



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM
Q AND A AND PROJECT EXAMPLES
(2015)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q-What kind of projects are fundable?

A-We encourage creativity so the following are just some examples of what may be acceptable:

- Targeted spay/neuter programs.
- Mobile and MASH (Mobile Animal Surgical Hospital)-style spay/neuter programs*.
- No cost voucher programs.
- Feral cat projects that do not violate local law and have the permission of the landowner (or authorized representative) where the work will take place.
- Zinc (non-surgical) neutering training and procedures*.
- Providing matching funds as a requirement for a project funded by another organization. This will be contingent on whether the project's goals are the same as this program's goals (i.e. the effectively and efficiently increase of spay and neuter of cats and dogs in targeted populations and areas to reduce intake in shelters and reduce the euthanasia rates in Maryland)*.
- Training.

*For projects that focus on equipping new low cost clinics, mobile MASH units, training or providing matching funds, we strongly recommend that you include a set number of no-cost spay/neuter procedures to low-cost Maryland pet owners or animal caretakers/managers for the period of performance of the grant.

For examples of some successful efforts please see Page 4.

**IF YOU HAVE A PROJECT IDEA BUT YOU ARE UNSURE OF ITS ELIGIBILITY, PLEASE
CONTACT THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

Q-Can applicants partner with other organizations to implement a spay and neuter project?

A-Yes. Applicants are encouraged to work in a coordinated partnership that exploits groups' strengths to create optimal results within communities. For example, a non-profit organization may coordinate with a local government shelter, other animal welfare organization, veterinary practice or other for-profit organization in an effort to maximize outcomes. Special consideration may be given to grant proposals that include collaboration with one or more community partners, or those that leverage funding and maximize the use of grant funds through matching grants and other means. Partners do not have to be in the same county to work together.

Also if an applicant's need falls below the Program's \$5,000, minimum grant limit, they may partner with another organization or organizations to propose a larger project that incorporates their need and goals.

Q-Can I require a co-pay for services from the pet owners or charge for additional services?

A-No. The primary intent of this program is to encourage pet owners in low income communities and populations to have their pets spayed or neutered, thereby reducing intake and euthanasia rates in Maryland shelters. Charging for the service, no matter how small, would tend to discourage participation. You should factor this in when budgeting your project.

You also may not make providing spay/neuter surgeries contingent on the owner purchasing other services, not specifically related to spay/neuter. Should an animal need additional services, such as other immunizations, micro-chipping, or other medical expenses, you may advise the owner of this but not make it mandatory to the spay/neuter procedure.

Q-How can I find obtain shelter data for the facility in my target area?

A-Shelter statistics from government facilities or those facilities contracted by county or city government are considered Public Information and should be made available to you upon request from the shelters. If you are having trouble obtaining the information, it can be requested from the Program Coordinator but you must put your request in writing (email preferred) and you must name the shelter and time period of the data you require.

Q-Is coordination with local animal control required?

A-Yes, to the extent possible. The purpose of the Fund is to reduce the intake and euthanasia in Maryland shelters. You should supply confirmation from the shelter in your target area that the shelter staff believes your target area is a source of intake and your project would benefit the facility and help reduce their numbers. You should also try to

quantify to what degree your project will likely reduce intake and euthanasia. Shelter staff should be able to help you with this.

If you are targeting feral cats, you should clarify with Animal Control and shelter staff how they are defining this term and make sure you are both on the same page. For Instance, for the purposes of this Program, “feral” equates to “unowned”. A shelter may define this term in a different and more restrictive way. For example: They may consider an unowned cat that is socialized to people as “stray” instead of feral.

Q-What if I am having trouble contacting Animal Control/shelter staff or getting information or cooperation from them?

A-If you run into roadblocks, it is best to at least document that you tried to coordinate with them and try to find other sources that may have data that supports your target choice such as other animal welfare groups or local officials.

Q-How can I find data to document that my target community or population qualifies as “low-income”?

A-The US Census defines a low-income community (area) as a census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20%, or with median income of up to 80% of the area or statewide median, whichever is greater. For a non-metropolitan census tract, 80% of the statewide median is acceptable.

To get economic data for Maryland by county or by city, you can use US Census data by investigating the US Census website:

[US Census Quickfacts](#)

Other useful documents based on Census data include:

The Poverty Rate for Incorporated Places in Maryland Document:

[Poverty Rates in Maryland by County 2010-2012](#)

Another good resource is the interactive map on the City-Data database:

[City-Data Database](#)

If you are targeting low-income individuals or populations that may not be restricted to defined low income communities then you will need to state in your application how you will determine the eligibility of those people who wish to take advantage of your project’s services.

The easiest and most reliable method to determine eligibility is if the individual is presently enrolled in or qualifies for any number of public assistance programs and provide some proof of assistance.

