

EVERY DOG DESERVES MORE THAN A KENNEL.

Independent Canine Enrichment Audit
Analysis of May 2026 Shelter Records
Prepared July 2026



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

MAY 2026 SHELTER POPULATION

Why enrichment matters during extended shelter stays.



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

415

DOGS INCLUDED
IN ANALYSIS

327

DOGS WITH NO
DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT
(78.8% of all dogs)

88

DOGS WITH AT LEAST ONE
DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY
(21.2% of all dogs)

METHODOLOGY & SCOPE



INCLUDED
Analysis includes all dogs physically housed at Gwinnett Animal Shelter at any time during **May 1–31, 2026.**



EXCLUDED

- Dogs already in foster or other verified off-site placements before May 1, 2026
- Dogs housed exclusively off-site during the audit period
- Duplicate records and verified data integrity corrections identified during forensic quality assurance



QUALITY ASSURANCE
Quality assurance included multiple rounds of record verification and data integrity review prior to analysis.

HOW MANY CHANCES WERE THERE?



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Looking at the days dogs were physically housed in the shelter

415
DOGS



4,935
SHELTER CARE-DAYS

The 4,935 care-days represent the **actual** number of days each dog was physically housed in the shelter during May 2026.



4,935
SHELTER CARE-DAYS



212
DOCUMENTED
ENRICHMENT EVENTS



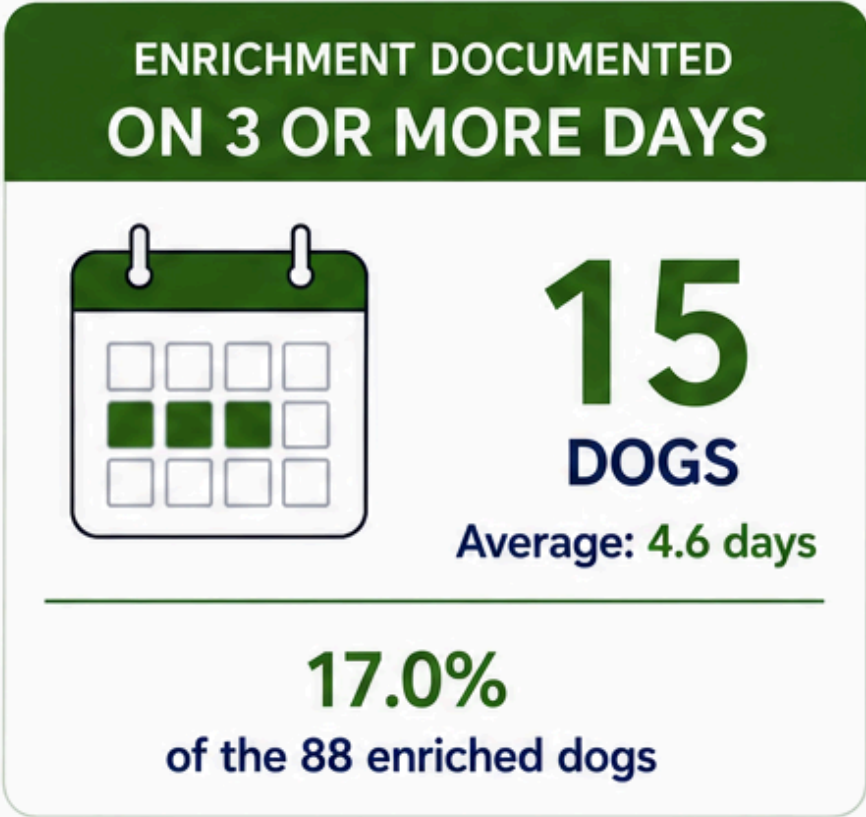
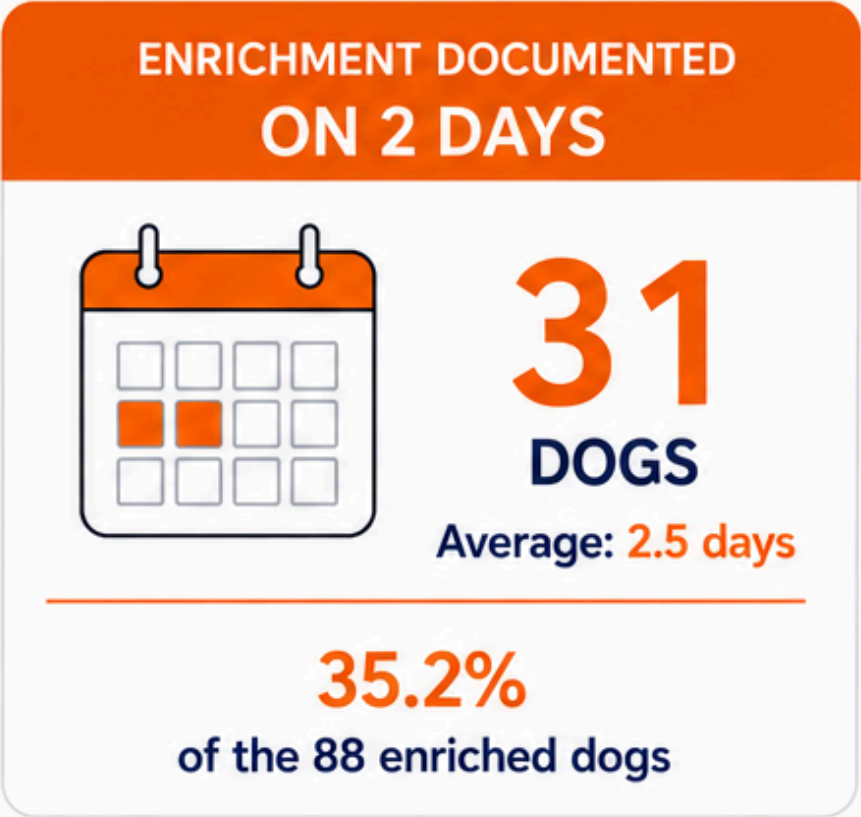
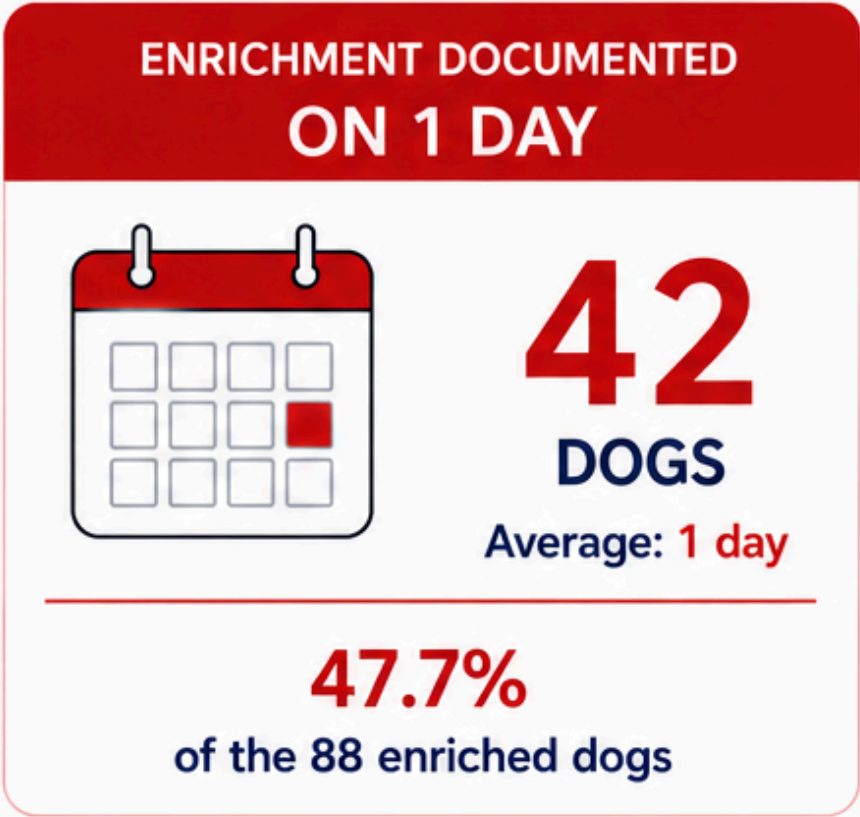
Statistically, a dog in a Gwinnett shelter kennel on any given day had a **95.7%** chance of receiving **no documented enrichment**.

ONE ACTIVITY ≠ ONGOING ENRICHMENT



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Among the 88 dogs with at least one documented enrichment in May 2026



These counts represent the number of dogs with enrichment documented on a given number of days during May 1–31, 2026. They do not reflect the type, duration, or quality of enrichment provided.

