

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE of BOSTON



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Mass Animal Fund Voucher Program Fueling Animal Rescue League of Boston Spay/Neuter Clinic *Funding Provided Through Line 33F Campaign*

It's the height of tax season, and Massachusetts residents once again have the opportunity to donate to the Massachusetts Animal Fund (MAF); an organization dedicated to eradicating animal homelessness through spay and neuter programs. This week the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) and MAF officials gathered at ARL's Dedham Shelter to discuss the importance of expanding this highly successful program.

"Right now there are 256 municipalities and about 30 veterinarians participating in the program statewide," said Lauren Gilfeather, Coordinator for MAF. "It's a safety net for people who are enrolled in state-funded assistance programs, and who may not be able to afford to have their pet spayed or neutered."

The MAF was created in 2012, is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, and funded through the voluntary tax check-off (Line 33f) on the Massachusetts resident income tax form as well as monetary donations. With current funding levels, MAF can provide vouchers for about 1,100 surgeries annually. However, with just a minimal donation amount, that number could increase dramatically.

"If every Massachusetts taxpayer donated just \$1, we could help up to 40,000 animals a year," Gilfeather said.

Local animal control officers may request vouchers for dogs and cats held in their respective municipal shelters, or on behalf of low-income residents or feral trappers who request them.

Since the first vouchers were disseminated in July 2014, more than 7,500 surgeries have been performed state-wide, nearly 800 by ARL alone.

“The Animal Rescue League of Boston was one of the first providers to sign on and through the Spay Waggin’ has been able to get to areas on the South Shore where we don’t have providers,” Gilfeather said. “ARL has been always been supportive and is a big reason for the program’s success.”

In conjunction with MAF, ARL is currently operating a Friday Community Surgical Clinic at its Dedham location. The clinic offers low-cost spay and neuter services for pet owners who have received an MAF voucher from their local animal control officer and area animal shelters that need assistance for animals in their care. In addition, the clinic will soon be able to offer other services as well, including dental procedures. Appointments can be made online at www.arlboston.org/community-vet-services/, and you MUST have an MAF voucher to receive services.

“The Dedham Community Surgical Clinic will provide much needed surgery space for clients with MAF vouchers that are not able to schedule elsewhere for their pet’s surgery,” said Cheryl Traversi, ARL Associate Director of Community Services. “By operating this clinic, ARL is ensuring that we are providing even more spay and neuter surgeries to the pets and pet owners in the greatest need.”

Homeless Animal Prevention and Care is one of six causes listed on Line 33 of the Massachusetts resident income tax form, and taxpayers can contribute any amount they choose. ARL encourages any Massachusetts taxpayer who has a compassion for helping animals in need to contribute to the cause, and help us ensure that animals are safe and healthy living in communities and out of shelters.

ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:

The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes. Founded in 1899, ARL provides high quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2016, ARL served more than 17,800 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We receive no government funding and rely solely on the generosity of individuals to support programs and services that help animals in need.

For more information please visit us online at www.arlboston.org; and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS ANIMAL FUND

In 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. One solution to this problem is investing in spaying/neutering animals, which the Fund does through the Spay/Neuter Voucher Program. Another is standardized and required animal control officer training that creates uniform enforcement of animal control laws, which the Fund does through the Animal Control Officer Training Institute. This program is solely funded by the voluntary tax check-off (Line 33f) on the Massachusetts resident income tax form and by monetary donations.

For more information please visit us at <http://www.massanimalfund.com>, and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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