

VISITATIONS

Meeting with Potential Adopters



Burlington County Animal Shelter
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UNDERSTANDING THE ADOPTION PROCESS

How to Start the Adoption Process:

First, the patron will need to visit with the animal they're interested in adopting. They do this by reporting to the front office and signing the "Visitation with an Animal" sign in sheet. An attendant will be called to help the patron in the order of which they signed in to view an animal. If no attendants are available an approved volunteer may show the animal. After they have visited with the animal, take the patron and the animal's paperwork back up to the front desk so they can then fill out an adoption application.

❖ *Please see page 6 for a detailed step-by-step guide to visitation.*

Things to Know About the Application Process:

The patron must fill out an adoption application for the pet they're interested in, which can take up to 3 days to be reviewed. Pets who are not spayed or neutered must be fixed before leaving the shelter, and how long that takes depends on what day the spay/neuter clinic is. There are **no** same day adoptions for dogs.

If multiple people apply for the same pet, the approved application is picked based on the home that seems the most appropriate for the pet. If all applicants seem like a good fit, they often go in the order of which the applications were placed. Three applications per animal and one back up application is the maximum amount of applications that can be placed on an animal. No more applications will be accepted after this point unless a previous applicant cancels.

Extra Steps for Dog Adoptions:

For applicants who want to adopt a dog and have a dog or children in the home, they will need to bring their dog and/or kids in to meet the shelter dog just to make sure everybody gets along.

For cat-owning applicants who'd like to adopt a dog, the dog must first pass a "Cat Test" at the shelter.

Shelter Pet Medical Info:

All cats and dogs are given a basic medical examination by a veterinary technician as well as dewormed and given a distemper shot when they arrive at the shelter. They are also treated for parasites and other basic medical problems when necessary. Prior to adoption, all cats and dogs are spayed or neutered, all cats are tested for Feline AIDS and Feline Leukemia, and healthy dogs of an appropriate age are tested for Heartworm.

We recommend that newly adopted pets have a wellness checkup with a private veterinarian within two weeks of adopting.

Adoption Prices

Puppies (Under 6 months) = \$100

Dogs (6 months and older) = \$75

Kittens (Under 6 months) = \$60

Cats (6 months and older) = \$45

Discounts

Pets for Seniors – There is no adoption fee for applicants who are 60 and over

Pets for Vets – There is no adoption fee for retired or active military

Some promotional events are seasonal or limited to a certain time frame, so please check with the front office for additional promotions and discounts.

What's Included in the Adoption

Spay/Neuter Surgery (all animals are spayed and neutered before they leave)

Distemper Vaccination

Heartworm test (for dogs over 6 months of age)

De-Worming (intestinal parasites, provided a good fecal reading)

Feline AIDs and Leukemia test

Rabies Vaccine**

Rabies vaccine will be given to animals who have approved applications when the vet comes for the spay and neuter clinic. If the animal does not receive a rabies vaccine before it leaves, adopters may return for our free once-a-month rabies clinic.

RETURN POLICY

When an animal is adopted, it should be taken to a veterinarian of the patron's choice within 14 days.

The patron is entitled to return any aggressive (resulting in harm or damage) or sick pet within 14 days of the adoption date. Even though an animal may look healthy at the time it leaves the shelter, it may be incubating a disease it has been exposed to.

If the animal is returned within the 14 days for a reason stated above the patron will be given a refund for the adoption fee **ONLY**.

No refund will be given if the animal is returned for being too hyper, or if the patron changes their mind about the adoption.

Animals returned after 14 days will not be given a refund, and they will then have to pay a \$25 surrender fee.

VISITATION RULES

❖ *Only **approved** volunteers are allowed to show animals!*

1. Only one animal may be visited at a time.
2. Sanitize hands in between animals. Patron must do the same.
3. We ask potential adopters to narrow their selection to two animals.
4. We stop all visitations 5 minutes before close.
5. Never leave a visitation unattended.
6. Visitations should be no longer than 15 – 20 minutes.
7. No one under the age of 18 is permitted to take an animal out.

