



Dear Pet Guardian:

Enclosed is a packet of information to help you re-home your pet(s). You should find the following:

**PROJECT SAFETY NET INFORMATION**

Providing alternatives to surrendering your pet to a shelter is the goal of Project Safety Net. These include re-homing your pet from your home and obtaining behavior assistance from our trained staff, among other alternatives. If after exhausting these options you still need to find another home for your pet, this packet contains information to help you.

**RE-HOMING SERVICE INFORMATION**

A component of Project Safety Net, the Re-Homing Service offers tools for you to find a responsible and loving family for your pet without causing him or her the stress of entering the shelter system. The service is designed to help people whose pets are already spayed or neutered and up-to-date on all age-appropriate vaccines. Having your pet neutered and up-to-date makes it easier to find him or her a new home and improves his or her chance of forming a lasting and successful relationship with the new guardian. We have included in this packet contact information for several low-cost spay and neuter clinics, which may also offer low-cost vaccination options.

**ADOPTION INTERVIEW GUIDE AND RE-HOMING INFORMATION**

We have included a sample adoption interview guide and a form to collect adopter information to show you how to evaluate potential adopters and give you guidance on the types of things to look for when finding your pet a new home on your own.

**ADMISSIONS INFORMATION**

We have a knowledgeable admissions team available to provide counseling and direct you to additional resources that can help you make the best decision for your pet. The procedures for appointments are explained later in this document on the Admissions Information page.

Sincerely,

Richmond SPCA Admissions Team



## PROJECT SAFETY NET



The goal of Project Safety Net is to provide alternatives to pet relinquishment. The Richmond SPCA has developed numerous programs and services that enlist the public as allies in keeping animals out of shelters. By creating a safety net through programs such as these, we save lives while educating our community in a meaningful, supportive way about the responsibilities of pet guardianship.

### **PET FOOD ASSISTANCE**

We occasionally have available supplies of donated cat and dog food that we are able to provide to members of the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Pet food assistance is intended to help keep a pet in his or her home while the guardian overcomes short-term financial difficulty. For more information, please contact the Admissions Department at 804-521-1306.

### **PET BEHAVIOR HELP**

We recognize that behavior issues are the number one cause of pet relinquishment, and the Richmond SPCA has developed programs that encourage guardians to resolve their pets' behavior challenges. Our free Behavior Helpline provides phone and email support, whether or not your pet was adopted from us. Call 804-643-SPCA (7722) or email [behaviorhelpline@richmondspca.org](mailto:behaviorhelpline@richmondspca.org). A trained behaviorist will contact you by the next business day. Additional resources are available at [richmondspca.org/behavior](http://richmondspca.org/behavior).

### **PET MANNERS CLASSES**

Ask how to sign up for a class specifically designed to help great pets that have minor challenges. Visit [richmondspca.org/classes](http://richmondspca.org/classes) for a listing of the classes offered and to register online, or call 804-521-1332 or email [gbirdnecklace@richmondspca.org](mailto:gbirdnecklace@richmondspca.org).

### **RE-HOMING**

The Richmond SPCA offers pet guardians free re-homing services and guidance which enables them to find appropriate homes for animals they are no longer able to provide care to without ever having the pets enter a shelter. Submit your pet's information using the form at [richmondspca.org/rehome](http://richmondspca.org/rehome).

### **PET FRIENDLY HOUSING GUIDE**

The Richmond SPCA offers a free online housing guide that lists local pet-friendly rental properties. Guardians are encouraged to use this resource so that they never are faced with having to give up a pet due to housing restrictions. [richmondspca.org/petfriendly](http://richmondspca.org/petfriendly)

### **LOW-COST SPAY/NEUTER SURGERY**

Affordable spay and neuter procedures are available through several area sterilization clinics, that may also offer basic vaccinations for pets at the time of surgery.

Barron Surgery (Mechanicsville) | 804-368-6232

Jessica Beath Spay/Neuter Clinic (Hanover) | 804-752-7729

Richmond Animal League (Chesterfield) | 804-379-9725

Prevent a Litter (Richmond City) | 804-359-6369

### **TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN FOR FERAL CATS**

If you have feral (unsocialized) cats in your neighborhood, visit us online at [richmondspca.org/feralcats](http://richmondspca.org/feralcats) for information about trap-neuter-return. The Richmond SPCA can also assist you with trap rentals and free spay/neuter and rabies vaccination services for feral cats. Call 804-521-1330.



Consider finding your dog or cat another home instead of surrendering him or her to a shelter because it will be less stressful for your animal, allows you to play a part in uniting him with a new family and makes additional space available for pets whose lives are immediately at risk in our community's government shelters.

**BEFORE YOU START LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME FOR YOUR PET, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:**

Get help with behavior problems such as chewing, housetraining challenges, excessive energy, etc. Go to [richmondspca.org/classes](http://richmondspca.org/classes), [richmondspca.org/behavior](http://richmondspca.org/behavior) or call **643-SPCA (7722)** and our trained staff will give you the information or referrals you need to resolve the issue. By working to solve behavior problems before you find your pet a new home, you'll help ensure a good, lasting home for your pet.

You do not have to give up your pet just because you're moving. Moving is stressful even in the best of circumstances, so give yourself extra time to find a residence where pets are permitted. When talking to landlords, be honest and offer to introduce your pet(s) to the landlord. Many property owners will allow well-behaved pets, particularly if the owner behaves responsibly. Providing your pet's veterinary records, graduation certificate(s) from obedience classes and references from past landlords can help to show a prospective landlord you are a responsible pet owner. For a list of many (but not all) landlords and apartment complexes that allow pets, please visit [richmondspca.org/petfriendly](http://richmondspca.org/petfriendly) for the Pet-Friendly Housing Guide. Once you have a new place, the Richmond SPCA can give you advice on how to help you and your pet cope with the change.

**THE RICHMOND SPCA CAN HELP YOU FIND THE RIGHT HOME THROUGH OUR RE-HOMING SERVICE**

First, be sure your pet is spayed or neutered and is up-to-date on all of his or her vaccinations. This will make it easier for you to find a new home for your pet and is a requirement for our posting.

Next, follow these guidelines. Be thorough and patient – finding the right home takes time, but it's worth it for your sake and the sake of your pet.

- **Take several color photos of your pet.** Show off your pet's cutest and most endearing qualities.
- **Write a story about your pet.** Include the reason your pet needs a new home, the kind of home he or she needs and would do well in, and some "human interest" information – for example, your pet's funniest behaviors, his/her favorite things to do or the thing you love most about your pet. Many people write the story from the animal's perspective, for example, "Hi, my name is Sabrina..."
- **Re-home your pet on our web site.** Visit [richmondspca.org/rehome](http://richmondspca.org/rehome) to submit your pet bio through our online form. Your confirmation email will have instructions on providing photographs. Interested persons will contact you to learn more about the animal. Pets will remain on the web site for at least 90 days. You will be responsible for notifying us once your pet has been adopted. All pets must be spayed or neutered to be posted on the web site.
- **Network.** Give your photos, story and e-mail to everyone you know asking for their help. Search the internet for additional resources, such as breed-specific rescues. Use your Facebook profile or Twitter account to ask your network to share your pet and assist in the search for a new home. Advertise through your workplace email or your community bulletin board. Placing your pet with someone you know will ease the transition for you, the new guardian and your pet.
- **Make a re-homing poster.** Simple templates can be found online, and free graphic design websites like [canva.com](http://canva.com) and [picmonkey.com](http://picmonkey.com) can help you create a more eye-catching poster to print or share online. Place the re-homing posters in veterinary offices and pet supply stores near and far, where people who take good care of their animals visit often.

- **Charge a fee.** A modest re-homing fee can cover the costs of updating vaccinations or the supplies such as a crate, carrier or flea and tick prevention you plan to pass along to your pet's new guardian.

#### **HELPFUL HINTS ON EVALUATING POTENTIAL ADOPTERS:**

- **Interview potential adopters carefully.** Use the sample adoption questionnaire we have provided as a guide.
- **Review the "Perfect Match" form.** Go over this document with each potential guardian to evaluate whether his or her home is compatible with your pet. Does your pet get along with other animals? Is your pet high or low energy? Make sure he or she fits into the lifestyle of the applicant's family, and your pet is what they're really looking for.
- **Along with collecting adopter information, you might consider the following in order to ascertain additional information (please note that with respect to some of these items, an open and honest discussion will provide you with the information you need to make an informed decision regarding your pet's placement):**
  1. Verify the name and address with a driver's license.
  2. Call the person's landlord and make sure he/she has permission to have a pet.
  3. Ask to see the person's veterinary records on all his/her current or past pets to see if he/she takes good care of animals.
  4. Get references (friends, neighbors), and call to see if they can vouch for the person's ability to care for animals.
- **Take the time to consider applicants.** Don't allow yourself to be pressured into making a decision that you do not feel right about. Your judgment is your best guide.
- **Follow up.** Call to see how your pet is doing in his or her new home. A responsible guardian will welcome your concern for the animal.

#### **Re-homing a pet who was adopted from the Richmond SPCA**

If you decide to utilize our re-homing board to find another good home for your adopted pet rather than returning the pet, please make sure to call our adoption desk at 804-521-1307 and provide us with the new guardian's contact information so that we can update the pet's information in our system.



### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU NEED TO SURRENDER YOUR PET**

You have a number of choices, the last of which should be surrendering your pet to a shelter. If you have exhausted alternatives to relinquishment (including trying to work through challenges, or trying to find a new home for your pet yourself with friends, neighbors, family or co-workers), here is how our admissions process works.

