



# REHOMING GUIDE

[www.ElPasoAnimalServices.org](http://www.ElPasoAnimalServices.org)





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## ALSO INCLUDED:

Transfer of Ownership Agreement Template

## FOR MORE RESOURCES:

For more resources on pet-friendly housing, domestic violence support, military resources, behavior support, pet health resources, end of life support and more, visit our website:

**[ElPasoAnimalServices.org/PetSupport](https://ElPasoAnimalServices.org/PetSupport)**





# REHOMING YOUR PET

We understand that circumstances in life can sometimes mean that you may find yourself in need of finding a new home for your pet or the pet of a loved one. If you're in this situation, we'd like to encourage you to try and re-home your pet directly rather than bringing them to the shelter. This is often a much more calming and comforting way for ownership to change hands for the pet, and means that you are able to be fully involved in the process.

When rehoming your pet, it is important to be thorough and patient; finding the right home takes time. Investing time into the rehoming process increases your chance of successfully placing your pet in a loving home that is not only a great fit, but also a safe place for your pet. We're here to help and can recommend some key tips and tricks to make the process go quite smoothly. If however, you feel you've exhausted all your options, know that you can of course contact us to discuss your choices.



**[PetHelpline@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:PetHelpline@elpasotexas.gov)**

## TIPS FOR WRITING A PET DESCRIPTION

One of the key components of rehoming a pet is sharing information with potential new families to help find a good match. It's tempting when writing these descriptions to share the details of why you are needing to find a new home for the pet, but remember that many people skim when reading long paragraphs and may find it more engaging to read about what to expect when living with this pet, what they enjoy, and the things that make them happy.

We recommend always being honest and forthcoming about your pet, but keeping the pet description largely positive is also important to encouraging interest.

Again, when we say keep it positive, we don't mean hiding the truth. But keep in mind that we all have different expectations of life with pets. A dog who chases or doesn't get along with cats may make a perfect pet for someone who is looking for a companion for their other dogs or a person with a cat allergy.

Some examples of keeping your language positive and matchmaking focused:

### **INSTEAD OF:**

- Needs a lot of exercise
- Needs too much attention
- Isn't good with my kids
- Hates other animals

### **TRY THIS:**

- Will make a great running partner
- Loves people / being by your side
- Needs the peace of a home without children
- Would prefer not to share a home with other pets / Would like to be your one-and-only

You can also use templates to help craft a pet description or bio for you pet if you need more guidance. Most prospective families want to know a bit about what to expect and what life will look like with this animal, so start there!

## **BIO-WRITING ROADMAPS**

• *for fast and effective pet bios* •

The 'roadmap' approach makes writing accurate, engaging bios easier when time and resources are limited! Try these tailored sets, or mix n' match.

**FAST AND  
SIMPLE**

**MEET \_\_\_\_\_ !**

**HER/HIS FAVORITE THING IS \_\_\_\_\_**

**BUT HE'S/SHE'S NOT AS INTO \_\_\_\_\_**

**HE/SHE NEEDS \_\_\_\_\_**

**THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO KNOW ABOUT  
\_\_\_\_\_ IS \_\_\_\_\_**

HELLO, I'M \_\_\_\_\_ !

MY FAVORITE THINGS ARE \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

BUT NO \_\_\_\_\_ FOR ME, THANKS

IF I WAS A DESSERT, I'D BE \_\_\_\_\_

MY PERFECT DAY IS \_\_\_\_\_

IF YOU LIKE \_\_\_\_\_ WE'D BE A GREAT TEAM!

**A LITTLE MORE  
PLAYFUL**

**HEARTS**  **SPEAK** FIND MORE TIPS, TRICKS, AND INSPIRATION AT  
[HEARTSSPEAK.ORG](http://HEARTSSPEAK.ORG)

For more resources on writing pet descriptions, including fill-in-the-blank tools or other language suggestions, visit [www.heartsspeak.org/edu](http://www.heartsspeak.org/edu) & search "bio writing".

## OTHER TIPS FOR MATCHMAKING SUCCESS

A few other tricks to successful rehoming:

- Don't rule out potential new homes before you learn more. It can be tempting to put a lot of restrictions on what you think is the perfect new home for the pet, for instance "must have fenced yard" or "must work less than 40 hours per week". But consider that "perfect" may look different than you imagine: Someone without a fenced yard who walks the dog on a leash is arguably giving them more attention and exercise than letting them out the door into the yard. And someone who works 60 hours a week but splits their time between home and work, or hires a pet sitter, is still giving excellent attention
- Check your email regularly and use an email address you can view frequently. Rehoming websites will use that email to get in touch with you and allow potential new homes to ask questions, etc.

## TIPS FOR GREAT PHOTOS

In addition to the pet description, photos are really important to catching the attention of someone who might want to adopt your pet. Photos (and video clips!) are a great way for the potential new caretaker to connect with the pet. Try for about 4 different images to show variety!

