

# Homeless with Pets

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For some people, pets are their family. When times get hard sometimes those pets are all they have. I have seen many homeless with their pets, and I often carry treats around with me to give to any homeless pets that I see, with their owner's permission of course. So, what is it like for a homeless pet? What do they do for food or when they get sick?

Approximately five to ten percent of homeless people have dogs and/or cats, and in some areas of the country the rate is as high as 25 percent. Many of the homeless population with pets have to choose between sleeping on the streets or giving up their best friend because many shelters do not accept pets. And for some people their pet is the only thing they have left, and they are their family.

There are humanitarian services directly aimed at those pets who are experiencing homelessness with their owners. They help with food, blankets or crates to shelter the animal in the cold winter months, and free or low-cost veterinary services. Feeding Pets of the Homeless is one organization helping those pets in need. They opened ten years ago in Nevada and now have almost 400 donation sites across the United States. Since their opening they have received 605 tons of pet food donated and have received over \$1 million to help toward veterinary costs and crates to help shelter the pets of the homeless. Since they opened, they have helped 19,000 pets with emergency medical care.

Daffy's Pet Soul Kitchen was started in Lilburn, Georgia in 2008 as part of the SOS Club, the first pet food bank in the country dating back to 1997. Daffy's Pet Soul Kitchen has the mission of keeping homeless pets with their owners. They give pet food not just to homeless, but anyone in need, with the goal of filling pet's belly's and keeping pets out of shelters. When families fall on hard times Daffy's and the SOS club are there to help them.

Homeless with Pets is an organization started by Dr. Gillian Squirrell in 2016, based out of Sonoma, California helping the homeless pets with a wide range of services. The organization offers free vaccine and wellness clinics, two to three times a month and access to lower-cost veterinary treatment, when possible. They help with basic grooming and care, and offer free spay

and neuter events, as well as donate pet food to those animals in need. They also help the local homeless population by distributing outdoor survival gear and seasonally appropriate clothing. For the people living in the streets with their animals these services can mean everything. With the donated food from organizations their pet's bellies can be full and happy. With the low-cost veterinary clinics and shots their pets can receive the help they need to stay healthy and happy. For many people experiencing homelessness, their pets are their life and their family, and family is something that they don't give up on.

Sources:

<https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/help-pets/>

<http://www.daffypetsoupkitchen.info>

<http://homelesswithpets.org/services>