

Massachusetts Animal Fund | Annual Report Fiscal Year 2016



**A Program of the
Massachusetts Department of
Agricultural Resources**

The Massachusetts Animal Fund

Animal homelessness is a problem that causes animals' lives to be lost to euthanasia, poses a public safety concern, and costs taxpayer money to pay for services for stray, abandoned, and feral animals and their offspring. It has been proven that sterilization of animals decreases not only the number of homeless and feral animals born each year, but it also decreases unwanted behavior in owned animals, including roaming and aggression, which are both factors that can lead to the surrender and euthanasia of animals. One solution to this problem is investing in spaying/neutering animals. Another is standardized and required animal control officer training that creates uniform enhancement of animal control laws.



On October 31, 2012, a law took effect that, in part, created the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund (Massachusetts Animal Fund). The Fund is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources with assistance from an advisory committee and seeks to end the problem of animal homelessness in Massachusetts.

This program is solely funded by the voluntary tax check-off (Line 33f) on the Massachusetts Resident Income Tax Return and by monetary donations.

Who We Are

Staff

Lauren Burbridge
Coordinator

Sheri Gustafson
Spay/Neuter Community Liaison

**Commissioner, Department of
Agricultural Resources**

John Lebeaux

**Director, Division of Animal
Health**

Michael Cahill

Advisory Committee

Kara Holmquist
Humane Representative

Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore
Veterinary Representative

