**Pets in Eviction Resources**

**as of 7/19/21**

*Pre-pandemic, the lack of affordable, safe, and pet-friendly housing was already a leading reason for pet surrender. Until there are long-term housing policy changes, families nationwide will continue to face an impossible decision: your home or your pet.*

* <https://hawaiianhumane.org/animal-welfare-laws/>
* <https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/keeping-families-together/>
* <https://www.pawsopeningdoors.com/moratorium-impact/>
* Tucson/Pima County has some progressive programming to evaluate. They provide "resource Fairs" for families who are at risk of Eviction.  The animal shelter is present along with other NGO's in the community to try to prevent eviction and also to bring the entire family resources. [https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=758210](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=758210__;!!LIYSdFfckKA!nl7uOhzFFKAr9NjH8YfFfwz8bqOSaCWH2w81lKoPK9TFVfJUyRgNGNgWPDcWi7ffY7lgO9anbg$)
* **Eviction Prevention Resource Fair** - connect people facing a possible eviction with community resources that may help them remain in their homes.
* Resources:
	+ Rent assistance information and processes
	+ Utility payment how to for overdue bills
	+ COVID vaccinations
	+ Pets and pet welfare information
	+ Job finding resources
	+ mental health resources
	+ health care assistance
	+ school enrollment
	+ financial management counseling resources
* Here is a great resource, an in-depth toolkit that was developed collaboratively among many agencies.   [https://humanepro.org/page/eviction-response-toolkit](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/humanepro.org/page/eviction-response-toolkit__;!!LIYSdFfckKA!kK4Ng6ddE20NSdQAwfERuXtTQMUR2BPqPCFcfMhH9ZZxtV1b5fet08WiJGGZilPXAfokhS7Hqg$)
Eviction is a huge concern and everyone in animal welfare is watching very closely and humane societies and shelters across the country are heavily involved in advocating for solutions as in the toolkit and also increasing their capacity to provide short-term care. Many shelters have been working to expand the number of fosters for this purpose.
* In Delaware, at the state government level, the Office of Animal Welfare is part of the state Department of Health and Social Services so the connection between humans and their animals is recognized. However, they haven’t had a conversation with Social Services specifically relating to how the eviction moratorium could impact housing and pet ownership in any detail. Delaware has some robust private non-profit animal shelters with significant funding that do a great job in providing community resources to pet families with a goal of always trying to keep pets with their owners. Delaware is a ‘no kill state’.
* The State of TX leaves it up to the counties. The County Sheriff has the authority, but normally designates that to Animal Control. If pets are left abandoned, turned loose, or turned into a shelter, there is a minimum of a 72 hr hold for someone to claim it. After that, it can be put up for adoption, transferred to another shelter, or euthanized, if not claimed.
* Not yet in Hawaii: Bissell Pet Foundation. [https://www.bissellpetfoundation.org/](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.bissellpetfoundation.org/__;!!LIYSdFfckKA!h_CEWM7dbmdsT3NkRygz4rkBu9mALMNQiDiyPT4VvAXnJ1OaepH0jhD9DWi5WGJ1RueUS8nHFw$) They have started a Sheltering Alliance in coordination with Code2Associates [https://www.bissellpetfoundation.org/shelter-alliance/](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.bissellpetfoundation.org/shelter-alliance/__;!!LIYSdFfckKA!h_CEWM7dbmdsT3NkRygz4rkBu9mALMNQiDiyPT4VvAXnJ1OaepH0jhD9DWi5WGJ1RudTTRO_SA$)

<https://www.fox17online.com/news/coronavirus/eviction-moratorium-ending-could-cause-trouble-for-pet-owners>

Those with pets may have more of a challenge if they can’t find help, and they may have to bring them to a shelter. “We are consistently housing about 50 percent of our pets in fosters,” said Guild. This is why the shelter is also putting out a call for more foster families just in case evictions force people to make that tough decision. The best part is that they pay all the medical bills and cover the food.

<https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/what-to-do-with-your-pets-if-you-are-evicted/>

# What To Do With Your Pets if You are Evicted?

### [Alicia Underlee Nelson](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/author/alicia-underlee-nelson/) | March 2, 2021

* Up to 9.8 million pets in the U.S. could face eviction — and the pandemic has only made the crisis worse
* Early intervention can help reduce evictions during COVID
* If you can’t delay or prevent eviction, use your contacts and trusted animal shelters and pet rescues to find a new home for your pet

Deciding what to do with your pets if you're evicted during COVID is a question most renters don't even want to think about. But widespread financial insecurity and the threat of eviction loom large for many pet owners. A [December 2020 study](https://www.aspca.org/about-us/press-releases/aspca-estimates-192-million-pets-living-households-risk-eviction-or) released by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) states that 9.8 million pets in the U.S. live in rental homes where their owners are behind on their rent payments. This puts them at increased risk for eventual eviction.

