

# Tips for Orange County Homeowners with Pets Facing Foreclosure<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Your Commitment

When you brought your pet into your life, you made a commitment to keep that pet with you, through thick and thin, in good times and bad. And your pet made that commitment to you. It has loved you whether you got a promotion or lost your job. Its love is unconditional.

So, you need to take your pets with you when you vacate your home; they will not survive if abandoned in the home or set loose.

In addition, the comfort and companionship of pets can provide therapeutic benefits to family members by easing the strain of moving to a new residence.

## 2. Make a Plan

If you are in trouble and facing foreclosure, start as early as possible to look for a new place where you can keep your pet. Not all places allow animals, so you may have to spend some time finding a place.

Document your predicament. Have a copy of any foreclosure documents with you when you discuss the situation with people, especially if you will be asking for a discount based on your problem. People tend to be generous, but they want to know they are not being taken advantage of.

Take some nice pictures of your pet. Gather all your documentation (date of birth, vaccinations, medical treatments, etc.). Make up a list of vital information. For example:

- Your pet's eating schedule and food preferences
- Your pet's sleeping preferences
- Any cute tricks your pet does
- Ways that your pet communicates his/her wants and needs
- Whether or not your pet goes outside and how often

## 3. Find a Pet Friendly Place

Check your local phone book and check online for pet friendly apartments and hotels/motels.

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- For apartments/condos, go to <http://www.mynewplace.com>. Enter your zip code. When the main screen comes up, look in the right hand corner and you'll see a box that lets you choose places that allow cats, dogs, or cats and dogs. Other resources to find pet friendly apartments/condos in Orange County include <http://www.ocdogfriendly.com> and <http://www.peoplewithpets.com> and <http://www.rental-living.com/>
- For hotels, go to <http://www.officialpethotels.com> . Enter your city and state. Other resources include <http://www.beachcalifornia.com/pet-hotel-california.html>

Some places will say that they do not allow animals. Here are some tips to help you get the rental agent /landlord to change his/her mind:

- Get a letter from your current landlord and/or from the homeowner's association saying what a good resident you've been.
- Take pictures of your current home to show that having a pet doesn't mean that your home is dirty or messy.
- Bring along pictures of your pet, showing them in a neat and clean house. Pick the cutest pictures. Cuteness counts. If you want to impress a landlord, bring along your pet's medical records too.
- Consider renting from a person instead of from a company. Many people own one or two homes/condos and it may be easier to convince a person to rent to you with a pet rather than trying to convince a company to change a policy.
- Show proof that your pet has been spayed/neutered. Pets that have been fixed are often considered more desirable by landlords. If you don't have "proof," get a letter from your vet.
  - If your pet isn't spayed/neutered, consider getting him/her fixed. There are several low cost spay and neuter services in Orange County. Click below for some options - [http://www.animalnetwork.org/ANIMAL\\_NETWORK/VetMedical/SpayNeuterHospitals.htm](http://www.animalnetwork.org/ANIMAL_NETWORK/VetMedical/SpayNeuterHospitals.htm)
- Offer an additional deposit if you have an animal and stress that these are exceptional times.

Once you've found a place, if you are having problems with food for the pets or with medical care, you can get help.

- If your pet has a medical problem and you can't afford to get it fixed, you can talk to RUFF (Rescue Unwanted Furry Friends). Their phone number is 949 580-1092 and their website is <http://www.ruffrescue.org>
- If you need help with pet food, you can go to the South County Outreach where you can get food for your pet and for your family. Their phone number is 949 380-8144 and their website is <http://www.sco-oc.org>. They are located at 26776 Vista Terrace in Lake Forest. If you're not in South OC, try Seal Beach where the PetFoodBank operates from. <http://www.thepetfoodbank.com/index.html> Call 714 379 1456 or e-mail [woof@thepetfoodbank.com](mailto:woof@thepetfoodbank.com)

