



West Virginia Spay Neuter Assistance Program - Frequently Asked Questions

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Q. What's new for FY 2024?

A. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is proud to offer the West Virginia Spay Neuter Assistance Program (WVSNP) once again in FY 2024. These FAQs have been updated to show the latest changes to the program. For the convenience of returning applicants, the most significant changes are listed in this section, but keep in mind that the entire document has been updated. All applicants should be aware of the following changes for FY 2024:

1. The application has been shortened by removing a few sections and by simplifying other sections. We believe these changes will improve the application process by clarifying and streamlining the application and reducing the time needed to complete it. If a section has disappeared, that means we no longer need the information it formerly collected.
2. The ranking system has been replaced by an automatic adjustment process that will increase or decrease award requests, as necessary, based on an objective prioritization of applicants. Each year, WVDA must weigh the number and amounts of grant requests against the available funding, which varies depending on pet food fees collected, funds spent in prior years, and other factors. Applicants should request a funding amount they will be able to use and indicate whether they can use additional funds. If WVDA does not have enough funding to fulfill all grant requests, grant requests will be reduced according to priority. If WVDA has enough funding to award additional funds, grantees who indicate they are able to use more funding may be awarded additional funding in order of the objective prioritization. Priority of applicants is based on the following four factors:
 - a. Whether the applicant is matching funds, and the percentage matched;
 - b. Whether the applicant will operate a Low-Income Restricted Program (see these FAQs);
 - c. Whether the applicant operates a high-volume, low-cost clinic; and
 - d. Whether the applicant spent at least 90% of its most recent grant award.
3. As always, the applicant is not required to match funds. However, in the event applicant requests would need to be decreased—or could be increased—matching funds is a factor in prioritizing applicants. Starting in FY24, matching amounts are standardized at two levels:
 - a. Level I match is calculated as 40% of the project cost (or two-thirds of the grant funds).
 - b. Level II match is calculated as 20% of the project cost (or 25% of the grant funds).
4. A public-facing phone number is now required of all applicants. WVDA may publicize public-facing phone numbers so that interested pet owners may contact recipients of this State grant.
5. Instead of providing adoption information, applicants are now asked to read a summary of prohibited adoption practices and verify that their adoption policies do not violate the WVSNP Legislative Rule. Grantees may not charge a fee incident to adoption to cover spay or neuter services paid for under WVSNP. If such a fee is charged, the spay or neuter services are not eligible for reimbursement.
6. **The application deadline for FY24 is January 16, 2024, at 11:59pm.**

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Q. Who is eligible to apply for the grant program?

A. Private entities and local governmental entities are both eligible. Individual pet owners are *not* eligible for direct grant funding.

A private entity must maintain 501(c)(3) status, be incorporated in and in good standing with the state of West Virginia, have its principal place of business in West Virginia, and meet one or more of the following criteria: (1) provides or facilitates spay neuter services by a veterinarian to the general public; (2) rescues stray, abandoned or feral animals and provides or facilitates adoptions services for the animals to the general public; or (3) advocates and furthers effective means for the propagation of humane principles to prevent animal cruelty, abuse, neglect and overpopulation. Registration with the West Virginia Secretary of State may not be as a sole proprietorship or voluntary association.

A governmental entity must be either a county or municipal shelter or an animal control agency.

Entities that facilitate spay and neuter services via vouchers or other methods are eligible; it is not a requirement that the applicant actually perform the spay/neuter services.

Q. How do I download the application?

A. Download the application package and save it to your computer using the “save as” command. The package is a zipped (compressed) file and contains a blank Excel application file, a PDF version of these FAQs, and an Owner/Caretaker Certification (for Low-Income Restricted Programs only). To unzip the file on Windows, right-click the zipped file and select “Extract All.” To unzip the file on a Mac, simply double-click the zipped file.

Q. How do I submit an application?

A. The application is a normal Excel file and can be opened, closed, saved, and attached to an e-mail message. (If the file opens in Protected View, you may have to click “Enable Editing.”) You will notice that each tab is locked and you will be able to enter data only in the appropriate cells. Cells set up for data entry are colored yellow or pale orange. Required cells are colored yellow. Enter all your data and e-mail the file, along with all supporting documentation, to spayneuter@wvda.us. Do not print the application and handwrite your answers or use a typewriter. To allow easy retrieval of data, applications must be submitted digitally in Excel format, as .xls or .xlsx files.

Q. Can I use Google Sheets to complete the application?

A. Google Sheets does not support some features employed by the WWSNP application. For best results, it is recommended that applicants use Microsoft Excel. For example, applicants using Google Sheets may be unable to fill in EIN and West Virginia Business Registration Account

Number. If this affects you, place the missing information in the body of the e-mail when submitting your application. Other issues may exist. If possible, use Microsoft Excel to complete your application. However, WVDA will not reject applications completed using Google Sheets or other spreadsheet software.

