

# COLORADO PET ANIMAL DISCUSSION



February 2021

Presented by National Canine Advocacy Group, Inc. in Collaboration with TABTO.org

# KEY POINTS

- ❖ Standards of Care for Pet Animals in our State Need to be Raised
- ❖ The Case for Creating a Socially Conscious Animal Community
- ❖ Support for the Colorado Socially Conscious Sheltering Act
- ❖ A Full Vet Exam Prior to Adoption or Sale is Critical

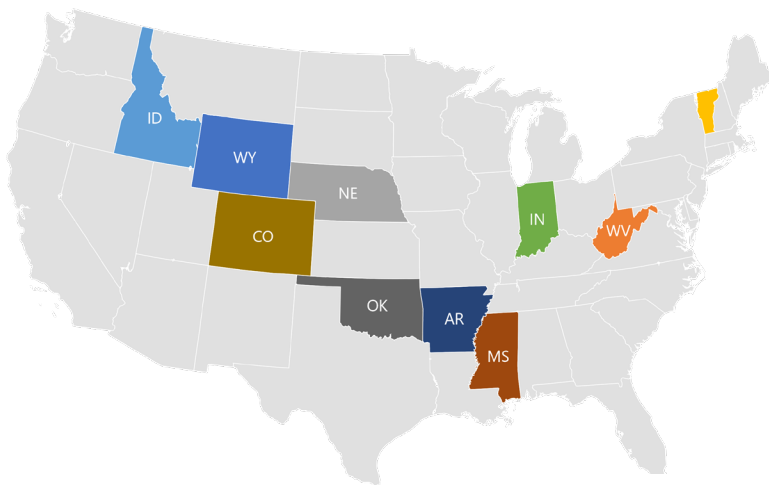


# COLORADO PET ANIMAL IMPORTATION

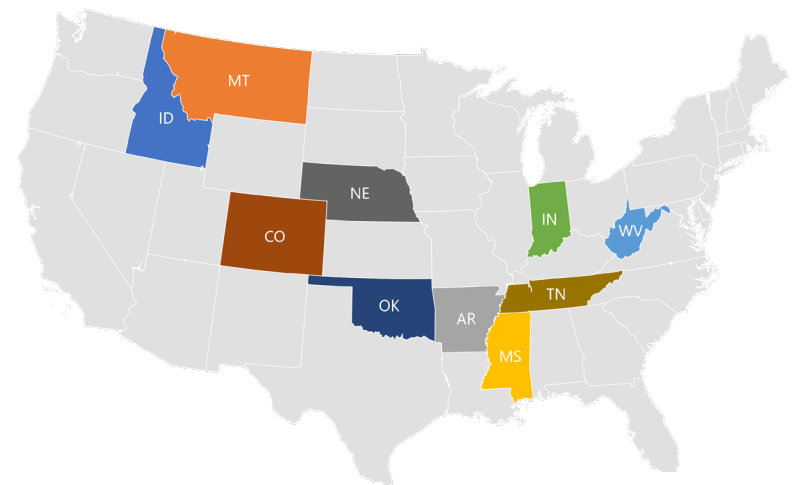
❖ At 65%, we have one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the country.

❖ And 47% of Colorado households have one or more dogs, making us the 8th highest dog-owning state.

Top 10 Pet-Owning States <sup>(1)</sup>

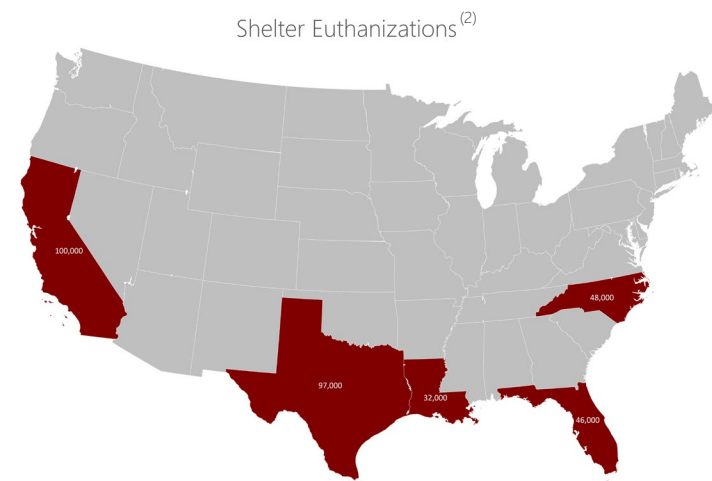


Top 10 Dog-Owning States <sup>(1)</sup>



# COLORADO PET ANIMAL IMPORTATION

- ❖ Our spay/neuter programs have successfully lowered unwanted pet populations in our State, resulting in fewer animals available for adoption.
- ❖ Other parts of the country have not been as successful in managing pet overpopulation. In fact, five states account for more than half of the estimated 625,000 shelter animals euthanized every year in the U.S.<sup>(2)</sup>
- ❖ By transferring animals into our State for adoption, Colorado's shelters and rescues reduce the strain of unwanted pets throughout the U.S. and save thousands of animals from being euthanized.
- ❖ The top five states for imports into Colorado are New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and Arkansas.



