

# RE-HOMING YOUR PET

## Finding a Shelter, Rescue Group, or the Perfect Family

By Cary Birdwell  
Second Edition – 2008  
Copyright 2008

It is a fact of life that people often find themselves in a situation where they feel that they must surrender their pet or pets to someone else. The most common reasons why people surrender their pet are behavioral issues; owning a pet has become too expensive; moving; allergies; new baby; work too many hours or unemployed; and personal illness or that of a family member. If you find yourself in this situation, this guide will hopefully help you make the right decisions in re-homing your pet.

While this guide cannot cover every question or situation you may encounter, I hope that it will provide you with the basic groundwork with which to begin the re-homing process.

### THE LAY OF THE LAND

Before you decide to surrender your pet, it is vitally important that you understand the current crisis that homeless pets face. Because dogs reproduce 15 times faster than humans, and cats 45 times faster, an estimated 3 to 10 million pets end up being euthanized in our Nation's shelters each year. The exact numbers are not known because there is no central agency to collect data. However, even if we take the conservative estimate of 3 million, that still equates to a total 8,219 animals euthanized every day of the year. Approximately 64% of all animals that enter a shelter will not come out alive.

Obviously, in light of such a tragedy, it is important that you first ask yourself if it is absolutely necessary for you to surrender your pet at this time. Is it simply for your convenience, or is it for the well being of your pet? If the latter is true, do not lose sight of the fact that your pet's welfare should be your top priority throughout this process. Additionally, you should not allow anyone to make you feel guilty for your decision to surrender. Dogs and cats have evolved along with us for centuries, and they need and want our company, attention, and love. It is not fair to the animal to remain with you if you are not in the position to give it the care and attention it needs. If this is indeed the case, then you are right to try and re-home your pet.

However, if you are re-homing your pet because of behavioral or medical issues, I recommend that you first seek professional training for your pet, or see your veterinarian. Failure to do so simply makes it someone else's problem—which is not fair to them, or your pet.

If your decision is based on a temporary illness, your job, or because you are moving, you should first seek temporary assistance from a family member or trusted friend. Many people may be willing to help you by keeping your pet until you work through these issues.



## WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

There are three types of groups that can help you re-home your pet, and pro and con arguments can be made for each one. Which route you take will ultimately be your decision, but you should understand that each of these will only be as effective or ineffective as the people who run them—which means that you will find a large degree of differences in their professionalism, knowledge, compassion, and success rate. They are:

- Municipal, tax-funded shelters
- Private, non-profit shelters or humane societies
- Non-profit animal rescue groups

**MUNICIPAL SHELTERS:** Every municipal shelter will take any animal that is surrendered to it, but this is probably the riskiest option for your pet. Should you surrender your pet to a municipal shelter, one of three things is likely to happen:

1. Your pet will be euthanized at their discretion. (Please see the appendix for more information about euthanasia.) Most of these shelters are usually full, and typically under-funded and under-staffed. They simply do not have the space for every animal that is surrendered, or brought in as a stray. Municipal shelters are legally obligated to take your pet, but not legally obligated to re-home your pet. Therefore, it is important that you realize that if you choose this option, your pet could be euthanized the same day you surrender it.
2. Your pet will be placed into their adoption program, and hopefully adopted into a responsible and loving family. This is a possibility, especially if your pet is friendly, young, and healthy. This is less likely to happen if your pet is older (5 or more years); suffering from health problems or living with disabilities; if it has behavioral issues; or if it suffers from fear or anxiety.
3. The shelter will work with a rescue group or non-profit shelter to have your pet released into their program for adoption. This is a possibility if your local city shelter has built good relationships with rescue groups in your area.

**NON-PROFIT, PRIVATELY OPERATED SHELTERS:** These shelters fall into two categories, typically referred to as “kill shelters” and “no-kill shelters.” (Municipal, tax-funded shelters are also usually referred to as “kill shelters”.) Calling a shelter a “kill shelter” may be true in a factual sense, but it is a stigma that is placed unfairly upon these organizations that basically have no other choice but to humanely kill unwanted animals. After all, they did not create the homeless pet problem. Most of these places do not have the funding or staff necessary to care for pets indefinitely, and therefore have made the decision to keep pets, and work to get them adopted, for as long as they possibly can, or for a pre-determined period of time. Once they decide that there does not appear to be any public interest in adopting a particular animal, they will have it euthanized. (In spite of this stigma, I will refer to these types of shelters here as kill shelters, to distinguish them from no-kill shelters.)

