

Public Good Fee Scale (1–5)

Purpose: This scale helps determine what percentage of actual program costs should be recovered through fees for **Environmental Health and Animal Control** services. Services with greater **private benefit** should recover more costs through fees. Services with greater **public benefit** should recover less costs through fees and rely more on general tax support. This model creates a defensible, transparent, and **equitable fee structure** by aligning charges with who benefits from the service and preserving access for services that protect the whole community.

Score	Recommended Cost Recovery	Description	Examples
1	100% of actual cost	Primarily benefits a specific individual, property owner, or business. Little to no broader public benefit. User action caused the need for service or receives a direct private advantage. Full cost recovery is generally appropriate.	Vicious dog designation fee, reinspection due to violations, replacement pet tags, late fees, nuisance complaint caused by one owner
2	90% of actual cost	Mostly private benefit, but some public value exists through compliance or risk reduction. Service is optional, transactional, or tied to a specific customer, but public also gains some indirect protection.	Food establishment permit, plan review for new restaurant, microchip service, pet licensing
3	80% of actual cost	Shared benefit between the direct user and the community. The customer receives a specific service or approval, while the public gains health, safety, or neighborhood protections. Cost should be shared between fees and taxes.	Routine restaurant inspections, temporary event food permits, rabies quarantine fees, animal reclaim fees, pool permits, mobile food vendor permits

4	70% of actual cost	Primarily public benefit with some identifiable private benefit. Service protects the wider community, prevents harm, or supports public systems. Fees should be modest and not create barriers to participation or compliance.	Vaccination clinics, low-cost spay/neuter programs, nuisance animal investigations, vector control inspections, complaint response involving sanitation, community cat program permits
5	60% of actual cost	Entirely or overwhelmingly a public service. Benefits are broad, community-wide, and essential to public health, safety, or welfare. Charging full fees would discourage participation or undermine outcomes. Tax support should fund most or all costs.	Bite investigations, rabies exposure response, cruelty/neglect investigations, stray animal pickup, disease outbreak response, disaster animal sheltering, foodborne illness investigations, mosquito control surveillance

Decision Factors to Apply When Scoring a Service

When assigning a score, ask:

- 1. Who receives the main benefit?**
Individual/business = lower score. Community = higher score.
- 2. Is the service voluntary or required?**
Optional/private request = lower score. Mandated protection = higher score.
- 3. Would fees discourage compliance or reporting?**
If yes, assign a higher public-good score.
- 4. Did the customer create the need for service?**
If yes, lower score.
- 5. Does the service prevent broader public harm?**
If yes, higher score.

Fee Formula

Fee Charged = Actual Cost × Cost Recovery % Based on Scale