

Frequently Asked Questions

ANIMAL SHELTER

Q: Where is the Costa Mesa Animal Shelter?

The City of Costa Mesa contracts exclusively with Newport Center Animal Hospital for animal sheltering services. The shelter is located at 1333 Avocado Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660 and can be reached at (949) 447-5959. *The shelter is open Monday – Friday, 10:00am-4pm and Saturday, 10am-3pm.*

Q: Is the shelter open to the public?

No, the shelter is not open to the public and does not facilitate adoptions. The shelter provides medical care and boarding to impounded animals during their required holding period prior to the animal becoming adoptable.

Q: What do I do if I found a stray animal within the City of Costa Mesa?

If you find and can safely contain a stray animal, please call the Costa Mesa Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674.

ANIMAL ADOPTION

Q: Who is Priceless Pet Rescue?

Priceless Pet Rescue is the City of Costa Mesa’s contracted animal adoption services provider since January 2018. They are a non-profit, no-kill pet rescue operating out of multiple adoption centers in Southern California known as “The Orphanage.” The Orphanage is located at 1536 Newport Blvd. in Costa Mesa.

Q: Is Priceless Pet Rescue the animal shelter?

No. To clarify, Priceless Pet Rescue is the City’s contracted animal adoption services provider. Newport Center Animal Hospital is the City’s contracted animal shelter. All animals must be medically cared for and deemed adoptable at the shelter before transferring into the care of the adoption center.

Q: How do I contact The Orphanage – Costa Mesa or Priceless Pet Rescue regarding animals?

Please email Priceless Pet Rescue at info@pricelesspetrescue.org for the quickest response. You may also call (909) 203-3695 to leave a voicemail message and staff will respond as needed. If you are inquiring about a specific animal, please visit The Orphanage in person to meet the animal and its friends. If you find and can safely contain a stray animal, please call the Costa Mesa Animal Control at (714) 754-5674.

Q: How can I view adoptable animals in person?

The City of Costa Mesa contracts exclusively with Priceless Pet Rescue for animal adoption services. Their local adoption center, The Orphanage, is located at 1536 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, CA 92627. *The center is open Tuesday– Friday from 12:00pm– 7:00pm, Saturday - Sunday from 12:00pm – 5:00pm.*

Q: What steps do I take to adopt a Costa Mesa sheltered animal?

If you are interested in adopting a Costa Mesa sheltered animal, please call Animal Care Services at (714) 754-4918 and we can place an adoption hold on the animal. Once the animal completes its required holding period and is deemed

healthy for adoption, we will notify you when the animal is available to adopt. Local adoptions will take place at The Orphanage – Costa Mesa, located at 1536 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, CA 92627.

LOST OR MISSING PETS

Q: My pet is missing, what do I do?

First, look at the City's [Impounded Animals webpage](#). If you do not see your pet, please check surrounding [animal shelters](#). If you still cannot locate your pet, please call Animal Care Services at (714) 754-4918 to provide a description or picture, location last seen, and your contact information. Staff can contact the shelter to see if your pet is in their care. In addition, post your pet's picture with your contact information around your neighborhood and online.

Q: I found my missing pet on the City's Impounded Animals webpage, how do I redeem my pet?

If you believe that your lost pet may be sheltered at Newport Center Animal Hospital, please call (949) 447-5959 to set up an appointment to visit the shelter in person to identify and reclaim your pet. *The shelter is open Monday – Friday, 10:00am-4:00pm and Saturday, 10:00am-3:00pm.* You will need to provide the following documentations to the shelter in order to redeem your pet from the shelter: Owner Identification, Proof of Rabies Vaccination for impounded dog(s) and proof of Animal License for impounded dog(s). If you do not have a current rabies vaccination certificate or animal license for your dog(s), shelter staff will assist you in getting the necessary documentation. Please remember to license, microchip, and tag your pets to increase their chance of returning home.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Q: What should I do about a stray, found, or dead animal in my yard or on the road?

To ensure the safe return and reduce any delays in reuniting pets with their owners, please follow these steps.

- If you have found a pet in the City of Costa Mesa (ONLY), and cannot locate an owner, please notify [Costa Mesa Animal Control](#) at (714) 754-5674. An Animal Control Officer can respond to your location.
- You may also bring lost dogs or exotics to the Costa Mesa Police Department at 99 Fair Drive.

Healthy cats cannot be accepted at the Police Station. Found cats must be reported to Animal Control so they can respond to your location.

- All pets (with the exception of cats, unless otherwise stated by an animal control officer) can be accepted directly by shelter personnel at the Newport Center Animal Hospital, during shelter business hours. The shelter is located at 1333 Avocado Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660 and can be reached at (949) 447-5959.
- For deceased animals, call the [Costa Mesa Animal Control](#) at (714) 754-5674.

