



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FALLING ADOPTION RATES PUT SHELTER PETS AT RISK** *Community Collaboration Urgently Needed to Save Lives*

PLEASANTON, California—March 15, 2022— Sometimes the more things change, the more they stay the same. After decades of lifesaving innovations aimed at reducing the number of pets euthanized in shelters, California animal welfare leaders are concerned that shelters are once again filling up. Dogs and cats are taking up space with longer than usual stays, due primarily to a lack of adopters. Being proactive and working collectively, however, community members and animal welfare leaders can take action to stop this impending crisis in its tracks. Join Valley Humane Society and Share the Care to help save pets' lives today.

The pandemic was an unexpected boon to shelter animals, with people seeking furry companions in record numbers during their isolation. While this mass pet acquisition did not result in the returned-pet exodus many feared, and intake at shelters across California remains lower than before the pandemic, adoptions have also slowed significantly, leaving the cats and dogs that do enter a shelter with no place to go. In other words, fewer animals are entering shelters, but those that do are staying much longer. The situation is causing shelters to fill up.

Typically, private shelters and rescues would support public shelters by transferring animals into their own care, providing necessary treatment and adoption services. Their flexibility and resources even allow less immediately adoptable dogs and cats—such as those with untreated medical conditions, seniors, and nursing litters—to be cared for and rehomed. With adoptions down across the state, however, organizations like these, including Valley Humane Society, are unable to transfer in their usual numbers of animals.

The Share the Care initiative recognizes that everyone has a part to play in saving the lives of dogs and cats. Public shelters provide a safe haven for found and unwanted pets; private shelters and rescues alleviate overcrowding, take on special cases, and help pets stay with their families; and community members are needed to adopt homeless animals and follow through on spaying or neutering any pets they've acquired through other sources.

Collaborating as a team and addressing the problem together will have the greatest lifesaving impact for companion animals, in our communities and across the state. People who can't adopt can still help by promoting and encouraging pet adoption among their family, friends and colleagues. Anyone wishing to participate can also share adoptable pet profiles on social media to spread the word. Visit [valleyhumane.org](http://valleyhumane.org) for more information.

Envisioning a world in which every animal is loved and every person knows the love of an animal, Valley Humane Society (VHS) creates a brighter future for cats and dogs by encouraging and strengthening the bond between people and pets. VHS rescues and rehabilitates companion animals, champions responsible caretaking, shares pets' soothing affections with people in need of comfort, and supports and preserves existing pet-guardian relationships. Whether you'd like to adopt an animal, share your passion for pets, or meet like-minded people, VHS is Your Means to a Friend™.

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