Q. When is the application due?

A. For FY 24, applications must be received by January 16, 2024, at 11:59pm.

Q. Why don't I have a full year to use grant funds?

A. It is important that WVDA have time to prepare next year's grant cycle. Therefore, all FY 24 invoices and final reports will have to be submitted no later than November 15, 2024. You should take this timeline into account when planning your project. Please note that it will not be possible to extend the grant deadline due to the short window before the next application period.

Q. What if, despite my best efforts, my application is missing a required element?

A. WVDA may, but is not required to, contact you with an opportunity to correct your application. Therefore, in the weeks after the application deadline, it is recommended that you monitor the e-mail address you list on your application.

Q. My organization no longer maintains a business license with the West Virginia Secretary of State's office. Are we eligible?

A. No. The legislative rule requires that all grantees be incorporated in, and in good standing with, the state of West Virginia. We must be able to confirm that your organization meets this requirement.

Q. How do I find my Business Registration Account Number?

A. If you do not know this number, please contact the West Virginia State Tax Department. They can help you find your number in their registry or aid you in registering for one. Please call 304-558-3333 or 800-982-8297 for tax information and assistance, or visit the Tax Department online at <https://tax.wv.gov/Business/BusinessRegistration/Pages/BusinessRegistration.aspx>.

Q. Why can't I request more than \$25,000.00 in WVDA funding?

A. Due to the overwhelming response from groups all over the state, WVDA prefers to fund as many groups as possible. If one group requests a large amount of funding, that reduces the pool of money available to other groups. Therefore, funding is capped at \$25,000.00 per group for this fiscal year.

Q. What are "matching funds" and how are they calculated?

A. WVDA encourages groups to put up their own funds to “match” in some proportion the funding WVDA provides. Although not required for participation, matching funds increase the total impact of the program. Therefore, groups able to provide matching funds at a higher percentage receive a higher priority if grant requests must be decreased, or can be increased.

In a “Level I” matched grant, WVDA provides 80% of the project funds, and the applicant provides 20%. The matching funds are calculated as 25% of the grant funds.

In a “Level II” matched grant, WVDA provides 60% of the project funds, and the applicant provides 40%. The matching funds are calculated as two-thirds of the grant funds.

Q. What are my chances of receiving a grant?

A. To date, all applicants who qualify for a grant, and have submitted all required materials timely, have received a grant in some amount. Due to demand, many requests are reduced in amount. A higher priority score may help the applicant receive more of its request.

Q. How will grantees be reimbursed for payments made toward the grant?

A. If you are selected as a recipient of grant funds, you will be reimbursed after properly submitting an invoice for eligible expenditures. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on the schedule laid out in your Grant Agreement, which provides for approximately bimonthly submissions. WVDA will reimburse at a rate consistent with the percentage of grant funds WVDA has agreed to provide. For example, if the awarded grant was \$10,000.00 and the matching funds provided by the applicant was \$2,500.00, WVDA will reimburse at an 80% rate. ($\$10,000.00 \div (\$10,000.00 + \$2,500.00) = 80\%$).

Q. What information will have to be submitted in order to request reimbursement?

A. To obtain reimbursement, a grantee must use the Invoice Template form provided by WVDA. Currently, the form will require you to provide your name, address, award number, contact person, and the “WVDA Share” from your Grant Agreement. You will need to provide detailed information about each procedure for which you are requesting reimbursement. This includes the service date, whether the animal altered was a dog, a cat, or a community cat, whether the procedure was a spay or a neuter, the amount you paid for the procedure, the county of residence of the owner, or, for stray and community animals, county of capture, and the veterinarian or vet agency that performed the procedure. Supporting documentation, such as copies of receipts documenting expended funds, must also be submitted. When submitting invoices to WVDA for reimbursement, grantees must use their correct name as it appears on the Grant Agreement. Failure to do so will require revisions, likely delaying reimbursement.

Q. What expenses are eligible for reimbursement?

A. WVDA will reimburse grantees for properly invoiced direct costs of spay and neuter procedures and reasonably related expenses, including but not limited to anesthesia, pain medication, increased expenses due to cryptorchidism and pregnancy, and rabies vaccinations

incident to spay and neuter procedures. No reimbursement will be provided for unrelated veterinary care, administrative costs, overhead, advertising, or facilities or equipment. Some transportation costs may be applied toward the grantee's matching funds.

Q. How can I apply transportation and van rental expenses to the matching funds provided by my organization?

A. Reasonably necessary mileage the grantee traveled transporting animals to and from a veterinarian may be applied to the grantee's matching funds. Rather than calculating actual expenses the grantee incurred, WVDA will credit grantees the WVDA rate (typically equivalent to the IRS rate) for each mile that the grantee substantiates as a valid, reasonably necessary transportation expense. WVDA's invoice form will perform this calculation automatically once you enter the mileage data.

