

Contents

- 2 Highland Animal Relief Team
- 3 Code of Ethics
- 4 What is Volunteering?
- 5 Our Administration Team
- 8 Code of Conduct
- 12 Dogs/Puppies
- 13 Cats/Kittens
- 14 Our Spay/Neuter Program, SNIP
- 15 Fostering Information
- 17 Our Adoption Procedure
- 19 Adoption Guidelines
- 22 Telephone Screening Form for Dog Adoptions
- 24 Telephone Screening Form for Dog Adoptions – Guidelines
- 26 Telephone/Intake Job Description

Highland Animal Relief Team

Thousands of years ago, we humans formed a covenant with our companion animals. We wanted them to live with us and to share our lives. Because of this our 'pets' lost most of their natural skills to fend for themselves. It then became our responsibility to feed and care for them. While the animals have kept their end of the bargain, we humans largely have not.

At HART we are trying, in our small way, to make amends. We believe that all animals deserve to be treated humanely and with respect. Each and every one of us can make a difference and help to keep our ancient promise to the animals.

In 1995 a group of North Hastings citizens came together to create HART. With many years of experience and the input from many credible rescue organizations Canada wide, we trust this handbook will provide insight and instruction in this most worthy field of animal rescue.

Our primary Program is designed to facilitate the rescue/support of dogs and cats in need. Dogs are taken into our Adoption Program and provided veterinarian and foster care, until a suitable adoptive placement can be developed.

Our Spay/Neuter Incentive Program, SNIP, is secondary and limited to available funds each year.

Our Mission

- To provide supportive care for and to promote humane treatment of stray, injured and abandoned animals in our region

Our Vision

- To stimulate interest in the well being of all animals, by promoting education of animal welfare
- To develop for perpetuity a system/facility to provide shelter, food, medical attention for animals in need, until a new permanent, caring home can be found

Our Commitment

- To respect and insure the dignity of our organization, our volunteers and the animals we serve by fostering moral and ethical standards approved within affordable means

Code of Ethics

To promote and optimize the missions and objectives of HART

All Hart volunteers are expected to comply with the following code of ethics.

- HART is a non-profit rescue organization and is 'no kill'.
- HART works to the highest rescue standards possible.
- HART will work to create funds/resources for emergency/sanctuary veterinary care before considering euthanization of terminally ill or severely injured animals.
- All foster animals are provided equal standards of food, shelter and veterinary care.
- Mutual respect and regard of all volunteers is appropriate at all times.
- HART works to the standards for charitable accountability as per the Ministry of Attorney General and Canada Revenue Agency.
- Volunteers should conduct themselves in a manner that is not injurious to the reputation, mandate or objectives of HART.
- Endeavour to raise awareness of the contribution made to society by canines as companions, therapy animals, search and rescue animals, law enforcement, and other canine occupations.
- Promote and practice humane treatment of all animals under the member's care including but not limited to the provision of sufficient food and water, adequate shelter, veterinary care, training, control, exercise and socialization.
- Promote and support ethical professions and services that promote, encourage and practice humane treatment of all pets.
- Strive to advance and cultivate a harmonious relationship between members of the dog owning community and the non dog owning community by exemplifying responsible dog ownership and accountability.
- Never partake in nor in any way be party to unethical breeding or breeding for the sole purpose of profit.
- Never partake in nor in any way be party to any illegal activities involving dogs, including but not limited to dog fighting.
- Never partake in or in any way be party to promoting adoption of animals by giving, 'Free to Good Home'. Appropriate vet care and screening for home suitable to needs of each individual animal must always be maintained.

What is Volunteering?

Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is offering time, energy and skills of one's own free will.

It is an extension of being a good neighbour, transforming a collection of houses into a community, as people become involved in the improvement of their surroundings and choose to help others.

By caring and contributing to change, volunteers decrease suffering and disparity, while they gain skills, self-esteem, and change their lives.

When you volunteer, you give part to your family and friends, to your neighbours, to your community.

Giving is one of the reasons why people volunteer. Their contributions to others and to their communities bring them feelings of self-fulfillment and the knowledge that they have made a difference.

Volunteering is a way of recognizing the countless others who have made life richer and better through donations of time and effort. Volunteering provides a satisfying outlet for people's talents, ambitions, and concerns in ways that are different from their regular daily responsibilities.

The importance of volunteers to nonprofit agencies is obvious. Volunteers can often make the difference in whether an agency survives. The hours that volunteers contribute are as valuable, if not more, than money donations.

