

TIPS ON FINDING GOOD HOMES

An animal has come into your life. While you may want to share your home with him/her, you realize that is not possible. Now what? First of all, take the animal to a veterinarian for a general checkup, to be tested (for cats--FeLV & FIV) and vaccinated. After you've interacted with him/her and have an idea of what kind of home is best, it's time to look for possible placements:

- 1) Advertise in neighborhood papers
- 2) Make a flyer with a brief description of the animal and your phone number(s) and post in supermarkets, laundries, banks, vet offices, libraries, office buildings, and on bulletin boards, etc.; check fliers weekly – people rip them down.
- 3) Spread the word to everyone you know and ask them to do the same.

How to Screen Potential Adopters: When people respond to your notices, it is important that you thoroughly screen each potential adopter. You will need to be **very careful** as there are unscrupulous people who will look for animals, usually free, and use them as bait in pitbull fighting, for religious sacrifice or sell them to laboratories. We **never** recommend giving away animals for free. Always ask for a donation--\$25 minimum. If you don't need or want the money, you can always donate it to a nonprofit animal organization, such as New Jersey Animal Rights Alliance. Although this is not an exhaustive list, here are some questions to ask:

- Do you have animals now? If so, how long have you had them?
- Have you ever had animals in the past? If so, why are they no longer with you?
- Why do you want an animal? (Some people may not want a companion but are looking for a cat to keep their home mice free or a dog to protect their property.)
- How long do you plan to keep the animal?
- Are you prepared for the possibility of a twenty-year commitment?
- What if your life circumstances change, e.g., you move; get married or divorced; have a child; get a new roommate; you or someone you live with develops allergies?
- Mention the adoption fee and explain that it covers veterinary care, food, litter, etc. (Always require an adoption fee – even if it is nominal. People generally don't value a free offer. If the potential adopter can't afford the adoption fee, s/he probably can't afford to care for the animal.)

When to Say “No” and How to Say It: Say “no” to whomever you are not sure of. Say “no” whenever you get a “bad feeling.” Rely on your intuition. Remember, there are people who make money from selling animals to research labs—you can never be too careful. Take notes on the attitude of the person. If they are hesitant to give information, cut the conversation short.

Say “*I'm sorry, but someone else decided to take him/her*” or “*I'm sorry, I cannot give an animal to someone who would allow an animal to roam free outside*” or “*I'm sorry, but declawing is extremely painful to a cat and not fair to the animal.*” Please remember, animals deserve loving homes—their lives are literally in your hands.

When the Adopter Looks Good: Once you decide that the potential adopter passes this minimal screening, ask her/him to complete the attached adoption application. Explain that you will review the application and get back to them within a specified period of time. Call the references on the application during this time period.

If you are comfortable with the answers to the questions and the reference checks, contact the potential adopter and invite her/him to meet and visit with the animal. As the person interacts with the animal, observe how each responds to the other. Ask to take a picture of the person and the animal before the visit ends. If the person refuses, they may be lying about information they have provided you.

Assuming that the visit has gone well, tell the potential adopter that you would like to wait about a week and then bring the animal to the potential adopter's home. Once the home checks out, the visit concludes and you are satisfied that this is a good home, have the adopter complete the adoption contract. Sign it, giving one copy to the guardian and keeping one copy for your files. If everything has checked out up to now, but you are uneasy for any reason with the home visit, by all means, discuss it with the person. **Do not leave the animal simply because you feel you have come this far, so you really should.**

Confirm that you will be calling to see how everyone is doing and remind them that if they cannot keep the animal at any time for any reason, you will take the animal back. Explain there is usually a two-three week adjustment period where the animal may be shy and fearful and to give the animal a chance to settle down. Please call at regular intervals and visit if distance allows. If distance prevents you from home visits, try to find someone near by who can stop by from time to time.

