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### **SPCA Florida Receives PetSmart Charities® COVID-19 Impact Grant**

Lakeland FL - SPCA Florida was awarded \$15,000 from PetSmart Charities for the COVID-19 pandemic impact in Polk County FL.

With this grant, SPCA Florida will help preserve the bond between pets and their families by providing support to pets at-risk in Polk County communities impacted by COVID-19. Funds will be used for supplies, food, sheltering, transport, and medical treatment.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has affected families and their pets throughout Polk County,” said Shelley Thayer, Executive Director, SPCA Florida. “The PetSmart Charities grant is providing us with the funds to help the substantial increase of requests for food, supplies, and medical assistance. Without this support, we would see a historic increase in owner surrendered pets. At a time when families need the love of their pets more than ever, PetSmart Charities is helping keep them together,” stated Thayer.

“Our organization remains committed to the health and welfare of pets and their people during this unprecedented time, and our hearts go out to those impacted by COVID-19,” said Kelly Balthazor, regional relationship manager at PetSmart Charities. “We’re thrilled to support SPCA Florida, which not only provides the only pet food bank in the county, but continues to serve as a critical community resource during this extraordinary time of need.”

Since 1994, through its partnership with nearly 4,000 humane societies, SPCAs and pet rescues across North America, PetSmart Charities has helped more than 9 million pets to find loving homes via its in-store adoption program in over 1,600 PetSmart® stores. The leading funder of animal welfare has also donated nearly \$430 million to improve access to veterinary care, to positively impact communities, to connect people and pets and to help preserve families through initiatives like SPCA Florida.

SPCA Florida is grateful for the opportunity to give our communities animals a long life of unconditional love to the families who care for them.

For more information, or to find other ways to help homeless pets, please call (863) 577-4600.

#### **About PetSmart Charities®**

*PetSmart Charities, Inc. is committed to finding lifelong, loving homes for all pets by supporting programs and thought leadership that bring people and pets together. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities helps to find forever homes and families for more than 600,000 shelter pets each year. Each year, millions of generous PetSmart shoppers help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its role as the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, granting almost \$430 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart Inc., PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator, a third-party organization that reports on the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of nonprofits, for the past 17 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of charities rated by this organization. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org).*





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### **About SPCA Florida**

*Founded in 1979, SPCA Florida is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization headquartered in Lakeland, serving all of Polk County and the surrounding communities. Dedicated to improving the lives of pets and people, SPCA Florida provides caring, compassion and hope to more than 4,300 homeless animals entering our doors each year.*

*Open to the public, the SPCA Florida Medical Center is a state-of-the-art veterinary facility that heals and helps 50,000 patients annually. Thousands more pets and people are served through our community outreach and education programs.*

*Every \$100 donated to SPCA Florida, or essentially the cost of an average adoption, equates to \$3,000 worth of positive economic impact throughout Polk County, Central Florida, and the state. Additionally, we are proud of the fact that 92% of every dollar goes directly to program resources and helping homeless animals.*

