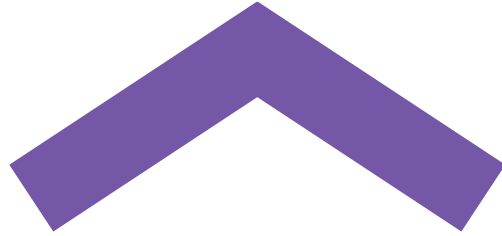


# Michelson Found Animals

Saving Pets, Enriching Lives.



**Marci Fukuroda**  
**Rainbow Services**  
**Legal Counsel**

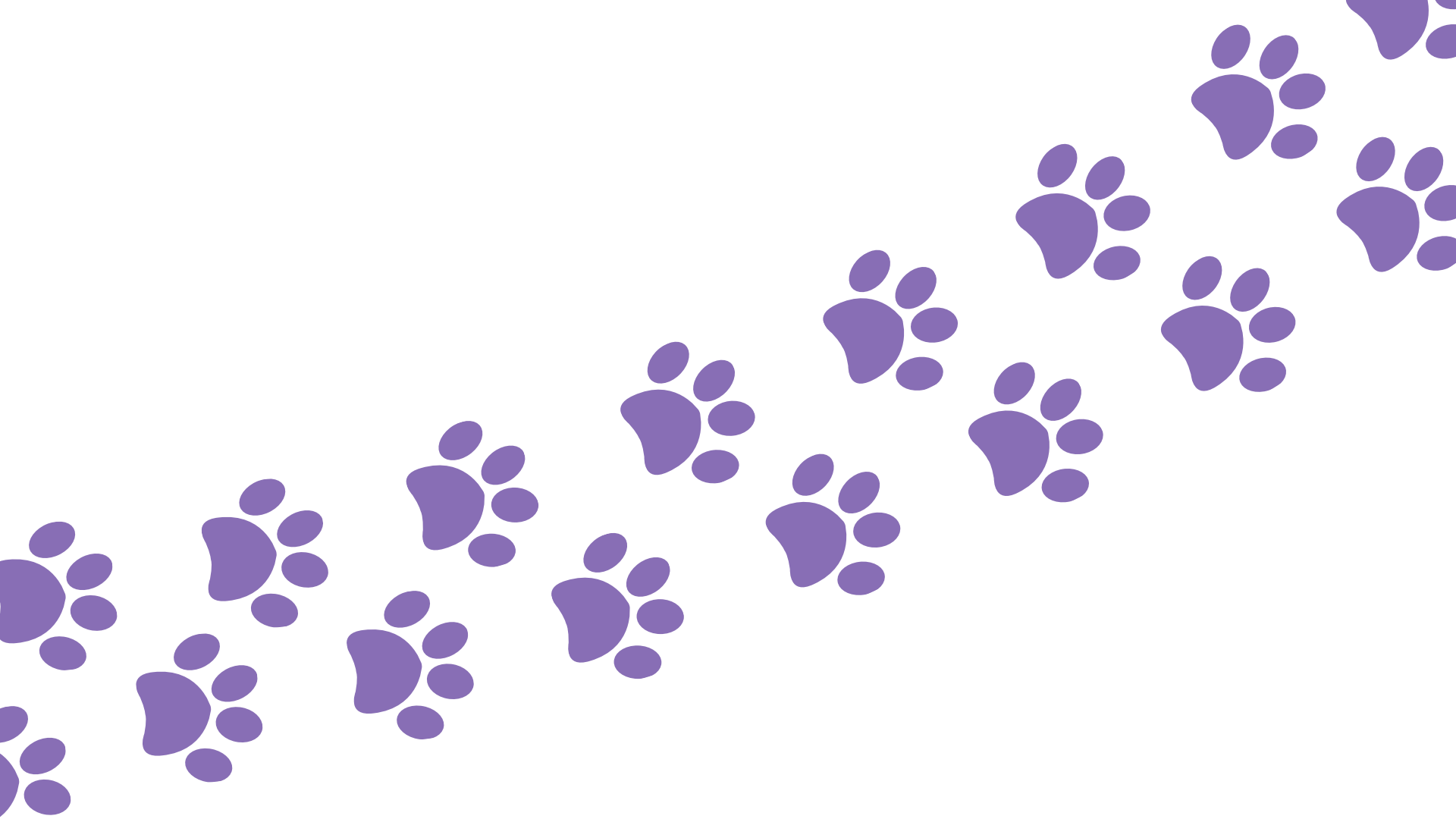


Domestic Violence Shelters  
Keeping Families & Pets  
Together in Times of Crisis



