



DUPAGE COUNTY

2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM



Deborah A. Conroy, Chair, DuPage County Board
Dawn DeSart, Chair, Legislative Committee



GOVERNMENT PROFILE

DUPAGE COUNTY BOARD



DuPage County Board

Deborah A. Conroy **D**

Chair, DuPage County Board
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Jack T. Knuepfer Administration Building

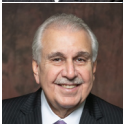
District 1



Cindy Cronin Cahill **R**
Elmhurst



Michael Childress **D**
Bloomington



Sam Tornatore **R**
Roselle

District 2



Elizabeth Chaplin **D**
Downers Grove



Paula Deacon Garcia **D**
Lisle



Yeena Yoo **D**
Elmhurst

District 3



Lucy Chang Evans **D**
Naperville



Kari Galassi **R**
Hinsdale



Brian Krajewski **R**
Downers Grove

District 4



Grant Eckhoff **R**
Wheaton

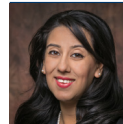


Lynn LaPlante **D**
Glen Ellyn



Mary FitzGerald Ozog **D**
Glen Ellyn

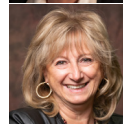
District 5



Sadia Covert **D**
Naperville



Dawn DeSart **D**
Aurora

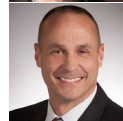


Patty Gustin **R**
Naperville

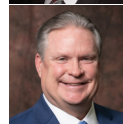
District 6



Sheila Rutledge **D**
West Chicago



Greg Schwarze **D**
Carol Stream



James F. Zay **R**
Carol Stream



DUPAGE COUNTY

421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

(630) 407-6500 • www.dupagecounty.gov

GOVERNMENT PROFILE

COUNTY FACTS

DuPage County, Illinois

Incorporated January 1, 1838

Cities located entirely or partly in DuPage:

Aurora, Batavia, Chicago, Darien, Elmhurst, Naperville, Oakbrook Terrace, St. Charles, Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton and Wood Dale

Villages located entirely or partly in DuPage:

Addison, Bartlett, Bensenville, Bloomingdale, Bolingbrook, Burr Ridge, Carol Stream, Clarendon Hills, Downers Grove, Elk Grove Village, Glendale Heights, Glen Ellyn, Hanover Park, Hinsdale, Itasca, Lemont, Lisle, Lombard, Oak Brook, Roselle, Schaumburg, Villa Park, Wayne, Westmont, Willowbrook, Winfield and Woodridge

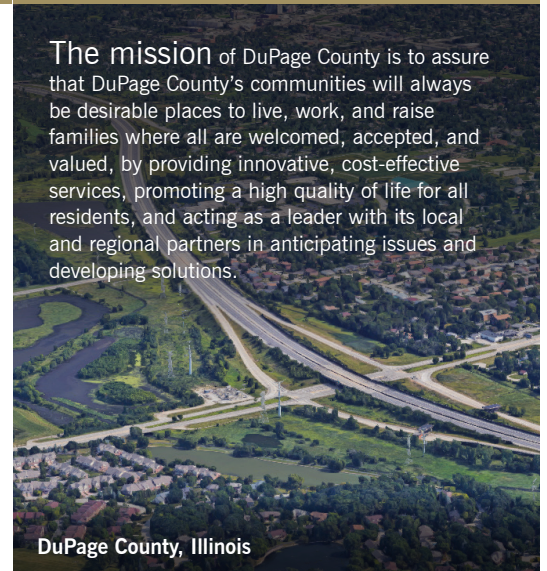
Unincorporated communities:

Cloverdale, Eola, Flowerfield, Keeneyville, Lakewood, Medinah, Palisades, Swift, and York Center

Townships:

Addison, Bloomingdale, Downers Grove, Lisle, Milton, Naperville, Wayne, Winfield and York

The mission of DuPage County is to assure that DuPage County's communities will always be desirable places to live, work, and raise families where all are welcomed, accepted, and valued, by providing innovative, cost-effective services, promoting a high quality of life for all residents, and acting as a leader with its local and regional partners in anticipating issues and developing solutions.



