

Components of a Lifetime Care Plan

Our pets do so much for us, yet few of us have done anything to ensure the long-term care for our pets. Having a lifetime care plan for your pet will provide peace of mind by insuring that the animals you love have the kind of life you want to give them – even if you're not around to provide care.

A comprehensive care plan includes:

Caregivers – Identify people who could step in to take care of your pets temporarily, in the hours, days, or weeks after an emergency, or who would adopt your pets should you die or become incapacitated. If you cannot find friends, relatives, or neighbors to care for your pets, your veterinarian, local pet sitters and animal rescue groups may be able to help you locate potential caregivers.

Instructions -- How do you want your pets to live – in another household or in a sanctuary? What kind of special care do your pets require? Do you want your pets to stay together? To make sure that your wishes are followed, your instructions must be written down and someone must know where to find them.

Financing – You pay for food, shelter, supplies and medical care for your pets. Those expenses won't stop if you aren't here to pay them. You may want to set aside funds for temporary or foster care, transportation to a new home and the ongoing care for your pets.