

Grant ID: 2202

Title of Proposal: Operation Mix-Fix
Agency Type: Non-Profit
Total Funding Requested: \$25,000.00
Check Payable To: Wags Pet Clinic, Inc

Application Information

Demographics

Name of Applicant Agency: Wags Pet Clinic, Inc. DBA Harmony Vet Care	Website Address: www.harmonyvetcare.org
Person Submitting Proposal: Stephanie J Sabshin	Position: Executive Director, Veterinarian
Person Submitting Proposal Email Address: sjsabshin@gmail.com	
Agency Head: Stephanie Sabshin	Agency Head Email: sjsabshin@gmail.com
Organization Business Address: 8501 Ladue Ln	City: TAMPA
State: FL	Zip: 33614
Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx): 813-871-0850	County: Hillsborough
Cell: 813-390-1623	Fax:

Agency Details

EIN: 821808037

Date of 501(c)(3) Incorporation: 05/26/2017

Dates of Last Fiscal Year: Begin: 01/01/23 **End:** 12/31/23

Organization Income in Last Fiscal Year: \$8,840,493.78

Organization Expenses in Last Fiscal Year: \$5,700,052.42

Number of Paid Employees: Full Time: 90 Part Time: 7

Number of Active Volunteers: 4

Total Volunteer Hours per Week: 60.00

How did you learn of the 2009 Florida Animal Friend grant competition? We are a previous recipient, thank you!

Year(s) of previous Florida Animal Friend grants (if applicable):

Previous Florida Animal Friend Applications: Years Funded: 2019, 2022 Year(s) denied/incomplete:

Auto-Generated (Previous Applications):

Grant #	Proposal Year	Proposal Title	Status
1819	2019	A Spay A Day	Funded
2035	2022	TNR Tampa	Funded
2202	2024	Operation Mix-Fix	Funded

***Type of Organization (check all that apply):**

- Municipal Animal Shelter
- Private Animal Shelter
- Private Animal Shelter with Municipal Contract
- Public Spay/Neuter Services
- Other Public Veterinary Services
 - Private Non-Profit Agency
 - TNR Group
 - Rescue Group
- Other

List the current board of directors of your nonprofit organization (Not required of governmental agency):

Name	Title
Angela Backus	Director
Carol Lansford	President
Heidi Paintner	Director
Natalie Yefimenko	Director
Sandra Sabshin	Director
Valerie Sabshin	Secretary/Treasurer

Applicant Qualifications

For your organization, in the last complete fiscal year:

21 cats and 2 dogs were admitted.

21 cats and 1 dogs were adopted, transferred, or other live outcome.

0 cats and 0 dogs were euthanized.

7599 cats and 4958 dogs were sterilized.

Briefly describe your animal programs:

- Stray/lost pet intake
- Foster program
- Wellness services to understand pet owners
- Volunteer program
- Owner surrendered animals
- Food bank
- Cruelty investigation
- High volume spay/neuter clinic
- Lost and found program
- Behavior counseling
- Enforcement of ordinances
- Full service wellness clinic
- Adoption program
- Disaster services

Give additional background information on your organization's programs as they relate to this application and the qualifications of the personnel who will be in charge of this program. Show that you have the capacity to carry out this program.

The Executive Director and chief surgeon of Harmony Vet Care, Stephanie Sabshin, DVM, has been a veterinarian for 12 years. She is ASPCA trained, and performs 40-60 spays and neuters per day. After working for two years in the open admission county shelter, she created Harmony Vet Care to help provide highly needed veterinary services aimed at keeping pets in their homes, and preventing pet relinquishment to the shelter. Harmony is a full service non-profit veterinary clinic that is growing quickly and working hard to fill the need of the community. Dr. Sabshin is supported by a team of doctors, technicians, receptionists and management who have been working in high volume spay/neuter clinics for years, many of whom are also ASPCA trained. The team consists of 4 full time high quality high volume spay/neuter surgeons, and 1 part time surgeon, as well as 3 surgical teams of highly trained technicians and receptionists all staffing 3 locations.

Florida Animal Friend grants are for low-cost and/or no-cost spay/neuter programs; If you currently have such a program, please describe

Harmony Vet Care is a full service veterinary clinic that has performed over 60,000 sterilization surgeries since opening Feb 5, 2018. Our low-cost pricing structure is designed to cover our daily operating expenses. However, in order provide critical spay/neuter surgeries that will help lower euthanasia rates in our community, additional resources are vital to be able to reach out to low-income and spay/neuter resistant members of our community who cannot afford available low cost services or who may not be willing to sterilize their pet unless the service is provided free of charge. Harmony also offers monthly free TNR events that sterilizes and vaccinates 100 ferals free of charge.