## What happens to pets during an eviction

Evictions during COVID are already on the rise. Widespread financial insecurity and unemployment, food insecurity and mental and physical health crises have forced many renters to part from their pets.

“I will be honest, it has been brutal," says KerryD'Amato, Executive Director of [Pet Haven](https://pethavenmn.org/), Minnesota's first foster-based animal rescue organization. “The economic downturn and COVID illness have spiked pets needing to be rehomed, and pets just left behind in eviction situations. Pets are left outside, in garages, in carriers outside vet clinics and the incidents are on the rise dramatically. Two years ago we might get a call every two months. Now I'm getting calls weekly. And it's really heartbreaking because you know that nobody wants to leave their pet behind."

## Access support to avoid evictions during COVID

“Pets are incredible sources of love and companionship in our lives — and bring more comfort than ever during these stressful times — but they are vulnerable to family separation if their owners are evicted," says Matt Bershadker, ASPCA President and CEO. “We must help these families by implementing local and national policies that expand affordable pet-friendly housing options and improve access to critical veterinary services, food, and supplies."

A network of pet businesses, non-profit organizations and volunteers has always worked together to provide supplies and financial support to struggling pet owners. This article helps pet owners identify and access these programs to delay or halt the eviction during COVID. If those efforts don't work, the experts offer advice about what to do with your pets if you're evicted.

Taking action early makes an already difficult situation less stressful for both pets and people.

"When people wait too long, they get desperate. When they're in crisis mode, they're just trying to take care of themselves. And their pets provide so much comfort," says D'Amato. "Be proactive. It's better to have help and not need it than to need it and not have it."

## If you're facing eviction for non-payment of rent

The temporary Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [Eviction Moratorium](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/cdc-eviction-moratorium/) runs through March 31, 2021. Renters who have filled out a CDC declaration form indicating financial hardship cannot be evicted from their homes for nonpayment of rent before the moratorium ends.

Fill out a [declaration form](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/declaration-form.pdf) immediately and file it with your landlord or property manager as soon as possible. Then work on a [payment plan](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/guide-to-rent-payment-plans/) to pay whatever portion of the rent you can afford. [Individual states](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/eviction-moratorium-state-resources/) offer additional protections and resources.

You might also like:

* [Sample Letter: Renter Cover Letter](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/sample-renter-cover-letter/%22%20%5Co%20%22Sample%20Letter%3A%20Renter%20Cover%20Letter)
* [21 Questions to Ask When Touring an Apartment](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/questions-to-ask-when-touring-an-apartment/%22%20%5Co%20%2221%20Questions%20to%20Ask%20When%20Touring%20an%20Apartment)
* [Sample Letter: Letter of Recommendation for Your New Apartment](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/sample-letter-of-recommendation-for-your-apartment/%22%20%5Co%20%22Sample%20Letter%3A%20Letter%20of%20Recommendation%20for%20Your%20New%20Apartment)

## If you're facing eviction due to pet-related issues

If your pets are specifically cited as a reason for your eviction, sit down to review your lease and work with your landlord to resolve the issue. Misunderstandings or paperwork errors sometimes get cleared up. This can halt and even prevent eviction and keep people and pets in their homes.

### Review your lease

If a lease doesn't mention pets, that usually means they're allowed. (Local laws can overrule a lease, though.) Leases can't be altered without both sides agreeing to the changes unless the language in the document specifically says otherwise.

### Comply with pet policies

Some communities prohibit particular breeds or types of animals, ban large dogs, impose a weight limit or limit the number of pets per unit. Others mandate that pet owners pay a deposit, register all animals in the home and keep vaccinations up to date.

If you've missed any of these steps, it counts as a violation, so make sure your pets are in compliance. Register your animals and pay your pet deposit fees if you haven't done so — or produce a paper trail and receipts to prove you have. Provide vaccination records and make sure the breed and size of your pets are on file. The Humane Society of The United States provides resources to help solve [common rental issues](https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/information-renters-pets).

