



Haliburton Pet Owners' Assistance Fund

People who have owned a pet know how important they can be to our physical and mental health. Particularly for seniors, and members of our community on disability assistance (ODSP), a pet dog or cat is their daily companion and often their closest friend. Pet owners take good care of their pets, ensuring they receive their shots and other preventative treatments, are spayed/neutered and get proper nutrition. But sometimes these pets contract a critical illness or experience a serious accident and need life-saving or life-sustaining veterinary treatment. The Haliburton Pet Owners' Assistance Fund (HPOAF) helps low-income pet owners in Haliburton County with the cost of this life-saving/life-sustaining treatment (up to \$1000).

The HPOAF was established in 2015 when the founders' beloved dog was diagnosed with bone cancer. We kept saying, "How horrible it would be if you could not afford the medications to treat your pet and had to make the decision to end their life prematurely". In fact, fully 25% of dogs that are "re-homed" must move to a shelter or another owner because their owners cannot afford required veterinary treatment. While shelters and second families do great work, how much better is it for the owner and the pet to stay together!

In the past five years, we have helped 55 pets – 33 dogs and 22 cats – with the cost of treatment for conditions ranging from diabetes and gastroenteritis to severe limb breaks and tumour removal. Since 2015, we have contributed about \$33,000 toward total veterinary costs of \$53,000, so while we contribute about 60%, the owners themselves also contribute a substantial portion of the cost. We work with the vets in Haliburton and Minden (as well as in Coboconk and Bancroft for Haliburton County residents who are closer to them), who fill out the application on behalf of their clients. We have strict guidelines for "financial need" and require the pet owners to provide proof that they fit within this criteria. (We maintain strict privacy rules.)

As reported in our annual filing to the Canada Revenue Agency, (<https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/hacc/srch/pub/dsplyRprtngPrd?q.srchNm=haliburton+pet+owners%27+assistance+fund&q.stts=0007&selectedCharityBn=812513174RR0001&dsrdPg=1>), we are a strictly volunteer organization. We are fortunate to have a retired vet, a former dog breeder and a lawyer on our Board to guide us. 99% of the money donated to us goes to help pet owners and their pets – our only expenses are stationary, postage and website fees. (We receive no funding from governments, have no paid employees or management expenses, and do not spend donated funds on fundraising expenses.) We appreciate the ongoing interest and support of 100 Women Who Care – Haliburton. You can be assured that if we are selected at this meeting, 100% of your donations will go to help pets and pet owners in our community. Thank you for considering us!

