**For immediate release: February 27, 2023**

### SPCA Florida Offers FL State Animal Response Coalition Disaster Awareness & Operations Training Classes In Partnership With Collier County UF/IFAS Extension

**Lakeland**: Florida is hit with disasters that impact our animals every single year. SPCA Florida is on a mission to save dogs and cats when natural disasters and man-made disasters strike.  Trained volunteers with Florida State Animal Response Coalition, better *known* as FL SARC, ensure these animals have someone on their side when they need it the most.  When you join our team, it gives FL SARC the power to:

* Respond to local, state, and national disasters
* Deploy emergency resources and trained responders
* Transport animals to safety before, during, and after a disaster

To register to become a lifesaving volunteer, go to [www.flsarc.org](http://www.flsarc.org) and click on "training"

An opportunity to take the Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class on Sunday, 3/5/23, at UF/IFAS Extension in Naples, FL. The Awareness Level (Level 1) class will provide the knowledge and skills needed to work in an emergency animal shelter as a trained professional disaster animal responder. The Awareness class is open to anyone 18 years old or older.

In addition to the Awareness Level class, an Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class on Monday & Tuesday, March 6th and 7th, 2023 at UF/IFAS Extension in Naples, FL. The Operations Level (Level 2) class will provide the knowledge and skills needed to lead a team. Operations class is open to anyone who has completed Level 1, Awareness Class and has a current FEMA 100 Certificate.

“Our goal is to provide skilled and FEMA certified volunteers as a ready resource during times of disaster”, stated Shelley Thayer, Executive Director for SPCA Florida.

Additional training classes will be listed on the website below as they are scheduled.

When disaster strikes, together, we will be ready.

**About SPCA Florida**

*Founded in 1979, SPCA Florida exists to eliminate animal suffering and engage the entire community in the welfare and well-being of animals. SPCA Florida will help and heal 20,000 dogs and cats through its SPCA Florida Animal Medical Center and provide direct care for 4,000 animals through its Adoption Center this year. Ani-Meals and Food Assistance Programs, provide food and medical care for animals of homebound families and families who need supplemental food for thousands of dogs and cats each year.*

SPCA Florida Partners:

**ORLANDO CAT CAFÉ**

*The Orlando Cat Café opened in September 2016. Working together with SPCA Florida, Cagan Management Group, Inc., and Minch Coffee Company, our joint mission is to save the lives of homeless cats in Central Florida while drinking good coffee. Visit orlandocatcafe.com for more information.*

**Petco**

*Petco is a category-defining health and wellness company focused on improving the lives of pets, pet parents and our own Petco partners.*

**PetSmart**

*We love pets and we believe pets make us better people. PetSmart is the trusted partner to pet parents and pets in every moment of their lives.*

**Petsense**

*Founded in 2005, Petsense by Tractor Supply is a pet specialty retailer focused on meeting the needs of pet owners, primarily in small and mid-size communities. We specialize in providing a large assortment of pet food, supplies and ervices, such as grooming and training, and offering customers a tailored experience while providing the top-quality products they need at a price they love.*

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