A private kill shelter may be a better option for your pet than a municipal kill shelter because it is not likely that a private shelter will even accept your pet if they only intend to put it down immediately, the way a municipal shelter may. If they accept the animal, they are probably going to do all they can to find it a new home. While your pet may have a better chance of being adopted, there is still no guarantee it will find a new home.

A private, no-kill shelter is still an even better option for your pet than a kill shelter. These shelters will keep an animal as long as it takes to find it a new home, and many provide medical care and sanctuary for animals that other groups either cannot or will not take, or that are simply unadoptable in the eyes of the public. Their goal is to never euthanize an animal if it can be saved, rehabilitated, or rehomed. The only exception these groups usually have is when an animal is clearly suffering from an illness or injury, and cannot be saved or guaranteed any quality of life.

Sometimes though, these groups maintain their no-kill status by simply refusing to take any animal that does not qualify as adoptable, or that has a condition that may lead to euthanasia. In other words, they don't provide sanctuary for unadoptable animals—they simply accept animals they feel they can re-home. There is nothing wrong with this of course, as it is well within their right to accept or refuse any animal they choose; but do not confuse a no-kill shelter with a no-kill sanctuary.

However, arguments can be made against no-kill shelters, too. Some of these groups will keep an unadoptable animal for its entire life—a policy that critics claim denies a much-needed space for more adoptable pets, therefore increasing the possibility that the latter will be euthanized unfairly. No-kill shelters and sanctuaries are also more expensive to operate, which may affect the total number of animals they are able to help. Additionally, pets—and especially dogs—that have lived too long in a shelter, cage, or kennel, can become *cage crazy*, a term used to describe a pet that has become aggressive or developed anti-social and undesirable behaviors—a problem that decreases its chance of finding a permanent home.

It is not that these animals are neglected, abused, or mistreated that causes this to happen. It is simply because a shelter is not the same thing as a home. Neither staff members nor volunteers with the best of skills and the greatest intentions can always allay the stress of communal living with which many of these animals must live. The truth is, even the best shelter in the world would rather see their pets in a loving home than living at the shelter.

**ANIMAL RESCUE GROUPS:** These organizations are usually 501(c)(3) non-profit charities, and do not have a shelter. Instead, they consist of unpaid volunteers who provide temporary foster homes for dogs and cats while they are looking for a new one. They typically place the animal on an online pet adoption site, and take him to adopt-a-pets for exposure to the public. A major advantage of this type of arrangement is that pets are living in a home environment, where they are much more likely to receive the attention, freedom, exercise, and training they need and deserve. These groups are also much more likely to have higher application standards (as compared to municipal shelters) for the people who wish to adopt, and most will flat out refuse to adopt a pet to anyone with whom they feel uncomfortable. This is a good policy because it means that when the pet finally is rehomed, there is a greater chance that it will be a responsible and permanent one. Although rescue groups usually do not have the funding and resources that are available to shelters, many of them are still quite successful.

A drawback however, is that these volunteers may be less knowledgeable and qualified than professionally-trained shelter employees, when it comes to recognizing and diagnosing illnesses or stress-related behavioral problems. It would really just depend on the individuals involved. Good intentions are not enough when they are not complimented with knowledge, sound judgment, and the ability to make important decisions regarding an animal's welfare.



## GETTING STARTED

Once you have made the decision to part with your pet, begin your search immediately. Rehoming a pet takes time, so don't procrastinate and wait until the last minute. If you are patient and diligent, you are much more likely to be successful.