Ray West
Pet Trade Industry Representative

Darleen Wood
Animal Control Representative

David Feldman
Public Representative

ACO Training Subcommittee

Michael Parker
Weymouth

Maureen Ray
Billerica

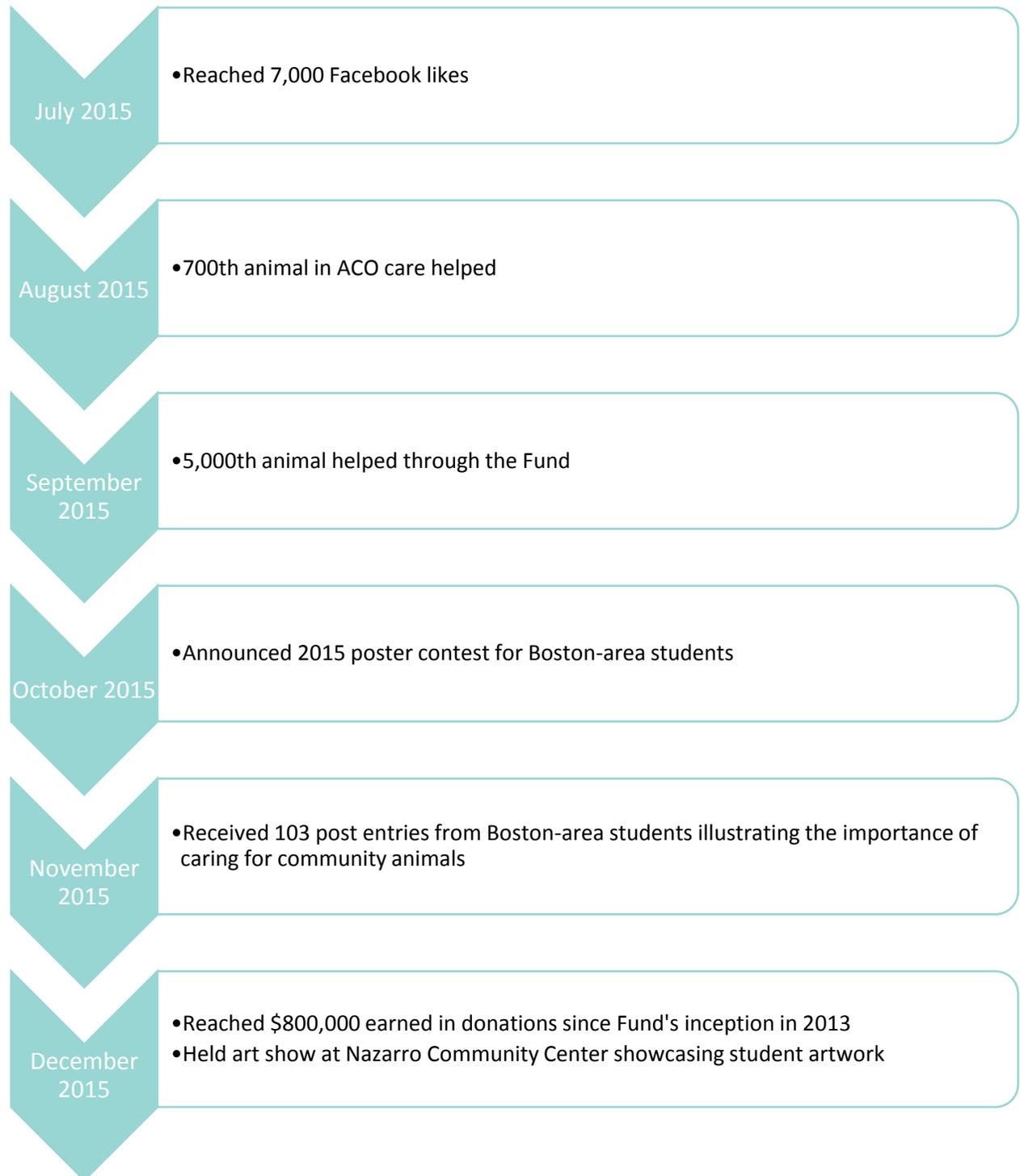
Karen O'Reilly
Watertown

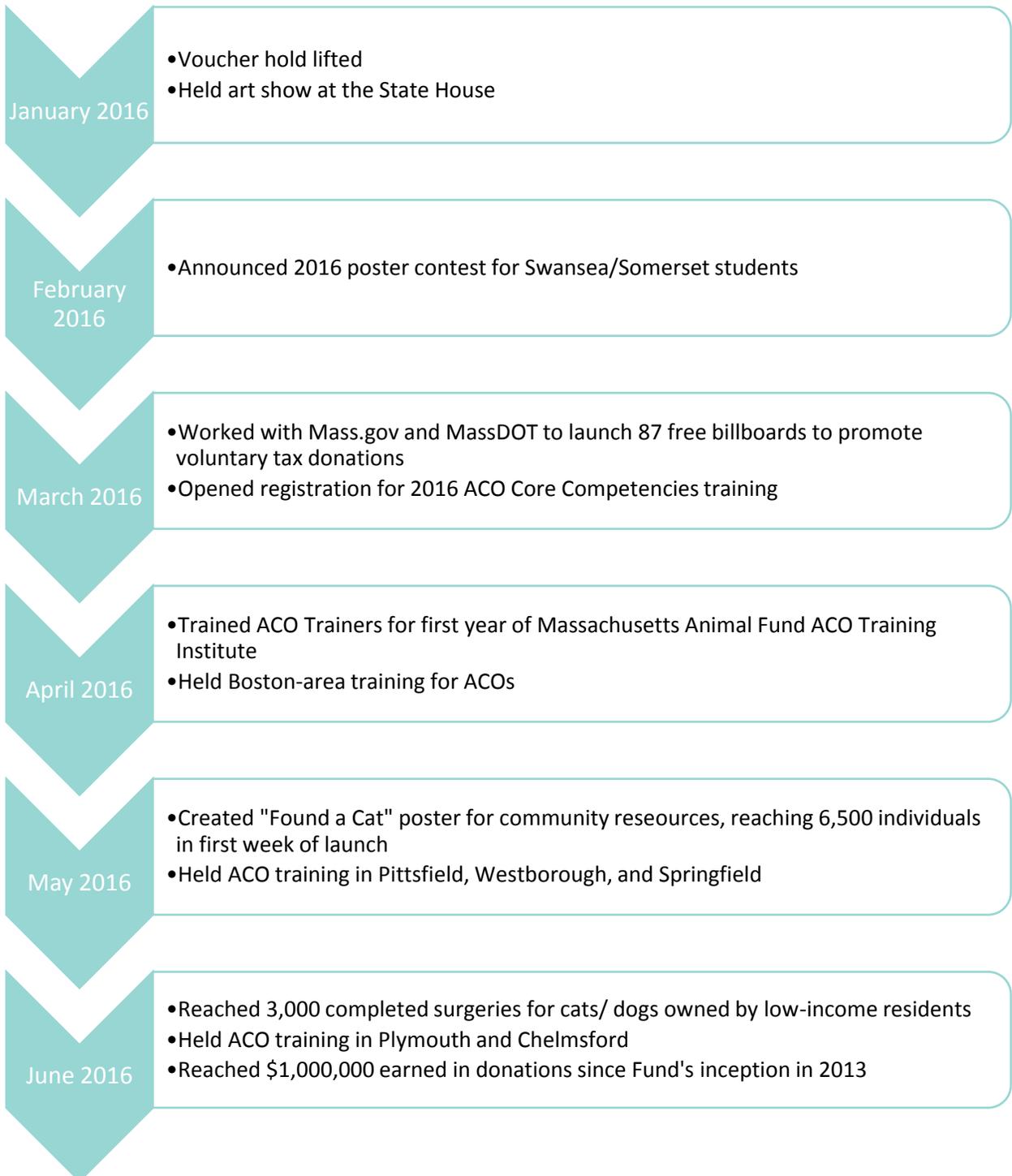
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Fiscal Year 2016 Timeline