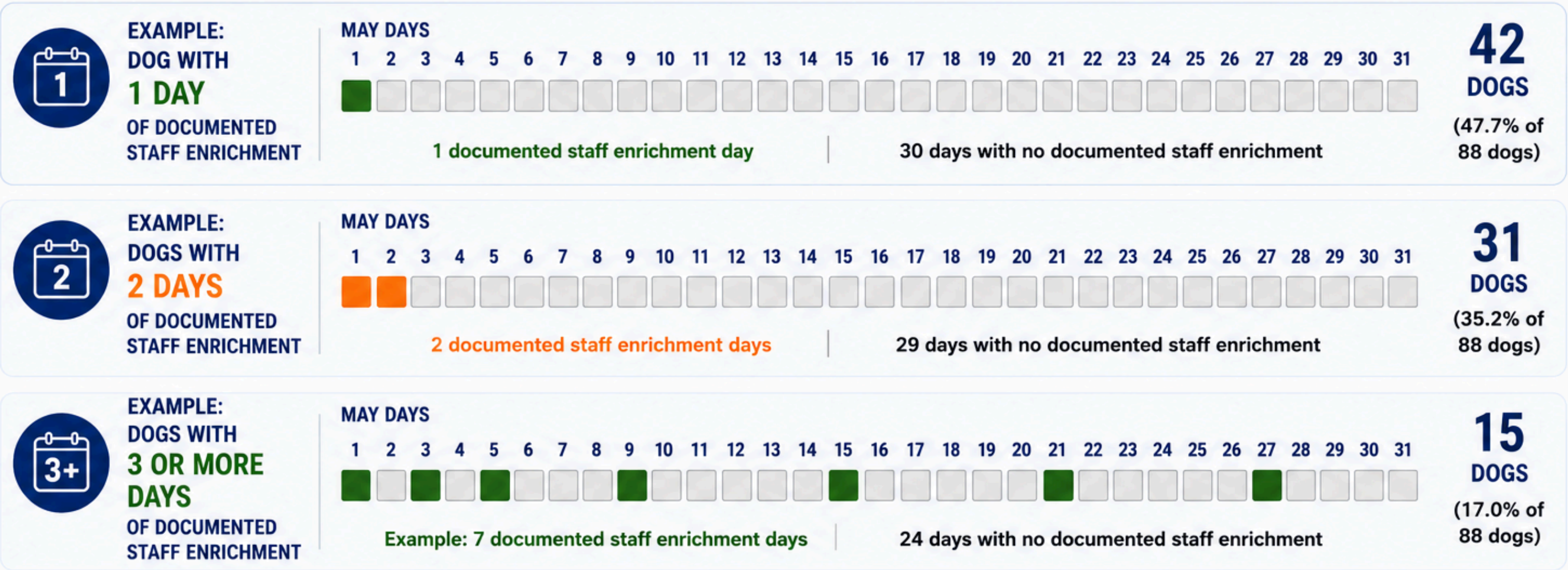
ONE DAY OF ENRICHMENT VS THIRTY ONE DAYS OF CONFINEMENT



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Even among dogs with documented enrichment, most days in May 2026 had no enrichment

