



# COMMUNITY SERVICES MATRIX

## (VRS 1.2021 – BETA)

### INTRODUCTION

This community services matrix was designed to serve as a tool for basic data collection. The goal is to capture the most common ways shelters and other organizations are supporting community members and keeping pets from becoming homeless. There is much depth to the types of services provided and those receiving services. For the purposes of this first attempt at national standards for community services data collection, the data collected focus on the number of animals receiving each community service each month. Based on user feedback and activity, Shelter Animals Count will continue to update the data categories and definitions to ensure the matrix is meeting the needs of organizations serving their communities.

### WHO SHOULD REPORT SERVICES DATA THROUGH THE COMMUNITY SERVICES MATRIX?

Animal shelters, rescue groups, and other non-profit organizations that are providing direct or partnered services in their communities should report their data through the Community Services Matrix. Examples of direct services include TNR-focused organizations counting cats they trap-neuter-return each month or shelters providing pet food to community members in need. Examples of partnered services include your shelter providing low-cost or free veterinary care to a community pet in need through a local veterinarian with your organization covering the expense. The organization reporting services is the organization providing the resource, directly or indirectly, to avoid animals being counted more than once per service.

### WHAT IS INTAKE?

“Intake” makes reference to possession. If the shelter or organization is accepting an animal into their shelter or rescue, that animal should be counted as an intake in the basic data matrix, not in the community services matrix. The primary concept here is one of ownership. Animals tracked in the community services matrix are owned or cared for by members of the community.

### WHAT ANIMALS ARE COUNTED?

The 2021 update to the basic data matrix expands beyond canines and felines to include other domestic companion animal categories: rabbits, equines, small mammals, farm animals, birds, and reptiles + amphibians. The community services matrix follows the same species format of the basic data matrix. Many organizations also provide extraordinary services for other animals such as wildlife, but that work is not captured here.

### TRACKING BY SPECIES AND AGE

To help organizations assess and understand differences between various populations of animals, this community services data matrix includes a break-out by species and age for service categories. The age tracked is the age at which the service was provided. This document defines puppy and kitten as under 5 months of age (see below: Determining Age). For animals beyond canines, felines, rabbits, and equines, there is a single age category.

## **DETERMINING AGE**

This basic matrix utilizes 5 months as the break point between puppy/kitten and adult. At or near 5 months of age there are changes in the teeth which can help guide trained staff regarding proper categorization of the animal. For cats, at 4-5 months of age permanent canines, premolars and molars are coming in (all in by 6 months of age). For dogs, at 5-7 months of age permanent canines, premolars and molars are coming in (all in by 7 months of age). Source: Animal Sheltering.

## **DEFINING OWNER INTENDED EUTHANASIA**

Some shelters offer pet euthanasia to the public as a service whose cost may be subsidized and therefore more affordable than local veterinary clinics, thus ensuring access to this service. Defining when euthanasia should be recorded as “at the request of the owner”, or not, is the subject of much discussion. For the purposes of this document, we are choosing to define owner INTENDED euthanasia as the euthanasia of a pet whose owner makes an appointment with the shelter to euthanize their animal due to a medical or behavioral condition OR owner selects euthanasia as the best treatment option after consultation with a veterinarian. We believe the simplicity of this definition helps to ensure consistent application and record keeping. Owner-Intended Euthanasia provided as a service outside of intake is counted in Community Services Matrix.

## **RTF vs TNR**

Trap Neuter Return (TNR) programs involve the management of community cats by trapping, sterilizing, and returning cats to where they originated. Return to Field (RTF) programs involve community cats who have been admitted to an animal shelter, brought in by animal control personnel or by members of the public. While the programs function in similar ways, the key difference is that RTF cats are admitted for sheltering and are therefore part of the animal sheltering function. TNR cats are NOT admitted for sheltering, only for a service or services (sterilization and/or vaccination). Both programs are lifesaving, but the admission for sheltering, or not, is an important distinction. TNR cats can be counted using the Community Services Matrix. RTF cats can be counted using the Basic Data Matrix.

