

Operational Guide

Animal Adoption



AMERICAN HUMANE

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About the Authors

Jan McHugh-Smith

Jan McHugh-Smith is the CEO of the Humane Society of Boulder Valley, a private nonprofit organization. The Society is an open admission shelter that cares for 7,800 homeless animals annually and provides animal control services to the local community.

With twenty-one years of animal welfare, Jan has worked in many different positions as an animal care and control professional. She chairs the American Humane Association Shelter Services Advisory Committee and served on the board of the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators and Colorado Federation of Animal Welfare Agencies. Her education includes bachelor's degrees in biology and music.

Jodi Lytle Buckman, CAWA

Jodi Lytle Buckman is the Executive Director of the Capital Area Humane Society in Columbus, Ohio, an open admission humane society responsible for cruelty investigations in Franklin County and sheltering over 12,000 animals each year. Jodi has worked in animal sheltering for over 17 years, serving agencies in Maine and Minnesota as Executive Director. Prior to her move to Ohio, she served as Director of Animal Protection Services for the American Humane Association where, for five years, she served as a resource for shelters nationwide and as a frequent speaker in the areas of animal sheltering and protection.

Jodi serves on the Board of Directors for the Ohio Federated Humane Societies, is a member of the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators, achieved the Certified Animal Welfare Administrator (CAWA) designation in 2006 and has a degree in biology.

With her husband, David Lytle, children, Samuel and Zoë, and former foster dog Spot; Jodi lives in Worthington, Ohio.

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Introduction

When a homeless animal comes into our care, we do our best to provide for its fundamental needs — safety, shelter, food, water, and medical care. Beyond that, our greatest gift is placing the animal in an appropriate home. Matching pets and people is an opportunity to give the joy of animal companionship while saving the homeless animal's life.

The purpose of this guide is to outline the elements of an effective adoption program so that each animal sheltering organization can formulate and operate the best adoption program possible for its particular set of circumstances. Adoption programs will, and should, vary from shelter to shelter. However, all good adoption programs share certain elements:

- A proactive screening process to match animals and people for compatibility
- An evaluation and matching system focused on providing a positive experience for the adopter
- A mindset that places primary emphasis on education

Acting as the temporary guardian of an animal and making a determination about adoption placement is a difficult task to say the least. Adoption programs walk the fine line between assessing the person's capabilities to care for an animal and meeting the animal's needs.

One of the most important components of an adoption program is teaching people about proper pet guardianship/ownership, regardless of whether or not they adopt at your facility. Acting in the best interest of animals never means antagonizing or alienating the public. A good adoption program treats potential adopters with respect and consideration. Research

clearly shows that people are more receptive to learning new ideas and values when they are treated like intelligent, competent, and well-intentioned adults.

The following assumptions are a good philosophical beginning for any adoption program:

- People who come to animal shelters to find a pet support your organization's mission.
- People need information to make sound choices in adoption, and we, as the experts, must provide that knowledge.
- We have an obligation to the animal to find a home that best matches his physical and social needs.
- We have an obligation to the adopter to find a pet that best matches her expectations of living with a companion animal.
- There are many places people can acquire a pet, and shelters must be competitive in the market to adopt out animals.
- We always respect an adopter's experience and knowledge.

Giving every consideration to a potential adopter does not mean giving a pet to every potential adopter. It simply means treating the person with dignity and respect as well as listening to their "side of the story."

The beliefs and goals of a humane organization are the backbone of its adoption program. Three important institutional attitudes are:

- **Education.** Viewing every interaction with the public as an educational one.

- **Flexibility.** Striving for the most positive solution in any situation, using policies as guidelines, not as absolute directives.
- **Commitment to improvement.** Working to evaluate and improve the adoption program in response to both internally and externally generated feedback.

The best adoption programs are those that balance the interest of the individual animal with the needs and wants of the community. There is no such thing as an ideal adoption program. Instead, each program must be based on the numbers and needs of the animals served, the local community, and the shelter's overall goals and objectives.

A Note About Language

A great deal of discussion continues regarding the use of language in animal sheltering. From the uses of terms like *dog pound*, *animal shelter*, *humane society*, *rescue league* to words like *adoption*, *rehoming*, *owner*, *guardian*, *intake*, *admissions*, and the like. Throughout this guide, the authors chose to use the word "adoption" to describe the process of transferring ownership of an animal from a sheltering organization to an individual. Reference is also made to pet "owners" and "guardians." We encourage animal sheltering organizations to consider the use of language in their work and to think about what words best reflect the nature of their work on behalf of animals in their community.

Goals and Objectives

The first step in beginning any program is identifying goals and objectives. Shelter staff and volunteers responsible for the maintenance of a program cannot work together effectively if specific goals and

objectives have not been clearly communicated. Begin by considering these fundamental elements of an adoption program:

- The availability of adoptable animals
- Staff knowledgeable in animal behavior and in communication
- A process to create the best match between pets and people
- Educational opportunities and post-adoption support for the public to learn about pet care, behavior, training, and pet overpopulation
- A place for pets and people to safely meet
- Documentation of the adoption process

Next, consider the goals and objectives of the program. For example, some basic goals might include:

- To place as many medically and behaviorally sound pets as possible in homes where they will receive good and stable lifelong care
- To help prospective adopters in the selection of a pet who will be most compatible with their lifestyle
- To extend educational efforts to the adopters and the community by providing information and advice about pet care, behavior problems, training, and pet overpopulation
- To help solve the pet overpopulation problem in the community
- To upgrade both the image of animal shelters and the public's perception about the kind of animals available for adoption at shelters
- To promote animal shelters as great places to adopt pets
- To promote the animal shelter as a successful, professional, and caring organization with many worthwhile programs

Before Adoption — Animal Sheltering and Care

Intake Information

The placement of any animal is facilitated by how much information is available about the specific pet. Adopters crave the details beyond breed-specific characteristics and want to find out as much as possible from previous guardians, the foster home, or the shelter's staff.

Gathering information at the time of relinquishment or transfer assists in the placement process. Most shelter software systems include fields to gather basic training information such as if the animal is housebroken. Diving into the details of a behavior or medical concern takes time upfront, but it provides valuable information for successful placement. Written questionnaires or one-on-one interviews with the families provide vital information at the time of relinquishment.

Relinquishment can be scheduled to allow for a thorough interview to collect the following types of information:

- General history
- Animal's habits (eating, sleeping, exercise)
- Medical issues
- Behavior issues
- Bite history
- Experience with other animals and children
- Training
- Action taken to resolve issues – medically or behaviorally

See the Sample Relinquishment Questionnaires included in Appendix A.

Legal Exchange of Animal Guardianship/Ownership

Know your local and state laws that pertain to the transfer of guardianship/ownership of pets. States set different legal requirements for the impoundment of stray and abandoned animals. To avoid legal action about the possession of a pet, have clients who bring in a pet sign a waiver that states their relationship to the animal (i.e., guardian/owner or stray) and that releases the animal into the agency's care. Clearly written statements about the agencies policies and procedures protect the shelter from legal action.

Transparency of Disposition

Clients may request that the shelter notify them about the final disposition of an animal. There are many things to consider when deciding whether or not to provide this service. While it is fulfilling to share the success of placing an animal, it stresses the staff to share news of euthanasia. On the other hand, not knowing what happened to the animal can be equally distressing for the client. Posting photos of lost and unwanted animals on the Internet opens the door for clients to track their pet's journey through the shelter. Each agency must weigh their legal responsibilities with the demands of their clients. Some agencies allow clients to pick up their animal if it does not qualify for adoption, and they set clear contact and timeframe expectations. No matter what policy an agency follows, it must train staff to deliver information in a compassionate and informative manner.

Health Care Protocols

Provide all incoming animals with a thorough health examination and necessary veterinary medical treatment before placing them for adoption. Health problems easily noticed with close contact

can often go undetected once that animal takes up residence in a cage (for example, mange). Therefore, an initial health check is very important.

A preliminary health exam and subsequent treatment are critical to reduce the threat of disease. Conduct regular daily health “rounds” to monitor the kennel areas for any signs of illness or injury. Health checks are essential for the welfare of individual animals as well as for general disease control within the shelter.

Document any signs of illness or injury in the animal’s records and report it to the appropriate personnel immediately.

To help maintain the health and well being of animals housed at the shelter, implement a comprehensive health care program, including isolating or euthanizing animals with communicable diseases. The public must have confidence in the health of a shelter’s adoptable animals.

A total health care program should include the basic criteria for physical examinations, as well as treatment and vaccination protocols.

The purpose of a physical examination is to discover and describe abnormalities, either physical or behavioral. The physical examination needs to be thorough and documented. This is best accomplished by establishing an exam routine that is done in the same order every time. For example:

- Describe the animal
- Observe the animal’s general appearance and attitude
- Note the posture, gait, and behavior
- Take the temperature (examine the rear quarters at the same time), pulse, and respiration

- Weigh the animal (needed for dispensing most medications)
- Examine body parts in the following order: head and neck, eyes, nose, mouth and throat, ears, trunk and extremities, mammary glands, penis, vulva, anus, and tail

Complete basic medical tests at this time. These tests include, but are not limited to fecal checks, heartworm tests, feline leukemia virus tests, and any applicable skin scrapings or parasite examinations.

Note all abnormalities and make a decision regarding the animal’s qualification for adoption based on the severity of the condition, the shelter’s ability to treat the illness or abnormality, and the animal’s adoption potential.

Establish a comprehensive vaccination and treatment protocol. Grooming and treatment against external parasites enhance the animal’s general well-being as well as increase its adoption potential.

Adoption Criteria

An animal shelter’s predominant goal is to prevent animal suffering. Although finding permanent, quality homes for unwanted animals is a high priority, the volume of surplus pets regrettably produces excess for which there are no homes. We must give these animals a dignified, painless death rather than allow them to suffer an unwanted or abused existence without love or proper care.

After the legal holding period expires, evaluate every animal, whether owner/guardian relinquished or stray, to determine if he is a suitable candidate for adoption. This can be determined by setting criteria for health and temperament to consider during the evaluation.

Balanced adoption programs provide a diverse selection of animals for adoption. It is not true that only young, attractive animals appeal to the public. Unfortunately, many shelters immediately discount old or handicapped animals as potential pets. By doing so, they may be missing out on a chance to find good homes for such animals. Experience proves that a wide range of animals appeal to various segments of the general public. With proper adoption protocols and education, it's not uncommon to place geriatric or handicapped animals or those needing medical treatment, as long as the animal's situation is disclosed to the adopter.

In addition to the health check guidelines, consider other items in determining adoptability, including outward demeanor, previous history, age, temperament, general appearance, health and behavior problems, resources for treatment, and shelter space.

Consider, then choose from a variety of behavior assessment tools available for use in shelters, including the SAFER assessment tool from the American Humane Association and Emily Weiss or Sue Sternberg's temperament test. Whatever tool used, here are some of the areas to consider:

Outward Demeanor

Will people and other animals be safe around this animal? Is the animal extremely frightened, very shy, or aggressive? What are the chances of this animal adjusting to a new home and environment?

Previous History

Does the animal have a history of neglect or poor care? Has the animal been kept strictly outdoors? While these factors do

not rule out adoption, consider them as part of the animal's adjustment to a new home. Is there a history of biting or aggressive behavior? Do not place aggressive animals and/or animals with a bite case history up for adoption. Think about the liability and trust placed on the agency to provide safe animal adoptions in the community. If an adopted dog harms a person or animal in the community and the media covers the story, the poor publicity impacts the adoption of all shelter animals. Does the animal have a history of not using the litter box? Unless you know the reason for not using the litter box or you believe the animal will use a litter box with proper support, do not consider it for adoption. An information sheet filled out by a previous guardian/owner aids in adoptability evaluation. It also gives potential adopters background information.

