



Supported Self-Rehoming Field Services and Basic Pet Care Resources

Overview

Community members rehoming pets may benefit from additional support to help ensure their pet is up to date on vaccinations, spayed/neutered, on schedule with preventatives, and any current behavior considerations have a management plan that can be passed along to their next caretakers. Pets with comprehensive medical and behavior care already in place tend to have a higher likelihood of moving forward in the rehoming process quickly, as the financial and time burden is lessened for the next potential owner.

Medical Care Considerations

Providing both short tip sheets and resources for free or low-cost medical care can help ensure pets get what they need. Reference [this guide](#) for ideas.

Behavioral Care Considerations

Due to the variety of considerations that may come with pet behavior, offer rehoming owners with guidelines for basic behaviors and referrals to online or local professionals for more complex situations. Here are a few ideas to get started:

- General Resources
 - [HumanePro Animal Behavior and Training](#)
 - Common cat behavior example resources
 - [ASPCA](#)
 - [Best Friends](#)
 - [Alley Cat Allies](#)
 - [Cat Behavior Solutions](#)
 - [Feline Communication and Body Language](#)
 - [Introducing a New Cat - Best Friends](#)
 - [Introducing Your Cat to a New Cat - PAWS](#)
 - [Introducing a New Cat Into the Home - HSUS](#)
 - Common dog behavior example resources
 - [ASPCA](#)
 - [Best Friends](#)
 - [Maddie's Fund Dog Behavior Sample Documents](#)
 - [Dog-Dog Introductions - Austin Pets Alive!](#)
 - [Introducing Dogs to Each Other - Best Friends Animal Society](#)
 - [Introducing a New Dog to Your Dogs At Home - Dogs Playing For Life](#)

- [Introducing a New Dog to Children - Regina Humane Society](#)
 - Training videos
 - [San Diego Humane Society](#)
 - [The Family Dog](#)
 - [Dog Training by Kikopup](#)
 - [Pam's Dog Academy](#)
 - [Zak George](#)
 - [Grisha Stewart](#)
 - [Dr. Sophia Yin](#)
 - [Dunbar Academy](#)
 - [Head Halter Desensitization](#)
 - [Crate Training](#)
 - [Cat Behavior](#)
- Create a referral system for more complex problems (e.g., [private trainers](#), [applied animal behaviorists](#), [veterinary behaviorists](#), etc.).
 - [How to choose a dog trainer](#)
- Create a list of available community services to help people keep their pets (e.g., daycare, pet sitters, groomers, vet clinics).
 - [Ecosystem mapping toolkit](#)
 - Investigate whether there's an opportunity for discounted services or a free first exam in exchange for your publicizing their service.
- Develop a list of recommended training supplies, enrichment materials, etc.
- Add free or low-cost programs you offer to pets.findhelp.com to increase visibility for your community.

Human Support Considerations

While identifying potential support for pets in the rehoming process, consider if the pet owner requires any support as well. For example, if a pet owner is struggling financially to provide food and supplies for their pet they may also benefit from support for food and basic supplies for themselves. Provide options for free or low-cost services through findhelp.org, contact information for local food pantries or housing support services, or connect them directly with social services.

Supporting Research and Resources

Supported Self-Rehoming (General)

- [Predictors of successful diversion of cats and dogs away from animal shelter intake: Analysis of data from a self-rehoming website](#) (Ly & Protopopova, 2023)
 - “This study aimed to identify predictors of successful diversion of animals through the AdoptaPet.com ‘Rehome’ online platform. Data for dogs (n = 100,342) and cats (n = 48,484) were analysed through logistic regression to assess the association of animal- and owner-related factors and outcome. Overall, **87.1% of dogs and 85.7% of cats were successfully diverted from animal shelters**, out of which, 37.8% of dogs and 35.3% of cats were kept by their original owner.”

