



Bill de Blasio
Mayor

Mayor's Office to
Combat Domestic
Violence
Rosemonde Pierre-Louis
Commissioner



URINYC
Urban Resource Institute

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Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, Urban Resource Institute, Petland Discounts, and C-Town and Bravo Supermarkets Join in Campaign to Promote URIPALS, NYC's First-Ever Initiative for Domestic Violence Victims with Pets

*Citywide Outreach Effort for Pet Safety Month Encourages
Domestic Violence Victims with Pets to Seek Help*

NEW YORK, NY – The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) today unveiled a campaign in support of Urban Resource Institute's (URI) People and Animals Living Safely (PALS) initiative to shelter domestic violence victims with pets. Throughout May, in recognition of Pet Safety Awareness Month, the campaign will canvass New York City via retail outlets and grassroots distribution, with the goal of raising awareness about the innovative services now available to victims of abuse with pets. To support this campaign, Petland Discounts will place posters on the doors of its 70 stores in the New York area and C-Town and Bravo Supermarkets will include information in its weekly store circular across all five boroughs.

"This creative private-public partnership with the Urban Resource Institute, Petland Discounts, and C-Town and Bravo Supermarkets will help connect survivors with critical domestic violence services," said Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Rosemonde Pierre-Louis. "Survivors who flee an abusive home no longer need to leave their beloved pets behind. Now, the entire family can find safety and security together in a supportive domestic violence shelter."

Studies show that as many as 48% of domestic violence victims stay in abusive situations out of fear of what would happen if they left their pets behind, and more than 70% of pet owners who enter shelter report that the abuser has threatened, injured, or killed family pets. URI is the only one of NYC's 50 domestic violence shelters that accommodates pets, filling a critical gap by addressing the unique challenges families with pets face.

"Pets are part of people's families, and no one should have to face the impossible decision to leave a pet behind in order to flee a violent relationship," said Nathaniel Fields, President and CEO of URI. "With this campaign, OCDV is taking a bold step in spreading the word about URIPALS so that we can help more New Yorkers escape abuse and rebuild their lives as a family unit."

Bringing together public, private, and non-profit leaders in the pet safety movement, this campaign is critical for increasing awareness about how the community can work together to ensure the well-being of the entire family in domestic violence situations.

“Petland Discounts is proud to partner with the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence in the effort to help inform the public that there are places for victims of domestic violence to go with their pets,” said Amy Eisenberg, Director, Public Relations & Special Events of Petland Discounts. “They are not alone and there is help for them.”

“C-Town and Bravo Supermarkets have been a part of local communities in the city for decades now,” said Mitch Klein, Vice President of Retail Services and Government Relations. “Each store is committed to their specific community to not only provide essential foods at competitive prices for the residents but to help and assist them on issues that are critical to their well being.”

OCDV staff and community partners will also hand out materials and information to hundreds of commuters in neighborhoods with a high incidence of domestic violence. These outreach efforts will promote the safety of families with pets, provide information about where to get help if someone is being abused including OCDV’s New York City Family Justice Centers, and encourage people to participate on social media with the hashtag #NYCendDV.

“My dogs are like my children, and I couldn’t imagine leaving them behind, even if it meant staying in an abusive relationship,” said one domestic violence survivor currently in URI’s shelter. “I was so relieved to find URIPALS and escape violence with my whole family. It’s such a comfort to have my pets with me as I begin the healing process and put my life back together.”

To learn more about URIPALS and for tips on keeping the entire family safe in domestic violence situations, please visit www.urinyc.org. For help from one of OCDV’s New York City Family Justice Centers, visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence or call the City’s Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-621-4673 or 311.

About the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence

Created in 2001, OCDV formulates policies and programs, monitors the citywide delivery of domestic violence services, and works with diverse communities to increase awareness of domestic violence and make it as easy as possible for victims and their children to get the help that they need regardless of the language they speak or their immigration status. OCDV operates the New York City Family Justice Centers, a private-public initiative that comprehensive civil legal, counseling and supportive services for victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, and sex trafficking. The FJCs are safe, caring environments that provide one-stop services and support by co-locating key City agencies, community, social and civil legal service providers, and District Attorney’s Offices. For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence.

About Urban Resource Institute

Urban Resource Institute (URI) provides comprehensive, holistic, and supportive social services programs that help individuals and families in the New York metropolitan area overcome obstacles and better their lives. With a rich 32-year legacy, deep community relationships, and a flexible, innovative approach to program development and service delivery, URI is uniquely equipped to provide solutions to the challenges affecting victims of domestic violence, the developmentally disabled, and people struggling with addiction and substance abuse. In June 2013, URI launched New York City’s first initiative to allow victims of domestic violence to enter shelter with their pets called URIPALS—People and Animals Living Safely. For more information, please visit www.urinyc.org.

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