

City of Alexandria, Virginia
FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP
Budget Questions & Answers

April 9, 2026

Question:

How do Alexandria's animal control officer pay and job descriptions compare across the region?

Response:

The City contracts with the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) to provide animal shelter management and animal control services, a business model also used by Arlington County. The AWLA maintains a staff of five animal services officers and the Chief of Animal Control to enforce all state and city laws pertaining to the humane care and control of animals. The City's contracted rate for entry-level animal services officers is \$20-24/hour, with higher hourly rates available to candidates already credentialed in the Commonwealth. These hourly rates equate to annual salaries ranging from \$41,600-\$45,760 a year. The job class specification for the supervisor role indicates a starting annual salary of \$58,000-\$60,000, commensurate with experience and qualification.

The Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with the AWLA, obtained pay and job description information from Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's County for their entry-level animal services officer positions. The department obtained only job description information from Arlington County, which excludes it from pay comparison calculations. AWLA's officers provide services that closely mirror those in neighboring jurisdictions, including cruelty investigations, enforcement of state and local animal laws, rabies control, animal capture and transport, and humane euthanasia. A notable difference is that AWLA officers have a larger responsibility in coordinating directly with law enforcement and legal/compliance employees on cruelty/neglect cases, along with running the City's rabies control program.

Salary range information from Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's County is provided in the table below. Findings show that the City's mid-range salary for entry-level animal services officers is approximately 37.22% below the average mid-range salary provided by neighboring jurisdictions.

Salary Range Comparison for Entry-Level Animal Services Officers

County	Min	Mid	Max
Fairfax County	\$56,905	\$75,873	\$94,841
Montgomery County	\$55,648	\$71,552	\$87,456
Prince George’s County	\$40,272	\$61,309	\$82,346
Average, Neighboring Jurisdictions	\$50,942	\$69,578	\$88,214
City of Alexandria (AWLA)	\$41,600	\$43,680	\$45,760
AWLA Salary Compared to Average in Neighboring Jurisdictions	-18.34%	-37.22%	-48.13%