- [Consumer Adoption Survey](#) (Best Friends Animal Society, 2022)
 - **Of the 39% of dogs** that were acquired from an individual, **14%** were acquired from someone the person connected with online.
 - **Of the 37% of cats** that were acquired from an individual, **5%** were acquired from someone the person connected with online.
- [Goodbye to a Good Friend: An Exploration of the Re-Homing of Cats and Dogs in the U.S.](#) (Weiss et al., 2015)
 - “Pets were most likely to be re-homed by being given to a friend or family member (37%) closely followed by being taken to a shelter (36%, Table 1). Being taken to a veterinarian (14%), **given to someone not previously known (stranger, 11%)** and set free (1%) were less likely re-homing options.”
 - “Forty two percent of respondents who re-homed to friends and family also considered a shelter for re-homing, and **18% of those who re-homed to a shelter considered re-homing to someone they did not know.** We hypothesize one of the drivers for shelter relinquishment may be lack of ready access to other options for re-homing.”

Free and Low-Cost Medical Care

- [Human Animal Support Services \(HASS\) Releases Community Values Survey Results](#) (Human Animal Support Services, 2023)
 - “In fact, **71% of pet owners could not afford nor had access to** the means necessary to meet their pets’ needs with the **largest barrier being accessibility to affordable veterinary care of all types.** These results point to communities in distress and in agreement for the prioritization of offering direct assistance when care grows beyond the capabilities of pet owners.”
- [Access to Veterinary Care—A National Family Crisis and Case for One Health](#) (Blackwell & O’Reilly, 2023)
 - “Due to the significance of the human–animal bond in our society, the lack of veterinary care negatively influences both human and nonhuman members of communities.”
 - **“More than 1 out of 4 families struggle to access veterinary care in the United States.”**
 - “Barriers to veterinary care are human-related, requiring a One Health solution.”
 - “Access to veterinary care is the social justice call to action of veterinarians”
- [Assessment of canine health and preventative care outcomes of a community medicine program](#) (Mueller et al., 2018)
 - The study hypothesizes that “the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities that exist with regard to access to high quality human health services, especially related to preventative care,” are likely similar in regard to access to preventative vet care for the dogs of underserved communities.
 - “Existing research exploring the impact of affordability in veterinary care has found that pet owners with lower incomes (less than \$35,000 a year) or who are unemployed were less likely to have taken their pet to a veterinarian within the previous year. . . (Volk et al., 2011).”

- “Capitalizing on **low-cost, community health models** that have been successful in human healthcare settings may be an effective **method of addressing access to veterinary care** (particularly preventative care) in underserved canine populations”
- [Goodbye to a Good Friend: An Exploration of the Re-Homing of Cats and Dogs in the U.S.](#) (Weiss et al., 2015)
 - “**Services that might have helped pet retention** were examined for the lower income category since the services listed were all described as free or low cost. **The service that was selected most commonly as something that might have helped respondents was free or low cost veterinary care (40%).** Other service options were free or low cost training or behavior help (34%, more common for dog owners), access to pet friendly housing (33%), free or low cost spay/neuter services (30%), free or low cost pet food (30%), free or low cost temporary pet care or boarding (30%) and assistance in paying pet deposits (17%).”
- [The Impact of the Social Determinants of Human Health on Companion Animal Welfare](#) (McDowall et al., 2023)
 - “In a study of rehomed companion animals, **40% of the participants identified that free or low-cost veterinary care could have prevented relinquishment [57].**”
 - “The proposed integrated framework considers the interconnection between the social determinants of health, One Health, One Welfare and the five domains of animal welfare, providing a model for a more comprehensive approach to better outcomes for companion animals, their guardians and the community.”
- [More Than a Pet](#) (The Humane Society of the United States, n.d.)
 - “20M+ pets live in poverty and that's three times more than the number who enter animal shelters every year.”
 - “70% of pets living in poverty have never seen a veterinarian.”
 - “28% of pet owners are unable to access veterinary care.”