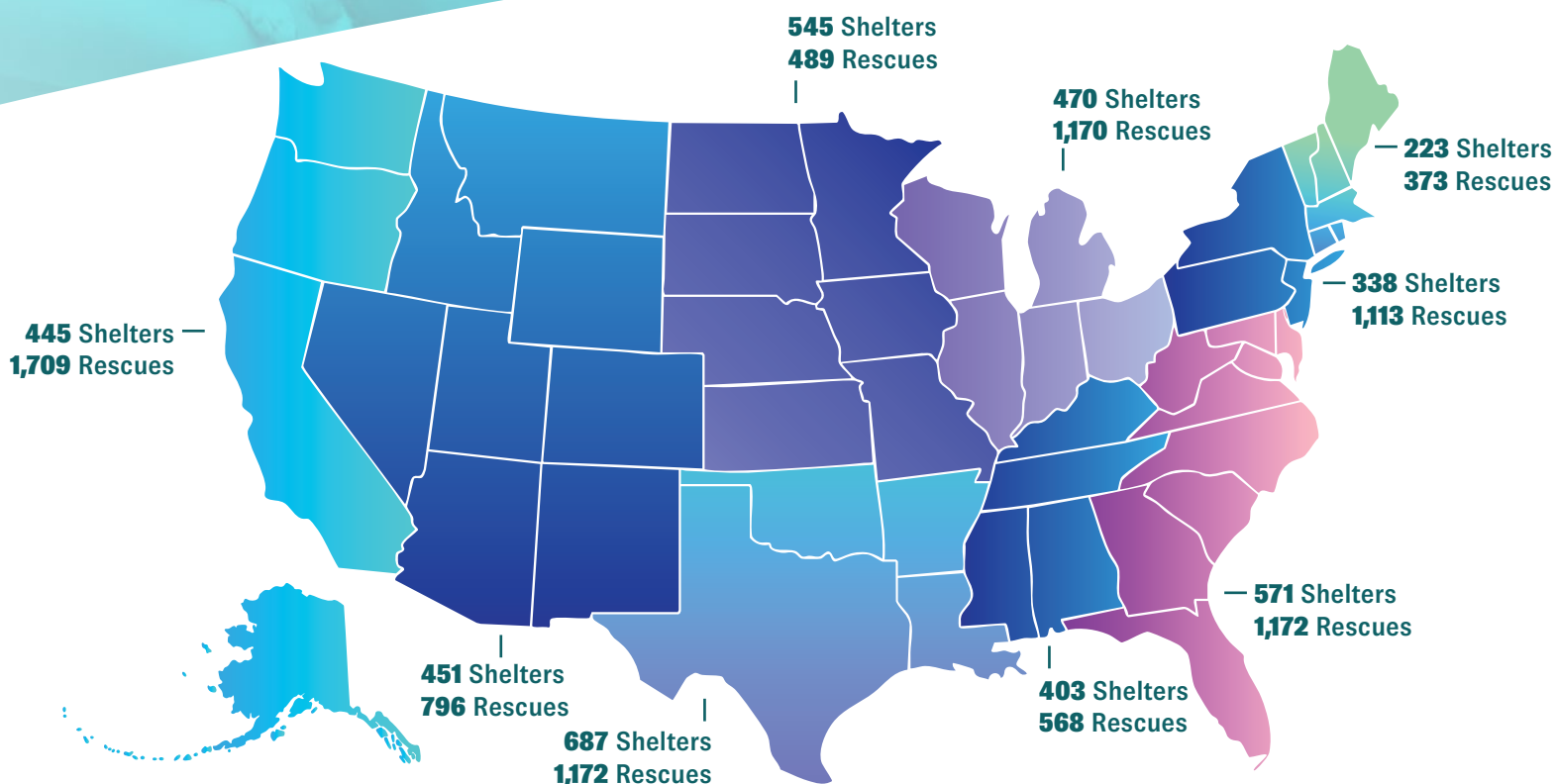
**CHECK OUT OUR REPORTS**

[shelteranimalscount.org/reports](https://shelteranimalscount.org/reports)

There were

# 13,554

animal sheltering organizations  
operating in the US in 2025.



## 4,133 Shelters | 9,421 Rescues

\*Note approximately 650 additional organizations are identified as “shelters” but have been excluded from the estimation model due to the granularity of information required by the estimation model.

The majority (84%) of community intakes occur in shelters, with 16% coming from rescues. 30% of adoptions were performed by rescues, with 70% performed by shelters in the first half of 2025.

Shelters are brick-and-mortar organizations, whereas rescues tend to be foster-based organizations.





## About Shelter Animals Count

Shelter Animals Count is a neutral, independent non-profit organization entrusted with analyzing and sharing animal sheltering data to provide crucial information and insights to improve the lives of pets and the people who love them. Each month, 200+ data points are collected on all organization types and all species, for both sheltering and community services organizations in all 50 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Canada.

### Community Intakes

Total intakes excluding transfers in to show actual community activity, and avoid double counting intakes when aggregating. Includes strays, owner surrenders, and other intakes (e.g. seizures, born in care).

### Community Live Outcomes

Total live outcomes excluding transfers out. Includes adoptions, return to owner, return to field, and other live outcomes.

### Community Outcomes

Total outcomes (live and non-live) excluding transfers out. Includes adoption, return to owner, return to field, other live outcomes, shelter euthanasia, died in care, lost in care.

### Intake Rate

The percentage of community intakes that are a certain intake type.

### Non-live Outcomes

Died in care (neonatal loss, illness, etc.), lost in care, and shelter euthanasia.

### Outcome Rate of Total Intakes

The percentage of total intakes that resulted in a certain outcome type. Transfers out are included as an outcome and Transfers in are included as an intake in this calculation.

### Outcome Rate

The percentage of community outcomes that were a certain outcome type. Excludes transfers out.

### Population Change (aka Awaiting Outcome or Gap)

$(\text{Community Intakes} + \text{Transfers in}) - (\text{Community Outcomes} + \text{Transfers out}) =$  the number of animals that have entered and not had an outcome. In the specified time period, this is the number that the population in care has increased (positive number) or decreased (negative number).

### Total Intakes

All intakes including strays, owner surrenders, other intakes (e.g. seizures, born in care, and transfers in)

### Total Live Outcomes

Adoption, return to owner, return to field, transfer out, and other live outcomes.

### Total Outcomes

Includes all outcomes including adoptions, return to owner/field, other live outcomes, transfers out, shelter euthanasia, died in care/lost in care.

## Animal Welfare Glossary by Shelter Animals Count

The Animal Welfare Glossary by Shelter Animals Count provides clear definitions of commonly used terms in the animal welfare sector. Explore additional industry definitions, data collection terms, and animal terminology at [shelteranimalscount.org/glossary](https://shelteranimalscount.org/glossary).

NATIONAL PLATINUM SPONSORS



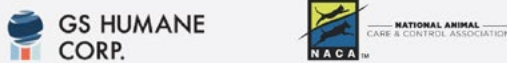
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