

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: Dear Los Angeles City Councilmembers, I am writing to emphasize the urgent need to fully and immediately implement the increased reimbursement rates for the Los Angeles City spay and neuter voucher program. As you know, our City is facing a severe shortage of spay and neuter for dogs and cats, resulting in overcrowded shelters and avoidable animal euthanasia. Legislators, veterinarians, and animal welfare experts agree that expanding spay and neuter services is the most effective way to address this crisis. To help families who cannot afford these essential services, the City has long offered a voucher program. Unfortunately, the reimbursement rates have remained unchanged since the last voucher rate increase in 2015. Recognizing that these outdated rates no longer cover the actual costs of spay or neuter surgeries—due to inflation and rising veterinary expenses—the City Council voted unanimously in 2024 to increase the voucher reimbursement rates. While this decision was met with widespread approval, the City Administrative Officer (CAO) has yet to approve the budget increase. We are deeply concerned by the CAO's proposal to implement reduced, incremental increases over several years, a plan that would render the new rates 3 to 6 years outdated by the time they are fully in effect. Without the full implementation of the increased reimbursement rates, too few veterinarians will be able to afford to accept the vouchers. This leaves families and rescue organizations without access to vital spay and neuter services and puts thousands of shelter animals at risk of euthanasia. Although Los Angeles law mandates that all dogs and cats over four months old be spayed or neutered, many pet owners and rescues wait months for an appointment due to the shortage of participating veterinarians. By fully implementing the voucher rate increase, you will immediately enhance animal welfare across our City. More veterinarians will join the program, more families will receive essential assistance. Every day without this increase means fewer pets are spayed or neutered, worsening our City's animal welfare crisis and leaving low-income families without support. Together, we have the opportunity to make a direct and positive impact on the well-being of pets and families throughout Los Angeles. Sincerely, Jennifer Parsignault Director, SpayShip Board Member Heaven on Earth Society for Animals