Age

Is the animal too young to be placed? Is there an appropriate foster home available? If the animal is too young to be put up for adoption (actual age depends on breed, species, general health, and mental attitude) AND an appropriate foster home or kennel space is not available, euthanize it.

General Appearance

Unfortunately, looks count — a good bath and some basic grooming dramatically increase an animal's chance of being adopted.

Behavior Problems

Does the animal jump fences, dig holes, scratch furniture, chew destructively? Can behavior modification be started in the shelter and can adopters be coached on management and prevention? Depending on the cause or severity of the problem, the animal may or may not be put up for

adoption. If you determine the animal to be an adoption candidate, he may require a special placement or rehabilitation in a foster home.

Shelter Space

How crowded are the kennels? How many other animals are available that are similar to the one being evaluated? Is extra holding space available in a “non-adoption” area? Are there any appropriate foster homes? Space factors can be an important consideration in evaluation.

Do not, however, use evaluation criteria as simple rules and regulations. Each evaluator should consider the big picture of the shelter’s situation when deciding the final disposition of animals. What are the resources available to keep this animal safe and comfortable in the agency? Ask if it is reasonable to think that someone would want to and could adequately care for the animal.

Qualifying animals for adoption is challenging. As with most aspects of animal sheltering, the organization must consider the needs of the community and available resources when determining what its adoptability guidelines will be.

Housing Adoptable Animals

Animal comfort and cleanliness are the main considerations in housing animals who are eligible for adoption. Healthy, clean, and content animals are more adoptable, and visitors pleased by these conditions are more prone to adopt.

Establish a routine, daily cleaning schedule that includes disinfection of all surfaces. Clean not only cages but also litter boxes, food and water bowls, mop heads, and anything else used in or around the shelter. It is important to consider the

number of animals you house, the kennel structure, and the geographic location (and consequently, common diseases) of your shelter when establishing a cleaning protocol. Choose cleaning products with an eye toward effectiveness and safety. For instance, is the product harmful to cats (i.e., does it contain phenol-based ingredients)? Is it an appropriate agent for killing bacteria and viruses? Does it leave surfaces “looking clean”? Does it smell good? No single product will work for all areas, so establish and follow standard operating procedures for cleaning. For more information regarding kennel and cage cleaning, refer to the American Humane Association’s Operational Guide on Sanitation and Disease Control.

It is important to not only consider the health and comfort of the adoptable animals, but also that of the potential adopter. While respecting the necessity of sanitation and disease control, there are a variety of ways to make the adoption kennel more inviting.

Plants and Music

Invite the public to donate nontoxic plants to your facility. In addition to providing some color to the adoption room, plants help oxygenate the air. Music can also be a soothing addition to the adoption area, provided there are controls on the volume and the type of music played. A classical music station might be a great addition, or consider a variety of CDs such as nature sounds, piano, classical guitar, and smooth jazz.

Beds and Toys

Dogs and cats certainly enjoy something soft to rest on and toys to play with, but studies also show that dogs and cats with blankets and toys are more likely to be adopted than animals without such

amenities. Carefully manage the use of beds and toys from the perspective of safety and disease control. Launder and disinfect bedding regularly — especially when moved between animals. Toys that can be properly disinfected or simply thrown away when soiled/used are best. “Kongs” are a popular option for dogs in animal shelters. These sturdy toys, packed with kibble and just enough canned food to stick together when frozen, provide a great distraction for food-motivated dogs. Cats can often be entertained with simple distractions like the interior cardboard roll from toilet paper. Also, since cat toys are relatively inexpensive, consider simply sending toys home with the cats when they are adopted.

Names

The same holds true for animals with names rather than ID numbers on their kennel/cage paperwork. Animals with names are more likely to be adopted. Perhaps the use of both names and beds/toys helps a potential adopter identify with a particular animal and imagine him in their home.

Cat Shelves and Hideouts

Cats are, by nature, vertically inclined. Whenever possible, add durable shelving to cages so that cats have a chance to get up and away from their litter boxes and food bowls. Including small boxes or litter box covers (without the litter box below) to the cage can also give the cat a chance to hide out a bit. The disadvantage of a hide out is obvious — the cat may be out of sight for periods of time. The benefit, however, is that the cat will be less stressed and more comfortable.

Cat Colony Housing and Real-Life Rooms

Though not appropriate for every shelter, cat colony housing and real-life rooms can be great ways to feature adoptable animals. Real-life rooms are generally small rooms set up to mimic a home environment. Of course, disease control can be a challenge in these areas. Before introducing either a colony room or a “real-life” room, carefully discuss the disease control and transmission issues and research best practice from other shelters that use such rooms successfully. Also, weigh cats each week to make sure they are eating.

There appears to be a significant benefit to such rooms for adoptions. As with the use of names, bedding and toys, colony and real-life rooms seem to appeal to adopters. Again, perhaps the adopter feels as though they get a better sense of the animal because they aren’t in a cage or kennel.

Exercise and Socialization

Encourage staff and volunteers to spend time with the animals to make their transition to kenneling easier. A little exercise and TLC goes a long way in helping an animal adjust. Again, a happy animal is more likely to remain healthy and much more likely to be adopted.

Shelter Atmosphere

Remember, public perception is important. Ensure the adoption areas are comfortable and welcoming to four-legged and two-legged guests!

“Atmosphere” is defined as the general feeling or spirit of a place. A shelter should strive to create the best possible atmosphere for making the animals, and the people who visit, comfortable. People are more likely to adopt or suggest adoption to their friends if the shelter is inviting.

Overall Appearance

People form quick first impressions that are often difficult to change. Factors contributing to the first impression of a visitor include the overall appearance of the shelter:

- Grounds and outside of the building
- Cleanliness
- Odor control
- Paint
- Lobby and/or entrance areas
- Signage

While an agency may be challenged by an older facility, an orderly, clean shelter that is maintained sends the message that staff care about making a positive impression and taking good care of the animals. If you are unsure of your agency’s first impression, get a fresh pair of eyes. Have people come in and describe what they see and smell when they walk in the door.

Hours of Operation

Service availability impacts many areas of operation. While staffing issues can make it difficult to be open seven days a week for eight or more hours a day, consider the community’s lifestyle and normal retail operating hours. Limiting adoption hours means fewer animals get placed. Consider setting up appointments for adoptions, using volunteers to augment staff, and holding special evening adoption hours once a week.

Client Service

Frontline staff makes the first and strongest impression on clients. Hold high your expectations on greeting and helping people; a smile goes a long way in creating a warm feeling. Hiring people who enjoy being of service to people and animals is important in a successful adoption program.

Welcome visitors to the facility and provide directions to obtain service. While signage can facilitate the flow of people to see animals available for adoption, clients often have questions about the process. Streamlining the process for adoption will save the client and staff time and lower frustration levels.

Staff shortages are normal in shelters, and clients feel the effect when trying to get assistance. A busy lobby can be difficult to control while staff assists clients. Provide a mechanism, so clients know how long they will need to wait and where they are in line. Keep them informed and busy.

Meeting the Animals

Clients will vary in their expectations in visiting and adopting from an animal shelter. When creating a procedure for clients to view and meet with the animals available for adoption, think about the resources available. With high-volume adoptions, many shelters have clients take a number or use a check-in system to establish a queue for service. A small volume of animals and limited hours may mandate setting adoption appointments. The best practice is to make the system as user-friendly and as streamlined as possible to minimize wait time and client frustration.

Animal Information

There are a variety of ways to give clients information about the animals. Many clients use the Internet to view photos of animals available for adoption with captions on their basic traits. Clients can also read website information on the adoption process and download paperwork in advance of visiting the shelter.

Easy to read kennel cards provide clients with information on the animal before meeting with a staff person. Kennel cards should identify the animal, with a name, description or photo, age, sex. With the ASPCA's Meet Your Match™ program, shelters can use color coded cards to indicate dogs' personality type. Clients are then directed to a color based on their own personality profile. You can visit the ASPCA's web site at www.asPCA.org or email them at outreach@asPCA.org for more information on this program.

Access to Animals

Client safety is paramount. Considerations for public access to animals include:

- Ability to supervise people with animals
- Screening animals for safety
- Allowing unsupervised viewing without handling
- Bringing in household pets to meet adoption animals
- Health of animals available for adoption.

Each shelter must decide how to address client interaction with the animals based on the shelter structure, staffing, and type of animals available for adoption.

Making the Match — Animals and People

The ultimate goal in any adoption program is to match clients with animals so that a strong bond forms and results in a lifetime relationship, where both the animal's and person's needs are met. While striving for the perfect home for every animal is a wonderful ideal, the reality is there are also many acceptable homes available for animals. Philosophies regarding adoption vary widely, and each organization must consider the outcomes they hope to achieve through adoption. What is a successful adoption? Is the goal to reduce the number of animals euthanized? Is it to educate the public on responsible pet guardianship/ownership? Is it to find a home for a lifetime? To provide safe animals for adoption? To provide safe adoption homes for animals? What are the community's needs for pet adoption?

Think about all this when setting guidelines for an adoption program in a specific community. Once guidelines are set, train staff on how to counsel people in the match-making process. Training topics include animal identification, breed characteristics, animal health and behavior, and counseling methods. In the Petsmart Report on Adoption Forum II, animal care and control leadership identified five key areas for a successful adoption.

1. The match is suited to the individual animal and family.
2. The pet is afforded appropriate veterinary care.
3. The pet's social, behavioral, and companionship needs are met.
4. The pet has a livable environment, including appropriate food, water, and shelter.
5. The pet is respected and valued.

It is important to set achievable goals for an adoption program. In this example, if these five criteria could be met, it would be considered a successful adoption.

For a downloadable copy of the Report on Adoption forum II visit Petsmart charities' website at http://www.petsmart.com/charities/downloads/adoption_forum.pdf.

Well-intentioned staff can thwart adoption programs by judging people based on gut reactions or their own personal agendas. While it is our mission to protect animals, overzealous adoption screening creates roadblocks for adoption that are unjustified for both the animal and the client. A shelter's adoption philosophy and guidelines must consider the demographics of the region served by the shelter, community sentiment, and the animal's well-being.

Thankfully, scientists have become interested in the human/animal bond in the last decade, resulting in studies that give us insight into the bond and the risk factors for relinquishment. Studying the results of their efforts can provide data for adoption guidelines. These studies can be found online from the National Council for Pet Population Study and Policy at www.petpopulation.org.

No matter what procedure is used, base your adoption program on establishing positive relationships with the clients who care enough to be interested in adopting a homeless animal. Of the estimated 130 million animals living in U.S. households, only 20 percent came from animal shelters. If animal organizations want to find homes for the estimated 4 million animals facing euthanasia in shelters across America each year, we must

provide value-added service to attract people to our facilities to adopt.

Adoption Guidelines

The following are basic guidelines for any adoption program:

- The animal will be spayed or neutered.
- No animal will be adopted to an applicant with a known history of animal or child abuse.
- No animal will be adopted to an individual who is suspected of being drunk or under the influence of drugs at the time of adoption.
- No animal will be adopted out as a food source.
- The adopter can meet the five criteria set for a successful adoption as stated above.

Identify the animal care and control issues in your community to determine if other guidelines for adoption are appropriate.

