



25 BY 2025

Advocacy Toolkit

Helping 25% of domestic violence shelters
become pet friendly by the end of 2025.

In partnership with:



With support by:



About 25 BY 2025

Every year, more than 10 million people in the United States are physically abused by an intimate partner* – and this abuse affects pets, too. Domestic violence shelters provide a safe and secure place to recover from trauma, but many do not allow pets.

The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025.** By providing the resources shelters need to make the transition to becoming pet friendly, 25 by 2025 is on a mission to help more people and pets stay together.

Through this toolkit and resources available at 25by2025.org, RedRover and its partners, PetSmart Charities, GreaterGood Charities, and with support from Purina, the toolkit allows advocates from all backgrounds to engage with the 25 by 2025 campaign to help make this goal a reality.



* The Hotline: <https://www.thehotline.org/stakeholders/domestic-violence-statistics/>

** Pet friendly means shelters can accept companion animals/pets, in addition to service and emotional support animals.

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Start with your local domestic violence shelter

- Find your local domestic violence shelter at DomesticShelters.org and determine if they are pet friendly.
- If they are pet friendly, thank them and encourage them to reach out to receive a pet-friendly badge.
- If they are not pet friendly, share details on the campaign, why it is important, and what resources exist to help their transition, and ask them to take the pledge.



Reach out to community leaders

- Find your local government officials at My Reps (datamade.us) or emergency services leaders on your municipality's website.
- Contact your local humane society, animal rescues and shelters, veterinarians, and anyone who identifies as an animal welfare advocate.
- Share details on the campaign, why it is important to you, what resources exist to help local shelters transition, and ask them to share those resources.



Spread the movement!

- Post on social media, tell your friends and family about the 25 by 2025 campaign, why it is important to you, and why they should support it!

If you feel comfortable sharing a personal story of your experience as a survivor of domestic violence, with or without pets, please feel free to use any of the 25 by 2025 content to underscore your story. We are mindful you and your family's safety comes first. We are grateful for you and support you whether you decide to publicly disclose your experience with us, shelter decision makers, elected officials, or keep your experience private.



“ Mary was hesitant to leave her abusive partner because she had a cat and thought there would be nowhere for her and her cat to go.

She was thrilled to learn she did not have to make the impossible choice to leave her beloved companion with an abusive person. Mary stayed with us for several weeks and we ultimately helped her find permanent housing for her and her furry family member. ”

Center for Hope & Safety, Oregon

Sample email to domestic violence shelters that are not yet pet friendly



Dear [name of shelter/director/staff member],

My name is [insert name], and I'm writing to you today on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets. I greatly appreciate the work you do to provide a safe haven for survivors. As I'm sure you know, up to 70% of survivors report having a pet*, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets.** I strongly believe in keeping pets and people together.

Have you considered transitioning your shelter to become pet friendly?

I'm an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025. It may feel like there are many barriers to keeping survivors and pets together in the journey to escape abusers, but there truly has never been a better time to become pet friendly. The 25 by 2025 campaign has resources to support you and your team during this transition, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and more.

There's a pet-friendly design option for every shelter! Many shelters in the U.S. have already taken the steps to become pet friendly, allowing more survivors and pets to find security after experiencing domestic violence.

Visit 25by2025.org and pledge to become pet friendly by the end of 2025. There, you can sign up for a workshop, apply for grants, and ultimately, connect with the team behind 25 by 2025, who are ready and available to make becoming pet friendly a reality. Together we can help more people and pets safely leave violent situations.

Thank you for your commitment to survivors and your openness to helping more pets and people stay together!

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

* Ascione, F. R., Weber, C. V., Thompson, T. M., Heath, J., Maruyama, M., & Hayashi, K. (2007). Battered pets and domestic violence: animal abuse reported by women experiencing intimate violence and by nonabused women. *Violence against women*, 13(4), 354–373. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801207299201>

** Carlisle-Frank, P.L., Frank, J.M., & Nielsen, L. (2004). Selective battering of the family pet. *Anthrozoös*, 17, 26 - 42.

