

2026 Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program

Request for Grant Proposals



Released:

December 4, 2025

Grant Proposals Due:

By 5:00 p.m. PT on January 5, 2026

Late submissions will not be accepted.



**California Department of Food and Agriculture
Office of Grants Administration**

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About the Program

Purpose

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is pleased to announce a competitive solicitation process to award grants under the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to help stop pet overpopulation in California by providing funds for spay/neuter services to municipalities and non-profit organizations in California.

This program is funded by the following sources:

- Pet Lover's License Plate Program: Fees associated with the original purchase, annual renewal, and conversion of Pet Lover's license plates from the California Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Prevention of Animal Homelessness and Cruelty Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund: Contributions provided by California individuals in excess of their tax liability when filing their annual tax returns.

Funding and Duration

CDFA anticipates that up to \$500,000 will be awarded to projects that help provide spay/neuter services to alleviate pet overpopulation. Individual grant award amounts can range from \$25,000 to \$50,000. The maximum grant duration is one (1) year and grant funds cannot be expended before June 1, 2026 or after May 31, 2027. CDFA reserves the right to offer an award amount different than the amount requested. Applicant organizations may only submit one grant proposal to the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program.

Eligibility

To be eligible, an organization must be:

1. A veterinary facility registered and in good standing with the Veterinary Medical Board; and,
2. Operated by a licensee manager registered and in good standing with the Veterinary Medical Board; and,
3. A veterinary facility operated by one of the following:
 - a. A California city, county, or city and county animal control facility that provides spay and neuter services to the public. The facility must be:
 - i. Current on its yearly rabies reporting requirements to the California Department of Public Health, Veterinary Public Health Section.
 - b. A California non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that offers low-cost or no-cost spay and neuter services. The facility must be:
 - i. Registered and in good standing with the Secretary of State.

- c. A California non-profit 501(c)(3) organization holding a municipal contract for animal control service. The following requirements must be met:
 - i. The city/county the municipal contract is held with must be current on its yearly rabies reporting requirements to the California Department of Public Health, Veterinary Public Health Section; and,
 - ii. The non-profit 501(c)(3) must be registered and in good standing with the Secretary of State.

Executive Order N-6-22 – Russia Sanctions

On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order [N-6-22](#) regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. “Economic Sanctions” refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to Russia’s actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. By submitting a proposal or application, the Applicant represents that it is not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should the State determine Applicant is a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the Applicant’s proposal/application any time prior to agreement execution, or, if determined after agreement execution, shall be grounds for termination by the State.

Funding Categories

CDFA has identified five funding categories. Funding categories are intended to help prospective applicants develop their projects and submit to the most appropriate category.

- In-House Spay/Neuter Services for Publicly Owned Animals
- Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinic for Publicly Owned Animals
- Voucher Program for Shelter Animals
(Adopters receive a voucher to be used to spay/neuter their newly adopted pet)
- Voucher Program for Owned Animals
(Redeemable at participating veterinarians)
- Feral Cat/Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program

Timeline

Release Request for Grant Proposals	December 4, 2025
Webinar	December 16, 2025, 1:00 pm PT
Grant Proposals Due	January 5, 2026, 5:00 pm PT
Review Period	January 2026 – February 2026
Announce and Award Funding	Spring 2026

How to Apply

Application Template and Required Documentation

To apply for the Pet Lover's Spay & Neuter Program, applicants must:

1. Complete the Grant Proposal Application using the required template available on the Spay and Neuter website at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/SpayNeuter/>.
2. Submit all required supporting documentation that verifies responses in the Eligibility Requirements Screening section.

The application includes the following sections:

- Required Supporting Documentation
- Eligibility Requirements Screening
- General Information
- Proposal
- Budget Narrative

Completed Grant Proposal Applications, along with all required supporting documentation, must be submitted electronically in one email to grants@cdfa.ca.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. PT on January 5, 2026.

