



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO



# ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

FY 2022 | FIRST QUARTER REPORT





SHANNON SIMS  
ACS DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S DESK

There's no doubt the pandemic has made lasting changes to the way Animal Care Services does business and now a resurgence of Covid variants (along with the resultant staff shortages) have once again changed the landscape of shelter operations. Over the course of the last month, a number of staff have tested positive for the illness and that's led to new policies to maximize lifesaving. In response, ACS has created a reduced intake protocol that proactively addresses possible overcrowding and eases any pressures associated with reduced staffing.

A key component of the department's Continuation of Operations plan, the new guidelines work in concert with the department's novel trapping policy to moderate intake while still addressing calls for service. Since the holidays, the approach has been implemented weekly as has a reduction or temporary pause to outward-facing programs such as proactive community education as well as the Shelter Paws and Community Cat programs. Operational staff has been moved to other divisions or assigned new tasks to address these modifications. I'm proud to say that flexibility has helped ACS continue operations without impact to our largest community roles—this is especially important as the new Safe Outdoor Dogs Act goes into effect, the new Community Animal Support and Assistance initiative (or CASA) takes shape, and we begin a year of community vaccination clinics with our partners. Bring on 2022!



RITA BRAEUTIGAM  
ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

## CHAIR'S CORNER

It's a new year. A time for looking forward but also looking back. Reviewing the past fiscal year at Animal Care Services, there have been some noteworthy wins--Placement has remained above 90% and the shelter continues to collaborate with local and national animal welfare who support positive partnerships. A new community case management team will assist high-risk pet owners. Community efforts to place a new ACS veterinary hospital on the 2022 bond ballot met with success. Of course, celebrating achievements is never a bad thing, but reflection often leads to re-energized efforts and a re-prioritization of goals. I'm excited to see how ACS will strategize new ways to make San Antonio more humane.

## SAFE OUTDOOR DOGS ACT--GOOD FOR DOGS, S.A.

The City of San Antonio Animal Care Services (SAACS) is pleased to announce the passage and implementation of the Safe Outdoor Dogs Act (or Senate Bill No. 5) which went into effect this month.



Photo courtesy of San Antonio Express News

**SAACS officers have already been briefed on the new state legislation which bans the use of chains for tethering outside dogs as well as mandates necessities such as shelter, shade, and clean water—all humane provisions long provided for in San Antonio laws.**

The only tethering now allowed for San Antonio dogs are the more humane options such as trolley systems or overhead “ziplines. Allowable tethers must also be attached to a properly fitting collar or harness and the new state guidelines support serious education opportunities as well—While initial violations are considered a Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500, repeat offenders face a judicial enhancement to Class B penalties including a \$2 thousand dollar fine and up to 180 days in jail.

The Safe Outdoor Dogs Act was signed by Governor Greg Abbott in late October of last year after similarly passed legislation died under an earlier veto. Residents can learn more about Senate Bill No. 5 and other animal laws in our community by visiting [saacs.info/petlaws](https://saacs.info/petlaws).

## HIGH-RISE RESCUE DRAMA SAVES FOX, DRAWS CROWD

While the Riverwalk and downtown attractions are used to heavy foot traffic, crowds gathered for a different reason during a recent Animal Care Services call for service.

The brisk autumn air left the trees along the river without leaves and a young fox with no options after he found himself stuck on a very high window ledge near the waterway. As passers-by, Riverwalk tourists, and downtown workers watched the drama unfold, ACS officers planned how to rescue the baby without either the kit or the officers from getting hurt.

First responder Officer Joey Olivares made a quick assessment of the building under renovations—in addition to construction rubble strewn about the site, the building itself was at least three stories high, and the fox perched on a narrow perch closest to the top level.

Backup officers Snowden, Delacruz, and Saucedo quickly made the scene with a ladder, but it was too short. That's when ACS called in a crew from the San Antonio Fire Department. The flashing lights and new activity drew an even bigger crowd including a number of diners at a hotel eatery across the river.

