

Shelter + rescue

# Partner Program

Updated January 2026

Bring  
love & loyalty  
home.



**Pets for Patriots helps people save  
pets and pets save people through  
companion pet adoption for United  
States military veterans and spouses  
of the fallen**



# Our work

- **Partner with shelters/rescues** to place companion pets with veterans and spouses of the fallen facing PTSD, depression, loneliness, deployment, or loss
- **Provide access to affordable pet medical care** through community veterinary partners, savings through VIP Petcare, and discounts on Vetster for 24/7 pet telehealth
- **Ease stress of military transitions** on service members/families
- **Champion companion pet adoption**

# Who and how we help

## 17 veterans commit suicide every day<sup>1</sup>

Depression and PTSD are major contributors; pets give veterans a renewed sense of purpose and a reason to live

## 17,800 dogs & cats enter shelters daily<sup>2</sup>

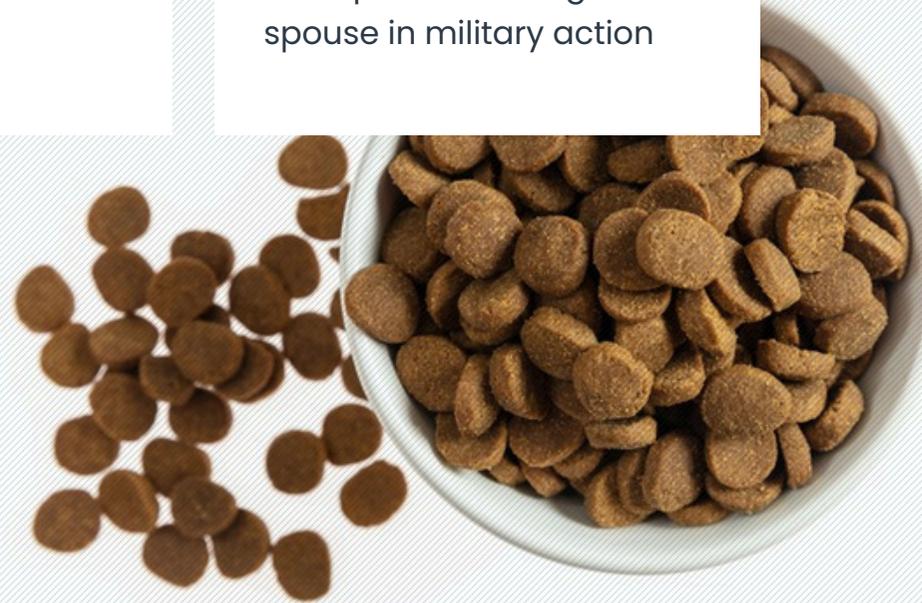
Many either fail to make it out alive or languish in long-term homelessness

## Loss of a spouse is recognized as one of life's most stressful events<sup>3</sup>

These burdens may be particularly acute for Gold Star spouses having lost a spouse in military action

## Our program helps solve three problems:

Provides healing to heroes/hero families, saves lives of vulnerable shelter animals, helps shelter/rescue partners make room for more animals in need



<sup>1</sup> 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, US Department of Veterans Affairs

<sup>2</sup> New Animal Shelter Data Indicates 6.5 Million Dogs and Cats Entered Shelters in 2023, Shelter Animals Count

