



HUMANE SOCIETY

of sonoma county

Santa Rosa & Healdsburg

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelly Olsen, Marketing Associate, (707) 542-0882 ext. 263,
kolsen@humanesocietysoco.org

**Humane Society of Sonoma County Expanding Safety Net Services
to Support Local Pet Guardians**

Santa Rosa, CA (January 31, 2023) – You might already know that the Humane Society of Sonoma County (HSSC) is dedicated to adopting pets into loving homes, but did you know that we also help pets and their families stay together through thick and thin?

During this time of economic uncertainty, shelters across the country are seeing an uptick in requests from pet guardians needing to surrender their beloved pets due to financial hardships, and Sonoma County is no different. Here at HSSC, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of pet surrender requests we are receiving each day.

“The situations for which families need to rehome their pets have become more desperate with little to no time to wait for a shelter to have room to help them,” explains HSSC Admissions Counselor Kristi Young. “It’s heartbreaking to see our community struggle to make ends meet, to the point of needing to give up their beloved pets. And it’s heartbreaking to see their pets come to the shelter and not understand why they are losing their families.”

That’s why, here at HSSC, we are working hard to expand our safety net programs for local pet owners when they struggle to meet their pets’ needs. We do this by providing access to affordable veterinary services, pet food and supplies, pet behavior support and other resources.

Our Santa Rosa campus has two clinics aimed at keeping pets healthy and in the arms of the families who love them. Our Community Veterinary Clinic provides urgent, sliding scale veterinary care and our Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic provides affordable services while helping reduce the number of unplanned litters entering the shelter system.

We also have Pet Food Pantries at both our Santa Rosa and Healdsburg locations where local pet owners can come and pick up free dog and cat food and supplies when they need a little extra help caring for their beloved pets.

Additionally, our new Community Action Team (C.A.T.) is working hard to increase access to these and many other resources. Not only are we providing assistance through our two shelters,, we are also coordinating with local human service organizations to expand our reach. For example, we have been bringing pet food and supplies to the Redwood Gospel Mission’s mobile shower sites for currently

unhoused individuals each week. We are also collaborating with our friends at Compassion Without Borders to bring a our pet food pantry to their monthly mobile veterinary wellness clinics.

Our Community Initiatives Manager, Jorge Delgado, described a compassionate connection he made at a recent event in Cloverdale. Toward the end of the day, he was packing up supplies when a woman came up and said she'd heard we were distributing pet food. "She shared that her husband was not able to work and that her paycheck was being stretched thin," Jorge says. "She needed food for their dog and cat. Since we were able to provide that, her paycheck can now go a little further covering her family's other pressing needs."

Our Community Action Team also participated in an event hosted by Redwood Gospel Mission this past December. In an effort to help pet guardians experiencing homelessness, we were there to provide needed pet supplies. "At the time," Jorge explains, "freeze warnings were in effect for the county and warming stations and shelters were put into place to help folks. In addition to pet food, we were able to provide donated pet jackets and sweaters. I felt joy seeing people put new jackets on their pets and knowing we could alleviate some of the worry about keeping their pets warm."

Our team is working to create new pipelines to deliver supplies where they're needed most. "A client approached our booth during a recent Esperanza mobile vet clinic at Mitote Park," shares Community Initiative Coordinator, John Tuchowski. "She was getting food for her two dogs and told me about a pet pantry in Monte Rio that was closing at the end of 2022. She was able to connect me to her point person there. By having these conversations, we are identifying where we can best help next."

Sometimes, behavior issues stand in the way of a person and their pet staying together. In addition to our popular public dog training classes (humanesocietysoco.org/dog-training/), we provide over-the-phone and in-person support for anyone seeking to understand and effectively manage their dog or cat's behavior. To find behavioral support and information, visit our library of references and resources on our website: humanesocietysoco.org/owner-support/additional-resources/.

We know that sometimes re-homing a pet is unavoidable. While we do take in surrendered pets by appointment only and as space allows, we encourage pet owners faced with this difficult decision to utilize other resources first, such as placing the pet with a friend or family member or listing on our Adoptions by Owner page on our website. More information about this free service can be found at humanesocietysoco.org/adoptions-by-owner/.

We are so excited to grow our safety net services and to partner with local pet guardians in providing their pets the care they need to stay happy and healthy. Stay tuned! We are exploring other possibilities such as pop-up veterinary clinics, mobile adoptions, and reducing pet-related barriers that limit access to housing.

Are you in need of help?

Please visit us at one of our shelter locations during business hours, or visit our website for more information. humanesocietysoco.org

For a complete list of our resources available to pets and their people, please visit humanesocietysoco.org/owner-support/.

HSSC Santa Rosa Campus

5345 Highway 12 West, Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Adoption Counseling available in English and Spanish

General Information: (707) 542-0882

Community Veterinary Clinic: (707) 284-1198

Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic: (707) 284-3499

Hours:

Tuesday – Saturday: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Sunday: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Closed Monday

HSSC Healdsburg Shelter

555 Westside Rd., Healdsburg, CA 95448

(707) 431-3386

Hours:

Monday – Saturday: 9:00 am – 5:30 pm

Closed Sunday

Can you help?

Our donor-supported services are essential to keeping Sonoma County pets in the arms of the families who love them. We gratefully accept donations to our Pet Food Pantry at both shelter locations during business hours listed above. You can also have food shipped directly to us from our [Chewy and Amazon Wishlists](#).

Help us sustain our low-cost clinics by making a donation here: humanesocietysoco.org/donate/

HSSC is seeking bilingual volunteers. For current volunteer opportunities, please visit: <https://humanesocietysoco.org/get-involved/volunteer-faq/>

THANK YOU – your kindness is truly appreciated!

###

About the Humane Society of Sonoma County

Serving our community since 1931, the Humane Society of Sonoma County is a donor-supported safe haven for animals. We provide shelter, medical care, behavior support and adoption services to

homeless animals on their journey to happy and healthy lives. Last year, we placed 1,660 animals into loving homes through our Santa Rosa and Healdsburg campuses! And adoption is just the beginning. As a resource to our community, we offer dog training classes and pet behavior support to help ensure the success of each adoption and strengthen the human/animal bond. Our weekly Low-Cost Spay/Neuter clinics and Community Veterinary Clinic help owned pets stay safe, healthy and with the families who love them. Our Humane Education Program nurtures compassion for animals through youth summer and winter camps and Read-to-a-Dog sessions at local schools. And our outreach efforts and volunteer opportunities foster engagement and sustained support for our life-saving programs. Visit humanesocietysoco.org and follow all our heartwarming happy tails on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).