



Animal Rescue Association of America™

Animal Rescue Code of Ethics

Adequate Care

1. **Veterinary care**
 - All animals must receive adequate veterinary care including health screening and vaccinations. Microchip or other permanent identification is preferred. Where resources are available and the benefit-to-cost relationship is appropriate, additional veterinary care should be provided.
2. **Shelter, food, & water**
 - Provide all animals with appropriate shelter, food, and water.
3. **Compassion, respect, and kindness**
 - Treat all animals with compassion, respect, and kindness. The reward is confidence and trust – by the animals and the observing community.
4. **Know your capacity**
 - Do not become overwhelmed. Maintain appropriate levels of care at all times. Ask for help when capacity is stretched.

Adoption Process

5. **Rescue-for-life**
 - Adopted animals should be welcome to return at any time.
6. **Educate and screen adopters**
 - Educate adopters about the species or breed. Screen adopters carefully to ensure a reasonable fit with the animal.
7. **Full disclosure to adopters**
 - Provide full disclosure to adopters including health and behavioral history and temperament (bite history, separation anxiety, etc.). Vicious or dangerous animals must be explicitly and completely disclosed.
8. **Post adoption follow-up**
 - Follow up with the animal's progress after adoption. Continue the education process with the adopters.

General

9. **Spay/Neuter**
 - All dogs, cats and other species, where applicable, must be spayed or neutered, preferably prior to adoption. If they are not altered prior to adoption, policies and practices must be in place to ensure sterilization within a reasonable time.
10. **Ethical intake**
 - All animals taken in must be with the owner's permission or provided by the proper authorities.
11. **Abide by shelter rules**

- Honor any agreed upon commitments with shelters. If the shelter has stated rules, abide by them. Credibility and trust with shelters must be earned.

12. Stray Notification

- Communicate the intake of strays with the appropriate local shelters or authorities with the goal of reuniting the animal with its owner.

13. Not-for-profit philosophy

- Operate as a not-for-profit whether or not you are recognized as such by federal taxing authorities. Be financially responsible. Keep proper records and separate bank accounts for rescue activities.

14. Personal pets: don't abuse provider discounts

- Do not abuse the rescue system by using provider discounts for personal pets. Credibility and trust with providers must be earned.

15. Professionalism

- Practice good "sportsmanship" in our trade. Do not speak negatively about other organizations (shelters, rescues, etc.). If there is a problem, take positive action to address the situation. Communicate these issues to the Animal Rescue Association for possible investigation or assistance. A professional attitude and demeanor will build credibility.

16. Honesty

- Be forthright and honest in all interactions with the Animal Rescue Association.