■ Documented staff enrichment day □ No documented staff enrichment



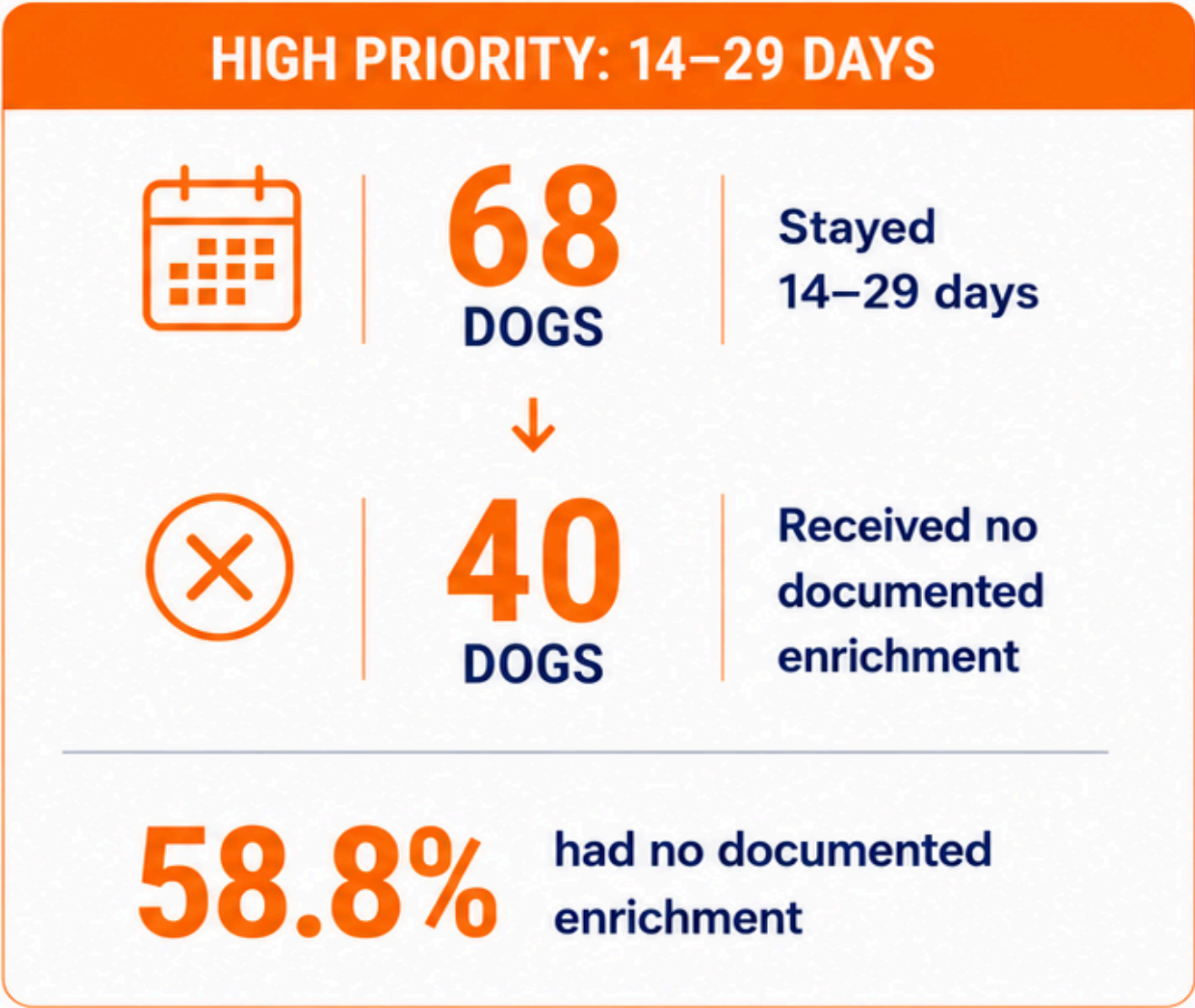
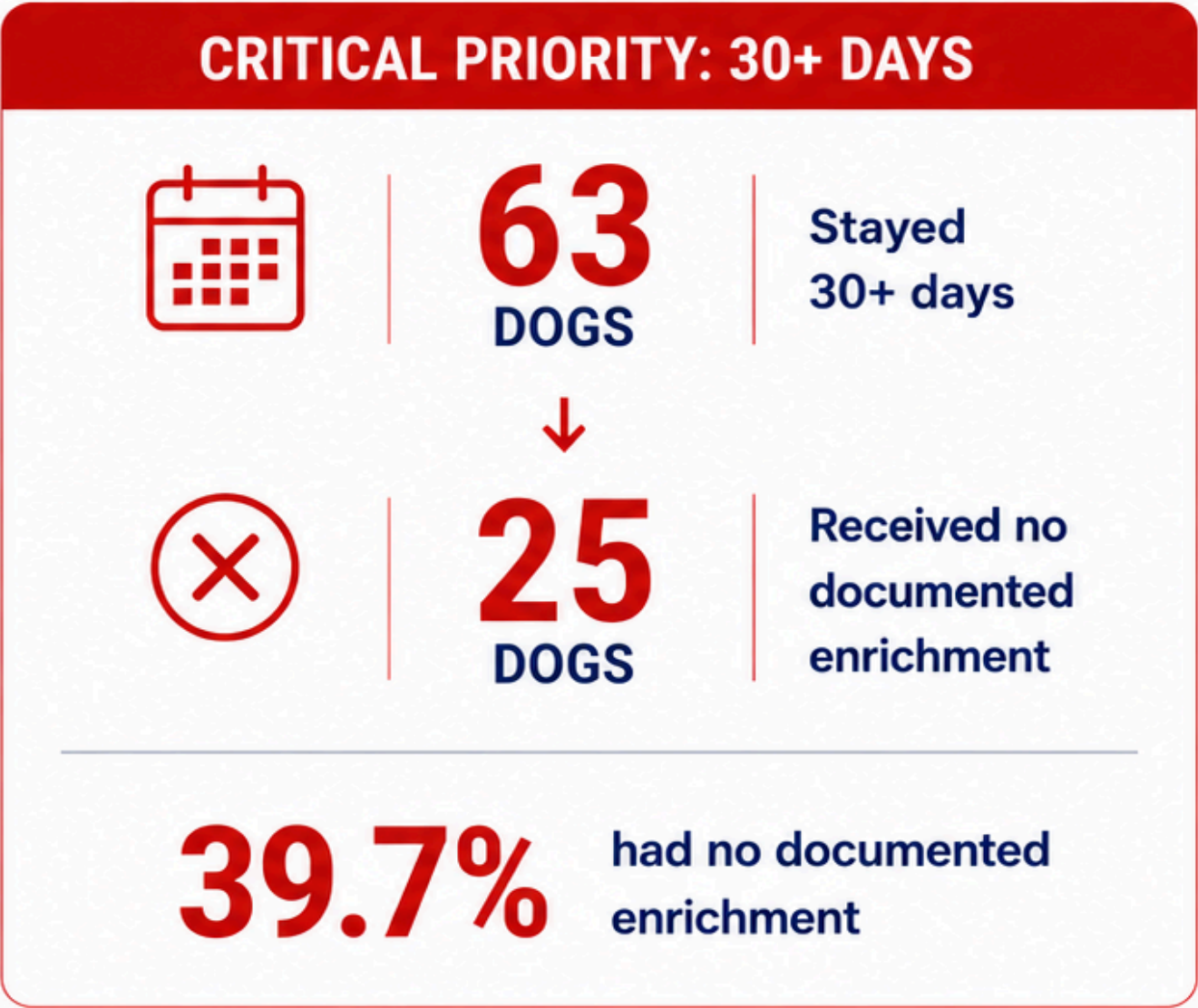
For most dogs, enrichment was documented on only a small number of days during the entire month.