Required Supporting Documentation and Eligibility Requirements Screening

1. **Required Supporting Documentation:** The *Required Supporting Documentation* section outlines the allowable forms of documentation that must be submitted with the application. Applications with missing or incomplete supporting documentation will be disqualified.
2. **Eligibility Requirements Screening:** The *Eligibility Requirements Screening* section defines the eligibility criteria for the Pet Lover's Spay & Neuter Grant Program. It includes two parts: General Eligibility and Organization Type, each consisting of Yes/No questions to help applicants determine eligibility. All responses must be supported by appropriate documentation. Incomplete or unsupported responses will result in disqualification.

Grant Proposal Requirements

1. **General Information:** The *General Information* section requests Applicant Details, Project Management, and Proposal Summary information. All sections must be completed.
2. **Proposal:** The *Proposal* must be completed using the required template and use 12-point font.
3. **Budget Narrative:** The *Budget Narrative* must include a description and detailed breakdown of the total grant funds requested by budgetary categories. All costs should be explained in detail with an estimated price per unit.

Reminder: Grant funds must be incurred during the grant duration. Grant funds cannot be expended before June 1, 2026, or after May 31, 2027.

Additional Guidance

In developing the Grant Proposal Application, applicants should ensure that all costs are reasonable, necessary to meet the objectives of the project, allowable, and incurred in a manner consistent with the applicant organization's established practices.

All Spay and Neuter grant proposals are subject to Section 330.2 of the Grant Administration Regulations set forth by OGA at:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Regulations/General/FinalGrantAdminRegs-Text.pdf>

Assistance and Questions

To maintain the integrity of the competitive process, CDFA is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with information regarding specific grant proposals during the solicitation process. However, CDFA encourages all applicants to view the frequently asked questions available on the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program website <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/SpayNeuter/> for assistance.

Grant Proposal Questions and Scoring

Failure to answer one or more application questions may result in disqualification. The following questions and descriptions are provided as a preview of the application, accessible on the Spay and Neuter website at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/SpayNeuter/>

Required Supporting Documentation (not a scored portion)

Supporting Documentation:

All applicants must include allowable supporting documentation that clearly verifies their eligibility. Acceptable documents to submit can be found on

Eligibility Requirements Screening (not a scored portion)

General Eligibility:

Using the drop-down menus, select Yes or No if your veterinary facility and/or licensee manager are in good standing with the Veterinary Board.

Organization Type:

Select the organization type that best describes the applicant. Using the drop-down menus, select Yes or No to answer the corresponding follow-up questions.

Section 1: General Information (not a scored portion)

Applicant Organization:

Provide the legal name of the organization that will serve as lead for the project and will receive and oversee the use of grant funds, along with address and phone number.

Organization Type:

Select the organization type that best describes the applicant. If the applicant organization is a non-profit 501(c)(3), enter the California Secretary of State Entity Number and the date of the most recent Statement of Information filing in the following fields.

California Senate and Assembly Districts:

Using the drop-down menus, select the districts where the applicant and project are located. If the project covers multiple districts, select "Statewide."

Taxpayer Identification Number:

Enter the applicant's 9-digit taxpayer identification number in the format 12-1234567.

Licensing Information:

Enter the veterinary medical board license number for the facility, the licensed veterinarian name, and the licensed veterinarian license number in the applicable fields.

Authorized Representative and Secondary Contact:

Enter contact information for the individual who is authorized to execute a funding agreement and receive grant funds, as well as a backup if that individual should be unreachable.

Total Amount of Grant Funds Requested:

Grant funds requested are for costs expected to be incurred during the grant duration. This number must match the amount requested on the Budget Narrative. Funds requested must range from \$25,000 to \$50,000; requests outside of this range may result in disqualification.

Funding Categories:

Using the checkboxes, select the most appropriate funding category. You may select all that apply.

Section 2: Proposal

Project Title (not a scored question):

Concisely describe the project title in 15 words or less.

Project Description (not a scored question):

Summarize the need for the project, describe the goals and outcomes, and present a plan for evaluating and measuring the success of the project.