Adoption counseling includes the opportunity to establish a rapport with clients to discuss their thoughts about responsible pet guardian/ownership and to educate them. Rather than trying to “control” clients’ behavior post-adoption through rules and regulations, a conversation to explore their belief system provides valuable insight to better match them with an appropriate animal.

Adoption Interviews

First, identify issues that cannot be compromised, then explore whether or not you can control elements of the issue through screening. For example, a client comes in to adopt a cat; the staff person asks if he plans to declaw the cat. At some shelters, someone who answers “Yes” would not be allowed to adopt. In others, clients sign a contract saying they will not declaw the cat. But, nothing really stops

the client from going down the street to the nearest veterinarian and making an appointment to declaw the cat.

Now, if we have a conversation about why we are concerned about declawing a cat or one that directs the client to a cat that is already declawed, we keep the door open to education and adoption. Instead of a rejection or refusal, an open conversation may provide the opportunity to shift belief systems. In rejection, the client walks out angry at the organization for being judged. Many of these people simply go to another source to find an animal without our support and counsel.

Staff trained in asking open-ended questions can avoid situations like this. These questions allow clients to express their expectations for a pet and how they value animals. If the animal they are interested in is not a good match, trained staff can redirect the client to an appropriate animal or ask them to wait and come back again. The adoption counselor must be a skilled listener and communicator.

Open-ended questions cannot be answered “yes” or “no” and usually start with “what” or “how.” For example:

- What kind of pet are you looking for today?
- What qualities are you looking for in a companion animal?
- How would you describe your lifestyle?
- What age range are you interested in?
- What are your plans for the pet when you are gone during the day?
- Tell me about your past experience with pets?
- How much do you know about our training and behavior programs?
- How long has it been since you’ve had a puppy or kitten?

- I noticed you are looking for a declawed cat. What are your concerns with taking home a cat with claws?
- Would you be interested in looking at adult animals that have been through training?
- What type of sleeping arrangement are you able to provide for your pet?
- How will you exercise your dog?
- What are you most concerned about in adopting a pet?
- What would you do if this dog didn't get along with your current pets?
- What would you do if your cat didn't use the litter box?
- What behaviors do you think you can't tolerate or would be difficult for you to manage?
- Tell me about the types of activities you'd like to do with the dog.
- What questions do you have for me?

Conversations with clients that encourage an exchange of information enhance the quality of adoption matches. Many organizations use simple one page Client Profiles that capture basic information: name, address, phone, and what they are looking for in a pet.

See the sample Client Profile forms included in Appendix B.

Home Visits

Some animal sheltering organizations consider home visits prior to adoption an integral part of the adoption process. For organizations doing adoptions in large volumes, this is generally not feasible. Home visits may have some merit for smaller scale adoption programs through volunteer or non-sheltered adoption agencies. Benefits may include an opportunity for very personalized attention and education, to verify specific needs for

the animal in question, and to ensure the animal and the adopter are set up for success.

Adoption Fees

How can we place a value on a living being? How can we begin to recoup the cost for care, medical services, sterilization, and counseling services? The reality is adoptions are subsidized through donations or taxes. It is important to charge adoption fees because it places a value on the animal and services you provide. Phil Kass studied the relinquishment rate on animals, and he found that pets who cost the person \$100 or more had a lower relinquishment rate.

Market demand for adoption animals determines what the community is willing to pay for the adoption fee. What costs must the agency recoup? If sterilization is mandated, can the agency afford to cover the cost, or could the adoption fee help? Some agencies have a fixed fee for all animals. Others vary the fee based on age. For example, an adult dog is less expensive than a puppy because puppies are in higher demand. Taking this a step further, animals that are in high demand because of their breed, size, age, or temperament may have the highest price of all, whereas the hard to place animals have a lower fee that is essentially "subsidized" by the easy-to-adopt, high-demand animals.

Every community is different, so consider the socioeconomic status of the community when determining the fee structure for adoptions. Obviously, shelters want to place as many animals as possible, but there is a fee associated with adoption to remind people of the value and responsibility required to care for homeless animals.

Adoption “Extras”

Adoption Packets

Make packets with adoption and general pet care information available to adopters. The best packet is assembled expressly for the individual adopter to meet his or her specific needs. Keep in mind that too much information can be as bad as too little information. Keep packets neat and well organized. Include educational information, copies of adoption contracts, and shelter contact information, along with an open invitation to call if the person needs any assistance or has problems or questions.

Collars and Identification

Identification tags are a pet’s life insurance. If an animal is outfitted with a collar and tag at the time of adoption, it helps ensure its future safety. Many organizations also provide identification for animals by means of an imbedded microchip. The advantage of a microchip is that it is generally a means of permanent identification. However, it is crucial that the shelter carefully research the microchip company they work with to ensure easy access to the scanners to read the chips and a well-managed and reliable database for lost animal reporting and recovery. Keep your own records of implanted microchips and provide automatic registration with an outside database.

Free Veterinary Health Examinations

To encourage responsible pet care and get adopters off on the right foot, provide them with a free veterinary health examination. A careful review by a veterinarian lets them know right off if there are any problems and allows them to set up a preventive schedule immediately.

Shelters can offer a complimentary veterinary health exam through their facility or through a cooperative program with participating veterinarians.

Pet Carriers and Leashes

Countless animals are lost on their way to or from a veterinary clinic or animal shelter. Again, an animal shelter should encourage responsible pet ownership and help adopters start off right. Don’t risk the chance of a newly adopted animal running off in the parking lot of your facility. Provide owners with a pet carrier or a leash. (Cardboard cat carriers can be purchased inexpensively in quantity and can be customized with your shelter’s name and logo, adding an extra “advertising” bonus.)

Post-Adoption Veterinary Care

Animal shelters receive animals from all over. Some are brought in by their owners, some are stray animals, and some are brought in through cruelty investigations. Many of these animals have never been vaccinated. Inevitably, viruses arrive at the shelter along with dogs and cats. Occasionally, these viruses go home along with adopted animals and cause illness.

Despite every effort to adopt healthy animals through a comprehensive vaccination and health maintenance program, some animals become sick after adoption. Always notify adopters that there is some risk of disease.

For the sake of the adopted animal and for the general goodwill of the adopter, institute a post-adoption veterinary care policy for a limited time after adoption. (Fifteen days exceeds the expected incubation period of most diseases and is a good time period.)

During this period, provide adopted animals with free care for infectious diseases that may have been acquired before the animal's arrival or during its stay at the animal shelter. Shelters can provide this care in house, through participating veterinarians, or by reimbursing adopters, as needed. If a shelter institutes such a policy, make it very clear to the adopter exactly what is covered in post-adoption care. (Normally, preventive care such as vaccinations, fecal checks, worming, or treatment of injuries would not be covered.)

Request File

Adopters don't always find the animal of their dreams on their first visit. To help those looking for a particular kind of pet, create a request file that can be checked daily against the animals housed at the shelter and those just arriving. Potential adopters can then be notified if "their" pet arrives. Potential adopters greatly appreciate this service, and it helps place animals quickly.

Contractual Agreements & Enforcement

The formal agreement signed by the client at the time of adoption plays an important role in the adoption program. Its effectiveness and enforceability can be crucial. While we always hope that a good placement is made, problems can occur. Knowing that your shelter can reclaim an adopted animal for mistreatment, cruelty, or violation of the signed agreement is reassuring. A strong adoption agreement allows an animal shelter to keep some control over the adopted pet's new ownership.

An equally important role of the adoption agreement is educational. Whether or not certain agreed-upon items are enforceable,

having adopters sign and agree to them reinforces their responsibilities and the shelter's expectations.

Do not take the signing of the agreement lightly. Make sure that the adopter actually reads the agreement before signing. If the adopter quickly signs the agreement without reviewing it, review it with him verbally.

Because the adoption agreement is a legal document, have your organization's attorney review the form. This might seem unnecessary, but if you have any problems later, you will be glad you took this precaution.

The following are suggested elements of an adoption agreement:

- Acknowledgment of receipt of the animal.
- Agreement to provide proper care and treatment for the animal. This statement may include an agreement to have the animal examined by a veterinarian within a specified time period.
- Agreement to sterilize the animal as specified by the shelter. A separate sterilization agreement is recommended as well.
- Agreement to license the animal in compliance with the laws and ordinances in force in the adopter's local municipality.
- Agreement not to allow the animal to be used for experimentation.
- Agreement to return the animal to the shelter if the adopter can no longer care for it. A variation of this agreement requires the adopter to return the animal to the shelter if the animal is not neutered at the time he can no longer care for it, but allows the adopter to find the

- animal a new home if the animal is already neutered.
- Agreement to surrender the animal, if stray, to its rightful owner if claimed within X days of adoption.
 - Agreement to accept all risks and responsibilities of ownership and to release the animal shelter from all liability.

A shelter may wish to add other items to the adoption agreement; these elements are by no means all inclusive.

See sample Adoption Contracts in Appendix C of this guide.

Sterilization Contracts and Enforcement

One of the main goals of a progressive animal adoption program is to help solve the pet overpopulation problem. Allowing animals to leave without any provision for sterilization is inexcusable. Simply put, no responsible shelter adopts animals without making provisions for their sterilization. Sterilization must be mandatory for all animals adopted — whether male, female, dog, or cat.

If someone is interested in breeding or is against sterilization (and all other adoption considerations are met), only allow them to adopt a previously sterilized animal or one who can be sterilized before it reaches the adopter's home. The ideal situation is a shelter that can sterilize animals in house prior to their leaving the facility. If that is not feasible, the second best alternative is to transport animals to private practitioners for sterilization prior to being released to the adopter.

Require all persons who adopt animals that have not yet been sterilized to sign a sterilization contract and pay a deposit.

Make the deposit amount substantial enough so that it is not easily disregarded by the adopter as disposable income.

Some states have mandatory sterilization laws for animals adopted from shelters. If your state does not have such a law, contact your state representative and discuss the possibility.

The basic elements of a sterilization contract include:

- Acknowledgement of receipt of the animal.
- Agreement to sterilize the animal by a specified date.
- Acknowledgment of a sterilization deposit to be refunded upon fulfillment of the contract. The actual agreement and terms will vary depending on the sterilization arrangements made by the shelter.
- Agreement that the adoption is conditional and not final until the animal is sterilized.

Sterilization contracts are often difficult to enforce and can create problems for an animal shelter. The best policy is to screen adopters for compliance with this policy and to emphasize the importance of sterilization.

See sample Sterilization Agreement in the Appendix D this guide.

Note: Even if a married couple adopts the animal, only one person needs to sign the actual contracts/agreements.

Effective sterilization follow-up is the key to the success of the sterilization contract. Timely follow-up is of utmost importance. Volunteers can play a valuable role in initial sterilization follow-up, with only the most recalcitrant adopters referred to shelter management.

Some suggested sterilization follow-up procedures are as follows:

At the time of adoption, complete the sterilization contract with the appropriate deadline date and have the adopter read and sign it. The most common time frame is to require surgery by the time the pet is six months of age. While some veterinarians and/or agencies advocate earlier or later ages, six months is the conventionally accepted age for sterilization.

Retain the original copy of the contract, and give a copy to the adopter. Reiterate the sterilization agreement when giving the adopter his copy.

Two to three weeks prior to the sterilization date on the contract, mail the client a postcard reminding them of the sterilization deadline. Some agencies have the adopter self address a postcard at the time of adoption, which is simply dropped in the mail at the appropriate time.

