



P.O. Box 863
Beaverton, OR 97075-0863
Office (503) 292-6628
Fax (503) 296-4957
www.AnimalAidPDX.org

Finding a New Home for Your Companion Animal

First let's look at some ways you can explore to keep your companion animal. When you bring an animal into your life, you are (or you should be) making a commitment for the life of the animal. After all you would not "get rid" of your child if they had a behavior problem, you needed to move, or you had a new child. Your pet feels fear and heartbreak when given up. Your responsibility is to find a loving forever home if you can not keep your pet.

Some people drop off companion animals in neighborhoods thinking that someone else will take in their pet giving it a new home. This is a long shot at best. More than likely your animal will be killed by a car, another animal, or slowly, painfully starve to death. Still others think that pets can fend for themselves, and take them out to the country or woods and leave them. Cats and dogs have been domesticated for thousands of years and are not equipped to fend for themselves; they become prey to coyotes, dogs, raccoons, hawks, owls, and humans. NEVER USE THIS OPTION. Abandonment of an animal is a class B misdemeanor!

Let's look at some of the reasons people give up their companion animals and some alternative solutions:

Behavior Problems

Your pets "bad" behaviors can make it difficult to live with, but should not be a reason to give up on it. Find a solution; make changes in your home. Most behaviors can be modified or eliminated.

- Use the many resources available to learn what solutions will work for your situation. The library and the internet have extensive information on behavior problems and ideas on solving them.
- Check with your veterinarian, some vets have had training in animal behavior.
- A dog trainer or cat behaviorist can be invaluable to making life better for both you and your companion pet.
- Oregon Humane Society runs a free behavioral help line. Call 503-416-2983.
- If you are able, look into behavior classes for a fee. Check around for the type and price best suited for you.

Financial Setbacks

Sometimes people have financial setbacks that make it difficult to care for their pet's physical well being. There are many resources available if you find yourself in this position.

Food

- Food – The Oregon Humane Society will give (if available) food up to 2 times a year. Call first for availability 503-285-7722. Bring your identification. If you need more food the second time you must show proof of sterilization of your companion animals.
- Some private shelters have extra food that they are willing to share. Make some calls.

Medical Care

If you have an established relationship with your veterinarian you may be able to work out a payment plan for medical care, if not see the resources listed below.

- Care Credit is available for loans for participating veterinarians. You can apply at www.carecredit.com or **866-893-7864**.
- Animal Aid, Inc. offers an interest-free medical loan for use with our participating veterinarians. This provides the animal with immediate medical care. The pet guardian can then repay our fund with monthly payments. Please note, our funds are limited, generally to \$100 – \$150 per loan, and are intended for unexpected life-threatening emergencies such as accident or illness. We cannot help with routine care, like vaccinations, worming or check ups. **Pet neuter/spay is required for a loan.**

- JOIN – a support organization for homeless individuals. Periodically has a clinic for the pets of the homeless. More information at 3338 SE 17th or 503-232-9514
- Vaccinations – Many of the Companion Pet Clinics have vaccinations clinics one day a week with reduced vaccines and no doctor visit required.
- Luv My Pet conducts vaccine clinics, at Petco, on a monthly rotating schedule. Call 503-557-1740 or visit www.LuvMyPet.com for dates and times.
- Spay or Neuter – attached is a list of options available to have your companion animal altered. An un-altered animal's behavior is affected adversely and many problems clear up when they no longer have these hormones.

Housing

If you're temporarily without housing and are faced with giving up your companion animal due to this, consider the following.

- Foster care: sometimes a friend or relative can take your pet while you are resolving the problem.
- If your situation is a result of domestic abuse or natural disaster, The Oregon Human Society's Red Cross program may be able to board your companion animal free for up to two weeks. Call Liz Cadmen at 503-416-5037

Resources for Finding a New Home

After reviewing the options to keep your companion animal and you still feel that you must re-home your companion animal. Then it is your responsibility to find a safe and loving new home.