#### 4. If You Can't Take Them With You, Find a Safe Place for Them to Stay on a Temporary Basis.

Follow these steps to find safe placement for your pets if you are unable to move to your new home with them:

- Ask family, friends and co-workers if they will care for your pets while you relocate.
  - When choosing a temporary place to house your pet, consider the city where your friend/family lives. Some cities have pro-humane shelters where the euthanasia rate is low, while other cities use the OC shelter that has a much higher euthanasia rate. All things considered, try to find a friend/relative who lives in a city with a pro-humane shelter. Here's a list: Aliso Viejo, Costa Mesa, Dana Point, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Laguna Niguel, Mission Viejo, Newport Beach, San Clemente, and Westminster. If you are forced to surrender your pet in one of these cities, the chances of being killed are substantially less. However, bear in mind that not all city shelters accept owner relinquished pets, and depending on how full they are, shelters that normally accept owner relinquished pets may not do so when you ask. Also shelters may accept dogs but not cats. So you'll need to check to be sure if the city accepts your pet. Here are the phone numbers for the city shelters in Orange County:
    - Costa Mesa (includes Westminster) – 714 898 3315
    - Irvine – 949 724 7741
    - Laguna Beach (includes Laguna Woods) – 949 497 3552
    - Mission Viejo (includes Laguna Niguel & Aliso Viejo) 949 470 3045
    - Newport Beach – 949 644 3299
    - San Clemente/Dana Point – 949 595 8899
    - San Juan Capistrano <sup>2</sup>– 949 240 1735
- Ask your veterinarian if you can receive low-cost boarding for your pets, or set up a payment plan for boarding costs, while you relocate.
- Contact pet resort companies in your area. They have the facilities to keep your pets overnight and for limited periods of time. Many will offer discount rates if you explain your situation. Check with them. Here's a list of pet resort companies in Orange County:
  - **Aliso Viejo:** Pet Suites. 949 425 0700. <http://www.petsuites.com/>
  - **Anaheim:** Camp BowWow. 714 533 2267 <http://www.campbowwowusa.com/california/anaheim/>
  - **Garden Grove:** Animal Inns. 714 636 4455
  - **Huntington Beach:** Camp BowWow. <http://www.campbowwowusa.com/california/index.html>

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<sup>2</sup> Provides shelter and medical care for stray/abandoned animals in SJC, but not strictly a city shelter.

- **Lake Forest:** Paws Pet Resort. 949 276 4930.  
<http://www.pawspetresorts.com/>
- **Laguna Beach:** Dog Ranch Bed & Biscuit 949 494 0484  
<http://www.thedogranch.com>
- **Laguna Niguel:** K-9 City. 949 DOG 3300 <http://www.k-9city.com/>
- **Long Beach:** Pet Set. 562 595 5889 <http://www.petsetlb.com/>
- **Oceanside:** Oceanside Pet Hotel. 760 757 2345  
<http://www.oceansidepethotel.com/>
- **Orange:** Sandman's Canine Care Castle. 949 721 8395  
<http://sandmanscanine.com/boarding.htm>
- **Orange:** Petopia. 714 637 1986.  
<http://www.petopiapetresort.com/index.html>
- **Rancho Santa Margarita:** Wags & Wiggles. 949 635 9655  
<http://www.wagsandwiggles.com/>
- **San Clemente:** Camp BowWow. 949 218 7387  
<http://www.campbowwowusa.com/california/san-clemente/>
- **San Clemente:** Paws Pet Resorts. 800 964 7297  
<http://www.pawspetresorts.com/>
- **Santa Ana:** YourDogTrainer. 714 547 5047
- **Santa Ana:** BZY Feet Kennel. 714 545 9116  
<http://www.bzyfeetkennels.com/>
- **Stanton:** Crossroads Pet resort. 714 821 6622  
<http://www.crossroadspetresort.com/>
- **Yorba Linda:** Country Care Pet Resort. 714 985 1330  
<http://www.countrycarepetresort.com/>