One week prior to the sterilization date on the contract, call clients to remind them and ask about their arrangements. Make repeated attempts to reach the clients if necessary.

Send a friendly letter to adopters who have not arranged for a sterilization appointment two to three weeks after the sterilization due date. The letter nicely but firmly reminds them of their contractual obligations.

Call any adopters with contracts still outstanding one month after the sterilization due date. If there is still no response, send an official (legal) letter by certified mail. It adds weight to send this

letter under the signature of the agency's cruelty investigation or legal department. Reclaiming the animal may be considered as a final action.

The key to a strong sterilization follow-up program is persistence and timeliness. An estimated 16 to 23 percent of the population moves in a year's time. The longer an agency waits to contact adopters, the greater the chances that they will be difficult to contact. People have a vast variety of schedules, so be persistent in calling clients. It helps to make calls on weekends and evenings.

If the adopter is willing to sterilize the animal but transportation or finances are stumbling blocks, make alternative arrangements. The bottom line is the sterilization, not logistical transportation or financial problems.

If the adopter refuses to sterilize the animal from the start, skip all of the intermediate steps. Instead, immediately send the legal letter and/or have a cruelty investigator make a visit. Shelters must be prepared to reclaim an animal if the adopter has not fulfilled the terms of the contract.

An added bonus of sterilization follow-up is the solicitation of new members and donation revenue for the organization. Adopters who comply on a timely basis often feel positively about the agency and willingly donate their refund or use it to pay for a "membership." It never hurts to ask!

Educational Efforts

Give all adopters a pet adoption packet containing pet care literature. Potential adopters who for some reason do not adopt an animal, either by their own choosing or at the discretion of the shelter, should still receive an adoption packet. They may choose to adopt at a later date, or they may purchase an animal through another source. Since one of the main goals of any adoption program is education, it is important to share basic pet care information with everyone you can.

Many organizations also rely on their websites to provide easy access to information for the public and adopters. This keeps the information accessible and avoids overwhelming the adopter with too much paperwork at the time of adoption.

Tailor your adoption pet care packets to dogs, cats, or small pets, depending on the adopter's selection. In addition, consider making special packets for young people.

Adoption counselors will cover some of the information that's in the packet, but take-home materials allow adopters to refer back at their leisure or share it with other family members.

Adoption packets often include literature on a wide range of topics. You can make up packets in advance or custom-make them for each adopter by selecting the appropriate materials from available literature.

Dog Topics

Educational materials that could be placed in a dog care packet include:

- Basic veterinary care
- Vaccination information
- First aid

- Grooming
- Puppy training
- Obedience training
- Crate training
- Housebreaking
- Chewing behavior
- Spaying and neutering information
- Kennel cough information
- Local leash and licensing laws
- Information on tags, microchips, and collars
- Fleas and flea control
- Heartworm
- Dogs and kids
- Dog bites and how to avoid them
- Finding a lost pet
- General information about the organization

Cat Topics

Educational materials that could be placed in a cat care packet include:

- Basic veterinary care
- Vaccination information
- First aid
- Declawing
- Scratching behavior
- Upper respiratory infection information
- Feline disease information, including feline urinary syndrome and feline leukemia information
- Spaying and neutering information
- Poisonous plant information
- Information on keeping cats indoors
- Local cat control laws
- Information on tags, microchips, and collars
- Fleas and flea control
- Finding a lost pet
- General information about the organization

Other Materials

In addition, insert adoption paperwork, veterinary health certificates, post-adoption care information, and a calendar of upcoming shelter fundraising and educational events into packets.

Pet Care Series

The average person watches a great deal of television and is used to programs and learning experiences that are rapid-moving and entertaining. Free, shelter-sponsored pet care clinics are a blend of education, professional show-and-tell, and G-rated entertainment suitable for the entire family.

Clinics can be held on a wide variety of subjects, including dog training and care, cat behavior and care, aquarium maintenance and fish care, horse care, bird care, small animal care, grooming, and obedience training. Some shelters even offer multi-session obedience training classes.

Public pet care clinics allow people to come and learn more about pets before or after adoption. A question-and-answer period at the end of the clinic allows people to share their own problems or get answers to specific questions about their pets. No amount of handouts can accomplish that.

Pet care clinics can be good for everyone. They can be helpful to people who are about to surrender their pet, those who are thinking about adopting a pet, those who have adopted a pet, those who are having problems with their pet, or those who are just interested in supporting your efforts in the community.

The secret of a successful pet counseling program is reaching people before they

reach “the end of their rope.” Counseling and information available to people wishing to surrender their pets can result in renewed hope, and some pet owners might just change their minds. Post-adoption programs can help adopters become good pet owners and remedy any problems that arise before they become frustrated and decide to get rid of their new pet.

Another benefit of pet care clinics is that they can help animal shelters with staff and volunteer training. Staff members and volunteers can learn more about pet care as well as learn what types of questions or problems new pet owners often have.

Here are some tips and advice for a successful pet care clinic series:

- Use knowledgeable instructors who know their topic and can convey a sense of confidence.
- Work cooperatively with a local dog training club or veterinary association. They can help provide expert instructors, and this alliance often leads to other cooperative ventures.
- Use a well-trained animal as well as a total “novice” animal for demonstrations. Let them see how a well-trained animal can act, and let them see how easy it is to train a total novice.
- Use a lot of props and visual aids. Remember, this is show and tell. The more items you have on hand, the easier it is for people to understand.
- Advertise — let people know you offer this service.

Sample outlines for dog and cat care clinics are included in the Appendix E of this guide.

After Adoption

Returns

The retention rate of an animal after adoption would seem to be the best hallmark for the success of an adoption program. Shelters measure the number of animals returned within a certain time frame (for example, three months). There is no standard “return rate,” but establishing a time protocol for returns can create a baseline to see if there are any emerging trends.

There is no such thing as a perfect home or a perfect animal, so judging people because they didn’t bond with the animal is counterproductive. When a shelter asks clients to return the animal if they cannot keep it, staff must treat clients who do so with compassion. Returns are an opportunity to get information from the adopter about what did not work. Changing this paradigm allows staff to gather additional information on the animal and provide good client service, easing the burden all share in the broken relationship. There is no reason to punish clients, but there is every reason to keep a healthy relationship with the client who is fulfilling our request.

Adoption Refunds

Establish an adoption refund policy, and make this policy clear at the time of adoption. The policy should consist of how much is refunded, when refunds are given, and if there is a time limit on refunds. Remember that adopters are your customers, and how you treat them affects how they feel about the organization for the long run.

In most shelters, adoption fees are nonrefundable except in cases of legitimate, unanticipated health or

temperament problems that occurred within a 15-day period. Many shelters allow for an adoption exchange, where people can adopt another animal at no additional fee if the first adoption is returned within the first month. Usually, people have up to six months to select an animal for an exchange adoption.

Whatever your policy, be sure that it is documented clearly in the adoption agreement for the client and that there is a process for documenting the return in your system.

Follow-ups

Adoption counselors do their best to make the right decision at the time of adoption. But many times there is not enough information on the animal to anticipate all the animal’s needs or behaviors. It is also impossible to get all the information about responsible pet guardian/ownership to the adopter. Comprehensive adoption follow-up can make a significant difference by cultivating a post-adoption relationship to assist with the adjustment to a new home. Adoption follow-up might even make the difference between someone giving up on a pet and returning it to the shelter or enjoying a long, happy relationship.

A comprehensive adoption follow-up program is important for several reasons:

- It offers the shelter the opportunity to help pet guardian/owners with the care and well-being of their pets and to assist with behavioral or medical problems adopters may face with new pets.
- It allows adoption personnel to remind adopters of their veterinary and sterilization obligations as agreed upon at the time of adoption.

- It promotes a positive continuing relationship with the organization and can help generate donations or memberships.

Approximately one to two weeks after adoption, plan follow-ups with new adopters. This can be done by phone, email, or mail. Some shelters make follow-ups at three days, three weeks, and three months to aid in the different phases of the animal's transition in the home. At the very least, conduct an adoption follow-up within a month of adoption. Otherwise, problems have a chance to get out of hand and frustrate the adopter.

A variety of people can handle adoption follow-ups, including office personnel, volunteers, or the adoption staff. Some adoption counselors prefer to do their own follow-ups to keep in touch with "their" clients. Encourage this attitude because it creates long-term relationships between adopters and the organization.

Keep the follow-up discussion friendly and informal. It's helpful to use a follow-up checklist, but make sure the conversation never sounds stilted.

The following is a list of some discussion guidelines for adoption follow-up:

1. Introduce yourself — your name, your organizational position (staff, volunteer).
2. Let the client know why you are calling: On behalf of the animal shelter to follow up on the person's recent pet adoption, to see how the pet is doing, and to find out if you can be of any assistance.
3. Find out if the client has a few minutes before proceeding. If not, find out when is a good time to call back.

4. Remain as conversational as possible, and try to refrain from simple questions and answers.
5. Ask open-ended questions on how the pet is doing.
6. Find out if the pet is wearing a collar and identification at all times.
7. Have they taken their pet to the veterinarian yet? If not, ask if they need help selecting a clinic near them, and stress the importance of preventive veterinary care.
8. Has the animal had any health problems? If yes, is the client aware of the post-adoption health care program?
9. Find out how the animal is adjusting. Remind the client, if necessary, that new pets take time to adjust to a new environment.
10. Are there any specific behavior problems? If yes, help with advice to the best of your ability. If there is a special problem requiring more detailed assistance, have someone get back to the client as soon as possible.
11. If necessary, remind the client of the sterilization due date.
12. Let the client know of any upcoming pet care clinics that might be helpful.
13. Find out if the client is a shelter member, and if not, explain (briefly) what your shelter does and how she can help. Ask if she would like to be mailed more information on becoming a member.
14. Remind the client that she is welcome to call for assistance if she has any problems with the adopted pet.
15. And finally, thank the client for adopting from your shelter.

Encourage the adopter to keep in touch if they have any questions. Provide a list of resources on the organization's website, so people have a place to go if they need additional information.

Keep track of the conversations in the animal's records. If the animal is returned, you will have more information on what the client tried to do to work through the situation. This could aid the next adopter or help staff match the animal in a different home. Also, is there a common theme in information needed by the adopter? Maybe additional training is needed to keep the staff up to speed on counseling and matching clients with pets.

A sample Adoption Follow-up is provided in Appendix C.

Program Opportunities, Challenges, and Evaluation

Statistical Records

While animal shelters have existed for more than 100 years, there is no reliable statistical base of information. Records regarding animals most often are not a high priority. The attitude of many shelters is that they are busy taking care of animals and don't take the time to keep records.

Yet, accurate record keeping is *the* management tool to measure the success of your program. It can make a big difference to your adoption program. It lets you know what you've accomplished, what you haven't accomplished, what you need to do, and how you can improve. It also allows you to keep abreast of new trends before they become a crisis.

Animal shelters should keep statistical records on all their activities, including adoptions. Many of these records prove very important in planning and updating your adoption program.