- If you purchased your companion animal from a breeder: Give them a call, they may take the animal back.
- If you adopted your companion animal from a shelter: Check your contract, many shelters stipulate that a pet is to be returned to them.
- Purebred rescue: If your animal is a purebred, there are rescue groups for nearly every kind of breed. Check with your local American Kennel Club for dog breed rescue groups, or visit on line at: www.akc.org/breeds/rescue.cfm. For cats, www.fanciers.com has a listing of cat breed rescue groups.
- Petfinder.com will allow you to post a free adoptable pet ad. Along with your description, list how your companion animal feels about other animals and children. Make sure to be truthful about why you are giving up the animal. A potential adopter can then make an informed decision about this companion animal fitting into their home and lifestyle. A behavioral surprise may result in the companion animal being re-homed yet again.
- Please note the warning on the Petfinder website about free to good home ads. "For the safety of the animals, 'free to good home' ads will not be posted. Adoption fees should be set at a reasonable amount meant to discourage unethical people from collecting animals. Fees should not be based on an animal's registration status, breed, or local desirability. Ads that appear to be selling animals for profit or seem excessive will not be posted on the site."
- Newspaper ads – As with Petfinder, remember to charge an adoption fee to discourage collectors or "bunchers" (those who sell animals to research labs)
- Flyers – Post flyers in a variety of areas: pet supply stores, veterinary offices, pet groomers, community centers, grocery stores, and at your work place.
- Word of mouth – Let friends and family know that your companion animal needs a new home and have them help spread the word.

A Potential Adopter

Once a potential adopter is found, you will need to interview and determine the suitability of the offered home. Please don't skip this step. Again, it is your responsibility to do your best to place your companion animal in a forever home.

Points that should be included in your discussion:

- Does the potential adopter own his/her own home or do they rent? If they rent you will want to call the owner/manager to determine if they allow a companion animal on the property. Can they afford the deposit if there is one?
- Has the potential adopter had a previous companion animal or does he/she have a current animal? What veterinarian do they use? Call the vet and make sure they have a good record of caring for their companion animals. Can they afford to feed good quality food and get routine care such as vaccines, worming, etc?

- Do ask to see the potential adopter's home, and determine if it is adequate to meet the animal's needs.
- Can they care for the animal long term? Remember an indoor cat can live around 20 years, a well cared for dog between 10 -15.
- Will the animal be kept indoors or outdoors? Indoor animals live longer healthier lives and are better behaved as well.
- Again be truthful about any bad habits or special needs your companion animal has. If you mislead the potential adopted he/she will just turn around and give up the animal as well.
- Do they have children? Does your companion animal like children? Are the children supervised with the pet?
- Do they have other pets? Are those pets friendly to other animals? Will your companion animal get along with them?
- Ask if you can make a follow-up visit after the adoption, or at a minimum make one to two follow-up calls to assure the companion animal is settling in okay.

Shelters – Last Option

You should realize if you take your pet to a shelter, it may be euthanized, Yes, there are "no kill" shelters but they are always at capacity and your chances of getting your animal accepted is small. Even if your pet is not euthanized and is adopted out to a new home there is no guarantee that the new home will be permanent or safe. Your cat or dog could still end up on the street. If your companion animal is elderly, sick, or has such severe behavioral problems that makes it un-adoptable, euthanasia with a loved family member present may be the more humane solution.

A Final Word

After working hard to find your companion animal a safe and loving home you can feel proud of your loyalty and commitment to the animal. Please use this experience to educate others about the commitment that should be made before bringing a new animal home. It's easy to get carried away by a sweet furry face but day to day expenses and work need to be well thought-out.

Shelters List State of Oregon

Clackamas County

Clackamas County Dog Control -
2104 Kaen Road.
Oregon City, OR 97045
Ph: (503) 655-8628
Does not accept owner surrender cats or dogs

Columbia County Animal Control
2084 Oregon St
St. Helens, OR 97051
503-397-3935
www.ccanimals.com
Will take owner release animals – no details available

Washington County

Bonnie L. Hays Small Animal Shelter
1901 SE 24th Avenue
Hillsboro, OR 97123
503-846-7041
www.co.washington.or.us/deptmts/at/dog/dog.htm

Will Take owner release animals

From their web page "The shelter accepts dogs/puppies and cats/kittens for incoming adoptions. A shelter technician will need to see the animal(s) before admitting the animal, and will ask you questions about its history. The fees for leaving an animal for adoption are: Dogs and puppies, \$10 - \$40 (depending on an assessment)
Cats and kittens, - \$10 - \$40 (depending on an assessment)"

Columbia County

Columbia County Animal Control
2084 Oregon St
St. Helens, OR 97051
503-397-3935
www.ccanimals.com
Will take owner release animals – no details available