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOU CAN NEVER ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS OR BE TOO CAREFUL.
Knowing someone or knowing someone who knows someone doesn't guarantee a good home.**

ADOPTION APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

Car License #: _____ State : _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone Number: _____ How long employed here? _____

Please complete all the information on the following pages. By signing below, you certify that you understand the following:

1. It is the agency/individual's right to refuse adoption to anyone.
2. The information contained within this application is accurate and not misleading in any way.
3. It is agency/individual's right to contact individuals on this form.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please give careful consideration to adopting an animal. Animals are not toys or short term commitments. Make sure your lifestyle allows the time, patience and expense this animal will need over the years.

* * * Please turn and complete the following pages * * *

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - THANK YOU

Animal:

Species: _____

Breed: _____

Color: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Vaccines given: _____

date: _____

Heartworm test: _____

Neutered: yes _____ no _____

date: _____

Reference checks: _____

Adoption Agency/Individual:

Approved: _____

Method of Donation: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Is this your first experience with a companion animal? yes / no

2. Do you have other animals at home? yes / no If yes:

Species:	Male: /Female:	Age:	Altered:	Vaccinated:	Lives:
dog / cat / other	_____	_____	yes / no	yes / no	in / out
dog / cat / other	_____	_____	yes / no	yes / no	in / out
dog / cat / other	_____	_____	yes / no	yes / no	in / out
dog / cat / other	_____	_____	yes / no	yes / no	in / out

3. Do you presently have a cat/kitten who has been tested for Feline Aids and Feline Leukemia?
yes / no Results: positive / negative

3a. Have you ever had any cats in your household with Feline Aids +/-or Feline Leukemia? _____

4. If you don't have animals now, have you had any in the past? yes / no cat / dog / other
How long did you have your last animal? _____
What happened to your last animal? _____

5. Have you ever suffered the loss of a companion animal? Yes/No. If yes, please explain the
circumstances of the death(s): _____

6. Who is/was your veterinarian? How long? _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

7. How long have you resided at your present address? _____

8. Where do you currently live? house / apartment / other

9. Do you own or rent? (circle one) If rent, does your lease allow animals? yes / no
Landlord's name _____ Phone: _____

10. How many people live in your household? _____ Do all the adults know you plan to adopt?
yes / no If there are children in the household, list ages _____

11. Does anyone in your household have any known allergies to animals? yes / no

12. Where will this animal be kept during the day? _____ night? _____

13. Is anyone home all day'? yes / no If no, how many hours will the animal be left alone in a 24-hour
period? _____

14. Where will he/she be kept when alone? _____

15. Are you financially prepared to give this animal routine and emergency medical care? yes / no

16. Would you object to a visit or call from us to see how you and your new family member are doing? yes / no

17. List two references with name, relationship, phone number. Do not list family members.
(Examples of references are: neighbor, employer, co-worker, friend)

1) _____

2) _____

18. In the event you become ill, who will be responsible for the care of your animal(s)? _____

CAT ADOPTIONS ONLY:

1. Why do you want to adopt a cat? (circle all the apply)

companion for myself/family gift for someone else
mouser to breed companion for another animal

2. Have you ever had a cat before? yes / no

3. Will the cat be allowed outdoors? yes / no

4. Do you plan to declaw the cat/kitten? yes / no If yes, front only or all four? (please circle)

5. What will you do if the cat claws furniture or shows other destructive behavior?

6. Are you familiar with nail clipping? yes / no

7. Do you need an explanation of how to introduce a new cat to your current animal(s)? yes / no

8. Are you familiar with the types of litter to use for a cat? yes / no

9. Are you familiar with feeding recommendations for a cat? yes / no

DOG ADOPTIONS ONLY:

1. Why do you want to adopt a dog? (circle all that apply)

companion for myself/family gift for someone else watch dog
guard dog to breed companion for another animal hunting

2. Do you realize you will probably have to housetrain the dog? yes / no

3. Are you familiar with crate training? yes / no

4. Are you familiar with leash & licensing laws in your community? yes / no

5. How will you be sure that your dog does not wander from your property? (circle all that apply)

kept in the house kept in the garage kept on a chain/leash outside
outside in a kennel we have a fenced-in yard

6. Do you have a fenced yard? yes / no If yes, how high? _____

7. What will you do if your dog chews furniture or shows other destructive behavior?

8. Do you need an explanation of how to introduce a new dog to your current animal(s)? yes / no

9. Are you familiar with the feeding recommendations for a dog/puppy? yes / no

10. Are you willing to bring the dog to training classes, if necessary? yes / no

ADOPTION CONTRACT

One copy for adopter.
One copy for adoption agency.