**HOW TO SPARK INTEREST IN YOUR PET:** Your pet will face a great deal of competition when it comes to finding a new home. One of the best things you can do for your pet is to be sure that he is desirable to others. Whether you are trying to get your pet into a shelter, or re-home him on your own, be sure that you have done the following:

- **Have your pet vaccinated and sterilized:** Having your pet sterilized and up-to-date on his yearly vaccinations will be a greater incentive for shelters and groups to accept your pet, because it would be one less expense for them. Animal rescue groups are not in the business of making money, and most actually lose money on the animals they place, having spent more to care for the animal than they make on the adoption fee. (They can only make up this difference by private donations and grants.) Therefore, having this done beforehand will give your pet increased opportunities.

If you cannot afford to have this done, do an online search for low-cost vaccination and sterilization clinics in your area. However, if you are still unable to get this done, you should proceed anyway.

- **Get a great photo of your pet:** A great photo, not just a good photo, will go a long way in "selling" your pet—especially when networking online or when making a flyer. To get the best possible picture, get down on your pet's level to take a picture. Try to avoid standing over or aiming down at him. Additionally, choose an attractive background, such as an outdoor garden, or a wall, fence, or background with a color or texture that contrasts your pet's appearance.

Treats and toys that squeak are also great props to have on hand, as they are the best way to get your pet to look at you, and the camera.

- **Write an interesting and positive bio:** In the first paragraph include your pet's name and the reason you need to rehome him. Be positive, but honest. Describe his personality and the things he likes to do, and why he would be a good companion for someone.

In the next paragraph, include the age, breed, gender, health status or problems, and whether or not they are housetrained or litter box trained, and sterilized or not sterilized. This information is important, but not interesting, and it should not be the focus of your bio.

While it makes sense to sing your pet's praises, you should not do so at the expense of being honest. If your pet has behavioral or medical issues, fears or anxieties, or is not good with other pets or children, then it is vitally important that you disclose this information to anyone interested in taking your pet. Failing to do so may mean that your pet is placed in an incompatible situation, which will invariably result in your pet being surrendered once again. Always remember to communicate honestly and clearly.

- **Obtain a copy of all your pet's vet records:** Call your vet and ask them to provide you a copy of your pet's files. Anyone who takes your pet will want to have this information, and if you get this before you begin, you will have it when you need it.



## NETWORKING YOUR PET ONLINE

Before you get in the car and start driving around town, I suggest that your first attempt should be to network your pet online via email. Additionally, you can take an ad out in the paper or an adoption website, or make a flyer to distribute through email or by hard copy. Personally, I have found that the most successful means to network a pet, especially to rescue groups, is through email. It is effective, and it doesn't cost you anything. However, you should be creative and try any idea you can think of!

**How to compose an email:** A good email should communicate well, be brief, hold the reader's attention, and provide important information about your pet. There is nothing more frustrating for an animal rescuer than a poorly composed email that tells you nothing. It is a waste of everyone's time. If you are going to network your pet through email, you might as well do it right the first time. Below is what I believe to be the best way to compose your email. It should include:

- Your name, phone number, email address, and your location (city, not physical address) *in the body of the text*, preferably at the very top or very bottom, where it is easily seen. Don't forget your location. People will forward your email, even indiscriminately at times, and an email can get from New York to Texas in a matter of seconds. It will be a waste of your time to be dealing with people outside your area.
- In the next paragraph, include the bio, which you should already have written.
- The adoption fee. If you are targeting rescue groups, you do not need to include this, but if you are attempting to rehome the animal on your own, I always recommend you charge an adoption fee. While this step will not guarantee that all interested parties are good applicants, it will discourage those who are not truly interested in making a life-long commitment to your pet. If someone must make a financial commitment to the animal up-front, they are much more likely to take it seriously from the start.
- The words "Please forward and cross-post." This lets everyone know that they are free to network your pet. Some people will not forward your email without permission.

Once you have this done, send it out to as many shelters and rescue groups as you can find. You should also include as many family members, friends, and coworkers you think may be able to help you network.



