

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
(Name of County) AND (Name of Organization)**

This Memorandum of Understanding is made and entered into this _ day of _____, 20__, by and between ___ (County) and _____ (Organization).

It is necessary that all of the resources and facilities of cooperating agencies and organizations be made available to prevent and respond to the needs of animals in disasters and local emergencies or disasters such as wildfire, flood, earthquake, drought, disease, etc. The parties hereto desire to coordinate a program of disaster relief to ensure preservation of animal life and to protect public health and welfare by providing animal rescue, emergency animal care, and care and shelter by means of this Memorandum of Understanding. It is also the desire of both parties to provide for effective coordination of their resources to be utilized in such emergencies and disasters and minimize unnecessary duplication of effort.

“Disasters” and “Emergency” shall be defined to include, but not limited to, those events and conditions described in California Government Code Section 8654, whether or not they require federal emergency assistance and/or are declared to be such by the President of the United States or the Governor of California.

Therefore, it is mutually agreed and understood as follows:

Each party shall develop a mutually compatible plan providing for the effective mobilization of all its resources and facilities to cope with any type of disaster. _____ (Organization) will accept the responsibility for coordinating animal relief efforts involving household pets and livestock in cooperation with the _____ (County) and to assist members of the public needing animal-related services. These efforts will include but are not limited to housing animals, providing emergency veterinary medical care, setting up temporary animal shelters, evacuating, rescuing and capturing animals in distress, caring and feeding for animals left in evacuation sites, caring and feeding for animals left to shelter-in-place, providing lost and found information services to the public, reunification of animals with their owners, euthanizing animals, when necessary, and providing animal food and supplies to the public. Other agencies involved with animal rescue will only be allowed to work under the direction of the _____ (Organization). The _____ (Organization) will coordinate all other animal rescue groups and individuals and reserves the right to deny assistance from any animal rescue group or individual..

In the event of any situation requiring disaster response, the _____ (Organization) acknowledges they must provide animal relief assistance through the direction of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). All actions of the _____ (Organization) will be coordinated with other participating governmental agencies during a disaster.

Each party agrees to participate without assurance of cost recovery.

The _____ (Organization) agrees to respond to requests for mutual aid in other counties pursuant to the Emergency Services Act, Article 10, Sections 8610 et seq. Each party agrees to participate in planning and preparedness meetings, trainings, and exercises related to disaster relief.

The _____ (County) and _____ (Organization) agrees to mutually furnish educational materials and appropriate training relating to dealing with animals in a disaster.

Each party will coordinate their respective disaster relief activities to maximize services to the welfare of animals and avoid duplication of efforts in the following ways:

1. Maintain close coordination, liaison, and support at all levels with meetings, and other means of communication. Include a representative of the other party in appropriate committees, planning groups and task forces formed to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other emergencies.
2. During disasters and emergencies, keep each other informed of the animal needs created by the events and the services they are providing. Share current data regarding disasters, to include statistical information, historical information, emerging needs and trends, damage assessments, among others, and disaster declarations and service delivery.
3. Work together to develop plans and secure resources to facilitate delivery of services to animal owners and their household animals or livestock during a disaster.
4. During the time of disaster and readiness, work in coordination to provide public information by participating in a joint information center and or collaborating with the county designated public information officer.

Both parties will participate in the other's training, educational, developmental and evaluation opportunities as applicable to the mitigation, preparation, response and recovery from disaster or emergencies. Examples of trainings from Organizations may include shelter operations, safe animal handling, disease recognition, etc. Examples of trainings and activities hosted by the county may include evacuation procedures, fire line operations, radio communications, CERT training, county-wide exercises, drills and after action reporting .

5. _____ (County) will support the (Organization) in the use of the reunification/ID system and the _____ (Organization) shall coordinate animal rescue and care and shelter information sharing and reporting with the County.

6. _____ (County) will provide needed staff as available and to the extent permitted by state law, to assist the _____ (Organization) in disasters and emergency operations. Examples of staff that could be deployed to an emergency animal shelter include veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants, and additional staff to operate the emergency animal shelter may include disaster service workers to provide general animal care such as walking, feeding and cleaning, and registration/admission.
7. County through its county animal services department will provide pet and livestock support to _____ (Organization).
8. County through its county animal services department will conduct initial shelter assessment inspections to locate an acceptable facility to serve as an emergency animal shelter. Site visits will be conducted before a disaster or emergency or within the first 48 hours of a shelter opening. Both parties will participate in an annual review of the shelter site list for accuracy and completeness.
9. During a disaster or emergency, both parties will work together to acquire necessary resources that increase the County and _____ (Organization) capacity to respond to disasters and emergencies.
10. Both parties agree to abide by the Code of Ethics for Animal Care and Control Professionals, which is to provide humane treatment, disposition and care for all animals, always mindful of what is best for the animal's physical and psychological well-being to prevent suffering and pain by reuniting with identified owners, responsible adoption or humane euthanasia.
11. Both parties will widely distribute this MOU within their respective organizations and departments and encourage full cooperation.

(Partner signature)
(Partner name, organization, position)
Date:

(Partner signature)
(Partner name, organization, position)
Date: