



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What is Paws Along the River? Are you a government agency?**

Paws Along the River is a private non-profit Humane Society founded in 1930. We provide dog control services for stray, injured and/or abused animals in need of shelter, food and medical care. Our state-licensed cruelty officer enforces the state's animal cruelty and neglect laws. We receive more than 150 complaints each year. We also provide pet care and education materials to the public. We are not a government agency and receive a small percentage of our operating budget from the townships, the County and the City and the amount varies and is subject to change. The Board of Directors sets policies and raises funds for operations. Our adoptions, fundraisers and donations help make our services available to the community.

## **Animals given to Paws Along The River because of medical or behavioral problems?**

No. Many of the dogs and cats are strays and owners often reclaim their pets. If they have ID tags, we contact the owners. Any animal-owned or stray-can have medical or behavioral issues. All dogs at the shelter are temperament-tested for socialization before being placed for adoption. We also evaluate cats for temperament. Medical issues are evaluated and handled according to the severity of the problem and the cost involved.

## **Am I getting a problem dog or cat from Paws Along the River?**

Despite our years of experience, we don't always know how an animal will respond to a new home. While we evaluate the animal at the shelter in our setting and we go one step further with our "Pet Trial Visit", and allow you to take the pet into your home for 12 days to evaluate the animal in your family setting. When everyone is satisfied the adoption is finalized.

## **How many animals are adopted from your shelter?**

We measure our success by permanent homes and that isn't always reflected in actual adoption figures. The numbers are not as important as placing the right pet in the best situation. If we get five aggressive, dangerous dogs and five friendly dogs, we will adopt out five dogs, not ten. Our adoptions fall between the National averages of 25-35 % of animals received being adopted. Paws Along the River is committed to adopting out every adoptable pet.

## **You are an "open admission" shelter, why? What does that mean?**

We often hear many people talk about "no-kill" shelters and that they don't want to bring pets here for fear they will be euthanized. Yes, it can be a scary thing, but the alternative can be worse. Open admission shelters accept all animals in need. The term "No-Kill" is confusing. The policies at no-kill or closed admission shelters sound appealing, but these shelters often have to turn away those animals who are most in need. They take only selected animals they feel they can adopt and those animals stay there until they are adopted. Refusal to accept all animals has caused hardship for some counties. The community may be required to build a municipal shelter to accept the overflow not taken in by the "no-kill" shelter. Animals are dumped on the streets if there is no place to go. Aggressive and abused animals are taken into open admission shelters and evaluated. We are here for all animals in Warren County and encourage spaying and neutering. Remember the public is responsible for the overpopulation we see. We are proud to be here to help the animals and give them second chances.

**Why do I have to fill out a pre-adoption information form & wait for the pet I want? Why can't I just take the pet home today? Is it true you refuse some people?**

We want our animals to have every opportunity for a forever home. We know our pets and matching them to your situation is our job, a job we take seriously. As with any business, we have policies and procedures. We're aware that our procedures don't satisfy everyone, but our first obligation is the welfare of the animals. That's why we spend time and talk to family members who will be responsible for the new pet. The information form and waiting period gives you an opportunity to think with your head as well as your heart. The waiting period also allows us to prepare the pet for the Pet Trial Visit. Shots are updated, the animal is bathed and a travel bag is packed. Few people are refused adoption. The best match is made for each pet. There are valid reasons why we don't adopt pets to some situations. Perhaps the landlord said "no", veterinary information on other household pets wasn't provided, family members couldn't agree on which pet they wanted, or the new pet wasn't compatible with children or with another pet in the home. Sometimes other people are interested in the same pet and may have a more suitable situation. If you get a pet from the newspaper, a friend or a breeder, you may have to cover the shots, de-worming and of course, spaying or neutering to avoid unwanted litters. We do all that –and more. We help you through the introduction to the home and other pets, offer free use of a crate, educational information and moral support. With over 25 years of combined experience, our staff works to give you a healthy, well-adjusted pet. Our adoption success rate over the years confirms that these procedures work best for the animals.

**I have a pet I can't keep or find a home for. Will you take it?**

Yes, we look at each situation carefully. We don't refuse a pet from an owner unless it has serious medical or behavioral issues. However, we accept animals with the understanding that our staff makes the final determination. If we don't have room at that time, your information is kept on a wait list. You will be charged a relinquishment fee for your pet to cover some of the initial costs of the pet's shelter stay, as boarding and health care costs add up quickly.

**If I bring a stray dog to you, will you charge a fee & can you tell me what happens?**

There is no fee for bringing in a stray dog. We do not release information about what happens to the animal. Our policy is set for the interests & welfare of the staff and the animals. When an animal comes to us it becomes our responsibility & we do what is best. Please understand our mission is to adopt and give second and third chances.

**Your shelter hours conflict with my work schedule, what are my alternatives?**

We're available by phone and have a well trained staff to help. We also have a wealth of information on our website ([PawsAlongTheRiver.org](http://PawsAlongTheRiver.org)). Adoptions must be done in person. We are open on Saturdays and make appointments after hours, if necessary. Our staff spends the morning hours cleaning, feeding and taking care of the animals. Afternoons are open for the public to visit and adopt.