

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ADOPT A PET

Congratulations! You are doing the right thing by considering adopting a pet from the New Albany/Floyd County Animal Shelter. The shelter has all breeds, shapes and sizes of homeless dogs and cats needing to be placed with loving families. And it is the best place for you to find just the right companion animal.

The goal of the shelter staff is to make sure there is a good match between the adopted pet and the owner, so that everybody is happy and the animal won't have to go through the trauma of being returned to the shelter. In order to accomplish this, the staff will need some information from you as a first step in the adoption process.

To prepare you for this process and to move it along as quickly and easily as possible, please take a few minutes to review the following steps.

- When you arrive at the shelter, you will be asked to sign in (so the staff knows who is in the building) and, once you tell them you are interested in adopting a pet, you will be given a questionnaire to fill out. This is NOT an adoption contract. It merely asks for basic information regarding your housing arrangements, family members and other pets in the household -again, to help find that perfect pet match! The questionnaire also walks you through some of the longer term issues of pet ownership, so that you will have an idea of what to expect down the road.
- A national survey was taken to determine the top reasons why dogs and cats were given up at shelters by their owners. At the top of the list were issues related to landlord prohibitions and moving in general. That is why, if you rent, you will need to check with your landlord about their pet policy *before* you come to the shelter. The shelter staff is required to confirm this with the landlord, so please bring his/her phone number with you.
- Another reason owners relinquish their pets to shelters is the cost of pet maintenance. Consistent, preventive veterinary care is a good indicator that an owner is financially able to spend the \$1,000 on average each year for food, shelter and veterinary care for each pet. If you have or have had other pets, you will be asked to provide the name of your veterinarian. Before you go to the shelter, it is a good idea to contact your veterinarian to make sure all of your pets are current on their vaccinations, as the shelter staff is required to verify this information.
- Don't be surprised if the shelter staff asks you to bring in your children and other pets to meet the animal you are interested in. After all, your new pet will be part of your family. The shelter offers a 'Bonding room', where you and your family

can have some privacy while you judge how everyone gets along with the newcomer.

Okay, you have come this far and are ready to sign on the dotted line and take your new pal home with you. Just a couple more things.

- All adopted animals are to be spayed or neutered prior to leaving the shelter. We are sure you are aware of the thousands of puppies and kittens born in the U.S. every day as the result of uncontrolled breeding. The shelter takes no chances in contributing to these numbers. Of course, fixing your pet also helps him or her live a longer, healthier life. A licensed veterinarian will perform this procedure at the shelter once your adoption has been finalized. This may mean it will be another day or two before your new pet will be going home with you.
- Finally, the staff will want to know how you plan to keep your pet on your property. Animals are prohibited by law from running at large, and keeping an animal chained for long periods is harmful to your pet. If you need to fence an area of your yard, that should be done before you go to the shelter to choose a pet.

This may seem like a lot of work, but the rewards of a well-planned adoption are worth it. And odds are you will have your pet longer than you'll have that car that you spent so much time shopping for! (Cars aren't glad to see you when you come home after a hard day, and they don't slow your heart rate when you pet them). We want you and your pet to live happily ever after. We take adopting a pet seriously and we hope that you will, too. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

If you have any questions, call 948-5355 or visit the shelter at 215 W. Market St. in New Albany, Tuesday through Friday Noon. to 5 p.m. and Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. To see currently available animals, visit our website at FCARL.org.

Brochure provided by the Floyd County Animal Rescue League, P. O. Box 285, New Albany, IN 47151-0285. FCARL is a non-profit, volunteer organization whose mission is to educate the community in the humane treatment of animals and responsible/enjoyable pet ownership; to reduce the number of unwanted animals in Floyd County and to assist and support the New Albany/Floyd County Animal Shelter.