

Pets and Domestic Violence



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Research shows that offenders of domestic violence often have a pattern of abuse involving all members of the household-including children and pets



- To get the submission they crave — as a brutal reminder that “this can happen to you, too.”
- The pet becomes a hostage, and the human victim is terrified of what will happen to the pet if they speak out or leave.
- Abusers don't take kindly to competition. A cat or dog who provides the victim with a lifeline weakens the abuser's hold.

The Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act of 2015 aspires to help victims of domestic abuse and their pets.



- Prohibit threats or acts of violence against a person's pet under the offenses of stalking and interstate violation of a protection order.
- Requires the "full amount of the victim's losses" for purposes of restitution in domestic violence and stalking offenses to include any costs incurred for veterinary services relating to physical care for the victim's pet.
- Directs Department of Agriculture to award grants to eligible entities to carry out programs to provide specified housing assistance, support services, and training of relevant stakeholders to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and their pets.
- Expresses the sense of Congress that states should encourage the inclusion of protections against violent or threatening acts against the pet of the person in domestic violence protection orders.

RedRover offers financial assistance for victims of domestic violence and their pets through our RedRover Relief program.



- Safe Escape grants pay for temporary boarding and/or veterinary care to enable domestic violence victims to remove their pets to safety. For safety reasons, the application must be submitted by a shelter worker.
- Safe Housing grants: fund start-up costs for domestic violence shelters seeking create a program to allow families and pets to escape abuse together. Grants can help to build pet housing at the domestic violence shelter, or help domestic violence shelters work with partners in the community to offer other pet housing options.
- SafePlaceforPets.org is an online directory of pet support programs for pet owners facing domestic violence.