These programs are detailed on Maryland State website at:

[Maryland.Gov Maryland Assistance Programs](#)

If the individual qualifies for but is not receiving any assistance, but is willing to disclose annual household income (by producing a copy of a W-4 or other documentation of annual income) then eligibility can be verified by comparing this figure with the median household incomes defined as low, very low, and extremely low income by US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Median family income information is available on the HUD Portal website on the Median Household Income interactive map:

[HUD Portal Website](#)

And the HUD Portal Dataset for Maryland:

[HUD Portal Database for Maryland](#)

The Humane Society of the United States’ Pets for Life Community Outreach Toolkit is an excellent resource with a tool especially for conducting a community assessment (Pets for Life Toolkit**).**

Q-Is there a page limit for the application?

A-No. However, the review committee will look favorably on submissions that are written as thoughtfully and concisely as possible without sacrificing essential detail. “Essential detail” is everything asked for in the application form and detailed in the Guidelines. Statements such as “We will advertise our project” or “We will target western Maryland” are not acceptable. Use of bulleted statements is a good way to reduce length while still conveying your pertinent information. You may also attach additional pages if deemed absolutely necessary.

We recommend that you avoid vague or unsubstantiated statements or generalizations. It may be beneficial to ask a third party to read your submission and give an honest appraisal before sending it in. Is the writing emotional instead of informative? Does it answer all the questions in the application as explained in the Guidelines? Are the benefits from my project well explained and specific to the target area? Are the budget items well described? Does your application answer the Who, What Where, How, and Why?

Q-Can I use grants funds to pay for our existing spay/neuter services?

A- No. Program funds cannot be used to subsidize the cost of surgeries that will already take place under another existing program. Keep in mind this program's purpose is to effectively and efficiently increase spay and neuter of cats and dogs in targeted populations and areas, and to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia rates in Maryland. Projects must seek to INCREASE the number of procedures done in Maryland, not just fund already existing programs at their existing levels. For example, if your organization routinely does 300 surgeries a year, and you apply for funds to do 200 surgeries, this must be 200 in addition to the 300 you normally do.

Q-What if my organization is essentially a rescue that does not normally do spay/neuters but wants to apply. Can we still apply even though we cannot “demonstrate an increase in spay/neuter capacity”?

A-Yes. If you demonstrate that you have the knowledge and capability to implement a project (or plan to partner with a group that does have prior experience), then your application will be considered. You may present your idea as a stand-alone project and detail how many surgeries will result. So, as an example: if you do not normally provide spay/neuter services and apply for a grant to provide 300 surgeries, you have increased your capacity from 0 to 300.

Q-Is overhead an allowable budget item?

A-No. Only direct costs may be funded. You cannot charge overhead (i.e. general operating expenses of your organization, including such items as heat and electricity for the premises and admin costs) as a budget item, unless it is to cover the expense of additional personnel that will increase your organization's spay/neuter capacity. This overhead rate should be part of the budget line item description for any additional personnel you are proposing.

Q-Where can I find information about MD Regulations on Standards of Care and training information?

A-A link to the MD Regulations is located on the program webpage under **On the Web Helpful Resources**. There is also a copy of the *JAVMA Special Report-The Association of Shelter Veterinarians veterinary medical care guidelines for spay-neuter programs* which may be of interest.

Q-What if I propose a target area or time line and then after funding, find I need to make a change?

A- If you are funded and then later find that your target area (or another element of your project needs to be changed, you can apply for a change of scope or no-cost extension from MDA. This MUST be requested to and approved by MDA before any change is acted upon.

We recommend that all applicants read the *Information for Grant Recipients* document in case they are awarded funds.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

The following are summaries of some projects funded by the New York State Animal Population Control Program, administered by the ASPCA and can serve as good examples as to what might qualify for funding by the Maryland Spay and Neuter Grants Program. It should be noted that these are only a few examples and do not represent the only types of projects we will consider. We encourage innovation and creativity and hope the following serve as inspiration and for project ideas. We extend our thanks to Michael Barrett, Vice President of Grants Management for the ASPCA for providing these examples.

BUILDING TO PERFORM SPAY/NEUTER SURGERIES IN-HOUSE: \$50,000.00

Project Summary: To purchase a former veterinary clinic with approximately 3200 sq. feet in which to utilize as a home base for PAWS program. Primarily the building will be utilized to perform spay/neuter surgeries, which will be geared toward all city zip codes, including zip codes which share borders with the city and surrounding suburbs. At this time, aside from the PAWS spay/neuter surgeries, made possible with an existing grant from the ASPCA, which is outsourced, there are no programs offered to pet owners, regularly, which are free of charge. No other programs provide transport to and from a pet owner's residence. With the purchase of this building, PAWS can expand its services to these under-served areas by predominantly utilizing the building to perform high quantity-high-quality spay/neuter surgeries. With the recently purchased trailer, again made possible with a grant from the ASPCA, we will transport any pets to and from their residence for pet owners with no means of transportation.

Impact on Designated Beneficiaries: Many Pet-owned animals will be altered at this location. This will serve the purpose of promoting an overall healthier state of animal welfare within the city of Rochester, including the immediate areas surrounding the city which share zip codes with the city limits. It will also result in a reduction of the intake numbers at the city shelter, as well as reduce the number of strays on the streets and unwanted litters of puppies.