Keep monthly records of all shelter activities, including the number of animals received, placed, returned to

guardian/owner, died, escaped, or euthanized. Furthermore, keep a separate adoption report breaking down the adoption statistics even further, such as:

- Details on adoptions by species and age (mature or immature)
- Details on where the animals were adopted, if you have a mobile adoption unit or several sites
- The number of special adoptions (i.e., service dogs, subsidized senior citizen adoptions, purebred rescue placements)
- The number of adoption refusals and the reasons for refusal
- The number of adoption returns and the reasons for return (health reasons, temperament problems, not housebroken, moving, spouse/roommate doesn't want, landlord doesn't allow, owner doesn't have enough time)
- The number of adoption refunds issued and the reasons why
- The number of sterilization contract defaults and the reasons for default

Accurate statistics allow you to evaluate your program and improve your program and services to better meet the needs of animals and people in your community. The Asilomar Accords were developed in 2004 by a group of animal care and control industry leaders from across the nation. The Asilomar Accords offer a uniform method for collecting and reporting shelter data, in order to promote transparency. There are uniform definitions as well as a method of reporting animal shelter data. The American Humane Association recommends that shelters nationwide use this format. Additional information is available at www.asilomaraccords.org.

Volunteers

For more information regarding volunteer management, please refer to American Humane's Operational Guide on this subject.

Volunteers make a difference in all shelter activities, and adoption programs are no exception. Volunteers can counsel prospective pet owners, assist with match making between potential adopters and animals, make follow-up contact on pet adoptions, and help with kennel chores and animal care.

If you use volunteers in any part of the adoption program, give them the same orientation and training as paid staff. Well-trained volunteers can assist the staff a great deal by taking the time necessary to begin a dialogue with a potential adopter. There are, of course, many ways in which a volunteer can assist with the adoption program, including:

- Adoption Counseling
 - Match Making — introducing prospective adopters to animals who may suit them.
 - Client Support — being available to assist clients.
 - Get-to-Know-You Sessions — helping supervise sessions with potential adopters and the animals they are considering.
 - Adoption Completion — augmenting adoptions from beginning to end. With proper counseling and support, volunteers can complete adoptions.
- Exercise and Socialization
 - Dog Walking and Kennel Enrichment — crucial to the animals' health and well-being.

- Cat Socialization and Care — helps keep cats comfortable and well socialized while up for adoption.
- Rabbit Socialization — A partnership with a local House Rabbit Society can be very beneficial, ensuring that rabbit adopters are well-educated and have follow-up support from rabbit experts.
- Grooming, Fostering, Training
 - The quality of life and adoptability of animals in the shelter can be significantly impacted by volunteer efforts in these areas. Grooming ensures the animals remain presentable while up for adoption.
 - Foster care must be well-managed, but it can extend the sheltering ability of the organization. It also can provide training to help an unruly young animal redirect its energy into more rewarding behavior.
- Adoption Follow-up Calls
 - Many people are willing to volunteer but prefer not to visit the shelter. An ideal volunteer job for them is conducting adoption follow-ups by telephone.

Overall, volunteer activities like dog walking, cat holding, and simply administering TLC are essential tasks for the animals, a good adoption program, and shelter operations in general.

Special Adoption-Related Programs

Be creative. An adoption program doesn't have to stop at the shelter door. There are a variety of special programs that add to the overall success of your program.

Adoption Referral and Regional Collaboration

Don't be afraid to refer someone to another facility or a responsible breeder if you don't have the pet for her. Collaborating with other responsibly run organizations serving homeless animals in your area ultimately benefits your community and the region. Some shelters use web-based adoption pages to make it easy for people to browse adoptable animals from throughout a region. And when someone has his or her heart set on a Brussels Griffon — face it, your shelter probably won't be receiving one any time soon. If you talk this client into adopting a terrier mix instead, it may be a big mistake. Steer these types of people in the right direction instead. Let them know where to go and where not to go for their pet. Let them know why it could be a mistake to buy a pet from a pet store. If they intend to buy a pet from a breeder, help them choose a responsible breeder. Teach them to tell a responsible breeder from an irresponsible one, and discuss with them the significant benefits of following through with spaying or neutering their new companion.

Handicapped and Senior Citizen Placements

Any pet owner can tell you having a pet is beneficial to her health and well-being; the scientific community has even documented the benefits of pet ownership. Working with a responsible caregiver organization to place older pets with disabled and senior citizens can be instrumental in the placement and

supervision of special home adoptions. This agency can help screen suitable placements and assist with ongoing guidance, as needed. Keep in mind that healthy senior pets can be a great match with a senior citizen adopter.

Mobile Pet Adoption Programs

A mobile pet adoption program brings pet adoptions into the community at large, promotes shelter activities, and raises funds. These adoption programs do require careful planning and coordination, but they can significantly improve the visibility of your organization and adoptable animals.

Nursing Home Adoptions

Many nursing homes have pet visitation or pet-facilitated therapy programs in conjunction with the local animal shelter or dog training club. Some of these homes will become interested in permanently adopting an animal for their facility. These placements can work out wonderfully, or they can be disastrous. Take care to ensure the animal has one responsible caretaker and that animal interaction will be supervised, as needed.

Breed Placement

Purebred breeders can often assist an animal shelter with finding good responsible homes for dogs of their particular breed. Some breeders have extra space and can house a dog longer than the shelter can while waiting for the perfect match. Just make sure you set some definitive guidelines for the program, including a requirement that all animals be spayed or neutered prior to placement, regardless of bloodlines.

Satellite Adoption Centers

A limited number of animals can be placed for adoption at a satellite adoption center.

In some areas, local veterinarians foster one or two kittens in their clinics until adopted by a client.

Service Dog Placement

Organizations that train seeing-eye, service, or hearing dogs often accept shelter dogs. Again, set some definitive guidelines. Make sure to visit the facility before placing any animals, and make sure the animal is sterilized.

All special adoption-related programs require some extra planning and work. The shelter loses some control, but with the right safeguards and supervision, the programs work. The important thing is to uphold the same policies and standards as with regular adoptions so that animals are placed in responsible homes.

Adoptions Marketing

It is important to remember that humane societies are competing with other businesses and individuals in the pet market. That makes marketing adoptable animals along with the services of the humane society even more important.

There are many formal adoption-related public relations and marketing activities.

“Alumni” Promotions

All universities and colleges have alumni promotions; why not humane societies? Alumni promotions can be as easy as putting up an alumni bulletin board or as involved as conducting a major alumni fund drive. Adopters are often proud of their pets, and many feel especially proud that they “saved” an animal — why not take advantage of that feeling and encourage Fido’s owner to support his fellow “classmates”?

Pet Advertising

One of the most effective ways to increase pet adoption while gaining exposure for the shelter is through advertising. Shelters can advertise in the classified section of their local paper, in the Yellow Pages, in magazines, or through a full-page advertisement featuring “pets of the week.” Local businesses are often interested in sponsoring shelter advertisements.

Pet Contests

Pet contests are always popular. Contest ideas are only limited by your imagination. Some categories include smallest pet, largest pet, ugliest pet, oldest pet, celebrity pet look-alike, and best trick. Participants have fun and compete for gift certificates while the shelter promotes its adoption program and raises money.

“Pet of the Week” Programs

Pet of the Week programs are probably the most prevalent form of shelter public relations. Pet of the Week programs run on a wide range of media outlets, from television programs to radio talk shows to newspaper features. The one thing they all have in common is the promotion of a particular pet (or pets) and promotion of the shelter as a good place to adopt a healthy, happy pet. Local papers may donate space for a featured pet of the week.

Shelter Tours and Open Houses

Showing groups (both adults and children) through your facility familiarizes the community with your location as well as with your programs and activities. People who have been through your facility, either on an official tour or as a guest at an open house, are likely to remember the shelter when it comes time to adopt an animal.

These are only some of the many public relations activities that can help promote pet adoption. For additional information on PR opportunities, consult American Humane's Public Relations Operational Guide.

Resources

Further Reading

The more knowledgeable you are, the more you can help. The following list is recommended reading.

Cats

The Fastidious Feline. How to Prevent and Treat Litterbox Problems

Patricia B. McConnell, PhD

The Indoor Cat

Patricia Curtis

G.P. Putnam's Sons

The New Natural Cat

Anitra Frazier & Norma Eckroate
The Penguin Group

Dogs

Beginning Family Dog Training

Patricia B. McConnell, PhD

The Chosen Puppy

Carol Lea Benjamin

Howell Book House

Culture Clash

Jean Donaldson

James & Kenneth Publishers

Dog Problems

Carol Lea Benjamin

Howell Book House

Don't Shoot the Dog! The New Art of Teaching and Training

Karen Pryor

Bantam Books

How to Raise a Puppy You Can Live With

Claire Rutherford & David H. Neil

Alpine Publications

I'll be Home Soon

Patricia B. McConnell, PhD

Mother Knows Best: The Natural Way To Train Your Dog

Carol Lea Benjamin

Howell Book House

The Other End of the Leash

Patricia B. McConnell, PhD

Playtraining Your Dog

Patricia Gail Burnham

St. Martin's Press

Second-Hand Dog: How to Turn Yours into a First Rate Pet

Carol Lea Benjamin

Howell Book House

The Evans Guide for Housetraining Your Dog

Job Michael Evans

The Right Dog for You

Daniel F. Tortora, Ph.D

Simon and Schuster

The Urban Dog

Patricia Curtis

Bantam Books

Dogs and Cats

Canine and Feline Behavioral Therapy

Benjamin Hart and Lynette Hart

Lea and Febiger

**Owner's Guide to Better Behavior in
Dogs and Cats**
William E. Campbell
American Veterinary Publications, Inc.

Pet First Aid
Bobbie Mammato
Staywell

The Well Dog Book
Terri McGinnis, DVM
Random House, Bookworks Books

Especially for Young People

Animal Doctors
Patricia Curtis
Delacorte

Animal Partners
Patricia Curtis
E.P. Dutton

Animal Rights
Patricia Curtis
Lodestar Books

Dog Training for Kids
Carol Lea Benjamin
Howell Book House

Some Swell Pup
Mathew Margolis and Maurice Sendak
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Other Resources

Pet Loss
Pet Loss Support Page
www.pet-loss.net

Poison Control
ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center
(888) 426-4435
www.aspca.org

Health and Veterinary Care

Cats

Pet First Aid
Bobbie Mammato
Staywell

The Well Cat Book
Terri McGinnis, DVM
Random House, Bookworks Books

Dogs

**Dog Owner's Home Veterinary
Handbook**
Delbert Carlson and James Griffin
Howell Book House

Animal Organizations that Provide Free and/or Low-Cost Literature

American Humane Association
63 Inverness Drive East
Englewood, CO 80112
(303) 792-9900
www.americanhumane.org

American Humane Education Society
350 South Huntington Ave.
Boston, MA 02130
www.mspca.org

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
424 E. 92nd St.
New York, NY 10128
(212) 876-7700
www.asPCA.org

American Veterinary Medical Association
930 North Meacham Rd
Schaumburg, IL 60196
(847) 925-8070
www.avma.org

Animal Protection Institute
PO Box 22505
Sacramento, CA 95822
(916) 447-3085
www.api4animals.org

Animal Welfare Institute
PO Box 3650
Washington, DC 20007
(703) 836-4300
www.awionline.org

Friends of Animals
777 Post Road
Suite 205
Darien, CT 06820
(203) 656-1522
www.friendsofanimals.org

Fund for Animals
200 West 57th St.
New York, NY 10019
(888) 405-3863
www.fund.org

Humane Society of the United States
2100 L. Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 452-1100
www.hsus.org

National Association for Humane and Environmental Education
67 Norwich Essex Turnpike
East Haddam, Ct. 06423
www.nahee.org

Nicki Meyer Educational Effort, Inc.
(Crating information)
31 Davis Hill Road
Weston, CT 06683
(203) 226-9877

Progressive Animal Welfare Society
PO Box 1037
Lynnwood, WA 98046
(425) 787-2500
www.paws.org

Society for Animal Protection Legislation
PO Box 3719
Georgetown Station
Washington, DC 20007
www.saplonline.org

Tree House Animal Foundation, Inc.
1212 W. Carmen Ave
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 784-5488
www.treehouseanimals.org

A P P E N D I X A

- A-1 Dog Behavior Profile
- A-2 Stray Dog Information Sheet
- A-3 Cat Behavior Profile
- A-4 Supplemental Cat Form
- A-5 My Cat's Meow-Cat Behavior Profile
- A-6 Animal Release Form
- A-7 Sample Kennel Card with
Relinquishment Contract

DOG BEHAVIOR PROFILE

DOG'S NAME _____

BREED _____

SEX

- Male Female
 Neutered Spayed

CURRENT AGE _____

ABOUT YOUR DOG'S HISTORY

How old was your dog when you obtained him? _____

From where did you obtain the dog?