## Free and discounted resources for pet owners

Many behavior problems like urinating in the house, excessive barking or scavenging for food happens because of untreated medical conditions or hunger. These behaviors can lead to complaints from landlords and neighbors and force pets and renters out of a community. There are [free resources](https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/need-find-your-pet-new-home) available to help cash-strapped renters care for their pets and solve common behavioral issues.

### Veterinary care assistance

Reach out to local animal shelters and rescue groups to ask about low-cost veterinary care. Veterinary colleges offer discounted rates. And many vets will offer discounted or pro bono care.

[Bow Wow Buddies Foundation](https://www.bowwowbuddies.com/) and [The Veterinary Care Charitable Fund](https://www.vccfund.org/) provide healthcare for pets in need.

The National Humane Society offers a list of [resources for low-income pet owners](https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/are-you-having-trouble-affording-your-pet), including national and state aid.

### **Pet food banks**

“There are thousands of tons of pet food that get donated because it's close to expiration, explains D'Amato. “They have to pull it out of the pet stores and it goes to pet food banks."

These pet food banks are found all over the country. You can search this [pet food provider tool](https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/get-help/find-locations/#latitude=39.163798&longitude=-119.767403&zoom=12) by ZIP code. Vets, shelters and rescue organizations may also have advice about where to find free and discounted food. You just need to reach out.

## **What to do with your pets if you're evicted**

Getting evicted is always a challenge. But evictions during COVID are especially difficult, since combining households increase disease risk and adds extra stress. Brainstorm temporary and long-term solutions for you and your pet. The answer might be a combination of the two.

### **Combine households with another pet owner**

Moving in with another pet owner can make life easier for everyone. You'll both save money and you'll be able to keep your pets with you. Just be sure to [introduce your pets](https://www.apartmentguide.com/blog/introduce-pets-moving-in/) and let them get used to each other to minimize stress and help everyone in the household adapt to the new routine.

### **Consider short term foster care**

Short-term foster care can provide stability for pets while you look for another place to live. Start by asking friends and family members who are experienced pet owners.

Then ask nearby shelters and pet rescues about short-term foster care options. To find a shelter near you, just enter your ZIP code into the [Petfinder search tool](https://www.petfinder.com/animal-shelters-and-rescues/search/) or the [shelter finder](https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/get-help/find-locations/#latitude=39.163798&longitude=-119.767403&zoom=12&types%255B%255D=food-supplies&types%255B%255D=shelters&types%255B%255D=resources&types%255B%255D=donation-sites) from Feeding Pets of the Homeless.

There's currently a shortage of short-term foster care for pets in crisis, but the rising rates of eviction during COVID have made it a priority. D'Amato recommends asking pet shop owners, veterinarians, animals shelter and pet rescue operations staff as well. They often hear about short-term solutions before they're advertised.

## **What to do with a cat or dog you can no longer keep**

You may have to make the difficult decision to re-home your pet due to evictions during COVID. There are several ways to do this. You can choose a new family yourself, list your pet special pet-centered websites or work with reputable pet rescues and animal shelters.

### **1. Put your pet's best foot forward**

Make a flyer that shares your pet's photos, personality traits and preferences. Be honest about medical or behavior issues so potential owners can decide if your pet is right for them.

Your pet is more adoptable if it's been spayed or neutered and its vaccinations are up to date. Take advantage of the free and discounted options listed earlier if financial challenges have made this a challenge.

### **2. Use your personal network**

Tell friends, family, neighbors and coworkers about your pet. Ask your veterinarian to pass your name and contact information on to good people who want to adopt a pet like yours.

Put up flyers at your place of worship, your daycare or your neighborhood coffee shop. Post your pet's story on social media and encourage your friends to share your pet's photos.

### **3. Contact breed-specific groups**

Many clubs and rescue groups focus on particular breeds. They can provide foster care or an enthusiastic pool of potential new families who already love and have experience with pets just like yours.

### **4. Screen strangers**

As your sphere of potential homes widens, it will include friends of friends and people you don't know. Screen strangers very carefully. Hold meetings in a public place and ask for references from a veterinarian, other pet owners or mutual friends. Call them to follow-up.

Ask prospective owners about other pets in the home. Learn how much time and attention your pet will receive. If someone seems pushy or aggressive, or something feels off, walk away. Your job as a pet owner is to make sure your pet is safe and provided for, so trust your instincts.

### **5. Never say your pet is free**

D'Amato warns against listing your pet for free. It attracts people who don't have your pet's best interest at heart, including those without the funds to care for them, pet hoarders and even people involved in underground dogfighting circuits.