**Marci Fukuroda**

Director of Legal Services, Rainbow Services, Ltd





Families and communities are safer  
when we make pets a priority  
at shelter agencies.





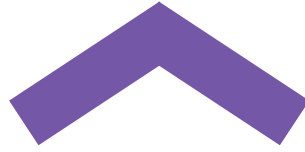
## Dangerous Link between DV and Animal Abuse

Pet abuse is one of the most significant **predictors** of intimate partner violence

Survivors in DV shelters are **11x** more likely to report animal abuse by their partners than non-abused individuals

Between **18%- 48%** of survivors delay leaving a dangerous situation out of concern for their pet's safety





## Need for Safe Options for DV Survivors with Pets

Despite significant demand, **very few** DV shelters in LA CO. accommodate families with pets

SPCA programs for shelter families **are not** always a good fit

- Only admit pets during business hours
- 60-day maximum stay
- No pet/owner interaction





## Human-Animal Bond is Critical During Times of Trauma

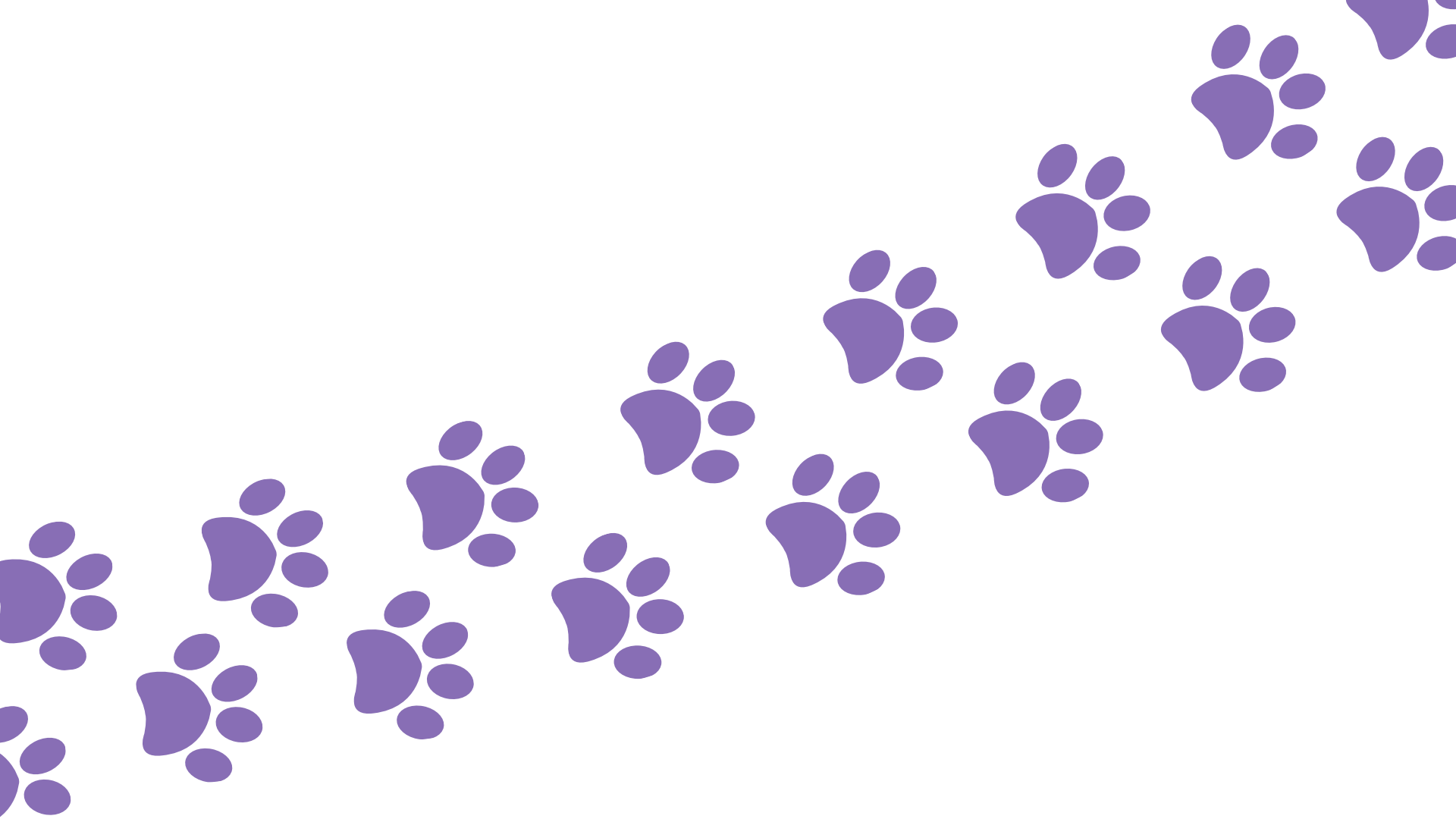
Pets provide **nonjudgmental** companionship and support