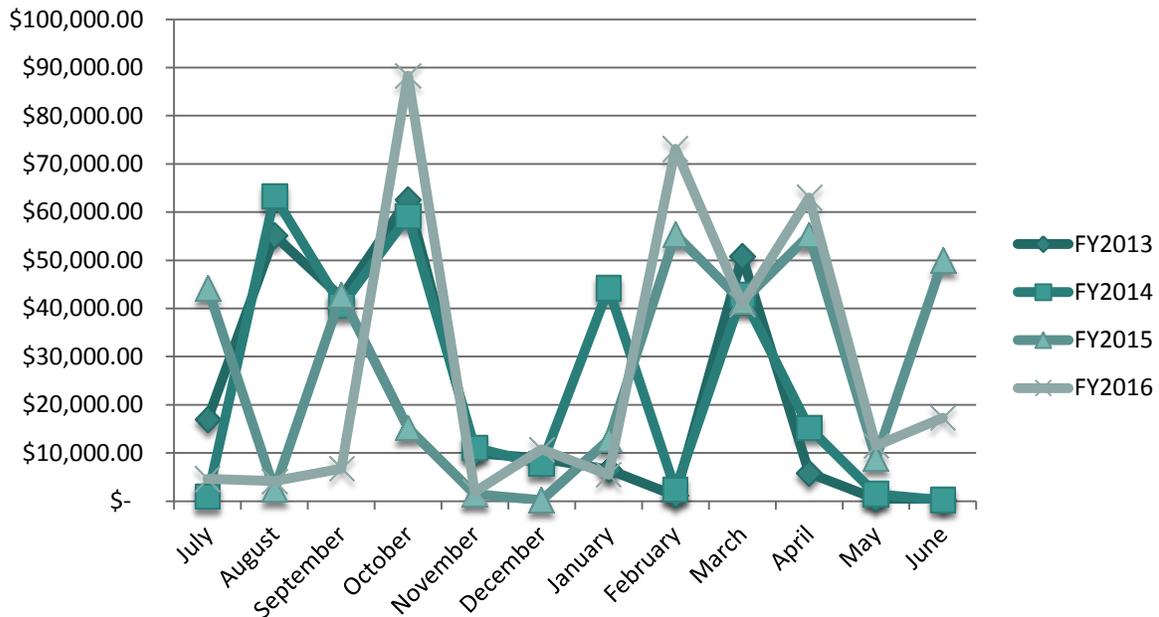
Funds Collected

The Massachusetts Animal Fund relies solely on the donations of Massachusetts taxpayers, who have the option of investing in the responsible care of animals each year by entering a contribution on Line 33f of the Massachusetts Resident Income Tax Return. The Fund is one of six causes from which residents can choose; others include the National Heritage and Endangered Species Fund, the Organ Transplant Fund, the Massachusetts AIDS Foundation, the Massachusetts United States Olympic Fund, and the Massachusetts Military Family Relief Fund. The Fund is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' Division of Animal Health, but receives no government funding.



The Massachusetts Animal Fund began collecting tax contributions on January 1, 2013. Funds collected by fiscal year are as follows:

Fiscal Year	Earnings
2013	\$195,780.72
2014	\$247,516.84
2015	\$329,713.81
2016	\$248,519.10



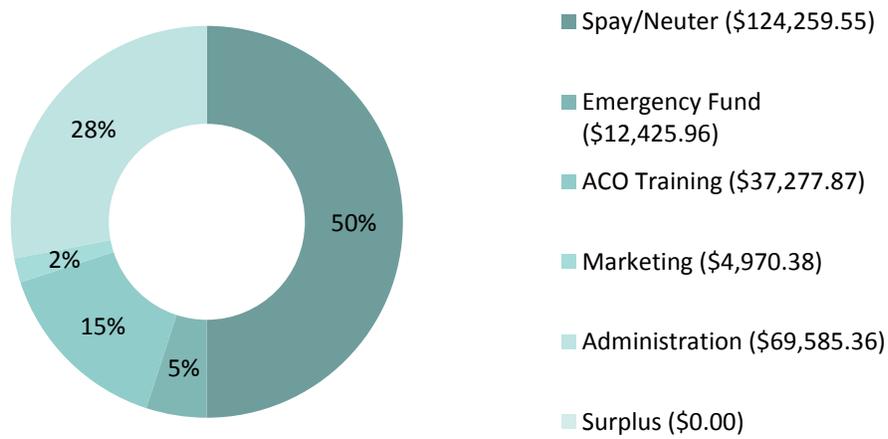
The Fund was the grateful recipient of two grants in Fiscal Year 2016. The Shirley Shattuck Windsor Charitable Trust donated \$5,000 to continue to fund the position of the Spay/Neuter

Community Liaison. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) donated \$5,000 to assist with printing materials for the Fund’s Animal Control Officer Training Institute.

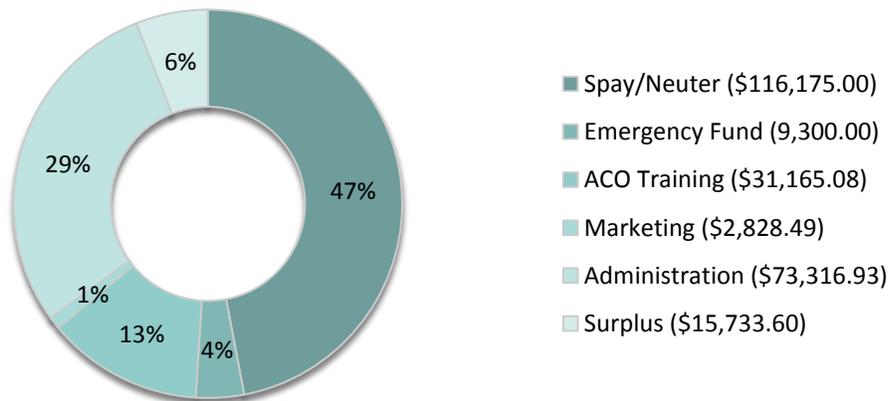
Budget & Spending

In FY16 the Advisory Committee maintained the original budget allocations set forth for the Fund: 70% of funds collected are allocated directly to animals and training those who serve them (program expenses); 30% of funds are allocated to administration of the program (operating expenses).