- Found/stray Previous owner Rescue Group Breeder Bred at home
 Shelter (name) _____ Pet store (name) _____

ABOUT YOUR DOG'S HEALTH

Has your dog been to a veterinarian in the past year? Yes No

Is your dog current on its vaccinations? Yes No

Please provide the name, address, and phone number of your veterinarian:

Does your dog have any medical problems? Yes (check all that apply) No

- Allergies* Arthritis Conjunctivitis Diabetes Epilepsy or seizures
 Giardia or diarrhea Heart murmur Hip dysplasia Kennel cough Organ failure
 Thyroid Tumors Other*

*For allergies or other, please explain:

What medications is your dog currently taking?

ABOUT YOUR DOG'S HABITS AND BEHAVIORS

Where does your dog spend the day?

- Inside, unconfined Inside, confined to a room Inside, confined in a crate
 Outside, unconfined Outside, in fenced yard or dog run Outside, on rope or chain lead
 Garage or basement At doggie daycare At work, with owner
 Other: _____

How many hours per day is your dog alone? _____

Where does your dog spend the night?

- Inside, unconfined Inside, confined to a room Inside, confined in a crate
 Outside, unconfined Outside, in fenced yard or dog run Outside, on rope or chain lead
 Garage or basement Other: _____

What is your dog's exercise routine?

- Run/long walks daily Short walks daily
 Run/long walks weekly with short walks daily
 Spends time in yard, no walks necessary Lap dog
 Other: _____

Has your dog ever had experience with children? Yes No

Lived with children Ages: _____

Regularly visited by children Ages: _____

Infrequent contact with children Ages: _____

No experience with children

Negative experience with children (please explain):

Would you recommend your dog be placed in a home with children?

- Yes, any ages of children
 Yes, but only children older than _____
 No

What brand of dog food does your dog eat? _____

How much does your dog eat? _____

When does your dog eat? _____

Is your dog housetrained?

- Yes No: has occasional accidents has frequent accidents

Under what circumstances might your dog have an accident?

Has your dog been through any obedience training? Yes (check all that apply) No

- Puppy class Beginner obedience Agility Service training Guard training
 Home training Other: _____

What commands does your dog know?

- Sit Stay Down Speak Shake
 Roll over Heel Other: _____

Has your dog ever been introduced to a crate? Yes No

Has your dog ever escaped from your yard? Yes (check all that apply) No

Door dashed Broke fence or gate Chewed or broke rope or chain

Jumped or climbed over fence (indicate height and type of fence): _____

Has your dog ever shown any of the following behaviors?

Baring teeth Lunging Nipping Snapping Aggression

None

Other: _____

Has your dog ever bitten someone and broken the skin? Yes No

Has your dog ever shown any aggressive, dominant, or fearful behaviors towards other animals (dogs, cats, wildlife, etc.)? Yes No

(If yes, please fill out the supplemental profile)

Would you recommend your dog be placed in a home with other animals?

Any animals Other dogs Cats Small animals No other animals

Does your dog have any fears? Yes (check all that apply) No

Water Vacuums Loud noises Thunder/lightening

Other: _____

What does your dog do when frightened?

Does your dog have any behavioral issues? Yes (check all that apply) No

Chewing Digging Excessive barking Food protection/aggression Toy protection/aggression

Chronic escaping Other: _____

Exhibits these behaviors:

Only when alone Only when you're home Always Other: _____

For how many hours is your dog comfortable being alone? _____

What are your dog's favorite toys and activities?

Please use the space below for any additional information you would like to share about your dog.

STRAY DOG INFORMATION SHEET

Did you give the animal a name? Yes No

If yes, what name did you give? _____

Is the dog good around other:

- Dogs Cats Other animals
 Not around dogs Not around cats Not around other animals

Does the dog walk well on a leash? Yes No

Is the dog housebroken? Yes No Unknown

Does the dog appear to have been obedience trained? Yes No

If yes, to what extent?

Is the dog good with adults? Yes No

Please explain: _____

Is the dog good with children? Yes No

Please explain: _____

Does the dog bark frequently? Yes No

Is the dog: Active Quiet

Check the words that best describe the dog:

- Friendly Noisy Shy Aloof
 Fearful Aggressive Hyperactive

Other comments:

CAT BEHAVIOR PROFILE

CAT'S NAME _____

BREED _____

SEX

- Male Female
 Neutered Spayed

CURRENT AGE _____

DECLAWED?

- Front only All four
 Rear only Not declawed

ABOUT YOUR CAT'S HISTORY

How old was your cat when you obtained him? _____

From where did you obtain the cat?

- Found/stray Previous owner Rescue Group Breeder Bred at home
 Shelter (name) _____ Pet store (name) _____

ABOUT YOUR CAT'S HEALTH

Has your cat been to a veterinarian in the past year? Yes No

Is your cat current on its vaccinations? Yes No

Please provide the name, address, and phone number of your veterinarian:

Does your cat have any medical problems? Yes (check all that apply) No

- Allergies* Arthritis Conjunctivitis Diabetes Epilepsy or seizures
 Giardia or diarrhea Heart murmur Hip dysplasia Kennel cough Organ failure
 Thyroid Tumors Abscess or cuts URI Other*

*For allergies or other, please explain:

What medications is your cat currently taking?

ABOUT YOUR CAT'S HABITS AND BEHAVIORS

Where does your cat spend most of his time?

- Indoors only Outdoors only Indoors at night
 In barn or shed Indoors with access to outdoors In garage or basement

Other: _____

Housetraining – check all that apply

- Uses a litterbox Goes outdoors Has occasional accidents
 Has frequent accidents Sprays

If your cat does not consistently use a litterbox, please fill out supplemental profile

What kind of litter does your cat prefer? _____

What brand of cat food does your cat eat? _____

How much does your cat eat? _____

When does your cat eat? _____

Has your cat ever had experience with children? Yes No

Lived with children Ages: _____

Regularly visited by children Ages: _____

Infrequent contact with children Ages: _____

No experience with children

Negative experience with children (please explain):

Would you recommend your cat be placed in a home with children?

- Yes, any ages of children
 Yes, but only children older than _____
 No

Has your cat ever lived with other animals? Yes (check all that apply) No

- Other cats only Dogs only Rodents

Would you recommend your cat be placed in a home with other animals?

- No Other cats only Dogs only Small animals (specify) _____

Does your cat have any fears?

- Loud noises Vacuums Thunder Strangers Other: _____

What does your cat do when he's scared? _____

Has your cat ever bitten someone and broken the skin? Yes No Date of last bite: _____

Does your cat have any behaviors for new adopters to work on?

- Nipping Scratching people Scratching rugs or furniture

Other: _____

What are your cat's favorite toys and activities?

Please use the space below for any additional information you would like to share about your cat.

Supplemental Cat Form Elimination Issues

Type of problem: urination defecation

Vet check? YES When? date _____ result _____ NO

Signs of med problem? (blood in urine/stool, meowing when going, frequent squatting with little elimination)

YES (describe) _____
NO

Description of Litterbox(es):

1. Litter: clay clumping newspaper pellets soils/sand
scented other _____
2. Number of Boxes: 1 2 3 4 more
3. Covered (C) or Uncovered (U): Box # 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
4. Liners? (Y,N): Box # 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
5. Depth of litter: <1" 1-2" 2-3" >4"

Location of Litterbox(es) (put number in each blank):

1. main floor _____ upstairs _____ downstairs _____
basement (finished, unfinished) _____ other _____
2. bedroom _____ dining room _____ kitchen _____ den/family room _____
laundry room _____ bathroom _____ living room _____
3. Location in room(s): near wall _____ in corner _____
under/behind furniture/objects _____ out in open _____ other _____
4. Cat's food, bed, or scratching post near box? YES NO
5. Strong scents near box (room deodorizer, etc)? YES NO
6. Your comments on the layout of the house and where box(es) are in relation to one another:

Litterbox Cleaning Procedures (check all that apply):

1. Frequency of removing feces: don't remove several times/week every other day
1/day 2/day more often
2. Frequency of litter changes:
Clay: once/day every other day 2/week 1/week every every 2 weeks
other _____
Clumping: don't change – just remove clumps and add several time/day 1/day
every other day 2/week 1/week every 2 weeks other _____
3. Frequency of washing box: don't wash 1/week every other week 1/month
2/month other _____

Cat's Behavior in Box:

Covers urine covers feces scratches in litter prior to elimination
scratches surroundings before or after "misses" box hangs off edge shakes feet
runs away vocalizes doesn't bury or scratch
other (describe): _____

Texture of Soiled Surfaces:

Soft: carpet throw rugs clothing bedding furniture towels
other: _____

Slick: tile linoleum tub/sink counters plastic vinyl wood
cement other: _____

Location(s) of Most Commonly Soiled Surface:

1. main floor upstairs downstairs unfinished basement
other (describe): _____
2. bedroom dining room kitchen den/family room laundry room
bathroom living room
3. **Relationship to box:** next to box same floor as box same room as box
4. **Location in room(s):** near wall in corner under furniture/objects out in open
other: _____

Location(s) of Other Soiled Surfaces:

1. main floor upstairs downstairs unfinished basement other _____
2. bedroom dining room kitchen den/family room laundry room
bathroom living room
3. **Relationship to box:** next to box same floor as box same room as box
4. **Location in room(s):** near wall in corner under furniture/objects
out in open other _____

When Does Soiling Occur:

unknown only when guardian gone morning afternoons evenings nights

Guardian's Responses to Problem:

Type of punishment:

Modifications to box:

Products used to clean soiled areas:

Modifications to soiled areas:

Other: _____

MY CAT'S MEOW

Please check all that apply on each question

Has this cat had routine veterinary care? Yes No

Has this cat had any of the following health issues:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth defects | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea | <input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worms in stool | <input type="checkbox"/> Sneezing | <input type="checkbox"/> Runny eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor appetite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Coughing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Were these conditions diagnosed / treated by a veterinarian? Yes No

Is this cat on any medications? _____

Has this cat been vaccinated for FIV? Yes No

Has this cat been vaccinated for FIP? Yes No

Has this cat been vaccinated for FeLV? Yes No

Has this cat been diagnosed with FeLV ? Yes No

Has this cat been diagnosed with FIP? Yes No

Has this cat been diagnosed with FIV? Yes No

Is this cat de-clawed? No Front only All four feet

When was this cat de-clawed? _____ Clinic Name? _____

If neutered or spayed, at what age? _____

Where? _____

Name of clinic: _____

Does this cat currently go outdoors? Yes No

Has this cat ever gone outdoors? Yes No

How long ago was this cat last outdoors? _____

MEDICAL HISTORY IF A LITTER Please complete if relinquishing a litter only

Have these kittens had routine veterinary care? Yes No

Have these kittens had any of the following health issues:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth defects | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea | <input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worms in stool | <input type="checkbox"/> Sneezing | <input type="checkbox"/> Runny eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor appetite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Coughing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Were these conditions diagnosed / treated by a veterinarian? Yes No

Have these kittens received any medications? Yes No

For what? _____

When? _____

Have these kittens had any vaccinations? Yes No

Which ones? _____

When? _____

Do these kittens currently go outdoors? Yes No

Have these kittens ever gone outdoors? Yes No

GENERAL INFORMATION Please check all that apply

How does this cat behave at the vet's office?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm, relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious, but procedures can be completed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hisses, but procedures can be completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Must be restrained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Will scratch | <input type="checkbox"/> Will bites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

How does this cat behave for having its nails trimmed?

