

ANIMAL ADOPTION FEE STUDY

Tehama County Code Section 7.04.040 authorizes the Board of Supervisors to establish a schedule of fees for services performed under this title. The established fees may recover the reasonable costs of providing such services. The standard adoption fee for an animal and the associated adoption fee increments were established in 2010 and 2011, with only the spay/ neuter fees for adopted animals increasing to correlate with the fee charged by the contracted veterinarian. The Division is proposing to eliminate adoption fee increments, and instead move to a standard adoption fee for each species. Discussed below are the methods used to determine adoption fees established as a result of this fee study.

The data below is based on adoptions from the Tehama County Animal Care Center over an 18-month period, from January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The Division processed 1569 adoptions during that period, including 297 cats and 1251 dogs. The remaining adoptions comprised of 8 small animals, 12 small livestock and one horse. The proposed adoption fees are based on averages of the actual make ready costs for the above animals.

Part 1. Dogs

Dogs receive core vaccines upon arrival to the shelter and are vaccinated for rabies prior to adoption if over 12 weeks. The average cost of these vaccinations is \$17.22. Additionally, all dogs receive broad spectrum dewormer and are given routine heartworm prevention, for an average cost of \$0.41 per dog. All dogs over the age of 6 months also receive a heartworm test, for an average cost of \$3.11 per dog.

All dogs must be microchipped at or before adoption. Because some dogs arrive to the shelter already microchipped, or are provided gratis microchips by one of our partners, not every dog receives a microchip from the Division. Of the 1251 dogs adopted during this study, 1091 received Division implanted microchips, for a total cost of \$6849.70. Divided by 1251 adoptions gives an average cost of \$5.48 per dog.

All dogs must be spayed or neutered at adoption, a service arranged for by the Division. Because some dogs arrive to the shelter already altered, or are altered through various grants awarded to the Division, the total actual cost to alter all dogs during this time period was \$103,880. Divided by 1251 total adoptions gives us an average \$83.04 in spay/neuter fees per adoption.

Based on the above information, the average cost to make a dog ready for adoption is \$109.26 (\$17.22+ \$0.41+ \$3.11+ \$5.48+ \$83.04). The proposed adoption fee for dogs is **\$110 per dog**.

Part 2. Cats

Cats receive core vaccines upon arrival to the shelter and are vaccinated for rabies prior to adoption if over 12 weeks. The average cost of these vaccinations is \$9.43. Additionally, all cats receive broad spectrum dewormer and are given routine flea, tick, and heartworm prevention, for an average cost of \$1.05 per cat.

All cats must be microchipped at or before adoption. Because some cats arrive to the shelter already microchipped or are provided gratis microchips by one of our partners, not every cat receives a microchip from the Division. Of the 297 cats adopted during this study, 278 received Division implanted microchips, for a total cost of \$1844.70. Divided by 297 adoptions gives an average cost of \$6.21 per cat.

All cats must be spayed or neutered at adoption, a service arranged for by the Division. Because some cats arrive to the shelter already altered, or are altered through various grants awarded to the Division, the total actual cost to alter all cats during this time period was \$15,440. Divided by 297 total adoptions gives us an average \$51.99 in spay/neuter fees per adoption.

Based on the above information, the average cost to make a cat ready for adoption is \$68.68 (\$9.43+ \$1.05+ \$6.21+ \$51.99). The proposed adoption fee for cats is **\$70 per cat**.

Part 3. Other Animals

Because the sample size for other animals adopted during this fee study is so small, the Division cannot accurately determine the average make ready cost per adoption. Instead, the Division recommends establishing an adoption fee in line with the comparator counties, as follows:

Small Animals (chickens, fowl, small mammals): \$5

Small Livestock (goats, sheep, pigs): \$40

Horses: \$50