Shelter & Rescue Transfers into Colorado<sup>(3)</sup>

	2017	2018	2019	3Y Total
Dogs	32,000	35,000	32,600	99,600
Cats	5,000	7,600	9,400	22,000
Other	100	200	100	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,100</b>	<b>42,800</b>	<b>42,100</b>	<b>122,000</b>

# IMPORTED PET ANIMALS & DISEASE



Sick animals are either not identified or not treated prior to transport.



The stress of transport may increase susceptibility to infection.



Sick animals may be quickly sold or adopted before any concerns are identified.

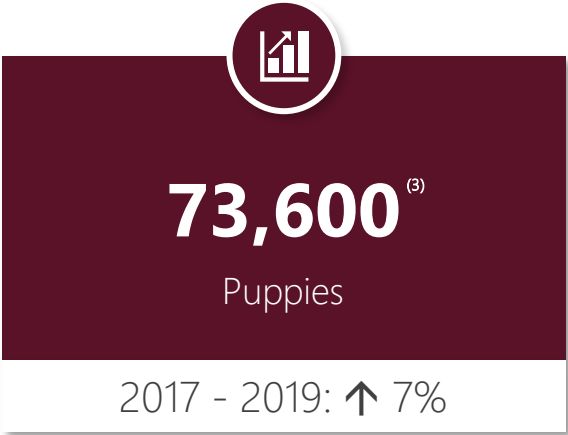


*Animals suffer, consumers are left holding the bag.*

# PUPPY IMPORTATION INTO COLORADO

## 2017 - 2019

**Puppies** are of particular concern - consumer demand drives a **high volume** of imported animals, generally with a **high price tag**, and **rapid sale or adoption**, often before any health or behavioral concerns can be identified.



# PUPPY IMPORTATION INTO COLORADO

2017 - 2019



Rescues<sup>(3)</sup>

117 Organizations

40,400 Puppies

59% of All Dogs Imported by Rescues are Puppies

Top 15 Account for 74% of Puppies Imported by All Rescues



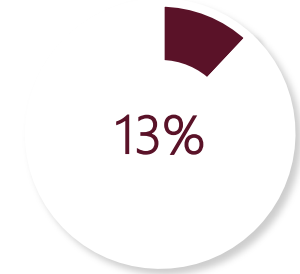
Pet Stores<sup>(5)</sup>

13 Pet Stores

23,700 Puppies

Four Colorado Pet Stores Selling Puppies Went Out of Business in 2019 and early 2020

Those Four Pet Stores Imported 6,500 Puppies from 2017 - 2019, Leaving a Supply Gap



Shelters<sup>(3)</sup>

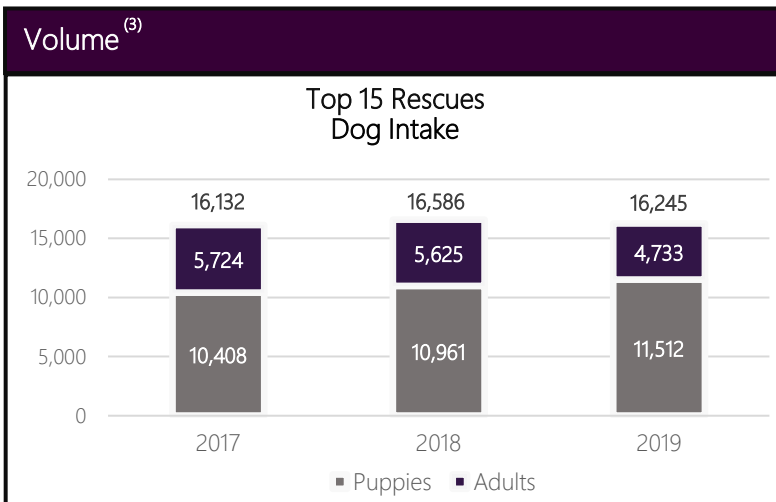
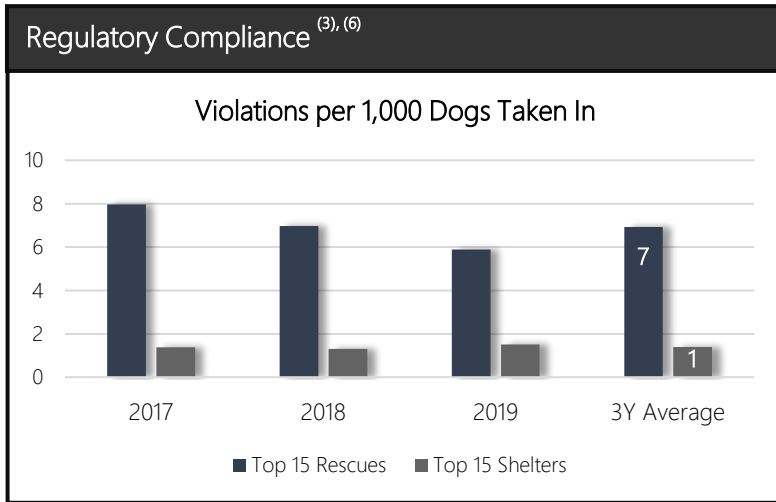
30 Facilities