For more pet resorts, check out - <http://www.poopbutler.com/cats.php?p=2&cat=4>

## 5. If You Can't Find a Temporary Home, Contact Rescue Groups

If you cannot find temporary placement for your pets, visit <http://www.petfinder.com> to search for animal rescue organizations where you can surrender ownership of your pets and which do not euthanize adoptable animals. This will provide peace of mind that your pets will be safe until they are adopted into a new home. Some organizations may offer to house your pets for a period of time (60 days, for example) at no cost, or at a reduced cost, while you find new housing, so you can be reunited with your pets. If you do not reclaim your pets within the time period, they may be placed for adoption. Always ask if this is an option.

Here are some general rescue groups:

- **Animal Assistance League** - [www.aaloc.com](http://www.aaloc.com) (Midway City) 714 893 4393  
[aaloc@aol.com](mailto:aaloc@aol.com)
- **Animal Network of Orange County** – [www.animalnetwork.org](http://www.animalnetwork.org) 759 3646  
[contact@animalnetwork.org](mailto:contact@animalnetwork.org)

- **A Wish for Animals** – [awishforanimals@yahoo.com](mailto:awishforanimals@yahoo.com) (Laguna Niguel) 949 481 6402
- **Critters in Need Pet Rescue** – [www.crittersrescueonline.org](http://www.crittersrescueonline.org) 949 831 4988  
[dogs@crittersrescue.com](mailto:dogs@crittersrescue.com)
- **Friends of Orange County's Homeless Pets** - [www.fochp.org](http://www.fochp.org) (Orange)  
714 280 4993 [friends@fochp.org](mailto:friends@fochp.org)
- **Loving Grace Rescue** – [lovinggracerescue@gmail.com](mailto:lovinggracerescue@gmail.com) (RSM)
- **Modjeska Ranch Rescue** - [www.modjeskaranchrescue.org](http://www.modjeskaranchrescue.org) (Trabuco Canyon)  
714 649 4406 [getpets@aol.com](mailto:getpets@aol.com)
- **New Beginnings** - [www.greatpets.org](http://www.greatpets.org) (Mission Viejo) [dawglady@cox.net](mailto:dawglady@cox.net)  
949 348 8057 (Dogs) 949 716 0538 (Cats)
- **Pet Rescue Center** - [www.thepetrescuecenter.org](http://www.thepetrescuecenter.org) (Laguna Hills)  
949 235 2072 24861 Alicia Pkwy, Laguna Hills, 92653
- **Second Chance** - [www.secondchancepetadoptions.org](http://www.secondchancepetadoptions.org) (Huntington Beach)  
714 715 3027 [info@secondchanceadoptions.org](mailto:info@secondchanceadoptions.org)
- **UnderDog Rescue** - [www.underdogrescue.net/](http://www.underdogrescue.net/) (Trabuco Canyon) 760 943 1844  
[underdogrescue@cox.net](mailto:underdogrescue@cox.net)

Here are some breed specific dog rescue groups:

