

ALTERNATIVES TO SURRENDERING A PET

Giving up a pet is a heart-wrenching decision, but sometimes there seems to be no other option for a pet owner. We understand that financial concerns, illness, moving to a home that won't accept pets, and unwanted litters can put owners in a no-win situation. The Nebraska Humane Society (NHS) accepts all pets surrendered by owners. We promise safe harbor and humane treatment as the pet is evaluated for entry into our adoption program. However, NHS also offers resources to help keep animals in loving homes, and we urge pet owners to consider other options before deciding to surrender their animals.

Moving

There are many resources available online to locate pet-friendly housing. The websites below have the option to browse pet-friendly rentals:

- <http://www.apartments.com/pet-friendly-apartments>
- <http://www.rent.com/pet-friendly-apartments>
- <http://www.apartmentfinder.com/>
- <http://www.apartmentguide.com/>

Food and Supplies

If you are unable to afford food or supplies for your pet, the Nebraska Humane Society distributes food to pet owners who have fallen on hard times. The Pet Food Pantry is open once a week and is free of charge. The Pet Food Pantry is available every Friday from 2:00-4:00 p.m. We may also be able to help with other items you need to keep your pet in your home, such as cat litter or a crate.

Veterinary Care

The Nebraska Humane Society Spay & Neuter Center provides affordable, high-quality spay and neuter services. Our center is staffed with highly-trained, caring individuals who will treat you and your pet with the utmost care and respect. We also offer vaccinations, heartworm tests, preventatives, and other services at the time of surgery only. For more information, visit <http://www.nehumanesociety.org/for-pet-owners/low-cost-spay-neuter/> or 402-905-3490 Monday to Thursday between 7:15 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Other vaccination clinics and affordable veterinary services are available in the Omaha area. At times, NHS may have resources available to assist you with your pet's medical needs. Ask your customer service representative for more information.

Behavior Help

At the Nebraska Humane Society, we want to provide you with the best information on how to keep your pets safe, content, and home with you. Many behavior problems can be easily managed with a little knowledge and effort. In addition to our online Pet Resource Library, our FREE Behavior Helpline will help guide you through many common behavioral concerns. Contact us at (402) 905-3421 or at bhelp@nehumanesociety.org.

If your dog's behavioral concerns require more focused attention, we offer training classes and private sessions. Visit our website for more information: <http://www.nehumanesociety.org/for-pet-owners/training/>.

Domestic Violence Issues

The NHS Project Pet Safe program provides temporary, safe housing of the companion animals of domestic abuse victims while those individuals work with an advocate to leave an abusive situation. Thanks to generous supporters, we work to arrange free, short-term housing for these pets until they can be reunited with their loving owners. For more information about Project Pet Safe, e-mail pps@nehumanesociety.org or call 402-905-3420. If you or someone you know is in need of a domestic violence advocate, contact one of the agencies listed below:

- Women Center for Advancement (WCA): www.wcaomaha.org
- Catholic Charities: www.ccomaha.org

REHOMING YOUR PET

If you have the time and resources, please consider trying to rehome your pet yourself before surrendering to a shelter. You know your pet better than anyone else and are best suited for finding your pet a home that fits all of his/her needs. You already have a bond with your pet and can focus your efforts on this one pet, whereas shelters may have hundreds of pets that need homes. And shelters, despite all their efforts, are still stressful places for animals, which can lead to anxiety, aggression, and illness. You are your pet's best option for finding him or her a new home!

Prepare Your Pet for Adoption

- **Get your pet prepped.** You can increase the chances of finding a new home by making sure your pet is spayed or neutered, in good health, up to date on vaccinations, flea- and tick-free, clean and groomed. Contact our low cost spay and neuter center if your pet needs to be altered.
- **Take photos and videos** that show your pet's personality.
- **Write a short biography** about your pet. What makes him special? What does he like to do? Is he house/litter box trained? Does he like kids, other animals? Does he have any medical conditions? What type of home does he need?
- **Be honest.** While you still need to market your pet, don't be misleading about things that will impact his success in a new home or risk anyone's safety. If you know your pet doesn't enjoy kids, try to find an adult-only home.

Check with Family, Friends, and Other Acquaintances

- **Create flyers and social media posts** with photos and videos of your pet along with a biography.
- **Share** with friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors, and ask them to share with their friends and family.
- **Hang flyers** at local veterinarians, dog daycares and boarding facilities, groomers, and pet stores.

Contact Local Rescues

Local rescues may be able to help you rehome your pet by placing him in one of their foster homes for adoption. You can find local rescues on the website 'Petfinder' (<https://www.petfinder.com/>), by searching the internet for "(breed) rescue" and the name of your city, or through social media. There are often all-breed rescues and rescues that will take mixed breeds if your dog is not purebred. Even if they can't take your pet, some groups will offer courtesy postings on their websites or may allow you to bring the animal to one of their adoption events.

Post on Pet Rehoming Websites

Pet adoption websites like 'Rehome' and 'Get Your Pet' make it easy to rehome your pet at no cost to you. The website helps you set up your pet's profile, review applications, meet adopters, and finalize the adoption yourself without your pet ever having to enter a shelter.

- <https://rehome.adoptapet.com/>
- <https://getyourpet.com/>

Stay Safe

- **Avoid personal or classified ads** through Craigslist or other means.
- **Charging a rehoming fee** is an option that can provide you with reassurance that the adopter can afford a pet and is willing to put forth money to care for one. The fee doesn't need to be high and is not intended to recoup costs for raising your pet up to this point or help you turn a profit.
- **Require references.** A reference could be from the potential adopter's veterinarian or, for first-time pet owners, a neighbor or other community member.
- **Conduct a home visit.** A home visit will allow you to make sure the home suits the needs of your pet. It's also another opportunity to meet the adopter(s) to make sure it's a good fit for your pet. Remember, if you have a bad feeling, go with your instincts. There are always other options.