Projected Budget



Actual Spending



Allocation	Projected %	Projected \$	Actual %	Actual \$
Spay/Neuter	50%	\$124,259.55	47%	\$116,175.00
Emergency Fund	5%	\$12,425.96	4%	\$9,300.00
ACO Training	15%	\$37,277.87	13%	\$31,165.08
Marketing	2%	\$4,970.38	1%	\$2,828.49
Administration	28%	\$69,585.36	29%	\$73,316.93
Surplus for FY17	0%	\$0.00	6%	\$15,733.60
TOTAL	100%	\$248,519.10	94%	\$232,785.5

The following information indicates the differences between proposed and actual spending.

The Fund was on a voucher hold for the first six months of FY16, meaning no new vouchers were being sent out due to lack of funding. In an effort to avoid another voucher hold, vouchers were issued at a slower pace in the second half of FY16.

Two approved Emergency Fund cases did not end up needing the total amount of the funding for which they applied.

Thanks to a generous grant from the ASPCA for printing of educational materials, the Fund was able to stay under-budget in the category of ACO Training.

The Fund was given more free marketing (Massachusetts Department of Transportation public service announcement billboards; Line 33f videos) in FY16 than in previous years.

From July 2015 through December 2015 the Fund was paying the salary, fringe benefits, and payroll taxes for both the Coordinator and the Spay/Neuter Community Liaison positions. In January 2016 the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources generously added the Coordinator position to the Department's budget to allow more public funding to be allocated for direct animal care. In FY17 and beyond, there will be a decrease in funding allocated for administration.

Spay/Neuter Voucher Program

Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 10, Section 35WW mandates that a portion of the funds collected by the Massachusetts Animal Fund be used by the Department of Agricultural Resources to offset costs associated with the vaccination, spaying, and neutering of homeless dogs and cats and to offset costs associated with the vaccination, spaying, and neutering of dogs and cats owned by low-income Massachusetts residents. The Spay/Neuter Voucher Program responds to this mandate.

The Fund has partnered with animal control officers (ACOs) to disseminate fee-free vouchers through this program. ACOs may request vouchers for dogs and cats held in their municipal shelter or on behalf of low-income residents or feral trappers. Now in its second



year, 68% of the Commonwealth’s municipalities participated by requesting vouchers.

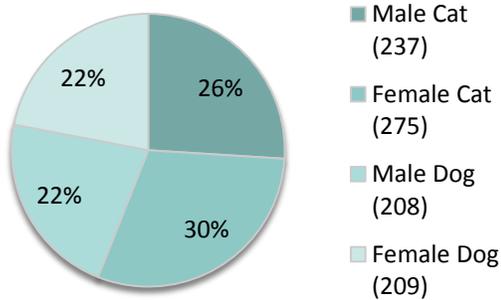
In its first program year the Massachusetts Animal Fund advisory committee chose to place no limitations on the number of vouchers requested—the Fund had been collecting donations for eighteen months prior to issuing the first voucher and the committee and staff wanted to fully understand the needs of the Commonwealth. In the first program year the Fund disseminated 6,066 vouchers and the Fund’s participating veterinary providers completed 3,632 surgeries during the same period. It became clear that the needs of the Commonwealth far outweighed the available funding.

Going into the second program year, the Fund put a hold on the Voucher Program for the first six months (July – December 2015). Vouchers that were already disseminated and unexpired could be redeemed during the hold period, but no new vouchers were issued. The Fund also assessed current needs and other resources available to ACOs, the public, and feral trappers. When the Voucher Program reopened on January 1, 2016, the following guidelines were put in place:

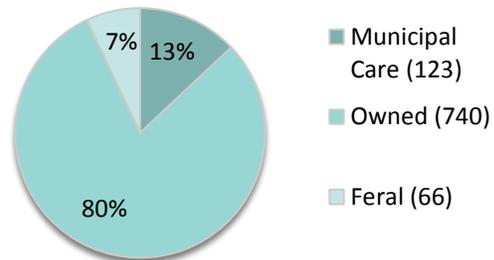
- Based on budgetary constraints, the Program would disseminate 10-20 vouchers per week depending on the health of the budget as donations fluctuate monthly.
- Priority would be given to those dogs and cats housed in municipal animal control facility so that they could be adopted more quickly.