Sample email to domestic violence shelters that are not yet pet friendly



**For survivors of domestic violence who have pets*

Dear **[name of shelter/director/staff member]**,

My name is **[insert name]**, and I'm writing to you today on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets. I greatly appreciate the work you do to provide a safe haven for survivors. As I'm sure you know, up to 70% of survivors report having a pet, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets. This was my truth for a long time. As a survivor myself, I strongly believe in keeping pets and people together.

Have you considered transitioning your shelter to become pet friendly?

As a domestic violence survivor and pet owner, I am also an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025. I delayed leaving an abusive home for **[insert timeframe]** because there was no place for me to flee to where I could bring my beloved pets. When I was able to flee I had to do so without my **[insert animals]** because there was no shelter available that could accept us both. It was an awful decision I hated having to make. It may feel like there are many barriers to keeping survivors and pets together in the journey to escape abusers, but there truly has never been a better time to become pet friendly. The 25 by 2025 campaign has resources to support you and your team during this transition, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and more.

There's a pet-friendly design option for every shelter! Many shelters in the U.S. have already taken the steps to become pet friendly, allowing more survivors and pets to find security after experiencing domestic violence.

Visit 25by2025.org and pledge to become pet friendly by the end of 2025. There, you can sign up for a workshop, apply for grants, and ultimately, connect with the team behind 25 by 2025, who are ready and available to make becoming pet friendly a reality. Together we can help more people and pets safely leave violent situations.

Thank you for your commitment to survivors and your openness to helping more pets and people stay together!

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

Sample email to domestic violence shelters that are not yet pet friendly



**For survivors of domestic violence who do not have pets*

Dear **[name of shelter/director/staff member]**,

My name is **[insert name]**, and I'm writing to you today on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets. I greatly appreciate the work you do to provide a safe haven for survivors. As I'm sure you know, up to 70% of survivors report having a pet, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets. As a survivor myself, I strongly believe in keeping pets and people together.

Have you considered transitioning your shelter to become pet friendly?

As a domestic violence survivor and animal lover, I am also an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025. It may feel like there are many barriers to keeping survivors and pets together in the journey to escape abusers, but there truly has never been a better time to become pet friendly. The 25 by 2025 campaign has resources to support you and your team during this transition, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and more.

There's a pet-friendly design option for every shelter! Many shelters in the U.S. have already taken the steps to become pet friendly, allowing more survivors and pets to find security after experiencing domestic violence.

Visit 25by2025.org and pledge to become pet friendly by the end of 2025. There, you can sign up for a workshop, apply for grants, and ultimately, connect with the team behind 25 by 2025, who are ready and available to make becoming pet friendly a reality. Together we can help more people and pets safely leave violent situations.

Thank you for your commitment to survivors and your openness to helping more pets and people stay together!

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

Sample email to domestic violence shelters that ARE pet friendly



Dear **[name of shelter/director/staff member]**,

My name is **[insert name]**, and I'm writing to thank you on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets! I strongly believe in keeping pets and people together, and I'm so grateful your shelter has taken the steps to become pet friendly.

I'm an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet-friendly by the end of 2025. The 25 by 2025 campaign has resources to support shelters during and after this transition, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and more.

This movement is encouraging shelters to take the pledge to become pet friendly by the end of 2025. Since your shelter is already pet friendly, I want to thank you – and encourage you to claim the Pet-Friendly badge.

Will you display this Pet-Friendly badge on your website, social media, and other communications to show other shelters what's possible? Visit 25by2025.org to get your shelter the Pet-Friendly badge and get involved with our movement.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping pets and people together!

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

Sample email to local government officials



Dear [local government official],

My name is [insert name], and I'm a voter in [locality]. I'm writing to you today on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets. I strongly believe in keeping pets with their people, and I'm concerned about the lack of availability of domestic violence shelters in our community that are pet friendly.

I'm an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025. Up to 70% of domestic violence survivors report having a pet, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets. There is a proven link between abuse of pets and abuse of people, and in a domestic violence situation, the likelihood of an animal also being abused is high.

By modifying domestic violence shelters to include spaces for pets, you remove a key barrier to entry, ensuring more survivors and their pets find safety and healing together. In addition to providing vital companionship, pets provide significant health benefits as survivors take the step to find help.

When domestic violence shelters become pet friendly, there is less stress on emergency services because people are getting the support they need, and less stress on animal control because pets stay with people instead of overcrowded animal shelters.

