

**§ 19A-63. Eligibility for distributions from Spay/Neuter Account; Definitions.**

(a) A county or city is eligible for reimbursement from the Spay/Neuter Account if it meets the following condition:

- (1) The county or city offers one or more of the following programs to low-income persons on a year-round basis for the purpose of reducing the cost of spaying and neutering procedures for dogs and cats:
  - a. A spay/neuter clinic operated by the county or city.
  - b. A spay/neuter clinic operated by a non-profit organization under contract or other arrangement with the county or city.
  - c. A contract or contracts with one or more veterinarians, whether or not located within the county, to provide reduced-cost spaying and neutering procedures.
  - d. Subvention of the spaying and neutering costs incurred by low-income pet owners through the use of vouchers or other procedure that provides a discount of the cost of the spaying or neutering procedure fixed by a participating veterinarian.
  - e. Subvention of the spaying and neutering costs incurred by persons who adopt a pet from an animal shelter operated by or under contract with the county or city.
- (2) Reserved for future codification purposes.

(b) The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Local veterinarian. – A veterinarian licensed by the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board under Article 11 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes and practicing within the county where the services are provided. If no licensed veterinarian practices within that county, then a local veterinarian is a licensed veterinarian practicing in a county adjacent to the county where the services are provided. For purposes of this definition, "practicing" means engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine, as defined in Article 11 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (2) Low-income person. – An individual who qualifies for one or more of the programs of public assistance administered by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Chapter 108A of the General Statutes or whose annual household income is lower than one hundred percent (100%) of the federal poverty level guidelines published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

(c) Each county shall make rules or publish guidelines that designate what proof a low-income person must submit to establish that the person has an annual household income lower than one hundred percent (100%) of the federal poverty level guidelines published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

(d) Each county shall provide the opportunity to participate in the program created by this Article to all local veterinarians. Proof of the provision of this opportunity shall be included in the first reimbursement request of each calendar year. (2000-163, s. 1; 2010-31, s. 11.4(d); 2015-241, s. 13.7(a); 2016-94, ss. 13.1(a), (b).)