Commitment to HART

- An appreciation of team effort is required to fulfill our mission statement.
- Persons willing to work responsibly, independently and in a timely manner to facilitate the duties of their own jobs , while maintaining an awareness of the interconnection of all facets of a very complex body of work .
- Empathy for animals and their right to humane care and treatment, is fundamental to rescue work of HART

Our Administrative Team

All in animal rescue begin with the altruistic view that we would and could save each and every animal but sadly this is not so. The two most important things in animal rescue are **to set limits and be willing to stick to them and to have well thought out policies and procedures in place.**

Policies and procedures must stay within the legal laws governing animal welfare and also within those laws governing non-profit charitable organizations as per HART's Constitution.

A board of directors provides adequate oversight of the charity's operations and its staff. Indication of adequate oversight includes, but is not limited to, regularly scheduled appraisals of performance, evidence of disbursement controls, such as, fund raising practices, establishment of a conflict of interest policy, and establishment of accounting procedures sufficient to safeguard charity finances.

Animal Intake

- begins with a call to the HART phone line
- only animals processed by this means will become the financial responsibility of HART and therefore HART animals

Veterinarian Approval

- legal surrender of animals to the HART program occurs at the office of a designated veterinarian
- veterinarian assessment and applicable care is extended
- a file photo is taken and a number is assigned to the animal, for purpose of identification

Fostering

- animals will remain in foster care until an appropriate, permanent home can be developed

Application for Adoption

- application for adoption of an animal is made through the HART website

Screening

- screening is done by email application and telephone before approving visitation with an animal in it's foster home
- home visits occur only after screening has been accomplished

Adoption

- adoption is prearranged and requires an adoption fee of \$225.00 to reimburse care, feeding, equipment and veterinarian expenses

Adoption Follow-up

- adoption follow-up will occur to insure an animal's transition to and progress in the new adoptive home

Photographer

- digital camera, computer skills, flexible schedule, and own transportation are required

Treasury

- Our treasurer will maintain records on a computer using a Quicken Books software program
- budgets and projections will be maintained

Secretarial

- Our secretary must have computer skills, filing skills and the ability to use a database, minutes from meetings must also be prepared

Fundraising

- requires coordination of volunteers/venues to create funds

Spay/Neuter Incentive

- requires coordination of application to and approval of spay/neuter subsidy, as funds are available

Advertising

- requires coordination of appropriate resources to advertise HART'S work, while working to the terms of HART constitution

Public Relations

- requires education of the community HART serves and the extended community from which HART seeks resources/support
- requires excellent social skills

Website Management

- requires administration/updates of the HART website, as per instruction from designated board member

Grant Proposals

- requires coordination of data for writing of proposals to access grant funds
- all proposals require the signatures of both the HART president and the other director

Code of Conduct

The board of HART is elected by and responsible to the membership of HART as defined in the constitution and bylaws. Members of the board, members of any committee of the board, or any person appointed by the board to serve on any committee of HART shall at all times be governed by applicable federal and provincial statutes, by the bylaws, and by any policies adopted by HART for the governance and management of its affairs. Members of the board and of committees shall ensure that none of their actions or decisions conflict with the rules.

General Standards of Personal Conduct

Members of the board or any member of a committee of the board or a member of a committee appointed by the board shall:

- respect the rights, dignity and worth of all persons;
- regardless of how he/she becomes a board or committee member, be responsible first and foremost to the welfare of HART and must function primarily as a member of the board, not as a member of any particular constituency;
- conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and adhere to the best interests of animal welfare and appropriate decorum;
- be fair, equitable, considerate and honest in all dealings with others;
- exercise due diligence in upholding fiduciary responsibility to the membership of HART;
- respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature;
- ensure that all members are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions, and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight;
- respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so;
- commit time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparing for and participating in discussions.

