



**Care on the Move:
SF SPCA Mobile Vaccine
Clinics in San Francisco**

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One Purple
Pomeranian**

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Our Animals

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The San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

201 Alabama Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 | (415) 554-3000
Founded April 18, 1868

Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure every companion animal has access to quality medical care, compassionate shelter, and a loving home.

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CEO's Message

This April, the San Francisco SPCA celebrated its 158th birthday with a community block party that brought together staff, volunteers, supporters, and neighbors from across the Bay Area. It was a joyful reminder that, for more than a century and a half, our organization has worked to strengthen the bond between people and animals and build healthier communities.

Today, that mission calls upon us to address one of the most pressing challenges facing veterinary medicine: access to care. Across the country, pet guardians are navigating rising costs, veterinary shortages, transportation barriers, and fragmented care that can be difficult to navigate. Yet, what continues to inspire us is the unconditional love our pets bring us and the commitment we have to their care and well-being.

At the SF SPCA, we believe access to care is more than providing services. It means creating welcoming spaces where pet guardians can ask questions, receive support, and access judgment-free care close to home. Through community partnerships, neighborhood outreach, and ongoing relationships with pet guardians, we are creating a future where support is easier to access and no family has to face challenges alone.

In this issue of *Our Animals*, you'll see how that vision comes to life through our Community Medicine Program and the people who make this work possible every day. You'll meet Leti Luna, our Senior Community Engagement Specialist, whose work builds trust with pet guardians and connects families to veterinary care. You'll read how our Mobile Vaccine Clinics, Community Veterinary Clinic, Spay/Neuter Clinic, Community Ambassadors, and partnerships with trusted local organizations work together to provide more options for pet guardians. We also share the story of a dog treated for pyometra, whose journey highlights the importance of accessible, connected care.

Every vaccine, surgery, and community partnership featured in this issue is possible because of supporters like you. Your generosity is building a stronger system of care for pets and the people who love them, creating healthier communities today and shaping a future where care is accessible to more families for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this work and for helping us create a better world for our animals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JMS'.

Jennifer Scarlett, DVM
CEO



SF SPCA Community Ambassador Melissa Gómez administers a vaccine to a kitten during a recent Mobile Vaccine Clinic in Hunters Point.

CARE ON THE MOVE: **SF SPCA Mobile Vaccine Clinics in San Francisco**

On a bright Saturday morning in San Francisco's Hunters Point neighborhood, a line formed outside the basketball court across from the 1030 Oakdale Avenue Community Center as San Francisco SPCA staff, volunteers, and community partners prepared for the day's Mobile Vaccine Clinic. Held monthly and rotating between Bayview, Hunters Point, and the Tenderloin, these free clinics bring preventative veterinary care directly to neighborhoods across San Francisco.

Dogs of every size weaved through the crowd, greeting one another with wagging tails, curious sniffs, and a few barks. Some dogs arrived in strollers, and others sat calmly on their guardians' laps in the bleachers surrounding the basketball court or peeked out from carriers slung over shoulders like baby harnesses. A few brave cats arrived in carriers or cradled in their guardians' arms.

The crowd itself reflected the city around it: families with young children, seniors, longtime neighbors, couples, and first-time pet guardians from many different backgrounds, all gathered for the same reason. They love their pets and want to keep them healthy.

As attendees checked in, staff and volunteers handed out numbers and organized the flow of the clinic. Inside tented care stations, veterinary teams, including trained volunteers, prepared vaccines, flea and tick preventatives, medical supplies, and information about other services available through the SF SPCA. Near the exit, there was an additional tent with free leashes, collars, and pet food for guardians who needed them.

As the event began, everything moved with a sense of calm organization and patience. At each station, veterinary staff and volunteers assessed pets for vaccines and flea treatment while helping families connect with SF SPCA programs and resources to support their ongoing veterinary care needs. Conversations ranged from vaccine schedules and nutrition information to grooming resources, skin concerns, and how to access free or low-cost spay/neuter appointments at the SF SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic.



Staff member Leti Luna helps bring veterinary care to San Francisco neighborhoods.

