



Caring for Pets When a Loved One Passes

Losing a loved one is a deeply emotional experience, and it can be overwhelming to manage all the details that follow. One important consideration that may be overlooked is ensuring the well-being of their beloved pets. Whether preplanned or unexpected, ensuring continuity of care for pets is a critical part of honoring their life and legacy.

When a Loss is Unexpected

If a loved one passes away unexpectedly, follow these steps to ensure the immediate care and safety of their pets:

1. Secure the Pet's Immediate Needs:

- Make sure the pet has access to food, water, and shelter.
- Keep the pet in a familiar environment when possible to reduce stress.

2. Determine Temporary Care:

- Contact a family member, friend, or neighbor who can provide short-term care.
- If no one is available, consider boarding the pet at a reputable kennel or contact local rescue organizations, such as the SPCA, humane societies, or breed-specific rescues for assistance or temporary fostering services.

3. Locate Veterinary Records:

- Check for veterinary records or tags to understand the pet's medical history and needs.
- The pet's veterinarian may also have insights into its behavior and care.

4. Notify Local Animal Services if Necessary:

- If you are unable to find immediate care, contact local rescue organizations, such as the SPCA, humane societies, or breed-specific rescues for assistance.

Caring for Pets Long Term

1. Identify a Permanent Caregiver:

- Talk to family members or close friends to see if anyone can adopt the pet.
- Consider the pet's age, temperament, and special needs when choosing a new home.

2. Pet Adoption Resources:

If no caregiver is available, these organizations can help place pets in loving homes:

- SPCA or Humane Societies: These groups are dedicated to rehoming pets and ensuring they are placed in safe, loving homes.
- Breed-Specific Rescues: These organizations specialize in rehoming specific breeds.
- Petfinder or Local Shelters: Online tools and local shelters can help find homes for pets quickly.

3. Plan for a Transition Period:

- Pets may grieve and exhibit changes in behavior after losing their owner.
- Provide consistency in feeding, routines, and familiar items such as toys or bedding.
- Work with a veterinarian or pet behaviorist if needed to support the pet's emotional adjustment.

At Downing & Lahey, we are here to provide support during life's most challenging moments. Whether planning ahead or navigating an unexpected loss, we are committed to helping you care for every member of your family.

Local resources:

Kansas Humane Society

(316) 524-9196
kshumane.org
3313 N Hillside St, Wichita, KS 67219

Wichita Animal Action League (WAAL)

316-895-9225
waalrescue.org
1550 N Broadway St, Wichita, KS 67214

Locally owned and operated for five generations.

East Wichita

6555 E. Central | Wichita, KS 67206
(316) 682-4553

West Wichita

10515 W. Maple | Wichita, KS 67209
(316) 773-4553