

§169.102. Texas Department of Health Animal Friendly Grants.

(a) Purpose.

(1) As authorized by the Texas Health and Safety Code, §828.014, relating to the Animal Friendly Fund, the department shall institute and administer grants under this subchapter.

(2) The grants shall be known as a part of the "Texas Department of Health Animal Friendly Grants."

(3) This subchapter governs the administration of the grants, the submission and review of grant applications, and the award of the grants.

(b) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Closing date - Date specified in the request for proposals as the date on which applications must be received or postmarked.

(2) Commissioner - Commissioner of Health or his or her designee.

(3) Department - Texas Department of Health.

(4) Local non-profit veterinary medical association – An organization set up by and comprised of several volunteer veterinarians in their immediate region for the purpose of presenting continuing education, planning group activities, or discussing issues common to their professional field.

(5) Nonprofit organization - A private, nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation, association or organization under Internal Revenue Code of 1986, §501(c)(3) (26 United States Code §501(c)(3)).

(6) Owner – A person which feeds, shelters, harbors, has possession or control, or has the responsibility to control an animal.

(c) Philosophy.

(1) The intent of the grants is to increase the sterilization of dogs and cats owned by the general public at minimal or no cost.

(2) Grant funds will not be used to:

(A) augment a releasing agency's adoption sterilization program; or

(B fund programs that do not operate within the State of Texas.

(3) One grant per grant period will be awarded per agency for the sterilization of dogs and/or cats.

(4) Efforts will be made to distribute funds to all areas of the state.

(d) Sources and Allocation of Funds.

(1) Funds for the grants shall be provided in accordance with the Health & Safety Code, §828.014, relating to the Animal Friendly account.

(2) All grants shall be awarded competitively according to the provisions of this subchapter.

(3) Grants shall be made only to the extent that funds are available in the Animal Friendly fund.

(4) The department shall have the authority and discretion to:

(A) determine the purpose(s) of the grants pursuant to law and this subchapter;

(B) approve or deny grant applications;

(C) determine the number, size and duration of grants; and

(D) modify or terminate grants.

(5) The department shall not be liable, nor shall grant funds be used, for any costs incurred by applicants in the development, preparation, submission, or review of applications.

(e) Eligibility for Grants. Eligible applicants include:

(1) a releasing agency;

(2) an organization that is qualified as a charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Code, §501(c) (3), that has animal welfare or sterilizing animals owned by the general public at minimal or no cost as its primary purpose; or

(3) a local nonprofit veterinary medical association that has an established program for sterilizing animals owned by the general public at minimal or no cost.

(f) Requirements for Grants.

(1) The department shall specify reasonable requirements for grant applications.

(2) Applicants for grants shall submit as a part of their application a plan of how they intend to provide sterilization services and their target population.

(3) Grant recipients shall make semi-annual reports to the department in a form and at a time determined by the department.

(g) Procedures for Grant Announcements.

(1) Before applications are requested, the department shall publish one or more notices of grant availability in the Texas Register. These notices shall also be distributed throughout the state through mail and electronic means. The notices will include details about the grants, instructions for obtaining a request for proposals, and the names of persons to contact in the department for further information.

(2) The department shall maintain a list of persons to be notified of requests for proposals. Any person wanting to be placed on the list should contact: Animal Friendly Grants, Zoonosis Control Division, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756.

(3) The department shall develop and publish one or more requests for proposals, which shall contain details concerning, but not limited to, the following:

(A) the nature and purpose(s) of the grants;

(B) the total amount of funds available for the grants under each part;

(C) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts that will be awarded for individual grants and for individual grantees;

(D) the information and format required for grant applications;

(E) information about the criteria used to judge grant applications; and

(F) the closing date.

(h) Procedures for Grant Applications.

(1) The department may specify any reasonable requirements for grant applications, including, but not limited to, length, format, authentication, and supporting documentation.

(2) Applications that are incomplete or substantially inconsistent with the requirements of this subchapter may be rejected without further consideration at the discretion of the department.

(3) Applications received after the closing date will not be considered, unless the closing date is extended by the department.

(4) Applicants will be given a minimum of 60 calendar days to file applications after a request for proposals is published. Applications must be received by the department on or before the closing date specified in the request for proposal.

(i) Competitive Review Process.

(1) Each application shall be reviewed by the department for completeness, relevance to the published request for proposals, adherence to department policies, general quality, technical merit, and budget appropriateness.

(2) The department's review process shall be completed within 45 days after the closing date.

(j) Selection Criteria.

(1) No grant shall be approved unless, in the opinion of the department:

(A) the application contains an explanation as to why provision of low-cost sterilization for pets will help minimize pet-overpopulation in their community;

(B) the application includes a workable plan to provide sterilization of dogs and cats for the general public at low or no cost;

(C) the application includes a method to report the number, species, and sex of animals sterilized;

(D) the applicant specifies how the general public will be made aware of the availability of low-cost surgery;

(E) the applicant has a written non-discrimination policy in place to ensure that no person is discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

(2) A grant application will be given funding preference, in a manner determined by the department and announced in the request for proposal, to the extent that it:

(A) targets low-income pets owners, describing how the applicant defines, ascertains, and verifies that the person is financially challenged;

(B) documents the intent and ability of the applicant to communicate and collaborate with the local health departments, animal control agencies, animal welfare agencies, veterinary organizations and human services organizations;

(C) demonstrates a low cost for surgery on a per animal basis, thereby maximizing the number of animals which can be sterilized;

(D) is a new, qualified program that does not duplicate existing low-cost sterilization efforts in a given community; and

(E) contains such other information or criteria that the department may specify and include in the request for proposals.

(k) Project Approval. Grant recipients shall execute a contract with the department. The contract shall detail items such as budget, reporting requirements, general provisions for department grant contracts, and any other specifics that might apply to the award.

(l) Continuation Funding.

(1) Grant recipients may be eligible for continuation funding. The department will consider the grant recipient's accomplishments, progress toward stated goals and objectives, award of past grants, and development of alternative funding. Applications shall be submitted in accordance with this subchapter.

(2) The department will award continuation grants after a review of applications in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.

