



## **ALABAMA ANIMAL ALLIANCE, INC.**

### **Spay/Neuter Clinic**

5316 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36109  
334-239-7387

#### **The Need for High Volume, High Quality, Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinics in Montgomery and Throughout the State of Alabama**

Over the last five plus years, the veterinarians working with the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic have performed over 36,000 high quality, high volume, low-cost surgeries. The Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic is one of four non-profit spay/neuter clinics in the State of Alabama. Combined, the veterinarians working with these four clinics have performed almost 100,000 spay/neuter surgeries since our clinic, the first clinic of its kind in the State, opened in 2007. Many of the animals brought to these clinics belong to people who otherwise could not afford to fix their animals. In addition, even at reduced rates, many of these surgeries had to be supplemented by the clinics thru donations and grants in order to be affordable for these families. During the first 9 months of 2012 more than 55% of the surgeries performed at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter were financially subsidized.

All four spay/neuter clinics have, since inception, been approved, sanctioned and licensed by the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (ASBVME). The Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic has been inspected five times since opening and has always “passed” these inspections with “flying colors.” Furthermore, our veterinarians have been commended for the high quality of care provided and for exceeding industry standards.

The goal of the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic and the State of Alabama’s other spay/neuter clinics is simply to reduce the number of animals that are euthanized in shelters and left as strays by providing the one surgery that prevents unwanted animal births. More than 200,000 animals are euthanized in facilities all over the State every year. The fact that many area shelters are reporting significant decreases in both animal intake and euthanasia is evidence that the nearly 100,000 surgeries performed by the four clinics are having the profound effect of preventing the euthanasia of thousands of dogs and cats in the State. In short, high quality, high volume spay/neutering is the only humane solution to animal overpopulation.

The beginning of August the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners presented a Notice of Intended Action (Rule #930X-39) that would make it difficult for our clinics to exist. In short, this action would prevent any non-veterinarians from providing equipment or medications for use by a veterinarian. This action would also prohibit any non-veterinarian from renting or providing a facility for a veterinarian. If this same rule were to be applied to human medical doctors, no hospital would be able to exist if it weren’t owned by the doctors.

If this Notice of Intended Action (Rule #930X-39) is adopted, it would essentially make it impossible for the State of Alabama’s four spay/neuter clinics to operate. It will also affect humane shelters and animal control facilities that purchase medication to treat common animal

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illnesses or euthanize animals. The rule is so far reaching that Alabama's farmers who vaccinate their cattle would be prohibited from purchasing vaccines in order to vaccinate.

The ASBVME and the recently formed Alabama Veterinary Practice Owners Association (ALVPOA) have circulated documents that suggest that our clinics provide substandard care, have a high turnover rate amongst veterinarians, allow non-veterinarians to make medical decisions, over-inflate homeless animal rates, exaggerate euthanasia statistics, do not provide surgical follow up care, and are money-making organizations that earmark only a small percentage of their donation dollars to animal well-being.

Here are the facts:

- All 36,000+ surgeries performed at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic are completed by fully licensed veterinarians. Dr. Rebecca Davidson, owner of the Spay/Neuter Clinic, received her license in 1980. Dr. Cathrine Byars received her license in 1998. Drs. Davidson and Byars are the only two veterinarians who perform surgery in our clinic.
- In accordance with Alabama State law, the veterinary practice that performs the surgeries is owned by a state-licensed veterinarian who has full autonomy and makes all medical decisions, including, but not limited to: number of surgeries performed per day, animals approved and refused for surgery, and all after-care decisions.
- Our spay/neuter clinic has been inspected by the ASBVME and received permits to operate each of the 5 years we have been in existence. The standard of care provided at our clinic exceeds standards. If standard of care was lacking, permits would not be issued.
- The services provided by this non-profit clinic are related to spay and neuter procedures and not to providing wellness services nor the full range of veterinary services provided by general veterinary practices.
- Dr. Rebecca Davidson has been performing surgeries at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic since its opening on October 22, 2007, and has owned the Spay/Neuter Clinic since January of 2008. Dr. Byars joined our clinic in 2010.
- The singular mission of the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic is to provide high-quality, high volume, spay and neuter procedures at affordable rates.
- The non-profit's supporting board of directors helps by raising funds for facilities, supplies, and through educating the public as to both the importance and availability of low-cost spay and neuter procedures.
- The Montgomery Humane Society has taken in 7,287 animals so far this year and has had to euthanize 5,232 of those. The Humane Society of Elmore County has taken in 3,925 animals so far this year and has had to euthanize 2,565 of those. The Prattville/Autauga Humane Society has taken in 2,463 animals so far this year and has had to euthanize 1,701 of those. A total of 13,675 animals have been surrendered to the River Region shelters in the first 9 months of 2012. Of those animals 9,498 have been euthanized.
- All animals who have surgery at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic have the opportunity to return to the clinic in 7-10 days for a FREE follow up exam to ensure that the surgical site is healing as we expect that it should. If there are post-op complications, we will provide care for the animals. If more care is needed than can be

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provided by the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter, the patient is referred to a full-service vet.

- Non-profits, including the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic are required to make their financial statements available to the public. Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic's 990 forms are open for public inspection. Additionally, the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic's financial statements are voluntarily audited. All of these documents illustrate that more than 98% of the money spent at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic goes directly toward clinic operations and animal well-being.
- Through the non-profit efforts and charitable donations, our high-quality, high volume, affordable clinic generally serves this population at 1/3 normal veterinary fees and less. The average cost of a subsidized surgery at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic is \$18.74. The average cost of a non- subsidized surgery at our clinic is \$56.25.
- 86% of our clients have never taken their companion animals to a veterinarian for any pet care services beyond rabies vaccinations
- 76% of our clients have not had their pets vaccinated against rabies
- 45% of our patients are from humane societies or rescue groups
- 92% of our office calls involve requests for financial assistance; unfortunately due to grant fund limitations and requirements we are currently only able to provide financial assistance to residents in Montgomery and Lee Counties who meet grant criteria
- 18% of our patients have medical concerns (i.e., skin, dental, weight, and eye concerns) that we refer to a partner veterinarian who operates a full-service clinic.

In summary, spaying and neutering is the only effective means to reduce the number of abandoned and homeless pets. If the ASBVME is successful at employing Rule #930X-39 we will see an increase in animal euthanasia, an increase in taxpayers' dollars for the collection and destruction of unwanted animals, an increased burden on the shelters, farmers, and residents of Alabama. Our great State of Alabama is home to countless numbers of residents in support of our clinics and in need of our services.

For more information, contact Rachel Tears at the Alabama Animal Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic.

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