



# Spay and Neuter Sunshine's Friends

Project #  
19-433

County: Anne Arundel, Howard, Baltimore

Number of Cats Spayed:	103	Number of Dogs Spayed:	40
Number of Cats Neutered:	98	Number of Dogs Neutered:	39

Amount Received: \$19,112.64	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0.00
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### Project Synopsis:

This project funded the no-cost surgeries and rabies vaccinations for pet cats and dogs owned by residents of Jessup and Curtis Bay, and specific low-income neighborhoods in Elkridge, Arbutus, and Odenton MD. We proposed to spay or neuter 200 pet cats and 60 pet dogs.



### Project Description:

Sunshine's Friends Cat and Dog Rescue ([www.sunshinesfriends.org](http://www.sunshinesfriends.org)) has been a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity since 2014 operating within 20 miles of our main location in Jessup, MD. The area is a mix of light industry, warehouses, and residential neighborhoods, and the area along the US Route 1 corridor and southern Baltimore Beltway has a higher than average number of low-income residents who need help.

This project, which ran from September 2018 to August 2019, sought to spay/neuter 200 pet cats and 60 pet dogs for low-income families within five zip codes in the area. As part of a multiyear project, we are steadily reducing the number of unwanted pets surrendered to local county animal shelters due to overpopulation or inability to afford veterinary care. The project funded the cost of the spay/neuter surgeries and rabies vaccines for the pets and included a transportation component to bring the animals from the targeted neighborhoods to our partner vets' clinics for those people unable to take their pets.

### Summary of Approach:

We started with advertising and community outreach: we worked with local community associations as well as social service and church groups by speaking at their meetings and by going door-to-door with brochures and pamphlets. We ran announcements on our social media and web pages and we left handouts at vet offices and pet stores. We not only spread the word about spaying/neutering and vaccinating pets in general, but also about our project in particular. We continued the outreach activities throughout the project's timeframe.

We partnered with three local spay/neuter vet clinics to provide services through an in-kind contribution in the form of substantially discounted rates. Our organization also contributed the costs of additional medical care and



flea treatment not covered by grant monies if pet owners could not afford it. This increased the effectiveness of the program and kept more pets with their families.

A project coordinator managed our efforts, engaged with the community, and lead the outreach portions of the project, making personal connections with pet owners and determining what their transportation and after-care needs were. Some pet owners took care of their own transportation, but about 80% of the time we picked up the pets, took them to and from the vet and delivered them back to their owners after the surgeries. Many owners either did not have transportation, worked odd hours, or could not take off time from work to go to the vet. By including mileage in the grant, we were able to increase the number of animals we spayed/neutered and improve our effectiveness.

**Accomplishments:**

In just 10 months of the planed one-year project, we managed to spay/neuter 201 pet cats and 79 pet dogs. Once the grant money was expended, we continued to fund some spay/neuter procedures and other emergency surgeries for cases of extreme need through our "Hope 4 Paws" program. We prevented numerous potential pet surrenders due to unwanted litters of puppies/kittens or medical care that people could not afford. We also covered medical costs, tests, and flea treatment for pets from our own operating budget. Two cats and one dog needed additional surgery in order to save their lives and to give them a good quality of life.

**Lessons Learned:**

We practically doubled the number of pets that we spayed/neutered from last year's projects. We increased our outreach activities, especially via social networking and door-to-door neighborhood canvassing, particularly in Curtis Bay. In particularly poor neighborhoods, we met other needs of pet owners beyond spay/neuter such as supplying pet food and paying for emergency surgeries for extreme cases. The increase in outreach and non-spay/neuter services drove up demand for our programs and also resulted in increased exposure from word-of-mouth.

We estimed being able to spay/neuter about 60 dogs, but since their surgery costs are based on weight we actually had enough funds to alter 79 (132% of our goal).

**Attachments:**

List of pet cats altered,  
List of pet dogs altered

**For More Information Contact:**

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