

Animal Hoarding Case
Brick, New Jersey

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

December 8, 2022

1. **What happened with the animal hoarding case in Brick, NJ?**
 - a. On December 2, 2022, Brick Township police discovered and rescued 180 animals (135 dogs and 45 cats) from a home in Brick. The animals were taken to Ocean County's three Animal Facilities in Jackson, Manahawkin, and Barnegat, which is used to house animals in emergencies.
 - b. As an active criminal investigation, additional information is not available surrounding the animal hoarding complaint. The case is being handled by Brick Township law enforcement and the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.
 - c. Animal "hoarding" can be identified when a person is housing more animals than they can adequately and appropriately care for. It is a complex issue that often encompasses mental health, animal welfare and public safety concerns. For general information on animal hoarding, we would refer you to the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) at www.asPCA.org.

2. **What is the Ocean County Health Department doing about the animal hoarding case in Brick, NJ?**
 - a. The Ocean County Health Department is currently caring for 175 of the 180 dogs and cats that were removed from the home. The other animals were referred for emergency veterinary care.
 - b. The Ocean County Health Department has a history of responding to animal emergencies/situations and have handled large volumes of animals before, including during Super Storm Sandy. Our facilities are staffed with trained animal facility employees and veterinary providers to ensure every animal is well cared for.
 - c. There were 30 dogs and 17 cats taken to the Northern Ocean County Animal Facility (NOCAF) in Jackson, 17 dogs and 8 cats taken to the Southern Ocean County Animal Shelter (SOCAF) in Manahawkin, and 81 dogs and 12 cats were taken to the county's facility in Barnegat, which is used to house animals in emergencies. These numbers will be updated as we obtain more information.

3. **Can I donate items to the animal shelters to help?**
 - a. At this time donations are no longer being accepted. Thank you for your generosity, but the Ocean County Animal Facilities have received a tremendous outpouring of donations and additional items are no longer needed.

4. **Can I donate money to the animal shelters to help?**
 - a. Yes, monetary contributions can be made by check to the "Ocean County Health Department". Please make sure to include on the subject line Brick hoarding or animal health trust fund. You can mail the check to:

Ocean County Health Department
P.O. Box 2191
Toms River, NJ 08754-2191

- b. We are not involved in other fundraising efforts listed online (i.e. GoFundMe) and encourage you to confirm the legitimacy of other fundraising efforts directly with the organization running them.
- 5. Can I volunteer to help at one of the Ocean County animal shelters?**
 - a. Requests to volunteer at the Ocean County Animal Facilities are handled by two partner organizations: The Friends of the Southern Ocean County Animal Shelter (<https://www.fosocas.org/contact/>) and the Volunteer Auxiliary, Inc. (<https://www.volauxrescuenj.org/contact.html>)
 - b. Please reach out to these organizations for any requests to volunteer at the Ocean County Animal Facilities.
- 6. I own one of the animals rescued from this house, how can I get my animal back?**
 - a. Animals that have been microchipped and claimed by previous rescues or owners will not be available for adoption by the public. These animals will be separated from the other animals and steps to reunite them with their owners will be made.
 - b. Officer Scott Smith of the Brick Township Police Department has an account to specifically identify any claims of people trying to identify their pets that may be involved with this case to personally go through requests and help assist with ID.
 - i. Individuals claiming animals should email petrescue@brickpd.com and make the request attention to Humane Officer Scott Smith. He will use any means possible, pictures, papers, descriptions to confirm identification.
- 7. Can I foster or adopt any of the animals that came out of the animal hoarding house?**
 - a. The Ocean County Animal Facilities are not currently in need of foster assistance. In general, animal fostering is handled through volunteers arranged by The Friends of the Southern Ocean County Animal Shelter (<https://www.fosocas.org/contact/>) and the Volunteer Auxiliary, Inc. (<https://www.volauxrescuenj.org/contact.html>)
 - b. Animal adoption will be possible, but the timeframe on when animals will be available for adoption is not yet known. As of 12/7/2022, we anticipate a couple of weeks before the first pets would be available. All animals will be evaluated by our veterinary staff and receive applicable clinical services before being indicated for adoption. Every pet we adopt out is spayed/neutered, microchipped, up to date on age-appropriate vaccinations, and have received a general health exam by our facility veterinarian.
- 8. What is the adoption process for animals through the Ocean County animal shelters? Is there an application process? Is there an application fee? Will the fee be waived for animals adopted as part of the animal hoarding case?**
 - a. Our General Adoption Policy is as follows – any changes in the policy in light of the volume of pets to be available for adoption will be communicated through our

website if applicable at www.ochd.org. We do anticipate scheduling appointments with the public for adoption once pets are available.

- i. Everyone in the house-hold (for dog adoptions this includes any dogs that live in the home) need to meet the pet prior to adoption
 - ii. Proof of Residence:
 - iii. Homeowner: mortgage statement or tax bill
 - iv. Rental: lease with pet policy stating any specifications of breeds and number of animals allowed
 - v. Driver's License or valid proof of identification
 - vi. Fill out an Adoption Questionnaire get it approved by Facility Management
- b. Animal Facility staff may also request information on current veterinary providers for households that currently have pets.
 - c. The cost for animal adoption: Exact Cash or a check with an address matching that on the Driver's License (Dogs are \$60; Cats are \$55)
 - d. At this time, fees will not be waived for animals involved in the animal hoarding case since expenses help cover the clinical services each animal receives prior to adoption.

9. Can I reserve a pet for adoption or request a hold on one?

- a. All adoptions are on a first come/first serve basis. The Ocean County Animal Facilities cannot place any holds on any pets. We do anticipate scheduling appointments with the public for adoption once pets are available.

10. Are the pets available on PetFinder?

- a. We will not be listing these animals on PetFinder. Please monitor the website for updates on adoption policies and appointments.

11. When are the Animal Facilities open?

- a. Both NOCAF and SOCAF animal facilities are open to the public seven days a week from 1pm – 4pm (closed on Holidays), **but although the facilities are open, the public will not be able to meet and greet any of these animals until they are ready for adoption. Please do not go during business hours until adoption notifications are made.**
- b. Additional information, including contact information, can be found on our website at www.ochd.org/animal-shelters-adoptions
 - i. NORTHERN OCEAN COUNTY ANIMAL FACILITY - 732-657-8086;
NOCAF@ochd.org
 - ii. SOUTHERN OCEAN COUNTY ANIMAL FACILITY - 609-978-0127;
SOCAF@ochd.org

12. Where can I get additional information?

- a. The Ocean County Health Department will continue to update its press releases and Frequently Asked Questions as more information is available regarding the adoption of these animals. We encourage you to check the website for more information.

- b. The Ocean County Health Department has implemented its Public Health Call Center in response to this animal hoarding case. Health educators are available Monday through Friday from 8am – 4:30pm at 732-341-9700, extension 7411.

13. For media inquiries, please contact our Public Information Officer at 732-341-9700, extension 7735.