Officers from the San Antonio Police Department responded to assist with crowd control as the fox (who ACS named River) watched preparations for his rescue intently. Once a tall enough ladder was positioned on the Riverwalk level of the building, Officer Olivares slowly climbed towards the ledge with a carrier in hand.

A cheer went up from the crowd once when River was gently placed in the carrier and officers worked together to hoist him to safety. River was taken straight away to Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation where he was treated for minor injuries and this young fox's rescue was publicly lauded by the City Manager's office as a perfect example of the City of San Antonio's core values of professionalism, integrity, innovation, and teamwork.



## SIX YEARS LOST, MONKEY FACE THE CAT SAVED BY MICROCHIP AND ACS PET DETECTIVES



Six years ago, a local family was amid moving into their new home when they lost their cat named Monkey Face. After a desperate search, they finished their move to a new neighborhood unsure they would ever see their cat again.

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### **This winter, Monkey Face is finally home thanks to the power of microchips.**

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It started with a call for service received from a concerned resident about a cat she found that didn't look well. Officer Perez picked up the sick cat, scanned her for a microchip and learned her unusual name. He also learned her family lived close by!



A quick drive to the address revealed Monkey Face's owners hadn't lived at that home in years. Faced with the dead-end search and knowing Monkey Face might be injured, Officer Perez brought her back to ACS for a veterinary exam. That's when the ACS placement team began the exhaustive search of cross-referencing phone numbers and utility records.

While the cat recovered from minor injuries in the clinic, ACS continue the search. After almost two weeks of stops, starts, and a few wrong numbers, Monkey Face's mom was found. At first, Ms. Flores assumed the phone call must be a mistake and surely her cat hadn't been found after half a dozen years. After several assurances, Ms. Flores reunited with Monkey Face, updated her microchip's contact information, and touched off a viral story that touched people around the globe.

## DOG TRAINING-THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE SKILL

The expertise of the staff at Animal Care Services not only serves as an example of the level of care ACS gives the pets in their charge, but it also speaks to the level of education and guidance ACS can provide the San Antonio community.

That's why it is so important staff continue to educate themselves on the most progressive techniques and approaches.

ACS congratulates dog trainers Kaitlan Helton and Isabella Guevara for obtaining enhanced certifications from the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers. Both Kaitlan and Isabella received CPDT-KA certifications for passing knowledge assessment testing for Certified Professional Dog Trainers.



Certified Professional  
Dog Trainer,  
Knowledge  
Assessed

This professional distinction gives the ACS trainers establish and implement training protocols that support humane, science-based dog training practices. Further, having CPDT-KA certified trainers also guides how ACS treats pets in their care and the types of advice the shelter can provide to the community. This is especially important when it comes to evaluating dogs for placement programs. Both Kaitlan and Isabelle play a large role in assessing the dogs that come into ACS.

Evaluations can cover everything from placement readiness to temperament, training motivations, leash walking ability, and friendliness interacting with other pets. Not only do these assessments direct daily placement options, but they also help ensure the live release teams make better matches with adopters, rescues, and fosters.

It's a win-win for everyone involved and ACS is thrilled to have trainers well versed in the latest innovative approaches to humane animal welfare.