FIELD SERVICES	ADULT	UP TO 5 MONTHS	AGE UNKNOWN	TOTAL	DEFINITIONS
Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)					Animals not included in intake, already altered or altered after trapping, and returned to capture location.
Return-to-Owner in the Field					Stray animals returned to their owner prior to intake.
<b>TOTAL FIELD SERVICES</b>					

VETERINARY SERVICES	ADULT	UP TO 5 MONTHS	AGE UNKNOWN	TOTAL	DEFINITIONS
Microchipping and/or Collar with ID tags					Animals receiving insertion of microchip and/or application of long-wear collar with identification, as well as registering microchip/recording identification.
Spay/Neuter for Owned Animals					Owned animals receiving spay/neuter services. Trap-Neuter-Return is not counted here. Count TNR above in Field Services.
Wellness/Preventive Medical Care					Routine preventive care provided to healthy pets and/or same treatments provided to mildly affected pets (i.e. vaccinations, routine deworming, flea/tick treatment, heartworm prevention, etc.).
Sick Animal Care/ Basic Veterinary Care					Minor medical or surgical care provided to pets with a condition requiring single course of treatment (i.e. dentistry, tooth extraction, minor heartworm disease, routine skin allergy, ear infection, etc.)
Sick Animal Care/ Advanced Veterinary Care					Animal presents with illness as complaint and illness requires more than routine preventive medical or surgical care to address. Condition requires ongoing or chronic care, or hospitalization to prevent death/disability (i.e. fractures, chronic diarrhea, URI, parvo, diabetes, cancer, etc.).
Owner Intended Euthanasia (OIE)					Limited to this definition: Owner makes an appointment with the shelter to euthanize their animal due to a medical or behavioral condition OR owner selects euthanasia as the best treatment option after consultation with a veterinarian. OIE provided to pets received at intake for OIE is not counted here.
<b>TOTAL VETETERINARY SERVICES</b>					

BEHAVIORAL SERVICES	ADULT	UP TO 5 MONTHS	AGE UNKNOWN	TOTAL	DEFINITIONS
Behavior Consultation					Owned animals receiving behavior consultation in-person, by phone, or online. Limited to this definition: consult is provided as a free or low-cost community service.
Group Training					Owned animals receiving training in a group setting. Limited to this definition: training provided as a free or low-cost community service, not all training classes provided by an organization.
Private Training					Owned animals receiving training in a private setting. Limited to this definition: training provided as a free or low-cost community service, not all training classes provided by an organization.
Behavior Modification Program					Owned animals participating in a behavior modification program. Limited to this definition: training provided as a free or low-cost community service, not all training classes provided by an organization.
<b>TOTAL BEHAVIORAL SERVICES</b>					

SUPPORT SERVICES	ADULT	UP TO 5 MONTHS	AGE UNKNOWN	TOTAL	DEFINITIONS
Pet Food					Animals receiving pet food through pet pantries or similar services.
Pet Supplies					Animals receiving leashes and collars, cat carriers, or other supplies.
Grooming					Animals receiving grooming services.
Temporary Housing for Owned Animals					Animals receiving temporary short or long term housing WITHOUT their owner.
Temporary Housing for People and Animals					Animals receiving temporary short or long term housing WITH their owner.
Other Pet Retention Services					Animals receiving other support not captured above (i.e. fence repairs/builds, dog houses, pet deposits).
Rehoming Support					Animals receiving rehoming assistance outside of owner relinquishment or other shelter/rescue intake.
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT SERVICES</b>					

## COMMUNITY SERVICES MATRIX 2021: TOTAL SERVICES PROVIDED EACH MONTH PER COMMUNITY/OWNED ANIMAL

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**USE FOR THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:**  
(WE DO NOT TRACK AGES FOR THESE SPECIES)

**SMALL MAMMALS**  
Includes small domestic mammals like guinea pigs, hamsters and rats.

**FARM ANIMALS**  
Includes non-equine hooved farm animals like pigs, llamas, and cows.

**BIRDS**  
Limited to domestic birds like chickens, pigeons, and parrots.

**REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS**  
Limited to pet reptiles & amphibians like turtles, snakes and iguanas.

VETERINARY SERVICES	TOTAL	DEFINITIONS
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