

Two Local Nonprofits Partner to Reduce the Number of Pet Surrenders in Phoenix

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Wednesday, 22 November 2023 16:36 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 November 2023 16:44

[Arizona Animal Welfare League](#) (AAWL) and [AZ Pet Project](#) have teamed up to save vulnerable animals from being surrendered. Due to rising costs and economic hardships within the community, some pet owners are being forced to surrender their pets.



"Our long term goal with this collaboration is to keep animals in their homes and keep families together," says Alessandra Navidad, president and CEO of AAWL.

The two organizations partnered to hire a social worker to provide resources to pet parents in need. This could include behavior support, medical support, housing resources or help building fences so the animal doesn't escape, according to Navidad.

"Our hope is that with additional support from a trained social worker, we will be able to provide Valley residents with both temporary and long-term solutions to keep their beloved pets in their care and out of the shelter system altogether," says Leanna Taylor, CEO of AZ Pet Project.

These efforts are made possible with a \$1.5 million grant from former Governor Doug Ducey. This grant is intended to provide support particularly to those experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless. Navidad says AAWL receives hundreds of calls monthly from pet owners trying to find resources to support themselves and their pets. With the partnership, AAWL and AZ Pet Project hope to help these owners and pets in need.

"Collaboration or lack of collaboration in the animal welfare space can have consequences for animals," says Navidad. "This is what collaboration looks like."

AZ Pet Project has previously collaborated with other shelters to help pet owners and is now working with AAWL. AZ Pet Project's mission is to make a healthier and safer community by bridging the gap between animal welfare and human services. The company's social workers help at-risk community members in need.

AAWL has operated since 1971 and rescues over 4000 dogs and cats every year. As the largest no-kill shelter in the state, AAWL rehabilitates and rehomes pets as well as provides resources and classes for pet owners.

"We're hoping this collaborative effort is going to end up keeping families together and in the end, saving more animals's lives," says Navidad.

To contribute to this cause, consider donating to azpetproject.org. Volunteers and foster families are always welcome at AAWL. The shelter is open for adoptions via walk-in and appointment. Keep an eye out for adoption events where fees are waived. Visit aawl.org for more information.