<sup>3</sup> 2023 National Council on Aging

# What makes us different

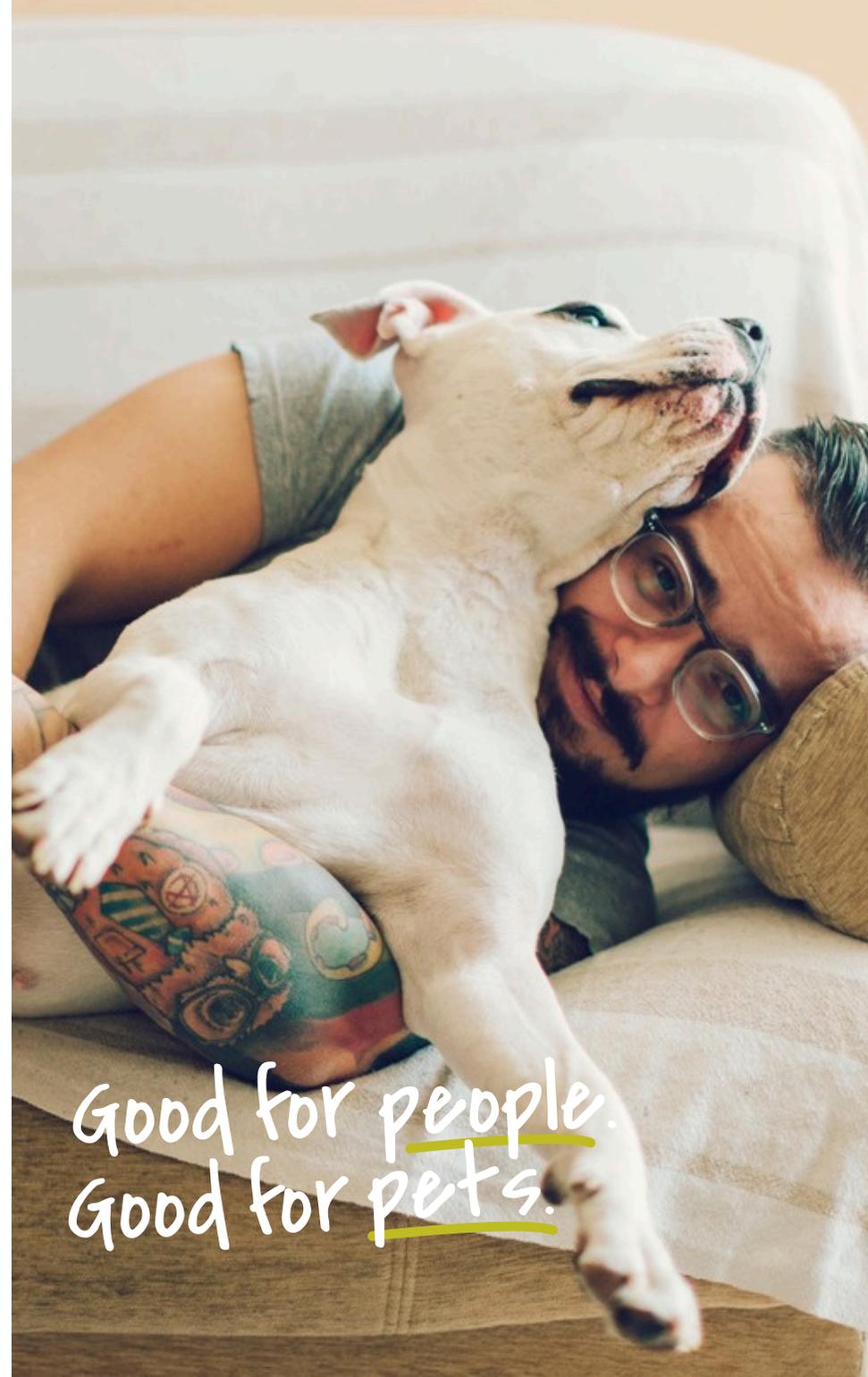


We are the only nationally operating 501(c)(3) charity that is:

- 01 Open to **veterans from WWII to active** duty and from all armed forces
- 02 Open to **Gold Star spouses**, the husbands and wives of service members killed or declared missing in action
- 03 Focused on **overlooked shelter animals:** adult, special needs, long-term homeless dogs/cats, and large breed dogs
- 04 Committed to **surrender prevention**

# Our adopter benefits:

- ✓ **\$200 pet retailer gift card** upon eligible adoption; defrays cost of 'welcome home' pet food and other essentials
- ✓ **Quality, affordable veterinary care** through local partner veterinarians, savings at VIP Petcare clinics, and discount on 24/7 pet telehealth from Vetster
- ✓ **Savings** on pet food, treats, medication, and supplies
- ✓ **Post-adoption follow up** for one full year—for every single adoption



Good for people.  
Good for pets.

