

Grant ID: 2425

Title of Proposal: Hernando County TNVR Program**Agency Type:** Municipal**Total Funding Requested:** \$25,000.00**Check Payable To:** Hernando County Sheriff's Animal Services

Application Information

Demographics

Name of Applicant Agency: Hernando County Sheriff's Animal Services	Website Address: https://www.hernandosheriff.org/AnimalServices/
Person Submitting Proposal: Natasha Russell	Position: Accounting Specialist
Person Submitting Proposal Email Address: 2363@HernandoSheriff.org	Person Submitting Proposal Cell: 352-797-3614
Organization Head: Sheriff Al Nienhuis	Organization Head's Email: ANienhuis@HernandoSheriff.org
Organization Business Address: 18900 Cortez Blvd	City: Brooksville
State: FL	Zip: 34601
Organization Business Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx): 352-796-5062	County: Hernando County
Organization Head's Cell: 352-754-3600	

Agency Details

EIN:0% "> EIN: 596019767**Date of 501(c)(3) Incorporation:****Dates of Last Fiscal Year: Begin:** 10/01/24 **End:** 09/30/25**Organization Income in Last Fiscal Year:** \$229,895.42**Organization Expenses in Last Fiscal Year:** \$1,127,931.80**Number of Paid Employees:** Full Time: 14 Part Time: 0**How did you learn of the 2009 Florida Animal Friend grant competition?** another municipal shelter**Year(s) of previous Florida Animal Friend grants (if applicable):****Previous Florida Animal Friend Applications:** Years Funded: 0 Year(s) denied/incomplete: 1**Auto-Generated (Previous Applications):**

Grant #	Proposal Year	Proposal Title	Status
2326	2025	Hernando County Animal Spay & Neuter	Denied

***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:**

1728 cats and 1314 dogs were admitted.

1465 cats and 1156 dogs were adopted, transferred, or other live outcome.

132 cats and 38 dogs were euthanized.

1155 cats and 555 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.

The Hernando County Animal Shelter faced several longstanding challenges that had gone unaddressed for some time. As a result, the County's elected board requested that the Sheriff's Office assume management of the shelter in order to resolve these issues and improve overall operations. This transition took place on January 1, 2025. One of the most significant improvements was the hiring of an in-house veterinarian after a prolonged vacancy. Our veterinarian has over 30 years of experience in veterinary medicine and more than 20 years of experience in animal shelter environments. The Head Veterinary Technician, a Certified Veterinary Technician since 2021, has over a decade of shelter experience. Both bring prior experience supporting TNR programs through other shelters and nonprofit organizations. The veterinary team also includes an additional veterinary technician and a veterinary assistant, and interviews are currently underway to fill an additional veterinary technician position. Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) is a proven, humane approach to managing community cat populations by preventing reproduction, reducing disease transmission, and decreasing shelter intake over time. By stabilizing colony populations and improving overall animal health, TNVR programs help reduce strain on shelter resources while supporting public health and animal welfare goals. As part of broader shelter improvements, the veterinary staff was able to launch a limited TNVR program in 2025.

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

The shelter's veterinary staff launched a limited TNVR program in 2025 using the shelter's medical budget. The program is designed to reduce the overpopulation of community cats by preventing reproduction, reducing disease transmission, and decreasing shelter intake over time. By stabilizing colony populations and improving overall animal health, the TNVR program helps reduce strain on shelter resources while supporting public health and animal welfare objectives. TNVR services are currently offered every Wednesday, with a weekly cap up to 10 cats. Trappers and community members caring for free-roaming cats may schedule appointments through the shelter's website. In addition, the shelter has established a collaboration with Barn Patrol, a volunteer-based nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of community cats through TNR efforts and barn cat placement. Barn Patrol identifies cat colonies and conducts trapping for TNVR services. In addition to the weekly TNVR clinic, the shelter recently completed two full TNVR days serving cats brought in through this partnership.

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

Cats: 208 Dogs: 0

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.):

All of Hernando County will be eligible but we plan to work with animal enforcement officers and other rescues or organizations such as Barn Patrol, to identify and target areas within the county with growing feral and community cat populations.

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

Unsterilized free-roaming, feral, and community cats represent a major factor in ongoing cat overpopulation. Their reproductive capacity, combined with the absence of consistent, humane population control measures such as TNVR, contributes to sustained and rapid population growth.

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, only 1 clinic in the county offers TNVR services, with a limited volume of services. The lack of accessible TNVR services has contributed to an ongoing cycle of uncontrolled breeding, resulting in high numbers of stray cat intake, particularly during kitten season.

Objectives

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

We receive daily calls from the community regarding cats that are sick, hungry, or suffering. Without meaningful TNVR, we are not addressing the root of the problem. Our goal is to reduce the overpopulation of community cats by preventing reproduction, reducing disease transmission, and decreasing shelter intake over time. By stabilizing colony populations and improving overall animal health, the TNVR program helps reduce strain on shelter resources while supporting public health and animal welfare objectives.

