



Pixie's Pen Pals Intake Policy

Intake of Dogs – General

Thorough record keeping pertaining to all dogs acquired by FETCH a Cure's Pixie's Pen Pals program, herein referred to as "Pen Pals," is essential for the successful evaluation and care of all dogs entering the program. The only animals accepted by Pen Pals are dogs. Dogs unknown to the organization are only acquired from shelter facilities. Pen Pals only accepts owner surrender of dogs which were adopted by means of the Pen Pals program. Policies and procedures for each condition are as follows.

Policies applicable to shelter intakes:

- a. **Identification** – Each dog should be fitted with an appropriately sized collar and/or harness with an identification tag affixed. Each dog should be microchipped and registered as belonging to the organization.
- b. **Shelter Acquisition** – Dogs may be acquired from various shelter locations with those in danger of being euthanized for space purposes being the highest priority. As much information as possible will be obtained to determine the feasibility of intake. All agreements pertaining to the release of the dog from the shelter will be documented.
- c. **Processing Paperwork** – Ensure all information is recorded appropriately on the Intake Log to include the date, description of the animal (including breed(s), color, sex, age, and neuter/spay status), and details of the source from which acquired. Location of each foster home utilized is routinely updated along with contact information for those individuals. The final disposition of the dog will also be recorded (adopted, continued medical evaluation, unadoptable/retained by rescue, returned to shelter).
- d. **Health Protocol** – The health status of each dog is to be evaluated within a reasonable period of time by the veterinary office approved by the rescue. All medical documentation will be acquired including status of vaccinations, heartworm testing, and physical exams provided by either shelter or prior owner. All dogs will be inoculated with a rabies vaccine in accordance with state law and administered a distemper/parvo combination vaccination, heartworm and tick-borne disease tested, dewormed and spayed/neutered if required.
- e. **Behavior Protocol** – A behavioral evaluation will be performed to determine signs of aggression, biting, fear issues, socialization with humans, other dogs, cats (if possible), housetraining, crate training, evidence of obedience training and the willingness to learn and obey commands. Healthy dogs without need for excessive behavioral intervention will be placed into one of the partnering Virginia Department of Corrections facilities to proceed with the program's curriculum. A specialized plan will be put in place for those with significant medical and/or behavioral needs until adequate standards have been met to enter the prison setting.
- f. **Intake Determination** -- The final decision regarding the intake of a dog is to be made by the lead trainer associated with Pen Pals with the approval of the Executive Director of the organization. Pen Pals volunteers are not permitted to initiate intake in any form.

Policies applicable to owner surrenders:

- a. **Identification** -- A dog may only be acquired through owner surrender if the dog was previously under Pen Pals ownership within a reasonable period of time. Owner surrenders are only accepted from the person(s) who adopted the dog from Pen Pals. The dog will be outfitted with an appropriate collar and tag, and its microchip will be updated to reflect Pen Pals ownership.
- b. **Owner Surrender Form** – Every individual surrendering an animal must sign a statement indicating ownership of the animal is being relinquished to Pen Pals. Owned animals will not be accepted in the absence of a signed form. The surrender form attests to the knowledge of the individual as to whether the animal has bitten a human or other animal within ten (10) days of surrender. Only designated staff will initiate or accept owner surrenders. Volunteers and undesignated staff are not permitted to accept intake of an owned animal.
- c. **Veterinary Records** – The individual surrendering the animal will provide all documentation regarding vaccination information, a copy of the records, or at minimum the contact information of the veterinarian providing medical care during their ownership.