## SURRENDERING TO A SHELTER OR RESCUE GROUP

If you have had no response to your emails, you may want to go ahead and start visiting shelters. Finding a local shelter or rescue group should be fairly easy by using the phone book or by doing an Internet search. In the phone book, look under *Animal Rescue Services* or *Animal Shelter Services*, or a variation on these words. If using the Internet, try to compose your search with one of these options:

- Animal Rescue [Your City or State Here]
- Animal Shelters [Your City or State Here]
- SPCA of [Your City or State Here]
- Humane Society of [Your City or State Here]
- Dog/Cat Rescue [Your City or State Here]
- No-Kill Shelters [Your City or State Here]
- [Breed Here] Rescue [Your City or State Here] (Ex: Siamese Cat Rescue North Texas)

If looking for a rescue group, it is best to contact them through email and explain the situation, as they usually do not have a physical address. If you do call and leave a phone message, remember to speak clearly, be brief, and repeat your phone number twice. Either way, do not expect to get a response right away. Rescue groups are operated by volunteers who have jobs, pets, families, and lives of their own to which they must also attend. If you don't hear back in a week, try again, as emails sometimes fail, and phone messages are sometimes lost, or not understood.

If looking for a non-profit, privately run shelter, get the address, hours of operation, and a map to their location. Get as many as you can, even if they seem a little far to you. Don't bother to call first. No shelter will agree to take your pet over the phone, having never laid eyes on it before. There is no telling what kind of situation a shelter may get itself into if it agreed to take every pet over the phone. Although some may require an appointment first, I personally believe that an actual visit to a shelter gives you and your pet a better chance than a phone conversation alone would.

**The day you surrender your pet to a shelter:** You should plan on setting one full day aside to get this done, but be prepared to be turned down. Shelters are *always* full, so finding a place for your pet is usually a matter of being in the right place at the right time.

Start with the shelter of your choice, and bring the following:

- Your pet, of course.
- Your pet's vet records.
- All of your pet's belongings, including toys, treats, bowls, leash, etc. You should also bring something you have worn, such as an old shirt, that can be left with the animal should you find someone to take him. These familiar items will help comfort your pet in this difficult time—and it will be difficult. Like people, change is stressful to companion animals, and they are not going to understand what is happening. Having familiar items will help them adjust.
- Money or a checkbook. Many shelters require a surrender fee to help allay the cost of caring for your pet. This is standard, and completely fair. If you cannot afford the donation, consider asking your friends and family to chip in a little towards one.

Once you have arrived, a shelter employee will be able to assist you according to the shelter's own policies and procedures. They will probably ask you many questions, and although this may be a difficult time for you, try to remain honest, and above all, refrain from being defensive or impolite.

Should they agree to take your pet, politely ask if you can have a tour of the facility first. You want to make sure that you are surrendering your pet to a responsible and safe shelter. As you walk around, look for the following:

- Does the staff appear knowledgeable, helpful, and compassionate?
- Are the cages and kennels clean or excessively dirty? (You should expect a little waste here and there.)
- Do the animals seem happy and playful, or scared and sulky? (Probably you will find a little of both, which is perfectly normal. But if all the dogs are cowering at the back of their cage, this may not be a good sign.)
- Are volunteers or staff member present and interacting with the animals?

If the shelter is dirty, and the staff indifferent, or if it in any way gives you a bad feeling, do not leave your pet there. Use your best judgment.

Should you feel comfortable with the shelter, but are turned down anyway, ask if they have a waiting list to which you can add your name. You can also ask if they have any suggestions or contacts to help you. Then go to the next shelter and try again. Don't give up. Even if you cannot find anyone to take your pet, try the same places again in a couple of weeks. Remember, placing your pet is usually a matter of being in the right place at the right time!

It is vitally important that you *never abandon an unwanted animal at a shelter after hours*. Throwing an animal over the fence, tying a dog to a tree or to the doorknob, or leaving a box of kittens or puppies on the doorstep is a crime in many areas. It is also unsafe for the animal and unfair to the shelter.

**Choosing a rescue group instead:** If you do find a rescue group to take your pet, you'll want to check them out in basically the same way you would check out the shelter. You want to find a responsible, safe, and caring interim environment for your pet, so you will need to ask questions about their policies and procedures. For example:

- Are they no-kill?
- How do they network the pets, or where do they have adopt-a-pets?
- What are their criteria for approval or denial of an applicant?
- Can you visit the foster home prior to releasing the animal? (I recommend you know where the animal will be living, if you can manage it.)
- What will happen if your pet never gets adopted?
- Are they able to afford vet care for your pet while it is in their program?