For many families attending these clinics, they are about far more than vaccines alone. They are opportunities to access veterinary care in a welcoming space close to home. It is a chance to ask questions without judgment, connect with care providers, and build relationships that lead to ongoing support for both pets and their people.

“What I love most about our clinics is seeing the sense of community grow,” says Leti Luna, Senior Community Engagement Specialist at the SF SPCA. “People come back and remember us, and we remember them too. You get to watch puppies grow up, see families return, and know they trust us when they need care for their pets.”

Across all our clinics, we see neighbors connecting with one another, organizations working side by side, and pet guardians receiving support that helps make caring for their companions feel more possible.

At a time when many families face rising costs and limited access to veterinary care, our Mobile Vaccine Clinics demonstrate an important idea: loving and caring for a pet should not feel out of reach.

Building systems, not just services

For decades, veterinary care has often been structured as a

straight path: preventative care leads to primary care, which leads to specialty treatment when needed.

But real life rarely works that neatly.

A pet guardian might first seek care during an emergency. Someone might hear about services from a friend or neighbor. Transportation challenges, work schedules, language barriers, and financial uncertainty can all shape how and when people access veterinary care. At the SF SPCA, we believe that these challenges are not a lack of love or commitment from pet guardians. It is the result of fragmented veterinary care options that can be difficult to navigate.

“Access to care is a structural issue, not an individual failing,” says Jessica Bogosian, RVT, Senior Director of Community Medicine Operations. “As a profession, we’ve spent a lot of time designing services. What we really need to design are systems that communities can easily access, navigate, and trust.”

This philosophy shapes every aspect of the SF SPCA Community Medicine Program, which includes our Spay/Neuter Clinic, Community Veterinary Clinic (CVC), and Mobile Vaccine Clinics. Bringing this work to life are the dedicated staff and volunteers who help connect people to the care and resources they need.



Helping Care Reach More Corners of San Francisco

Merrilee Harris, Leesa Miao, and Martin Romo’s support of the SF SPCA Community Medicine Program is helping build a more connected system of care for San Francisco pets and their people.

Their generosity sustains our Mobile Vaccine Clinics, expanding access to preventative care and strengthening our local communities.



Our dedicated volunteers help make our clinics possible by welcoming pets and families with compassion and care.

These subdepartments work together as connected entry points into a system of care that includes our full-service hospital, allowing families to access support in ways that make sense for their lives. The goal is not simply to provide a service in a moment of need. It is to create lasting pathways into care that feel welcoming and sustainable over time.

Instead of expecting people to fit into a one-size-fits-all model, our goal is to strengthen a flexible system of care alongside the communities we serve. Our Community Ambassadors help connect pet guardians with resources while building trust through ongoing outreach and conversation. Mobile Vaccine Clinics bring preventative care directly into neighborhoods. Fixed-cost and subsidized veterinary services help reduce financial barriers. Referral pathways connect families with more advanced care when needed.

Sometimes, reducing barriers can be as practical as helping someone schedule transportation to an appointment. Other times, it means offering care in spaces that already feel familiar.

Care built with community

Today, our regular Mobile Vaccine Clinics rotate between three San Francisco neighborhoods: Bayview, Hunters Point, and the Tenderloin. This structure reflects a community-driven approach focused on strengthening long-term partnerships and responding to each neighborhood’s unique needs.

Rather than operating as standalone events, the clinics are built in collaboration with trusted community-based organizations already deeply connected to the people they serve.

In Hunters Point, the SF SPCA partners with City of Dreams, a neighborhood organization focused on mentorship and youth development for children living in low-income housing communities. By hosting clinics in a gathering space already used by local families, the partnership helps expand access while strengthening community connections.

“Partnering with the San Francisco SPCA has been an incredible asset to Hunters Point West Oakdale,” says Khendria “Miss Kay” Williams of City of Dreams. “Their compassion, dedication, and hands-on support not only uplift the well-being of our community’s animals but also strengthen the bond between residents and their pets. They are truly a valued and trusted partner in building a healthier, more caring community.”

