



Levy County Board of County Commissioners
 PO Box 310, Bronson, Florida, 32621
 310 School Street, Bronson, Florida, 32621
 Phone: 352.486.5218

Animal Services

Name of Department	Animal Services
Name of Department Head	Matt Weldon
Department Mission	Through collaboration with community partners, Levy County Animal Services will ensure a safe environment for the public, dogs, and cats in Levy County through education, enforcement of state and local laws, providing temporary care, and uniting animals with loving homes.

Department Staffing

	First Quarter FY 2025	Second Quarter FY 2025	Third Quarter FY 2025	Fourth Quarter FY 2025	First Quarter FY 2026
Number of Budgeted Full-Time Employees	7				
Number of Actual Full-Time Employees	7				
Number of Budgeted Part-Time Employees	2				
Number of Actual Part-Time Employees	2				
Comment					



Commissioners

Charlie Kennedy, District 1
 Rock Meeks, District 2
 Desiree Mills, Chair, District 3
 Tim Hodge, Vice Chair, District 4
 Johnny Hiers, District 5

Department Deliverables

Deliverable <i>(To be determined by the Department Head)</i>	First Quarter FY 2025	Second Quarter FY 2025	Third Quarter FY 2025	Fourth Quarter FY 2025	First Quarter FY 2026
	Replace the outdated software system that does not fully capture basic animal data and does not provide for efficient recording of daily tasks – Installed ShelterLuv completely – done by 12/3/2024 Developed a system for written policies and procedures – done by 12/4/2024 Develop a policy to comply with Ponce’s Law for hours of operation – Done 11/20/2024 Develop a written procedure for euthanization – Done 10/29/2024				
Comment					

Department Highlights

- While the animal services department had a rough start to the quarter with the change of our shelter director, the condemnation of our office building by the health department, and a total of 64 dogs in our facility in need of adoption or rescue, we have been able to make great strides to improve shelter standards for anyone who enters the facility.
- Since Matt Weldon took over the interim Animal Services Director position and Brandy Cannon took on the interim Animal Service Manager position we have moved into a temporary office facility on the premises to ensure our office space is safe for staff and visitors alike, which has also given us the chance to make room for an additional kennel technician and animal control officer. We also took this set back as a chance to reevaluate our shelter policies, procedures, and relationships with shelter partners to ensure the best possible outcome for all animals that enter our facility. We were lucky enough to be able to collaborate with the University of Florida's Shelter Medicine program to revamp our intake and outtake procedures for all animals, and find ways to ensure lost animals find their way home as quickly as possible, ideally without having to enter the shelter facility in the process.
- In working with the University of Florida's Shelter Medicine program, we were able to establish a set of 17 written policies and procedures, including written guidelines on expectations for the members of the department, and strict protocols that prioritize the safety and wellness of all animals in the facility. These policies have helped decrease the chance of disease spread, and helped establish a deworming protocol that is helping keep our facility and play yards cleaner for all dogs that enter it.
- As we worked to evaluate all the dogs in our care and determine the best possible outcomes for them, a rescue plea was publicized to help get our dogs with problematic behaviors into facilities where they had more resources for training, behavior modification, and environmental control to work on stressors and decompression from the shelter environment. This helped move 8 long-term residents into rescues, all of which who are now excelling in their new foster homes.

- In addition to moving our long-term residents who had begun to mentally deteriorate, we were able to find homes for 47 other dogs in our facility, and find rescue commitment for 13 other dogs. We have also had 10 cats adopted from our facility, and 19 cats pulled into rescues. We have been able to restore, establish, and promote rescue partnership, and have worked closely with Williston Animal Group, Operation Catnip, Citrus County Animal Services, Humane Society of North Central Florida, Must Love Pitties, Poochies Pet Rescue, K9s for Warriors, and we have now been accepted as a fellow shelter by Jacksonville Humane Society, FL Leaders Lifesaving Initiative. Building and restoring relationships with other shelters and rescues allows us to improve the positive outcome for shelter pets entrusted to our care, and has helped us maintain a low intake of animals into our kennels. This has allowed us more time and freedom to be able to provide services to our community.
- Thanks to our partnerships, we have already been able to make positive changes for not only the dogs within our shelter, but our cats, too. Halifax Humane Society was kind enough to donate some new stainless steel cat cages to our facility, with installment of plastic portals to maximize the amount of clean space our cats have access to during their time in the shelter, which will only allow us to maintain a healthier cat population.
- In an effort to further improve upon our shelter policies and public perception, a public strategic planning workshop was held, and we had over 60 people turnout to participate and have their voices heard! We were able to hear from public citizens, local rescues, animal services staff, and county commissioners to provide multiple perspectives when determining the future goals of our shelter.
- In response to the public demand for a social media presence by Animal Control, we were able to set up our own Facebook page to market the animals that are currently adoptable at our shelter. We can easily post when an animal does make its way into the shelter, share these posts to all local lost and found pages, and garner interest from the public to get them adopted in case their owner does not come forward!
- We have now implemented a new software that allows us to receive cashless donations, as well as efficiently process animals from their intake, all medical history, and adoptions with ease. We have been able to stay on top of all vetting for the animals in our care, which means our dogs are adoptable as soon as their stray hold is over for same-day adoptions, and ensuring our adoption process is an easy, seamless one.