LONGER STAY DOGS STILL LACKED DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT



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Dogs with the greatest need for enrichment were not consistently receiving enrichment



Nearly **2 out of every 5** dogs housed 30+ days—and nearly **6 out of every 10** dogs housed 14–29 days—had no documented enrichment during May 2026.

THE FIRST TWO WEEKS: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Documented enrichment was rarely provided during the first two weeks of confinement

199 OF 216
(92.1%)

**RECEIVED
NO DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT
DURING
DAYS 2–13 OF SHELTER CONFINEMENT**

DAYS IN SHELTER	DOGS (#)	NO DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT (# and %)
2–6 Days	115	114 (99.1%)
7–13 Days	101	85 (84.2%)
TOTAL (2–13 DAYS)	216	199 (92.1%)



KEY FINDING

More than **9** out of every **10** dogs housed for 2–13 days had no documented enrichment recorded.

THIS ISN'T OUR STANDARD. IT'S SHELTER MEDICINE'S.



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Recognized shelter medicine guidance emphasizes that enrichment becomes increasingly important as confinement continues



LENGTH OF STAY

“This becomes even more urgent when cages are small and/or length of stay extends beyond a week or two.”

– UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program,
“Considerations for Out-of-Cage Time”



OUT-OF-CAGE TIME

“Most dogs enjoy outdoor play areas and walking trails, but dogs also benefit from quiet out-of-cage time in a more home-like indoor setting.”

– UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program,
“Considerations for Out-of-Cage Time”



THE GOAL

“Housing and enrichment should enhance each animal’s chances for adoption, never detract.”

– UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program,
“Considerations for Out-of-Cage Time”



HOW DOES GWINNETT COMPARE?

During the first two weeks of confinement, **199 of 216 dogs (92.1%)** had no documented enrichment recorded.

WHAT TYPE OF ENRICHMENT DID STAFF DOCUMENT?



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Based on enrichment logs completed by shelter staff during May 1–31, 2026

212 TOTAL STAFF-DOCUMENTED ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

STAFF-DOCUMENTED ACTIVITY	TIMES DOCUMENTED	PERCENT OF TOTAL
 Kong / Feeder Puzzle	93	43.9%
 On-Leash Walk	50	23.6%
 Nose Work	36	17.0%
 Petting	14	6.6%
 Sit Quietly	6	2.8%
 Do Nothing	4	1.9%
 Find-It Game	2	0.9%
 Running	2	0.9%
 Basic Commands	2	0.9%
 Lure Course	1	0.5%
 Brushing	1	0.5%
 Fetch	1	0.5%

All other activities combined represent

13

activities (6.1%)

KEY TAKEAWAY

84.4%



of all documented enrichment activities came from just three activity types.