In Bayview, the SF SPCA partners with Southeast Family Health Center, a longstanding healthcare provider that has served the Bayview-Hunters Point community since 1979. Known for its culturally responsive approach, the center provides integrated care tailored to each patient’s needs.

During one recent clinic, a pet guardian shared that he had once brought his children to Southeast Family Health Center for their immunizations. Now, years later, he brings his dog to the same location for veterinary care. Today, one of his daughters even works there as a social worker.

In the Tenderloin, clinics are held in partnership with St. Anthony Foundation on the Golden Gate Greenway. For decades, St. Anthony’s has served as a vital community anchor, offering meals, healthcare, clothing, recovery services, and other essential support to neighbors experiencing homelessness and poverty.

“At St. Anthony’s, we believe whole-person care means supporting every aspect of a person’s well-being, including the relationships with pets that bring comfort and stability,” says Laura Flannigan, Chief Operating Officer at St. Anthony Foundation. “By bringing veterinary care directly into the neighborhood, the SF SPCA is helping remove barriers and making it easier for families to keep their pets healthy.”

Our partnerships are also supported by the SF SPCA Community Ambassadors, whose work focuses on community outreach, building relationships, listening to community needs, providing free vaccines in homes, and connecting pet guardians to additional services, such as spay/neuter. Launched in 2024 thanks to a grant from Maddie’s Fund®, a Duffield Foundation. Our Community Ambassador Program hires and trains trusted members of the community to help local families navigate and access veterinary care.

Sustaining care for the future

Expanding access to care at this scale requires more than medical supplies and mobile equipment. It requires long-term investment in the people, partnerships, and systems that allow these clinics to grow alongside the communities they serve.

This future is strengthened through the generosity of longtime SF SPCA supporters Merrilee Harris, Leesa Miao,

and Martin Romo, whose recent commitments will help fund Mobile Vaccine Clinics across San Francisco for years to come. Their support is complemented with core vaccines donated by Petco Love, which help ensure that cost is not a barrier to preventative veterinary care.

As the need for accessible veterinary care continues to grow, philanthropic support plays a critical role in helping the SF SPCA expand these efforts and reach more neighborhoods across the city.

This support ensures that more families can access preventative veterinary care close to home. Just as important, their investment supports a broader vision of care that connects outreach, education, spay/neuter services, and ongoing veterinary support.

“I’ve been continually moved by the devotion our attendees show their pets and the gratitude they have for these services,” says Harris as she reflects on the impact of the Mobile Vaccine Clinics. “They arrive early and wait patiently because they care so deeply about their companions. And the dogs and cats seem to know that it is an event especially for them, which it is!”

**Instead of expecting
people to fit into a
one-size-fits-all model,
our goal is to strengthen
a flexible system of care
alongside the
communities we serve.**



Our team partners with pet guardians to keep pets healthy and happy.

Harris has attended several clinics in the Tenderloin and recalls one moment in particular that stayed with her. A woman was waiting in line with her dog, who was sitting comfortably in a folding chair. Harris struck up a conversation with her, and the woman explained that she had adopted the dog as a companion for her autistic son. Her son had been anxious about having the dog near his feet, so his mom put the dog up on a chair to bring them closer to eye level. This simple change put her son at ease, and the boy and dog quickly bonded. The chair became the dog's happy place, and the dog became her son's closest companion. "It was such a beautiful illustration of how people and their pets build very important connections," Harris says.

Creating pathways to ongoing care

For many families, attending a Mobile Vaccine Clinic is not the end of their journey with the SF SPCA. It is the beginning of an ongoing relationship.

At each clinic, families can access additional services to help their pets stay healthy. These include referrals to the CVC, scheduling for low-cost and subsidized spay/neuter surgeries, and connections to more advanced medical care when needed.

Together, these programs help create a flexible system of care that meets families at different points in their lives and circumstances.

Spay/neuter services are a cornerstone of that system. In addition to supporting the long-term health of pets, spay/neuter helps prevent unplanned litters and reduces overpopulation that can contribute to shelter intake. For families facing financial challenges, access to affordable spay/neuter services can be a critical step in keeping pets healthy and in their homes.

