

# Personal Emergency Planning

## Would Your Pets Be Safe if Something Happened to You?

### EMERGENCIES HAPPEN EVERY DAY

People experience personal emergencies— accidents, death, deportation, hospitalization, arrest, domestic violence, eviction, etc. If there are pets at home, they need to be cared for. Immediate short-term pet care is temporary but vital. *It can save a pet's life.*

There are 68,000,000 dogs and 73,000,000 cats in homes in the United States. What happens to any of these pets if their guardian cannot take care of them because of a personal emergency? What happens to these animals if that person is in an accident and is hospitalized, for instance?

### PLAN FOR YOUR PETS' CARE & SAFETY IN YOUR ABSENCE

Will your pets be taken care of if you can't be with them? It's too important to leave to chance! Advance planning can make the difference of life or death to a pet. Develop a **Personal Emergency Plan!**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- ✓ Designate a mutually agreeable person on your driver's license to be the responsible emergency contact ("Attorney in Fact for Health Care Decisions" on the back of your license).
- ✓ Establish a personal emergency network of three trustworthy people, including the "Attorney in Fact", who agree to act as pet caretakers in your absence. They will have keys and access to the pet owner's home, and access to the pets' licenses and medical records. Within your network, be sure you periodically check on each other to make sure an emergency has not occurred. This is especially important for people who live alone.
- ✓ Arrange for alternate housing with someone in your network in the event your pets can't stay in your home.
- ✓ Provide each network member with a notarized document that authorizes temporary guardianship of your pets.
- ✓ Provide a written copy of your **personal emergency plan** to your attorney and veterinarian. Include contact information of your emergency network members.
- ✓ Check with your local animal control and shelters to determine what else is required for someone in your network to claim your pet.
- ✓ Consult with an attorney to add emergency planning for your pets to such arrangements as your power of attorney and will.
- ✓ The scope of your **personal emergency plan** is not meant to encompass or replace a long-term legal arrangement for guardianship of animals.

