

Pet Safety for Victims of Domestic Violence

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Victims of domestic violence are often hesitant to leave their abusers because they fear for the safety of their pets. There is an unfortunate yet inherent link between those who abuse animals and those who abuse spouses and children. A majority of adults who are victims of domestic violence report that their partners have mistreated their pets. One of the troubling consequences of this behavior is that often people who want to seek safety at domestic violence shelters feel they are forced to make the decision to either stay so as to not leave their pet, or leave their pet behind.

In Georgia, there are no shelters that provide safety to both human victims of abuse and their pets. However, there is an organization by the name of [Ahimsa House](#), located in metro Atlanta, that provides a safe place for the pets of people who are fleeing domestic abuse. This nonprofit organization is the only domestic violence shelter for animals in the state. Ahimsa House works with law enforcement agencies, domestic violence shelters and counseling agencies in the Atlanta area to provide victims of abuse a safe place to shelter their pets while they receive help.

If you are a victim of domestic violence but feel you can not leave your abuser because you do not think you can leave your pet behind, please contact [Ahimsa House](#), your local animal shelter, rape crisis center, domestic violence shelter or police department. Often they will help you arrange for the removal of your pet prior to you leaving your home, so that you know your pet is safe.

A few other resources include:

- *Working at the Roots: The Link Between Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Animal Abuse* by Gregory Tooman
- Georgia Legal Professionals for Animals, Inc.
- [Ahimsa House](#) (web site www.ahimsahouse.org)