Here are some quick tips for taking better cell phone photos at home:



### Get On Their Level + Fill Frame

Rather than stand and take a photo of a pet from above, crouch down so you're taking the photo more at eye level with them. Also try and be sure they are taking up most of the photo, rather than appearing as a small part of a larger photo. This helps more accurately show size and connect with their eyes.



### Use Natural Light + Avoid Harsh Sun

Oftentimes people think that a clear, sunny day is perfect for pictures -- but it's actually the opposite! Sunny days make for harsh shadows and squinting, which even affects pets! Look for a shady spot or a cloudy day and your photos will be gorgeous. Using natural light like this is preferable to fluorescent overhead lights (even when indoors, just try to position things so the window is behind you, the photographer).



### Pay Attention to Background

To maximize connection and impact, try to take a photo without much clutter or distraction in the background -- we want the pet to be the star!



### Shoot for Eye Contact

Use a funny noise, a treat, or toy --- held right over the lens of your camera -- to get a photo where the pet is looking at you and making eye contact.



## GETTING THE PET READY FOR REHOMING

A healthy pet is easier to rehome so try and be sure that your pet is up to date on vaccines. If possible, reach out to your vet and ask for copies of your veterinary records to pass along to the new owners.

All pets must be up-to-date on vaccinations, microchipped and spayed/neutered before being rehomed. If you need more information on resources for these services, please reach out to us at **PetHelpline@elpasotexas.gov**.

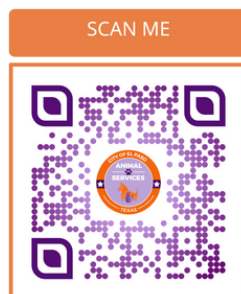
## GETTING THE WORD OUT

There are a few options for posting your pet on websites that specialize in rehoming and offer specific platforms for simple, safe and free ways of transferring ownership to a new owner.

## HOME TO HOME

Home to Home is our free rehoming platform that allows you to post your pet -- but you need a local shelter to be associated with the profile you create. Visit [home-home.org/shelters/elpasoanimalservices](https://home-home.org/shelters/elpasoanimalservices) to create your pet's Home-to-Home profile. Home-to-Home allows the pet owner to be directly involved in finding a new home for their pet. Pets adopted through our Home-to-Home platform are also eligible for free vaccines, microchip and spay/neuter.

Need help setting up your pet's profile? Check out this how-to video!



## USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Once you post your pet on a rehoming site, you can then share the link to their profile on social media to help circulate it and get more eyes on them.

When you post on any social network to share your pet, try these quick tips for success:

- Tell a story. Sometimes a heartfelt story about your pet and your search for a safe place for them to land can help people understand your choice to rehome and help get the post shared to other potential adopters.
- Be descriptive. Use the same advice as you did when writing your pet description - be positive, share important basics (weight/size, age, preferences, etc).
- Choose your cutest / favorite photo. Grab attention and help show off their best side! Make sure it's a recent photo and accurately represents them
- Include your contact info or ask people to DM you. If there's a deadline for seeking the new home or other critical info share that too.

### Facebook

On Facebook you can not only share a link to Rehome or Home to Home, you can also seek out facebook groups or local pet groups in your area to post about your pet. If you're a member of local community groups (church, social clubs, community service orgs) you can ask the admin of the group if you're allowed to post there as well.

### Twitter or Instagram

If you're a regular user of either of these platforms, then definitely share your pet there and include hashtags like #rehome #adoptadog #adoptacat #petadoption as well as hashtags for your local area or neighborhood to make sure you're zeroing in on the right audience.

### Nextdoor

Nextdoor is a neighborhood or community based social network so really helps ensure you're posting to folks nearby.



## OTHER NETWORKS & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Consider other off-line connections you have to help get the word out. You never know who might be looking for a pet!

- Friends
- Family members
- Neighbors
- Co-workers
- Community contacts
  - School
  - Church, Synagogue, House of worship
  - Membership groups
  - Community-based organizations

You can also make flyers -- using the same basic information you used in your online pet description and a few great photos -- and post them in different locations around your community:

- Veterinarian
- Pet supply store
- Feed Store
- Coffee Shop
- Restaurants / Diners
- Work, school or other community bulletin boards

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Once you create your pet's Home-to-Home profile, you can also post your pet on our Adoptable Pets of El Paso Animal Services group on Facebook.



**[Facebook.com/groups/AdoptablePetsAtEPAS](https://www.facebook.com/groups/AdoptablePetsAtEPAS)**

## **MEET & GREET: INTERVIEWING POTENTIAL ADOPTERS**

You want to find the best possible match for your pet, so the first step is transparency. Share with the future family any medical information, behavior information (to the best of your knowledge), the pet's personality and lifestyle in your home, and tendencies.