Project Purpose (10 points):

Identify the specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address, and explain why the project is important.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on how well the grant proposal addresses the specific issue, problem, or need, as well as the importance it has to the community.

Prior Year Pet Lover's License Plate Projects (not a scored question):

Please indicate if this project builds upon a prior-year project. If "No," please indicate "No." If "Yes," all of the following must be addressed within the text boxes provided:

- Provide the CDFA grant agreement number(s) (e.g., 19-1234-000-SO).
- Describe how the project differs from and builds upon the previous work.

Other Funding Sources (not a scored question):

If the project has been or will be submitted to or funded by another state or federal grant program, all of the following must be addressed within the text boxes provided:

- Identify the State or Federal grant program and the agency administering the program.
- List the amount of grant funds requested or awarded by the program.

Project Awareness (10 points):

Describe what efforts will be made to promote the project and raise awareness for spay/neuter service in the community and to promote awareness of the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program and the purchase and renewal of the Pet Lover's specialized license plate.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the reasonableness and likelihood of success of the project awareness plan as described.

Project Work Plan (10 points):

Fill out the provided timeline to describe the activities necessary to accomplish project objectives. Include the name and/or title of the person(s) responsible for performing the activity as well as beginning and end dates (formatted MON YYYY; e.g., Jul 2026, or Jul 2026 – May 2027) for accomplishing each activity.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the clarity of the work plan and relevance of the specific project activities to the project purpose.

Evaluation and Performance Monitoring Plan (10 points):

Describe what the project is expected to accomplish and how it will be evaluated while in progress and upon conclusion.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the reasonableness and likely effectiveness of the proposed project accomplishments and plan to evaluate success.

Section 3: Budget Narrative

Budget (10 points):

All budget items should be associated with expenses that will be covered by Spay and Neuter grant funds and correlate to the goal(s) of the project. The Budget Narrative is broken down by budget category (personnel, fringe benefits, supplies, etc.). The applicable budget tables must be completed, along with a brief description/justification for each item.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the reasonableness of the budget relevance to the project activities and goals.

Total number of points achievable in the grant proposal: 50 Points

Requirements and Limitations

In developing a grant proposal and budget, applicants should ensure that all costs are reasonable, necessary to meet the objectives of the project, allowable, and incurred in a manner consistent with the applicant organization's established practices.

Grant Regulations

All Spay and Neuter grant proposals are subject to Section 330.2 of the Grant Administration Regulations set forth by OGA at:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Regulations/General/FinalGrantAdminRegs-Text.pdf>

Promotion Awareness of Pet Lover's Grant Program

Applicants are strongly encouraged to promote awareness of the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program, including the purchase and renewal of the Pet Lover's specialized license plates. Up to 5 percent in grant funds can be used to support these efforts.

Allowable Costs

Costs for Spay and Neuter Services:

Costs that are necessary to conduct spay and neuter services are allowable. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Costs for personnel, supplies and other costs for the applicant to directly provide spay and neuter services.
- Costs to contract with a third party to conduct spay and neuter services.
- Costs to operate a mobile clinic for spay and neuter services.

Other Costs to Support Spay and Neuter Services:

Costs that are necessary to support spay and neuter services are allowable. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Costs for vouchers to facilitate spay and neuter services, including costs for printing vouchers.
- Costs to raise public awareness of spay and neuter events.

Unallowable Costs

Administrative Costs

Grant funds will not be approved to support administrative costs of a project including, but not limited to administrative staff salaries, information technology services, rent, utilities, internet and telephone service, general use office supplies, insurance, and maintenance.

Other Animal Services Costs

Grant funds cannot be used to pay for other pet services such as wellness exams, vaccinations, flea treatment, microchipping, ear tipping, tattooing, etc.

Incentives and Donations

Raffles, incentives, gifts, and donations. Purchase of free giveaways and gift items to give away to the public are unallowable. Items include but are not limited to, key chains, pens, stickers, etc.

Hospitality

Hospitality suites, alcoholic beverages, costs of entertainment (including amusement, diversion and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities).

