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ASPCA[®] Mission: Orange[™] Target Community: Tampa, Fla.

The Background

With more than 17 million people, Florida is the fourth largest state in the United States, following close on the heels of California, Texas and New York. The three counties that comprise Tampa Bay—Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco—offer a combined population of 2.5 million. Tampa also has the third largest immigrant (Hispanic/Latino) population in the country.

ASPCA[®] Mission: Orange[™] is going to concentrate its efforts in Hillsborough County, which, at more than 1.1 million people, has the largest population of the above-named three counties. With success, the program could be expanded to neighboring counties in the future.

Participating shelters in the ASPCA's Mission: Orange campaign are Hillsborough County Animal Services (the animal control facility), the Humane Society of Tampa Bay, Animal Coalition of Tampa (a low cost sterilization clinic) and No More Homeless Pets (a coalition of animal welfare groups and individuals working together to end pet over-population).

ASPCA Mission: Orange initiatives in Tampa include:

- Behavior assessment programs to complement shelter adoption programs;
- Reducing intake of unwanted animals; and
- Expanding existing spay/neuter programs.

Each sheltering facility has veterinarians on staff, and the veterinarian community (which includes two schools for veterinary technicians in the Tampa Bay area, as well as a college of veterinary medicine at the University of Florida in Gainesville), has demonstrated its strong interest in helping the local shelters with disaster relief by working with the local EARS (Emergency Animal Rescue Services) representative.

Currently, Tampa Bay's free or discounted spay/neuter programs include a voucher program run by Hillsborough County Animal Services, which charges \$10 for low-income/indigent families, and a low-cost sterilization clinic at the Humane Society of Tampa Bay. The Animal Coalition of Tampa (ACT) offers low cost sterilization at its clinic, and No More Homeless

Pets-Hillsborough County (NMHP-HC) promotes adoptions and spay/neuter by working closely with ACT and the Humane Society of Tampa Bay.

While Tampa Bay certainly has the infrastructure and desire to ultimately support a “humane community,” and the ASPCA has more than 40,000 donors in the state who give more than \$3 million annually, the participating ASPCA Mission: Orange animal welfare agencies still face the following challenges:

- Hillsborough County Animal Services: Euthanizes approximately 90 percent of animals due to limited adoption programs, lack of space, health issues with animals and no formal behavior assessment program;
- Humane Society of Tampa Bay: Has limited space due to being a limited admission facility. There have also been health issues with animals that have been transferred in from animal control which have limited the animals they are able to take;
- Animal Coalition of Tampa (ACT Clinic): Needs community outreach for its spay/neuter programs, especially in the untapped Latino Community;
- No More Homeless Pets-Hillsborough County (NMHP-HC): Has had limited impact due to no physical shelter and lack of funding for programs.

Approximately 50,000 animals were euthanized last year at the three animal control agencies in Tampa Bay. Of the three county facilities, the breakdown is as follows:

	Intakes	Adoptions	Euthanized
Hillsborough County	36,091	2,900	29,872
Pasco County	10,000	2,200	7,000
Pinellas County	23,518	3,400	12,685
TOTAL	69,609	8,500	49,557

Other challenges include a large number of feral/stray cats and high volume of cruelty cases often involving pit bulls which need to be held at the shelter for long periods of time until cases are resolved. Volunteers perform trap/neuter/return for feral cats, and the Animal Coalition of Tampa conducts a spay/neuter day once a month, but there is room for improvement.

Although pit bulls are banned in the Miami area, no breed bans currently exist in Tampa Bay, but dog fighting is an issue. Shelters offer pit bulls and pit mixes for adoption, but they are difficult to place and tend to linger longer than other animals, increasing the chances of disease and problematic behavior.

ASPCA Mission: Orange will address these and many other issues, in collaboration with its Tampa partners, to elevate the status of companion animals in this target communities.

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