From there, some thoughtful questions can help you learn more about the prospective adopter and their family:

- What is a typical day like in your home?
- What qualities are you hoping for in a pet?
- What behaviors would be hard for you to tolerate or difficult to manage in a pet?
- Do you have other pets? Tell me about them
- Are their children in your family? If very young, will they be supervised with the new pet?
- What questions do you have for me about our life with the pet?

If it's an option for you, consider doing a trial sleepover where the pet goes to stay and you check back in. If you're able to take the pet back temporarily, let the new adopters know that you'd like that option if things do not work out.

# THE ADOPTION PROCESS

Once you have found the perfect home for your pet, the adoption process can begin.



## GET YOUR PET READY

If you haven't already, contact the Community and Pet Support team at El Paso Animal Services to schedule your pet for any needed pet wellness services such as their spay/neuter appointment, or vaccinations.



## MEETUP

Arrange a time and public place for you and the adopter to meet up. A well known spot and area is recommended for your safety. To help your pet transition into their new home, it is important to provide their favorite toys, bedding, carrier, kennel, litter box, and/or other familiar items. It is also nice to give the adopter any remaining pet food you have so they know what diet your pet is eating so they can either continue to provide the same food or successfully transition the pet onto a new diet.



## RECORDS

It is important to provide the new owner with copies of any and all veterinary records you have. To make the transfer super easy, you should offer to contact your veterinarian to send the pet's records directly to the new owner's preferred veterinary clinic. You may need to provide this request in writing to your veterinarian. Be sure to alert your clinic of the new ownership in the process.

# THE ADOPTION PROCESS

## TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP



It is incredibly important that you create a written document and record the transfer of ownership to the adopter. The document should be signed by both you and the adopter and as the previous owner, you should retain a copy for your own personal records. A Transfer of Ownership Agreement is available for your use on our website, and is also available for you to download on page 14 of this Playbook.

## UPDATE THE MICROCHIP



If the pet is microchipped, it is important to update the information registered to the microchip. You can do this by contacting the database where the microchip is registered (such as Found Animals, Home Again, 24PetWatch) and notifying them of the change of ownership and the new owner's contact information. Be sure to provide the new owner with the pet's microchip information and remind them to keep their own contact information up-to-date on the registry. Microchips can be registered for free at [www.My24Pet.com](http://www.My24Pet.com).

## NOTIFY



If you adopted the pet from a local rescue or shelter, be sure to contact them and let them know that you have rehomed the animal and give them the new owner's information so they can update their ownership records. You will also need to notify El Paso Animal Services of new ownership to ensure ownership information is up-to-date in our system.



# CONTACT

5001 Fred Wilson Ave., El Paso, TX 79906  
(915) 212-8735 | [www.ElPasoAnimalServices.org](http://www.ElPasoAnimalServices.org)  
[PetHelpline@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:PetHelpline@elpasotexas.gov)



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[www.bestfriends.org](http://www.bestfriends.org)

# TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP *Agreement*

## PREVIOUS OWNER'S INFORMATION

First & Last Name:

Street Address:

State:  Zip Code:  Phone Number:

Alternate Phone Number:  Email:

## NEW OWNER'S INFORMATION

First & Last Name:

Street Address:

State:  Zip Code:  Phone Number:

Alternate Phone Number:  Email:

## PET INFORMATION *(provided by previous owner)*

	<b>DOG</b>	<b>CAT</b>	<b>OTHER</b> <i>list here</i>
Pet's Name: <input type="text"/>	Species: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Breed(s): <input type="text"/>	Sex: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Is the pet fixed? <input type="text"/>
Age: <input type="text"/>	Size: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Microchip Number: <input type="text"/>			
Microchip Company: <input type="text"/>			
Known Health Conditions (if any): <input type="text"/>			
Current Medications (if any): <input type="text"/>			
Known Allergies (if any): <input type="text"/>			

Is there any additional information that should be noted on this agreement?

*Examples may be discussions about recent vet history, behavior, etc.*

## PREVIOUS OWNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To the best of my knowledge, all information about the animal provided by me to the new owner is true. I understand and hereby certify that **(i) I am the true and rightful owner of the animal described above, (ii) no other person has any right of property in this animal, (iii) I surrender all property rights in this animal, and (iv) I am conveying full and complete right, title, and interest in and to this animal to the new owner documented above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF PREVIOUS OWNER

/   /    
MONTH DAY YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF PREVIOUS OWNER

## NEW OWNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge taking custody of the animal described above and I am assuming full and complete right, title, and interest in this animal as of this date. I promise to provide regular veterinary care for the animal. I understand that the previous owner makes no guarantees or warranties regarding the health or temperament of this animal and cannot be held liable for any action that may take place as a result of this animal after this date.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF NEW OWNER

/   /    
MONTH DAY YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF NEW OWNER

*It is recommended that both the new and previous owner retain a copy of this agreement for their records.*