

**Illinois Pet Population Control Program  
Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program**

**Who is eligible?**

- Receiving Food Stamps or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Illinois residents only
- Feral Cat Colony Manager

**How many pets can be spay/neutered each year?**

- Two pets per family each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30)
- A separate application must be completed for each pet

**How do I prove I am eligible?**

- Letter from Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) or Local Office showing amount of food stamps or SNAP benefits received monthly. Must be current information. They can contact their caseworker.
- Letter from federal government showing monthly benefits. Letter must clearly state that benefits are Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- DO NOT send LINK or Medicaid Cards, bank account statements or insurance cards.
- DO NOT send original documents as IDPH WILL NOT return these.

**How do I become an approved Feral Cat Colony Manager?**

Must be designated by your city or county to operate a humane Trap/Spay and Neuter/Release (TNR) program for feral cats. Provide a copy of the letter designating you as a Feral Cat Colony Manager, signed by the mayor/county board chairman of the city/county where you are located to the Illinois Department of Public Health. The letter must be on city/county letterhead and have an original signature from the mayor or county board chairman.

The letter must address the following points:

- Identify you as the manager of a Feral Cat Colony and a humane TNR program.
- Describe how many years you have been running a Trap/Spay or Neuter/Release Program
- Identify the address of the feral cat colony you are responsible for, including a brief geographic description of where the colony is located; and
- Provide an estimate of the total number of feral cats in the colony.

Send your designation letter to: Illinois Department of Public Health Public Health and Safety Animal Population Control Program, 525 W. Jefferson Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Springfield, IL 62761-0001. Once your letter is reviewed and approved, a package of five vouchers will be sent to you along with a list of participating veterinarians. Spay/neuters for up to five feral cats will be approved per feral cat colony manager annually.

**Are there any out-of-pocket costs for the pet owner?**

- Must pay the veterinarian a \$15.00 co-payment for each pet. Some veterinarians waive this fee for extreme need cases
- IDPH covers: all vaccinations needed by the pet (including the rabies vaccine); pain medications and all costs related to the spay/neuter procedure (including pre-/post-surgical exams). Any other costs must be paid by the pet owner.

**How long does it take to be approved?**

Once the application and proof of eligibility is received, it takes about 4 to 6 weeks to process the voucher (if all of the documentation is correct). A list of participating veterinarians is sent with each approved spay/neuter voucher so that the pet owner can make an appointment. DO NOT make an appointment before you have received an approved voucher.