The SF SPCA's approach focuses on providing high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter surgeries while making these services accessible to as many pet guardians as possible. Thanks to donor support, in the last fiscal year, 70% of surgeries performed through our Community Medicine Program were fully or partially subsidized, helping ensure that cost is not the deciding factor in whether a pet receives important preventative care. Through pay-what-you-can and subsidized options, we work to reduce the everyday obstacles that can prevent families from seeking care in the first place.

"Reducing friction often yields greater results than simply expanding services," says Bogosian. "When care feels approachable and connected, families are more able to access the support they need for their pets."

That same philosophy shapes the care offered at the CVC, located in San Francisco's Excelsior neighborhood, an area that has historically had very limited access to veterinary services.

The CVC provides affordable veterinary care on a fixed pricing structure designed to make basic primary care more accessible. While some pet guardians first connect with the SF SPCA through a Mobile Vaccine Clinic or Community Ambassadors, others might enter the system through the CVC itself. The programs are intentionally designed to work together, creating multiple pathways to care depending on a family's needs.

A family might first visit a neighborhood clinic for vaccines, schedule a spay surgery a few weeks later, and eventually receive follow-up care through the CVC. Another pet guardian might begin with the CVC and later be referred for more advanced treatment at the SF SPCA Hospital. The path to care is not always linear, and the system is designed with that flexibility in mind.



Our Mobile Vaccine Clinics bring preventative veterinary care directly to San Francisco neighborhoods.



Community Ambassador Melissa Gómez connects families to veterinary care, resources, and local support.

One example is Matilda, a beloved Pomeranian and regular patient at the CVC.

When Matilda developed pyometra, a serious uterine infection, SF SPCA veterinary staff quickly coordinated her care and brought her to our Spay/Neuter Clinic for urgent surgery. After the surgery was a success, Matilda's guardian returned with her other dog for a preventative spay surgery and encouraged her neighbor to schedule a neuter appointment for their dog as well. What began as a crisis became an ongoing relationship built on trust and access.

You can read more about Matilda's story on page 12.

The power of care

By creating clearer pathways between services and reducing barriers along the way, the SF SPCA is strengthening San Francisco's broader system of care for pets and people alike.

Across San Francisco, that system is taking shape one relationship at a time.

It can be seen in a family arriving at a Mobile Vaccine Clinic in a convenient neighborhood space. In a Community Ambassador helping connect a pet guardian with resources. In a volunteer who spends their weekends helping neighbors access care. In a veterinarian coordinating follow-up care

that feels manageable. In community partners working side by side to support the people and pets they serve every day.

Together, these moments form something larger than any one program.

They reflect a belief that access to veterinary care should not depend on how easily someone can navigate complicated systems, overcome transportation barriers, or afford unexpected costs alone. They reflect the idea that strong communities are built through connection and trust.

For more than 150 years, the SF SPCA has evolved alongside the city of San Francisco. Today, through our Community Medicine Program and broader access to care efforts, we continue to reimagine what veterinary care can look like when it is built with communities, not simply delivered to them.

The result is healthier pets, stronger human-animal bonds, reduced shelter intake, and communities where care is easier to reach, easier to trust, and easier to sustain. That is the power of care. 🐾



In Memory of Jeff Wichmann

Longtime SF SPCA supporter Jeff Wichmann believed deeply in the power of care. His family's connection to veterinary medicine began with his father's groundbreaking work developing the parvo vaccine, which has helped save countless canine lives.

His legacy continues to have an enduring impact on animals everywhere.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: The Power of Care



LETI LUNA

Senior Community Engagement Specialist

How long have you worked at the SF SPCA?

I started working at the SF SPCA in December 2025, but before then, I volunteered as a dog walker at the shelter and supported the Community Medicine Program by volunteering at the Mobile Vaccine Clinics and as a Community Ambassador when this program was first getting started.

Do you have any pets?

Yes! I have my dog, Salsa. I met her during one of my volunteer shifts. She was super shy at first, but by the end of the day, we were outside walking and having fun. I called my husband, and we adopted her the following weekend. We also recently adopted a cat and named her Chips. Together, they're the perfect combo!