Personally, I would be very leery of anyone who is not forthcoming with this information. Anyone who feels that they are doing you a favor, and therefore should not be scrutinized by you, clearly does appreciate the efforts you are taking to find a safe and comfortable environment for your pet.



## RE-HOMING YOUR PET ON YOUR OWN

If you are unable to find a shelter or rescue group to take your pet, but do find an individual or family who is interested, it is important to screen them first, too. NEVER LET ANYONE TAKE YOUR PET IF YOU HAVEN'T CHECKED HIM OR HER OUT FIRST! I cannot stress this enough. Not everyone who wants a pet is capable of caring for a pet, no matter how nice they may appear to be.

With the help of my friends and associates, I have composed a generic application that you are free to use in your efforts to rehome your pet. The application and an adoption contract is included at the end of this guide. This application will give you some good basic information on the applicant, and will include a place for them to provide you with both a personal and a vet reference—and I advise that you call them.

**Once someone has submitted an application:** Just like when surrendering to a shelter or rescue group, you'll want to see where your pet will be living, and how the people live.

First, call their vet, if they have one. Like a doctor's office, a vet will not usually disclose personal information on their clients, but what kind of cooperation you get will just depend on whom you are talking to at the time. Simply explain that you are re-homing your pet, and that Mr. or Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ has submitted an application, and provided this vet as a reference.

Suggested questions to ask:

- Does the applicant appear to be genuinely concerned for the welfare of their current or previous pets?
- Is the applicant able to pay their bill in a timely manner, or is caring for their pet a financial burden?
- If (the person you are talking to) was going to rehome a pet, would they feel comfortable adopting a pet they cared about to the applicant?

If this goes well, you will next want to do a home check. A clean, safe, and responsible home will be the best opportunity for your pet. When doing a "home check", look for the following:

- Is the house clean, or does it appear that the family is too busy to keep it up? If the latter, they may also be too busy for a pet—though this is not always the case.
- If it has a back yard, is the fence secure and free from holes, protruding nails, and missing boards, etc. Are there holes under the fence? Is there a lock on the gate? Does it have a swimming pool? (Not all animals know how to swim instinctively.) Is there a vegetable or flower garden? If so, ask what they will do if the animal digs or defecates in the garden, or eats some of the plants.
- Is both the house and yard free of dangerous objects, chemicals, cleaners, or lawn equipment? In other words, is there anything in which your pet could get into and cause him harm?

If the person does not meet your standards or expectations, simply call or email them and let them know that you feel that it is not a good match for your pet. You do not need to explain why.

If the person has met with your approval, and you have done a vet check and home check, you will need to provide them with the copy of your pet's vet records (which you should already have), and all the pet's belongings. You should also follow up every week for a couple of weeks to make sure that your pet is adjusting to his new home, and then once every four or five months as well.



## IN CLOSING

Re-homing a pet can be a difficult and emotional experience for both you and your pet. Never forget:

- This is a major life change for your pet.
- That your pet's welfare is your number one priority.
- To communicate clearly and honestly at all times.
- To be patient and persistent.
- Never surrender to any shelter, group, family, or individual with whom you have serious doubts.

I hope that this guide has been helpful, and I wish you and your pet the best of luck.



I welcome constructive comments and suggestions for improving this guide. Please email me at [adoptadallaspet@yahoo.com](mailto:adoptadallaspet@yahoo.com) with your suggestions. Thank you.

*Re-homing Your Pet: Finding a Shelter, Rescue Group, or the Perfect Family* is copyrighted by Cary Birdwell. However, permission is granted to print, email, and distribute freely in its entirety. Permission is not granted to alter, modify, or omit any part of this document.

Do you have the latest version of this guide? Email me at [adoptadallaspet@yahoo.com](mailto:adoptadallaspet@yahoo.com) to find out.

## **Appendix**

- **Understanding Euthanasia**
- **Adoption Application**
- **Adoption Contract**

# Understanding Euthanasia

I will not beat around the bush – I do not encourage anyone to surrender their pet to a shelter to be killed unless it is the absolute last possible choice they have. The premature death of an animal, especially when there is no better reason than the fact that it is homeless, is not fair or good! But in reality, I know it will happen.