The board of directors shall:

- establish the strategic purpose and values of the organization;
- exercise financial oversight and fiduciary responsibility for the organization on behalf of the members;
- exercise risk management oversight on behalf of the organization;
- establish formal and informal reporting requirements between the board and any committees of the board and between the board and the executive committee;
- establish, approve and review policies, particularly those related to governance of the organization or its' members;
- avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, a member of the board is expected to declare the conflict and to act in accordance with established policies for resolution or avoidance of the conflict;
- engage in developmental activities to improve board performance and ensure 'best practices' in board procedures;
- review the performance of board members and of the chairperson of the board;
- respect the authority of the chairperson, and exercise only such authority as is granted individually or collectively by board governance policies;
- respect the relationship between the board and executive committee, and the authority of the executive committee over management/administration;
- ensure that only the appointed member of the board speaks publicly on behalf of HART unless another spokesperson has been specifically authorized by the board;
- establish clear performance criteria (including key results and time frames) for the periodic evaluation of the performance of all the board members. Performance criteria should be objective, measurable, and in accordance with the strategic purpose and values established by the board.

Members of committees of the board of HART and persons appointed by the board to serve on other operational committees of HART shall:

- review and be guided by the terms of reference for the committee;
- develop, in conjunction with the board or with the appropriate staff person, an annual program of work for the committee, including performance outcomes and timelines;
- respect the authority of the chair of the committee, and communicate to the board and to staff through the chairperson or through such lines of communication as may be established by the board or by management;
- avoid and declare potential conflicts of interest, according to board policies and procedures;
- prepare for and participate fully in all discussions, meetings and decisions of the board/committees;
- ensure that decisions that create budgetary implications or expose the organization to potential risk are flagged for specific attention by the board;
- ensure that budgetary constraints are known and respected.

Notice of Compliance

Code of Conduct
HART Board of Directors and Committees of the Board

I certify that I have read and agree to comply with the code of conduct for members of the board and committees of HART.

Name: _____

Position(s): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annual recertification of compliance:

Date	Position	Signature
------	----------	-----------

Dogs/Puppies

Veterinary costs are only provided by HART, when proper intake procedure has been observed. Extenuating circumstances often prevail and these should be discussed with and decided upon by intake personnel.

CONFIDENTIALITY IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE OUR BUSINESS IS ALWAYS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS TO BE DISCUSSED INTERNALLY ONLY

Intake is never based on profitability of an animal. Neither is intake based on like or dislike of an animal owner. Only the animal's specific needs are considered for intake to our program. HART serves animals in need, not the persons who own them.

- Prior to surrender of any litters of puppies to our program, a Parvo screen must be conducted. Fecal swabs will be collected per any two random puppies from the said litter. This procedure is executed for delivery to the veterinary office. Results are usually back in 3 – 5 days. Intake only occurs when the test results are negative.
- the cost to spay the 'dam' of the surrendered puppy litter can be covered by HART
- a surrender form, transferring legal ownership to HART, is required
- a veterinary check is administered, before entry to HART foster care
- a HART identification number is assigned
- should an animal not be assessed as a good candidate for adoption/admission, that animal may therefore be declined
- in circumstances of traumatic injury, terminal illness, etc. veterinary care to be provided, will be decided upon by intake personnel and at least one Director, after consultation with Treasurer
- photographs of an animal are taken for advertising/ file purposes
- an animal is then transferred to the care of a foster provider
- in the case of 'owner surrender', a statement should be signed affirming that the dog has never bitten anyone
- the cost or a percentage of the costs incurred are reimbursed by adoption fee of \$225.00
- when a foster home is unavailable, outside rescue resources are sought

Cats/Kittens

- HART no longer intakes cats/kittens
- HART fulfills our mission statement by providing supporting care to cats/kittens.
- Badly injured cats/kittens are sent to Faraday Animal Hospital (FAH), where it is determined if they can be saved at a cost reasonable and affordable to HART. The HART treasurer must be consulted to insure funds for treatment are available. Humane euthanization is the alternative when ‘aforesaid’ animal is beyond our means to assist or rehome.
- pregnant female cats can be ‘intaken’ when foster care is available
- To persons calling to turn in stray cats/kittens, the following suggestions are made:
 - for immediate help contact PAWS, Lakefield Animal Welfare, Quinte SPCA, or Pembroke SPCA
 - abandoned kittens can remain the responsibility of a caller who will provide all necessary transportation
 - if a caller can be convinced to make a stray cat/kitten a part of their own family, HART will offer support by offering low cost, basic veterinary care (i.e. first vaccinations; de-worming; spay/neutering), through SNIP, when funding is available, or by offering the FAH HART price, to be repaid to HART, by animal’s caretaker
- Due to kitten deaths to viral contamination and upon discussion with HART veterinarians, the HART board decided to stop the intake of cats and kittens for some of the following reasons:
 - no ‘reasonable’ foster homes are currently available
 - lacking suitable means to ‘isolate’, jeopardizes not only incoming animals but the healthy animals already residing in foster homes
 - pre-intake blood screening is cost prohibitive
 - because cats are extremely territorial, more than six cats in one home is considered psychologically disturbing to all the animals residing there
 - municipal bylaws must be observed
 - intake can be revisited when and if the development of suitable foster homes becomes available. The attempts to create ‘outdoor feral colonies’ overseen by a caretaker, have to date, met with little or no success
 - costs can not be recovered adoption fee
 - all cats ‘intaken’ by HART in the past, have not been successfully adopted and now remain in lifetime HART foster care.
 - attempts to create a Trap/Neuter Release Program, TNRP, have met with little success, to date. This option remains available to citizens willing to undertake this responsibility, with HART financial assistance