Number of animals sterilized in that program in the past year:

Cats: 7599 **Dogs:** 4958

Target Population

Geographical target area (name of city, county, zip codes, etc. Be as specific as possible.):	Hillsborough and Pinellas counties
Total human population in target area:	2,434,615
Percent of residents living below poverty in target area:	11%
Estimated number of pet cats in target area (human population divided by 3.3):	737763
Estimated number of pet dogs in target area (human population divided by 4.0):	608654
Estimated number of free-roaming community cats in target area (human population divided by 6.0):	405770
Number of cats admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	16,594
Number of dogs admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	9378
Number of cats euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	404
Number of dogs euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	786

Please explain if you believe your target area animal population is significantly different than above.

We believe this is reflective of our target population.

Please explain what you believe are the most substantial sources of dog and cat overpopulation in the target area:

County statistics indicate the most substantial sources of dog and cat overpopulation are community cats and pit bull (mixes). There is still a concerning amount of for profit breeding of pit bull and pit bull mixes in Hillsborough county. Additionally, access to affordable spay/neuter is limited, making it easy for owners to put off spay/neuter, resulting in too many accidental litters.

What kinds of spay/neuter services are currently available in the target area and in what ways are these resources currently insufficient to meet community needs?

While there are numerous private practice veterinarians in Hillsborough County, they are charging several hundred dollars for a pit bull spay or neuter. Additionally, most require a preoperative exam and blood work, which require two visits to the clinic. This makes their services available only to middle to upper income households with reliable transportation and flexible schedules. There are also several ASPCA model clinics in the area, which are charging about \$115-200 for large dog spays and neuters. These clinics are inundated with requests for sterilization appointments, and current wait lists are about 6 weeks in each clinic. All of these pieces together are still struggling to meet the demands of Hillsborough County, which has one of the largest populations in the country. Additionally, they are all failing to meet the needs of the lower income families and the unmotivated owners who are not actively trying to spay or neuter their dogs. Free spays and neuters may be the only viable option to capturing the lowest income bracket and least motivated population.

Florida Animal Friend is highly supportive of proposals that are focused on animal populations that are identified as substantial sources of dog or cat overpopulation rather than being diluted over too broad of a geographic area or diverse animal populations. Describe the specific target animal population(s) of the spay/neuter project proposed for this grant:

Pets in low-income families Large mixed-breed dogs Trap-Neuter-Return of free-roaming community cats. **EAR-TIPPING IS REQUIRED** Other

Objectives

What do you hope to accomplish with these funds (objectives should be specific and quantifiable)?

Our objective for the requested funds is to provide free sterilization surgery for 250 pit bulls and pit bull mixes to very lowincome residents or to spay/neuter resistant pet owners within 12 months. Our normal cost for sterilization surgeries for large dogs is \$100-\$175 for males and \$105-\$180 for females. Harmony Vet Care would perform the surgeries at a reduced cost of \$100 for this grant and would include pain medication and a rabies vaccine for each surgery. Our goal is to maximize this grant to help reduce the number of pit bulls in our county municipal shelter, Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center

How does this program increase the number of sterilization surgeries above the existing baseline?

This grant would allow us to reach owners who are low income or spay/neuter resistant, who would have not altered their dog without this grant. This grant will extend spay/neuter to 250 large breed dogs.

Methods

What criteria will you use to determine eligibility for your program?

We will use the same low-income documentation accepted by our open admission shelter in determining eligibility for low-income spay/neuter vouchers. This includes residents of Hillsborough county whose household income is at or below 185% of the 2023 federal poverty level. For documentation of eligibility we will accept current Food Stamps, Hillsborough Health Care Plan, Medicaid, Section 8 Housing, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), Women, Infants & Children, or

a 2017/2018 federal income tax return. We will also conduct special outreach for pet owners that are determined to be culturally resistant to pet sterilization. Staff will work with Hillsborough County Animal Control Officers to identify neighborhoods or individuals with high rates of impounds or known pet overpopulation issues. Selection factors will be documented in written notes for each recipient under the Resistant Populations criteria.

How will you advertise the program? Explain how the advertising will reach the target audience.