Pets can **lower** stress level, blood pressure, and cholesterol

Interacting with pets can improve a **child's self-esteem**

**Separation** from a pet can cause added anxiety and trauma



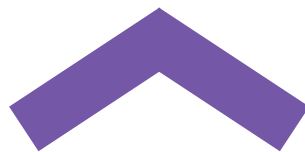






# Sara's Story





# Our Process: Evaluating Our Capacity

## We assessed:

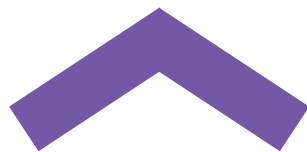
Existing models  
and research  
(e.g., SAF-T  
Program)

Physical  
capacity

Attitudinal  
capacity

Funding and  
resources





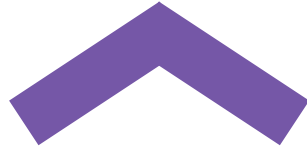
## **Our Process: Getting Buy-in**

Board of  
Directors, staff  
members,  
insurance  
company, etc.

Minimizing impact  
on shelter's  
communal living  
environment

Establishing  
policies, procedures  
and intake process  
for pets

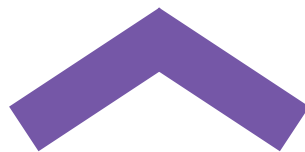




## **Our Process: Policies and Procedures**

- Separate living area and outdoor dog run for family with pets
- Support to ensure pet is vaccinated and on flea treatment
- Support to ensure that pet owner has everything needed to care for the pet
- Pet owner is solely responsible for day-to-day care of pet
- Pets allowed in designated areas and must be on leash when not in these areas
- Waiver of liability
- SPCA program is the default





## Our Process: Implementing the Program

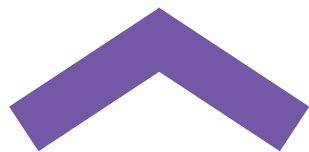
Pet program  
launched in  
December 2013

Publicized  
program among  
community  
partners three  
months prior to  
launch

Admitted our first  
family with a pet  
within days of  
launch

Plans to expand  
program: adding  
pet room to  
emergency  
shelter and  
accepting pets in  
transitional  
shelter





## **Current Challenge: Significant Need for More Pet-Friendly DV Shelters**

Harder to move families with pets into transitional and permanent housing

Our efforts have only had minimal impact

Long-term change requires a culture shift in the DV field and focused funding and resources for pet programs