Our Spay/Neuter Incentive Program – SNIP

- A secondary HART program designed to reduce overpopulation of dogs and cats in our service region
- Program is dependent upon funds available, at any given time
- Goal is to create funds required to subsidize affordable spay/neuter/vaccine costs for animals of low fixed income or multi pet families
- Accesses services of veterinarians in our region to provide agreed upon schedule of fees to facilitate this work

Cats: \$50 paid by animal caretaker - balance of fee paid by HART

Dogs: \$75 paid by animal caretaker - balance of fee paid by HART

- SNIP is an application process. A financial statement is required and facilitated by mail.
- Application begins with a call to the HARTline 613-338-3333
- Approval of applicant is confirmed by telephone by the SNIP administrator
- Approval of applicant to designated veterinarian service, is transmitted by email from the SNIP administrator
- Application file is forwarded to the treasurer of HART

Fostering Information

When a foster animal arrives at your home, it comes with a collar, leash, kennel, bedding, food, treats, toys and any medications required. Should you wish to supplement the supplies on your own, that is your decision.

Let us know you are interested in fostering by calling 613-338-3333 or email us at www.hartanimalrelief.ca

Our foster home coordinator or another volunteer will contact you to set up a mutually convenient time to come to your home to meet with you. They will gather information regarding your history with animals, your lifestyle and examine your home to ensure the safety and security of the foster animal. When approved, a rescued animal can be accommodated in your Foster home.

The length of time that each animal stays in foster care varies. Some animals stay for a few days while others may need to stay for a few months. It is in the animal's best interest to have consistency when in foster care so we endeavor to keep them in one foster home until their permanent home is found.

We want the fostering experience to be positive for both the rescued animal and the foster family. Often times, when a dog or cat is moved to a foster home, they are confused and unsettled. It may take a few days to a week for the animal to settle in. If the animal is just not a good match for your household, HART will transfer the animal to another foster home as soon as a transfer can be arranged.

All resident animals must have their vaccinations up to date and be either spayed or neutered prior to a rescued animal being placed in your home.

It is helpful if foster families can transport their animals to and from vet appointments. However, not having transportation does not preclude you from being a foster home, it just makes it more challenging. We also encourage our foster homes to take their foster animals out for errands and visits, and to regularly walk 'on leash'.

HART will arrange for alternative accommodation for a foster animal during vacation time period but requires as much advance notice as possible.

Any foster family who would like to become the 'forever' home to their foster animal, will be considered. An appropriate adoption fee will be decided by two Directors.

HART encourages the use of the kennel that is supplied and strongly recommends that the animal is not left unsupervised in your home. Kennel training keeps items out of harm's way and makes the foster dog more adoptable. Many of our foster animals are not housetrained and accidents are to be expected while training takes place.

HART will not be responsible for any damage done to your home or property as a result of fostering.

Socialization is an important aspect in the development of well rounded dog behaviour. Both puppy and adult dogs need socialization to insure their likelihood of adoptive placement. Puppies should be handled often throughout the day to accustom them to human touch. A walk on a lead daily, even a short one, provides pup an education to the world at large and prevents them from becoming timid of loud noises and various commonplace occurrences. Speak to them often and they learn to respond to human voices. Handle their little feet, ears and mouths so they become accustomed to this routine.

Guardian/foster caretakers will be expected to keep animals clean at all times. Feces should be removed daily from adult dog enclosures. Puppy urine and feces, should be removed 'as it happens' from puppy enclosures and beds. Strategies for healthy kennel maintenance will be provided by HART personnel.

Our Adoption Procedure

A HART Director will screen all prospective adopters. Should an applicant be suitable, they will be given the foster caretaker's telephone number and a convenient time to visit the animal.

