



EMANCIPET[®]
CLINICS

Chief Executive Officer

Position Description
May 2024





Chief Executive Officer

Austin, TX

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Emancipet, the leading nonprofit provider of affordable and accessible veterinary healthcare in the U.S., seeks a visionary Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to assume leadership of the organization after a period of unprecedented growth and innovation. The new CEO will build upon decades of success and a strong foundation, created in partnership with the community by its long-standing CEO following her intentional transition.

This moment in Emancipet’s lifecycle is marked by positive change and introspection, driven by the commitment of an outstanding team, an involved Board, and engaged community. The new CEO will steward the next evolution of the organization that focuses on strengthening organizational effectiveness and operational excellence. The CEO will lead efforts for strategic planning, financial health, and sustainability; invest in the success and wellbeing of Emancipet’s dedicated, hardworking team and foster a culture of optimism and compassion along with results and accountability; advance the organization’s reputation as a social innovator and thought partner in the sector; and reinforce consistent and dependable service delivery that ultimately readies the organization for future expansion.

We seek a human-centric, results-oriented, and inspirational leader and manager with a passion for making a difference in the lives of families and their pets, a commitment to equity and social justice, demonstrated aptitude for fundraising, and experience leading organizational management to enhance and bolster the organization and its people before advancing to the next growth period.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

There are approximately 60 million pets in the United States that don’t always receive the veterinary care they need simply because the cost of care is out of reach for almost half the pet owners in the country. Further obstacles to accessing veterinary care include language and cultural barriers, a lack of reliable transportation, accessibility of clinics, and low pet health literacy. Low-income families face more barriers than others.

[Emancipet](#) has developed the country’s first model for scaling up and sustaining low-cost, nonprofit veterinary clinics across geographies. Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2024, Emancipet has built a network of local veterinary [clinics](#) designed to reduce barriers for pet families to access veterinary healthcare for their beloved cats and dogs. Emancipet’s mission is rooted in making veterinary care affordable and accessible for everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status. Their bold, audacious goal is that by 2028, everyone in the United States will have access to veterinary care they can afford.

OUR IMPACT

THIS PAST YEAR WE SAW



CONDUCTED 233,081 TOTAL CLINIC VISITS



As one of the only nonprofits exclusively focused on closing the veterinary access gap in an increasingly consolidated space, Emancipet has brought a unique value proposition to this important work as both a trusted service provider and a movement builder. What began as a mobile spay/neuter program has grown into a true national movement fueled by a commitment to equity, social innovation, and the imperative to create high level solutions that meet the needs of historically underserved pet owners. Emancipet's efficient, high-volume model of providing veterinary care means its clinics can provide veterinary care at deeply reduced prices, making it possible for any family to afford the care their pets need. And no pet owner is ever turned away for an inability to pay at a clinic.

By providing low-cost services with compassion and free of judgment, Emancipet works to support and strengthen some of the most powerful bonds in life – those between people and the pets they love. In 2023, Emancipet conducted 234,000 total clinic visits, caring for 123,000 dog patients and 40,000 cat patients, and creating transformative experiences for pet families. Operating in line with the guiding principles that make up the DNA of Emancipet's culture and identity, each team member is focused on delivering:

- Compassionate Service: serving people and animals with kindness, warmth & compassion.
- Excellence: demonstrating care for our patients, clients, ourselves, and all stakeholders by pursuing excellence in all we do.
- Teaching & Learning: empowering others and ourselves by sharing information and encouraging learning.
- Optimism: believing we are changing the world for the better and approaching our work with joy and positivity.

Over 70% of Emancipet's [operating budget](#) is supported through earned income, with the remaining provided through a range of philanthropic sources, from donations at point-of-sale and a dedicated base of individual donors to long-standing institutional funders including PetSmart Charities and Tito's Vodka for Dog People. This fundraising model allows Emancipet to subsidize the veterinary care it provides, and only charge clients a fraction of the typical cost of high-quality veterinary care.