During the months of the voucher hold, the Fund paid for 650 surgeries while sending no new vouchers. After the voucher hold, the Fund disseminated another 692 vouchers and providers completed another 279 surgeries.

**Surgeries by Species
(55% cats / 45% dogs)**



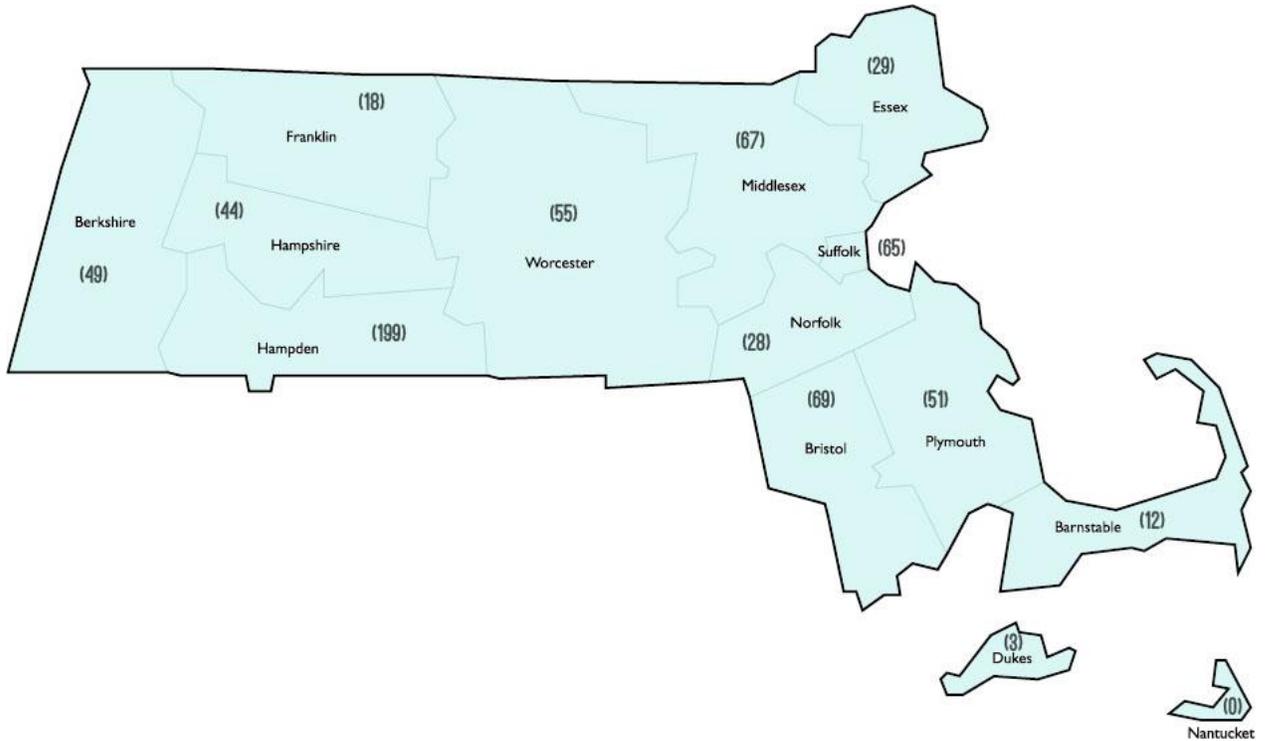
Surgeries by Category



Dogs and cats are eligible for the Voucher Program under the following guidelines.

