



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 3, 2018

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ANNOUNCES PRIVATE DONOR TO SUPPORT TREATMENT FOR
SHELTER'S HEARTWORM POSITIVE DOGS**

Partner organizations and rescue community rally around CACC shelter to save treatable dogs

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced a private donor has committed to funding medicinal heartworm treatment for the Chicago Department of Animal Care and Control's (CACC) shelter dogs. The treatment will reflect recommendations set forth by the American Heartworm Society, the gold standard in care.

"Chicago's animal community is second to none," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "I am grateful for their unwavering support in supporting the health and humane treatment of Chicago's animals."

The announcement comes just after some of CACC's partner organizations and rescue community rallied around the shelter's heartworm positive dogs to provide the dogs with an opportunity for successful recovery. Organizations including CPR Fund and Spay Illinois provided funding for the heartworm treatment while rescues, including Foster Pet Outreach, Linda's Magnificent Mutts and One Tail at a Time, transferred the animals out of the shelter setting and into their care. CACC regularly relies on Chicago's dedicated rescues who frequently transfer and care for many of CACC's medically vulnerable animals.

"Heartworm disease is a potentially fatal disease that can cause an animal much distress if not treated properly and immediately," said Kelley Gandurski, Acting Director, CACC. "Through our partners generous support, these dogs are getting a second chance at life."

Heartworm disease is caused by worms that infect an animal's heart, lungs and blood vessels, resulting in lung disease and heart failure. The resulting damage can affect the dog's health and quality of life long after the parasites are gone.

Heartworm is contagious and can be transferred between animals via mosquitos, which makes managing the spread of the disease in a shelter setting extremely difficult. Heartworms can live up to seven years in dogs. Because of the parasite's lifespan, each mosquito season can lead to an increasing number of worms in an infected pet.

Signs of heartworm disease may include a mild persistent cough, reluctance to exercise, fatigue after moderate activity, decreased appetite, and weight loss.

Once a dog has been diagnosed, animals should be cared for in a quiet, stress-free environment. Normal physical activities must also be restricted because physical exertion increases the rate at which the heartworms cause damage in the heart and lungs.

CACC the city's only municipal-run animal shelter, protecting public safety and ensuring the humane care of animals through sheltering, pet placement, low-cost pet medical care, education and animal law enforcement. For more information on all of CACC's services and programs, visit www.cityofchicago.org/CACC or visit CACC on Facebook at facebook.com/ChicagoAnimalCareandControl.

###