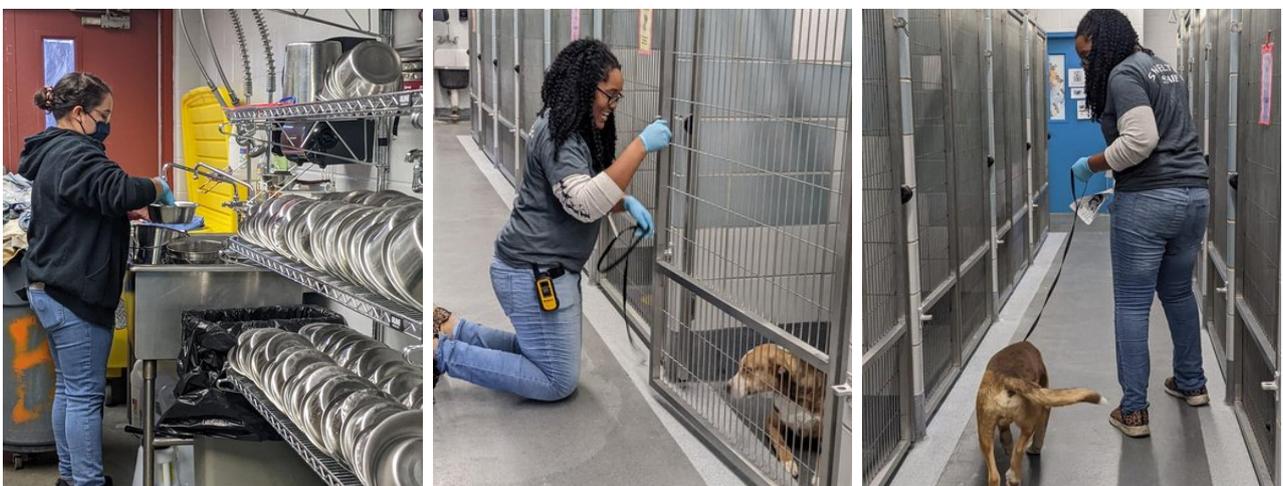
## STAFF HIGHLIGHT: ANIMAL CARE ATTENDANTS

There are likely not many jobs you can think of that run 365 days a year. While your first thoughts might run towards first responders like police or firefighters, ACS employs heroes of another sort.

The ACS shelter staff works daily to ensure all the animals in the shelter are cared for with the highest of standards. With almost 30 thousand animals brought in annually, the shelter's animal care attendants stay busy each day of the year. ACS' animal care attendants ensure the pets at the shelter have clean kennels, food, water, and a warm place to rest.



Of course, it's not just shelter dogs that enjoy a close relationship with their caregivers —the cattery also has dedicated staff who care for the cats and kittens in their care as if they were their own. It's all a part of the staff's dedication to helping shelter pets write their next life chapter on the way to a new family and a happy ending.



# FY 2022 1ST QUARTER PERFORMANCE

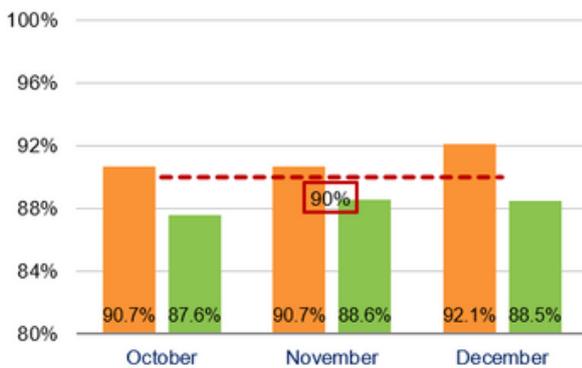
Analysis of the annual metrics for Fiscal Year 2022 will be a comparison of the results for Fiscal Year 2022 and the average of respective metric totals for the previous three years (Fiscal Year 2019, Fiscal Year 2020, and Fiscal Year 2021). Annual Fiscal Year 2022 targets are displayed to gauge the actual performance of each metric during the course of the recent fiscal year.

