



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: Friday, April 3, 2026.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. Contact [Gage Harter](#) with any questions.

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: Monica Smith-Callahan

## **Program Overview**

In January 2025, the Henrico County Police Animal Shelter implemented a multidimensional program designed to improve outcomes for shelter animals. The program, called *Fixin' to Go Home*, achieved significant results regarding animal transfers, adoptions, and live release rates. The results were achieved by leveraging social media, collaborating with public and private partners, expanding the volunteer program, and finding alternate funding sources for spay and neuter procedures. The Henrico Police Animal Shelter will continue this program throughout 2026, and this document offers details about the program dimensions.

## **Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality**

Henrico County is situated in Richmond's metropolitan area and has a population of approximately 338,000 residents. The Henrico County Police Division maintains and operates the county's animal shelter, which cares for an animal population of over 100 animals at times. Henrico's shelter is relatively large and utilizes an open admission model. Animal owners, who can no longer care for their pets, can surrender the animal to the shelter. In addition, police officers often bring stray animals or seized animals to the shelter as part of the rehoming or legal process. Shelter employees are committed to finding the owners of stray animals and to rehoming animals whose owners cannot be located. Caring for a large animal population, including many that are medically managed, is demanding work that is performed seven days a week. The Shelter Manager and police leadership must

provide essential services utilizing a limited budget and staff, so collaboration and innovation are critical.

### **How the Program Fulfilled Award Criteria**

*Fixin' to Go Home* programs and strategies are grounded in collaboration, innovation, and practicality. The Henrico Police Animal Shelter partners with numerous groups during *Fixin' to Go Home* events, including the Henrico Humane Society, the William A. Harrison Jr. Foundation, and Furbish Thrift. In addition, other law enforcement agencies such as Louisa County, Sussex County, and the City of Petersburg are often present at adoption events. *Fixin' to Go Home* and the associated events would not be possible without robust collaboration, specifically regarding staffing and funding.

***Fixin' to Go Home example.*** Two large *Fixin' to Go Home* events were held in April and August of 2025. Both of these events were staffed by shelter employees and a group of approximately 20 volunteers from the Henrico Humane Society. The events included significant social media campaigns, including live updates during the event. Both events relied on funding from the William A. Harrison Jr. Foundation that was used for spay/neutering and nourishment for the staff. In addition, Henrico hosted several other law enforcement agencies at the events. Both events resulted in the adoption of almost 30% of the adoptable animal population in one day.

***Fixin' to Go Home/Paws at the Pumps example.*** In August and December 2025, the Henrico Police Animal Shelter partnered with the Henrico Humane Society and

the William A. Harrison Foundation to conduct two *Fixin' to Go Home* events known as *Paws at the Pumps*. Animal Shelter staff and Henrico Humane Volunteers formed a team that offered Henrico County employees coffee, donuts, and a chance to meet adoptable dogs while they filled the gas tanks of their county vehicles. The operation was conducted in the morning during a time of peak usage at the central government gas pumps. Funding for the food and drinks was provided by the William A. Harrison Jr. Foundation. While adoption is often the primary goal of these events, the mission at Paws at the Pumps is connection. The opportunity to engage with hundreds of Henrico County employees, connect them with the shelter's social media sites, and raise awareness about the shelter's presence and mission is well-worth the minimal effort required to hold the event.

***Fixin' to Go Home Pop-Ups example.*** Part of the *Fixin' to Go Home* strategy in 2025 was to increase access to the animal shelter. While staff have always been present on Sunday, the shelter has traditionally been closed to the public. In 2025, shelter staff and Henrico Humane volunteers conducted 20 Sunday Pop-Up adoption events. Almost all these events resulted in the adoption of animals on Sundays, and the volunteer presence allowed the staff to maintain their deep clean responsibilities. The Pop-Up events typically resulted in the adoption of one to six animals per event. These events are great examples of low-cost/no-cost operations that are sustainable with volunteer support.

