



**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Nina Thompson  
619-372-0916 cell  
[nthompson@sdhumane.org](mailto:nthompson@sdhumane.org)

24-Hour PetSmart Charities  
Media Line: 623-587-2177

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**JULY 14, 2022**

## **San Diego Humane Society to Provide Affordable Veterinary Care to San Diegans in Need with \$100,000 Grant from PetSmart Charities**

**SAN DIEGO** — In the U.S., [70 percent](#) of homes include pets. Even though pets are part of so many families, nearly 50 million pets in the U.S. cannot access even the most basic veterinary care. Due to cost and other barriers, pets in under-resourced communities often do not receive essential veterinary services such as vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, dental or other medical care. As research continues to reveal the benefits of the human-animal bond, a movement is underway to connect pet parents to the veterinary care their pets need, in order to keep them and their families healthy.

With a \$100,000 grant from [PetSmart Charities](#), San Diego Humane Society expects to impact 10,000 pets and pet parents in need of these veterinary services through its Community Veterinary Services program, which will include:

- Low-cost vaccine services.
- Low-cost spay/neuter services.
- A veterinary voucher program, which pet owners can redeem at partner veterinary clinics, intended to supplement the cost of veterinary care when their pets are sick or injured.
- The launch of mobile preventative care clinics this summer, which will help bring veterinary services directly into the communities that need them most.
- On-site clinics twice per week at San Diego Humane Society's San Diego Campus.



This year, San Diego Humane Society expanded its Community Veterinary Services program by hiring the Dr. Francine Deutsch and Dr. Carole Leland Community Services Veterinarian position, a registered veterinary technician and two veterinary assistants. This is the organization's first medical team to focus exclusively on providing services to pets owned by members of the community, rather than shelter animals, five days a week. The Community Veterinary Services team will provide care on-site at the organization's four campuses and by taking mobile preventive care clinics to targeted neighborhoods where there is little or no access to veterinary care.

"Marginalized communities, especially, are experiencing a crisis with access to veterinary care," said Aimee Gilbreath, president of PetSmart Charities. "A recent study found that 40% of low-income people surrendering their pets cited affordable veterinary care as a critical factor. PetSmart Charities is proud to invest in innovative and sustainable care models like San Diego Humane Society's Community Veterinary Services program – and we hope others take inspiration!"

San Diego County is among the most expensive places to live in the nation, and accessing veterinary care can present significant challenges to pet families in the region. San Diego Humane Society's Resource Center



receives an average of 50 calls a day from pet owners requesting information about accessing low-cost veterinary services.

“While the need for veterinary care in our community is great, there is a significant gap between the number of accessible, low-cost service providers and the human population of San Diego County — especially in underserved areas,” said San Diego Humane Society Director of Community Veterinary Services Geraldine D’Silva. “As a result, countless pet owners face barriers that make it virtually impossible for them to access veterinary care. Our Community Veterinary Services program addresses this challenge head-on by removing the financial and logistical barriers low-income pet owners face in accessing medical care for their animals.”

According to the Human-Animal Bond Research Institute, pets make a significant impact on the health and wellness of the people they love. This grant funding will help more families in need access veterinary care to ensure their pets live long, healthy lives.

**To learn about San Diego Humane Society’s Community Veterinary Services, visit [sdhumane.org/supportservices](https://sdhumane.org/supportservices).**

**Photos for media use can be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/3Lcet6N>**

#### **About San Diego Humane Society**

San Diego Humane Society’s scope of social responsibility goes beyond adopting animals. We offer programs that strengthen the human-animal bond, prevent cruelty and neglect, provide medical care, educate the community and serve as a safety net for all pet families. Serving San Diego County since 1880, San Diego Humane Society has campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside, Ramona and San Diego. For more information, please visit [sdhumane.org](https://sdhumane.org).

#### **About PetSmart Charities®**

PetSmart Charities is committed to making the world a better place for pets and all who love them. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities helps up to 600,000 pets connect with loving families each year. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to support organizations that advocate and care for the well-being of all pets and their families. Our grants and efforts connect pets with loving homes through adoption, improve access to affordable veterinary care and support families in times of crisis with access to food, shelter and emergency relief. Each year, millions of generous supporters help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities directly at [PetSmartCharities.org](https://PetSmartCharities.org), while shopping at [PetSmart.com](https://PetSmart.com), and by using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart® stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its role as the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, granting more than \$500 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart LLC, PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator for the past 18 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of rated charities. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](https://www.petsmartcharities.org).

**Connect with PetSmart Charities on Social Media:**

**Instagram:** [@PetSmartCharities](https://www.instagram.com/PetSmartCharities)

**Twitter:** [@PetSmartChariTs](https://twitter.com/PetSmartChariTs)

**Facebook:** [Facebook.com/PetSmartCharities](https://www.facebook.com/PetSmartCharities)

**YouTube:** [YouTube.com/PetSmartCharitiesInc](https://www.youtube.com/PetSmartCharitiesInc)

###