



## Independence Holding Company Announces PetPartners, Inc. and the American Kennel Club Expand Relationship in Response to Record Growth in Pet Ownership

February 11, 2021

STAMFORD, Conn., Feb. 11, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Independence Holding Company (NYSE: IHC) today announced that fueled by record growth in pet acquisition and registration, the [American Kennel Club](#) (AKC®), the leading advocate for dogs, and PetPartners, Inc. (PPI), its longtime administrator of AKC Pet Insurance (insurance underwritten by [Independence American Insurance Company](#)), announced an expanded licensing and marketing agreement which takes their relationship to an unprecedented new level.

The expanded agreement will feature marketing campaigns that highlight pet health and wellness, but also protect against the financial burden that comes with the rising cost of veterinary services. AKC and PPI have been partnering in pet insurance since 2003 and remain dedicated to advocating for pets to receive quality, and timely medical treatments throughout their lifetime.

Many first-time pet owners underestimate the breadth of responsibilities that come with caring for a pet, including costs associated with preventive care and unexpected medical treatments. Whether the new owner acquired their puppy through a breeder or through rescue, AKC and PPI recognize the critical need for greater awareness of the components of responsible pet ownership, in order to help promote the human-animal bond and the lifelong well-being of pets.

A record increase in dog acquisition as people look for comfort in the face of COVID-19, has fueled a significant rise in AKC new puppy registrations as well as AKC's Canine Partners mixed breed enrollment. Consistent with its AKC Responsible Pet Promise, the AKC provides a complimentary initial vet appointment through AKC's Veterinary Network, a lifetime microchip enrollment from AKC Reunite, live training support staffed by expert trainers at AKC GoodDog Helpline, and access to [30 days of pet insurance](#) coverage through [AKC Pet Insurance](#), which provides a link to [TailTrax™](#) an app that instantly retrieves pet medical records, pet insurance claims, and connects to a [24/7 vet helpline](#) for around-the-clock pet health support and advice.

"As an active advocate for pet health and responsible dog ownership, the American Kennel Club is pleased to expand our relationship with PetPartners, a trusted partner in pet insurance," said Dennis B. Sprung, President and CEO of AKC. "A key part of responsible pet ownership is veterinary visits, both expected and not. Having the security of pet insurance is a smart option to ensure your pet never goes without the care it needs."

"Life with a pet is a very rewarding experience and the bond between a dog and a human is like no other," said Lane Kent, President of PetPartners, Inc. "We are committed to helping pet owners prepare for emergencies and illnesses so they can enjoy peace of mind that their pet is protected, and freedom from worry about the unexpected veterinary bills that can be debilitating for many families."

For more information on the work of the American Kennel Club or on PetPartners, please contact [Jeena.Choi@ihcgroup.com](mailto:Jeena.Choi@ihcgroup.com) or visit [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) or [www.akcpetinsurance.com](http://www.akcpetinsurance.com).

### About American Kennel Club

Founded in 1884, the American Kennel Club is a not-for-profit organization which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world and oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its more than 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. More than 22,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred and mixed-breed dogs are held under AKC rules and regulations each year including conformation, agility, obedience, rally, tracking, herding, lure coursing, coonhound events, hunt tests, field and earthdog tests. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Humane Fund, AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Reunite and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

AKC, American Kennel Club, the American Kennel Club seal and design, and all associated marks and logos are trademarks, registered trademarks and service marks of The American Kennel Club, Inc.

### About PetPartners, Inc.

PetPartners provides pet health insurance in all 50 states of the United States, underwritten by Independence American Insurance Company (in WA by American Pet Insurance Company). Since 2003, PetPartners has been the exclusive provider of pet health insurance protection to registrants of the American Kennel Club through the AKC Pet Insurance brand. In 2004, PetPartners was selected by the Cat Fanciers' Association, the largest registry of purebred cats, to provide health insurance to CFA registrants. Founded by Sir John D. Spurling, a leading British innovator in pet insurance who remains on its Board of Directors, PetPartners became a member of [The IHC Group](#) (NYSE: IHC) in 2017.

### About AKC Pet Insurance

AKC Pet Insurance is the name used by PetPartners to offer and administer insurance plans and is neither an American Kennel Club business nor an insurance company. American Kennel Club does not offer, administer, solicit, market or sell any insurance plans. Insurance is underwritten and issued by Independence American Insurance Company, rated A-(Excellent) by AM Best Company (in WA, by American Pet Insurance Company). Insurance plans are offered and administered by PetPartners, Inc., a licensed agency. For more information, visit [www.akcpetinsurance.com](http://www.akcpetinsurance.com).

### **About The IHC Group**

Independence Holding Company (NYSE: IHC), formed in 1980, is a holding company that is principally engaged in underwriting, administering and/or distributing group and individual specialty benefit products, including disability, supplemental health, pet, and group life insurance through its subsidiaries (Independence Holding Company and its subsidiaries collectively referred to as "The IHC Group"). The IHC Group consists of three insurance companies (Standard Security Life Insurance Company of New York, Madison National Life Insurance Company, Inc. and Independence American Insurance Company). We also own the following agencies: (i) PetPartners, Inc., our pet insurance administrator; (ii) IHC Specialty Benefits, Inc., a technology-driven full-service marketing and distribution company that focuses on small employer and individual consumer products through its call center, career agents, and Independence Brokerage Group; and (iii) The INSX Cloud Platform through My1HR, our wholly owned Web Based Entity. Our InsureTech division is comprised of our call centers, field and career agents, in-house MarTech artificial intelligence capabilities and domains, including [www.healthdeals.com](http://www.healthdeals.com); [www.healthinsurance.org](http://www.healthinsurance.org); [www.medicareresources.org](http://www.medicareresources.org); [www.petplace.com](http://www.petplace.com); and [www.mypetinsurance.com](http://www.mypetinsurance.com).

### **Forward-looking Statements**

Certain statements and information contained in this release may be considered "forward-looking statements," such as statements relating to management's views with respect to future events and financial performance. Such forward-looking statements are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from historical experience or from future results expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Potential risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, economic conditions in the markets in which IHC operates, new federal or state governmental regulation, IHC's ability to effectively operate, integrate and leverage any past or future strategic acquisition, and other factors which can be found in IHC's other news releases and filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. IHC expressly disclaims any duty to update its forward-looking statements unless required by applicable law.

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