## INCREASING THE LIVE RELEASE RATE

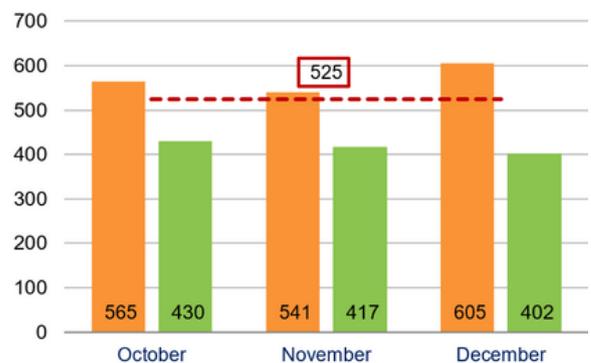
Since FY 2017, Animal Care Services (ACS) has maintained an annual Live-Release rate of 90+%. While this is a monumental achievement for any open-admission municipal shelter, ACS is continuously striving to achieve greater heights. This is why the Live-Release Division is constantly developing new programs and enhancing existing programs. Some of the ways in which ACS is pushing to maintain and raise the Live Release rate: Free dog training for adopters helps ensure successful outcomes. Building partnerships with external agencies to take part in national events and grant opportunities. Continuing to support and be supported by committed rescue partners.



### LIVE RELEASE



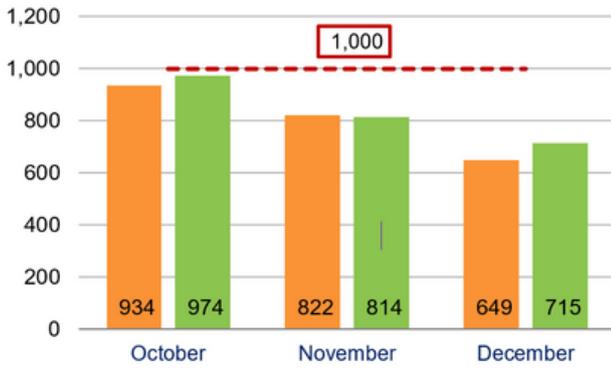
### ADOPTIONS



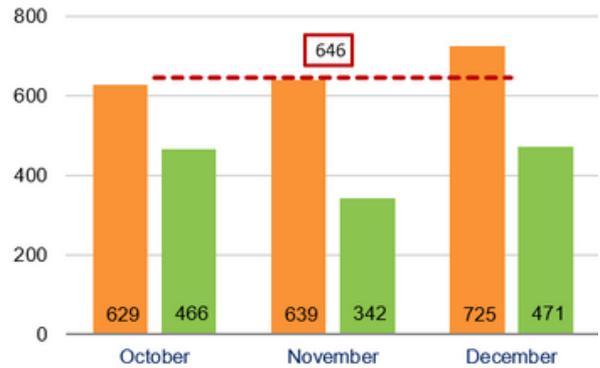
--- FY 2022 TARGET    █ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE    █ FY 2022 ACTUAL

