

**Feral Cat/Kitten Spay & Neuter Information**

**DEFINITIONS**

**Feral cats** **–** A feral cat/street cat is a cat that cannot be handled and is not social with people; the cat may try to bite or scratch if s/he feels threatened. A feral cat must be trapped in order to be transported and safely handled by staff. Before trapping, please review additional information located on our website (phs-spca.org 🡪 Our Services 🡪 Community Services 🡪 Feral Cat Services).

**Socialized feral kittens –** If feral kittens cannot yet be picked up and handled, they need to be treated as feral cats in order for Spay and Neuter staff to handle safely.

**Domesticated stray cats** – A stray cat is a cat that can be handled; the cat may not bite or scratch as they are more social with humans (purring, rubbing against legs, allowing you to pet them, etc.) These cats can also be indoor/outdoor pets and so are most likely social with people. We CANNOT accept a domesticated stray cat through our feral cat program. For a stray cat appointment, please refer to our Spay and Neuter services webpage located on our website (phs-spca.org 🡪 Our Services 🡪 People & Their Pets 🡪 Spay/Neuter Services).

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Location –** The PHS Spay/Neuter Clinic is located at the north end of the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA building at 12 Airport Blvd. in San Mateo.

**Hours –** The PHS Spay/Neuter Clinic is open Monday – Friday. Feral cats are admitted in the morning **by appointment only** from 8:00am to 9:00am and are picked up the same day from 4:00pm to 5:30pm.

**Contact –** We have a dedicated Feral Cat Line: **650-340-7022 x679**. Please only use this number.

**Services offered –** The $50 Feral Cat Package includes: spay or neuter surgery, Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) testing, FVRCP vaccine, Rabies vaccine, microchip, and ear tip. All cats must have their ear tipped to easily identify them as having been spayed or neutered.

If you would like to have flea or tapeworm treatment applied while the cat is anesthetized, products can be purchased from the Spay/Neuter Clinic at additional cost.

We are able to provide this low-cost service because of dedicated donors. Any donations you can contribute are greatly appreciated.

**SAN MATEO COUNTY SPAY/NEUTER VOUCHERS**

In order to receive services using a voucher, you must have a valid feral cat voucher from the San Mateo County Health Department office and present your driver’s license with a current San Mateo County address at the time the cat is brought into the Spay/Neuter Clinic for services. Caregiver must agree to the terms of use outlined on the County Voucher as well as associated surgical release documents from the Peninsula Humane Society in order to use the voucher at our clinic. **Only those caregivers listed on the voucher can present the cat for services and sign the necessary paperwork.**

**Services offered for Feral Cat vouchers –** The $50 Feral Cat Package listed above is completely covered by the voucher. Any other requested services that are not included in the feral cat package must be purchased at an additional cost.

**FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (FIV) AND FELINE LEUKEMIA VIRUS (FeLV)**

We strongly recommend that feral cats testing positive for FIV or FeLV be euthanized to reduce the suffering of the infected cat and to prevent the spread of disease to other cats. Both FIV and FeLV are incurable diseases that can be transmitted between cats. If you are bringing a feral cat to our clinic for surgery, we will ask you to sign a release form indicating that you authorize our staff to euthanize the cat should the cat test positive for either FIV or FeLV. If you choose not to authorize euthanasia for a feral cat that tests positive for either disease, we will provide the services listed previously and return the cat to you. **You will be responsible for any continuing care the cat needs, including veterinary services.**

**SICK CATS**

Sick cats will be refused for surgery, since this greatly increases the risk of serious surgical complications. Symptoms that could cause surgical complications include:

* Sneezing, runny eyes, nasal discharge, or cold-like symptoms indicating an upper respiratory infection.
* Excessive thinness, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, skin issues, or other signs of poor health.

Cats exhibiting these symptoms should be taken to a private veterinarian for treatment and be in a healthy state before returning for surgery.

**ADMITTANCE AND PRE-SURGERY**

We alter feral cats **by appointment only,** Monday – Friday. Please leave a message on our **Feral Cat Line: 650-340-7022 x679** on Mondays after 3pm in order to set up an appointment. Staff will call caregivers within 24 – 48 hours to set up an appointment for either the same week or the following week depending on availability. Please note that trying to call around to different departments in an attempt to reach a live person will not expedite this process; if anything, it will mean your request will be more difficult to track down and accommodate.

**Feral cats must be in a humane trap. A cat brought in a carrier, box, airline kennel, or form of transportation other than a humane trap will be refused for surgery to avoid injury to staff and the cat during the anesthetizing process. One cat per trap. If two cats are caught in the same trap, the caregiver is responsible for transferring one cat to another trap.**

Surgery on cats that are nursing kittens is more difficult and riskier for both the mother and the kittens. Nursing females should not be brought in until their kittens are 6 – 8 weeks old. If possible, kittens should be separated from the mother at this age, and the mother brought in 1 – 2 weeks later. This allows time for excess milk to dry up.

**SURGERY AND COMPLICATIONS**

Surgeries are performed between 9:30am and 3:30pm. We use internal sutures and external glue as necessary.

Occasionally a cat, once anesthetized, will be found to have a condition of such severity that euthanasia is the only humane alternative, since returning the cat to its own environment would mean a slow, painful demise. Ideally, to avoid additional stress and pain to the cat, euthanasia is performed before the cat awakens from the anesthetic.

Since it is often difficult to reach the owner during the day, he/she will be asked to sign a release at the time of admittance allowing the clinic to euthanize any animal discovered to have a life-threatening condition. The veterinarian will make all decisions regarding suitability for surgery or necessity of euthanasia.

**POST SURGERY AND RECOVERY**

Cats must be picked up the same day as surgery between 4:00pm and 5:30pm.

You may notice your cat showing some unusual behaviors such as head bobbing and weaving, and over-reaction to noise and fast movements. These signs, as well as glassy eyes, are normal side effects of the anesthetic used. The cat may also be a little quiet but should return to normal within 24 hours post-surgery.

Your cat has no external stitches, so there is no need to return to the clinic for suture removal.

We have Post-Operative Instructions available at the clinic, and on the Spay/Neuter Services page of our website.

**In order to recover from the anesthesia and surgery, feral cats should be kept indoors or in a warm, dry sheltered area for 48 – 72 hours after discharge from the Spay/Neuter Clinic. If you have a female cat that was pregnant, please try to keep her in for five to seven days.**

If you would like the cat to recover in another cage or carrier instead of the trap, please bring it with you when you drop the cat off for surgery. It is simple to put the cat in another cage while it is under anesthesia. Waiting until you pick up the cat to transfer it to another cage is more difficult and can result in injury to the cat; staff will not transfer a cat that has already woken up from anesthesia.

If your cat has problems resulting from the spay or neuter surgery, please call the clinic as soon as possible at 650-340-7015. If problems should arise and our clinic is closed, contact your private veterinarian or the nearest emergency clinic. The clinic closest to the Peninsula Humane Society is the Northern Peninsula Emergency Veterinary Clinic. Their phone number is: 650-348-2575. Be advised that if you bring your animal to the emergency clinic, they will charge you as they are not associated with the Peninsula Humane Society. **PHS/SPCA cannot reimburse you.** Please call the Spay/ Neuter Clinic the next business day to inform us of the problem.