

## Purina and RedRover Mark Domestic Violence Awareness Month by Announcing 2026 Purple Leash Project Grant Recipients

*Since 2019, nearly 70 grants have helped create over 335,000 safe nights for survivors and their pets as Purina and RedRover work to expand access to pet-friendly domestic violence shelters*

ST. LOUIS, Oct. 16, 2026 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- In recognition of Purple Thursday and Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Purina and RedRover today announced the recipients of the first two rounds of its 2026 Purple Leash Project grants, continuing their shared commitment to helping ensure survivors of domestic violence never have to choose between their own safety and the safety of their pets.

Since launching in 2019, the Purple Leash Project has worked to increase access to pet housing programs at domestic violence shelters across the United States. Today, only about 20 percent of domestic violence shelters accept pets, leaving many survivors facing a difficult choice when seeking safety. To help address this need, Purina and RedRover have awarded nearly 70 grants totaling \$2.2 million, helping create more than 335,000 safe nights for survivors and their pets through pet-friendly renovations, dedicated pet spaces, shelter accommodations, and essential pet care resources.

"Pets are often a source of comfort, stability and unconditional love during life's most difficult moments," said Nina Leigh Krueger, Purina CEO. "No one should have to leave a beloved pet behind to escape abuse. Through the Purple Leash Project, we're helping remove barriers to safety and recovery for survivors on both ends of the leash, and we're proud to support organizations creating more welcoming, pet-friendly spaces in communities across the country."

### Expanding Pet-Friendly Shelter Options

This year already, Purina and RedRover have awarded Purple Leash Project grants to six domestic violence shelters and service providers working to expand pet-friendly housing and services, including:

- **TESSA in Douglas County, Colorado** received a \$20,430 grant to transform existing bedrooms into pet-friendly safe spaces, provide cat enrichment structures and purchase additional pet supplies.
- **Peace Place in Jackson County, Georgia** received a \$60,000 grant to build new dog runs and kennel spaces, and to create a dedicated cat room on-site.
- **The Heights Ellis County Family Resources in Ellis County, Texas** received a \$60,000 grant to support the cost of veterinary care, pet boarding, and pet supplies for survivors and their pets.
- **The Family Life Center of Butler County in Butler County, Kansas** received a \$59,850 grant to develop a climate-controlled, freestanding pet area onsite, with indoor and outdoor runs for dogs and cats, a shared seating area with pet supplies, and a secure play yard.
- **Tri-County Protective Agency, Inc. in Liberty County, Georgia** received a \$60,000 grant to help provide a safe haven and essential support for survivors' pets, including new climate-controlled areas, and new secure storage for pet food and supplies.
- **Meriden Wallingford Chrysalis in New Haven County, Connecticut** received a \$53,235 grant to install new fencing, cover the cost of veterinary care, and purchase additional pet equipment and supplies.

"These grants represent more than physical improvements to shelter facilities," said Katie Campbell, President and CEO of RedRover. "They help ensure survivors can seek safety without leaving behind the pets who often provide critical emotional support throughout the healing process. We're grateful to Purina and our shelter partners for helping expand access to pet-housing programs and making a meaningful difference for families affected by domestic violence."

When Purina and RedRover created the Purple Leash Project in 2019, less than 10 percent of domestic violence shelters allowed pets onsite. Today, 20 percent of domestic violence shelters in the U.S. welcome pets, providing survivors with the chance to escape and heal together.

"This grant is truly life-changing for the survivors and pets we will serve through Safe Pets at The Heights. For many survivors of domestic violence, fear for a beloved pet's safety is a major barrier to leaving abuse," said Jordan Molina, advancement director at The Heights Ellis County Family Resources. "RedRover's and Purina's support allows us to create a safe, trauma-informed environment where families can remain together, heal together, and begin a new chapter without having to choose between their own safety and the safety of their animals."

### **Bringing Pet-Friendly Sheltering to Life**

Purina's commitment goes beyond funding. Purina associates have devoted more than 2,500 volunteer hours to renovating shelters including Lydia's House in Missouri, Safe Voices in Maine and DVIP in Colorado, helping transform these spaces into pet-friendly havens where survivors and their pets can stay together.

Purina also helped found the PAWS Act Coalition, which successfully advocated for the Pets and Women Safety (PAWS) Act, helping secure federal grants that support pet-friendly domestic violence shelters and give survivors greater opportunity to leave violent situations with their pets. Purina continues to advocate for reauthorization and federal appropriations to sustain this critical program.

### **Raising Awareness During Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

While increasing access to pet housing programs at shelters is critical, changing the landscape of domestic violence services also requires greater awareness of the unique challenges faced by survivors with pets. Purina continues to use its platforms and partnerships to bring greater visibility to the issue and encourage people to take action.