Documentation suggests staff-recorded enrichment relied heavily on a small number of activity types rather than a diverse enrichment program.

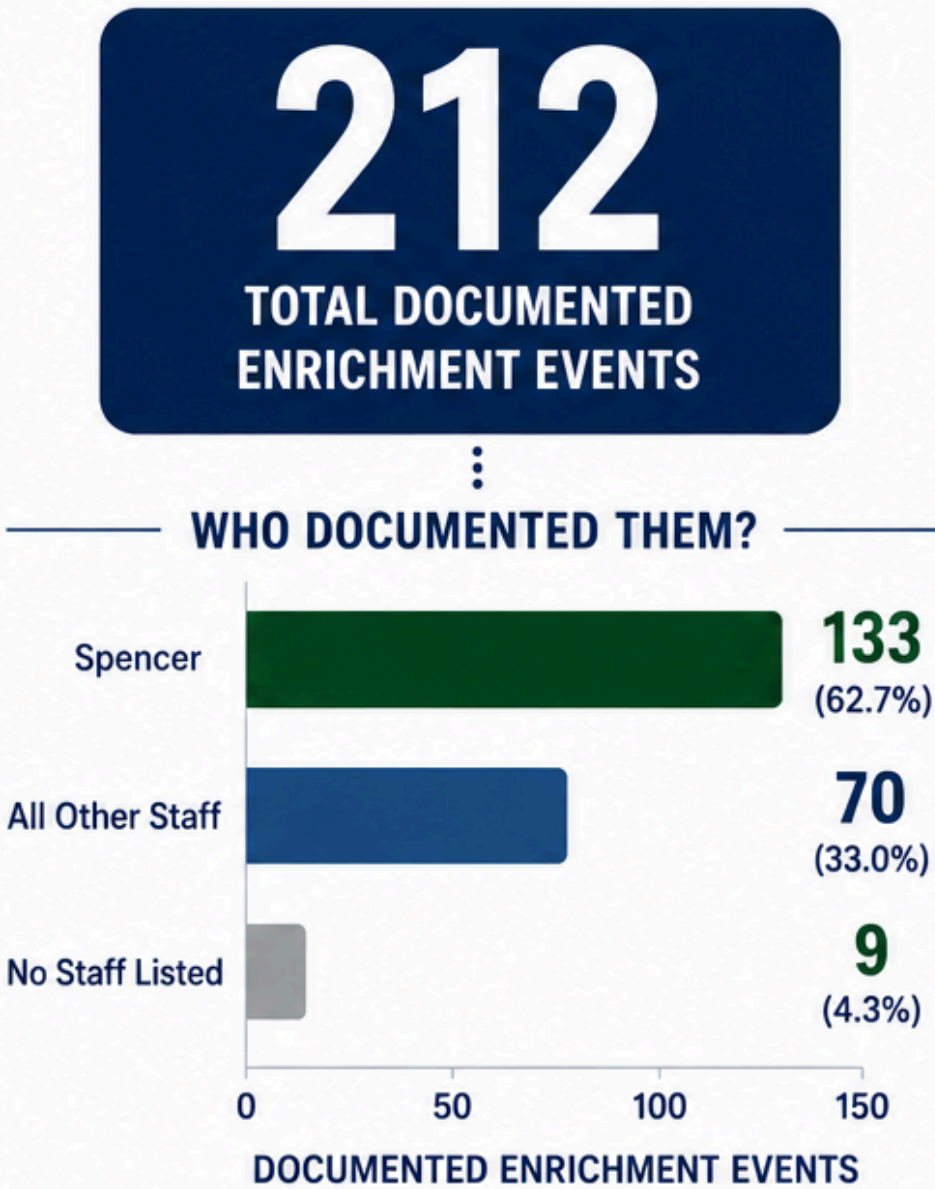
These counts represent activities documented by shelter staff only. They do not include enrichment provided by volunteers.

DOCUMENTATION RELIED HEAVILY ON ONE STAFF MEMBER



Over 62% of documented enrichment activities were recorded by a single employee, highlighting a significant operational dependency.

SPENCER'S DOCUMENTED ACTIVITIES		
ACTIVITY		EVENTS
	Kong / Feeder Puzzle	84
	Nose Work	30
	On Leash Walk	13
	Petting	2
	Running	1
	Sit Quietly	1
	Find It Game	1
	Do Nothing	1
TOTAL BY SPENCER: 133 EVENTS (62.7%)		





Enrichment documentation was heavily concentrated in one staff member's records.



