

Calgary Humane Society

Homing of Companion Animals

Position:

In placing companion animals with owner families, the Calgary Humane Society supports ethical and responsible homing of companion animals.

Whether these parties are individuals, shelters, rescues, animal control agencies, breeders, or retailers, Calgary Humane Society believes that all parties that place pets into homes must be held to the same ethical, humane and responsible standards. These include:

- Ethical, responsible and humane animal breeding that ensures the welfare of both breeding animals and their offspring.
- Responsible lifetime care (socialization, exercise, environment, care, nutrition, veterinary attention, life enrichment and training) for all animals involved in the breeding operation (breeding animals and offspring).
- Providing lifetime return of animals and establishing of breed or species rescue networks for situations in which pet owners can no longer or no longer wish to care for an animal.
- Spaying or neutering of appropriate species when animals will not be used as breeding animals.
- Appropriate individual screening of prospective owners, including ensuring a good match between a pet and prospective family, owner education about the animal's needs, owner capacity to provide appropriate homing, training and care for the animal.
- Full documentation of the animal's past and future veterinary needs, genetic background (if appropriate and available), and permanent ID traceable to both the initial source of the pet (breeder, shelter, or other) and to the new owner.

NOTE: See CHS Positions on the following related issues for a more complete picture of what is meant by ethical, humane and responsible homing practices:

Keeping Companion Animals as Pets
Spaying and Neutering of Companion Animals
Permanent Identification of Companion Animals
Breeding Companion Animals
Veterinary Care and End of Life Care for Companion Animals
Non-medical and Cosmetic Surgeries on Companion Animals
Improper Environment as a Form of Abuse

Training of Dogs

Rationale:

- As long as there are animals waiting for a home in animal shelters or with rescue groups, we encourage the public to first consider adoption of a homeless animal through a reputable shelter or rescue organization or through a pet store that provides adoption space for shelter or rescue animals.
- Many sources of pets do not ask sufficient questions or attempt to educate the client about an animal's lifespan, the responsibility, and the commitment required. Some sources will sell animals without consideration for the quality of home the animal will have.
- Many sources of pets provider no support to owners such as a helpline, online or print resources, or training classes.
- Many sources of pets have no mechanism for the rescue of returned animals when owners cannot or do not want to continue caring for the pet. These animals often then become a burden on shelters.
- Sources of pets that sell unsterilized animals contribute to the pet overpopulation problem, and also supply breeding stock to other irresponsible breeders.
- The required transportation of animals to distant outlets often causes the animal's distress, and/or injury, and/or death. For example, there is a high rate of injury to so-called "pocket pets" such as mice, gerbils, and hamsters.
- Sales practices such as giving away gerbils or hamsters or rabbits "free" with cages and other gear contributes to these animals being seen as of low worth. Many of these animals are neglected, denied needed veterinary care, and/or abandoned.
- Abandoned and unsterilized domestic rabbits have bred and become a community nuisance, as well as being subject to conditions that can cause distress and suffering.