

## **HSCC Adoption Policies and Guidelines**

- 1) Adopters must be at least 18 years of age to adopt an animal.
- 2) Adopters must provide proof of identity with a government issued photo ID. In the state of Vermont, animals are considered property and as such, during the adoption process we are assigning legal ownership and must confirm the adopter's identity. Examples include:
  - Driver's license
  - Non-driver's license
  - Passport
- 3) Adopters must have a physical address or place of residence in order to register the animal's microchip which must be tied to a physical address where the animal resides.
- 4) To ensure a fair and transparent adoption process, HSCC follows a first-come, first-served policy for cats and for dogs who have completed their counseling and meet-and-greet steps. Dog adoptions are conducted by appointment.

To be considered "first" for an animal, the following must be true at the time of your adoption:

- You must have a completed adopter profile on file,
- You must have completed adoption counseling,
- You must have met the animal in person, and
- You must have clearly communicated your intent to adopt to a staff member during your appointment.

*Please note: HSCC prioritizes adoption placements for staff and active volunteers. While we aim to keep the process fair for everyone, we cannot guarantee that members of the public will be first in line for any specific animal.*

- 5) Prospective adopters must fill out an Adopter Profile and be present for the entirety of the adoption counseling and matchmaking process. Adopter must be present at the time of the adoption appointment to sign legal documents with HSCC to complete the transfer of ownership of the adopted animal. Adoptions may be processed remotely on a case by case basis.
- 6) In the case of a good match between an animal and an adopter:
  - We will adopt regardless of whether an adopter owns their home, rents, leases, etc.
  - We will adopt to families living out of state and out of country. Adopters are responsible for knowing and following guidelines for transporting animals across state/border lines
  - We do not require permission from a landlord or proof of owning a home (but we do require proof that animals are allowed in student housing)
  - We do not call references (vet, personal, financial)
  - Generally, dogs adopted on training plans must be adopted within Chittenden and Grand Isle counties due to transportation restrictions determined by the trainers. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by management.
  - We do not require a fenced-in yard when adopting a dog
  - We adopt out companion animals and are not able to guide or guarantee a match for visitors looking to adopt a service, therapy, or emotional support animal

- We do adopt indoor/outdoor cats to adopters interested in this option and pending a good match. HSCC will help educate adopters on how to safely integrate cats to this environment
  - We do adopt cats through our Working Cat Program (barn cats, alternative placement)
  - We do adopt FIV+ (Feline immunodeficiency virus) cats and require they live indoors only; they can also be adopted to homes with other cats providing a good match
  - We do adopt out FeLV+ (Feline Leukemia) cats on a case-by-case basis (if otherwise healthy)
  - We can adopt multiple animals/different species to the same home, but we require a minimum 2 week waiting period between adoptions to give the animals time to decompress (management may make an exception depending on the customer and circumstances)
- 7) The matchmaking process requires one of HSCC's counselors and the adopter to be able to effectively communicate the needs of the animal and what the adopter is looking for. If communication is not possible due to the health or mental status of the potential adopter, we may ask for the assistance of an aid or power of attorney to communicate for the adopter. Any adopter who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be asked to leave the premises.
- 8) We strive for same-day adoptions as time allows and in the interest of the adopter.
- 9) An adopter has the option to place a non-refundable, non-transferable hold on an animal after they have been approved for an adoption (50% of the adoption fee). This hold is valid for no more than 24 hours after being placed (or next available business day). If an adopter cancels their appointment or they do not come in for their scheduled appointment, the hold fee will be processed and considered a donation to HSCC.
- 10) Dog, Rabbit, and Cat Introductions: HSCC can facilitate dog-to-dog introductions for dog adopters who have a resident dog and rabbit-to-rabbit introductions for rabbit adopters who have a resident rabbit, and may require successful introductions for certain animals. Full counseling for the animal must be completed prior to arranging an introduction, and dog adopters must sign the Waiver of Liability for Dog Introductions prior to their dog-to-dog introduction. HSCC cannot facilitate introductions for cats to resident animals (including dogs or other cats), but can make recommendations for cat adopters to introduce animals at home.
- 11) Student Housing: HSCC will adopt animals to students living on-campus housing. Adopter must receive prior approval from the Office of Residential Life and provide HSCC with proper documentation from the school before an adoption can be approved and an animal can leave the building. Approval does not include recommendations from a counselor - it must be the final documented approval from campus housing. Not all animals will be appropriate for on-campus housing and only suitable matches will be considered. The student is responsible for knowing and following their school's requirements for housing companion animals.
- 12) For those wishing to gift an animal to a family member or friend, HSCC sells gift certificates which can be given to potential adopters so they can be personally matched with the pet of their choosing. Management reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.
- 13) Cats must leave in a cat carrier. Dogs must leave with a collar and on a leash. Adopters may provide their own or purchase these items from HSCC if available. We reserve the right to request an adopter to purchase the harness that has been fit to their chosen dog at the time of their adoption.



- 14) Refunds: Adoption fees are final, non-refundable, and non-transferable. If someone would like a refund for their adoption fee, staff can complete a refund request form and submit it to the Shelter Manager or Executive Director for approval or denial.
- 15) Adopters must agree to all the terms and conditions of their Adoption Agreement before finalizing an adoption through HSCC. We reserve the right to request an increased adoption fee for certain animals or to offer lower fees during promotional periods.