Harmony Vet Care has a phenomenal network of supporters that includes other local veterinary clinics, rescues, and the municipal shelter. We will create an announcement to send to each of these key supporters. We will also share this program on social media and through emails to our clients and through press release. We also have a partnership with the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center. The officers there will be able to help us target low income and spay/neuter resistant populations to help.

How will you address barriers to full use of the program such as transportation, illiteracy, and cultural hurdles?

The public will be required to provide transportation to one of our clinics, conveniently located in the east, north, and west corners of Hillsborough County. We are frequently flexible with schedule hurdles and can provide boarding for dogs when an owner’s schedule interferes with drop off or pick up. We routinely translate advertisements and posts into Spanish and have multiple bilingual employees in our clinic. We do not anticipate illiteracy to be a problem, as word of mouth and direct contact with animal control officers will play a large role in advertising this program.

Does this project involve the transportation of animals by someone other than the client? If so, describe the vehicles, methods for confinement, personnel training, liability releases used to assure the safety of the animals and handlers.

No

Veterinary Services

What arrangements have you made with veterinarians to perform the surgeries?

Harmony Vet Care is staffed with 4 full time high quality high volume spay/neuter surgeons, and 1 part time surgeon who will all participate in this program and fulfilling its objective.

Are they: In-House Veterinarian Outside Clinic Combination

Participating veterinary practices if surgeries will not be performed in-house:

Practice Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Lead Practice
Harmony Vet Care	8501 Ladue Ln	TAMPA	FL	33614	813-871-0850	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Harmony Vet Care of Brandon	3301 John Moore Rd	Brandon	FL	33615	813-390-1623	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harmony Vet Care of Oldsmar	300 State St E	Oldsmar	Florida	34677	813-390-1623	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fee Range

What is the fee range to be paid for spay and neuter and what is the distribution to be paid by the client vs. the grant program? **Keep in mind that Florida Animal Friend grant funds may only be used for costs directly associated with sterilization surgery (including anesthesia and pain control, which is required) and not for other items such as testing, licensing, and capital purchases. However, \$2 per animal of grant funds can be used for rabies vaccination.**

Amount Paid by Client

Amount Paid by Project

Total Amount

Range for Male Cats	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>
Range for Female Cats	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>
Range for Male Dogs	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$100.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$100.00"/>
Range for Female Dogs	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$100.00"/>	<input type="text" value="\$100.00"/>

Please check each item below to indicate additional services offered at the time of surgery, whether the client is required to pay for them, and if so what the fee is. For example, if an examination is required for surgery but is not charged to the client it would be marked: Required Yes, Fee to client No

Required, Optional, or Not Offered Fee to Client?

- Examination** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Rabies Vaccination if Due** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Other Vaccination if Due** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Pain Medication*** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Parasite Medication** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- HW Testing** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Feline Leuk/FIV** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- County License** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Ear tipping*** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Microchip** Required Optional Not Available No Yes
- Other** Required Optional Not Available No Yes

*** = REQUIRED by grant**

None of the anticipated grant funds can be used for any of the above services, except for mandatory pain medication, ear-tipping and \$2 per animal for rabies vaccination.

If necessary, please explain the procedures and fees described above:

Grant funds will cover spay/neuter, rabies, and pain medications. Additional services are available at our regular low price.

Is this a voucher program? No

If so, how will you assure utilization of the program?

For your voucher program, how have you determined the capacity of the veterinarians listed above to handle the projected capacity?

Will you have the ability to report the number of vouchers issued and the number redeemed for spay/neuter surgeries?

Community Collaboration

Florida Animal Friend values community/inter-agency collaboration. Are there any local groups (such as rescue groups, animal control agencies, TNR groups, local businesses, local media, social service agencies, etc.) other than your organization and your cooperating veterinarians who are committed to assist?

Yes No

Please list them and detail their level of involvement with the proposed effort.

Name	Level of Involvement
Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center	PRC and its animal control officers is committed to helping to identify low income and spay/neuter resistant owners and referring them to Harmony for use of this grant.
Lost and Fount Pets of Hillsborough County	This facebook page has 69,000 followers and is committed to sharing our advertisement for this event.
The New Barker	This printed publication in the Tampa area will be printing an advertisement for this event in their fall publication. The New Barker can be found in local businesses throughout Tampa as well as online.

Other Information

Provide any additional information that will help the grant selection committee understand how the program will operate to achieve its goals.

