



Safety Planning for Pets

Pets are part of the family and are an important part of the recovery process.

Pets can also be at risk due to domestic and family violence. Research indicates that approximately 50% of women in violent relationships report that their violent partner had also hurt or killed one of their pets.

We understand that the welfare of a family pet can play a key factor in a woman's decision to leave a violent relationship. 33% of women who owned a pet delayed leaving a violent relationship because they fear the animal who has provided love and support when they need it most will be harmed.

It is not always possible for women to take their animal with them when fleeing an abusive home, especially during a crisis.

Animal shelters

The RSPCA Queensland's Pets in Crisis program can find temporary housing for the pets of people entering a refuge. People entering refuge can bring their pet (cats, dogs, rats, lizards and more) to several RSPCA shelters across Queensland, where they will be cared for over 28 days, either in the shelter or with a foster family.

Friends and Family

If an animal shelter or pet-friendly refuge is not an option or something you are not comfortable with, speak to trusted friends or family.

Planning to Leave

Finding accommodation for your pet when escaping a violent relationship is one part of a safety plan, however, removing a pet ahead of time could alert an abuser.

If you are leaving your pet, either in temporary care or behind in the home, there can be a grieving process.

If this is something you want help with, please contact DVAC or a specialist domestic violence support service.

Helpful Websites:

Domestic Violence Action Centre (DVAC)

<https://dvac.org.au/>

Pets in Crisis

<https://www.dvconnect.org/home/pets-in-crisis/about-pets-in-crisis/>

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