Emancipet has adapted the human public health sector's [six domains](#) of quality medicine to define and deliver only the highest quality of care, measuring its work to ensure it is Safe, Effective, Patient Centered, Timely, Efficient and Equitable. The organization has also adopted a dyad model, pairing a veterinarian with a non-veterinarian administrator for strategic and operational oversight of clinical services, and encouraging open communication between clinical leaders and business administrators through a shared goal environment.

Clinic [services](#) are selected based on population-level health needs and community resources. Primary care services include annual veterinary exams; vaccines; spay and neuter; puppy/kitten visits; parasite prevention; and preventative dental cleaning. Sick pet care services include heartworm treatment, skin and ear diagnosis and treatment; soft tissue surgeries; and dental extractions. Emergency services include pyometra and dystocia surgeries.

The organization freely shares its research to support other clinics and veterinarians around the country in improving pet health and increasing access to care and provides direct training to veterinary and animal welfare professionals to help strengthen their ability to provide care in their communities. With an urgent, nationwide shortage of veterinarians and other clinicians threatening the accessibility of veterinary care for everyone in the US, Emancipet clinics also serve workforce development needs, serving to recruit hundreds of new veterinarians and technicians and providing

them with training, development opportunities, and continuing education to maximize their job success while strengthening and diversifying the field.

Emancipet is led by a dedicated Board of Directors, which is responsible for the organization's overall financial strategy and strategic direction. A growing leadership team currently comprising five individuals and a talented staff of approximately 260 full- and part-time employees at locations in Austin, Houston, Killeen, and Philadelphia work to build and maintain a culture of community and excellence for pets, families, and employees alike.

GROWTH TRAJECTORY

Over the last eighteen years, Emancipet has taken steps to increase impact and grow operations by first expanding the types of medical procedures offered beyond spay/neuter. Emancipet began partnering with other local nonprofits and government agencies, launched a fundraising program, and started creating programs and services that prioritized the needs of low-income families.

In 2013, the operation began to scale up and entered new communities, starting with a branch in Pflugerville and then in Killeen in 2014, and in Houston in 2015. In 2016, Emancipet merged with Animal Trustees of Austin, which allowed the organization to further expand services to include heartworm treatment, dentistry, and advanced surgery. In 2017, Emancipet expanded into the state of Pennsylvania with the Philadelphia Adams Ave branch. In 2020, just a few months into the pandemic, Emancipet opened its second location in Houston, the Monroe branch. And, in 2022, Emancipet opened two branches inside PetSmart retail stores, one in Houston and one in Philadelphia.

Emancipet has grown from \$1M to \$30M in revenue and from <30 to 260 employees; opened nine brick and mortar clinics in two states, and recently added a [Dental & Surgical Center](#) while maintaining two mobile units; launched Emancipet [New School](#); and helped establish the Access to Veterinary Care field through the thought leadership and social innovation of Emancipet staff.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As Emancipet enters the next iteration of its work, it will rely on the new CEO to maintain organizational and operational excellence, allowing for effective decision making and consistent, high-quality service delivery. They will work with the Board and senior leaders to explore financial models that increase financial sustainability and make future scaling possible. The next leader will elevate Emancipet's public profile to raise awareness and attract new partners and funders, and make further investments in people, culture, and systems that support Emancipet's highly capable team to care for their own wellbeing and deliver on their mission more fully.

The CEO will partner with a senior leadership team comprised of: Chief Medical Officer and Chief Quality Officer dyad (overseeing a shared services team providing Veterinarian Training/Clinic Success/Learning; Research/Data/Analytics; Resource Center; plus Mid-Level dyads and Branches), Chief Financial Officer (overseeing Accounting and IT), Chief Operating Officer (overseeing Human Resources including an outsourced partner in [Kazdon](#), Facilities & Procurement, Learning & Training including Emancipet New School), Chief Development Officer (overseeing Marketing & Brand; Regional Fundraising; National Fundraising); and Senior Coordinator (overseeing Administration and Board Relations).