DuPage County, Illinois

Demographic Information¹

- Population
- Total Population: 928,814
- Incorporated Population: 832,363
- Unincorporated Population: 96,451



Race, Ethnicity, Gender²

- Caucasian: 65.0%
- African American: 5.4%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 0.4%
- Asian: 13.2%
- Hispanic or Latino: 15.0%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.01%
- Other: 3.53%
- Male: 49.5%
- Female: 50.5%



Education Attainment³

- High School Graduate: 93.3%
- Bachelor's Degree: 50.3%
- Graduate or Professional Degree: 19.6%



Colleges and Universities⁴

- Devry University
- College of DuPage
- Wheaton College
- Benedictine University
- Elmhurst University
- North Central College
- Midwestern University
- National University of Health Sciences
- Lewis University



Area Information⁵

- Persons per Square Miles: 2,773.4
- Open Space: 20% or 443,060 acres
- Total Area: 336.36 sq. miles
- Total Incorporated Area: 247.58 sq. miles
- Total Unincorporated Area: 88.78 sq. miles
- District 1: 54.81 sq. miles
- District 2: 49.99 sq. miles
- District 3: 53.08 sq. miles
- District 4: 38.64 sq. miles
- District 5: 49.63 sq. miles
- District 6: 90.22 sq. miles



Financial Information⁶

- County Revenue: \$510.0 million
- Sales Tax Revenue: \$131.3 million
- Property Tax Revenue⁷: \$46.4 million
- Local Gas Tax Revenue: \$37.1 million
- Income Tax Revenue: \$13.9 million
- Funds on Hand: \$98.9 million



Economic Information⁸

- Unemployment Rate: 3.3%
- Number of Jobs: 632,089
- Office Space Vacancy Rate: 16.9%
- Industrial Space Vacancy Rate: 2.8%
- Bond rating: AAA / AA+⁹
- Housing Units: 344,314¹⁰
- Median Household Income: \$94,930¹¹



¹ ESRI/American Community Survey 2023

² ESRI/American Community Survey 2023

³ 2020 U.S. Census

⁴ There are 18 colleges and universities in DuPage County

⁵ DuPage GIS Map Book (2022)

⁶ DuPage County FY2023 Approved Budget

⁷ 2023 County revenue minus Health Department tax levy

⁸ Choose DuPage

⁹ Maintains AAA bond rating with Standard & Poor's and Moody's and an AA+ rating with Fitch

¹⁰ 2020 U.S. Census

¹¹ 2020 U.S. Census



DUPAGE COUNTY



2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Overview

DuPage County is the second largest county in Illinois with over 925,000 residents. The County is comprised of 9 townships, portions of 39 municipalities, and 336 square miles. DuPage is a major employment center for northeastern Illinois, home to 630,000 jobs, 90,000 businesses, 7 hospitals, 2 national laboratories (Argonne National Laboratory and Fermi National Accelerator), 18 institutions of higher education, 300 miles of bikeways, and 23,000 acres of forest preserve property. Over 20% of the county is open space.

County residents elect the County Board Chair at-large plus nine other Countywide Elected Officials including the Auditor, County Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Coroner, Recorder, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Sheriff, State's Attorney, and Treasurer. The County Board includes eighteen members who are elected from six County Board Districts (three members per district).

Core county government services include the provision of: public safety/sheriff's office and the operation of the county jail; administration of the 18th judicial circuit, the second largest court system in the state (and all related agencies - judiciary, state's attorney, circuit court clerk, public defender, jury commission, probation); construction and maintenance of the county highway and trails system; delivery of public health, environmental health, mental health care, and substance use prevention; assistance with food, emergency shelter, utilities, and transportation services to residents in need; programs for seniors including adult protective services; flood control and stormwater management; job training and job search support; water and sewer services; building and permitting; zoning enforcement; administration of countywide elections; operation of the county nursing home; emergency management and emergency preparedness; and operation of the county animal shelter.

County leaders continue to seek opportunities to share the delivery of public services to minimize the tax burden on residents. DuPage County continues to receive a AAA Bond Rating from two major credit rating agencies. County government also accounts for less than 3% of an average property tax bill.