I'm asking you, a community leader, to support survivors of domestic violence through the 25 by 2025 campaign and work with local domestic violence shelters in our area to become pet friendly by the end of 2025.

Here's what you can do to start this movement in your community:

1. Reach out to domestic violence shelters and advocates in our community and share 25by2025.org with them.
2. Connect with the 25 by 2025 team to learn more about making pet-friendly spaces a reality for shelters in our community.
3. Share the 25 by 2025 campaign on social media to help build movement toward the goal.

Thank you for your time and openness to helping more people and pets stay together.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

Sample email to animal welfare advocates



Dear **[humane society/veterinarian/animal shelter/rescue]**,

My name is **[insert name]**, and I'm writing to you today on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and their pets. I strongly believe in keeping pets with their people, and I'm concerned about the lack of pet-friendly domestic violence shelters.

I'm an advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign, the movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025. Up to 70% of domestic violence survivors report having a pet, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets. There is a proven link between abuse of pets and abuse of people, and in a domestic violence situation, the likelihood of an animal also being abused is high.

As an animal welfare advocate, you already have a vested interest in supporting the 25 by 2025 campaign.

Many survivors of domestic violence may make the difficult decision to relinquish their pet if they can't find a pet-housing program. Increasing the number of pet-friendly domestic violence shelters will ensure more survivors and pets are able to find safety and freedom from violence and ultimately thrive.

I'm asking you to support the 25 by 2025 campaign and work with local domestic violence shelters in our area to help them become pet friendly by the end of 2025. The 25 by 2025 campaign has many resources at 25by2025.org to support shelters in their transition to becoming pet-friendly, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, AND ways that you—an animal welfare advocate — can support them.

Thank you for your time and openness to helping more people and pets stay together!

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate

Sample email to animal welfare advocates



Dear friends and family,

I'm writing to tell you about something I'm really passionate about: the 25 by 2025 campaign. 25 by 2025 is a movement to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the United States become pet friendly by the end of 2025.

Up to 70% of domestic violence survivors report having a pet, but nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers out of concern for their pets. There is a proven link between abuse of pets and abuse of people, and in a domestic violence situation, the likelihood of an animal also being abused is high.

I strongly believe in keeping pets with their people, and I'm concerned about the lack of availability of domestic violence shelters that are pet friendly.

The 25 by 2025 campaign has many resources to support shelters in their transition to becoming pet friendly, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and more. The campaign's website, 25by2025.org, also has resources for us advocates to help spread the word and encourage decision-makers to take action!

This campaign will need many advocates like us to help reach its goal, so I'm asking you to join the movement. You can learn more and get involved by visiting 25by2025.org.

Thank you for your time and openness to helping more pets and people stay together!

[Sign your name]

Proud 25 by 2025 Advocate



“ Pets provide a great deal of support to many of our residents... In many situations, a pet can provide calm and ease anxiety in traumatic and stressful times.

... Staff have seen service animals be lifelines to life outside of their abuse. Therapy pets help to ease anxiety and at times can help with self-care and exercise.

”

South Peninsula Haven House, Alaska

Letter to the Editor: Version 1



[Name of Publication]

Attn: [Name of Editor]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP code]

[Date]

Every year, more than 10 million people in the United States are physically abused by an intimate partner — a staggering number. But did you know that up to 70% of domestic violence survivors have pets, and nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers to keep from leaving their pets behind?

Our community has an opportunity to help more people in need by making sure our local domestic violence shelters can accept pets.

Pet-friendly shelters not only help more people, they also decrease stress on our community's emergency services and animal control. Plus, adding pet spaces to shelters also protects pets in danger — 71% of pet-owning survivors in domestic violence shelters report animal abuse in the home.*

There are resources available to make the process easier for our local shelters. The 25 by 2025 Campaign (25by2025.org) offers everything from guidance on how to work with local government to approve the transition, to handbooks for building different types of pet space options, to funding opportunities. The campaign is aiming to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet-friendly by the end of 2025.

I believe, as a community, we must do everything we can to help protect our neighbors from harm. Ensuring our local domestic violence shelters have pet-friendly housing options is a simple yet vital way to do so.