HOMELESS	
<i>Eligible</i>	<i>Ineligible</i>
<p>Dogs and cats that are housed in a municipal animal control facility or dogs and cats held on behalf of a municipality at a private shelter that is in a formal agreement to act as a holding facility for that municipality.</p> <p>Part I (Homeless Animal) and Part III (Requester Information) of the voucher is completely filled out prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>	<p>Dogs and cats housed in a private shelter, rescue, or foster group.</p> <p>Part I and/or Part III of the voucher is not filled out completely prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>
OWNED	
<i>Eligible</i>	<i>Ineligible</i>
<p>Dogs and cats that are owned by low-income Massachusetts residents. To determine low-income eligibility, we recommend that the animal control officer ask for proof of enrollment in a state or federal assistance program, such as TAFDC, SSI, VS, SNAP, WIC, Section 8, etc.</p> <p>Part I (Owner/Pet Information) and Part II (Referral Information) of the voucher is completely filled out prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>	<p>Dogs and cats owned by Massachusetts residents who do not meet income eligibility requirements.</p> <p>Part I and/or Part II of the voucher is not filled out completely prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>
FERAL	
<i>Eligible</i>	<i>Ineligible</i>
<p>Cats that are homeless, un-owned, free-roaming, unsocialized, and appear healthy. These cats must be released back into its home colony, which will be managed, and must receive a 3/8" ear tip at the time of surgery.</p> <p>Part II (Feral Cat) and Part III (Requester Information) of the voucher is completely filled out prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>	<p>Cats that are owned or possibly owned, or those that will be adopted out or are in foster care awaiting possible placement. Socialized cats being evaluated for placement, and cats that do not appear healthy.</p> <p>Part II and/or III of the voucher is not filled out completely prior to dropping off the animal for surgery.</p>

Vouchers Disseminated by County



The Massachusetts Animal Fund has actively sought clinics, hospitals, shelters, and individual providers to participate in the Spay/Neuter Voucher Program since April 2014. Providers apply to the program by submitting a résumé, veterinary license copy, and references for each veterinarian in the practice. Once their application is accepted, they sign a contract as a vendor for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Providers are reimbursed a flat rate per surgery based on the following guidelines:

Tier	Type	Rate
Tier I	Small dog (<50 lbs.) neuter/cat neuter	\$75
Tier II	Small dog (<50 lbs.) spay/cat spay/big dog (>50 lbs.) neuter	\$150
Tier III	Big dog (>50 lbs.) spay	\$300

In FY16 the Fund had 26 active providers, including Alliance for Animals; Andover Animal Hospital; Animal Rescue Vet Services; Animal Shelter INC; Animed Pet Hospital; ARK Angel Animal Hospital; Animal Rescue League of Boston Spay Waggin'; Best Friends Veterinary Hospital; Blandford Animal Hospital; Cape Cod Cat Hospital; Chase Veterinary Clinic; Country Veterinary Services; Commonwealth Veterinary; Dakin Community Spay/Neuter Clinic; Holyoke Animal Hospital; Lichtenberg Animal Hospital; Marion Animal Hospital; Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society; Merrimac Valley Animal Hospital; Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Angell and Nevins Farm); North Shore Animal Hospital; Pet Haven Animal Hospital; Pittsfield Animal Hospital; Second Chance Wellness Clinic; Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Care and Control; and Worcester Animal Rescue League.

The Spay/Neuter Voucher Program would not be able to run without the support of these providers.

