

# STOP LITTERING



Companion Animal Advocates (CAA) is an all-volunteer, non-profit, organization, located in Northern New Jersey, dedicated to keeping pets and their families together. CAA is making a difference in our community by pro-actively addressing the day to day issues that every pet owner faces. CAA has initiated the “STOP LITTERING” campaign to inform pet owners of both the importance of spaying and neutering their pets, as well as how to find affordable options for these procedures.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why should I have my pet spayed or neutered?

Spaying or neutering your pet has numerous health benefits for the animal, and is paramount to controlling pet overpopulation. Every year, already crowded shelters get inundated with new puppies and kittens. Some will find homes, some will not. Many will be euthanized simply because there are too many of them.

- 🐾 Over its lifetime, your cat or dog can have many babies. A female pet that is not spayed can have over 100 babies; and male pets can literally father thousands. Everyone of us must spay or neuter our pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that are euthanized every day.
- 🐾 Spaying females reduces or eliminates the risk of mammary gland tumors, ovarian and/or uterine cancer, especially if done before the first heat cycle. Spaying eliminates the heat cycle, thereby making females less attractive to roaming males.
- 🐾 Neutering males greatly reduces or eliminates the risk of testicular cancer and can decrease incidents of prostate cancer as well. Neutering decreases the desire for males to roam.
- 🐾 Spaying or neutering may decrease certain undesirable behaviors, such as spraying and marking or aggressiveness.
- 🐾 Spaying or neutering reduces the likelihood of “roaming”, which can result in the impregnation of females as well as risk of injury by car or other animals.
- 🐾 Spaying or neutering helps prevent pet overpopulation.


### When should I have my pet spayed or neutered?

Kittens or puppies can be spayed or neutered as young as two months old (or two pounds); however, veterinarians have different guidelines, so it is best to check with the veterinarian who will be doing the procedure. Most veterinarians will recommend that a female pet be spayed before entering her first heat, which generally occurs around six months of age.

### Having my pet spayed or neutered is very expensive. Are there low cost options?


New Jersey offers various low-cost spay/neuter programs for qualified participants. In addition, many non-profit organizations offer low-cost spay/neuter programs without any limitations. With all of the programs that follow, program funding can be an obstacle, so you may be required to be wait-listed, or follow-up at certain times during the year. It is imperative that you pay attention to these timelines, as

the program benefits and reduced expense (not to mention the benefit to your pet) is well worth the extra effort. CAA is always available to help you navigate through these programs and find one that works best for you and your pet.

 You may be eligible to have your pet spayed or neutered for \$10, under the *NJ Low Cost Spay Neuter Program*, if you receive any of the following:


- ✓ Food Stamps, Medicaid, General Public Assistance, Rental Assistance, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Lifeline Utility Credit, Tenants Lifeline Assistance, Supplemental Security Income, Pharmaceutical Assistance to Aged or Disabled


If you meet any of these eligibility requirements, you can obtain a list of participating veterinarians by going to the CAA website, or contacting CAA directly for assistance. *(NOTE: The NJ State Programs are funded on a quarterly basis. This means that you have the best chance of getting your pet spayed or neutered through the program by contacting a participating veterinarian within the first week of the quarter. (Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, April 1<sup>st</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, Oct 1<sup>st</sup>)*


 You may be eligible to have your **adopted** pet spayed or neutered for \$20, under the *NJ Low Cost Spay Neuter Program*, if you:

- ✓ Are a NJ Resident and
- ✓ Adopted your pet from an eligible licensed NJ shelter; municipal, county, or regional pound; NJ holding or impoundment facility that contracts with NJ municipalities; or a non-profit NJ animal adoption referral agency and (a list of these eligible organizations can be found by contacting CAA directly for assistance, or go to <http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/spayneut.htm> )
- ✓ Licensed the dog in your municipality (licensing for cats is not required)

If you meet the eligibility requirements, you can obtain a list of participating veterinarians by going to the CAA website, or contacting CAA directly for assistance. *(NOTE: The NJ State Programs are funded on a quarterly basis. This means that you have the best chance of getting your pet spayed or neutered through the program by contacting a participating veterinarian within the first week of the quarter. (Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, April 1<sup>st</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, Oct 1<sup>st</sup>)*

 Friends of Animals' affordable Spay/Neuter Certificates are available for purchase online at <http://www.friendsofanimals.org/programs/spay-neuter/index.html> or call 1-800-321-PETS for an order form. These certificates are honored by licensed veterinarians in hundreds of communities across the country. The prices for low cost certificates are Female Cat \$65, Male Cat \$51, Female Dog \$90, Male Dog \$64.00

 SPAY/USA, a program of the North Shore Animal League America is a network of volunteers and veterinarians working together to popularize and facilitate spay/neuter services through a nationwide referral service. Their mission is to end cat/dog overpopulation. They put people in touch with veterinarians or programs in their area that will spay/neuter cats and dogs affordably. More information can be found at their website: <http://www.spayusa.org>

 More options are available by going to our website or contacting CAA directly.

### **Does the low-cost option mean lower standards of care?**

**NO!** All of the options that are listed above are offered through local veterinarian practices that are fully licensed and meet or exceed all the appropriate professional and health department guidelines.

### **What exactly is the spay or neuter procedure?**

Spaying a female pet is a major abdominal surgery where the pet's ovaries and uterus are removed. The uterus is also removed to insure that it does not become a source of infection over a period of time.

Neutering a male pet is a surgery where the doctor makes an incision in front of the scrotum and through that incision accesses each testicle. The fibrous coverings of the testicles are incised and each testicle is removed after securely ligating the blood vessels that attach to each testicle.

### **Can I get vaccinations at a reduced cost?**

Bergen County Animal Shelter, 100 United Lane, Teterboro, NJ 07608, (201) 229-4600, offers free rabies clinic on an ongoing basis. Call for dates and times.

Local town's Board of Health Departments conduct free annual rabies clinics. Contact your town for more information.

Conveniently held on weekends, **Luv My Pet** vaccination clinics can be found in neighborhood Petco stores and other independent pet clinics in 23 states. Their specialized focus on vaccines and their strong partnership with Petco and independent animal clinics allow them to provide these services for your beloved dogs and cats at low-costs and convenient times to you. Visit their website for more details <http://www.luvmypet.com/>

### **With the current economic crisis, will these programs still be available?**

All of the programs, including the NJ State Low Cost Spay Neuter Programs, are funded through donations or revenue; therefore, they rely heavily on the public's generosity and support. It is our hope that people will continue to appreciate the importance of these programs and the value they provide to the community.

### **How can I help?**

You can help by having your pet spayed or neutered! You can spread the word of the importance of spaying and neutering your pet, and the profound impact that this action will have on lowering the number of unnecessary euthanasias that are happening on a daily basis. You can donate to CAA or any of the other non-profit organizations listed above to help sustain these valuable programs.