Other staff collectively documented only one-third of all enrichment events.



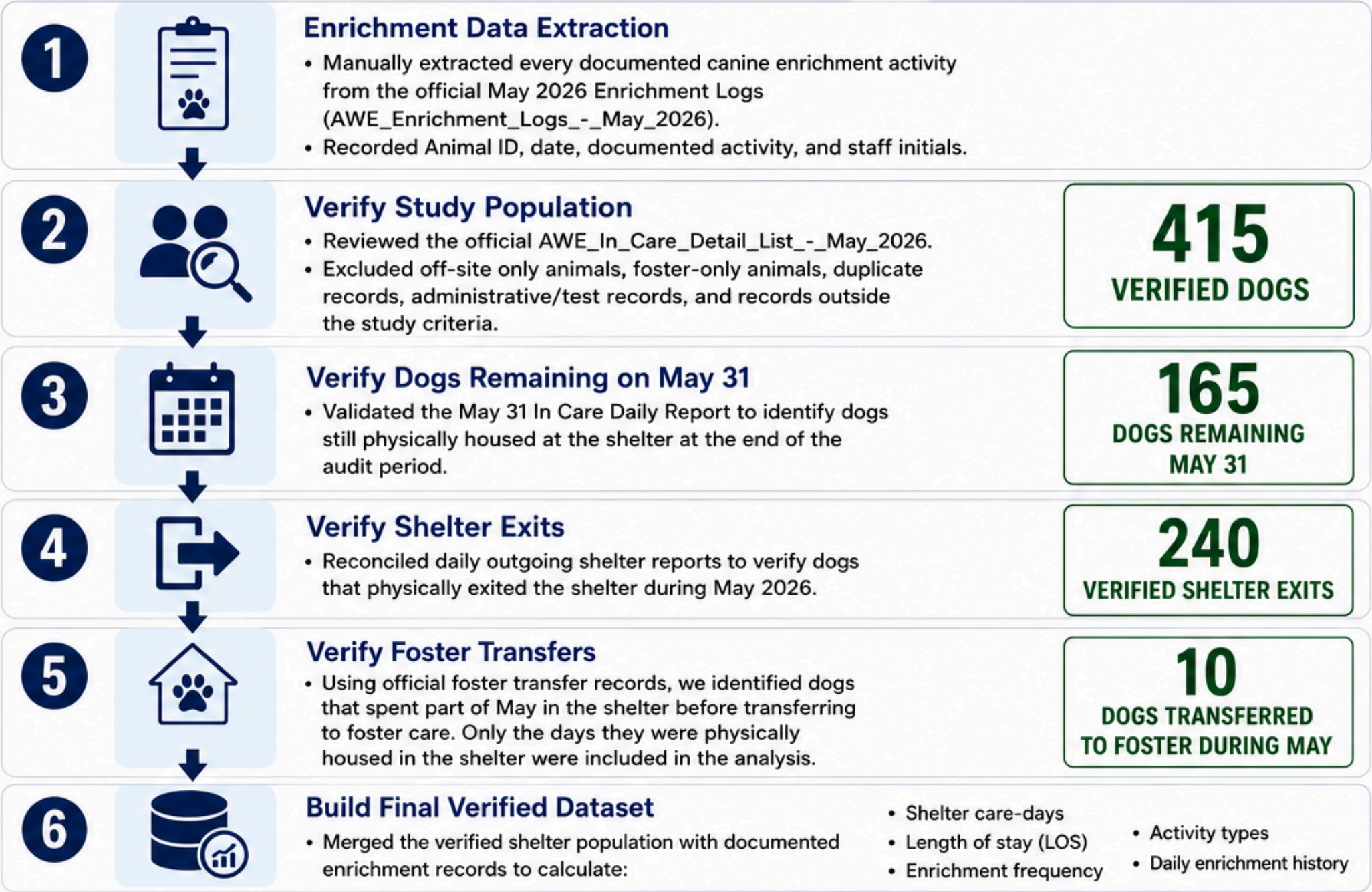
Nine events had no staff name listed, making the true distribution of effort unclear.

AUDIT METHODOLOGY

How the May 2026 Enrichment Audit Was Conducted



GWINNETT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE



415
Verified Dogs

4,935
Shelter Care-Days

212
May Enrichment Events

88
Dogs with Documented Enrichment

Every statistic presented in this audit is traceable to official Gwinnett County shelter records and was independently reconciled prior to analysis.

