



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Damon T. Arnold, M.D., M.P.H., Director

525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.idph.state.il.us

January 6, 2009

Dear Honorable Governor Rod Blagojevich and Members of the General Assembly:

In 2005, Gov. Rod Blagojevich and the General Assembly passed the Illinois Public Health and Safety Animal Population Control Act [510 ILCS 92], which created the Illinois Public Health and Safety Animal Population Control Act -- also known as "Anna's Law." The legislation was named in memory of Anna Cieslewicz, who was attacked and killed by stray dogs in 2002 while jogging in Chicago's Dan Ryan Woods. The act was introduced as a means to protect the public safety by decreasing the number of dangerous dogs, stray dogs and feral cat populations throughout the state.

Background

The purpose of the Illinois Public Health and Safety Animal Population Control Program is *to reduce the population of unwanted and stray dogs and cats in Illinois by encouraging the owners of dogs and cats to have them permanently sexually sterilized and vaccinated, thereby reducing potential threats to public health and safety* [510 ILCS 92/20].

The program provides Illinois residents with a way to obtain low cost spay or neuter surgery for their household pets. In order to be eligible to participate, the individual must be an Illinois resident and participate in either the food stamps or Social Security disability income programs. All eligible program participants are required to fill out an application form and submit proof of eligibility.

The Department then reviews the application and, once approved, mails the application back to the citizen. The individual must take the approved application form to a veterinarian participating in the program. The act requires the individual to pay a \$15 co-pay when the surgery is performed. All other costs related to the surgical procedure Animal Population Control Program and rabies vaccination are reimbursed by the Department. The veterinarian then submits the application and proof of the surgery to the Department for reimbursement.

Program Implementation

In December 2007, the Department contacted 3,050 veterinarians in the state (this represented all veterinarians currently registered with the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation) via a mass mailing. The mailing contained a registration form, as mandated by Section 30 of the Act, which would allow veterinarians to participate in

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the Program. The mailing also contained detailed information regarding the program. The Department also has distributed program information and applications to every local health department and all local offices maintained by the Illinois Department of Human Services.

In 2008, more than 112 veterinarians participated in the program. These veterinarians represent 60 counties in Illinois, up from 56 counties in 2007. From January 2008 through June 30, 2008, 241 animals were approved to receive spay/neuter services under the program, representing a cost of \$37,040. For 2008, 1,374 animals were approved to receive services through the program for a total cost of \$211,300.

Funding

During fiscal year 2008, the Illinois Department of Public Health had an appropriation of \$100,000. The appropriation was increased to \$250,000 for FY2009. The fund receives revenue from various sources including Pet Friendly license plate fees, fines collected from animal control agencies under the Animal Control Act, and voluntary contributions. The ending cash balance for the fund on December 31, 2008 was \$349,555.

The Department adopted the following reimbursement fee schedule for 2008.

Female Dogs

(or male dogs with retained testicles)

25 lbs or less - \$170

26 - 50 lbs - \$180

51 - 75 lbs - \$190

More than 75 lbs - \$200

Male Dogs

25 lbs or less - \$150

26 - 50 lbs - \$160

51 - 75 lbs - \$170

More than 75 lbs - \$180

Female Cats (any weight) - \$130

Male Cats (any weight) - \$100

Please contact Denise Gaines, Chief, Division of Governmental Affairs, at 217-782-6187 or TTY (for hearing impaired use only) 800-547-0466 if you have any questions about this program.

Sincerely,



Damon T. Arnold, M.D., M.P.H.
Director

cc: Denise Gaines, IDPH, Governmental Affairs