

# American Humane Association™

The nation's voice for the protection of children & animals™

## *Tips for Homeowners With Pets When Facing Home Foreclosure*

If you are facing home foreclosure and you have pets, here are some tips to help you relocate with your pets or find other safe placement for them. ***Never leave pets behind when you vacate your home!***

### ***Take Your Pets With You or Find Them a Safe Place to Stay:***

- Take your pets with you when you vacate your home; they will not survive if abandoned in the home or set loose. In addition, the comfort and companionship of pets can provide therapeutic benefits to family members by easing the strain of moving to a new residence.
- Follow these steps to find safe placement for your pets if you are unable to vacate your home with them:
  - Ask family, friends and co-workers if they will care for your pets while you relocate.
  - Ask your veterinarian if you can receive low-cost boarding for your pets, or set up a payment plan for boarding costs, while you relocate.
  - If you cannot find temporary placement for your pets, visit [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com) to search for animal shelters and animal rescue organizations in your area where you can surrender ownership of your pets and which do not euthanize adoptable animals. This will provide peace of mind that your pets will be safe until they are adopted into a new home. Some shelters and organizations may offer to house your pets for a period of time (60 days, for example) at no cost, or at a reduced cost, while you find new housing, so you can be reunited with your pets. If you do not reclaim your pets within the time period, they may be placed for adoption. Always ask if this is an option.
  - You also can surrender your pets to your local open-admission animal shelter, but be advised that open-admission shelters are required to accept all animals (including strays), and the adoption of your pets cannot be guaranteed. Thus, if the shelter is overcrowded, it may be forced to euthanize your pets.

### ***Don't Leave Pets Behind:***

- Never vacate your home and leave pets behind or set them loose. It's inhumane and may be illegal.
  - If you leave pets indoors or release them outdoors, state criminal animal-cruelty laws may apply (e.g., abandoning or neglecting your pets), even if you believe you have left sufficient food and water for your pets.
  - If you leave pets behind and have arranged for someone to periodically check on them, you may still be in violation of criminal animal-cruelty laws. In addition, when the mortgage lender takes possession of the home, your pets will be removed by the local animal control agency, which will leave your pets at risk of an uncertain future that may include euthanasia.

When faced with foreclosure, please remember to provide for your pets to ensure that they are safe and that you do not face a criminal investigation and possible criminal charges for abandoning or neglecting them. By following these simple steps, this will help you, your family and your pets have a better future.

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