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

Through the launch of our startup TNVR program, the shelter was able to TNVR 208 cats in 2025. If awarded funding, the shelter plans to set a goal of 15-20 cats per week and to schedule additional TNVR surgery days in collaboration with Barn Patrol as needed. Over the past year, the shelter was able to establish a limited TNVR program and develop numerous strong community partnerships. With this foundation in place, the shelter is well positioned to expand the program and increase its impact.

Methods

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

Our program will prioritize feral and community cats within our county. This will include rescues or other organizations as well as citizens who trap feral and community cats for TNVR services.

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

The shelter will utilize its website and Facebook page to share press releases and provide ongoing community updates. Outreach efforts will also include advertising through the shelters pet food pantry, at off-site adoption events, and by reaching out to local veterinary offices to encourage referrals for TNVR cases. In addition, the shelter will continue collaborating with local rescue groups and community organizations to expand awareness of TNVR services. Offering TNVR services on a consistent weekly schedule increases accessibility and convenience for community members participating in trapping efforts.

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

Transportation will primarily be the responsibility of the trapper. When transportation barriers arise, the shelter will coordinate with Animal Enforcement Officers and/or Barn Patrol to assist when feasible. To address language barriers, the shelter will utilize bilingual team members when available and will use translation tools such as Google Translate to support clear communication. The shelter is also exploring additional resources to further reduce barriers and improve accessibility for all community members.

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

Transportation will primarily be the responsibility of the trapper. When barriers arise, the shelter will coordinate with Animal Enforcement Officers and/or Barn Patrol to assist when feasible. Citizens who feed community or feral cats will be encouraged to assist with trapping and transportation whenever possible.

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

We will use our in house veterinarian.

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	\$60.00	\$60.00
Range for Female Cats	\$0.00	\$60.00	\$60.00
Range for Male Dogs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Range for Female Dogs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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 \$8.00
Pain Medication*	☒ Required ☐ Optional ☐ Not Available	☒ No ☐ Yes
Parasite Medication	☐ Required ☒ Optional ☐ Not Available	☐ No ☒ Yes \$7.50
HW Testing	☐ Required ☐ Optional ☒ Not Available	☒ No ☐ Yes
Feline Leuk/FIV	☐ Required ☒ Optional ☐ Not Available	☐ No ☒ Yes \$30.00
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:

The \$60 project fee would cover the TNR surgery, pain medication, ear tipping, and \$2 for the rabies vaccination. The trapper will have the option to add other vet services for a fee.

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
Barn Patrol	Barn Patrol is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of community cats through TNR efforts and barn cat placement. Barn Patrol identifies cat colonies and conducts trapping for TNVR services. They have occasionally assisted with transport for our weekly TNVR program. In 2025 we held two TNVR surgery dates specifically for their organization and plan to do more.
Humane Society of the Nature Coast	Humane Society of the Nature Coast is a local private nonprofit organization. They often assist with rescuing animals in need and communicate information to the public about our shelter's TNVR program.
Pet Luv	Pet Luv is a local clinic that offers affordable spay, neuter, and vaccine services with limited availability for TNVR clients that refers TNVR cases to our shelter as needed.
Rescue Pets of FL	Rescue Pets of FL is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization that collaborates with local shelters. They accept cat transfers from our shelter regularly and they also provide support with large case transfers.
Runaways Animal Rescue	Runaways Animal Rescue is a nonprofit animal shelter that provides TNVR services in a neighboring county. Because our program is designed to serve Hernando County, any TNVR inquiries originating from Pasco County can be referred to Runaways. Additionally, when our shelter experiences higher intake levels or complex medical cases, Runaways is one of the rescue partners we regularly contact for transfers.

Other Information

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

Only six months after the shelter transitioned from county oversight to the Sheriff's Office, our veterinary team launched a startup TNVR program. During this time, we also established partnerships with local rescues and community organizations. In addition to

providing TNVR services, cats and kittens deemed adoptable are placed in temporary foster care through the shelter or transferred to partner rescues, helping further reduce the number of feral and community cats. With this foundation in place, the shelter is well positioned to expand the program and increase its impact. Our team remains committed to stabilizing feral and community cat populations, improving overall animal health, and reducing the strain on shelter staff as well as the rescues and organizations that assist.

Budget

Total number of sterilization surgeries projected:

Cats: 417 **Dogs:** 0

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

Average cost/surgery projected: \$60.00

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

The shelter medical budget funds our current limited TNVR program. We will continue looking for grants and fundraising opportunities.

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:** 08/14/27

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.**

The shelter will continue looking for grant opportunities, explore fundraising and revenue opportunities, seek donations, or allocate funds through the shelter medical budget.

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.**

The shelter will advertise through its website and Facebook page, create flyers to hand out at the shelters pet food pantry and at off-site adoption events, and add information to the take home bag we give to every adopter.

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

Unknown