- **Australian Shepherd** - [www.aussierescuesocal.com](http://www.aussierescuesocal.com) (Perris)  
[laurie@wagsandwiggles.com](mailto:laurie@wagsandwiggles.com)
- **Basset Hound Rescue** - <http://www.bhrsc.net/> (Whittier) 805 524 9353  
[surrender@bassethoundrescue.org](mailto:surrender@bassethoundrescue.org)
  - See also [www.bassethoundrescue.org](http://www.bassethoundrescue.org) (Long Beach) 805 523 9353
- **Beagle** – [www.beaglesandbuddies.com](http://www.beaglesandbuddies.com) (El Monte) 626 444 9664  
[beagles@beaglesandbuddies.com](mailto:beagles@beaglesandbuddies.com)
- **Bichon Frise** - [www.bichonfurkids.org](http://www.bichonfurkids.org) (La Costa) [info@bichonfurkids.org](mailto:info@bichonfurkids.org)
- **Border Collie** - [www.bcrescue.net](http://www.bcrescue.net) (Phelan) [info@bcrescue.net](mailto:info@bcrescue.net)
- **Boston Terriers** – [www.bostonbuddies.org](http://www.bostonbuddies.org) (Huntington Beach) - 310 364 4543  
[contactus@bostonbuddies.org](mailto:contactus@bostonbuddies.org)
- **Boxer Rescue** - <http://www.boxerocrescue.org> (Huntington Beach) 714 904 0012  
[bskmdk@verizon.net](mailto:bskmdk@verizon.net)
- **Bulldog** - [www.socalbulldogrescue.org](http://www.socalbulldogrescue.org) (Santa Ana) - 714 612 0265
  - See also <http://www.thebca.org/> 714 381 7691 [moccosin@earthlink.net](mailto:moccosin@earthlink.net)
- **Cairn Terriers** - <http://www.southwestcairnrescue.com> (Orange) 714 288 0221  
[Info@SouthwestCairnRescue.com](mailto:Info@SouthwestCairnRescue.com)
- **Chihuahua** – 714 995 4647
- **Collie** - [www.collie.org](http://www.collie.org) (Brea) 949 858 0298 [lovecollies@cox.net](mailto:lovecollies@cox.net)
- **Dalmation** - [www.savethedals.org](http://www.savethedals.org) (Gardena) [rescue@savethedals.org](mailto:rescue@savethedals.org)
- **English Springer Spaniel** - [www.springerrescue.org](http://www.springerrescue.org) (Los Alamitos) 562 431 2354  
[ozbow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ozbow@sbcglobal.net)
- **German Shepherd Rescue** - <http://www.gsroc.org/> (Newport Beach) 714 974 7762  
[info@gsroc.org](mailto:info@gsroc.org) See also [www.coastalgsr.org](http://www.coastalgsr.org) (Irvine) 714 528 4730  
[k9rescuegsd@aol.com](mailto:k9rescuegsd@aol.com)

- **Golden/Laborador Retrievers** - [www.retrieversandfriends.com](http://www.retrieversandfriends.com) (Temecula) 951 696 2428 [info@retrieversandfriends.com](mailto:info@retrieversandfriends.com)
- **Great Dane** - [www.danerescue.org](http://www.danerescue.org) (Lake Elsinore) 760 743 6874
- **Greyhounds** – California Greyhound Adoption Promotion (Irvine) 949 468 8689 [calgap@cox.net](mailto:calgap@cox.net)
- **Labrador** - [www.sclrr.org](http://www.sclrr.org) – 888 554 ALAB (Irvine) – 949 862 4329 [sclrr@sclrr.org](mailto:sclrr@sclrr.org)
- **Miniature Schnauzer** - [www.msfr.org](http://www.msfr.org) (Torrance) – 310 374 7701 [info@msfr.org](mailto:info@msfr.org)
  - See also 714 531 7473 [Bmajersnz@aol.com](mailto:Bmajersnz@aol.com)
- **Pug** - [www.pugdogrescue.com](http://www.pugdogrescue.com) (Newport Beach) – 949 262 7843 [pugdogrescue@att.net](mailto:pugdogrescue@att.net)
- **Saint Bernard** - [www.adoptasaint.org](http://www.adoptasaint.org) (Lake Forest) – 888 231 8713 [cmdiullo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmdiullo@sbcglobal.net)
- **Samoyed** - [www.socalsamoyedrescue.org](http://www.socalsamoyedrescue.org) (Los Angeles) – 714 956 6180 [tomepperson@cox.net](mailto:tomepperson@cox.net)
- **Sheltie** - [www.southlandsheltierescue.com](http://www.southlandsheltierescue.com) (La Habra) – 562 697 9784 [dkparsons@verizon.net](mailto:dkparsons@verizon.net)
- **Silky Terrier** – 714 531 7650
- **Westie/West Highland Terrier** - [www.westierescueoc.com](http://www.westierescueoc.com) (Huntington Beach) 714 960 1083 [kayd@westierescueoc.com](mailto:kayd@westierescueoc.com)
- **Wolfdog** – [www.wrr-inc.org](http://www.wrr-inc.org) (Costa Mesa) 714 673 3729 [mikel@wrr-inc.org](mailto:mikel@wrr-inc.org)