While the CEO will be future-focused, they must address immediate challenges in the sector and consider how these may impact organizational decisions. Ongoing challenges in the veterinary care and animal welfare sector include the rising cost of services, a national shortage of veterinarians, the emergence of AI and other technologies that impact the delivery of quality care, the growing

privatization of veterinary care, and an evolving philanthropic landscape in the post-pandemic era. They must also be attentive to the [high stress levels and suicide rates](#) among veterinary professionals in some part due to occupational stressors like burnout, compassion fatigue, and access to euthanasia drugs.

Further, the CEO will come on board at a time when work to achieve the organization's 2024 [Objectives and Key Results](#) (OKRs) will be well underway. Emancipet currently sets annual strategic priorities and uses the OKR process to identify the changes that matter most in the next 90 days to achieve those strategic priorities. Examples of the OKRs that have been active during 2024 include:

- Removing barriers to serving the pets and people who need Emancipet most by increasing the average daily visits to clinics and achieving stated fundraising goals to support free and discounted services.
- Enhancing connection and communication between individuals and departments by implementing a quarterly “service day” that encourages shared services staff to be onsite at a clinic, providing individualized budget training for branch leaders, and increasing weekly updates through internal communications channels.
- Inspiring everyday people, philanthropists, and funders to give to Emancipet with goals to secure anniversary sponsorships, increase point-of-sale donations, launch a low-dollar donor program, and amplify Emancipet's profile by promoting YouTube views of its powerful [documentary](#).

The ideal candidate will bring expertise in organizational management to structure and support Emancipet's people and operations in ways that help the organization meet and sustain business growth. They will offer strong business acumen and disciplined business practices, along with a deep grasp of financial models and flexible thinking to explore new pathways to sustainability and enduring fiscal health, as well as staff recruitment and retention.

They will serve as a powerful external advocate for the organization, amplifying Emancipet's mission and visibility. With expertise in fundraising, they will forge new partnerships and cultivate donors. Internally, they will foster accountability, communication, and follow-through across all levels of work. The CEO will embody Emancipet's dedication to equity and social justice, ensuring it permeates throughout the organization and guides the behavior of each person.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CEO

LEADERSHIP & VISION

Collaborate across the organization to develop a vision for Emancipet's next phase of impact, including setting a course towards continued investments in the Access to Veterinary Care movement. Foster a culture of collaboration and unity by tethering staff, departments, clinics, and geographic sites in practice and spirit so the organization truly operates as “one Emancipet”. Champion and advance Emancipet's commitment to equity internally and externally as an integral expression of its mission and match the organization's commitment to leading through the lens of social justice.

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

In partnership with the senior leadership team, engage a diverse, geographically distributed team of 260 clinicians and staff and closely manage a growing operating budget currently at \$30M. Lead the development of Emancipet's next 5-year strategic plan and budget, in concert with the Board, and determine a financial model that drives revenue growth. Offer a growth mindset when evaluating the strengths of existing financial models and philanthropic programs; lead the diversification of funding and explore new strategies for earned revenue. Model effective management, decision making, and

coaching that empowers the senior leadership team's and staff's own decision making in support of core strategies and priorities. Demonstrate humility, curiosity, and vision in assessing organizational capacity and supporting the team's ability to address evolving and complex organizational challenges following recent significant growth and post-pandemic realities.

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Be a clear communicator committed to transparency and accountability; foster effective collaboration and coordination across staff, departments, and sites; consider and include the team in decision making and timeline planning that impacts their workload and capacity. Inspire, support, and provide structure for the team that offers clarity and direction as the organization evolves and grows. Maintain a sense of community; make sure tools are in place to promote staff growth and reward performance, strengthen staff morale and retention. Conduct an organizational scan that ensures role alignment of Emancipet staff with business strategies and build programs for professional development and performance management that result in a cohesive, results-oriented, high-performing team that is accountable to each other and celebrates wins together.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Assemble and lead a high-impact senior leadership team operating at the enterprise level to drive change forward and ensure continued success through an effective operation that puts scalable systems and processes in place. Leverage the principles of continuous improvement to enhance existing services and protocols, ensure consistent, high-quality delivery, and keep staff and patients safe. Prepare the organization's infrastructure and resources to align with its historical pattern of growth and ready itself to care for additional patients in the future. Maintain the operational progress achieved by establishing and expanding OKRs, either with existing OKR structure or other proven performance measurement models. Identify opportunities for technology integration and equipment upgrades. In partnership with the Emancipet community, participate in and share learning that informs future direction, health outcomes, and enhances program success and mission.