Asking for a modest adoption fee or a small donation to a shelter or rescue organization weeds out disreputable people. It also keeps your pet safe. You don't want your pet moving from a financially uncertain situation to a dangerous one.

### **6. List your pet on a pet-focused website**

Some shelters and rescue organizations will post your pet's photo and listing on their website as a courtesy, even if your pet still lives with you. They can also help you re-home your pet if you need to surrender them in the future.

Use the [petfinder tool](https://www.petfinder.com/animal-shelters-and-rescues/search/) or the Feeding Pets of the Homeless [shelter list](https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/get-help/find-locations/#latitude=39.163798&longitude=-119.767403&zoom=12&types%255B%255D=food-supplies&types%255B%255D=resources&types%255B%255D=donation-sites) to search by ZIP code.

Or set up a profile using the Adopt-A-Pet [re-homing tool](https://rehome.adoptapet.com/list-a-pet/step-1). The organization screens to prevent suspicious posts, which makes it safer than other, more general sites like Craigslist or Facebook marketplace.

### **7. Find a shelter or animal rescue operation**

There are hundreds of reputable places that can re-home your animal if you're not able to care for them. They include animal shelters, municipal shelters (where you must live in the city or county in order to surrender a pet) and foster-based rescue groups which place dogs and cats in temporary homes until a permanent family can be found. Again, the [petfinder tool](https://www.petfinder.com/animal-shelters-and-rescues/search/) and this [shelter list](https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/get-help/find-locations/#latitude=39.163798&longitude=-119.767403&zoom=12&types%255B%255D=food-supplies&types%255B%255D=resources&types%255B%255D=donation-sites) will help you narrow your options.

Organizations listed in these national databases are part of a nationwide pet community. These trusted organizations are accountable to each other and to partners in their home states.

The intake process varies with each organization, but most require several weeks to find the right place for your pet. They'll require documentation to establish a paper trail.

Avoid any organization that doesn't appear connected to a larger community, that ignores record-keeping or pressures you to make a decision quickly.

“You want to pick an organization that has a board, that's a 501(c)(3) that has visibility in the community and has a strong reputation," says D'Amato. “Look for organizations where you're filling out an application. That's going to tell you that your organization is more legitimate. Be wary of people who will just come and pick up your animal."

### **8. Surrendering a pet**

You never need to abandon an animal. You can always [surrender your pet](https://www.animalhumanesociety.org/surrender/surrendering-pet) to the Animal Humane Society. Just call 952-HELP-PET (952-435-7738) to schedule an appointment.

## **You've got options**

Evictions during COVID are on the rise. But what happens to pets during COVID depends on you. By accessing available resources and working to avoid eviction, many pets and their owners can stay in their homes. If that's not possible, reputable shelters and rescue operations can help pets healthy and safe in new homes.

<https://www.ktnv.com/13-investigates/pet-owners-facing-eviction-often-face-devastating-choice-between-housing-their-animals>

According to the Humane Society of the United States, 72% of renters have pets, yet the inability to find pet-friendly rental housing is a leading reason why animals are relinquished to shelters.

**RESOURCES**

* [Apartments.com, the leading website for rental properties, encourages pet-friendly rentals](https://www.apartments.com/rental-manager/resources/article/how-to-rent-to-tenants-with-pets), noting that those properties can earn more money, the tenants stay longer and it provides a larger pool of tenants to choose from.
* [Click here for information and guidance on searching for pet-friendly rental options in Las Vegas](https://animalfoundation.com/get-pet-help/pet-resource-center).
* [Click here to read the Humane Society's Pets Are Welcome guide](https://humanepro.org/sites/default/files/documents/Pets-Are-Welcome-Guide_HSUS_digital_2-11-2021.pdf), to help pet owners navigate rental housing restrictions and learn more about their rights as renters.
* [The Animal Foundation’s Keeping Every Person and Pet Together (KEPPT) program](https://animalfoundation.com/get-pet-help/surrender-or-rehome-pet) can assist people who need help with veterinary care, short-term boarding, emergency pet deposits and pet food assistance. Find out if you or someone you know is eligible by calling 702-955-5910 or by emailing KEPPT@animalfoundation.com.
* [Click here for information from the ASPCA](https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/covid-19-and-housing-challenges-keeping-people-and-pets-together) on keeping people and pets together in the midst of COVID19 housing challenges.