In addition, Grantees may charge reasonable and necessary van rental expenses used to transport animals to and from a veterinarian. Grantees must provide proof of a qualifying rental when submitting a reimbursement request.

Note that only matching funds—not grant funds—are eligible to be used for transportation and van rental expenses. Grantees who have an unmatched grant need not track or invoice transportation or van rental expenses.

Q. How long will it take to receive my reimbursement check?

A. Once you submit your invoice, WVDA follows its normal grant reimbursement procedures to approve payment. Due to the State's fiduciary responsibilities to the taxpayers, the review process is robust. Multiple internal WVDA staff will review each request to ensure that the request complies with state law and your grant agreement. After WVDA approves the invoice for payment, the West Virginia State Auditor's Office must approve the payment. From the time WVDA receives a **complete and correct** invoice, it takes approximately 22 business days to issue a check, although at certain times of year it can take considerably longer. Normal USPS delivery times apply. If you wish to expedite the receipt of your payment, the State Auditor's Office offers the opportunity to sign up for direct deposit by submitting a form. To download the form, go to the State Auditor's "Electronic Payments" page, at <https://www.wvsao.gov/ElectronicPayments/Default>, and click on the Company eVendor Agreement (Setup). WVDA does not collect this form; rather, it should be submitted directly to the State Auditor's Office.

Additionally, note that errors on invoices significantly delay the reimbursement process. WVDA cannot process incomplete invoices or invoices with errors. If WVDA has to contact the grantee to make corrections, this time is not included in the timeline estimation above.

Q. Is the WV Spay Neuter Program limited to low-income pet owners and caretakers?

A. No. Grantees may choose to run programs designed for low-income pet owners and caretakers, but eligible grant programs under the legislative rule are not limited to such low-income programs.

Q. What are the requirements of Low-Income Restricted Programs?

A. Grantees who agree upon application to run a Low-Income Restricted Program (LIRP) are responsible for complying with the LIRP guidelines. Non-LIRP grantees need not comply. The LIRP guidelines are as follows:

1. Eligible owners and caretakers must currently be receiving assistance from at least one of the following state and federal public assistance programs: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Medicaid; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); The West Virginia Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP); Social Security Disability; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); or Low Income Veterans Assistance under 38 U.S.C. § 2044.
2. If an eligible owner or caretaker requests free spay or neuter services from a grantee running a LIRP, and the grantee has remaining grant funding sufficient to provide such the requested services, the grantee must grant the owner or caretaker's request.
3. A grantee may, by written policy, limit eligible owners or caretakers to a maximum number of animals per owner which can be spayed or neutered under the LIRP.
4. Grantees may run a combination of LIRP and non-LIRP programs, but requests from eligible owners or caretakers must take precedence over non-LIRP expenditures.
5. Grantees must collect a completed Owner/Caretaker Certification from each eligible owner or caretaker who receives spay or neuter services under the grantee's LIRP. The Owner/Caretaker Certification is available on WVDA's website at <https://agriculture.wv.gov/owner-caretaker-certification/>.
6. On the Owner/Caretaker Certification, an eligible owner or caretaker must certify that he or she is currently receiving assistance from at least one of the public assistance programs named above at #1. The eligible owner must also certify that he or she is the owner or caretaker of the animal to be spayed or neutered.
7. Upon invoicing WVDA, the grantee must submit an Owner/Caretaker Certification for each free spay or neuter service performed under the grantee's LIRP.
8. The grantee may not request documentation or evidence to prove that the eligible owner is receiving assistance from a public assistance program, but shall rely on the eligible owner's sworn statement on the Owner/Caretaker Certification.
9. The grantee may not charge any fees of the eligible owner in exchange for the spay or neuter services.
10. The grantee may not solicit the eligible owner for a donation.

Q. Are spay/neuter expenses for stray and community cats and cat colonies eligible for reimbursement?

A. Yes. Grantees may choose to submit for reimbursement of expenses incurred for spaying and neutering stray and community cats, so long as the grantee adheres to all other requirements.

Q. May grantees utilize out-of-state veterinarians?

A. No. WVDA may not provide reimbursement for spay/neuter procedures performed by veterinarians who are not licensed and doing business in the State of West Virginia.

Q. How will the Department of Agriculture use my information?

A. First, the WVSNP Legislative Rule requires that WVDA maintain and make available to the public a current list of grantees and their contact information. Second, applicants are given some options regarding voluntary publicity. (See application section 1.2.) WVDA may, at its option, utilize this voluntarily provided information to publicize the WVSNP and its grantees. Third and finally, because WVDA is an agency of the State of West Virginia, WVDA's information is generally public and may be subject to disclosure in a variety of contexts. Applicants should assume that all submitted information may be publicly disclosed and should not submit any information that is private or confidential.

Q. What if my question is not answered by these FAQs?

A. Please feel free to e-mail spayneuter@wvda.us or call Andrew Yost at 304-389-9750 or Connie Shoemaker at 304-538-2397.