DUPAGE COUNTY

2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



2024 State Legislative Priorities

- Develop a Statewide Mental Health Care System – expand access to mental health care and substance abuse services, **with a focus on youth**, ensuring adequate reimbursement through Medicaid and private health insurance, incentives to encourage more individuals to enter the behavioral health workforce, and funding of innovative programs at the local level.
- Reimagine our Public Transit System - modernize our public transit delivery system to expand and provide equitable access to transit services across the collar counties in order to meet the needs of employers, job seekers, and our aging and disabled populations and to support a governance structure that strengthens the RTA and expands suburban representation.
- Erosion of MFT dollars – the state’s policy of encouraging the accelerated electrification of vehicles is negatively impacting the primary source of funding counties rely on to maintain and construct county highways. As local and state MFT revenues continue to diminish as the result of vehicle and fleet electrification, state leaders need to consider a replacement revenue source.
- Impact Fee Repeal - DuPage County adopted an impact fee ordinance in 1988 however the County Board rescinded its ordinance after 35 years in May of 2023, largely due to a decline in development. The county seeks statutory authority to transfer the remaining funds into a transportation account to be used for capacity related improvements.
- Allocate a Fair Share of Income Tax Revenues – provide counties and municipalities with its fair share of income tax proceeds through the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) that supports the delivery of critical local government services to residents.
- Keeping our Communities Safe – protect our residents, especially children, from injury and death through a gun safety public education and awareness campaign, enact gun safety storage provisions, and protect victims of domestic violence by requiring law enforcement officers to quickly remove guns from people who have orders of protection entered against them.
- Addressing Food Insecurity – one of the many negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic was a significant increase in food insecurity among our residents, an issue the General Assembly should prioritize.
- Protecting Our Environment – support legislation that reduces the impact our residents and businesses have on the environment by reducing waste and diverting materials from landfills.
- Enhancement of Affordable Housing Opportunities - allocate increased state resources to foster the creation of new affordable housing units and empower counties and municipalities with essential tools to encourage and incentivize local-level construction initiatives, thereby contributing to the expansion of affordable housing options.
- Caring for our Animal Population – advocate for our animal population by opposing any attempts to repeal the current ban on puppy mills, closing the Illinois Department of Agriculture (dog dealer) licensure loophole, and the enacting other measures to protect animals from inhumane treatment.



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2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Develop a Statewide Mental Health System

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently released the results of its [2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#) which showed ***that nearly one in five Americans ages 12 and older reported having a substance use disorder in the past year, and roughly one in four adults reported having a mental illness.***

The DuPage County Health Department faces challenges as it works to build an ideal behavioral health crisis system, consisting of efficient administration and service delivery to address all types of urgent and emergent behavioral health crisis needs.

A full continuum of behavioral health crisis response services includes crisis call centers, mobile crisis response team services, crisis receiving and stabilization centers, and other acute behavioral health services. A sustainable crisis continuum requires stable and adequate funding across the continuum to ensure 24-hour services are available to community members. Innovative funding strategies including a bundled rate model for crisis services and ongoing grant funding for the full continuum of services is recommended. Bundled rates would allow for comprehensive services to be offered to individuals based on need during their time of crisis. Currently, IL Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health (DMH) grant funding is siloed by each crisis program. This structure is complex for providers to maintain separate grant contracts, deliverables, and reports for each program, and limits cross training of staff across programs. In addition, overnight stays for clients in crisis residential programs remain unbillable, though the programs require 24/7 staffing costs. The development of a Night of Care (NOC) rate for this level of care would also assist in long-term funding and sustaining 24/7 operations instead of relying on local taxpayer support and a state grant that does not cover the cost of the program. Lastly, the development of the “somewhere to go” level of the continuum is still in the development stage at the state level and funding opportunities have not been fully developed in this area. The “somewhere to go” level of service will provide a much-needed option for residents, families, and first responders. The DuPage County Health Department is leading the way in this area and will be offering “somewhere to go” for adults and youth in crisis for up to 24 hours to complete the full continuum of care in DuPage County.