# How you help:

Every shelter/rescue partner offers a 'member patriot special'—a 'thank you for your service and sacrifice' adoption benefit

## *Some examples:*

- Adoption fee discount or waiver (most popular!)
- 'Day one' essentials (food, leash, carrier, etc.)
- Low- or no-cost pet training (can limit to 'x' number of sessions or 'y' off standard fees)
- Coupons for local pet-care businesses



# Easy to administer

**One-page adoption checklist** to make it easy for your team to complete an adoption with options to send documents by email, fax, or online

**Free promotional assets**—both printer-friendly and digital—to promote our partnership in your shelter, website, social media, and community

**Free Search Engine Optimized page** on our website



## CRITERIA FOR A PETS FOR PATRIOTS ADOPTION

- Member presented Pets for Patriots approval email or letter showing their unique PFP member number (PFP-xxxx)
- Pet meets ONE of these criteria. These are NON-NEGOTIABLE and MAY NOT BE CHANGED BY YOUR SHELTER:
  - Dog/cat at least 2 years of age
  - Dog/cat with special needs requiring lifelong care
  - Dog/cat homeless 6+ months
  - Dog 40+ pounds at adoption
- Adoption contract in the member's name—spouse, partner, or family member—unless previously approved

## SEND ADOPTION DOCUMENTS

- Copy of final adoption contract
- Email: partner@petsforpatriots.org
- Fax: 866-265-4603 (Colorado only)
- Contract information including:
  - Pet type (dog/cat), name
  - Description of special needs
  - Documents confirming adoption (only for pets sheltered)
  - Medical history and/or treatment
  - Adoption contract
- Email photo of member and pet



## Member patriot special: About Humane Colorado

50% adoption fee discount

Humane Colorado offers all veterans pet adoptions in partnership with Pets for Patriots. The organization was known prior as Dumb Friends League. Humane Colorado maintains a range of programs in addition to adoption. These include temporary pet housing assistance, pet lost/found, and pet urgent care through Humane Colorado Veterinary Hospital at CSU SPUR.



★ Forever remembered. Forever loved. ★

## Gold Star Family Pet Adoption

Honoring the sacrifices of our military families by making pet adoption more accessible and affordable for those who have lost a loved one in service.

When you join...

- + Receive a welcome home gift card
- + Access savings on food, veterinary care, supplies, medication + more
- + Stay connected with one year of post-adoption follow up

Adoption is Love, unleashed

petsforpatriots.org

PETS FOR PATRIOTS® Pets for Patriots is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization serving veterans and saving shelter pets. EIN 27-1082210



# Turnkey and free

Pets for Patriots provides an additional channel for your shelter/rescue to promote the most overlooked dogs and cats in your care—and is **100% free**



**Focus on most adoption-challenged:** dogs/cats who are adult, special needs, or chronically homeless, and large breed dogs



**Open to range of animal welfare organizations:** shelters, rescues, SPCAs, humane societies, and municipal animal controls



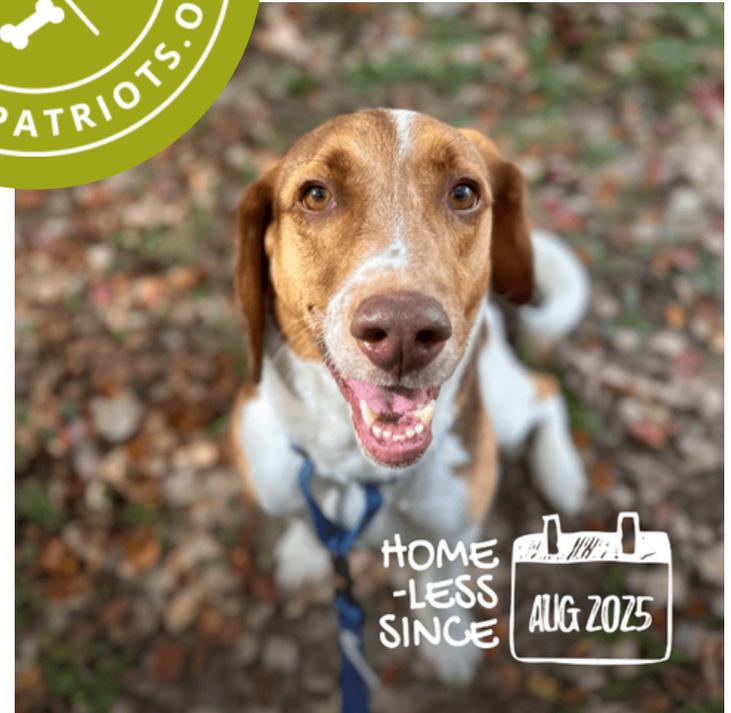
**Forget Me Not campaign** available only to our partners to shine a light on your long-time pets

more...



