



The Center for Women and Families

*Short-Term Housing Solutions Provide
a Safe Temporary Home for Pets*



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Trusted Animal Housing Solutions



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— JANE WHITE

Background

The Center for Women and Families in Louisville, KY provides trauma-informed advocacy and support at no cost to protect families and their pets from domestic violence. Through the Safe Haven Program, pets can stay at the center for 48 hours while the Kentucky Humane Society works to place the animals in a foster home.

Challenge

The Center for Women and Families provides a temporary safe haven for pets as a way to help domestic violence victims escape their abusers. The Center for Women and Families provides services in its 80,000 square-foot building that was previously a motel. The Center for Women and Families is one of only 100 domestic violence shelters that accepts pets, and the space wasn’t optimal. Both dogs and cats were housed in cages in the same room also used for storage.

“The correlation between animal abuse and domestic violence is very high and often the victim has a very close relationship with the pet and may even resist leaving an abusive situation out of fear of harm for their pet,” said Jane White, development manager for the Center for Women and Families. “Our facility needed a design that created an environment to reduce stress for the pet and that would allow them to start to be more comfortable, especially while housing them separately from their owner.”

Solution

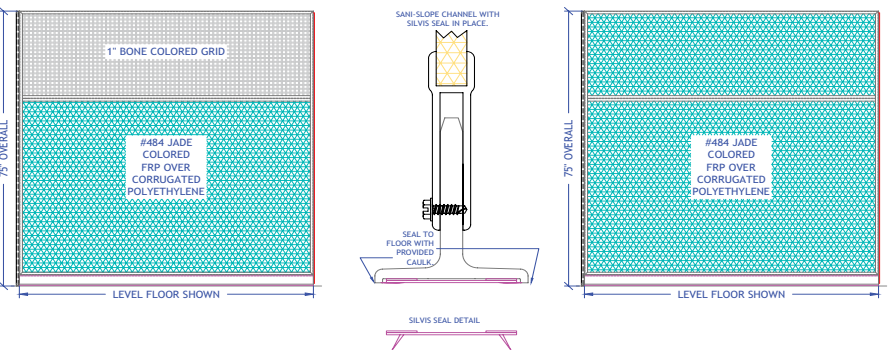
Following a 14-month renovation of the building, a donor provided funds to create new Safe Haven pet spaces. The donor, also a major contributor to the Kentucky Humane Society, encouraged the two organizations to strengthen their 15-year relationship and work together more effectively and create separate spaces for dogs and cats. Staff from both organizations met regularly and focused on the additional goal of raising awareness during Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October about the correlation between domestic violence and animal abuse.

The Kentucky Humane Society recommended Mason Company to provide design and equipment recommendations for upgraded, professional short-term holding. The dog housing solution included three Sani-Kennels with stainless steel grid grates. The FRP side panels are jade to match the teal and purple colors associated with the Center for Women and Families. The Sani-Kennels have Mason’s patented Silvis Seal™ and Sani-Slope™ to prevent cross-contamination between the kennels when there are multiple dogs being housed.

For cats, two of Mason Company’s customizable cat towers connect to a play center in the middle that cats can access. Tempered glass gates enable the cats to look out and shelves allow for climbing and perching. The litter area is hidden at the bottom in a separate area to allow the cats privacy.

Mason partnered with Kennel Installations to provide installation using professionally trained technicians and to ensure the process went smoothly.

“Our timeline involved a period of just a few months for design and installation, and the awesome staff at Mason Company and Kennel Installations were great partners to work with throughout the process,” said White.



Results

The newly renovated pet spaces at the center have helped further remove the barriers that families may feel when seeking help. The solution replicates an animal shelter and provides a safe place for pets to live in a stress-free environment that helps with their transition out of traumatizing crisis situations.

“We worked with Mason Company to design the new addition to the Center for Women and Families to make it easier for victims of domestic violence to leave, and the new dog and cat areas have opened up a lot of avenues for growth in the help we can provide families and their pets,” said White. “It’s providing a really great offering and will allow us to grow our overall program as more people realize we also offer quality housing for their animals.”

White said the three Mason Sani-Kennels are so much better for the dogs than the previous large cages. They are easy to clean, and clients at the center help take care of their pet in conjunction

with the staff. The owners visit their pet every few hours as part of the Safe Haven program and feed, walk and play with them. Kennel Installations staff installed the free-standing kennels in one day and provided the Center for Women and Families ideas to build on as their program grows.

White added, “It has been a joy to watch the cats in the cat condo as they play on the swing and in the hammock and crawl through all of the available options in the play center.”

The new pet areas were completed in time to hold a grand opening in conjunction with Domestic Violence Awareness Month. White said the timing helped the Center for Women and Families raise awareness of the importance of removing barriers for families to find a safe place by housing their pets.

“The entire experience was amazing and we love the new animal areas and are so proud of our updated offering,” said White. “We could not be more pleased with the results and highly recommend Mason Company and Kennel Installations.”



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