Here are some specific rescue groups:

- **Birds:** Lily Sanctuary - <http://www.lilysanctuary.org> - (Fountain Valley) 714 442 9474
- **Cats:** Orange County Animal Rescue Coalition - [www.oc-arc.com](http://www.oc-arc.com) (Irvine) 949 451 3272 [fran@oc-arc.com](mailto:fran@oc-arc.com)
- **Cats:** Orange County Cat rescue Adoptions – 714 734 2353 [ukbird@cox.net](mailto:ukbird@cox.net)
- **Cats:** South County Cat Adoptions – 714 715 3027 [catsneedhelp@aol.com](mailto:catsneedhelp@aol.com)
- **Cats:** Friendly Feline Rescue – [Charlene10@cox.net](mailto:Charlene10@cox.net)
- **Cats:** Cats in Need - <http://www.catsinneed.com/> - 909 622 0121
- **Cats:** Blue Bell Foundation <http://www.dovecanyon.org/bluebell/> (Laguna Beach) 949 494 1586 [bluebellfoundation@live.com](mailto:bluebellfoundation@live.com)
- **Dogs:** Cuddly Canines Rescue – [www.cuddlycanines.com](http://www.cuddlycanines.com) (La Habra Heights) 949 422 8744 [CuddlyCanines@aol.com](mailto:CuddlyCanines@aol.com)
- **Dogs:** Ariel rescue - [www.arielrescue.com](http://www.arielrescue.com) 949 499 9380 (Dana Point)
- **Dogs:** Little Bow Wow Rescue – [www.littlebowwowrescue.com](http://www.littlebowwowrescue.com) 714 974 2297 [lbwrescue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lbwrescue@sbcglobal.net)
- **Dogs:** Underdog Rescue – [underdogrescue@cox.net](mailto:underdogrescue@cox.net) (Trabuco Canyon)
- **Ferrets:** Ferrets Anonymous – [www.ferretsanonymous.com](http://www.ferretsanonymous.com) (Irvine) 949 303 8481 [lancem\\_fa@yahoo.com](mailto:lancem_fa@yahoo.com)
- **Ferrets:** OC Ferrets - <http://www.ocferrets.org/> (Irvine) 949 241 1189 [Info@ocferrets.org](mailto:Info@ocferrets.org)
- **Guinea Pigs:** [www.CavyHaven.org](http://www.CavyHaven.org) - 714 242 7548 (Costa Mesa) [cavyhaven\\_info@yahoo.com](mailto:cavyhaven_info@yahoo.com)

- **Pelicans:** <http://www.pacificwildlife.org> – (Laguna Niguel) 949 831 1178
- **Pigs:** California Potbellied Pig Association – [www.CPPA4Pigs.org](http://www.CPPA4Pigs.org) (Pleasant Hill) 925 937 9045 [info@cpga4pigs.org](mailto:info@cpga4pigs.org)
- **Pigs:** Pigs without Partners – 310 836 8237 – [pigswithoutpartners@artnet.net](mailto:pigswithoutpartners@artnet.net)
- **Rabbits:** [www.Rabbit.org](http://www.Rabbit.org) – 310 713 2478 (Los Angeles) [losangelesrabbits@earthlink.net](mailto:losangelesrabbits@earthlink.net)
- **Turtles :** Turtle Rescue - [www.tortoise.org](http://www.tortoise.org) 714 437 7042 or 714 529 5223 (Santa Ana) [occhaptercttc@hotmail.com](mailto:occhaptercttc@hotmail.com)

