

Spay/Neuter

The Alabama Humane Federation urges every companion animal owner to spay or neuter their dogs and cats (and other pets such as rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, etc) that are not in a responsible breeding program. We encourage pet owners to consult with their veterinarians about if and when their pet(s) should be spayed or neutered. AHF feels that the best approach to reducing the numbers of unwanted pets is education and incentives that will encourage owners to have their pets altered before they produce unplanned for and unnecessary offspring.

The number of companion animals that are homeless at any given time exceeds the number of responsible homes available for them. Every year millions of homeless animals suffer from abandonment or are euthanized in animal shelters simply because there are more pets than homes.

Alabama shelters euthanize an estimated 120,000+ unwanted pets each year. When pet owners give away unwanted offspring there is no guarantee that those animals or their offspring won't end up as abandoned pets in Alabama cities, towns and animal shelters.

Spaying and neutering of dogs & cats (and other pets) has proven benefits including:

- reduction in the desire to roam in both males and females resulting in less injuries & deaths due to auto accidents, gunshot, poisoning, fighting, etc.
- reduction of mammary tumors/cancer and elimination of ovarian/uterine cancers & pyometria in females
- elimination of testicular cancer & reduction in prostate problems in males
- reduced likelihood of roaming and fighting in neutered males
- reduction in disease exposure from fighting and contact with feral or unvaccinated pets
- elimination of estrus caused personality changes in spayed females
- reduction or elimination of spraying and marking
- decreased aggressive behavior, including bites
- reduction of unwanted cats/kittens/dogs/puppies
- longer, healthier lives for altered pets
- savings to local government in animal control and nuisance animal issues
- increased safety to children, pets, livestock and property from reductions in roaming, nuisance and aggressive animals

Because the cost to care for unwanted animals places a burden on local taxpayers, AHF supports local ordinances and state legislation that provide incentives for the spaying and neutering of privately owned animals. AHF believes that the use of taxpayer monies to house unwanted animals without also developing incentives to address the root causes of homeless animals is not good stewardship of tax revenue.

Additionally, AHF expects all Alabama animal shelters and animal placement agencies to be in compliance with Alabama state law requiring that adopted pets either be spayed or neutered prior to their release or within 30 days of sexual maturity and that each agency have a method of ensuring compliance with this law.