I, _____, adopt this animal and release the adoption agency from all claims for personal injury and/or property damage to myself or others associated with this adoption. The welfare of this animal will be my sole responsibility. I AM NOT ADOPTING THIS ANIMAL FOR ANOTHER PERSON. This animal will not be used for breeding, medical or experimental purposes. I understand that in the event I give false information or do not follow the terms of this contract, the adoption agency may remove this animal from my household and start legal proceedings against me at my expense and may assess damages in the amount of \$2000.00 against me.

1. After adoption, this animal's health becomes my full responsibility. I will provide necessary veterinary care upon sickness, disease or injury. In addition, I will take this animal to a veterinarian at my expense for yearly thorough exams and necessary shots. The exam will include a stool sample test and heartworm for dogs. I will not declaw this cat without first contacting the adoption agency.
2. I will spay/neuter this animal no later than _____. I will send written proof of spaying/neutering to the adoption agency within 10 days of completion.
3. I will telephone the adoption agency immediately if this animal becomes lost.
4. I will keep this animal in a private residence only. I have permission from the rental agency or property owner to have companion animals in my home.
5. I will keep an ID tag on this dog at all times. When outside, I will keep this dog on a leash or in a fenced-in yard. I will not keep this animal chained nor allow him/her to roam. I will keep this cat indoors at all times.
6. If I can no longer keep this animal, I MUST telephone the adoption agency to arrange for re-adoption. I will never abandon this animal or give him or her to a shelter or another person. I will insure that this animal is never sold, given up for experimentation, or exchanged in any form. In the event I must give up this animal, I will abide by the terms of this contract and allow the adoption agency sufficient time to arrange for re-adoption or foster care.
7. I understand that I will be contacted for further verification of the animal's welfare and will cooperate by providing whatever information is requested which could include a visit into my home by the adoption agency. The adoption agency reserves the right to investigate into the living conditions of any animal adopted and may remove such an animal being kept in violation of the requirements in this contract.
8. I do not hold the adoption agency responsible for errors in the information provided to me about this animal.
9. I understand that the donation made as part of this contract is a gift and not a payment for a value received. This donation is not refundable. Amount of donation - \$_____.
10. I accept all responsibility and liability for this animal at the date of adoption.

This agreement executed at _____, _____.
(city or county) (state)

Date: _____ (adopter) _____

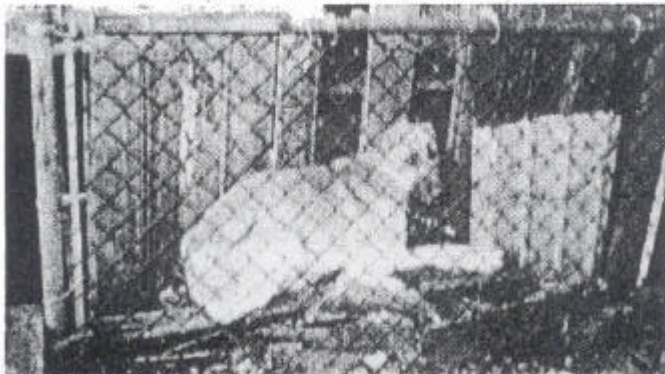
Date: _____ (adoption individual/agency) _____

Keep this contract with your animal's medical records

Adoption Agency/Individual: _____

"FREE TO GOOD HOME" DOG LEFT TO STARVE TO DEATH

Giving away an animal "FREE TO A GOOD HOME" is very rarely a lifetime commitment on the part of the new pet owner. Several years ago, nationwide statistics showed that one in five animals stays in a permanent home for its lifetime. We are sure that the statistics are even higher now. Sadly, this is a throw-away society — for children as well as pets.



