

Coastal Humane Society Feline Spay/Neuter Voucher Program Information Sheet for Animal Control Officers

Coastal Humane Society has received a Belvedere Grant for the amount of \$15,000 for the purpose of spaying and neutering pet cats of low-income owners and maintained colonies of feral cats in the 14 communities with whom we contract. We designed a voucher program with the goal of spaying or neutering approximately 230 cats at several veterinary clinics in the area who have agreed to participate in the program. These clinics are Androscoggin Animal Hospital in Topsham, The Community Spay Neuter Clinic In Freeport, Sunray Animal Hospital in Brunswick, Topsham Veterinary Wellness in Topsham, and The Veterinary Clinic In Brunswick. We are looking into adding more participating clinics as our contracted towns have recently changed.

We designed this program to help two groups of people: low-income cat owners and caretakers of feral colonies. Owners of pet cats will be required to live in one of our contracted towns and to provide proof of financial need in order to be eligible for this program. We will accept proof of income in the form of two consecutive pay stubs, a previous year's tax return, or proof of government assistance such as disability pay stub, MaineCare coverage, or an EBT card. Caretakers of feral colonies will be required to live in one of our contracted towns and to be willing agree to a site visit by a representative of Coastal.

Applicants who qualify will be issued one voucher for each cat. We are not setting a limit on the number of cats per qualified owner, though we reserve the right to do so should the need arise. The voucher will be at no cost to the owner and will cover the cost of the spay or neuter surgery. Any additional items required by the participating clinic, such as an exam or rabies vaccine, will be the responsibility of the owner, or may be donated by the clinic. Once the voucher is issued, the owner will contact the participating clinic of his or her choice and make an appointment for the surgery. We will provide an information sheet to each owner or caretaker to assist him or her in choosing a clinic that best meets the owner's needs.

For colonies of feral cats, vouchers will be issued to the caretaker. A representative of Coastal will be available to be the liaison between the colony caretaker and the participating clinic if necessary, and may be involved in coordinating the trapping and transporting of groups of cats.

Through this program, we hope to be able to reduce the numbers of unwanted and often suffering cats and kittens in our communities. For citizens who would like more information about the program, they can be directed to visit our website at coastalhumanesociety.org and look for the program under the "Resources" tab. In order to be issued a voucher, an applicant should call the shelter at 725-5051 and ask to speak to Julia, or email her directly at jkloczko@coastalhumanesociety.org. Please take a stack of business cards to hand out as needed.

Thank you for everything you do!