### **WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT**

Please understand that, as a no-kill humane society, the Richmond SPCA cannot accept every animal brought to our shelter immediately. We treat every animal's life as precious and will not resort to euthanasia to control the number of pets at our Robins-Starr Humane Center. Therefore, we will accept the surrender of owned cats and dogs by appointment only as space allows. We do charge a modest surrender fee for dogs and cats, which will be applied to the costs we will incur providing care to the pet.

### **HOW THE PROCESS WORKS**

Each day Richmond SPCA Admissions staff assess the amount of space available in the shelter as animals find homes through the Adoption center. The goal of this process is to have spaces filled as efficiently as possible, keeping cages from standing empty and maximizing our lifesaving capacity. We are unable to accept same-day surrenders, but do our best to keep the surrender process moving quickly.

### **HOW TO PREPARE**

- Submit an Admissions Appointment Request Form through our website. The Admissions Team uses this form to gather information about your pet. You can find the online form by visiting [richmondspca.org/admissions](http://richmondspca.org/admissions).
- Fax all veterinary records to 804-644-8327 as soon as possible. Ask your veterinarian to write "Admissions" in the attention line along with your name, phone number and pet's name. We cannot set an appointment without receiving your pet's vet history.
- An Admissions Counselor will return your call to discuss the surrender process, and when appropriate, set an appointment. We receive a high volume of phone calls daily, which are returned in the order they are received. Appointments are scheduled Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Each appointment should take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours.

### **BRING TO THE APPOINTMENT:**

- Your pet's medications
- Your pet's bed, toys, leash and other belongings from home
- Your pet's crate or carrier

*For everyone's safety, all dogs must be leashed and all cats must be in a carrier.*

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARRIVE**

- Your cat will be tested for FIV and the Feline leukemia virus, or your dog over 4 months of age will be tested for heartworms.
- A staff member will evaluate the behavior of your pet.
- Once your pet has been evaluated, and the Richmond SPCA decides to take your pet into its care, you will be asked to complete surrender paperwork. Virginia law requires the owner's signature in order to relinquish title to the pet. If the pet is brought to the appointment by someone other than the owner, please inform an admissions counselor of this in advance.
- Your surrender fee will be collected. The surrender fee is usually \$50 (exceptions may apply for litters of infant animals). Accepted forms of payment are cash or credit/debit card.

An appointment for evaluation does not guarantee that the Richmond SPCA will be in a position to take your pet into its care.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU NEED TO SURRENDER YOUR PET TODAY**

The Richmond SPCA urges you not to surrender your pet to a shelter. A shelter should always be your very last resort. If you are unwilling to wait for an appointment at our center, you may contact the local animal control agency in your jurisdiction to inquire about their surrender process. You may also want to ask questions related to their adoption and euthanasia practices for owned animals.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Richmond SPCA Admissions Department: 804-521-1306

Chesterfield County Animal Control: 804-748-1683

Henrico County Animal Control: 804-727-8800

Hanover County Animal Control: 804-365-6485

Richmond City Animal Care and Control: 804-646-5573



# THE PERFECT MATCH FOR CATS

## Suggested questions

### About the Household

How many adults \_\_\_\_\_ and children \_\_\_\_\_ are in your home? Ages of children: \_\_\_\_\_

What pets do you have in your household:

Dog(s) \_\_\_\_\_, indoor cat (s) \_\_\_\_\_, indoor/outdoor cats \_\_\_\_\_ and other pets \_\_\_\_\_

How many dogs \_\_\_\_\_ and/or cats \_\_\_\_\_ have you had as an adult? Where are they now? \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you have them? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have a dog: what experience has the dog had with cats? \_\_\_\_\_

This cat will...

- live strictly indoors
- live indoors/outdoors
- live outdoors only
- enjoy being outside with supervision
- come and go independently
- enjoy living in our barn

### Cat Behavior

What cat habits would you like more information on?

- Litter box problems
- Scratching furniture
- Play biting
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Other Possible Questions

Have you ever had a cat with litter box problems? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how did you resolve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever owned a kitten? \_\_\_\_\_

How much time do you think it will take for the cat to adjust to his or her new environment? \_\_\_\_\_

What about this cat drew you to him or her? \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

# ADOPTER INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

My current living arrangement is:

I own my own home.

I live with my parents. Do they know you are getting a pet? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

I rent. Describe your landlord's pet policy: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian's name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

How much annually are you planning on spending on your pet for vet care? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of emergency/alternate contact \_\_\_\_\_ Relation \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- I certify the above information to be true and correct.
- I understand that the Richmond SPCA provides free behavior support, which pet guardians can access online at [www.richmondspca.org/behavior](http://www.richmondspca.org/behavior) or by calling (804) 643-SPCA.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_