HIGH QUALITY HIGH VOLUME SPAY/NEUTER TRAINING AT EMANCIPET: \$5,000

Project Summary: Emancipet has offered to train our core staff and vet team being utilized to start up and run our spay/neuter program, under the guidelines set forth for a High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter Clinic. PAWS is seeking to take advantage of training our core staff through an already proven successful and sustainable program. We are seeking a grant which would provide stipends for costs, including fees and travel expenses, associated with the training of staff and veterinarians in low-cost spay/neuter techniques for the purpose of efficiently implementing and running a sustainable High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVSN) clinic.

Impact on Designated Beneficiaries: In order to put a dedicated and sound staff in place, it is critical to implement a clinic run by medical personnel and executives who are trained under the low-cost spay/neuter techniques. These techniques are necessary in order for a High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVS/N) program to be successful and sustainable. The training program designed and created by Emancipet can help to ensure PAWS has a successful and sustainable program right from implementation. PAWS is not only seeking to meet the requirements set forth with our existing grants awarded, but the PAWS program itself is dedicated to making a direct impact on the community through reducing strays, reducing local rescue and shelter intake; and in turn enhancing the overall state of animal welfare and the community itself, by keeping animals safe at home. With training our core medical and executive staff under this model, PAWS can begin to make that impact immediately.

 EXPENSES FOR LOW COST HQHVS/N MOBILE CLINIC SERVING LOW INCOME OWNED CATS & DOGS: \$15,000

Project Summary: Funds to be used for continuing operational costs of Spay/Neuter/Now (SNN) mobile clinic primarily servicing low-income owned cats & dogs in St. Lawrence, Jefferson & Lewis counties in Northern New York State. Clients must submit an application & household proof of income prior to scheduling (income guidelines based off USDA WIC). Spay/Neuter/Now relies on donations, fundraisers and grants to keep our programs running and our clinic fees low. The applied funds would be limited to covering: veterinarian & veterinary technician/assistant professional service fees, mileage or vehicle rental & gas fees, and mobile clinic operational & surgical instrument/supply costs (including Neuter Commuter II fuel costs).

Impact on Designated Beneficiaries: Our previous \$10,000 ACP grant performed 351 sterilizations with a mobile clinic & voucher program. In this previous program, the mobile clinic was only performing surgery for cats. Please keep in mind the differences between the previous project and this project involve not including a higher cost/animal voucher program and the mobile clinic has expanded to include dogs. This project helps reduce the companion animal over population by providing a low-cost spay/neuter service for low-income owned dogs & cats in Northern New York State.

 SPAY/NEUTER SURGICAL SUPPLIES: \$5,000

Project Summary: Our HQHVS/N clinics have grown from 3-4 a month to 5 or more on average each month, and in 2012 we provided a record number of low or no cost surgeries -- 1,692 compared to 1,310 in 2011, a 29% increase. As with any program that grows, the need for supplies, or in this case, surgical instruments also grows. For the continued implementation, expansion and sustainability of our HQHVS/N program, we urgently need the following equipment: 2 Warm water circulating blankets for surgical patients, 2 A5 ,10 A5 Clipper Blades, 2 Oscope/ophthalmoscopes and miscellaneous surgical instruments (many, including items

like mosquito hemostats for cat neuter packs curved Kelly hemostats, army navy retractors, 2 additional spay packs, and more.

Impact on Designated Beneficiaries: Having sufficient surgical equipment will allow us to provide HQH VS/N surgeries for the maximum number of clients at each clinic. Without sufficient warming blankets, for example, surgical procedures must be delayed so that each patient receives optimum care. The same holds true with our other equipment needs. To continue to offer sustainable and expanding HQHVS/N clinics we must be fully equipped. This project will allow us to purchase the needed equipment and provide uninterrupted service for income qualified pet guardians and for pets adopted at licensed NY State agencies.

 **MOBILE SPAY/NEUTER VAN TO REACH LOW-INCOME PET OWNERS: \$135,380**

Project Summary: We are applying for a grant to purchase a \$130,180 LaBoit mobile spay/neuter van which will allow us to go out into our community and reach those individuals in need for our low cost s/n programs. We expect that our first year's expenses to be approximately \$231,720, the bulk of which is for the van itself. We expect income of for the first year of approximately \$96,400 so that our net cost for the first year is expected to be \$135,120; going forward we believe that we will at least will break even. A detailed budget for the project is attached.

Impact on Designated Beneficiaries: This project will dramatically reduce the number of homeless companion animals in the Town of Southampton. Particularly, it will reduce the number of kittens and puppies surrendered. Once a kitten reaches 6 months old and a dog (particularly pit bull and pit bull mixes) it is very difficult to get them adopted. In addition, companion animals that are spayed/neutered lead healthier lives and are not surrendered with horrific medical issues that have to be addressed.