## INCREASING THE LIVE RELEASE RATE (CONT'D)

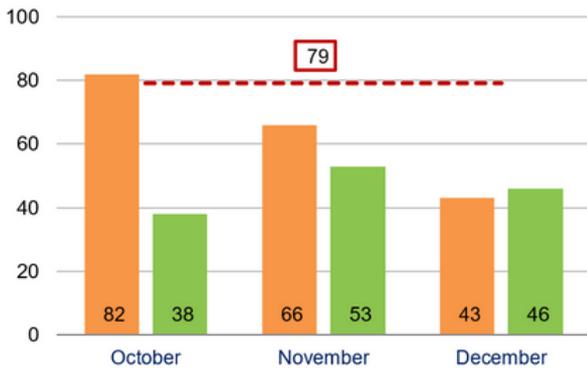
### RESCUES



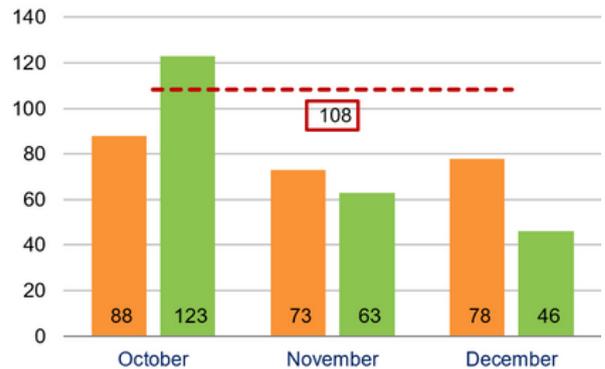
### RETURN TO OWNER



### TRAP NEUTER RELEASE



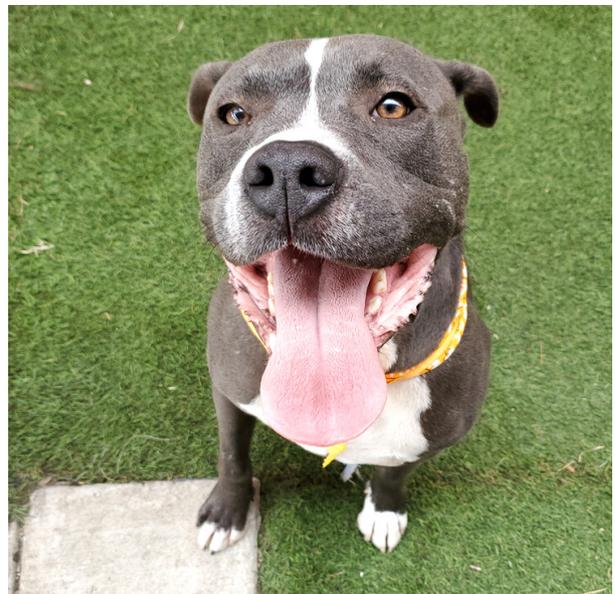
### PETS FOSTERED

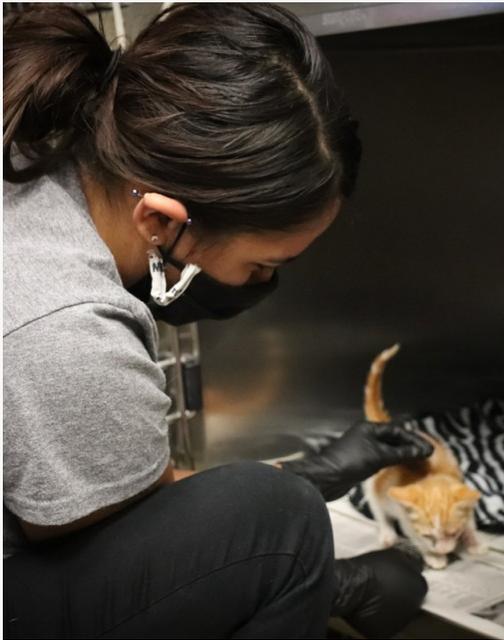


--- FY 2022 TARGET

■ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE

■ FY 2022 ACTUAL

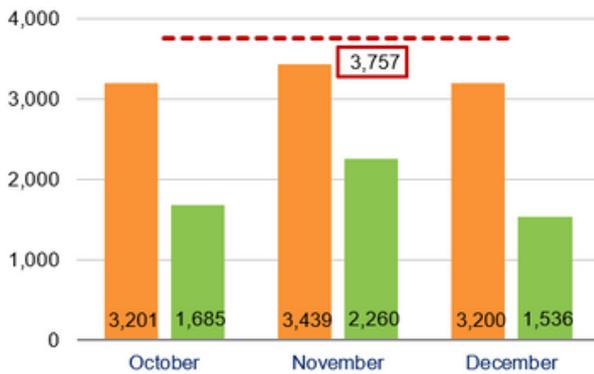




## CONTROLLING THE ROAMING ANIMAL POPULATION

Animal Care Services (ACS) strategic priority to control the animal population includes any program that reduces or manages the stray animal population. Spay and neuter surgeries performed in-house and by ACS partners help contribute to this strategic priority, as does microchipping, which allows ACS to reunite roaming pets with their owners, often without needing to bring the animal to the ACS campus. In addition, the metric of dead animal pickup is used as an additional indicator of the number of animals roaming free.