The starving dog was petrified and hid behind a broken-down shed in order to get away from uncaring people.



Left: A prime example of a dog given away "free to a good home".

The Society received a cruelty complaint concerning an emaciated dog kept in a Newark backyard under appalling conditions. An Animal Control Officer went to the scene and found a starving dog, without shelter, in a garbage-strewn yard, no area to walk, no bowl for water, no bowl for food...no one home who was concerned. The Society's Animal Control Officer confiscated the dog leaving a note who to contact for further information. No one ever called & we were unable to obtain the name of the person who would claim the dog as theirs. But the Society found a Verona, N. J. license and obtained the name and address of the licensee.

The woman had given the dog away "FREE TO A GOOD HOME". Cinnamon had been her loving pet which she could no longer keep. It is our understanding that through a co-worker, she was able to find a home for the dog in Newark. The original pet owner came to the Society and was appalled at what she saw. Once a loving pet, she was now a traumatized, lost, starving soul. She took Cinnamon to her veterinarian where she received intensive care for over a week. It took a long time for Cinnamon to get back on to solid foods. We had offered to find her a loving and lasting home, but her original owner had found a family who had the time, love and desire to care for her. According to her original owner who sent us a recent letter: "Thank you for your kind interest and the financial lesson was no comparison with the shock of her condition when I got her back. Rest assured she has found a wonderful, loving home that we are always in touch with and in tune to her new family and well being".

We find many, many people giving away their lifetime pets to people who are basically strangers to them. Most people are afraid to ask questions or blithely believe whatever stories people want to tell. If you have a beloved pet you can no longer keep, is his life that cheap? Is he that worthless? It isn't easy finding a new home for a pet but if you need additional assistance, please call us for more details.

APRIL/MAY 2000

"GIVE-AWAY" PUP SUFFERS BEING SET ON FIRE AND BROKEN LEG

SEE PHOTOS ON PAGE 1.



Cain suffered burns around the head and body as well as a broken leg

From puppyhood, Cain was a beloved, cherished friend to a young East Orange, N. J. resident named Jennifer. When Jennifer took on a new job with more hours and responsibilities, she realized that her 5 month old dog needed to be placed in a new home where he would be given more time and attention. She asked around the neighborhood and within a short time, a 15 year old youth visited the apartment house and advised that he would take the dog. Jennifer asked a few questions and ascertained that his dog had died, he had a "cage" for the dog and his parents would accept the new addition. The naive, inexperienced Jennifer gave Cain to the teen-ager whom she did not know, had no further information, did not know where he lived and had not spoken with his parents.

Four days later, Jennifer's boyfriend had parked the car in the apartment house parking lot and saw a non-descript mass underneath his car. At first, he thought it was an injured possum, but as he got closer, he realized it was Cain - terrified, injured and dirty.

Somehow, between the time he was given to the teen-ager and 4 days later, he had been brutally treated. Trying to find solace from the cruel treatment and pain, he attempted to get back to the only place he knew he would be loved - to Jennifer.

Cain was brought into their apartment and the Society was contacted to pick up the dog which Jennifer released to us. The pup was immediately brought to the West Caldwell Emergency Center where it was verified that he had been set on fire and his leg had been broken. Cain is now recuperating at the Society's Newark Medical Department where he has been getting very special care and lots of T.L.C. He has the light-hearted cheerfulness that belies his experience and encounter with malicious cruel people.

And now we want to find a home for this innocent soul who is so gentle, trusting and happy. File 350374-M (Newark).

Sadly, Cain is not an unusual story. Pet owners who are forced with making a decision to give up a pet should seriously consider Cain's grim story. If you are faced with such a decision, call Roseann Trezza at the Society's Newark Animal Care Center for additional tips.