

# Animal Custody Record Summary Report

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who is required to submit a custody record summary report?**

All Virginia animal control officers, law enforcement officers, public and private animal shelters, humane investigators, humane societies, and other releasing agencies are required to make an animal custody record for each animal taken into custody. A summary of these records is required to be submitted annually.

### **When is the report due?**

The report is due at the beginning of each calendar year, during January, summarizing the previous year. A letter will be sent to remind agencies of the open submission period for report, but you are responsible for submission regardless of receipt of this courtesy notice.

### **What information must be reported?**

The report includes contact information, an intake policy (.doc, .pdf, .xls, or .jpg file from your computer), and sum totals of all animal intake and disposition for the year, separated by category and species. If you transferred animals to or from another Virginia releasing agency, you will also be required to provide the name and address of each releasing agency. If your organization had intakes or dispositions outside of the methods delineated in Code, you will be required to provide an explanation. Examples of reasons include births in your facility or stolen/escaped animals.

### **Do I submit the actual animal custody records?**

No, you do NOT need to provide any individual animal custody records. You will be asked to provide a total number of animals for each intake and disposition method by species (i.e., total number of dogs, cats, etc. for each intake/disposition category).

### **Who can access the information I provide?**

Your report is part of an online database, which is accessible to the general public. Your contact information, all report details, and your intake policy will be available to anyone who visits the website: [arr.vdacs.virginia.gov/Reports06](http://arr.vdacs.virginia.gov/Reports06). You can also view previous years' reports using this web address.

### **How long do I have to submit my report?**

The submission period is January 1 – January 31. Submissions will NOT be accepted outside of the open submission window.

### **How should I document...**

- ...previously adopted animals that were returned?
  - Each custody event is separate, and the reason for custody should reflect the intake method (i.e. owner-surrender)
- ...animals currently being kept at a foster home?
  - These animals are still in the custody of your organization, regardless of where they are physically housed, and should be included. Foster is not a disposition.
- ...animals which our organization keeps in custody from year to year?
  - These animals should be included as 'On-hand December 31.'
- ...animals which were dead when we collected them (animal carcass pickup)?
  - An animal custody record is required for each **live** animal taken into custody, specifying the reason for custody. If the animal dies in transit, disposition should be recorded as 'Died in Custody'. Dead animals picked up should **NOT** be included in your report.

### **What is an intake policy?**

This is not specifically defined in Virginia Code, but may include the types of animals taken into the custody of your agency, the reasons for intake, and/or the policies utilized to make those decisions.

### **The names and addresses of my releasing agencies to/from which transfers were made will not fit in the space allowed. How can I submit this information?**

First, try separating your entries by commas or semicolons instead of line breaks. This significantly reduces the number of characters used. If you still exceed the character limit, use any of the other text boxes on your report to continue your list. Do NOT mail, fax or email any portion of your report to this office. You must list names and addresses in your report. Notes such as "list too long, see shelter for more information" will NOT be accepted.

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### **The 'On Hand January 1' column number is not correct. How do I change it?**

This column is carried over from your report last year. Any animals you reported as "On Hand Dec. 31" (Column Q) the previous reporting year, will be included as "On Hand January 1" (Column A) on this year's report. If these numbers are incorrect due to recordkeeping or other errors, use the "Other" intake and disposition columns (Columns H and P) to correct any discrepancies. Be sure to provide an explanation in the corresponding text box.

### **I'm having trouble submitting my report. How do I know my report went through successfully?**

When you select "submit" at the bottom of the report, a screen will appear notifying you that your report has been submitted successfully. If you do not see this screen, your report did **NOT** transmit. **Scroll down the page to view any validation errors, which will appear midway down in red.**

Do **NOT** mail, fax, or email any portion of your report to this office. Information provided outside of the reporting system will **NOT** be accepted.

Common problems with submission are:

1. **Taking too much time in the system.** The system will prompt you to continue your session, but will eventually time out anyway. We recommend you gather your submission materials in advance to minimize time spent logged into the system.
2. **Failing to submit an intake policy.** Directly under your contact information, you must use the "choose file" button to select an intake policy file from your computer. You will NOT be able to submit your report without one.
3. **Not reconciling intake and disposition numbers.** Each animal reported for the year must have both an intake and disposition method. The 'totals' columns in each section MUST match.
4. **Not ensuring zeroes are present in all empty boxes.** Each box not containing a number must contain a zero, or the form will not work correctly. If you have not included a zero in an empty box, the corresponding row and column totals will show 'NaN' instead of a sum.

