



We are proud to announce we have partnered with the Dutch Society at the United States Partners Can and will be adopting from all shelters North Ca

Step 2: Rely on conversation instead of applications

LONG APPLICATIONS that ask pet owners to prove their worth are another barrier in and of themselves. This approach also makes it easy to miss insights that help make a match succeed. Remember your new perspective: Your job isn't to ferret out bad adopters, it is to help support great pet owners. Your goal is to find a way to get to "yes."

The following adoption questionnaire (we don't call it an application!) is designed for conversation-based adoptions in organizations that have barrier-free adoption policies. You won't see a space for landlord contacts or veterinary history, or any questions that might lead to automatically rejecting adopters. You will see questions that will help counselors learn about the adopter, or a gift recipient, and any pets at home. These can guide conversations about a particular animal or provide information to assist the adopter in finding the best pet for them. It can even be used with formal matching programs you already have in place.

This questionnaire also asks adopters to point out what topics are important to them, which can help counselors prioritize what

information to share. Finally, there is space to promote your special services that might be of interest to adopters or someone they know. You can customize the template to fit your organization. Our only request is that you keep it barrier-free. Download the questionnaire at animalsheltering.org/questionnaire.

PAPERWORK OPTIONAL

Don't tie yourself to unnecessary paperwork. If adoption counselors can demonstrate that they have mastered the new approach, allow them to skip the questionnaire altogether and go straight to the conversation. This approach is already working for the Animal Humane Society, which serves communities out of five campuses in Minnesota. According to Janelle Dixon, president and CEO, the group has eliminated checklists and applications for adopters to fill out. Customer service representatives refer to a list that guides a friendly and constructive conversation. "We refer to our adoption process as relational and not transactional," Dixon explains.

HAVING CONVERSATIONS

Your logo

Thank you for choosing adoption! Please complete the following questions to help guide our conversation today.

Animal's Name: _____ Animal ID #: _____

Your Name(s): Mr./Ms. _____

Address: _____ Town, State, ZIP: _____

Email: _____

Cell phone: _____ Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Best way to be reached by phone? cell home work

Best time of day to be reached? morning afternoon evening

This pet is meant to be a gift. I am answering the following questions from the perspective of the lucky recipient.

We welcome adopters who rent or live in an apartment or condo. We want to alert you that some landlords and management companies have size and breed restrictions, limits on number of pets, and/or require pet deposits or additional fees.

Tell us about members of the new pet's household (e.g., # of adults/seniors/young children):

Tell us about pets at home (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> We have one or more dog(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> We have one or more small animal(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We have one or more cat(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like help with introducing a new pet to pet(s) at home |

Other info you want to share?

We'll explain this new pet's medical history and behavioral history. Check additional topics you'd like to discuss:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding this pet | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding a trainer | <input type="checkbox"/> Crate training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House training/litter box training | <input type="checkbox"/> Introducing this pet to other pets | <input type="checkbox"/> Moving with pets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming/nail trimming | <input type="checkbox"/> Microchips and other ID options | <input type="checkbox"/> Pulling on-- leash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise, toys and fun activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding a veterinarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Flea/tick prevention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puppy/kitten-proofing your home | <input type="checkbox"/> Declawing | <input type="checkbox"/> Heartworm prevention |

Other questions: _____

[Shelters and rescues: Use the following space for additional services your agency may be able to offer pets at home. Examples listed below.]

Extra services and opportunities; check any you are interested in:

- Borrow/rent a crate with this adoption
- Information on our next low-cost vaccination day for any current pets
- Information on our next low-cost microchip implantation day for any current pets
- Make ID tags for current pets
- License current pets
- Information about our training classes
- Information about low-cost spay and neuter services and other veterinary services
- Information about volunteering or fostering with us
- Information about supporting us with financial or in-- kind donations