



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
*City of Albuquerque*

Melissa Santistevan  
Inspector General

P.O. Box 1293, Suite 5025  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103  
Telephone: (505) 768-3150  
Fax: (505) 768-3158

---

**DATE:** October 18, 2021

**INVESTIGATOR:** J.S. 

**SUBJECT:** Case Number 21-0050-C, AWD, Mistreatment of Dog

**Informative Case Synopsis**

The OIG received a complaint on October 6, 2021 through the 311 system stating that an injured puppy was denied care at the Animal Welfare Department since he was not from the correct jurisdiction.

The OIG attempted to reach the citizen via phone three times and send an email with the information provided, but was unsuccessful in each attempt.

The OIG reached out to and spoke to the Director of the Animal Welfare Department. The Director was not familiar with specific animal mentioned but stated some were refused during that period due to the shelters being over capacity. A memo was sent from the department Operations Manager to all staff on September 28, 2021 which stated "Staff, Effective immediately AWD will only accept animals from City of Albuquerque residents. It does not matter if the pet was found outside of City limits, If a City resident found it, AWD accepts the pet. However if the finder is not a City of Albuquerque resident we do not accept the pet, EVEN if it was found within the City limits. If finders are not City residents refer them to their jurisdictions shelter."

It is the Directors belief that the staff may have refused due to this directive. To clarify the directive, an amended memo was resent to all staff on October 13, 2021 to add "In addition to the above, please note: Sick or injured animals in need of medical assistance from any jurisdiction should be accepted. If you are unsure as to whether or not an animal is in need of medical care, please request assistance from a doctor on duty for review."

The allegation received appears to have been substantiated but within the directive that was in place at that time. The directive has since been changed to clarify for staff what to do in the event of an injured animal from outside the jurisdiction. The OIG recommended to the Director that this

information be relayed to the public, via the AWD website, so citizens are clear on where to take animals to include injured, found and surrendered. In addition, the OIG recommends that this directive be added to policy.