



Rehoming Guide

We are truly sorry to hear that you must find a new home for your companion. We understand how difficult this decision can be, and so we hope to give you as much information as we can to allow you to make an informed choice that takes into account the needs of you, your companion, and the limits of various resources.

Often the reasons for rehoming are based in animal behavior, medical expenses, or general costs of care. These are all things that we have resources (training and behavior information, financial assistance information such as grants that can help cover medical expenses, and programs such as Pet Food Assistance for those who qualify) that may be able to ease the stress and circumstances that threaten to divide your family. Though we hope these services can be of use to you, we understand that not all situations are alike and, in many, surrendering to the shelter is truly the best or only option. We will do everything we can to accommodate you and assist.

The Nevada Humane Society is the only “no-kill,” open-admission shelter in northern Nevada, and due to our limited space and resources we are forced to regulate the animals that come into us from private surrenders by admitting them on an appointment-only basis. Like most open-admission shelters across the nation, our appointments are typically 2-4 weeks out from the time of contact. While inconvenient, this is one of the many things that allow us to remain a “no-kill” shelter. Additionally, we are only able to take animals from their legal owners who reside within Washoe County.

Just like shelters for homeless people, animal shelters should only be places of last resort, so we encourage people to seek out other solutions whenever possible. It is always preferable to try and place your animals directly into a new home rather than surrendering your pet to any facility.

Many of the resources attached are online services. If you do not have access to the internet, you may want to ask a friend to help you, or your local library will have free internet access and people there to assist you. If behavioral, residential, or financial barriers prevent you from keeping your pet, please contact our Animal Help Desk to discuss interventions and resources.

Check with any shelters near you to see if they will post a courtesy listing of your animal. They may have additional ideas or resources to offer. Consider the following groups:

- Wylie Animal Rescue Foundation (WARF), (775) 833-2319 or tahoewarf.com
- SPCA of Northern Nevada, (775) 324-7773 or spcanevada.org

You are truly your animal’s best option for finding a new home, as you’ll be able to provide the most information on your pet to prospective adopters as well as best determine the suitability of a new home. There are good homes out there! It’s just a matter of finding them.

How To Find a Home

Just like a job interview, putting your pet's best paw forward is exceedingly important. To increase the chances of finding a new home and the success of the new placement, it is important that the pet has had most of these done or achieved:

- Spayed or Neutered
- Checked by a vet for a clean bill of health
- Up to date on vaccinations
- Professionally groomed or bathed and free of matting and foul smells
- Reasonably well-behaved, especially housebroken

Adopters should be made aware of any and all medical conditions or behavior concerns without making it seem as if there is no hope. Most issues can be resolved with enough time and the right resources, and the Animal Help Desk has a multitude of information on training and financial assistance that another family might be more equipped to pursue.

For exotic animals such as reptiles, birds, fish, and farm animals, our Animal Help Desk may have information on local rescue groups or specific suggestions.

Pet Selfie

A photo helps create a connection with a potential adopter. Descriptions are important, but it's the picture, more specifically the eyes and expression, that are going to grab someone first. You can use your cell phone camera or another high resolution camera to take great pictures of your pet with these simple strategies:

- For both online and printed, color is best.
- Backgrounds should be simple and in contrast to the animal's coloring (i.e. dark color background for a light colored animal)
- You can have a person holding or petting the animal to capture scale
- Animal should be in a calm or relaxed state
- Focus on the eyes and head, these features should take up a third of the photo (if a confirmation picture is needed, you can add a second picture)
- Take many and from different angles, then choose the very best one

Pet Profiling

Before starting to write your pet profile, make a complete list of what you would consider your pet's ideal home. Once you are done, go back and pick out the non-negotiable items for your pet's unique needs. This will help you with mentioning the most important details in your description and in eventually choosing the right home.

While your pet profile should have the pet's basic characteristics like breed, size, gender, age and appearance, it should also highlight your pet's personality, likes and dislikes, and the little things that make him/her special. Don't hold back when it comes to telling about disabilities, health issues, behavior quirks or limitations (i.e. not good with cats or small children). By not telling the less appealing aspects you are potentially setting up the rehoming for failure. Sometimes these are in fact the very things that particularly speak to a potential adopter.