Step-by-Step Visitation Instructions

Dogs are allowed to be seen in the yard, in the field directly in front of the shelter, and in the lobby away from the main entrance.

- Check availability of animal they are interested in visiting
 - Is the animal in a section that is allowed to be taken out?
 - Animals in Holding, Red, Behavioral Hold, Sick, and NAC cannot be seen
 - We take up to three applications and one back up per animal. We will not take any more than this (applications are marked with a tally in the application box on front of the flowchart).
- If the patron is interested in a dog, check the temperament sticker to make sure it is a dog you are allowed to handle and able to show.
- Let the patron know that we encourage everyone in the household to meet the animal.
 - If everyone in the household is here, make sure it is noted on their application. If everyone in the household is not there, make sure it is noted who the applicant is (i.e is it the 18 year old or the 50 year old?).

- Ask the patron if they have other animals at home
 - If they are applying for a dog and have cats at home let them know at some point a staff member will walk the dog through the cat room to see how it reacts.
 - If they have another dog at home let them know that they will be required to bring in their dog to do a dog meet with the dog they are interested in to make sure everyone gets along.
- Explain to the patron the application process (refer to “So You’d Like to Adopt a Pet... Now What?”)
- Explain to the patron the adoption fees (refer to adoption fees)
- Explain the return policy to the patron (refer to return policy)

It’s a Match! – Now What?

- If it’s a match and they choose to adopt, have them meet you up front. In the meantime, return the animal to its kennel/cage.
- Take only the flow chart from the clipboard on the animal’s kennel/cage and bring it to the front for the patron to hand to the office staff for an application.

What to Look Out For

RED FLAGS

- Indicating that they will be used for fighting, guard, or attack
 - If they will be left outside or chained outside all day
 - If they show violence: STOP VISIT IMMEDIATELY!
 - If anyone in the household is allergic
 - If they recently surrendered a pet and now want a new pet
 - Keep count on how many animals they might mention that they already have
 - Gut feeling
- ❖ ***If any of these occur, finish out the visit, write a note, and discreetly pass it to the staff member taking the application.***

INCIDENTS/COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS

Incidents

If you are showing an animal and the patron somehow gets hurt, (falls, scratched, bitten, etc.) escort the patron to the front office and notify the office staff immediately so that an incident report may be filed.

If an animal caused the injury immediately put the animal away, bring the animal's paperwork to the front office when you escort the patron so the office staff can make the proper adjustments with the animal or record which animal caused the injury.

Complaints

If a patron has a complaint, bring them to the front office so they can formally file it or speak to the supervisor on duty.

Concerns

If you notice an animal has a health concern or something that requires medical attention, please fill out one of the medical slips for the vet tech and hand to the front office staff.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Are they housetrained?

A. We cannot guarantee that any of our animals are completely housetrained.

Q. Can I take the animal home on a trial period?

A. We do not offer a trial period, however if you do adopt there is a return period to bring the animal back if it's not working out, with certain circumstances the return may qualify for a refund. For the most part, however, we like to make sure you are certain the adoption is for you before you take the animal home. If you have any hesitations on adoption the animal we usually suggest you take your time to think it over before acting on impulse.

Q. Do they get along with other dogs/cats?

A. (dog to dog): We require introducing your dog(s) to the new dog at the shelter in a supervised meet with a staff member prior to adoption.

A. (cat to cat): Though you cannot bring your cat in we can let our cat loose with another cat to see how the cat you are interested in reacts.

A. (dog to cat): A staff member will walk the dog you are interested in through the cat room to see how it reacts.

Q. Can they go home today?

A. No dogs are permitted to go home the same day. The application needs to be reviewed (could take up to 3 days), and if the dog still needs to be spayed or neutered it could take about a week. If there are other applications on the dog they need to be taken into consideration too. At times same day cat adoptions are permitted if the cat is already spayed/neutered tested for FIV/FEL, there are no other applications on the cat, and the applicant's application can be processed completely. Usually this cannot happen on a Saturday because we are usually too busy to process the application.

Q. Can I just take the animal home without their surgery and bring them back or get it done on my own?

A. No, all animals are required to be spayed or neutered before they leave the shelter.