What one word embodies the SF SPCA for you?

Care. Especially non-judgmental care. That's such a big part of how I see the work we do here. Everyone here leads with compassion instead of judgment.

What led you to a career in animal welfare at the SF SPCA?

I've always loved animals and have always been a big advocate for them. Before joining the SF SPCA, I worked in journalism, and what I loved most was providing resources to people. Over time, I started volunteering more in animal welfare, and I found this role at the SF SPCA, where I can provide resources to the community I love so much.

What's a typical day for you at the SF SPCA?

Every day looks a little different. Some days, I'm prepping for our Mobile Vaccine Clinic by packing our van and getting everything ready. On other days, after our staff and materials are prepped, we go directly into our local community to provide care. Every Thursday, I'm out in the community with our Community Ambassadors, either tabling or door-knocking to help connect families with services. After busy clinic days, there's a lot of follow-up work, like checking records and invoices to ensure everything is accurate behind the scenes.

How does our focus on access to care impact your work?

Access to care is really my entire job. I see my role as being the connection between the community and the systems of care we have here at the SF SPCA. A lot of the work is about building trust and helping people feel comfortable reaching out for care. We go to people in their own neighborhoods instead of requiring them to come to us, and that makes such a difference. Sometimes, people feel intimidated walking into a big building or think they don't belong there, but when we're at their community center, basketball court, or neighborhood event, it feels familiar because it's their space. That's what access to care means to me.



Snip Happens

**The cone is temporary.
The benefits last a lifetime.**

Mention this ad to receive free spay/neuter surgery for your pet(s) at the SF SPCA.

**Text OA2026 to (415) 554-3084
to book your pet's appointment.**

Offer valid through December 31, 2026.



76 Cats and One Purple Pomeranian



Matilda, a sweet and memorable Pomeranian sporting a few purple accents, arrived at the San Francisco SPCA Hospital not feeling like herself. Although she had been a regular client at the Community Veterinary Clinic (CVC) since it opened in 2022, she was referred to our Mission Hospital after she presented with lethargy, poor appetite, and signs that something was wrong.

Her visit happened to fall on one of the busiest surgery days at the SF SPCA: a dedicated spay/neuter event focusing on community cats. Hosted by our Spay/Neuter Clinic, these high-volume surgery days help expand access to care and reduce unplanned litters among local cat populations.

The SF SPCA Hospital and Spay/Neuter Clinic work closely together, so staff quickly recognized that Matilda was showing signs of pyometra, a dangerous uterine infection that can become life-threatening if left untreated. Pyometra can happen to any dog or cat who is not spayed. Spaying a pet when she is young is the best way to prevent this dangerous, debilitating, and often costly emergency. Our teams coordinated quickly and brought Matilda to the Spay/Neuter Clinic, where she received this lifesaving surgery at an affordable cost.

A connected system of care

For Matilda and her guardian, access to timely and affordable care made all the difference. Instead of navigating multiple appointments, referrals, and costly diagnostics,



Matilda received the surgery she needed that same day through our connected system of care. After surgery, she reunited with her guardian to recover in the comfort of home.

By the end of the day, our team had performed spay/neuter surgeries on 76 cats and one purple Pomeranian. Now that's a successful day at the clinic.



Building trust through care

Caring for Matilda and her family didn't stop there. Just one week later, Matilda's guardian returned to the SF SPCA with her other Pomeranian, Madeline, for preventative spay surgery. She also encouraged a friend to bring in their dog, Popcorn, for neuter surgery.

Today, Matilda and her family continue receiving care at our CVC, where they have access to preventative care close to home. Their story reflects how trust and relationships often guide the path into veterinary care. One visit can lead to additional support, preventative services, and neighbors sharing trusted resources by word of mouth.