Before you leave your pet at a shelter, you should know a little more about the means by which pets are disposed.

Euthanasia literally means “good death”, and in most cases, euthanasia only refers to one kind of death—the lethal injection of sodium pentobarbital by a licensed veterinarian or shelter employee.

Once injected into the animal's vein, sodium pentobarbital quickly causes loss of consciousness. This is soon followed by respiratory arrest, and then cardiac arrest, with cessation of life in less than a minute or so. Having witnessed this process myself, I can attest that it does have the appearance of being completely painless.

Unfortunately, not all shelters use lethal injection, which is considered by practically everyone as the only humane method of killing an unwanted animal. This is in part due to financial considerations, but also because sodium pentobarbital is a federally-controlled lethal substance, and can only be purchased and possessed under certain criteria for its storage, handling, and use. These factors alone make choosing lethal injection a means beyond the budget of many small communities.

Other modern methods include the gas chamber, shooting, drowning, and electrocution. I say “modern” because there are more archaic methods that are simply too ghastly to mention. Yet compared to lethal injection, these four do not appear to be modern at all—and yet they happen every day.

The gas chamber is exactly what you think. The animal is placed in an enclosure and then suffocated to death by the introduction of a lethal gas, or a gas combination that results in oxygen deprivation. This happens while the animal is fully conscious and death is somewhat slower and probably much more painful.

Sadly, many rural and mid-sized communities cannot afford a fully trained employee to administer a lethal injection, or to purchase an expensive gas chamber, or even possess a decent shelter in many cases. The consequence of this is that they must rely upon much less humane methods of killing, such as drowning, shooting, or electrocution—all of which are perfectly legal in many states, and often done with makeshift equipment. As long as the animals are being killed under the direction of a municipality, and the person doing the killing is authorized to do so, and he or she makes a reasonable attempt to not cause the animal unnecessary pain or suffering, then they are not doing anything wrong in the eyes of the law.

Drowned animals are usually placed in a cage that is then submerged into a large container of water. Other animals are simply shot in the head with a handgun, or even worse, hooked up to wall outlets to be electrocuted. I have seen videos of animals being gassed, shot, and electrocuted—and believe me, you don't want this for your pet.

Before you leave your pet at any kill shelter, please ask what method they use to dispose of unwanted pets. I strongly encourage you to never leave your pet at any shelter that practices anything other than lethal injection. It is better to take your pet to your veterinarian to be euthanized, than to leave your pet any place where it may be subject to such a painful experience.

# Adoption Application

In order to adopt this pet:

- You must be 21 years of age or older.
- You must have some form of identification with your current address.
- You must have the knowledge and consent of all adults living in your household.
- You must be able and willing to spend the time and money necessary to provide training, medical treatment, and proper care for a pet.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of spouse or life partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's/Partner's DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License #: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Time \_\_ Part Time \_\_

S/P's occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Time \_\_ Part Time \_\_

Please answer the following questions:

1. Have you ever owned a pet(s) before? Yes \_\_ No \_\_ If yes, was it a dog(s) \_\_ cat(s) \_\_
2. Where did you get it? \_\_\_\_\_ How long has it lived with you? \_\_\_\_\_
3. If you no longer have it, what became of it? Lost \_\_ Gave it away \_\_ Sold it \_\_  
Died \_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many pets do you currently have at home? \_\_ Dog(s) \_\_ Cat(s) \_\_ Other  
Briefly describe: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are they on heartworm preventative? Yes \_\_ No \_\_
6. Where do your current pets stay during the daytime?  
If you have a cat(s): Inside only \_\_ Outside only \_\_ Inside & Outside \_\_  
If you have a dog(s) Inside only \_\_ Outside only \_\_ Inside & Outside \_\_
7. Where do your current pets stay during the nighttime?  
If you have a cat(s): Inside only \_\_ Outside only \_\_ Inside & Outside \_\_  
If you have a dog(s): Inside only \_\_ Outside only \_\_ Inside & Outside \_\_

