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**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCES NYC COVID-19 PET HOTLINE  
TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY  
CORONAVIRUS**

*NYC Emergency Management and Mayor's Office of Animal Welfare partner with animal welfare groups to provide a safety net for people's pets*

**NEW YORK**— The New York City Emergency Management Department and the Mayor's Office of Animal Welfare today announced the launch of the NYC COVID-19 Pet Hotline. The Pet Hotline will serve as an information, planning, referral and service coordination hub for NYC residents who need support for their pets during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pet Hotline operators can be reached directly at [877-204-8821](tel:877-204-8821), from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

The Pet Hotline and supportive services are being provided by the City's Animal Planning Task Force, which is coordinated by NYC Emergency Management. The Task Force is a collaboration between City agencies and nonprofits. These include the Humane Society of the United States, the ASPCA, Animal Haven, Animal Care Centers of NYC, Bideawee, American Red Cross, Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals, NYC VERT, New York State Animal Protection Federation, Best Friends Animal Society, and PAWS NY.

"Pets and service animals are a part of our family, and we want to alleviate any concern associated with having to take care of these family members during these trying times," said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. "We are thankful to our task force members who have stepped up to help New Yorkers who need this service."

"This Administration has always understood that animals share our homes, our lives, and are sometimes our closest companions," said **Mayor's Community Affairs Unit Commissioner Marco A. Carrión**. "We must support and plan for all New Yorkers, including four-legged ones, during these times, and we are grateful to all of the animal welfare partners who have stepped up to create the Pet Hotline and provide lifesaving services to animals."

"During this time of uncertainty and fear, we understand people need the comfort of their companion animals more than ever," said **Christine Kim, Senior Community Liaison for the Mayor's Office of Animal Welfare**. "In order to keep people and their animals together, we have ensured that animals are included in the safety net we have created for all New Yorkers. I thank all of our partners within NYC Emergency Management's Animal Planning Task Force for stepping up during the COVID-19 crisis to support pets and the people who love them."

The Pet Hotline will help mitigate people's questions and concerns about keeping their pets during the COVID-19 crisis, as well as connect callers to pet relief resources such as subsidized emergency veterinary care and food and supply distribution services. For NYC residents with pets requiring a higher level of care, cases will be escalated for coordination of temporary placement or supplemental care of animals. NYC's COVID-19 pet response plan is the first of its kind in the country.

“The COVID-19 crisis affects all New Yorkers, including pet owners seeking information and resources to keep their companion animals safe,” said **Brian Shapiro, New York State director for the Humane Society of the United States**. “This pet hotline offers valuable direction and assistance to those most in need. We’ve seen through other disasters that providing services for people and pets during such emergencies is necessary and enhances public safety. The Humane Society of the United States is proud to be a member of the NYC Animal Planning Task Force, which continues to meet the needs of animals during disaster.”

“Although critical animal care resources are now available for pet owners who need them—including pet food, urgent medical services, and emergency boarding—knowing how and where to access these services during a crisis can be challenging. The NYC COVID-19 Pet Hotline will significantly help solve that problem,” said **ASPCA President and CEO Matt Bershadker**. “As a longstanding member of the New York City Animal Planning Task Force, we’re proud to be among the collaboration of agencies and organizations connecting vital supplies and services to the people and animals who need them most.”

“Working together with national and NYC based animal welfare organizations to help people and pets during this crisis is the best way we can ensure everyone gets the help they need,” said **Risa Weinstock, Chief Executive Officer of Animal Care Centers of NYC**. “We are grateful for the support of everyone on the Animal Planning Task Force and for the continued commitment the Administration has shown for our companion animals.”

“During this unprecedented time, Animal Haven is committed to helping dogs and cats and the community of pet owners throughout New York City,” said **Tiffany Lacey, Executive Director of Animal Haven**. “As part of the animal welfare community, we believe we are stronger together and we will all get through this together. The NYC COVID-19 Pet Hotline is a critical resource for those affected by this virus and those who need assistance and our support. We are proud to participate and do our part in this effort.”

“The pet hotline is a lifeline for New Yorkers seeking information and assistance with pet-related issues during this challenging time,” says **Jane Hoffman, President of the Mayor’s Alliance for NYC’s Animals**. “As a participant on NYC Emergency Management’s Animal Planning Task Force, we feel privileged to be a part of the City’s efforts to ease some of the burdens facing New York City’s pet owners. The pet hotline is a vital component of a multifaceted and collaboratively engineered response plan to assist pet owners under these unprecedented circumstances.”

“The COVID19 pandemic created new challenges for pet owners in New York City and across the state,” said **Libby Post, Executive Director of the New York State Animal Protection Federation**. “The Federation has arranged for over 140 placements of companion animals in shelters across the state if they are needed. NYC Animal Care and Control is a Federation member and shelters throughout NY stand at the ready to help.”

“The NYC Covid-19 Pet Hotline is an excellent resource for our community - designed to share out pet related information and assistance during these difficult times,” said **Elizabeth Jensen, Northeast Regional Director for Best Friends Animal Society**. “But more than a hotline, it is a manifestation of New York City’s heart. New Yorkers understand that pets are family, and the

NYC Covid-19 Pet Hotline will work to keep those families together. Best Friends Animal Society in New York is honored to be part of the NYC Emergency Management's Animal Planning Task Force and for the opportunity to work in collaboration with our animal welfare peers in this essential work."

"This is an extremely difficult time for everyone, and especially so for our city's most vulnerable populations. The NYC COVID-19 Pet Hotline will serve as a critical resource for isolated pet parents who need additional support, including financial and physical assistance. PAWS NY is honored to be a part of this endeavor that will certainly have a positive impact on the lives of so many New Yorkers and their animal companions, hopefully keeping more families together," said **Rachel Herman, Founder and Executive Director of PAWS NY.**