Through our Community Medicine Program, the SF SPCA is working to make veterinary care more accessible, connected, and community-centered for pets and people across San Francisco. From Mobile Vaccine Clinics and spay/neuter services to ongoing care at the CVC, these programs work together to keep pets healthy, reduce barriers to care, and strengthen the human-animal bond across San Francisco. 🐾

**To learn more or schedule a
spay/neuter appointment for
your pet, please scan here →**



Celebrating the Human-Animal Bond

The love we share with our pets inspires us to do everything we can to keep them healthy and happy. In the stories that follow, our community celebrates the companions who fill their lives with joy, comfort, and unconditional love.

Amy and Marcel

Adopter, Legacy Society Member, and Sido Program Member

Sometimes, healing arrives on four paws. 2025 was a tough year. I lost the two most special people in my life: my husband and my mother. The months that followed were filled with grief, steep learning curves, and profound grief. That fall, as the holidays approached, I saw a pair of bright green eyes on the SF SPCA adoption website and knew Marcel was the one. I'm convinced the spirits of my mom and husband conspired to bring us together. Marcel is my constant companion. He knows when I need a snuggle, a laugh, or a reminder that playtime is more important than sitting behind a computer. Most importantly, he makes our house a home.



Jon, Sonja, Jack, Tenzin, and Chewy

Donors

When our daughter, Jack, was changing schools, my wife, Sonja, suggested we bring a family companion into the house. The morning we picked up Tenzin, it was a perfect match. Jack is an only child, so she and Tenzin became immediate family. He listened to everything she had to say and always ended the conversation with a lick! We later inherited Chewy after my mother, Grace, passed away. Chewy is now Tenzin's beloved stepbrother, and the two are inseparable in their daily activities. Every morning, they greet me with wagging tails and brown eyes. Their message is simple: today is going to be a great day. The joy they bring to my family reminds me why expanding access to veterinary care is so important and why I'm proud to support the SF SPCA Mobile Vaccine Clinics through the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation.

Sherri, Freckles, and Hazel

Donor

My dog Freckles came into my life in 2022 after a rescue asked if I could foster him. He had an extreme fear of strangers and had been rehomed twice. When I drove to Sacramento to meet him, he immediately jumped into my lap and started giving me kisses. I knew right then that I was adopting him. Freckles still needs time to warm up to new people, but he's so much more confident now. He just needed patience and a second chance. Later, I adopted Hazel as a companion for Freckles. It was a great match. Together, they fill my life with unconditional love, make me smile after a rough day, and get me out walking every day. I can't imagine life without them.



Jailyn, Kovu, Robin, and Winnie

Employee

Robin, Winnie, and many other dogs have enriched my life, but Kovu was one of those rare companions whose impact is impossible to fully capture. Kovu and I grew up together after my older brother shared his birthday gift with his little sisters. From that moment on, Kovu was my constant companion. We napped, adventured, sang, and spent countless hours together. More than anything, he taught me peace, a lesson I've carried into my relationships and throughout more than a decade in animal welfare. Through Kovu, I learned patience, forgiveness, and, most importantly, how to laugh through life's small inconveniences. Kovu taught me unconditional love, and I'll carry that gift with me forever.

Ellen, Rosie, and Rita

Volunteer

I started volunteering with the SF SPCA Animal-Assisted Therapy Program 13 years ago. Rosie is my second therapy dog, and she is always on the job, whether we're visiting a facility or simply walking the streets of San Francisco. The joy and comfort she brings is palpable. Rita came into our lives last summer after being rescued from the streets of Mexico. She is the funniest dog. Her tail wags in wild circles, she "talks" constantly, and her enthusiasm is contagious. With a little more maturity, I can easily see her becoming a therapy dog too. I also volunteer at the SF SPCA's Mobile Vaccine Clinics, where I witness the deep love and connection between people and their pets. Both volunteer roles bring me tremendous gratification, service, and fun!





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California Adopt-a-Pet Day

One Day. Thousands of New Beginnings.

Thanks to supporters like you and nearly 150 participating shelters, California Adopt-a-Pet Day on June 6 helped thousands of animals find loving homes across the state, including **149 adoptions in one day** at the SF SPCA Adoption Center.

This annual event is hosted by CalAnimals, the SF SPCA, and the ASPCA.

It's never too late to adopt!

Meet available animals today by visiting sfspca.org/adoptions.