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious, but allows | <input type="checkbox"/> Hisses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Must be restrained | <input type="checkbox"/> Will scratch | <input type="checkbox"/> Will Bite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Must go to vet or groomer | <input type="checkbox"/> Must be sedated | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Name of this cat's veterinarian or clinic: _____

Address if known: _____ Phone Number: _____

May we contact your veterinarian? Yes No

May the new owner(s) contact your veterinarian? Yes No

Animal Release Form

I certify that I am: (a) the guardian (also known as the “owner”) of the animal described below; or (b) I am the authorized representative of the guardian or owner of the animal described below. I also certify that I have unrestricted and complete authority to surrender the animal to the Humane Society of Boulder Valley (“the Humane Society”). The animal being surrendered is: _____

I understand that there is a fee to relinquish an animal to the Humane Society. If I am able to pay the fee, I will request to speak to a supervisor.

I also acknowledge my understanding of, and agreement with, the following terms and conditions that govern the relinquishment of the animal:

- (a) If the animal is of suitable health and temperament, it will be placed in the Humane Society’s adoption program.
- (b) If the animal does not pass the Humane Society’s health or behavioral screening *at any time* during the animal’s stay at the Humane Society, the animal will be euthanized—which means that the animal will be put to death in the most humane manner possible.

I understand that the Humane Society offers an option to euthanizing my pet, which means that I can choose to reclaim my animal before it is euthanized. In that regard, and subject to the following terms and conditions, my choice is as follows (please initial on the appropriate line):

_____ I wish to reclaim my animal before it is euthanized.

_____ I do not wish to reclaim my animal before it is euthanized.

If I initialed the first option (indicating my wish to reclaim my animal before it is euthanized), I understand and agree that I must reclaim my animal **WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY GIVING NOTIFICATION** that the animal may be reclaimed. I am responsible for maintaining contact with the Humane Society and for providing the Humane Society with current contact information for me, which is listed below:

Telephone Number(s): _____

Email address: _____

If I have initialed above that I wish to be notified before the animal is euthanized, *and* if I provided contact information in the space(s) listed above, I understand that the Humane Society will: (a) attempt to contact me by email (at the email address that I provided above); or (b) attempt to contact me by telephone (using the telephone number(s) that I provided above) until a Humane Society representative speaks with me or leaves a message on my telephone or with the person who may answer the telephone.

The Humane Society's one-time email or telephone contact, as described above, shall constitute the Humane Society's only obligation to attempt to notify me that the animal may be reclaimed by me. If I have not reclaimed the animal within 24 hours from the time of the Humane Society's email notification, attempted email notification, telephone notification, or attempted telephone notification (by message), the animal will be humanely euthanized.

I understand that I may call the Humane Society to check on the status of the animal that is being relinquished. I understand that I should also keep the Humane Society timely advised of any changes in my email address or telephone numbers.

I hereby release the Humane Society and its employees, staff, agents and/or representatives from any claims or demands that I have, or may have, that: (a) may be connected with the animal; (b) may arise out of the Humane Society's care of this animal; or (c) may arise out of the Humane Society euthanizing this animal (provided that the Humane Society has complied with the terms set forth above).

I certify that the animal has not bitten anyone in the last 10 days.

Signature

Date: _____

Kennel Card

Kennel: GSD01

8/12/2005 10:29AM

<u>ID</u>	<u>TAG</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SEX</u>	<u>BREED</u>	<u>COLOR</u>
A5124595	461F09645A	SHILOH	S	LABRADOR RETR / PIT BULL	GOLD / WHITE

<u>AGE</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>CROSSING/COMMENTS</u>	<u>MARKINGS</u>
2 YRS	DOG	NO PTS/OK TO CONTACT/INDEFINITE	

<u>DATE & TIME</u>	<u>INTAKE TYPE</u>	<u>SUBTYPE</u>	<u>BY</u>	<u>REASON</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>HOLD?</u>
08/04/05 4:11 PM	OWNER SUR	WALK IN	KK	MOVE	1	BEH/MED	

PROFILE DATE: 08/04/05 BY:

<u>OWNED</u>	<u>DAYTIME</u>	<u>NIGHTTIME</u>	<u>CAR</u>	<u>HOUSEBROKEN</u>	<u>LEASH</u>
2-5 YEARS	BOTH	INSIDE	YES	DAY/NIGHT	PULLS

<u>OBEDIENCE</u>	<u>ESCAPES</u>	<u>FENCE</u>	<u>FEAR BEHAVIOR</u>
GOOD	DIGS	6 FT WOOD	

<u>BEHAVIOR TO PEOPLE</u>	<u>BEHAVIOR TO ANIMALS</u>	<u>DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR</u>
FRIENDLY / PEOPLE FRIENDLY / CHILDREN FRIENDLY / STRANGERS	FRIENDLY / DOGS	

SHILOH IS GOOD WITH OTHER DOGS AT THE BEACH AND PARK. LIKES DOGS OF ALL SIZES, PLAYS GENTLY WITH SMALL ONES. UNKNOWN ON CATS. GOOD IN THE CAR, LOVES RIDES. LOVES THE BEACH BUT WILL NOT GO INTO THE WATER. PREFERS MEN TO WOMEN BUT FRIENDLY WITH ALL.

Animal Relinquishment Contract

I hereby warrant the animal specified above is my personal property and the animal has not bitten any human within the past two weeks, nor is under quarantine, and that the above information is true and correct. I assume all legal liability for any falsification in the foregoing. The animal shall be disposed of at the discretion of the San Diego Humane Society and S.P.C. A. In the event my animal is returned to me, I understand I will be liable for all costs incurred by the San Diego Humane Society and SPCA in providing care and services to said animal.

Signature: Date: 8/12/2005

Stray Relinquishment

I hereby warrant the animal specified above was found stray, and is not my personal property. The animal has not bitten anyone while in my possession. I understand the Department of Animal Control will be contacted, and the disposition of this animal will be left to the sole discretion of the Department of Animal Control.

Signature: Date: 8/12/2005

Kennel Card

Kennel: GSD01

8/12/2005 10:29AM

Animal(s) Acceptance Contract

I hereby acknowledge receiving the above animal(s) and agree to keep it in my possession, to care for humanely, and assume full responsibility for the animal(s) health and conduct. This animal shall not be used for vivisection, nor any other research purpose.

Date: 8/12/2005

Signature:

Outsource Surgical Services

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the post-operative directions provided to me by the SDHS staff. I understand that all health issues with my new pet are to be treated by my own veterinarian unless it is related to the actual surgery of spaying or neutering at which time I may call the SDHS veterinary department to determine the next course of action.

Date: 8/12/2005

Signature:

Owner Requested Euthanasia

I hereby warrant the animal specified above is my personal property and the animal has not bitten any human within the past two weeks, nor is under quarantine, and that the above information I have provided regarding the animal and ownership is true and correct. I assume all legal liability for any falsification in the foregoing. As the owner I am requesting the San Diego Humane Society and SPCA to perform the act of euthanasia with my animal.

Date: 8/12/2005

Signature:

Appointment start time: _____ End time: _____

- B-1 Adoption Consultation Form
- B-2 Dog Pre-Adoption Questionnaire
- B-3 Rabbit/Guniea Pig or “Other”
Pre-Adoption Questionnaire

A
P
P
E
N
D
I
X

B

ADOPTION CONSULTATION FORM

Welcome to the _____ shelter and adoption center. We are glad you have come to adopt a new pet from our shelter. The following information is requested so that your adoption counselor can assist you in the selection of a new pet. The consultation process is designed to help us determine if the adoption is in the animal's best interest and to assist you in finding an animal most compatible with your lifestyle.

In order to be considered as an adopter today, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Have identification showing your present address;
- Have the consent of your landlord (if applicable);
- Be able and willing to spend the time and money necessary to provide training, medical treatment, and proper care for a pet.

I am here today to look for a:

Puppy Dog Kitten Cat Other: _____

Is this your first experience with a pet? Yes No

Why do you want to adopt a pet? (check all that apply)

Companion Watchdog Barn cat/mouser Breeding Hunting Child's pet
 Family pet Guard dog for business Companion for other pet Other: _____

Do you own any pets at the present time? Yes (please complete information below) No

Name	Breed/Species	Age	Neutered?	Declawed?

Please indicate your veterinarian's name and phone number:

How many dogs or cats have you owned in the past five years? Dogs _____ Cats _____

What happened to those pets? Be specific. Include names, species, breeds, ages, and if they were neutered.

Where do you currently live?

House Apartment Mobile home Condo Townhouse Own Rent

If you rent, does your lease/landlord allow pets? Yes No

Household information:

of adults _____ # of children _____ ages of children _____

Do all adults know that you plan to adopt a pet? Yes No

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

HOME PHONE: _____ **WORK PHONE:** _____

Dog Pre-Adoption Questionnaire

Office Use Only

P# _____ A# _____

CS _____ AC _____ Time _____

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)

Date of Application

Present Address

City

ST

Unit/Apt#

Zip

Daytime Phone

Evening Phone

Email Address

Do you own your home? Y N For How Long? _____

Type of home (**please circle**) Townhome Apt. Condo House Military Housing Other

If you rent, please provide your landlord's contact information below (**Your landlord will be contacted.**)

Name

Phone Number

If you own a condo/townhome, have you checked with your homeowners' association regarding their pet policy? Y N

(1) How did you find out about San Diego Humane Society and SPCA? (**Please circle one below**)

TV Paper Website Family/Friend Radio Yellow Pages Mobile Other: _____

(2) Your Veterinarian's Name or Practice Name

Phone Number

May we phone your veterinarian for a reference? Y N If not please explain: _____

Can your veterinarian verify vaccination history on current or past pets? Y N If no, please explain: _____

(3) Do all the members of your household want a new pet? Y N If no, please explain: _____

(4) Have you relinquished or given away any pets before? Y N

If yes, please explain the circumstances involving giving up your pet, i.e. to whom, why and when: _____

(5) Would you like to receive updated information about upcoming SDHS programs and events including dog classes?