### **My organization is an animal control officer unit, which contracts with a shelter to house animals. Do I have to submit a report? Who should report animals taken to the contracted facility?**

Yes, a report is required for animal control officers who utilize a contracted animal shelter (not owned/operated by their employing locality). However, **animals impounded at the contracted shelter facility should appear only on the shelter's animal custody records summary, NOT on the animal control officer's field report. Only animals confined/disposed independently of the shelter (NOT taken to the shelter) should be included in the field report.** This may include, but is not limited to, critically injured animals taken straight to a veterinarian and euthanized, or animals picked up and returned directly to the owner (rather than being taken to the shelter). The report should **NOT** include animals that were dead when picked up by an animal control officer (animal carcasses are not part of this animal custody records summary report).

### **My organization is closed now. Why am I still being asked for a report?**

If your organization closed during the reporting year, you will be required to submit one final report summarizing any intakes or dispositions during the final year of operation. If your organization was closed the entire year, contact the database administrator at 804-692-4001 or [animalcare@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:animalcare@vdacs.virginia.gov).

### **My question was not answered in this FAQ. Where can I get assistance?**

You may direct any further questions to the Office of Veterinary Services during normal business hours at 804-692-4001 or [animalcare@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:animalcare@vdacs.virginia.gov).



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## Explanations of Report Fields

### Animal Intake Policy Document Upload

"Intake Policy" is not specifically defined in Virginia Code, but may include the types of animals taken into the custody of your agency, the reasons for intake, and/or the policies utilized to make those decisions.

### Species Type

#### Companion animal

Includes domestic or feral dogs, domestic or feral cats, nonhuman primates, guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits not raised for food or fiber, exotic animals, reptiles, and exotic or native birds.

#### Livestock animal

Includes horses, cows, sheep, pigs, goats, llamas, domesticated cervidae animals, ostriches and emus, farmed fish, and rabbits or hares raised for human food or fiber.

#### Poultry

Includes all domestic fowl and game birds raised in captivity.

More Information: [Va. Code § 3.2-6500](#)

### Reason for Custody

#### Column A. On Hand January 1

Animals which were in custody on the last day of the prior year and were therefore still in custody at the beginning of the reporting year (carried over).

#### Column B. Stray

Animals found running at large, dumped at the agency's facility or another location, or otherwise astray separated from the rightful owner, whereby an owner cannot be identified and the animal's status is unknown. **Do not report "DOA" animal carcasses picked up.**

#### Column C. Seized

Animals which were actually seized from an owner or property pursuant to Virginia Code.

#### Column D. Bite Case Quarantine

Animals confined for the purposes of satisfying a rabies quarantine related to a bite case, wherein the animal is taken into custody and confined by the agency or facility. *(Does **NOT** include cases of animals quarantined at the owner's home; these were not taken into custody.)*

#### Column E. Surrendered by Owner

Animals lawfully surrendered by the owner. *(Includes animals returned by a new owner after adoption.)*

#### Column F. Received from Another Virginia Releasing Agency

Animals received as a transfer from another releasing agency operating within Virginia. *(Animals impounded by an ACO from a contracting locality are **NOT** transfers.)*

#### Column G. Received from an Out-of-State Releasing Agency

Animals received as a transfer from a releasing agency operating outside of Virginia.

#### Column H. Other

Animals received in a manner that is not consistent with any of the previous categories. **Do not report "DOA" animal carcasses picked up.**

### Method of Disposition

#### Column J. Reclaimed by Owner

All stray, quarantined, seized, impounded, or safekeeping animals that were returned back to their owners.

#### Column K. Adopted

All animals adopted to a new owner.

#### Column L. Transferred to Another Virginia Releasing Agency

Animals transferred to a **bona-fide releasing agency operating within Virginia**. Do not report animals impounded at your contracted shelter as "transfers".

#### Column M. Transferred to Out-of-State Releasing Agency

Animals transferred to a releasing agency operating outside of Virginia.

#### Column N. Died While in Custody

Animals that died while in custody of the agency, regardless of the reason or physical location where the death occurred. *(Does **NOT** include animals that were euthanized.)*

#### Column O. Euthanized

Any animals euthanized while in custody of the agency, regardless of the reason, physical location where the euthanasia occurred, or person performing procedure.

#### Column P. Other

Animals that were disposed in a manner that is not consistent with any of the other columns. **Do not report "DOA" animal carcasses picked up.**

#### Column Q. On Hand December 31

Animals not disposed by the end of the reporting year and still in custody through the last day of that year.