Q: Will Animal Control show up when I call about a loose animal?

Animal Control will not show up if the animal is not contained. The reason being is that if the animal is running freely, most likely the animal will run off by the time Animal Control arrives. If you cannot safely contain the animal without putting yourself, others, or the animal in harm, please do not attempt to capture the animal.

ANIMAL LICENSING

Q: How do I apply for or renew a dog license?

- To apply for or renew online visit: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/doglicense>
 - You will be required to upload an updated rabies certificate.

- You will also be required to upload a certificate of sterility if your dog has been spayed/neutered.
- If over the age of 62+ you will be required to upload an ID to receive approval for Senior Rates.
- Payment by Visa or MasterCard card only.³

- *To apply by mail:*

- Download the application if you click [here](#).
- Include copies of the rabies and sterility certificates. Do not send original documents.
- Provide a check or money order payable to “City of Costa Mesa”. Do not send cash.
- Mail to: City of Costa Mesa Attention: Animal Licensing PO Box 1200 Costa Mesa, CA 92628

- *To apply in person:*

- Visit the Costa Mesa Police Department (99 Fair Drive); Monday-Thursday 8am-4:30pm
- Provide copies of the rabies and sterility certificates. (Documents must be in the name of the person registering for an Animal License. Proof of ownership may be requested.)
- Pay with cash, check, or by Visa or MasterCard card.
- Once the application is processed, and required documents and payment are received, you will be sent the initial dog license tag. Please allow 2-4 weeks to receive license tag in the mail.

For questions regarding dog licensing, please call the Costa Mesa Police Department Front Desk at (714) 754-5280.

Q: Is a dog license required?

Yes! Each dog over four months of age kept in the City of Costa Mesa must be licensed and have a current rabies vaccination. It is required that all dogs wear the license tag at all times, attached to a collar or harness. Dog licenses are non-transferable and non-refundable.

Licenses are issued on an annual basis and it is the responsibility of the dog owner to ensure that rabies vaccines and dog licenses are kept current.

Q: How much does the dog license cost?

- Non-spayed or Non-neutered dogs: \$80.00
- Spayed or neutered dogs: \$25.00
- Late Renewal Fees: 50% of applicable license fee
- Replacement tag: \$5.00
- Non-spayed or Non-neutered dogs: \$40.00 Senior Owners (over the age of 62; proof of age required)
- Spayed or neutered dogs: \$10.00 Senior Owners (over the age of 62; proof of age required)

Q: Where do the dog license fees go?

All license fees collected shall be paid into the general fund of the City of Costa Mesa.

Q: Do I have to license my cat?

No, cats are not required to have an animal license. However, updated identification tags and microchips are recommended to increase the chances of your cat returning home if missing.

Q: I moved and no longer reside within the City of Costa Mesa – Can I cancel my dog(s) animal license?

Yes, you may send an email to Animal.License@costamesaca.gov or call 714-754-5280 to inform City personnel that you no longer require a Costa Mesa Animal License and would like to close your account. You may also contact us if your pet is deceased.

RULES, LAWS, AND MUNICIPAL CODE

Q: How many pets can I have?

Costa Mesa residents may own up to five (5) animals over the age of four months per household. Keeping of non-domesticated animals, livestock, reptiles, aviaries, and more than five domesticated animals is prohibited unless a special animal permit has been approved by the Chief of Police.

Q: How do I acquire a special animal permit?

Keeping of non-domesticated animals, livestock, reptiles, aviaries, and more than five domestic animals is prohibited unless a special permit has been granted. Permits are issued at the discretion of the Chief of Police and Costa Mesa Animal Control, and may be revoked for any violation of regulation.

There is a one-time \$15 non-refundable fee to apply for a permit. An annual permit fee is due within 10 days of approval and due each year thereafter. Please call Costa Mesa Animal Control Dispatch (714) 754-5674, with licensing or permit questions.

Q: What are the City rules about having dogs in parks?

Dogs are allowed in City parks as long as the dog is securely restrained by a leash not exceeding six (6) feet in length that is held by the person in charge of the dog. The only public area a dog is permitted to be off leash is at the Costa Mesa Bark Park (890 Arlington Drive).

In addition, dog waste must also be picked up and disposed of in the appropriate receptacle. Dog waste bags are available in all City parks, including the Bark Park; however, walkers and owners are responsible to provide their own dog waste bags if bags are not available.

Q: Whom do I contact if I see a dog off leash?

The City requires that dogs that are not on their own property be on a 6-foot or shorter leash, held by a person who can completely control the dog at all times. Violation of this law is punishable by fine. Please call the Costa Mesa Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674.

Q: Whom do I contact to report someone who does not pick up his or her dog's waste?