Through advertising and networking, Harmony Vet Care will reach out to low income and spay/neuter resistant pet owners to offer free sterilizations for large breed mixes. We believe that targeting very low income and spay/neuter resistant pet owners is the key to increasing sterilization above baseline numbers, as these are the pet owners least likely to ever sterilize their dogs. By providing a special fund for free spay/neuter surgery and facilitating participation through outreach and other support, this project will directly address the largest barriers in our community: poverty and cultural resistance. At an average cost of only \$100 per surgery, this project is an excellent investment of Florida Animal Friend funding with huge potential to keep the most at risk dogs out of our county shelters. It is also vital to note what appears to be profit in 2023 was already committed to vital expansion of Harmony Vet Care in 2024. Our primary and original location will be closing in July 2024, as our lease has ended. Harmony Vet Care has purchased a building which will serve as our new third location, and will simultaneously expand our services into Pinellas county. Harmony Vet Care of Oldsmar is set to begin its soft opening in April 2024, and will be fully operational by July 2024. This grant will be available at all three Harmony locations: Carrollwood, Brandon, and Oldsmar.

Budget

Total number of sterilization surgeries projected:

Cats: 0 Dogs: 250

Total budget requested (Budget should not exceed \$25,000): \$25,000.00

Average cost/surgery projected: \$100.00

Describe any expenses that are not included in the grant and how they will be paid for (for example, vaccines, microchipping, ear notching, etc.):

The range of cost for canine neuters is \$100-\$180 and the cost for canine spays is \$105-\$180. For the purposes of this grant, the cost of each surgery will be \$100, and Harmony will absorb the additional cost of each surgery. Harmony Vet Care will cover the cost for rabies vaccination (\$20) and postoperative pain medication (\$15). Additional vaccines, heartworm testing, and microchipping can be purchased by the client for a low cost.

Describe any other funding sources for this program, i.e. other grants, targeted fundraising efforts, budget allocation, etc.

Grant funds will be used specifically for the costs of spay/neuter surgery for large breed mixes belonging to low income or spay/neuter resistant pet owners. The cost of outreach, including printing and staff time will be absorbed by Harmony Vet Care. We will also solicit donations from the community.

What percent of the total cost of the program would this projected grant cover?

66%

Timeline

PROJECTS CANNOT BEGIN UNTIL GRANT FUNDS ARE RECEIVED, usually before September 1.

All projects must be completed within 12 months of receipt of funding, with the final report submitted no later than September 1 of the following year.

Projected start date: 09/01/24/ **Projected end date:** 07/01/25

Unexpended funds

Any unexpended funds must be refunded to Florida Animal Friend within 30 days of the end of the project.

Requests for extensions

Requests for time extensions are discouraged and not often granted. If it is imperative to request an extension, such request must be made in writing at least 30 days prior to the end of the project. It is FAF's policy to seldom grant more than a 30-60 day extension.

Failure to submit reports and requests within the required time period will impact your agency's future grant applications.

Future Funding to Sustain Public Spay/Neuter

***Explain how the organization plans to fund this program in the future. Having sustainable plans including other grants, local donations and other services generating revenue enhances the chances of receiving this grant.**

Harmony Vet Care will continue to offer affordable spay/neuter surgeries at our clinics. Additionally, we will continue to aggressively seek grant funding for this program so that the public can have these services performed for little or no cost. We have a charity fund (the Simon Fund) that helps subsidize medical care for animals in need. Since its inception, it has subsidized \$507,711 worth of medical care for animals in need. We plan to use the statistical outcomes of this project period to demonstrate impact and effectiveness and make the case for continued support from our major donors, so we can use our charity fund to fill in time gaps between grants.

Promotion of Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate

***Applicants selected for funding are expected to publicize their grant in support of their spay/neuter program and promote the sale of the Animal Friend license plate via press releases, newsletters, website links, social media, etc. Please describe your plan to promote the Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate. Grantees are required to submit documentation of promotional endeavors with their final report.**

Harmony Vet Care will promote the program through placement on our website and social media. Harmony's facebook has 9,000 followers and posts reach an audience of approximately 20,000. Additionally we have a client database of over 70,000 clients who receive periodic email newsletters. Information about the grant and license plate was first placed on our website when we received a FAF grant in 2019, and has been on our website since. We will also place rack cards promoting Florida Animal Friend license plates in our lobby. The license plates will be mentioned in all advertising about the program. Many of our staff have the license plate and are enthusiastic supporters.

Number of FAF specialty plates on vehicles of staff and/or volunteers:

11