### **How the Program was Carried Out**

*Fixin' to Go Home* and its affiliated events were carried out using simple but thoughtful planning and resource allocation that make these programs replicable for

government agencies. The Henrico County Police Division utilizes an Operations Plan (see attached) to organize and document personnel responsibilities and resources. Team Leaders use the Operations Plan as a foundation, as the events can be dynamic.

In addition to the Operations Plan, the success of these events can be linked to proactive and effective use of social media. The Henrico County Public Information Office (PIO) team has been critical to ensuring that our community and partners are made aware of the events. Social media platforms are updated frequently, often daily, to provide details about locations, times, and fees. A member of the PIO team is often present at the events and has provided real-time updates on social media while the event is happening.

The primary methodology leading to the success of these events requires finding ways to remove obstacles. Opening the shelter doors to volunteers, rescues, and other partners requires an acknowledgment that critics will have opinions about the quality of animal care, shelter facilities, or customer service. Practicing vulnerability and accepting constructive criticism comes with the territory when a shelter decides to accelerate adoptions. The leadership at the Henrico shelter established communication “ground rules” for volunteers before growing the program from two volunteers to more than twenty throughout 2025. In addition, shelter leadership frequently communicates with volunteers and allows volunteers to ask questions and offer feedback about all aspects of operations.

## **Financing and Staffing**

Financing and staffing obstacles are addressed effectively during *Fixin' to Go Home* efforts. The primary strategies all revolve around partnerships. During the adoption events, shelter staff remain responsible for animal care, cleaning, and administrative tasks.

Henrico Humane volunteers staff information tables, walk dogs, introduce cats to potential adopters, and answer general questions. In addition, the William A. Harrison Jr. Foundation provides funds for spay/neuter procedures prior to the events, supplies, and even food and drinks for workers. Other partners such as the Richmond SPCA and Best Friends Animal Society offer animal behavior evaluation, grants, and data analysis services at no cost to Henrico County. This significant network of public and private partners allowed the Henrico Animal Shelter to create and sustain *Fixin' to Go Home* events in 2025, and the results were remarkable.

## **Program Results**

The growth of the volunteer program and social media presence are directly linked to the excitement around *Fixin' to Go Home*, but the real reward to Henrico County's residents and animals were the adoption results. Due to the effectiveness and consistency of *Fixin' to Go Home* events, Henrico County recorded 603 animal adoptions in 2025. This number represents an 82% increase in adoptions achieved in one year compared to 2024 (332 adoptions). In addition, The Henrico County Police Animal shelter processed 2,432 pets into the shelter in 2024, and approximately 305 of those pets did not have a live outcome. In 2025, the shelter processed 2,304 pets into the shelter, and 156 did not have a

live outcome. Most of those animals were brought to the shelter critically injured or were deemed not safe for adoption. The *Fixin' to Go Home* events resulted in approximately 40-50% decrease in humane animal euthanasia, which is a noteworthy result for only twelve months of focused efforts.

While the program is focused on animal welfare and adoption, the Fixin' events offer Henrico County Police employees the chance to engage with the community on a regular basis. This increased engagement is beneficial for the residents, but it also benefits the employees. Animal shelter employees provide an essential public health service, often without the recognition or support that other government employees enjoy. The opportunity for employees to network and engage with the community is priceless. The staff is able to see how they fit into the network of effective partnerships, and they take ownership of the process and results.

### **Executive Summary**

The Henrico County Police Division implemented the *Fixin' to Go Home* program at the beginning of calendar year 2025. *Fixin' to Go Home* is the umbrella term describing how the shelter uses partnerships to complete spay/neuter procedures in advance of holding frequent collaborative and innovative adoption events. Henrico County utilized proactive social media strategies, increased collaboration with the Henrico Humane Society, a growing volunteer program, and innovative event practices to achieve an 82% increase in adoptions in 2025 compared to the previous year. In addition, the *Fixin' to Go Home* program resulted in a 40-50% decrease in humane euthanasia. By leveraging partnerships,

encouraging creativity, and accepting financial support from alternative sources, the Henrico County *Fixin' to Go Home* Program is becoming a model for municipal animal shelter leaders, who desire to achieve more live outcomes and increased community engagement with limited resources.