



Domestic Violence *and* Companion Animals

Supporting Animals Affected by Domestic Violence Also Supports Survivors

The Link between Domestic Abuse & Animal Abuse: Domestic abusers harm companion animals to intimidate and control their human victims. In some cases, abusers force children to witness or participate in the animal abuse. The very real fear that their companion animals will be harmed if left with an abuser, and the lack of animal-inclusive domestic violence shelters, can prevent survivors of domestic violence from leaving abusive situations.

CARE has existed since 2000 and runs a helpline to assist domestic violence survivors with temporary emergency housing and care for their companion animals. Mini-grants are available to cover the cost of temporary safe boarding for up to four animals. CARE covers some types of veterinary care, such as vaccinations required to enter boarding facilities, spay/ neuter procedures, microchipping, and wellness exams. Other veterinary medical expenses may be covered on a case-by-case basis.

Co-Sheltering Allows Families to Escape and Heal Together

Co-Sheltering, when domestic violence survivors and their animals can shelter together, is gaining traction nationally.

However, only 17% of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. currently provide co-sheltering options for survivors and their companion animals.

CARE assists New Mexico's domestic violence shelters in adopting a co-sheltering model by providing information, advocacy, and logistical support to allow survivors and their animals the chance to heal together.

As a result of the CARE co-sheltering initiative, 31% of New Mexico's domestic violence shelters now offer some level of co-sheltering, far ahead of the national average.

FY26 operating budget for CARE was \$272,500.

- \$180,000 came from GRO
- \$82,500 recurring funding in CYFD's annual
- Approximately \$10,000 raised by APNM

CARE NEEDS FUNDING TO CONTINUE SAVING LIVES & KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Funding Needed for FY27 & FY28

CYFD has contracted with APNM to deliver CARE for FY27 and FY28, but the funding has not been secured.

CARE needs \$350,000 each year for FY27 and FY28 to continue operations. The \$272,500 FY26 budget was *not enough to meet the need*.

97%

of respondents said that keeping their animals with them is an important factor in deciding to seek shelter from domestic violence.

50%

of respondents would not consider shelter for themselves if they could not take their animals with them.

91%

of respondents indicated that their animals' emotional support and physical protection are significant in their ability to survive and heal.

71%

of survivors with animals entering domestic violence shelters reported that their batterer had injured, maimed, killed, or threatened family animals for revenge against or to control survivors.

68%

of domestic violence survivors delay leaving their abuser out of fear for the safety of their animals if the animals are left behind.

SOURCE: Urban Resource Institute (URI) and the National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) present the PALS Report and Survey: Breaking Barriers to Safety and Healing

IMPACT

CARE numbers for Fiscal Year 2025:

CARE Helpline
Assisted 122 callers regarding 178 companion animals

CARE Provided Services for
95 survivors with 137 animals, and provided 15 additional referrals

NM Domestic Violence Shelters
Provided with Co-Sheltering Support: **13**