[Name, Location]

* Ascione, F. R., Weber, C. V. & Wood, D. S. (1997). The abuse of animals and domestic violence: A national survey of shelters for women who are battered, *Society & Animals* 5(3), 205-218

Letter to the Editor: Version 2



[Name of Publication]

Attn: [Name of Editor]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP code]

[Date]

[Insert sentence on how important your pet is to you. Example: To me, my dog is more than just a pet, he's family.]

If you've ever had a pet, you likely know that feeling. Now imagine having to leave that pet in a potentially violent environment.

People experiencing domestic violence often must make the choice between leaving their beloved pet behind in order to escape violence or staying in a dangerous situation to remain with their pet. That's because only 17% of domestic violence shelters in the United States have on-site pet-housing programs.

Our community has an opportunity to help more people in need of a safe and secure place to escape violence by making sure our local domestic violence shelters are pet friendly.

There is a proven link between the abuse of pets and abuse of people, and in a domestic violence situation, the likelihood of an animal also being harmed is high. In fact, 71% of pet-owning survivors entering shelters have reported animal abuse.

There are resources available to make the process of becoming pet friendly easier for our local shelters. The 25 by 2025 Campaign (25by2025.org) has everything from guidance on how to work with local government to approve the transition, to handbooks for building different types of pet space options, to funding opportunities. The campaign aims to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet-friendly by the end of 2025.

I believe, as a community, we must do everything we can to ensure no person has to decide between their safety and their beloved pet. Ensuring our local domestic violence shelters have pet-friendly housing options has the potential to save lives.

[Name, Location]



“ One young woman came into shelter with her cat. It was very important for her to be able to bring her pet with her, because the cat supports her when she experiences both panic attacks and seizures.

The cat seems to sense when we she is about to have an episode and sits on her which helps her prepare and then calm down and recover. ”

Lumina Alliance, California

Full newsletter article

Did you know that up to 70% of domestic violence survivors have pets, and nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers because they don't want to leave their pets behind? We need more pet-friendly domestic violence shelters to ensure more survivors and pets find safety from potentially life-threatening situations.

The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025! Here's what you can do to support this movement in your community:

- Reach out to domestic violence shelters and advocates in your community and share 25by2025.org with them.
- Connect with the 25 by 2025 team to learn more about making pet-friendly spaces a reality for shelters in your community.
- Share the 25 by 2025 campaign on social media to help build movement toward the goal.

At 25by2025.org, you can find resources to support shelters in creating pet-friendly spaces on-site, including financing support, workshops, training handbooks, and resources for all advocates to help spread the word and encourage decision-makers to take action!

This campaign will need many advocates to make the 25 by 2025 goal a reality. If you know of a domestic violence shelter that isn't yet pet friendly, share 25by2025.org with them today and be an essential part of the movement to keep pets and people together.

Short newsletter insert

Did you know that up to 70% of domestic violence survivors have pets, and nearly half delay or avoid leaving abusers because they don't want to leave their pets behind? **More pet-friendly domestic violence shelters are needed to ensure more survivors and pets find safety from potentially life-threatening situations.**

The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025! Get involved in the movement today at 25by2025.org and help keep pets and people together.



“ A mom and child who had been separated from their pet due to violence were really struggling with depression, a sense of loss, and hopelessness. We were able to reunite this family with their pet and just the fact of having their dog back left the mom and child more hopeful and happy.

Because they were more at peace having their pet with them, the family was able to focus on building a positive and safe future for themselves. Currently, the mom and eight-year-old are now living in a safe, pet-friendly apartment!

”

Domestic Women's Abuse Network, Washington

Click the graphics to download images for social posts or use the messages below for your social media.

Post for Pet-friendly DV Shelter



We're Proud to be a Pet-Friendly Domestic Violence Shelter!

Join the movement at 25by2025.org

Post for DV Shelter



We took the pledge to become a pet-friendly domestic violence shelter by the end of 2025.

Join the movement at 25by2025.org

Posts for 25 by 2025 Advocates



The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025!

Join the movement at 25by2025.org



I'm a proud advocate for the 25 by 2025 campaign. The goal is to help 25% of domestic violence shelters become pet friendly by the end of 2025.