Purina is rallying all 25 of its operating communities to support domestic violence survivors with pets and promote the cause in October through various events and volunteer activities. In Purina's headquarters city of St. Louis, associates partnered with MLS home team St. Louis CITY SC to assemble 250 'Love Packages' for the Diamond Diva Empowerment Foundation to distribute to survivors, while several dozen local landmarks, businesses and public spaces illuminated purple in recognition of Purple Thursday on October 15.

Earlier this month, Purina, the Official Pet Care Partner of the U.S. Soccer Federation, [brought the Purple Leash Project to the pitch](#) during a U.S. Women's National Team match against Spain, presented by Purina, in Washington, D.C. Actress, producer and advocate Mariska Hargitay joined Purina and the USWNT as Purina's Honorary Captain to raise awareness of domestic violence, show support for survivors and encourage soccer fans to learn more about the Purple Leash Project and how they can help survivors and their pets find safety together.

Purina also honored television personality, bestselling author and podcast host Paige DeSorbo with the [2026 Variety Courage Award at Variety's Power of Women event](#) in Beverly Hills on Sept. 23. The award recognized DeSorbo's courage in speaking publicly about surviving an abusive relationship and using her platform to help others feel less alone.

## Turning Awareness into Action

Purina is continuing to support RedRover through a national fundraising initiative this fall, with a donation of up to \$500,000 to help expand access to pet housing programs and resources for domestic violence survivors and their pets.

On Purple Thursday, supporters can also donate directly to RedRover in support of the Purple Leash Project. Those who commit to a monthly donation of \$5 or more, or a one-time donation of \$60 or more, can receive a special-edition purple leash or cat collar while supplies last.

The Courageous Together Collection is also available at [shop.PurpleLeashProject.com](https://shop.PurpleLeashProject.com), with 100 percent of every purchase donated to RedRover to help keep survivors and their pets together. New this year, the limited-edition [Courageous & Comfy Soccer Scarf](#), officially licensed by U.S. Soccer, is available exclusively through the collection.

For more information about the Purple Leash Project, Purina's commitment to supporting domestic violence survivors and their pets, or to make a donation, visit [Purina.com/EscapeTogether](https://Purina.com/EscapeTogether).

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **Q: What is the Purple Leash Project?**

**A:** The Purple Leash Project was created by Purina and RedRover to help domestic violence shelters create pet-friendly spaces. Its goal is to help survivors seek safety without being separated from their pets.

### **Q: Why are pets important to people experiencing domestic violence?**

**A:** Pets can provide companionship, comfort and a sense of safety during and after traumatic experiences. Many survivors delay leaving abusers because they are concerned about what will happen to their pets.

### **Q: How does the Purple Leash Project help survivors and their pets?**

**A:** The project provides grants, resources, and support to help domestic violence shelters create pet housing programs. Since 2019, Purina and RedRover have awarded more than \$2.2 million in grants to help create safe spaces for survivors and their pets. Safe Housing grants of up to \$60,000 are available and can be used to build or renovate spaces dedicated to housing survivors' pets, create a foster program, pay for temporary boarding, or support a combination of services. Funds may also go toward routine veterinary care, emergency veterinary care, and pet deposits.

### **Q: What is the Purple Leash Project's goal?**

**A:** Purina and RedRover are working toward providing one million safe nights for domestic violence survivors and their pets by the end of 2030.

### **Q: How is Purina helping advance policy for pet-friendly domestic violence shelters?**

**A:** Purina helped found the PAWS Act Coalition, which successfully advocated for the Pets and Women Safety (PAWS) Act. The legislation established federal grants to support pet-friendly domestic violence shelters and help survivors leave violent situations with their pets. Purina continues to advocate for reauthorization and federal appropriations to sustain this critical program.

### **Q: How is Purina raising awareness of the Purple Leash Project?**

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**A:** During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Purina is bringing together its partners in sports and entertainment to help shine a light on the issue. Earlier this month, the U.S. Women's National Team hosted Purina Honorary Captain Mariska Hargitay at its match against Spain at Audi Field in Washington, D.C. Purina also honored Paige DeSorbo with the 2026 Variety Courage Award for her advocacy and willingness to share her experience of surviving an abusive relationship.

## About Nestlé Purina PetCare

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations.

Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Dog Chow, Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Friskies and Tidy Cats. Our more than 11,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year. Nearly 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://purina.com) or subscribe [here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

## About RedRover

Established in 1987, RedRover is a 501(c)(3) animal welfare nonprofit focused on bringing animals out of crisis and strengthening the human-animal bond through emergency sheltering, disaster relief services, financial assistance, and education. RedRover has earned a coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. To learn how RedRover is creating a more compassionate world, visit [RedRover.org](https://RedRover.org).

## SOURCE Purina

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