All persons visiting the foster home for purpose of adoption are well screened by HART personnel before scheduling a visit to your home. Should the foster caretaker have misgivings about the person when speaking with them over the telephone or when meeting them in person, they can stop the adoption in the best interests of the animal concerned. This circumstance has only occurred a very few times as screening is previously accomplished by the 'online application', follow-up emails and phone calls.

The foster caregiver should confirm with HART personnel that all vaccines, worming and surgery is up to date before the adoption occurs.

A dog/puppy should NOT be fed the morning of the proposed transport to his or her new home. The animal suffers far less stress from motion sickness on an empty stomach. Fresh water should be limited until the animal arrives at their new home. This is required on a journey of one day or less only.

The adoption fee asked for all HART dogs/puppies is \$225.00. This fee is occasionally negotiated to provide an animal the best home. Negotiation is previously arranged with HART intake personnel or a Director. The foster caregiver will be made aware of this negotiated fee in advance of the adoption. Relative information is gathered from the animal's own veterinary records and from the person applying to adopt. Please ensure that the form is completed properly.

- The adopter must sign the form. The foster caregiver must sign the form as a representative of HART. The pink copy of the three part form is given to the adopter.
- The white and yellow copies of the adoption form, along with the cheque or cash, should then be forwarded to HART as soon as possible.
- In the case of cash, please call 613-338-3333 to make arrangements for pickup or drop-off to appropriate HART personnel.
- The adopter should be given the pink copy of the adoption form as well as the animal's veterinary records. HART ID tag and rabies vaccine tag for puppies should be attached to their collar before they are transported to their new home.
- A leash and collar will be provided by HART or kept for return to HART should the adopter have a leash and collar of their own.

• Please instruct the adopter to be very cautious when transporting their new animal to their home. Animals become frightened during times of change and extra care should be taken. A leash should be used at all times until the dog/puppy is safe in his/her new home.

• A sample (2-3 days) of the animal's food can be given to allow the adopter to change food brand over time, if desired. The animal suffers less stress (diarrhea) when food is changed gradually over a few days.

• Large quantities of unused dog/puppy food can also be returned to HART as soon as possible.

• A HART Director or the HART fostering coordinator will follow up in a few days to insure that the adoption is going well.

• Should you, as foster caregiver, have any questions or concerns please call the HARTline at 613-338-3333 and leave a message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Adoption Guidelines

Once an animal is rescued, it is HART's priority to find them a loving, safe and stable lifelong home. To assist in achieving this goal, we have established the HART Adoption Guideline.

Best Match versus 'First Come, First Served'

Adoptions are not done on a 'first come, first served' basis. Some of our animals have special needs that must be taken into consideration and our matching system allows us to find the best environment for each animal.

Spay/Neuter

All animals adopted through HART must either be spayed or neutered, when age appropriate. A spay/neuter 'incentive fund' of \$50.00 will be refunded, with vet proof of surgery at age 6 months, in the case of a puppy.

Pets as Gifts

HART does not allow its animals to be adopted as gifts. Instead, we encourage a review of the animals available for adoptions so the best match can be made between the potential adopter and the animal.

Animals are not transferred to new homes during Christmas holidays.

Adoption Criteria

- Potential adopters must have reasonable expectations of the animal being adopted. Any sign of intolerance or aggression towards the animal may result in the termination of the adoption
- Potential adopters must demonstrate they have the financial means to care for the animal. References may be necessary for students or unemployed individuals.
- Individuals who have returned an adopted animal to HART for reasons which show a lack of understanding or compassion, will not be permitted to adopt another animal and no refund will be granted.
- Potential adopters who: have recently had to euthanize an animal for reasons other than severe health problems; have surrendered an animal to another organization; or have given an animal away for reasons which indicate a lack of understanding or compassion with respect to the animal's needs and natural behaviour, will not be permitted adoption of the HART animal.

Companion Animals

HART animals are adopted out as companions, not working dogs.

Fences

HART dogs will only be adopted out to homes with appropriate fencing accommodations.

HART does not condone leaving dogs outside, unsupervised for extended periods of time as all dogs are social animals and thrive in a healthy, family setting. Dogs may become bored and problematic (i.e. barking, digging, aggressive) if left without stimulation or exercise.

Crating

HART dogs are crated while in foster care and we strongly recommend using the crate until the adopter can trust the animal's behaviour when left in an unsupervised home.