DATA QUALITY OBSERVATIONS

Issues identified during independent reconciliation of enrichment logs



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While the enrichment logs provided useful information, we identified recurring issues that impacted clarity, consistency, and the ability to accurately analyze the data.

1 INCORRECT ANIMAL IDs USED



- Some enrichment pages were created with incorrect Animal IDs.
- Required manual review to determine the correct record.

Examples:
110345 was recorded as 117068
115867 was recorded as 104237

2 INCORRECT SPECIES RECORDS



- A cat enrichment sheet was used for a dog.

Example: Animal ID 116072 (page 139) used cat enrichment.

3 MISSING CALENDAR DATES



- Some entries were recorded only as “May” without a specific calendar date.
- Limited the ability to analyze daily trends and frequency.

Example: Animal ID 115765 was listed as “May” (no specific date).

4 BLANK ENRICHMENT ENTRIES



- Multiple pages contained dogs listed, but no initials, activity, or indication that enrichment occurred.
- Made it impossible to confirm whether enrichment was provided.

Pages with blank entries:
121 – 138, 140 – 152, 155 – 170

5 INCONSISTENT DOCUMENTATION



- Staff documented enrichment in different ways (abbreviations, levels of detail, symbols, and formatting).
- Made it difficult to compare and aggregate data across staff.

Examples: “LW”, “Walk”, “L”, checkmarks, numbers, or no documentation at all.

6 OLD FORMAT PAGES IDENTIFIED



- Two pages used the previous enrichment format that included duration and totals, which was inconsistent with the new format.

Other pages using the old format:
153 – 154



These issues did not prevent completion of the audit, but they substantially increased the time and effort required to independently verify the official records.

AUDIT SCOPE & LIMITATIONS



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Official records included in the audit – and what was intentionally excluded

INCLUDED IN THE AUDIT

May 2026 Animal In Care Report
Master list of dogs physically housed during the audit period

Daily Animals Placed Reports
Verified shelter exits, including foster transfers

May 31 In Care Report
Verified dogs remaining in the shelter at month-end

Official Staff Enrichment Logs
Documented enrichment activities

OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THIS AUDIT

Volunteer-provided enrichment

Undocumented staff interactions

Duration or quality of enrichment

Behavioral assessments or outcomes

Medical treatment or care

Records that could not be independently verified
(missing Animal IDs, incorrect forms, inconsistent documentation, etc.)

WHY VERIFICATION MATTERED

To preserve the integrity of the audit, only records that could be independently verified and consistently analyzed were included. Ambiguous or inconsistent documentation was excluded rather than estimated or assumed.

Findings reflect only enrichment that could be independently verified from official shelter records.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT



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Four practical, budget-neutral recommendations based on the findings of this independent May 2026 audit.

1



MODERNIZE DOCUMENTATION

Use a structured digital system that captures meaningful data and allows enrichment to be tracked, audited, and analyzed efficiently.

This system should:

- ✓ Record activities by individual dog
- ✓ Capture date, activity type, and staff/volunteer
- ✓ Enable easy reporting and quality assurance
- ✓ Eliminate manual reconciliation and handwritten sheets

2



MEASURE MEANINGFUL PERFORMANCE

Move beyond counting activities. Measure how consistently each dog receives documented enrichment throughout its shelter stay.

Track performance metrics like:

- ✓ % of dogs receiving daily enrichment
- ✓ Dogs with no enrichment in 3, 7, or 14 days
- ✓ Average enrichment frequency per dog
- ✓ Monthly compliance trends

3



PRIORITIZE DOGS BY LENGTH OF STAY

Automatically identify dogs experiencing extended confinement and ensure they receive enhanced enrichment based on their needs.

Focus on what matters most:

- ✓ Long-stay dogs receive consistent enrichment
- ✓ Days since last enrichment for priority dogs
- ✓ Enhanced enrichment plans for 30+ day dogs
- ✓ Better outcomes and shorter LOS

4



INCREASE TRANSPARENCY

Publish monthly enrichment performance metrics to promote accountability and build public trust in animal care.

Share metrics that matter:

- ✓ % of care-days with documented enrichment
- ✓ % of long-stay dogs receiving daily enrichment
- ✓ Average documented enrichment days per dog
- ✓ Progress over time



These recommendations are based directly on the findings of the May 2026 audit and are intended to improve animal welfare, documentation, and accountability.