- The animal services department was also able to maintain free adoptions for all animals in our care, which has helped make adopting a fully-vetted pet more accessible to all members of our community. It has also helped us decrease our overhead costs for animal care, as more animals adopted out requires less food, resources, and labor from the shelter staff. This has allowed us to run more play groups for our dogs, and allows for more time to walk and interact with the dogs in our care so they are less likely to mentally deteriorate in the stress of the kennel environment.
- Finally, our Kennel Technician Supervisor Tammy Goss was able to attend a 4 day refresher seminar with Dogs Playing For Life, a program that works to enhance the quality of life of shelter dogs by allowing for them to get out of their kennels, partake in natural play behavior, and allow for mental enrichment beyond the toys, food, and treats given to them within their kennels. This has also allowed us to better market our adoptable animals on Pet Finder with full biographies, as by spending more time interacting with the animals outside of a kennel we can best represent them and how we predict they will act in a home!



Housing

Name of Department	Housing
Name of Department Head	Marlon Gayle
Department Mission	To Promote and Preserve Affordable Housing within the County

Department Staffing

	First Quarter FY 2025	Second Quarter FY 2025	Third Quarter FY 2025	Fourth Quarter FY 2025	First Quarter FY 2026
Number of Budgeted Full-Time Employees	2				
Number of Actual Full-Time Employees	2				
Number of Budgeted Part-Time Employees	0				
Number of Actual Part-Time Employees	0				
Comment					

Department Deliverables

Deliverable <i>(To be determined by the Department Head)</i>	First Quarter FY 2025	Second Quarter FY 2025	Third Quarter FY 2025	Fourth Quarter FY 2025	First Quarter FY 2026
Community Engagement/ Enquires (Telephone Calls)	123 *				
Site Visits/Inspections	12				
Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Meetings	2				
Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP)- Idalia	5 meetings				
Board Appointments/ Engagements/ Meetings (CFCAA)	6				
Affordable Housing Training (Workshop/Webinars)	9				

Deliverable <i>(To be determined by the Department Head)</i>	First Quarter FY 2025	Second Quarter FY 2025	Third Quarter FY 2025	Fourth Quarter FY 2025	First Quarter FY 2026
SHIP Projects	9				
Comment	*A large portion of the task undertaken by this department are not easily quantifiable in terms of tangible numbers or result. Several hours are spent interacting with the public via phone calls or walk in office visits. These in the vast majority of the cases are not logged or recorded, which in many instances yields no tangible results beside a contented resident.				

Department Highlights

- Community Engagement:** For the 1st quarter of FY 2025, the Housing Department responded to 123 telephone enquiries regarding affordable housing. These calls were from a wide array of clients such as potential applicants, applicant’s lenders, real estate agents and contractors. The topics included but were not limited to SHIP Program parameters, available funding, available community resources, available housing resources, and project implementation/update and status. Callers were provided with the requested information over the phone and in many instances via emails. They were also pointed in the right direction when the resources needed were outside of the scope of the department.
- Site Visits/Inspections:** Site visits are conducted during the various phases of each SHIP project. Such as a pre-bid site visit, an in progress site visit and a close out/ final inspection. The amount of visits varies depending on each project and its associated project scope. For the reporting period, the Department conducted twelve (12) site visits related to four (4) SHIP Rehabilitation Projects at varying stages of completion.
- SHIP Projects:** For the reporting period there were at Four (4) Projects completed. Three (3) Rehabilitation Projects totaling \$80,477 and One (1) Purchase Assistance Project totaling \$30,000. The Department also received Five (5) new applications for housing assistance completed the review and approved/income certification of Three (3) applications and denied/ income certified One (1) application.
- Affordable Housing Training (Workshop/Webinars):** Department Staff attended/ participated in several training sessions throughout the reporting period. These training were centered around various legislative changes affecting the implementation of the various State affordable housing initiatives and programs and how they are implemented. Eleven (11) different training sessions were attended via half day in person workshops and webinars with an average duration of 1.5 hours. Topics included:
 - Closing the Gap Webinar Series Part 1: Preventing Homeownership Loss
 - Serving Lower Incomes through the Live Local Act.
 - Income and HOTMA Workshop
 - Live Local's Land Use Mandate for Affordable Housing



- **Board Appointments/ Engagements/ Meetings (CFCAA):** As the Levy County Public Sector representative on the Board of Directors for Central Florida Community Action Agency (CFCAA) I also serve as the CFCAA Board Secretary. I therefore advocate for funds to be expended and services undertaken by CFCAA to be increased in Levy County. To this end during the reporting period I have attended/ participated in Six (6) CFCAA related meeting/ projects such as the CFCAA Annual Partner of the Year Function.
- **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC):** During the reporting period Staff participated/ spearheaded two (2) AHAC meetings. Staff also drafted the Affordable Housing Incentive Strategies' Report for the year and made presentation to the Levy County BOCC and subsequent submitted the report to the State as per the statutory requirement of the SHIP Program.
- **Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP)-Idalia:** Attended numerous meetings with HHRP Idalia Consultants. Review progress of program implementation and make recommendations as needed. Review applications/ client files. Process invoices for payment.