



Tips from the Field

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Beyond Fences has been providing veterinary care for pets in Durham NC for over 15 years.

Most Common Medical Needs We See in Addition to Spay/Neuter and Vaccinations

- Worms/intestinal parasites
- Fleas/ticks
- Mange
- GI upset
- Infections (eyes/ears/skin)
- Lacerations/wounds
- Pain management
- Parvovirus
- Heartworms: Heartworm tests, prevention and treatment are out of reach for many programs due to financial limitations and scale. Due to resource constraints, we have chosen to not provide heartworm preventative and since we don't have the capacity to treat heartworm positive dogs, we do not spend money testing. We do share information with people if requested on the cost and steps for prevention and treatment. We also share information on recognizing heart failure and offer humane euthanasia when the disease is advanced and impacting quality of life.
- Emergency injuries
- Severe matting: Provide grooming by a trained staff member/volunteer or partner.
- Humane euthanasia: Euthanasia is never easy, but many pet owners are faced with limited options: either a prolonged and difficult natural death or surrendering the pet in a traumatic and high-stress way for euthanasia to be provided. Offering a dignified, peaceful and compassionate ending—with the option of the owner being present—is one of the most impactful and important services you can offer for both people and their pets

Transportation is Also a Major Need

The lack of access to veterinary care combined with the fact that many people work hourly jobs and often do not have reliable personal transportation, makes it challenging and sometimes impossible for people to get their pets to veterinary services and appointments. Providing transportation to and from spay/neuter and veterinary appointments is a service we have found essential.

- Spay/neuter appointments are more consistently filled and completed.
- With fewer “no shows” for spay/neuter appointments, time for rescheduling is reduced.
- Stress around time, money and family/work responsibilities for pet owners is eliminated.
- Relationships and trust are built when people see the extent of support being offered.

There are many transportation plans to consider:

- If your organization has a vehicle, assign a couple of days a month to schedule and provide transportation.
- If your organization does not have a vehicle, talk to other local animal shelters, animal service agencies and spay/neuter clinics to see if they have a vehicle that can be utilized on certain days.
- Create a volunteer program of transporters. These volunteers should be well trained in animal handling, be well versed in your program philosophy and have the right skill set for the role—mainly a friendly demeanor and the ability to interact well with people.
- There is not one best way to make a volunteer transport program work—be creative and solution-oriented.
- Work with a pet taxi or ride-share services. This can add to the average cost of each spay/ neuter surgery but is worth it if no other option is possible.

For all the transportation options above, door-to-door pickup is ideal. If that is not possible to do efficiently, coordinate a convenient and centrally located spot for people to meet for drop-off and pickup. When possible, have paperwork completed and signed by the owner ahead of time. If that is not possible, ensure the owner will be present at pickup to sign.