

# The Spay/Neuter Assistance Program for Cats

## A Cooperative Venture of the SPCA of Luzerne County and Valley Cat Rescue

Kittens are cute and adorable, no question about it. Fuzzy, funny, playful and amusing, they can steal your heart in an instant. But what happens to all the kittens born each year who aren't lucky enough to find good, loving, responsible homes where they will be cared for all their lives? For many, the answer is a tragic and untimely death because there are simply TOO MANY KITTENS!

There is only one effective way to prevent the over-population problem that leads to shelter euthanasia, and that is to spay or neuter our pets. Unfortunately, many families right here in Luzerne County struggle just to provide the necessities for themselves, and simply cannot afford this vital surgery for their pets. That's why the SPCA of Luzerne County has teamed up with the volunteers of Valley Cat Rescue to provide spay/neuter surgeries for low income households in Luzerne County. If you are eligible, here's what you'll pay:

Male Cat Neuter ..... \$10.00  
Female Cat Spay:..... \$15.00  
Rabies Shot:..... \$5.00\*  
\*available with surgery only

### This program...

- is for low-income households only. You must either receive some form of public assistance, or meet income guidelines, to participate.
- is for owned, pet cats only, not for stray or feral cats. (See FAQ for more info.)
- is only available to residents of Luzerne County.
- is for cats only, because over-population among cats is currently much more severe than among dogs, due to cats' far higher rate of reproduction.

### To Participate:

- N **Call** Valley Cat Rescue any day, between the hours of 9:30 AM and 8:30 PM only.
- N Please go to Mailbox 4. Leave *only* your name and number, as instructed.
- N A Valley Cat Rescue volunteer will return your call, register you over the phone, and give you all necessary instructions and information.
- N **Send** in the required proof of residence, assistance or income, and your copays, and receive a certificate for your cat's surgery.
- N **Select** from among the participating veterinarians, and make your appointment according to the instructions on your certificate.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How old does my cat have to be to be fixed?

Cats as young as twelve weeks can be fixed. Not only is early-age spay/neuter safe, young kittens recover more quickly and heal faster- so the younger, the better.

N

### How many cats can I have fixed?

All the cats that live in your household are eligible, but not outdoor, stray or feral cats. Call Valley Cat Rescue for more information on how to help feral cats.

N

### Why does my cat have to have a rabies shot?

Pennsylvania law requires that all dogs and cats over the age of twelve weeks be vaccinated against rabies. If your cat hasn't had a rabies shot yet, or if its last shot has expired, the rabies shot is required in order to comply with the law and to protect the staff of the veterinary hospital.

N

### **Will my cat have to stay at the vet's overnight?**

Your veterinarian will decide when it's safe for your cat to come home. Male cats can often come home the same day, females usually stay overnight.

N

### **Will I have to pay anything extra when I take my cat in for its surgery?**

This program covers your cat's rabies shot and all surgical expenses, so you won't pay any extra for those. But if you want extra services, like other shots, you will have to pay the vet directly for them.

N

### **Are there any other benefits of spaying and neutering my cat?**

Wow, are there ever! Here are just a few of them:

- ✓ No more noisy, annoying female heats!
- ✓ No spraying! All male cats, and even some females, will begin to spray urine when they become old enough to breed. Spay or neuter young, and it will never start. And if they've already started spraying, getting them fixed will stop it about 90% of the time.
- ✓ Males will stay closer to home and be less likely to get into fights with other males in their territories.
- ✓ Less risk of catching Feline Leukemia, which is often passed by mating and fighting behaviors.
- ✓ Fewer cancers. Cats fixed before one year old are 90% less likely to develop cancer during their lifetimes.

N

### **Why is the Spay/Neuter Assistance Program only for cats?**

For the past eight years, the SPCA of Luzerne County has had to euthanize dogs **only** because of severe illness or because of dangerous behavior problems, **not** for lack of space. In contrast, the shelter takes in about twice as many cats as there are good homes available for.

We can never turn away any animal in need, but we also want to stop euthanizing cats. So we're putting our money where it will do the most good: spaying and neutering as many cats as possible, for the families who need our help the most.

N

### **Why do shelters get so many more cats than dogs?**

Cats breed much younger, faster, and more often than dogs. A female cat can become pregnant when she's only four months old, and can have three to four litters a year, every year, for her whole life. She can even get pregnant again while she's still nursing her last litter, when her kittens are as young as a week old! In addition, owned cats are more likely to be surrendered to the shelter or abandoned on the streets for so-called nuisance behaviors that are really linked to reproduction, and that can be easily solved by simply getting the cat fixed.

N

### **How can I support the work of the Spay/Neuter Assistance Program?**

Your help is urgently needed! The SPCA of Luzerne County depends solely on private donations to fund the Spay/Neuter Assistance Program. Donations in any amount are always welcome, and you can be sure that every penny you contribute will go directly to help the cat of a family right here in Luzerne County. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. **Please write "Spay/Neuter Program" on the memo line of your check, and send to:**

SPCA of Luzerne County  
524 East Main Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

**To Register, call 570-824-4172, 10:00 AM to 8:30 PM daily**

**Don't delay, call today!**