Example: Not long ago a puppy was born missing most of his back paw to a local breeder. Instead of euthanasia, because he couldn't be shown or used for breeding purposes, the breeder decided to rehome him as a pet. A gentleman

heard about the puppy and his malformation and knew he'd found the perfect dog. The gentleman, who was also born missing much of his hand, saw in the puppy his soul mate.

Advertise Widely

Now that you have a good picture and an engaging pet profile, it's time to get the word out in as many places as possible.

- Posting flyers with the photo and description you've created is inexpensive and often highly effective in getting the word out. A free and easy to use flyer making program is available on the website petbond.com. Place flyers throughout the community and especially in places that match your animal's needs. For example, if you were trying to rehome a working dog, placing flyers at farm and ranch supply stores could potentially attract the right adopter. Other places to post flyers:
 - Veterinary hospitals
 - Retail/Grocery store community boards
 - Employee Break Rooms
 - Dog Parks
 - Car windows
 - Library and church community boards
 - Gyms

You can also send a flyer to the Nevada Humane Society Animal Help Desk email

animalhelp@nevadahumanesociety.org and we will place it in our non-shelter adoption folder at the front desk.

- Use community and social media contacts. Ask your church to mention the animal in their church newsletter. If you or someone you know works in an office or at a school or university, ask to send an office wide email. Post about your animal on all your social media outlets and ask your friends and family to share the post.
- Posting information on actual pet adoption websites is another way to stretch your advertising range. There are sites for specific species, breeds, ages, and even some for animals with special needs.
- Word of mouth should never be underestimated. Tell everyone about your pet who needs a home. You never know who is going to be interested.
- Get the pet out there! (This works especially well with dogs.) The more your pet interacts with people the more likely he'll charm the right person. Take your pet on walks, go to pet supply stores, the local park, anywhere your dog is allowed and might meet the right person. Wearing a bandana or a sign that says "Adopt me" or "Looking for a New Home" will also help.
- We do recommend asking an adoption fee for your pet. Those truly looking to add to their family will be willing to pay a small fee. Those looking for other nefarious reasons will probably not. An adoption fee in conjunction with a pet adoption contract (many templates for which are available free online) can do a lot toward keeping your pet safe.

Quick Comment on Potential Adopters

If someone expresses interest in adopting, try to hold a brief interview over the phone before introducing them to your pet. Using a set of screening questions will efficiently eliminate inappropriate or inadequate homes. If the potential adopter seems like they might be a match for your pet, try to meet them in a neutral (and public) location. If at all possible, try to have a few meetings with the potential adopter for a pet with a very shy temperament. This will make the transition easier. After the adopter has signed the contract and taken their new family member home, stay in touch, at least until you are certain a new bond is created and all seems well.

Adoption Websites

Here is a short list of adoption websites. You may want to try and find others online, as well. Ask your local rescues if they will allow your pet on their list of adoptable animals as a courtesy listing.

General adoption websites:

rehome.adoptapet.com

petbond.com

rescueme.org

petfinder.com

getyourpet.com

Special Needs Cats and Dogs:

www.petswithdisabilities.org

Diabetic Pets:

imom.org/community

Purebred Dogs:

akc.org/akc-rescue-network

Purebred Cats:

pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/RescueSiamese

pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/Persian_Rescue

Purebred Special Needs & Senior Cats:

purebredcatbreedrescue.org

Senior Dogs:

srdogs.com

muttville.org

Blind Dogs:

blinddogrescue.org

Deaf Dogs:

deafdogsrock.com

deafdogrescueofamerica.org

You can also post messages on the Yahoo groups.

Brochure: "How to Find Homes for Homeless Pets"

The Best Friends Sanctuary in Utah has also put together an amazing resource that includes sample contracts for potential adopters. This guide will give you lots of ideas on how to advertise for a home.

http://bestfriends.org/uploadedFiles/Content/Resources/Resources_for_Rescuers/Adoption/HowtoFindHomesforHomelessPets.pdf.

Remember, Be Creative and Persistent

Creativity and persistence are usually rewarded. Finding a new home takes work, but there are good homes out there!

Have questions or concerns? Contact our Animal Help Desk at 775-856-2000 ext. 200 or animalhelp@nevadahumanesociety.org