Offering a full continuum of crisis services will be reliant on having a well-educated and well-trained staff available to provide high quality services. It is imperative that policies, programs, and legislation be enacted to increase the supply of healthcare workers to meet the demands of the problems associated with mental health and substance use disorders. Supporting the behavioral health workforce and creating a better pipeline for people to come into the field is necessary and overdue. Paid internships and student loan repayment that are not based solely on serving clients in low-income areas and instead focused on currently under-served populations should be funded.



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The General Assembly passed legislation stating that no base Medicaid rate payment or any other payment for the provision of Medicaid community mental health services in place on January 1, 2023, shall be diminished. DuPage County requests the General Assembly develop a bundled rate payment for crisis services that fully covers the cost of 24/7 programming, develop grant funding that is flexible and covers the full continuum of crisis services, develop a Night of Care (NOC) rate for overnight stays, and set aside funds to offer students enrolled in mental health fields, scholarships, loan forgiveness, and other incentives to study fields related to Mental Health and to practice once they graduate in Illinois (such as social workers, occupational therapists, community mental health nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, community support workers, mental health pharmacists).

It is imperative that the State of Illinois invest the resources necessary to ensure any resident, **particularly for our youth**, regardless of background, can receive the appropriate level of mental health and substance use treatment when they are in crisis. DuPage County also supports legislation that examines the root causes of mental illness.

Reimagine our Public Transit System

Traditional transit ridership has dropped significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic and is not expected to return (to pre-pandemic levels). However, we continue to see growth in demand for ADA, paratransit, and dial-a-ride services in addition to demand for non-traditional routes (suburb to suburb) and schedules (nights and weekends).

We must build back, grow ridership, and innovate our delivery service models to ensure transit supports our evolving local, regional, and global economies and the ever-changing needs of our communities. The collar counties have some of the highest local employment opportunities, yet employers and job seekers are not best served by the antiquated fixed route transit systems in place.

DuPage County supports:

- a stronger RTA with separate executive service boards
- greater suburban representation on the RTA Board
- greater access and coordinated paratransit and rideshare services across the region
- expanded transit service in the collar counties
- a more realistic farebox recovery ratio that still requires transit users to help support the system
- fare equity and managing the impact of fares on seniors, students, and paratransit users
- the integration of fares and appropriate administrative functions
- prioritizing operating cost savings over revenue increases.

DuPage County urges the General Assembly to work collaboratively with transit agencies, counties, and all stakeholders to redesign our public transit system to the benefit of the state's economy and riders.



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2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Erosion of MFT dollars

Motor fuel taxes are the primary source of funding that support state and local government transportation infrastructure. DuPage County currently receives \$24.5 million from the State of Illinois in MFT revenues and an estimated \$39 million annually from the county's local gas tax. The County increased its local motor fuel tax to the 8 cents per gallon maximum allowed under the Rebuild Illinois Program.

Over the past couple of decades, as more fuel-efficient cars were developed, there began a steady decline in MFT revenues. The decline in MFT revenues was further accelerated as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, as more drivers switch to electric vehicles (incentivized by the federal Inflation Reduction Act and the State of Illinois), and with an increase in teleworking, MFT revenues over time will continue to diminish with no replacement revenue source identified to date.

Some states have begun charging an annual registration fee for the use of an electric vehicle (EVs). Illinois currently charges an annual \$100 EV fee however the proceeds of this fee remain with the state (are not shared with local governments) and are not projected to replace the amount of motor fuel taxes that would otherwise been collected (annually).

As the erosion of state and local gas tax revenues continues, DuPage County urges the General Assembly to consider sharing equitably with local agencies revenues collected from the annual EV tax and consider options (long-term), that will supplement and eventually replace the gas tax with a sustainable source of funding to support future transportation needs.

Impact Fee Repeal

In 1988, the General Assembly enacted legislation that permits units of local government to adopt a transportation impact fee ordinance. The enabling legislation allowed counties of more than 400,000 in population to enact an ordinance which DuPage and Kane Counties subsequently adopted. In DuPage, transportation impact fee revenues supplemented gas taxes and other revenue sources during an explosive development period in the county. A number of significant projects were constructed over the past 35 years with transportation impact fee revenues including the widening of Army Trail, Eola and Stearns Roads, the Naperville-Warrenville interchange, and the County Farm Road extension and widening.