Children and Pets

HART takes all household members into consideration when arranging an adoption and may, based on the animal's temperament, discourage the adoption of certain animals to families with young children.

Out-of-Town Adopters

Potential adopters who live outside the region, will be considered as potential adopters provided they follow the steps in the adoption process and the foster home is in full agreement.

Landlord Permission

Potential adopters who rent will be required to submit written proof from their landlord that pets are permitted (i.e. lease permission signed by landlord). Owners of townhouses or condominiums may be required to provide proof their bylaws allow animals.

Other Pets at Home – Proof of Vaccination

All resident animals of a potential adopter must be up-to-date on vaccinations before an adoption will be approved. A vaccination certificate may be requested.

Refunds

The adopter has three (3) weeks in which to return an adopted animal to HART for a full refund, regardless of circumstances. After the three (3) week period, if the adopter is unable to keep the animal, they must contact HART who will take the animal back into care, or use all available resources to place the animal into a suitable home. No refund will be issued after the three (3) week period.

Medical Conditions

While HART makes every effort to insure the dogs available for adoption are healthy, HART does not guarantee the temperament of any animal. Once adopted, medical costs (including booster and rabies shots) are the responsibility of the adopter.

Follow-Up

In order to ensure the successful placement of HART animals, an adopter can expect follow-ups from HART volunteers.

Adherence to Municipal Bylaws

All municipalities have bylaws pertaining to the control of animals. Potential adopters must be prepared to adhere to control bylaws in their area.

Telephone Screening Form for Dog Adoptions

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

What are you looking for in a pet? _____

How long have you lived at your present address? _____

How many adults live in your home? _____

Are there children? What are their ages? _____

Who will be responsible for the animal? _____

What kind of area do you live in? (suburb/rural) _____

How many animals are you legally allowed to have on your property? _____

How do you feel about crating a dog? (approve/disapprove) _____

1. Do you want the dog for yourself or is it for a gift? _____

2. Are you a student or are you active in the military? _____

3. Do you live in an apartment, house, mobile home, or condo? _____

4. Do you own or rent your residence? _____

Will your landlord give you written permission to have a dog? _____

Will you show me the landlord's written permission stating that you can keep a dog on the premises? _____

5. Do you have a cat or a dog now? (breed/how many/gender) _____

How long have you had your pet(s)? _____

Are their vaccines up to date? _____

(Telephone Screening Form for Dog Adoptions – page 2)

What kind of personality does your dog have? Dominant/aggressive _____ Docile/Easy-going _____

Have you had any pets prior to the one you now own? _____

6. What happened to your pet? _____

7. May we contact your vet as a reference? _____

8. Is (was) the pet spayed or neutered? _____

9. Are you interested in breeding? _____

10. Do you think that an animal should have at least one litter before being fixed? _____

11. Will this dog be primarily an indoor or outdoor pet? _____

Do you hunt? _____

12. Where will the dog be kept when you are away from your home? _____

13. What is the longest period of time that the dog would be left unattended? _____

14. Do you have a fenced-in yard? _____

15. If you moved, what would you do with the dog? _____

16. Does everybody in your family want an adopted dog? _____

17. May I visit your home to see how and where the animal would be living? _____

NOTES:

Telephone Screening Form for Dog Adoptions - Guidelines

Do not reveal to the person being interviewed what you are looking for in a pet owner. Some people may then tell you only what you want to hear. At the same time, don't 'grill' them. Instead, make conversation and you will be surprised at what they reveal about themselves.

The first part of this form gives you a general background on the person and an idea of what kind of environment might be provided for the dog. The prospective adopter(s) set the tone right away when they describe what they are looking for in a pet. It could be a companion for a lonely person, playmate for their children, buddy for another pet or an act of kindness in providing a home for an unfortunate animal. The number of adults and children in the home and their ages will indicate to you whether the dog would be suitable or not, since you are familiar with the animal's personality.

How long they have lived at their present location usually gives you some idea of their stability. If they have moved into their neighbourhood recently, ask how long they lived at their last residence. The location of the prospective home may also help you in the decision making process in many ways. For instance, the community they live in determines how many animals may be kept on the property. Don't let them adopt an animal if it puts them over their legal limit!

If they disapprove of crating a dog, you should educate them on the benefits of this type of training. Give them literature if you have it, explain how the dog perceives the crate as its den, that it is not cruel and that, until it is trained, it is in the dog's best interest to be confined when you are not at home.