FUNDRAISING & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Effectively represent Emancipet's work to current and potential funders, inspiring investments in its work. Collaborate closely with the Development team to steward existing and cultivate new relationships. Help form a robust pipeline of individual, corporate, foundation, and government funders that expands opportunities for major, principal, and transformational gifts. Build strong, trusting relationships with all sectors of Emancipet's culturally, socially, and economically diverse community. Support the veterinary field at large to foster genuine partnerships with the community, emphasizing collaborative decision-making and inclusive practices. Serve as the face of the organization, interact and present to various constituents, and enlist the support of community partners and volunteers.

BOARD RELATIONS

Partner with the Board to create alignment on the organization's strategic direction and vision. Ensure sound governance and fiduciary responsibility. Encourage board engagement, leveraging each board member's experiences and relationships to identify key sources of partnership and funding and opportunities for continued organizational growth and to build a diverse pipeline of volunteer talent for the future Board of Directors.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- A shared belief that people love their pets and will choose to do what's best for them when given the opportunity.
- 15+ years of related work experience in the social sector including animal welfare, human services, or service-based operations that address access to healthcare, high-volume/low-cost care, or proximate issues for disenfranchised populations or youth.
- Prior executive leadership experience in a complex organization is necessary; experience in multi-site operations and/or multi-layered staff environments is helpful.
- Comfort raising significant funding from private sources including individuals and corporations; ability to think strategically in partnership with the development team to build, nurture, and sustain relationships with key donors and partners.
- Excellence in organizational management with experience leading and inspiring change in a diverse, mission-driven environment; proven capacity to develop systems and decision making that foster participation, mutual accountability, and growth.
- Success managing mid-stage organizational growth, comparable budgets and staff through the shifts needed to sustain ongoing organizational health and mission focus.
- Demonstrated experience in building strong leadership teams and guiding their efforts as enterprise leaders contributing to organization-wide strategy efforts.
- Strong entrepreneurial spirit and business acumen with the demonstrated ability to identify opportunities for operational improvement and financial growth.
- Ability to develop and maintain partnerships with community-based organizations, potential resourcing partners, and other agencies to support strong engagement and create collaborative partnerships focused on impact.
- Aptitude for innovation and iterative design; a track record of clearly defining shared goals, demonstrating accountability, and productively navigating change.
- A deep and sustained personal learning journey and commitment to equity with the proven ability to apply a social justice lens to an organization's work.
- Thoughtful, timely decision-maker with experience using data and evidence effectively to inform strategy and promote continuous learning and improvement.
- Superior relationship-building skills, high emotional intelligence, and an authentic interest in listening to and learning from others; the ability to act with intentionality, establish trust, engage stakeholders, and cultivate belonging.
- Collaborative leadership style, demonstrated by knowing when to step in and direct, when to delegate, and when to share leadership.
- Powerful communicator one on one, in small group settings, and with large audiences.
- Bilingual or multilingual skills are helpful.
- Lived experience that is aligned with Emancipet's mission and values is a priority.

ABOUT EMANCIPET

Pets are family. They bring joy and unconditional love to our lives, and they deserve a lifetime of health and well-being, regardless of their families' financial circumstances.

As the nation's largest non-profit network of low-cost veterinary clinics, Emancipet exists to make veterinary care affordable and accessible for everyone. We know that people love their pets and will do what's best for them when given the opportunity to do so. Today, there are 60 million pets across the country whose families cannot access or afford veterinary care. Emancipet is here to change that.