Y N

Is this adoption for (**circle one**): Yourself Family Pet Gift Companion For Pet Working/Farm

Protection for home/Protection for business (**please explain**) _____

OVER

Are you over 18? Y N Are you a student? Y N

How many adults are in the household? _____ Children? _____ Children's ages: _____

Do any members of your household have allergies specific to animals? Y N

If yes, please explain: _____

Please list your current pets residing at your home (Include roommates' pets as well)

Breed/Type	Name	Age	Sex	Spayed Neutered?	Owned for # yrs:	Indoors Outdoors
------------	------	-----	-----	---------------------	------------------	---------------------

Have you owned any pets in the last five years not listed as current? Y N

Was your previous pet (**circle one**) Spayed/Neutered Indoor/Outdoor

Outcome? _____

Where will your new pet be kept when you are home? _____

Where will your new pet be kept when you are not home? _____

If kept outdoors, please explain how your pet would be confined? _____

*Examples might be Zip line, chain, fence (**please give full description of type and height of fencing**)

Total length of time outdoors? _____? Type of shelter? _____ Type of shade provided? _____

In a 24-hour day, how long would the pet be left alone at a given time? (**Please circle one below**)

2-4 hours 4-8 hours 8-12 hours 12+ hours

Given the possibility of housebreaking difficulties, please describe your expectations on this tedious and sometimes frustrating task?

Who would ultimately be responsible for the socialization and training needs of your new pet?

The adoption of a lifelong animal friend should not be impulsive, but rather a carefully thought out decision, which will ensure a loving, lasting relationship. Remembering you are applying for a lifetime companion, are you willing to make the investment in both time and finances (up to \$1000 annually) to care for and properly manage your new pet?

Y N

Would you be willing to allow a representative to make a home visit at a mutually agreed upon time?

Y N If no please explain: _____



THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME
TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION

*Permission required for duplication

Have you owned any pets in the last five years not listed as current? Y N

If yes, please explain: _____

Can the veterinarian verify vaccination history on current or past pets? Y N If no, please explain:

(4) Have you relinquished any pets before? Y N If yes, please explain including to whom, why and when:

Where would your new pet be kept when you are home? _____

Where would your new pet be kept when you are NOT home? _____

If kept outdoors explain how your pet would be confined? _____
Total length of time? _____, Type of shelter? _____ and type of shade provided? _____

In a 24-hour day how long would the pet be left alone at any given time?

< 4 hours 4-8 hours 8-12 hours > 12 hours

What equipment is needed for this particular type of pet? _____

Do you have the necessary equipment for this particular type of pet? Y N If no, what time period would you require to prepare for your new pet? _____

Who would ultimately be responsible for the socialization and physical care of your new pet?

Remembering you are applying for a lifetime companion, are you willing to make the investment in both time and finances (up to \$500 annually) to care for and properly manage your new pet? Y N

Would you be willing to allow a representative to make a home visit at a mutually agreed upon time?

Y N If no please explain: _____

(5) Would you like to receive updated information about upcoming SDHS programs and events? Y N

We hope you have thoughtfully considered each of the questions asked. Once again, the adoption of a life-long animal friend should not be impulsive, but rather a carefully made decision which will ensure a loving, lasting relationship.

Thank you for taking the time
to complete this application!



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C

- C-1 Pet Adoption Agreement
- C-2 Adoption Agreement
- C-3 Adoption Follow-Up

Pet Adoption Agreement

Animal A# _____

Client Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Street (if different): _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____
Cell _____

E-Mail: _____

The Humane Society of Boulder Valley understands and agrees to the following:

- We are here to promote a healthy relationship between you and your pet.
- We encourage you to call us with any questions and concerns and ask that you respond to our follow-up requests by phone or e-mail.
- Included with your dog adoption is an invitation to attend our How to Live with Your Dog Workshop at no cost to you. Register with the HSBV Training and Behavior Center at (303) 442-5995.
- We recognize some pet matches may not be successful through no fault of the person or the pet. We will welcome you and your returned pet back. If you are able to rehome the animal, we ask that you provide us with the new family's contact information so we may continue to provide support to that animal.
- The Humane Society strives to provide you with a healthy pet. However, the stress of changing environments can lower an animal's immunity to fight disease, and the pet could harbor an infection without displaying symptoms. We cannot guarantee the health of any animal.

1. I am 18 years of age or older.
2. I understand that I am adopting this animal with the following diagnosed condition or fault, and I realize that this animal may need further training or treatment. _____
3. I will take the animal to a veterinarian within 14 days of adoption for a general physical examination and any necessary vaccinations, deworming, medications, or medical treatment, at my own expense.
4. I may return the animal for an exchange or adoption refund within 14 days for a previously undiagnosed health reason, verified by a licensed veterinarian. The Humane Society does not reimburse for medical bills.
5. I will provide a humane environment, regular exercise, and companionship for my pet. I will have the animal inoculated against rabies and abide by animal control laws.
6. I understand and agree that the Humane Society of Boulder Valley makes no express or implied warranty, representation or promise to the age, health, breed, habits, disposition, or safety of the animal. I hereby accept the animal as is, assume all risks and responsibilities associated with the ownership of the animal, including bites, and I hereby fully and completely release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Humane Society of Boulder Valley, its directors, officers, volunteers, servants, and employees from any claim, cause of action, or liability of any sort or nature, whether known or unknown, directly or indirectly arising out of or in connection with the adoption, care or ownership, maintenance, temperament, or condition of the animal.

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the terms and conditions of the foregoing adoption agreement and that I will comply with the same.

Adopter's Signature

Date

Staff Signature

Adoption Fee	\$ _____
Donation (tax-deductible)	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

ADOPTION AGREEMENT

CONTROL NO.: _____ TAG NO.: _____ STERILIZATION NO.: _____

ADOPTER: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.: _____

BREED: _____ DESCRIPTION: _____

APPROXIMATE AGE: _____ SEX: _____

STRAY OWNED PET'S NAME: _____

IMPORTANT! READ BEFORE SIGNING!

1. I hereby acknowledge receiving the above described animal.
2. I agree to provide proper food, water, adequate shelter, and kind treatment at all times.
3. I agree to take the animal to a veterinarian for examinations and immunizations as needed, and to procure immediate veterinary care, at my own expense, should the animal become ill or injured.
4. I agree not to allow the animal to breed and to spay or neuter any unaltered animal in accordance with the terms of the Sterilization Contract.
5. I agree to license the animal in compliance with the laws and ordinances in force in the municipality in which I reside.
6. I agree to notify the _____ if I decide at any time that I can no longer keep the animal.
7. I agree not to allow the animal to be used for medical or other experimental purposes.
8. I have read this section. I have had it explained to me, and I completely understand and accept the rights and obligations involved.
9. I understand that the _____ cannot guarantee the health, temperament, or training of the above-described animal and hereby agree to release _____ from all liability once the animal is in my possession.
10. I further understand that I may have to give up custody of a stray animal if it is claimed with thirty days of my adoption by the former owner.

REMEDY FOR NON-COMPLIANCE: It is agreed that the _____ retains superior title in said animal limited to and for the express purpose of assuring the animal's well-being and will only exercise its superior claim in the event it appears to the _____ that the proper and humane care as specified in the above adoption provisions is not being afforded said animal, in which case the animal may be taken through a Claim and Delivery proceeding.

SIGNATURE OF ADOPTER

SIGNATURE OF STAFF/VOLUNTEER

DATE

ADOPTION FOLLOW-UP OUTLINE

Date of Adoption: _____
Adoption Counselor: _____
Adopter's Name: _____
Adopter's Phone Number: _____

Animal Info: Control No. _____ Sterilization No. _____
Name at Time of Adoption: _____
Description: _____
Sex: _____ Age: _____
If Unaltered, Sterilization Due Date: _____

Date of Adoption Follow-up: _____
Follow-up Counselor/Volunteer: _____
Current Name of Animal: _____

DISCUSSION:

Veterinary Care

Name of Veterinarian: _____
Has Animal Been to a Veterinarian Yet? _____

Any Health Problems? _____

Adjustment/Behavioral Problems

Any Specific Problems: _____

REFERRAL, IF NECESSARY _____

Overall Satisfaction: _____

REMINDERS

_____ Sterilization Due Date, if appropriate

_____ Pet Care Clinics

_____ Membership Promotion

_____ FEEL FREE TO CALL WITH ANY PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS

Sterilization Contract

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STERILIZATION CONTRACT

Control No. _____ Sterilization No. _____ Microchip No. _____

Adopter's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone H: _____ Phone O: _____

Breed: _____ Description: _____

Age: _____ Sex: _____

Name: _____

IMPORTANT! READ BEFORE SIGNING!

1. I hereby acknowledge receiving the above described animal from _____ pursuant to the pet adoption agreement. INITIALS _____

2. I agree to have the animal surgically sterilized by _____. INITIALS _____

3. To guarantee the animal will be sterilized I am placing a _____ surgical deposit with the _____. INITIALS _____

4. I understand that this payment will be refunded to me (or act as full or partial payment for sterilization of said animal) upon timely presentation of proof of sterilization by my own veterinarian (or cover the full or partial cost of the basic sterilization if done at the _____.) INITIALS _____

5. I understand that the adoption is conditional and not final until the animal described above is sterilized. INITIALS _____

6. I further understand that failure to sterilize the adopted animal and provide proof within the time period specified will constitute a default under this agreement and the pet adoption agreement referred to above, and that the _____ shall be entitled to immediate possession of such animal and I shall forfeit all amount paid to the _____. INITIALS _____

7. Finally, I agree to allow an agent of the _____ to remove the animal from any premises occupied by me if the animal is not sterilized as agreed, and entry shall not constitute a trespass. INITIALS _____

Signature of Adopter

Signature of Staff/Volunteer

Date

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E

E-1 Cat Behavior and Training Clinic

E-2 Dog Training and Care Clinic

CAT BEHAVIOR AND CARE CLINIC

Program Outline

1. Introduction
 - Instructors
 - Participants (type of cat they own, how they heard about clinic, etc.)
2. The New Arrival
 - Cat behavior (scenting, cleanliness, etc.)
 - What to expect
 - Introduction to other pets and/or babies
3. Family Responsibilities
 - Feeding
 - House rules
 - Routines
 - Safety (doors, cat carriers, etc.)
4. Housebreaking
 - Litter training and litterbox maintenance
 - Scratching, declawing, scratching posts
 - Plants
5. Grooming
 - Demonstration
 - Grooming tools
 - Toenail trimming
 - Ear cleaning
 - Teeth cleaning (oral ulcers)
 - Fleas and flea control
6. Healthcare
 - Veterinary care
 - Common diseases and concerns
 - Feline urinary syndrome (blocking)
 - Importance of preventive care
 - Know your pet – what is normal/abnormal
 - Emergency first aid
 - Demonstration – giving pills, liquid medication, taking temperature
 - Sterilization
7. Resources
 - Recommended books and free literature
 - Your animal shelter/membership
8. Questions and Answers

DOG TRAINING AND CARE CLINIC

Program Outline

1. Introduction
 - Instructors
 - Participants (type of dog they own, how they heard about clinic, etc.)
2. The New Arrival
 - Your dog's personality
 - What to expect
 - Dog behavior – pack animals/language
3. Family Responsibilities
 - Feeding
 - House rules
 - Routines
4. Housebreaking
 - Crating
 - Chewing (toys, bones, etc.)
5. Grooming
 - Demonstration
 - Grooming tools
 - Toenail trimming
 - Ear cleaning
 - Teeth cleaning
 - Fleas and flea control
6. Healthcare
 - Veterinary care
 - Common diseases and concerns
 - Know your pet – what is normal/abnormal
 - Importance of preventive care
 - Emergency first aid
 - Demonstration – giving pills, liquid medication, taking temperature
 - Sterilization
7. Training
 - Demonstration – both trained and untrained animals
 - Obedience training – sit, stay, down, heel, come
 - Household manners – jumping, unruliness
 - Obedience classes
8. Resources
 - Recommended books and free literature
 - Your animal shelter/membership
9. Questions and Answers