Voucher Surgeries by Provider

Provider	Surgeries
Alliance for Animals	3
Andover Animal Hospital	1
Animal Rescue Vet Services	1
Animal Shelter INC	35
Animed Pet Hospital	46
ARK Angel Animal Hospital	2
ARL Spay Waggin'	55
Best Friends Veterinary Hospital	14
Blandford Animal Hospital	10
Cape Cod Cat Hospital	1
Chase Veterinary Clinic	2
Country Veterinary Services	2
Commonwealth Veterinary	2
Dakin Community Spay/Neuter Clinic	287
Holyoke Animal Hospital	13
Lichtenberg Animal Hospital	16
Marion Animal Hospital	25
Merrimack River Feline rescue Society	63
Merrimac Valley Animal Hospital	8
MSPCA	19
North Shore Animal Hospital	58
Pet Haven Animal Hospital	4
Pittsfield Animal Hospital	127
Second Chance Wellness Clinic	52
TJO Animal Control	78
Worcester Animal Rescue League	6

Emergency Fund

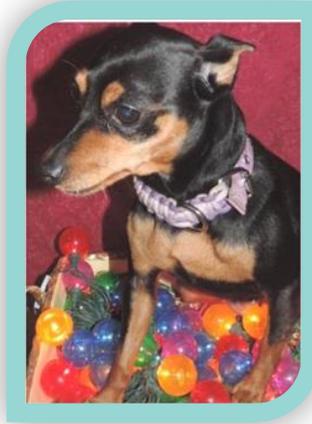
The Massachusetts Animal Fund dedicates up to 5% of its budget annually to the Emergency Fund. This money is used to assist with the spay, neuter, and vaccination of dogs and cats in certain cases of animal hoarding/abuse or disease outbreak when funds from other sources are unavailable. In FY16 the Fund spent \$9,300 to assist 81 animals in need through the Emergency Fund.

Success Stories

The Fund loves to hear happy stories about the dogs and cats helped through both the Spay/Neuter Voucher Program and the Emergency Fund. Below are a few of this year's standouts.

Kimimila

“Kimimila was rescued from an abusive home as a puppy by Jose and Christa. Kimimila is a Lakota word meaning butterfly; we named her this because we knew with a little love she could break free from her cocoon and become the butterfly she is today and thanks to the help of the Massachusetts Animal Fund she’s spread her wings even more. We thank you for all the wonderful work you do.”



Pixie & Jasper

These two lucky cats were taken in off the streets by a loving family who needed help affording their medical care. The kittens were spayed/neutered through a Massachusetts Animal Fund voucher on the Animal Rescue League of Boston Spay Waggin’. Pixie and Jasper are doing great after surgery and are not only very bonded with each other, but they have become truly inseparable members of their new family.

Winter

Our friends at Thomas J. O’Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center met little Winter after he was struck by a car when he escaped from his home. His guardian Maribel was quickly in touch with TJO and was so relieved that Winter, while injured, would be OK. His family always wished to have Winter neutered, but had trouble finding money to do so. With the help of the Massachusetts Animal Fund for his neuter and vaccinations and medical assistance for his injuries from TJO, he is back home where his Maribel says he will never escape again!



Animal Control Officer Training

Animal control officers (ACOs) have important responsibilities, including dealing with dangerous dogs, responding to reports of stray animals, and enforcing licensing and vaccination laws. In addition, they often care for and adopt out sheltered animals and many deal with wildlife conflicts. Improved training will increase the professionalism of this important position in our cities and towns. In return, this will provide for better care of Massachusetts animals, increase public safety, and create more uniform and stronger enforcement of animal control laws. Section 35WW of Chapter 193 of the Acts of 2012 mandates that the Fund must assist with the training of ACOs consistent with Section 151C of M.G.L. Chapter 140. The Massachusetts Animal Fund Animal Control Training Institute was created to respond to this mandate.



The first Animal Control Officer Core Competencies training was offered between April and July 2016. Two trainings were offered in each of six locations across the Commonwealth: Pittsfield, Springfield, Worcester, Plymouth, Lowell, and Boston. Over the course of twelve weeks the Fund trained 321 officers in the content areas of animal control law; emergency preparedness; animal behavior, capture, and safe handling; communication and public relations; and records and report-writing. ACOs who did not complete the training in FY16 will be trained in FY17; going forward, any officer who is new to the position will be trained within one year of being hired as an ACO as funding allows. All officers are required to complete eight continuing education hours annually to maintain their compliance with the state mandate.

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