In all cases, do not make a snap decision while on the telephone. Tell them that other people are on your prospective list and that you will call them back. Then tally up, review your notes and compare them with other prospects. If you feel that you have found a good home, call them back and make arrangements for them to see the dog and for you to visit their home.

This screening form should be used in conjunction with other techniques, such as face-to-face interviews, home visits and conversations with the person's friends and references. None of the conditions in this screening form are absolute. They are guidelines and should not be used alone to make a definitive decision regarding someone's suitability as an adopter.

There are always exceptions to every rule. For instance, the form deducts a lot of points if the person is a student or in the military. This is because these demographic groups are known to abandon pets much more often than the average pet owner does. But if they score high in other areas, get to know them better and ask for character references. They may be totally dedicated to a pet and would never abandon it.

Another example would be someone who has recently lost an old and/or beloved pet and has been referred to you by a reputable veterinarian. This is practically a 'no-brainer', regardless of the circumstances.

Points are gained when you have a fence and gate five feet or taller, however, that still does not mean that the fence is suitable. You won't know that until you visit the home. If a dog is to be kept in a yard any time at all, it is very important that it not be able to escape and that another animal not be able to get into the yard with it. If the fence is in disrepair and/or there are places that a dog could easily crawl or dig under it, you should require the owners make repairs before you adopt to them. Remember, it is better for a dog to live in an apartment and be walked regularly than to be kept in an unsafe yard; or even worse, to be dumped in a yard 24 hours a day without any human contact.

Use your discretion with the points system. If you feel that someone went above and beyond the norm in any of the situations, you should feel free to give them a higher score than listed. For instance, if someone went to extraordinary lengths to try and save a former pet with a health problem, they would merit more consideration. Alternatively, if you feel more strongly about any of the negative items, you may want to proceed carefully.

Careful thought and common sense are required to be successful in this process. Also, it is necessary to be flexible, keep an open mind and use your good judgment.

Telephone/Intake Job Description

HARTline, 613-338-3333 has been established to facilitate the 'generation' of HART resources.

The general public often experiences HART for the first time when calling the HARTline for various reasons.

It is the responsibility of this operator to represent HART in a professional manner.

Familiarity with HART programs and resources is prerequisite to initiation of procedures or to offer resources requested by callers.

All calls are confidential to HART.

Duties of a HART Operator

1. Answer, on a daily basis, all calls coming into HARTline. The operator will attempt to contact callers over a period of no more than 2 days. After leaving a voice mail, it becomes the responsibility of the caller to reconnect with HART. HARTline personnel have a responsibility to be courteous, pleasant and with a business-like demeanor, offer the resources HART has available.
2. Intake of animals is based on daily liaison with the HART treasurer and an awareness of availability of foster resources. Intake must be coordinated to occur at a veterinary facility for the purposes of veterinary assessment, legal surrender, photos and foster care.
3. HART is NOT animal control. Animal control is or is not offered by each Municipality HART serves. Tax dollars generate animal control services, where they exist.
4. Alternate resources and telephone numbers are routinely offered for persons seeking immediate solutions to animal crises.
5. Telephone numbers and email addresses are also given from the 'Directory of Rescue Clubs in Ontario', for 'breed specific' rescue.
6. Creating interest in HART membership and collection of mailing addresses for emailing to appropriate personnel for HART files.
7. Taking information for cash donations, 'in memoriam' donations and emailing to appropriate personnel for HART files.
8. Maintaining data of animals lost or found in hopes of reconnecting them with owners.
9. Veterinary approval to designated veterinary services for emergency care and supportive care for stray animals. All approvals are given both verbally and by email to the appropriate veterinarian.
10. SNIP calls are answered and information is collected for email to appropriate personnel or are answered by SNIP personnel.

11. Callers wishing to adopt a HART animal are asked to go online to www.hartanimalrelief.ca and fill out the Adoption Application found there.
12. Offering education for spay/neuter, appropriate feeding, housing, housebreaking, crate training etc. Offering helpful strategies for problem solving behaviours in an attempt to resolve difficulties before rehoming occurs.
13. Answering emails coming into info@hartanimalrelief.ca Resourcing response from appropriate department only when usually designated personnel are NOT available.
14. Facilitating the needs of foster and volunteer callers.
15. To inform callers that HART is a registered charity, non-profit and volunteer organization.