Fundraising

Costs for organized fundraising, including financial campaigns and solicitation of gifts.

Equipment and Capital Expenditures

General-purpose equipment, and capital improvements/expenditures.

Scholarships

Grant funds cannot be used to support, augment, or create scholarship programs.

Unallowable costs will not be reimbursed.

Review and Notification

Review Criteria

CDFA's intent is to fund projects that can produce the highest degree of measurable benefits in relation to each dollar spent. Grant Proposals will be evaluated on the criteria set forth in the [Grant Proposal Questions and Scoring section on pages 4-6](#).

Additional Considerations:

In selecting proposals for funding, CDFA may prioritize proposals that serve companion animals or animals being prepared for adoption as well as proposals from:

- Eligible veterinary facilities located in or serving underserved communities or those that can demonstrate financial need; or
- Eligible veterinary facilities that have previously provided or currently provide low-cost or no-cost animal sterilization services; or
- Eligible veterinary facilities that use high-volume spay and neuter clinics.

Review Process

CDFA will conduct two levels of review. The first level is an administrative review to verify the applicant's eligibility, determine whether grant proposal requirements are met, and if applicable, assess an applicant's past CDFA grant performance.

The second level is a technical review conducted by reviewers selected by CDFA to evaluate the merits of the grant proposal. The technical reviewers will submit recommendations to CDFA for final determination of awards.

Notification and Feedback

Grant proposals that are disqualified during the administrative review will be notified by email within three weeks of the grant proposal's due date. All other applicants will be notified by email regarding the status of their grant proposals in Spring 2026. Feedback will be provided to applicants upon request.

To ensure all communications are received, points of contact listed in the application should add grants@cdfa.ca.gov to their email safe senders list, address book, or contact list.

Disqualifications

The following may result in the disqualification of a grant proposal:

- Proposals from ineligible institutions.
- Incomplete grant proposals, including grant proposals with one or more unanswered questions.
- Proposals that include activities outside the grant duration.
- Proposals for less than the minimum award amount or more than the maximum award amount.
- Proposals with unallowable costs or activities necessary to complete the project.
- Multiple proposals submitted by the same applicant organization.

APPEAL RIGHTS: Any discretionary action taken by the Office of Grants Administration (OGA) may be appealed to the CDFA's Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notice of disqualification from CDFA. Email notification shall serve as the date of service. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application or their authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the OGA decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 or emailed to CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov. If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be disqualified from consideration.

Grant Terms and Conditions

If awarded a grant from CDFA, the grant recipient will be expected to sign an agreement abiding by certain terms and conditions, including but not limited to:

- Submission of a Final Performance Report. *Information outlining the reporting process will be supplied once selected to receive grant funding.*
- The grant recipient will agree that all vouchers and receipts will clearly state that the sterilization was funded by the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program.
- CDFA encourages the grant recipient to raise public awareness of the Pet Lover's Spay and Neuter Grant Program, using the CDFA approved Spay and Neuter flier in their facility, newsletter/local announcements, and/or social media.
- The grant recipient understands that CDFA may conduct site visits at any time during the grant period.
- Grant agreements will be one year in length. The grant recipient will agree to use the funds solely for the purpose described in the grant agreement.
- Grant funds cannot be used to cover provider overhead costs.
- Any unused funds must be returned at the end of the grant agreement.

Payment Process

If awarded, recipients will be subject to all applicable State regulations. Recipients are required to submit invoices at least quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly for reimbursement of actual expenses incurred to support approved project activities. Invoices must include documentation to support reimbursement requested. Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations may be eligible to receive an advance payment to cover anticipated project expenditures. Advance payments may not exceed 25 percent of the total award and will need to be submitted to CDFA for approval. Ten percent of the total amount of the award will be withheld until receipt, review, and approval of the Final Performance Report.

Reporting Requirements

Recipients must submit one Final Performance Report that identifies the number of animals spayed and/or neutered, goals and objectives achieved, including quantifiable results, successes, project delays or lessons learned, and any other pertinent information.