In recent years as development slowed (roughly 3% of land in DuPage remains to be developed) and the county received additional revenues from state and county gas tax increases, the need to continue to collect this transportation impact fee has eroded.



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In May of 2023, the DuPage County Board repealed its fair share transportation impact fee ordinance after 35 years of activity, alleviating permit fee burdens, encouraging redevelopment, offering a competitive advantage for the county, and benefitting the hard-hit retail and service industries.

DuPage County is proposing legislation to transfer any remaining impact fee accounts to a transportation account to be used for capacity related improvements.

Allocate a Fair Share of Income Tax Revenues

Monies allocated under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF), established in 1969 when the State of Illinois enacted an income tax, does not represent a “grant” from the State but rather a small share of income taxes paid by county residents that are returned on a per capita basis to support critical local services. Under the original agreement with the State, units of local government were to receive 10% of total state income tax revenues which continued until 2011, when the State instituted a temporary income tax increase but failed to share the corresponding (increased) portion with local governments.

In 2017, the General Assembly further reduced LGDF payments to local governments by 10% of state income tax revenues received, and in 2018, by another 5% of revenues received (to help balance the state budget).

As part of the Fiscal Year 2024 budget package, the General Assembly approved a one-year increase in local government’s total share of income tax proceeds, raising the amount distributed from the previous 6.16% of state income tax collections to 6.47% (for state fiscal year 2024 only), which translates into an estimated annual increase of \$897,001 for DuPage County. This positive step continues to build towards the restoration of LGDF to the agreed upon 10% share of income tax proceeds.

Keeping our Communities Safe

According to the Academy of Pediatrics, the presence of unlocked guns in homes increases the risk of both unintentional gun injuries and intentional shootings. An estimated 4.6 million children and teens in the U.S. reside in homes with at least one loaded and unlocked firearm. In 2020, firearms became the leading cause of death for children in the U.S., with 30% attributed to suicide. Annually, an estimated 700 children die by firearm suicide most often using guns belonging to a family member. Each day in the U.S., eight children and teens are unintentionally injured or killed due to an unlocked or unsupervised gun in the home.

To date, 27 states have enacted gun safe storage laws including Ethan’s Law, named after Ethan Song, a Connecticut teen who was accidentally and fatally shot with an unsecured firearm in a neighbor’s home in 2018.



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DuPage County supports the passage of Ethan's Law (last session SB 1521) that requires gun owners to secure firearms and legislation to require the Illinois Department of Public Health to develop and fund a comprehensive statewide safe gun storage public awareness campaign (HB 4729, 102nd General Assembly).

Earlier this summer, Karina Gonzalez and her 15-year-old daughter Daniela, were shot to death by Gonzalez's husband Jose Alvarez, 12 days after she submitted an order of protection.

Karina's Bill would clarify the Domestic Violence Act to provide law enforcement clear directives on removing firearms from a home when an individual is granted an order of protection. This legislation is critically important as domestic violence is on the rise both in Chicago and across our state. Last year, there were 56 domestic violence homicides across Illinois, up from 40 in 2021 and 37 in 2020. Added to the rise in domestic violence is the proliferation of firearms across our state. In the U.S., intimate partner homicide represents 40-50% of the murders of all women.

Currently, the order of protection process is failing too many domestic violence survivors, especially when firearms are involved. DuPage County supports passage of Karina's bill to protect victims of domestic violence.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Addressing food insecurity must be a priority in our State as we strive to build a just and compassionate society in which no individual goes hungry. By prioritizing comprehensive policies, we can create a framework that supports food assistance programs, bolsters community-based initiatives, and invests in sustainable agricultural practices. Our commitment should extend to ensuring equitable access to nutritious food for vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, and low-income families.

Moreover, we need to explore innovative strategies to reduce food deserts, promote local food production, and collaborate with non-profit organizations to maximize the impact of our efforts. By including provisions that champion food security, we will not only alleviate immediate hunger, but also contribute to the long-term well-being and resilience of our communities, fostering a society where every citizen has the opportunity to thrive.

To address the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting increase in food insecurity, DuPage County established a 5 million dollar Food Pantry Program to provide funding to the Northern Illinois Food Bank and local pantries to distribute fresh produce and other essential commodities and to also invest in the long-term infrastructure to enhance service delivery.

