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MEDIA RELEASE

Humane Society Is In Critical Mode

KITCHENER & STRATFORD, ONTARIO: The Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth (HSKWSP) is feeling more than strained this summer. They have been constantly functioning in crisis mode. With a large volume of animals coming in (345 animals currently in their care between both centres), kennels constantly full, and a waiting list of 139 pets needing help next, the Humane Society staff is also receiving a high volume of calls from pet owners needing help.

“Shelters across North America are at breaking points and have been for a while. We are short-staffed, adoptions have slowed despite reducing adoption fees, donation sizes have decreased, demand for outreach programs has skyrocketed, demand for low-cost veterinary services has skyrocketed, there’s a high volume of animals coming into our centres, and call volumes for surrendering have significantly increased,” stated Calla James, director of community engagement and outreach.

Those seeking the Humane Society’s help are typically citing financial reasons, as well as lifestyle changes. Over the last year, there has also been a significant jump in callers looking to surrender young, large-breed dogs that are exhibiting behaviours that their owners cannot handle. Based on their ages, they are typically obtained during the pandemic, have not received any training, and have not been socialized.

“We have almost 140 pets on our waiting list needing help, but the stray and abandoned animal volumes continue to keep our kennels full. This year alone, we have taken 1,066 stray and abandoned animals into our care! Callers are increasingly angry, and the staff is burnt out. We not only need our community’s help, but we are also asking for their kindness and patience as we do our best to help people and pets as quickly as we can,” James added.

The Humane Society aims to keep owners and their pets together at all costs before turning to surrender as an option. They have launched programs, including:

- [Pet pantry program](#) – to help provide pet food and supplies to those who are experiencing financial hardship or a personal crisis.
- [Low-cost rabies and microchip clinics](#) – to help pet owners ensure their pets can be rabies vaccinated and microchipped, so they can be returned home when found.
- [Emergency boarding services](#) (when capacity allows) – available through social services and emergency services referrals, for anybody experiencing a crisis and needing short-term boarding to source alternative care.
- [Veterinary outreach services](#) – available through social services referral, for pet owners who are experiencing homelessness or who are vulnerably housed to access vet care for their pets.
- [Alternatives to surrendering](#) – earlier this summer, the Humane Society launched the Home to Home platform for their two animal centre locations, which is a platform that allows pet owners to self-rehome their pets, helping to alleviate the stress in shelters. The platform is available for no cost and can be accessed right through the Humane Society’s website.

“There isn’t a better time than now to support the HSKWSP. We are a self-funded charity that receives no level of government funding for our charitable programs and services. We are also in desperate need of foster homes to support both our centres. Anything you can do to help us is appreciated,” James stated.

How can you help NOW? Head to kwsphumane.ca to:

- [Adopt](#) – view available animals on their website and submit an online application.
- [Donate](#) – via a one-time donation or become a monthly donor.
- [Foster](#) – complete an application form under the How to Support tab.
- [Support programs](#) – view the current wishlist of items needed under the How to Support tab.
- Share, share, share – like and follow the Humane Society on Facebook, X and Instagram and share posts of animals looking for new homes.

For more information on the Humane Society’s initiatives, please visit kwsphumane.ca.

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We are leaders in animal welfare in our communities and committed to promoting the human-animal bond, while focusing on the responsible treatment of animals through education, collaboration, compliance, advocacy and care. Charitable BIN 11898 3550 RR0001

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