



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL

Pr o c l a m a t i o n

Proclamation Recognizing Survivors & Pets for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

WHEREAS, The City of Sebastopol stands with survivors of domestic violence. Survivors of abuse show extraordinary courage as they protect themselves and their loved ones, seek safety and stability, and rebuild their lives. This proclamation is offered on behalf of their voices; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol recognizes that domestic violence affects families in every community, including our own. Domestic violence is not rare - it is one of the most common and devastating public health and safety issues impacting more than one fourth of our local neighbors, friends, coworkers, and families; and

WHEREAS, research from twelve studies demonstrates that 50% of survivors delay or decline to leave an abusive situation if they cannot bring their pets. 70% of households have animals, and 71% of survivors report that their abuser threatened, harmed, or killed their pets. These facts make clear what survivors have always told us: pets are family, and the safety of pets is inseparably linked to the safety of survivors; and

WHEREAS, Sebastopol-based nonprofit Ruthless Kindness, a 501(c)(3) organization, removes critical barriers for those survivors seeking safety with animals. Ruthless Kindness ensures that survivors do not have to choose between their safety and the safety of their pets, through free veterinary care, pet foster placement, and comprehensive support. Without such services, many survivors remain trapped in abusive homes, or choose homelessness over separation from their animals; and

WHEREAS, Ruthless Kindness is a proud on-site partner of the Family Justice Center of Sonoma County and a grateful collaborator with other domestic violence and victim service providers throughout Sonoma County. This diverse safety net extends the reach of support for survivors and their families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol affirms its commitment to stand with survivors. This month, and every month, we honor their courage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, I, Stephen Zollman, on behalf of the City Council of the City of Sebastopol, do hereby recognize Survivors & Pets for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the Great Seal of the City of Sebastopol this 7th day of October, 2025.

Stephen Zollman
Mayor