Costa Mesa Municipal Code 3-12 states that it is unlawful to leave your pet's feces on any public property that is not owned by you. Violation of this law is punishable by fine. Please call the Costa Mesa Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674.

Q: How do I report animal abuse?

Laws protect animals against abuse, cruelty and neglect. These crimes are punishable by fine and/or imprisonment. To report suspected cases for investigation, please contact Costa Mesa Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674. If you need an Animal Control officer to respond to an urgent situation in which an animal's life is in immediate danger, please call Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674.

Q: How do I report an animal bite?

If you are bitten or scratched by any animal, seek immediate medical advice or attention. Any person having knowledge of anyone having been bitten or scratched by a warm-blooded animal should immediately notify the Costa Mesa Animal Control or the Costa Mesa Police Department. Anyone willfully concealing this information is guilty of a misdemeanor. All instances of animal bites should be reported within 24 hours. In order to protect humans and other animals against the transmission of rabies or other diseases, Animal Control must document that the biting animal stays healthy for a period of 10 days after the bite occurs.

To report a bite incident involving a loose or wild animal, please call Animal Control Dispatch at (714) 754-5674. Try to keep the animal's whereabouts known until an Animal Control officer arrives. Do not put yourself or others at risk by attempting to restrain an aggressive or unfamiliar animal on your own. If the biting animal is not loose or is not an immediate threat to others, call Animal Control's dispatch at (714) 754-5674.

When reporting a bite incident, be prepared to provide the following information:

1. Victim name and contact information
2. Animal owner information (if applicable)
3. Description of the biting animal
4. Place and circumstances of bite
5. Description and location of wounds sustained.

Q: How do I report a barking dog?

Beginning September 18, 2008, the City of Costa Mesa enacted a new barking dog/noisy animal ordinance. Briefly, a dog that barks, bays, cries, howls or makes any noise audible beyond the boundaries of the property on which the dog is situated for more than 30 minutes incessantly or 60 minutes intermittently during a 24-hour period may be considered a barking dog according to Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 3-8.

For more information on what constitutes a barking dog violation and how to file a barking dog complaint, please visit Animal Control's [barking dogs webpage](#).

Q: What do I do if I see a coyote?

If you see a coyote, haze it by making yourself big and loud. Keep nearby pets close to you and pick up small animals until the coyote leaves. Keep hazing the coyote until it leaves. Then log onto the [Coyote Cacher](#) to report your encounter. You can access the Costa Mesa Animal Control Hotline at (714) 754- 4899. If you encounter an aggressive coyote, call Costa Mesa Police Department at 9-1-1 (emergency) or (714) 754-5255 (non-emergency).

For more information on coyote safety, please visit [Animal Control's Coyote Information webpage](#).

Other City of Costa Mesa – Animal Regulations/Municipal Codes can be found if you click [here](#).

BARB PARK

Q: Why is the Bark Park closed on Wednesdays?

The Bark Park is closed all day for routine maintenance on Wednesdays. This allows staff to enter the Bark Park for scheduled maintenance and park upkeep without the presence of dogs. In addition, this gives the heavily used grounds time to rest.

Q: Why does the Bark Park close on days it barely rains?

The maintenance staff determines the closures of all Costa Mesa parks and fields. To preserve the Bark Park grounds, the park is closed during inclement weather to prevent prolonged closures in the future to restore the damage.

OTHER/GENERAL

Q: What is a microchip and is it required to own a pet?

A microchip is a small, electronic chip enclosed in a glass cylinder that is about the same size as a grain of rice. When a scanner passes over the chip, the chip transmits the identification number to the scanner.

Veterinarians and Animal Control are able to use microchip databases to find the owner, if the information is current. Microchipping your pet is not required, but it is recommended as an additional tool to pet licensing and identification tags.

Q: What is a good age to spay/neuter my pet?

Sterility ages vary between species. Contact your veterinarian to inquire when your pet should be spayed/neutered.

Q: I am no longer able to care for my pet, what do I do?

If you are not able to provide care for the animal and you do not have anyone to care for the animal, please take your pet to the Newport Center Animal Hospital. Shelter staff will converse with you about your situation and your pet.

A surrender fee will be paid to the shelter. Please provide as much information on your pet to shelter staff to ensure proper adoption placement.

Surrendered animals will become adoptable to the public within three (3) days of the surrendered date.

Q: How can I get involved and volunteer?

Priceless Pet Rescue is constantly looking for volunteers and foster care providers. Interested helpers must attend a Volunteer and Foster Care Orientation before starting your service. Orientations are held on-site at The Orphanage. Volunteers must be at least 13 years old and a parent/guardian must accompany minors. Please visit www.pricelesspetrescue.org for more information on how to get involved.