9,500 Puppies

31% of All Dogs Imported by Shelters are Puppies

22 of the 30 Facilities are Open-Admission Shelters

# STANDARDS OF CARE



Pre-Adoption Health & Behavioral Evaluations

Perform a complete veterinary exam
Ensure vaccinations are up-to-date
Spay/neuter
Assess behavioral needs of animal
Evaluate suitability as a companion animal
Safeguard communities from animals that have exhibited dangerous behavior

Post-Adoption Support

Behavioral consultation and guidance
Return policy
Vaccine/microchipping services
Veterinary services
End-of-life services
Community programs



# SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS ANIMAL COMMUNITY

The fundamental goal of a Socially Conscious Community is to create best outcomes for all animals. The responsibilities of Socially Conscious Shelters include:

-  Ensuring every unwanted or homeless pet has a safe place to go for shelter and care
-  Placing every healthy and safe animal
-  Assessing the medical and behavioral needs of homeless animals and ensuring these needs are thoughtfully addressed
-  Alleviating suffering and making appropriate euthanasia decisions
-  Aligning policy with the needs of the community
-  Enhancing the human-animal bond through thoughtful placements and post adoption support
-  Considering the health and wellness of each animal and each community when transferring animals between communities
-  Fostering a culture of transparency, ethical decision making, mutual respect, continual learning and collaboration



Rescue Groups can help create a Socially Conscious Animal Community by:

-  Partnering with Socially Conscious shelters
-  Supporting the fundamental tenets of Socially Conscious Sheltering
-  Focusing your programs on animals who struggle within shelter systems
-  Helping move animals to locations where they are most likely to be adopted



# THE WAY FORWARD FOR COLORADO

- ❖ Codify best practices and high standards of care by establishing the “Colorado Socially Conscious Sheltering Act.”
- ❖ Require a **full veterinary examination** be conducted by a **licensed Colorado veterinarian** on **all** pet animals prior to adoption or sale, not just puppies and not just those being imported into the State.
  - ◆ **Protects Colorado consumers** from unknowingly buying or adopting sick and/or diseased animals, leaving them “holding the bag” should their pet become seriously ill or die.
  - ◆ **Protects employees and patrons of Colorado’s pet animal care facilities** from disease transmittable to humans.
  - ◆ **Protects Colorado consumers and communities** from animals with serious behavioral issues.
  - ◆ **Protects pet animals in Colorado** by ensuring their medical and behavioral needs are assessed and thoughtfully addressed prior to adoption or sale.

# NOTES

- (1) 2017-2018 Edition AVMA Pet Ownership and Demographics Source Book
- (2) Bestfriends.org Pet Lifesaving Dashboard
- (3) PACFA 2017, 2018 and 2019 Animal Shelter and Rescue Individual Statistics reports. For all periods, excludes: rescues and shelters that did not import any adult or juvenile dogs into Colorado; pet transporters; for-profit shelters; out-of-state shelters reporting in Colorado; and miscellaneous organizations not otherwise classified as a rescue or shelter. Certain data gaps exist in PACFA's 2017 and 2018 Animal Shelter and Rescue Individual Statistics reports, which impact one rescue's 2017 statistics and two rescues' 2018 statistics. In each case, it is assumed that the number of puppies and dogs imported into Colorado for that rescue and that year approximate the two years that were reported.
- (4) Represents estimated weighted average cost to buy a puppy as follows:

	<u>Rescues</u>	<u>Pet Stores</u>	<u>Shelters</u>	<u>Total/ Weighted Average</u>
<b>Total Puppies Imported Into Colorado</b>	40,400	23,700	9,500	73,600
<b>Average Adoption Fee / Sale Price per Puppy</b>	\$425	\$1,940	\$325	\$900

**Rescues** - \$425 adoption fee is based on August 2020 web research, primarily on Petfinder.com and individual rescue websites.

**Pet Stores** - \$1,940 sale price is based on August 2020 research on Puppyfind.com. Value is based on advertised prices for 87 puppies of varying breeds between the ages of 7 and 12 weeks. The calculated average is \$2,150 sale price per puppy, which has been reduced to \$1,940 for conservatism.

**Shelters** - \$325 adoption fee is based on August 2020 web research and includes the eight largest shelters as measured by number of puppies imported into Colorado. These shelters make up 80% of the total puppies coming into Colorado.

- (5) Pet store data compiled using Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) records obtained from the State of Colorado.
- (6) Violation data obtained from PACFA under the Colorado Open Records Act.

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