

Grant ID: 2397

Title of Proposal: Clay County Spay & Neuter Program**Agency Type:** Municipal**Total Funding Requested:** \$24,990.00**Check Payable To:** Clay County Board of County Commissioners

Application Information

Demographics

Name of Applicant Agency: Clay County Board of County Commissioners**Website Address:** 477 Houston Street**Person Submitting Proposal:** Kaylee Benner**Position:** Grant Writer**Person Submitting Proposal Email Address:** kaylee.benner@claycountygov.com**Person Submitting Proposal Cell:** 904-529-4152**Organization Head:** Ernest Hagan**Organization Head's Email:** ernest.hagan@claycountygov.com**Organization Business Address:** 3984 State Road 16 West**City:** Green Cove Springs**State:** Florida**Zip:** 32043**Organization Business Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):** 904-269-6342**County:** Clay**Organization Head's Cell:** 904-529-5836

Agency Details

EIN:0% "> EIN: 596000553**Date of 501(c)(3) Incorporation:****Dates of Last Fiscal Year: Begin:** 10/01/24 **End:** 11/30/25**Organization Income in Last Fiscal Year:** \$2,573,944.00**Organization Expenses in Last Fiscal Year:** \$1,724,883.76**Number of Paid Employees:** Full Time: 25 Part Time: 4**How did you learn of the 2009 Florida Animal Friend grant competition?** Previous applicant.**Year(s) of previous Florida Animal Friend grants (if applicable):****Previous Florida Animal Friend Applications:** Years Funded: 2022 Year(s) denied/incomplete: 2025**Auto-Generated (Previous Applications):**

Grant #	Proposal Year	Proposal Title	Status
2042	2022	Low-Cost/No-Cost Spay/Neuter Program	Funded
2303	2025	Clay County Spay & Neuter Program	Denied
2397	2026	Clay County Spay & Neuter Program	Funded

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

- ☒ **Municipal Agency with Shelter**
- ☐ **Municipal Agency without Shelter**
- ☐ **Private Animal Shelter**
- ☐ **Private Animal Shelter with Municipal Contract**
- ☐ **Public Spay/Neuter Services**
- ☐ **Other Public Veterinary Services**
- Non-profit Agency**
- ☐ **TNR Group**
- ☐ **Rescue Group**
- ☐ **Other**

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

Applicant Qualifications

For your organization, in the last complete fiscal year:

1487 cats and 1013 dogs were admitted.

1245 cats and 984 dogs were adopted, transferred, or other live outcome.

162 cats and 53 dogs were euthanized.

1270 cats and 744 dogs were sterilized.

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.

Clay County Animal Services (CCAS) is responsible for animal welfare in Clay County. The shelter engages in a multitude of services for the community, including animal intake, lost and found, disaster services, enforcement of ordinances, and cruelty investigations. The shelter also provides TNVR services and low-cost rabies vaccines and microchipping for owned pets. Currently, the shelter does not provide spay/neuter services for owned pets. If CCAS is awarded funding by the Florida Animal Friend organization, CCAS will have the funds necessary to enact a no-cost spay and neuter program for residents in the target area. This program will be overseen by both the Shelter Manager, Courtney Sumner, and the Shelter Medical Director, Dr. Jennifer Green. Under their guidance, staff will perform approximately ten no-cost surgeries per week resulting in at least an additional 520 surgeries during the program year. Clay County Animal Services has utilized Census tract data to determine a target area. Clay County, while experiencing exponential growth, has multiple pockets of rural and urban areas that remain underserved with a significant low-income population. The zip code area 32068, which encompasses the town of Middleburg, is a prime example: this mostly rural area has the highest number of residents living in poverty in Clay County (US Census). Residents in this part of the County are barred by financial constraints when seeking veterinary care. This area has seen multiple animal hoarding situations in the past five years. CCAS will work with various County partners to inform the target area of the spay/neuter program and encourage their participation. In collaboration with Animal Services, the Clay County Community Services department will assist in referring residents in this area to the spay/neuter program. Community Services already provides vetting and screening for a host of County services and can direct 32068 residents to this opportunity as they assist them with other prospective services. Field services personnel from Animal Services will also refer individuals and families for services as a routine part of their enforcement work in the community. When scheduling an appointment with Animal Services, the resident will be asked to provide their address to determine eligibility. Staff will inform residents that they will be required to provide proof of residence in the form of a valid ID. The County was awarded funding from Florida Animal Friend in 2022, emphasizing our proven capacity to carry out this program.