Our growing network of clinics in Texas and Pennsylvania provides low-cost and free veterinary care to hundreds of thousands of pets in need. To ensure our services are easily accessible to the families who need us most, we locate our clinics in the most socially vulnerable neighborhoods in the country. We use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index to find the areas in the greatest need.



Emancipet clinics provide quality veterinary care at the lowest possible price. To ensure even the lowest income families can afford to care for their pets, we make sure our prices are low and transparent, with no hidden or surprise fees. And we never turn anyone away for an inability to pay.

To maximize impact and manage costs, we select services based on population-level health needs and community resources. Emancipet clinics have welcomed over 1.6 million patient visits since 1999.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Emancipet is committed to applying a social justice lens to our work by evaluating and ensuring that our systems, policies, practices, language, and programs create equitable access, opportunities, engagement, and inclusion for all people, and people from historically marginalized groups in particular. We strive to live by our values and be an organization where the culture created by our diverse staff and board advances our mission and vision, and supports organizational excellence and sustainability.



NO COMPANION LEFT BEHIND

The newly released documentary, *No Companion Left Behind*, a short film by Notable Human Films, tells the story of Emancipet and the Access to Veterinary Care movement through the eyes of clients, veterinarians and stakeholders. This in-depth look at Emancipet's community-based nonprofit business model, with lower rates subsidized by donors, offers a view into the mission and work to make veterinary care affordable and accessible to everyone.

BENEFITS INFORMATION

The salary range for this CEO position is \$250,000 to \$275,000. Emancipet offers a comprehensive benefits package including 100% employer-paid health, dental, vision, and telehealth coverage for you, your partner, and your children. The health insurance plan has no co-pays or deductibles; and the telehealth plan includes behavioral health services at no extra cost. Emancipet offers life insurance, an Employee Assistance Program, an identity theft plan, and a travel plan. The 401(k) plan matches half of your contribution up to 5% of your annual pay. And if you're looking for student loan forgiveness, you can apply through the federal government's Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Employees also receive a yearly credit towards Emancipet services and products, and you're eligible to participate in our relocation program to cover moving expenses. At Emancipet, we believe in taking care of our team every step of the way.

But the true benefits of working at Emancipet are found in our mission and culture. You'll be joining a team of compassionate, hard-working, and optimistic professionals who share a vision for a different kind of veterinary industry: one that is more inclusive, equitable, and compassionate to those who love

their pets but struggle financially. Our employees come to us from a variety of backgrounds, but what they all share in common is the desire to be able to say "yes, we can help." At Emancipet, no client is ever turned away because of an inability to pay.

Emancipet is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Prohibits Discrimination and Harassment of Any Kind: Employment decisions at Emancipet are made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran or disability status or any other status protected by the laws or regulations in the locations where we operate. We are intentional in creating a diverse staff and leadership team, and work to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all employees. You belong here!

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To express interest in the position, please submit application materials consisting of a resume and letter of interest to ceo@pearlstreetcollective.com.

[Pearl Street Collective](#), the search firm with purpose, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Adele Mezher, Maeve Clifford, Dianne Moody, and Carolyn Ho are leading the search. Pearl Street is an award-winning, retained executive search and talent strategy firm serving the nonprofit, education, and healthcare sectors. Women-owned and led by a diverse group of talented professionals who are deeply committed to equity in search, Pearl Street seeks to disrupt traditional search dynamics by practicing radical empathy; listening and learning from others' unique perspectives, lived experiences, and identities; and committing to transparency for all stakeholders. This purposeful approach informs every facet of Pearl Street's comprehensive search process that identifies exceptional talent, builds real relationships, and delivers an unparalleled, values-driven service that honors the whole person. For three consecutive years, Women of Color in Fundraising & Philanthropy (WOC) has named Pearl Street one of the Top Search Firms for Women of Color, Forbes has named Pearl Street to their 2024 list of America's Best Executive Recruiting Firms, and Hunt Scanlon has included the firm in their 2024 shortlists of top recruiters for nonprofits and higher education. [Follow Pearl Street](#).