Get involved at 25by2025.org

Posts for 25 by 2025 Advocates



DID YOU KNOW:

- 47% of domestic violence survivors delay leaving abusers because of pets
- 25% of DV survivors return to abusers because of pets
- Only 19% of DV shelters have on-site pet programs
- 100% of pets and people should stay together.

Learn more:

25BY2025.ORG



DYK UP TO 70%

of domestic violence survivors have pets, and nearly half delay leaving abusers because they don't want to leave their pets behind?

Get involved with the
25 BY 2025 CAMPAIGN
to help 25% of domestic violence shelters become pet friendly by the end of 2025!

Did you know:

- 47% of domestic violence survivors delay leaving abusers because of pets
- 25% of DV survivors return to abusers because of pets*
- Only 19% of DV shelters have on-site pet programs**
- 100% of pets and people should stay together.

Learn more: 25by2025.org

DYK up to 70% of domestic violence survivors have pets, and nearly half delay leaving abusers because they don't want to leave their pets behind? Get involved with the 25 by 2025 campaign to help 25% of domestic violence shelters become pet friendly by the end of 2025!

* Bershadker, M. (2017). Domestic Violence Awareness Month is about protecting people and pets. ASPCA. <https://www.aspc.org/blog/domestic-violence-awareness-month-about-protecting-people-and-pets>

** Domesticshelters.org

Post for 25 by 2025 Advocates

25 BY 2025

Many domestic violence survivors have reported living in cars with their pets rather than leaving them behind. We need more pet-friendly DV shelters to ensure more survivors & pets find freedom from violence.

Help shelters become pet friendly at
25by2025.org

Many domestic violence survivors have reported living in cars with their pets rather than leaving them behind. We need more pet-friendly DV shelters to ensure more survivors & pets find freedom from violence.

Help shelters become pet friendly at
25by2025.org

25 BY 2025

Do you know a domestic violence shelter where survivors and their pets can find safety and healing together? Ask them to claim their Pet-Friendly badge at 25by2025.org and display it proudly everywhere – they can show other shelters what’s possible and inspire change!

Do you know a domestic violence shelter where survivors and their pets can find safety and healing together? Ask them to claim their Pet-Friendly badge at 25by2025.org and display it proudly everywhere – they can show other shelters what’s possible and inspire change!

Do you know a domestic violence shelter interested in becoming pet friendly?

Find resources at

25BY2025.ORG

to support shelters in their transition to becoming pet friendly including:

Financial support. Workshops. Training handbooks, and more!



Do you know a domestic violence shelter interested in becoming pet friendly? Find resources at 25by2025.org to support shelters in their transition to becoming pet friendly including:

- Financial support.
- Workshops.
- Training handbooks; and more!

Carousel Posts for 25 by 2025 Advocates - please post in order

1

The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025! Here's what you can do to start this movement in your community:



25 BY 2025

2

25 BY 2025



Reach out to domestic violence shelters and advocates in your community and share 25by2025.org with them.

3



Connect with the 25 by 2025 team to learn more about making pet-friendly spaces a reality for shelters in your community.

25 BY 2025

4

Share the 25 by 2025 campaign on social media to help build movement toward the goal.



25 BY 2025

5

Take action at
25by2025.org

25 BY 2025

The 25 by 2025 campaign has set a goal to help 25% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. become pet friendly by the end of 2025! Here's what you can do to start this movement in your community:

- Reach out to domestic violence shelters and advocates in your community and share 25by2025.org with them.
- Connect with the 25 by 2025 team to learn more about making pet-friendly spaces a reality for shelters in your community.
- Share the 25 by 2025 campaign on social media to help build movement toward the goal.

Take action at 25by2025.org

Post and tags for 25 by 2025 Advocates



Instagram Example



Tags

@RedRoverOrg
@PetSmartCharities
@GreaterGoodCharities
@ndvhofficial
@DomesticShelters
@novavictims

Hashtags

#25by2025
#DontForgetThePets

Additional Resources



- DomesticShelters.org: domesticshelters.org/
- Safe Havens Mapping Project: safehavensforpets.org/
- National Link Coalition: nationallinkcoalition.org/
- Urban Resource Institute and The Hotlines' People and Animals Living Safely (PALS) Report: urinyc.org/palsreport/
- The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI): habri.org/
- My Dog is My Home: mydogismyhome.org/