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

Clay County Animal services does not currently have such a program.

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

Cats: Dogs:

Target 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 ☐ S/N services where demand exceeds current resources. ☐ Other

Geographical target area (name of city, county, zip codes, etc. Be as specific as possible.):

32068

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

The largest contributing factor causing dog and cat overpopulation in Clay County is the lack of access to affordable spay and neuter programs. CCAS currently does not provide a low-cost or no-cost spay and neuter program. Selection for a Florida Animal Friend Grant would allow CCAS to provide no-cost cost services to individuals and families in the 32068 zip code.

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?

Currently, Clay Humane provides low-cost and/or no-cost spay and neuter programs while CCAS is unable to do so. The current institutional capacity of these organizations, combined with all programs and services, is insufficient to meet the community's needs. Despite their efforts, more than 2,000 animals were admitted to Clay County animal control shelters last year, including more than 1,000 dogs and cats. The issue has been exacerbated by population growth coupled with no new low-cost facilities opening in the area. The long commute (and associated costs) to neighboring cities such as Jacksonville to access these services creates a barrier for Clay County residents, especially those who are already struggling financially. These factors have contributed to a larger strain on already limited resources.

Objectives

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

CCAS hopes to increase the number of spay/neuter surgeries performed by at least 520 in the year following an award. Through increased sterilization, CCAS hopes to reduce the unwanted pet population in Clay County and decrease shelter intakes by at least 200 animals from the previous year. CCAS' dog intakes are mostly large-breed dogs, underscoring their local overpopulation. Clay County also has a significant community and feral cat presence that has only grown since our recent surge in residents (notably, the 32068 area has experienced the largest boom in population). Through a no-cost spay and neuter program, CCAS hopes to help low-income families choose the health benefits of spaying and neutering their pets without concern about affordability. Veterinary costs lead to increased pet surrenders to Animal Services. The ability to add spay and neuter services for pet owners to the current low-cost rabies and microchip offerings will help more owners keep their pets and reduce the number of accidental litters in the County. Increased spay/neuter in the area would ideally reduce the number of hoarding cases as well.

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

In the last fiscal year, CCAS sterilized 1,270 cats and 744 dogs. These 2,014 animals were sterilized in the absence of an owned-pet spay and neuter program at the shelter. Adding 520 sterilizations through this program, along with the continuation of the TVNR program, would allow CCAS to sterilize well over 2,000 animals in the coming year, making a significant dent in the unwanted pet population in Clay County.

Methods

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

CCAS has utilized Census data and maps from the Clay County GIS department to determine the zip code area in Clay County with the highest number of residents living at or under the poverty line. The 32068 area was identified as having the greatest need. This is the densest area in Clay County and has a poverty rate of approximately 10.9%. With a population of 57,458, this percentage accounts for over 6,000 residents. Another major factor for targeting this zip code is the concentration of animal hoarding cases within the area. In the past four years, CCAS has handled multiple major hoarding cases. In the majority of these isolated cases, the resident resided in the 32068 zip code. Between all these instances, over 200 animals have been seized from separate Middleburg residences. This pattern emphasizes the need for accessible spay/neuter programs in the target area.

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

A multitude of advertising methods will be used to promote the program. The County's Communications Department will work with Animal Services to advertise on social media and send out a press release to build awareness. Field officers will share information about the program during their routine work within the community. CCAS will ask partners, such as Clay Humane and the SAFE Animal Shelter, to share information about the program. CCAS also participates in community events, including adoption events, where they can share information with community members about the program. Additionally, Clay County's Citizen Information Division will provide information about the program to individuals and families whom they screen for other services.