# Spotlight on long timers

Our **Forget Me Not** campaign highlights program-eligible, long-timer dogs and cats in your care who are still searching for their heroes—and is **an exclusive shelter/rescue partner benefit**



# Eligible pets

A pet must meet just **ONE** of the following criteria:

- **Dog or cat at least 2 years of age**
- **Dog 40+ pounds at time of adoption**
- **Dog or cat homeless for 6 months+**  
(total continuous homelessness at your shelter and/or any shelter from which pet was transferred; time as a 'stray' does not count)
- **Dog or cat with special needs**  
(birth defect, disability, or chronic medical condition that requires lifelong care)  
***Not sure if a pet is special needs?***  
Ask us at [partner@petsforpatriots.org](mailto:partner@petsforpatriots.org)





# Pets for love, not work

Dogs and cats adopted through Pets for Patriots are for **companionship and emotional support** only

We do not permit pets in our program to be trained as service animals—without exception

# Double the love

**Adopters can have up to two program-eligible pets** (dogs or cats) at once, adopted simultaneously or over time



A great way to help bonded pairs and other compatible animals find loving homes!

# Eligible applicants

**Active, reserve, or separated members of the U.S. military** from all armed forces; we welcome veterans from WWII to those currently in service

**Husband or wife of service member** killed or declared missing in military action, known as a Gold Star spouse

**Adopting pet for himself/herself;** cannot adopt on behalf of another person and **must** be legal owner/signatory for the adoption; we'll reach out to you if another party may be the initial signatory due to a veteran's military obligations or a Gold Star member's personal circumstances

**Approved by Pets for Patriots prior to adoption:** all members **must** present their Pets for Patriots approval email/letter to shelter staff, not just tell you their unique Pets for Patriots number



# Application + Adoption process:

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**1.** Individual applies to Pets for Patriots online or by phone, provides required documentation  
**Approval typically within 2 business days if applicant has his/her documents**

**2.** Once approved, member visits local shelter/rescue partner to adopt a pet  
**You help match our member with a program-eligible dog or cat - or two!**

**3.** Shelter/rescue promptly sends Pets for Patriots signed adoption contract, photo of adopter and pet

**See online shelter welcome kit for a one-page adoption checklist...our partner 'cheat sheet!'**

**4.** Member visits our local veterinary partner for affordable, quality care (if available)—and has access to savings from VIP Petcare nationwide and 24/7 pet telehealth from Vetster

## Stay Connected

**Pets for Patriots conducts post-adoption follow up for a minimum of one year to nurture the person-pet bond and reduce pet surrender**

# Questions?

## We've got answers!

Read some of our most-asked questions...

### **Q: Does Pets for Patriots pay the adoption fee?**

No. The adoption fee is the adopter's responsibility. However, we encourage our shelter/rescue partners to offer adoption fee discounts or waivers as their member patriot special, though it is not required.

Partners that discount or waive adoption fees can often recoup the difference through donor appeals. Supporters love helping heroes, hero families, and pets in their communities, and often respond well to specific donation requests.

### **Q: How do we handle adopters who haven't yet applied to Pets for Patriots?**

You can put the pet on a three-day hold, or offer a short (e.g., 7- day) foster-to-adopt to allow the individual time to apply to Pets for Patriots. Our usual turnaround is no more than two business days from the time we receive both an individual's online application and eligibility documents.

Adopters will forfeit all benefits of our program if they adopt a pet prior to being approved by us unless they adopt on a weekend or federal holiday\*, or we have made arrangements with you beforehand, such as for an adoption event or extenuating circumstance. \*See our 'weekend-holiday adoptions' guide!

# Q/A continued...

**Q: Can we ask for military ID, discharge papers, or a Gold Star's proof of casualty document?**

No. We are experienced at reviewing a wide range of documentation relating to a veteran's eligibility or a Gold Star applicant's proof of casualty for their fallen hero.

Further, those documents contain confidential and highly sensitive information. You may ask for other ID that is part of your customary application process, e.g., driver's license, rental agreement, utility bill, etc.

**Q: Can a Pets for Patriots member adopt more than one pet?**

A: Yes! Pets for Patriots members may have up to two program-eligible pets at any time. For both pets to receive full benefits, both must fit one of our adoption criteria.

The member may adopt both pets at the same time (bonded pairs or other similarly compatible animals) or over time.

# Fetch!

*Let's get started!*