Humane Society of Willamette Valley (WHS)
4246 Turner Road SE
Salem, OR 97301
(503)585-5900
www.hswv.com
Does take owner surrender animals

From web site "What to expect:

1. Please call in advance of your visit to make an appointment to surrender your animal. (503-585-5900 ext. 300)
2. Be prepared to sign-over custody of your animal to WHS. All cats and dogs received by WHS are evaluated on health and temperament to determine if the animal is suitable for adoption. Some factors considered are: Health (skin problems, eye problems, etc.), Age (too young/too old), Temperament, Behavior problems and past behavior history, if available, and Space in the adoption kennels. Unfortunately, not all animals who enter the shelter are suitable for adoption and there is a possibility your animal will be euthanized.
3. WHS charges a receiving fee on a sliding scale of \$100-35 for cats and dogs. This fee helps offset the costs of the animal's care. "

Multnomah County

Multnomah County Animal Services
1700 W Columbia River Hwy
Troutdale, OR 97060
(503)988-7387
www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets
Does not take owner release dogs

Oregon Humane Society (OHS)
PO Box 11364
[1067 NE Columbia Blvd.](http://1067-NE-Columbia-Blvd)
Portland, OR 97211-0364
(503) 285-7722 phone
(503) 285-0838 fax
Does take owner release pets

You must schedule a pre-admission counseling appointment with the OHS receiving department. **(503) 285-7722, ext. 211.** We will listen to you, provide you with tips and options, and if relinquishment seems the best option, schedule an admission appointment. After talking to you, examining your pet, and testing your pet's temperament, we may be able to assist you by matching the animal's personality with a deserving and responsible next home.

Shelters List

State of Washington

Clark County

Clark County Animal Protection and Control
1300 NE Franklin St
Vancouver, WA 98660
360-397-2488
www.clark.wa.gov/animal
Does not take owner release animals

Southwest Washington Humane Society
2121 St. Francis Lane
Vancouver, WA 98660
360-693-4746
www.southwesthumane.org
Takes owner release animals.
Asks for a donation if you're a resident or request a fee of \$20 if you are not.

Spay or Neuter Options

There are many options available to have your pet spayed or neutered for low-cost, no cost or with an interest free loan.

- Oregon Spay and Neuter Fund offers a low-cost spay/neuter coupon. There are no income restrictions to using it, but it must be used at specific participating veterinarians. The coupon is available for download at <http://www.animalaidpdx.org/documents/coupon.pdf>. For more information, call (503) 286-2411.
- The Spay/Neuter Assistance Plan (SNAP) provides direct assistance to those who need financial help to pay for their cats spay or neuter surgery. Seniors with inadequate income, the unemployed and under employed and people on public assistance receive help through this program. The SNAP certificate covers the full cost of the surgery at participating veterinary clinics. To apply for SNAP, call the Oregon Humane Society at (503) 285-7722 ext. 224. (For cats only)
- Cherish the Animals runs a low-cost spay/neuter assistance program designed to help spay or neuter cats. For questions call (503) 234-7182– For low-income only.
- POPPA, Inc. (Pet Over-Population Prevention Advocates, Inc.) runs a statewide spay/neuter referral and assistance service for dogs, cats, rabbits, and ferrets. For questions call (503) 626-4070.
- Feral Cats Coalition holds spay/neuter clinics throughout Oregon and SW Washington for feral cats. For information call (503) 797-2606.
- Spay Today! Over-Population Prevention (STOP) provides low-cost and no cost services in Portland Metro area only. You will need to fill out an application and once approved you will receive a voucher good at the nearest participating vet. To apply call (503) 441-1212.

Loans for Spay/Neuter

- Oregon Humane Society provides an interest free loan program to enable you to spay or neuter your family pets. The application is available at <http://www.oregonhumane.org/spay-neuter/index.asp> or call (503) 285-7722. If approved for the loan you will receive a certificate good for up to \$50 towards altering your pet. You are responsible for the remainder of the cost and finding a veterinarian to perform the surgery. The loan must be repaid within 6 months.
- At Animal Aid we attempt to relieve and prevent the suffering or death of our animal friends from accident or disease by helping with an interest free loan so the animal can receive immediate medical care. This includes loans to have your pet spayed or neutered. The pet guardian can then repay our fund with monthly payments. We can be reached at (503) 292-6628, or at admin@animalaidpdx.org.