### TOTAL SPAY & NEUTER SURGERIES



### DECEASED DOG/CAT PICK-UP\*



### MICROCHIPS REGISTERED



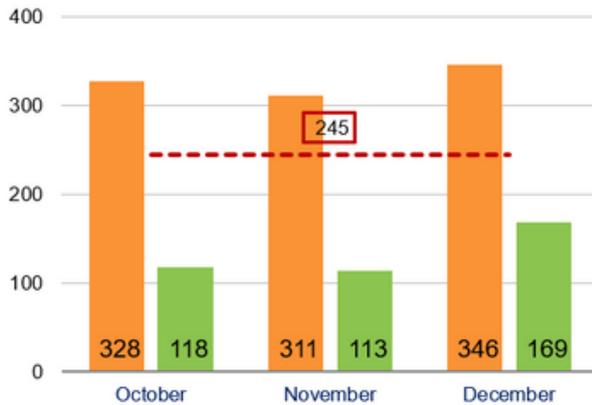
--- FY 2022 TARGET    ■ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE    ■ FY 2022 ACTUAL

## ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT

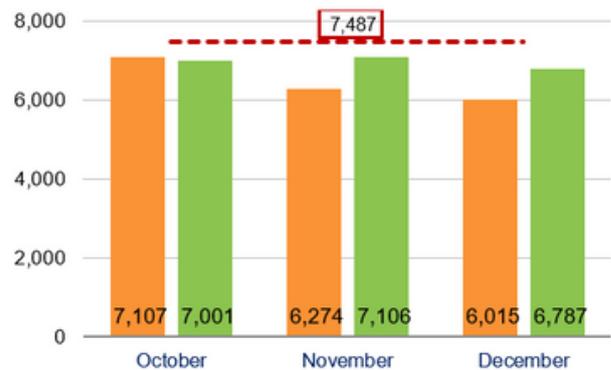
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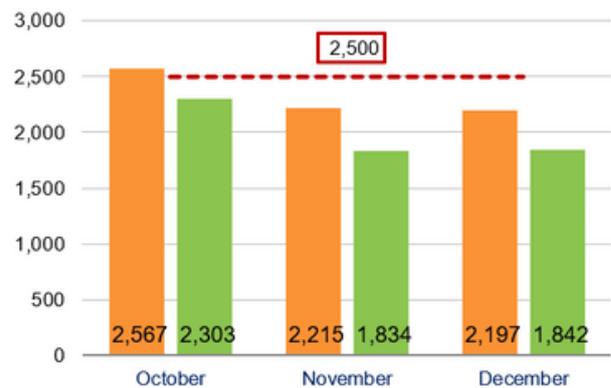
PETS RETURNED TO OWNER-FIELD



