



# PRESS RELEASE

*Seal Beach Police Department  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CITY OF SEAL BEACH ANIMAL CONTROL PROGRAM STARTS JULY 1, 2023**

SEAL BEACH, CA — The City of Seal Beach is implementing an in-house animal control program to better serve the community of Seal Beach.

From 2004 to 2023, the City of Seal Beach contracted with the City of Long Beach to provide animal control services to the Seal Beach community. Operating cost increases prompted a review of the Long Beach Animal Control contract. City staff conducted a comprehensive assessment of Animal Control services in general, as well as an exploration of options for providing these services to the City. In May of 2022, several options were provided to the City Council, and it was the Council's direction to bring animal control services back to an internal Seal Beach program.

As of July 1, 2023, the Seal Beach Police Department will be handling all animal control services for the community. Animal Control is a vital government function. A robust and active Animal Control Program serves the community by maintaining public safety and health, while ensuring animals are treated humanely. The essential purpose of Animal Control is to provide enforcement of state and local laws pertaining to animals and animal ownership. Animal Control Officers are tasked with the issuance of citations, investigation of violations of animal care and welfare pertaining to Animal Control codes, and violations of the Municipal Code. They also provide education on the humane and required treatment of animals and solicit information to citizens on resources available

to comply with local and state laws. Lastly, Officers respond to calls for service and provide care or impound a healthy, injured, sick, dangerous, or deceased animal.

All Seal Beach Police Department Senior Community Services Officers and Police Aides assigned to field duties attended a humane animal enforcement course. The course was designed to provide animal control officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to handle and respond to animal-related incidents in a humane and compassionate manner. The training focuses on promoting the welfare of animals while ensuring public safety.

Following a request for proposals, The Westminster Adoption Group and Services, also known as WAGS, was selected as the designated animal shelter for the City of Seal Beach. WAGS shelters and cares for companion animals, rescues neglected pets, treats unhealthy and injured strays, and educates the community about humane issues and responsible pet care. WAGS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

*For further information, please visit WAGS - 6621 Westminster Blvd. Westminster, CA 92683. (714) 887-6156. <https://wagspetadoption.org/>*

Although WAGS will accept various other types of animals, they are not equipped to take in wildlife animals. The nearby Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center, located on Pacific Coast Highway in Huntington Beach, fits this need and was designed as the wildlife shelter for the City of Seal Beach. The Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center a non-profit organization and is dedicated to the rehabilitation and release of injured and orphaned native wildlife. The center is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center is capable of rehabilitating over 400 animals at a time. The facility is equipped with animal washing stations, a hospital, indoor and outdoor caging, an area to prepare food, and other facilities.

*For further information, please visit Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center – 21900 Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, CA 92646. (714) 374-5587. <https://www.wccoc.org/>*

Licensing is a critical function of an animal control program. A properly managed licensing program assures appropriate imposition of vaccination requirements; assists with the tracking of privately owned animals and adherence to ordinances; provides a revenue stream that helps support the animal control program, and, assures that non-

residents are paying mandated fees when accessing City owned-and-operated dog parks.

Previously, the City of Long Beach licensed all dogs for the City of Seal Beach. However, with the expiration of that contract, licensing will now be the responsibility of the City of Seal Beach.

Currently, dog licenses expire at the end of the year. We have identified an online licensing provider that will provide a more user-friendly, streamlined, and efficient process for our residents. In the coming months, the City of Seal Beach will provide additional information about pet licensing.

“It is extremely gratifying to see Seal Beach take a leadership role in its city by deciding to operate its own animal services program. No doubt this will bring greater connectedness between the community and their newly established Animal Welfare Department,” said Long Beach Animal Care Services Acting Bureau Manager Melanie Wagner.

“We wish to thank the Seal Beach Animal Care Center and the City of Long Beach, their animal control programs, staff, and volunteers for the services they provided to Seal Beach for many years,” said Chief of Police Michael Henderson. “Without their assistance and guidance, we would not have been able to bring animal control services back in-house.”

**As of July 1, 2023, to report an animal control-related incident, please contact the Seal Beach Police Department’s non-emergency number (562) 594-7232. For life-or-death emergencies, please dial 9-1-1.**

For more information about the Seal Beach Police Department’s animal control program, please follow the Seal Beach Police Department on social media @sealbeachpolice. Community members can also email [animalcontrol@sealbeachca.gov](mailto:animalcontrol@sealbeachca.gov) for questions related to this program.

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