



## Resource Guide Terminology Defined

**Advocacy** - To provide public support; to speak up on behalf of a person, animal or family in need; to be a champion for a living being or a cause. If there are restrictions on how your agency could provide public support, look through our advocacy section and identify which of the action steps your team can engage in. In order to keep more families together, we must stay informed and learn how to effectively communicate the needs of our community members with housing agencies, police enforcement, animal service commissioners, social services agencies and other intersecting entities that play a role in keeping people with their pets.

**Community members** - Local pet owners and non-pet owners

**Companion animals** - This term is used to refer to pets, but shifts more towards identifying them as living beings who provide us with companionship, amusement, psychological support and all other functions that add to the human-animal bond. The term shifts away from animals only being recognized as “property.” Companion animal does not refer to service animals or emotional support animals.

**Families** - Since family make-up could vary greatly, in the toolkit whenever the term “family” is used, it includes human-animal families, interspecies families, individual and their pet(s), multiple family members and their pet(s)

**Experiencing homelessness** - According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA - <https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/definitions-homelessness>), this includes:

1. *An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, such as those living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or places not meant for habitation, or*
2. *An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence (within 14 days), provided that no subsequent housing has been identified and the individual/family lacks support networks or resources needed to obtain housing, or*
3. *Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth who qualify under other Federal statutes, such as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, have not had a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 60 or more days, have had two or more moves in the last 60 days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed because of disability or multiple barriers to employment, or*
4. *An individual or family who is fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, has no other residence, and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing*



**At risk of homelessness** - According to SAMHSA

(<https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/definitions-homelessness>), this includes individuals and families who:

1. *Have an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the area, as determined by HUD, **and***
2. *Do not have sufficient resources or support networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or place not meant for habitation, **and***
3. *Exhibit one or more risk factors of homelessness, including recent housing instability or exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care such as foster care or a mental health facility*

**People and pets experiencing homelessness** - this term refers to a unique population within those experiencing homelessness who have pets. Studies have shown that the estimates of people and pets experiencing homelessness together can vary, but the most recent count done in the US states that they make up approximately 10% of the total population of those experiencing homelessness (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10530789.2020.1795791>).

**Support** - to provide assistance. Support could be seen in many different ways; this includes how organizations can work together to create partnerships that support each other in working toward a common goal.