8. This pet would be:  
 A.) A companion pet for me \_\_\_ a child \_\_\_ an elderly person\_\_\_ A gift\_\_\_  
 B.) Kept as a watch dog \_\_\_ a hunting dog \_\_\_ a guard dog for a business \_\_\_  
 C.) Kept as a barn cat/mouser \_\_\_
9. Do you leave your windows and doors open at home? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_
10. Do you have screens on your windows and doors? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
11. Do you have a fenced in back yard? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Is the gate locked? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 What type of fence is it? Chain-link \_\_\_ Wood \_\_\_ Brick/Stone \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 How high is it? 4 ft. \_\_\_ 5 ft. \_\_\_ 6 ft. \_\_\_ 8 ft. \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you have a pool? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
13. If adopting a dog, do you plan on keeping him/her on a chain? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 If yes, how many hours a day? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Have you ever house-trained/litter box trained a pet before? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
15. If adopting a dog, do you plan on enrolling in an obedience class? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
16. Do you have the spare time during the days or evenings to spend meeting your pet's companionship needs? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
17. Do you or anyone in your household have any allergies to animals?  
 Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Don't know \_\_\_
18. On the average day, how many hours would your pet be left alone? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you travel frequently? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
20. Who watches your pet while you travel? A family member \_\_\_ A neighbor/friend \_\_\_  
 A pet sitter \_\_\_ A kennel \_\_\_ A pet hotel \_\_\_ A veterinarian \_\_\_
21. How many children are in your household? \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_
22. Are there any children who visit you household frequently? If so, please state age(s) and gender(s). \_\_\_\_\_
23. Is a new baby expected? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If so, how will this affect your companion?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
24. Do you have a veterinarian reference? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 If yes, how long have you been visiting him/her? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vet's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **(Please give phone number.)**  
 Is the pet(s) listed under a different name than the applicant's? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 If yes, give name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pet names on file with this vet: \_\_\_\_\_
25. Please give a personal reference, other than a family member.  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birth date or age: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_
26. Do you live in: An apartment \_\_\_ House \_\_\_ Condo \_\_\_ A mobile home \_\_\_  
 Do you: Own \_\_\_ Rent \_\_\_

27. If you rent, can written permission be obtained from your landlord along with proof of deposit paid?

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Landlord's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of complex or mobile home park: \_\_\_\_\_

28. Is there a limit to the size or number of pet(s) you can have? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

If yes, what are the limits? \_\_\_\_\_

29. How long have you lived at your current address? \_\_\_\_\_

30. Do you plan to move soon? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ If yes, do you know your new address yet?

\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

31. What will happen to your companion animal if you move?

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Are you prepared to provide regular veterinary care for the next 10 to 20 years, which would include yearly vaccinations, flea/tick treatment, and heartworm preventative?

Yes\_\_ No\_\_

33. In case of emergency or death, who will care for the animal(s)?

**(Other than personal reference listed above.)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

34. Are there any other comments you would like to make to support your application or any questions you may have?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pet Adoption Agreement

Pet Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

New Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of spouse or life partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

License #: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address if different from drivers license: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I agree to adopt this animal as my personal family pet. I understand the responsibility, safety, and risks of ownership and I agree to care and provide for the lifetime of the animal with proper food, shelter, veterinary care, and loving environment.
2. I agree to keep my pet indoors for its own safety and protection, and when outside, my dog will be fenced and provided with a doghouse.
3. I understand that the previous owner has made no guarantees or claims concerning the age, health, condition, temperament, or disposition of this animal and cannot be held financially liable if, after adoption, this animal becomes ill or is unsuitable for my home environment.
4. If the animal becomes ill or acts in an unusual manner, I agree to seek prompt veterinary care. During the first 30 days after adoption, should any signs of illness be observed, I agree to notify the previous owner immediately at the numbers listed above.
5. If for any reason I cannot keep my pet, I agree to return it to previous owner so that it may be rehomed again.
6. I agree to notify previous owner if my pet is lost, dies, or if I have a change of address.
7. I agree to keep a collar and tags on my pet at all times, even though it is an indoor pet.

Owner's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Adopter's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_