

Consulting with Jackson and Kristen

We find ourselves in a unique and challenging moment in animal welfare where finding a path forward can feel impossible. More than ever, we are acting in crisis mode, operating with little or partial data, just trying to keep our heads above water as we experience a seemingly endless inflow of animals into our shelters, causing overcrowding and increased distress.

We Can Help

What shelters need most right now are solutions so understanding your unique challenges is our starting point. We begin by getting to know you, taking a deep dive into your data to learn what animals are coming in, how they're entering, what's happening when they get there, and how long it's taking for them to get out. We find answers you didn't know you were there so you can make some fast and easy changes that will get you back in the driver's seat.

Next, we spend several days on site, at your shelter, observing every operational area, meeting with key staff members, learning about your culture and standard practices, and talking to your leadership team to provide you a comprehensive and objective assessment of what we see as the biggest challenges, the simplest fast-fixes, the practices or policies that are part of the problem, and the bigger shifts you can make to get back to a place of excitement and empowerment.

Then we stick with you, providing remote and if needed, in-person support to get you through each change you decide to make until you get to a place where you don't consistently need our guidance and leadership support. We know our work is finished when the leadership team feels motivated and in control again and you have a clear vision and a pathway to get there.

In these tough times, animal shelters simply cannot go it alone without facing burnout, fatigue, and organizational instability. We've worked with thousands of animal welfare professionals and hundreds of animal shelters and rescues and we have a proven track record of success in increasing lifesaving, improving culture and morale, reducing barriers to outcomes, building sustainable systems, and ensuring every animal in your care receives individualized care and attention.

Our Process

Step 1: We gather and analyze your data, conduct background and survey work, and provide you with an organizational profile.

Step 2: We work with you to identify three changes you know you want to make and what success will look like.

Step 3: We work with your team to plan and schedule the site visit.

Step 4: We come to your shelter or rescue for three to four days, with about half of our time working toward pre-established goals and half observing your operation so we can make further observations and recommendations.

Step 5: We schedule a follow-up meeting and set up goals and deliverables for each team and manager for three to six months.

Step 6: We work with your team in a process of mutual accountability - we provide deliverables to each other as agreed upon in order to meet time bound goals we set as a group.

Step 7: We work with you on a monthly retainer until you don't need us any longer. At that point, you give us 30 days to wrap up and we provide you a closing report.

We focus on six core areas of support

1. **Foundation.** This includes adherence to nationally-recognized guidelines (ASV, Shelter Animals Count, NACA, Fear Free, etc.) for animal intakes, field services, humane care, public safety, animal outcomes, and policy.
2. **Structure.** We help you define roles and responsibilities, your organizational chart, accountability systems, standard operating procedures, internal communications practices, and strategic prioritization. Our goal is that everyone in the organization knows why they are there, what their job is, and how they fit into the big picture.
3. **Flow.** We analyze the flow of people and animals through your systems in order to help you streamline processes, reduce the length of time animals spend in shelter, reduce frustration and confusion, and ensure your system is operating smoothly. We look at every step of your flow process from pre-intake to intake to care to outcome.
4. **Culture.** We help you build a culture of saying yes to innovation and new ideas. We also help you build or improve an organizational culture agreement that matches your mission and values, so everyone is on the same page when it comes to how we treat pets and people.
5. **Balance.** We help you balance public safety, community pet support, humane care, and live outcomes to create a healthy, well-functioning organization.
6. **Model Programs.** These are the things that set your organization apart, get the attention of your community and potential supporters, and make the work fun and rewarding.

Some of our goals for every organization:

- Your organization has standardized processes for intake, care, and outcomes that recognize the individuality in people and animals.
- You have a pathway plan for animals before or at the point of intake.
- You meet or exceed standards set by national organizations (ASV guidelines, NACA, SAC).
- You have fewer than 10% of your animals in a shelter for more than 60 days and you have no animals in your custody for more than six months (unless you provide a sanctuary function).
- You do not have to euthanize healthy, adoptable animals due to capacity or resource issues.
- You have connections to funding that can help you solve your most pressing challenges.
- You have a plan to provide humane, individualized care for every animal in your shelter or rescue.
- You have an easy-to-understand budget, organizational structure, and standard operating procedures that are accessible to everyone in the organization.
- Your volunteer and foster programs are at the heart of the organization.
- You have conversations with everyone who engages you for any reason. You ask for help, accept help, and make it fast and easy to help.
- You know your data and you're tracking the metrics over time to make data-driven decisions.
- Your board or advisory committee, staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders understand the basics of how the organization functions, its performance over time, what it does, and their role in success.
- You have a simple, straightforward strategic communications plan that is shared with everyone in the organization.
- You manage limited resources wisely to maximize your organizational impact.