Protect our Environment

One of government's primary responsibilities is to protect the public health and safety of its citizens by ensuring residents have access to clean air, land, and water. DuPage County supports measures that decrease our carbon footprint (per our Cool DuPage program), develop affordable clean energy and solar energy options, lessen vehicle miles traveled, and reduce industrial emissions, among other environmental concerns.



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DuPage County urges legislators to work with all stakeholders to develop legislation that reduces waste and increases the recycling and reuse of materials. Recovering resources including critical minerals (Lithium, Copper, Zinc etc.) that might otherwise be landfilled, is a priority for DuPage County. The County will continue working with recycling industry stakeholders to ensure recycling remains an important and viable alternative to disposal. Safe recycling options can reduce the impact these materials can have on human health and the environment.

An Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy for batteries (a battery collection program) would benefit residents, the waste industry and tech companies creating new products from the rare earth materials recovered during recycling. When improperly disposed of, batteries can explode or catch fire, emitting hazardous air pollutants. A working group of stakeholders including retailers, environmental groups, solid waste agencies, and waste & recycling have been meeting, to reach an agreement this session on a Battery Recycling EPR Bill.

Alternatives to landfilling food scraps and other organics support the County's greenhouse gas reduction goals. The County encourages new infrastructure and the creation of markets for the food scrap amended compost. DuPage also supports legislation that paves the way for electric vehicles and the necessary charging infrastructure, including incentives. A proposition on the 2022 ballot asking if the County should invest in charging stations was passed by more than 55%. Clean energy and energy efficiency are additional priorities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

Expansion of Affordable Housing Opportunities

In DuPage County, the urgent need for affordable housing reverberates among residents, including first-time homebuyers, essential workers, and those grappling with budget constraints. Stable housing is vital for student success, and homeownership is crucial for families to build generational wealth. Seniors downsizing seek to maintain ties to their communities, while young adults who grew up in DuPage County aspire to raise their families here.

Despite these aspirations, DuPage County faces a severe shortage of 16,000 affordable rental units, with over 20% of DuPage renters allocating more than half their income to rent. To address these concerns, earlier this year the DuPage County Board Chair established the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Solutions which focuses on the many aspects of affordable housing, including but not limited to, defining affordability, evaluating local policies on current development, and analyzing past County efforts to increase the affordable housing supply.

To emphasize their commitment, the DuPage County Board allocated \$5 million to incentivize affordable housing development once criteria has been established and a formal program developed. As a non-home rule entity, DuPage County has limited options/authority and supports legislation such as the Land Bank Authority Act, which aims to facilitate the repurposing of vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties to productive use. These efforts, coupled with other tools, enhance the county's ability to address the pressing need for affordable housing.



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Caring for our Animal Population

DuPage County Animal Services (DCAS) operates an open-admission shelter in Wheaton that is required by state statute to accept any companion animal surrendered to the facility, both stray and owner-relinquished. DCAS works to: prevent and control the spread of rabies; rescue and shelter stray and unwanted animals; provide veterinary medical and surgical care to treat illness and injury to shelter animals; perform spay/neuter procedures to control the animal overpopulation; and promote responsible pet ownership through humane education programs. Last year, over 2,000 animals entered DuPage County Animal Services, some surrendered due to illness or significant behavioral problems as they were sourced from commercial breeding facilities. Animals from these facilities often live under poor sanitary conditions and lack adequate veterinary care, resulting in many sick and unwanted animals being given up by their owners, ending up in the county's care.

In 2021, DuPage County played a pivotal role in the passage of Illinois Public Act 102-0586, the Humane Pet Store Law, effectively banning the sale of cats and dogs sourced from commercial breeding facilities (puppy mills). Despite passage of this legislation, the pet store industry continues to attempt to weaken or repeal this Public Act. In addition, 5 retail facilities continue to operate in the state due to a loophole in current law concerning the definition of dog dealers by the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

DuPage County opposes all attempts to weaken or repeal the Humane Pet Store Law, supports legislation (last year SB 1230) to revise the definition of dog dealer under the Illinois Agriculture Act to finally close these retail stores, and support legislation supported by the Humane Society of Illinois.