CALLS FOR SERVICE REQUESTS



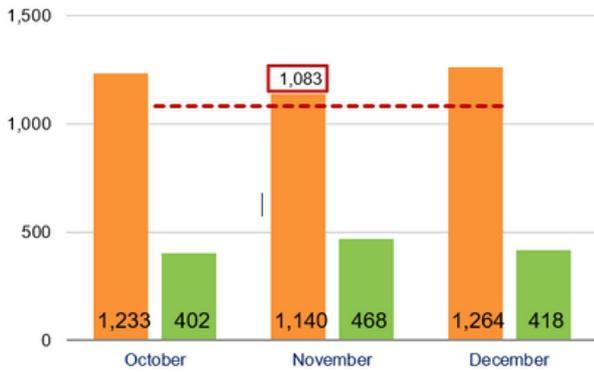
IMPOUNDMENTS



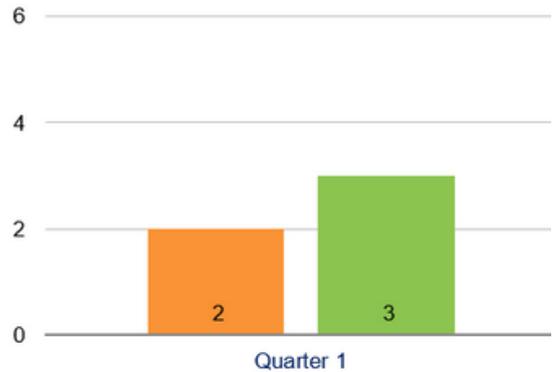
--- FY 2022 TARGET    ■ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE    ■ FY 2022 ACTUAL

## ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT (CONT'D)

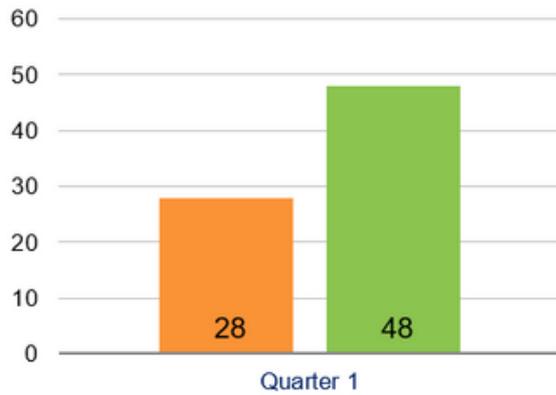
CITATIONS WRITTEN



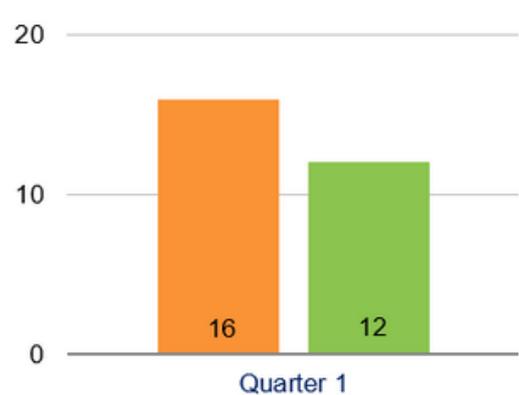
SERIOUS BODILY INJURIES



AGGRESSIVE/DANGEROUS DESIGNATIONS



CRUELTY CASES FILED



--- FY 2022 TARGET    
 █ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE    
 █ FY 2022 ACTUAL





## ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY

The ACS strategic priority to engage and educate the community is the objective of the Education & Outreach Division. Through strategic outreach efforts including digital engagement and promotion, the Education and Outreach Division has provided support to all other Divisions at ACS. To broaden ACS' reach and better adapt to modern trends, the Education & Outreach Division enhanced its social media efforts. Their efforts have been met with great success and as such, their Homes Reached now includes digital outreach efforts as well (effective February 2020).

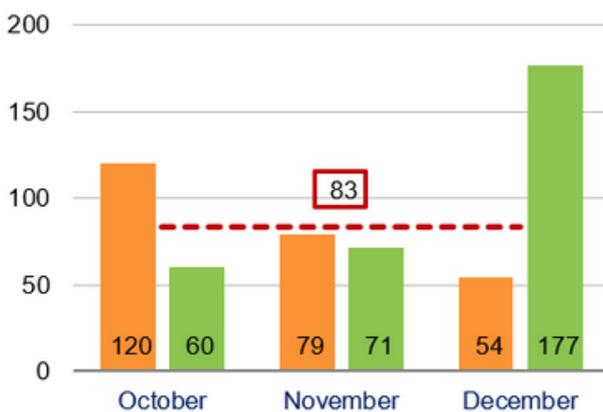
### DIGITAL REACH\*



### DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT\*



### MEDIA INTERACTIONS



--- FY 2022 TARGET    ■ PRIOR 3 YEAR AVERAGE    ■ FY 2022 ACTUAL