Please note: There are rescue groups all over the country, and contacting them may be helpful if you don't find a local group. For more information about rescue groups in other areas, go to <http://www.petfiniti.com>

## 6. If You Can't Find a Rescue Group, Try Other Ways

If you haven't been successful so far, now is the time to get creative. But first consider whether this isn't fate stepping in and telling you that you need to keep your pet with you. If that's impossible, try any of the following:

- **Craig's List** can be an effective place to communicate. List your pet for adoption. Stress the good traits and tell them that you'll provide food and all the supplies you have at no cost. But be sure you are giving your pet to a trustworthy family. There are unscrupulous researchers who use resources such as Craig's List to solicit animals who will be used in terrible experiments that cause pain and even death. Check them out completely before you trust your pet to someone else.
- **Post a notice at work.** You'd be surprised how many times this is effective. And the best news is that you probably know the person.
  - When you put up a notice, be sure to use a cute picture of you and your pet and include pertinent information (e.g., sex, age, breed, up-to-date on shots, etc.). Include your phone number as well as e-mail address.
- **Let your neighbors know.** Perhaps you can put a notice on the local bulletin board, or in your newsletter, or even on the street if you have to. Go door-to-door with a notice. Include a nice picture of your pet.
- **Contact Animal Advocacy groups.** While they may not be involved directly in animal rescue, they have a vast network and it's possible that someone in that network can help. Here's a list of some animal advocacy groups:
  - **Orange County People for Animals.** <http://www.ocpausa.org/> 714 751 6272 [information@ocpausa.org](mailto:information@ocpausa.org)
  - **Orange County SPCA.** <http://www.orangecountyspca.org/> 714 374 7738 [ocspca@verizon.net](mailto:ocspca@verizon.net)
  - **South County Animal Shelter Coalition.** [www.Socoanimalshelter.org](http://www.Socoanimalshelter.org)
  - **Save our Strays in Huntington Beach.** <http://www.saveourstrayshb.org/> 714 442 1446 [saveourstrayshb@aol.com](mailto:saveourstrayshb@aol.com) (Huntington Beach)
  - **Friends of Lake Forest Animals.** [www.folfa.org](http://www.folfa.org). [info@folfa.org](mailto:info@folfa.org) (Lake Forest)

- **Dedicated Animal Welfare Group.** <http://www.dawg.org/> 949 470 3045 [sharon@dawg.org](mailto:sharon@dawg.org) (Mission Viejo, Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel)
- **Compassion in Action** <http://www.thecioclub.com/contact@theCIAclub.com> (Newport Beach)
- **Contact Animal Care Professionals.** There are lots of people who make their living providing animal care services – veterinarians, groomers, pet sitters, dog walkers, pet loss bereavement specialists, pet food providers, pet supply providers, etc. All of these people/businesses are potential contact points to find someone to take your animal, on a temporary or permanent basis. Check your yellow pages for the resources nearest to you.

## **7. If You Can't Find a Solution, Call a Shelter**

You also can surrender your pets to the Orange County animal shelter, but be advised that open-admission shelters are required to accept all animals (including strays), and the adoption of your pets cannot be guaranteed. Thus, if the shelter is overcrowded, it may be forced to euthanize your pets. If you need to contact the Orange County shelter, the website is <http://www.ocpetinfo.com> and the phone number is 714 935 6848.

## **8. Don't Leave Pets Behind**

Never vacate your home and leave your pets behind. Don't turn them loose. It's inhumane and it's illegal.

By following these simple steps, you will help your family and your pets have a better future.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. James Gardner is licensed as an animal rehabilitation specialist. He has assisted animal rescue efforts at the Salton Sea, along the Southern California coast, during Hurricane Katrina, and in Brazil, where he maintains a 3,000 acre ecological preserve. Dr. Gardner is on the Board of the South County Animal Shelter Coalition and the Friends of Lake Forest Animals. His family includes two dogs, three cats, and four birds.