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

The most significant barrier to full use of the program in Clay County will be a lack of awareness since there has been a gap in the operation of this program. CCAS will engage in an educational campaign via both informational brochures and social media regarding the benefits of spay and neuter. CCAS will also engage in a multifaceted campaign to promote the new program to qualified individuals and families via word-of-mouth through Clay County agencies, partner agencies, and social media.

Does this project involve the transportation of animals by someone other than the client? If so, describe.

No, individuals will transport their own pets for participation in this program since the focus is on owned pets.

Veterinary Services

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

Dr. Jennifer Green is CCAS' in-house veterinarian and medical director. She, alongside her staff, will perform the surgeries.

Are they: ☒ In-House Veterinarian ☐ Outside Clinic ☐ Combination

Participating veterinary practices if surgeries will not be performed in-house:**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. This includes pain medication, ear tipping, and \$ 2 per animal for rabies vaccinations. Costs for licensing, testing, transport, etc. are not to be paid for with grant funds.

	Amount Paid by Client	Amount Paid by Project	Total Amount
Range for Male Cats	\$0.00	\$25.55	\$25.55
Range for Female Cats	\$0.00	\$33.79	\$33.79
Range for Male Dogs	\$0.00	\$60.06	\$60.06
Range for Female Dogs	\$0.00	\$60.06	\$60.06

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**

Grant funds cannot be used for the above services except for pain medication, ear tipping, and \$2 per animal for rabies vaccination.

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

CCAS does not have the institutional capacity to provide a full-service veterinary clinic. Prior to performing surgery, Dr. Green will perform a brief surgical exam at no cost to clients. Clients will update their pet's rabies vaccination for a \$10 fee if necessary. Additionally, microchipping is available for a cost of \$15.

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
Clay County Citizen Information Center	While taking calls from residents and providing other assistance, the CIC team may refer eligible residents to the program.
Clay County Communications Department	The Clay County Communications Department will play the vital role of informing the public about the program through social media channels, the County website, local news outlets, flyers, etc.
Clay Humane	Clay Humane will be invited to refer eligible residents to the program.
Lincoln Memorial University	The County has an ongoing partnership with Lincoln Memorial University's Veterinary School. This partnership will allow veterinary students and staff to participate in spay/neuter surgeries, expanding CCAS' capacity to provide these services.
SAFE Animal Shelter	Clay County Animal Services works closely with the Safe Animal Shelter in Middleburg. Staff at SAFE will be invited to make referrals to CCAS for this program. CCAS has assisted the Safe Animal Shelter with spay/neuter surgeries in the past.

Other Information

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

Residents in the 32068 zip code will be able to seek no-cost spay or neuter from CCAS if this program is funded. Consideration will also be made on a case-by-case basis for residents with multiple animals to ensure that the cost of the program is tenable and allows for all of the target animals to receive services.

Budget

Total number of sterilization surgeries projected:

Cats: 364 **Dogs:** 156

Total budget requested (Budget should not exceed \$25,000): \$24,990.00

Average cost/surgery projected: \$49.00

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

Florida Animal Friend would be the sole funder for this no-cost spay/neuter program.

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

100%

If not 100%, please elaborate.

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: 09/01/26/ **Projected end date:** 08/30/27

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.**

A successful spay/neuter program will reduce the number of intakes. The reduction in intakes will reduce the cost of operation for the shelter overall, and the funds saved by caring for fewer unwanted animals will support the ongoing cost of the program. Additionally, the County is developing guidelines for donations. In the future, animal lovers throughout the County will be able to donate the cost of a spay/neuter for a low-income resident to ensure that funds remain available to support this program.

Promotion of Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate

***Applicants selected for funding are expected to actively publicize their grant in support of their spay/neuter program and promote the sale of the Animal Friend license plate. Publicity efforts should include press releases, newsletters, website links, and social media posts, among other strategies. Florida Animal Friend's marketing firm will provide assistance and advice, and partner with your organization to achieve coverage. 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 as part of their reporting obligations.**

Clay County Animal Services, with assistance from the County's Communications department, can promote the Florida Animal Friend license plate on social media and the County website. CCAS will place Florida Animal Friend promotional materials in the shelter and ensure they are available at community events, including adoption events.

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

5