



NHFHO Animal Relocation/Importation Procedural Guidelines April 3, 2003

The New Hampshire Federation of Humane Organizations (NHFHO) recognizes that while our state currently has the lowest euthanasia rate in the USA, there exists a shortage of adoptable dogs across the state; in short, demand exceeds supply. As a result, some of our member organizations have initiated relocation or importation programs that bring healthy, adoptable animals destined for euthanasia into New Hampshire from other states to provide to qualified adopters. To that end, the NHFHO asks that its member organizations strongly consider adopting the following guidelines when employing this practice.

1. No animal should be scheduled for relocation/import unless a valid health certificate, signed by a duly licensed veterinarian, is in place.
2. Public health is of primary concern to the NHFHO. Therefore, in order to protect public health initiatives, and the health of pets, the following medical considerations are recommended prior to transport:
 - a. An intra-nasal bordetella vaccine should be administered 5-7 days prior to transport.
 - b. Flea and tick treatments should be done prior to transport.
 - c. De-worming.
 - d. Parvovirus test and inoculation with DHPP/DHPPL.
 - e. Rabies vaccination administered by licensed veterinarian for all animals four (4) months of age and older.
 - f. Conduct a visual exam to rule out the existence of bite wounds, open sores/wounds, runny eyes, and runny nose.
 - g. Perform a heartworm test seeking negative results.
3. Check resources within the state to determine whether adoptable dogs already exist before relocating or importing.
4. Review all paperwork on animals prior to relocation/importation to ensure profile accuracy.
5. Know who you are dealing with – establish a working relationship with every agency from which you accept animals.
 - a. Be sure the agency conducts medical and behavioral evaluations that are important to your own organization.
 - b. Especially key is to ensure that the organization has an active spay/neuter program in place, whether that be spay/neuter contracts or otherwise. The NHFHO is not opposed to providing assistance to other agencies, however, cautions member agencies to avoid shifting a problem from one part of the country to another.
6. New Hampshire would not have the nation's lowest euthanasia rate without the intense focus and provision of resources on spaying and neutering. To ensure that relocation/importation is conducted to satisfy community service efforts and to prevent accidental, or unwanted, litters, the NHFHO strongly urges participating organizations to:
 - a. Have a pre-adoption spay/neuter program in place, or
 - b. Work with outside agencies that will spay/neuter prior to transport, or

- c. Use every available resource to ensure that relocated/imported animals are spayed or neutered without putting undue burden on the New Hampshire Pet Population Control program.
7. The following guidelines are recommended for land transport. The NHFHO discourages air and freight (train or airplane) transport unless the animal is over eight (8) weeks of age, is free from injury, and safe counter-to-counter transport can be guaranteed.
 - a. Stop regularly to water/feed and provide bathroom breaks (with special concern paid to young and pregnant animals.)
 - b. Ensure the transport vehicle has proper climate control.
 - c. Each animal should travel in separate enclosures (except in the case of litters).
8. The following guidelines are suggested as post-transport procedures:
 - a. Quarantine the animal(s) for 7-10 days. If the agency cannot provide a quarantine space that is physically separated from other animals every precaution should be taken to avoid potential transmission of disease (e.g., disinfect with bleach).
 - b. If the pre-transport medications and testing have not been done, do them immediately.
9. Conduct adoption follow-ups on all animals relocated/imported to ensure that the animal does not become a burden to the community. Offer your agency's resources when/if problems arise.
10. Keep written statistics that track the origin and disposition of all animals relocated or imported.

NHFHO Animal Relocation/Importation Committee Report
Public Relations Guidelines
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Recognizing that no member agency is successful without the full cooperation and support of its constituents, the NHFHO strongly recommends that any agency engaging in the practice of relocation/importation be candid with its community about such practices. The following is suggested as minimum guidelines for publicity.

1. Be open in your communication with your community; they support you as you support them – effective and honest two-way communication is critical to the success of any initiative that your agency undertakes.
2. Reinforce that New Hampshire has the lowest pet euthanasia rate per capita in the United States; the parallel being that healthy, adoptable animals are not euthanized in New Hampshire shelters in order to make room for relocated/imported animals.
3. The human population is expected to continue to grow. The number of N.H. households is projected to grow from 325,800 in 1980 to 540,000 (66%) in 2010. (*Source: State of NH Office of Business and Industrial Development, Public Service of New Hampshire, and Business NH Magazine telephone survey.*)
 - a. The AVMA reports that 34% of households (34.7 million) own cats and 39% (40 million) own dogs. The percentage of cats and dogs acquired from shelters is 20%. The statistics about population speak volumes about the future demand for domestic household pets. Animal shelters have the innate ability to be the source for its community's pet acquisitions while maintaining focus on animal welfare and public health concerns. With decreased supply from shelters comes an increase in acquisition from pet shops and "backyard breeders;" this practice will undoubtedly lead to an increase in problem pets in the community that will eventually become a burden to society thereby further taxing shelter resources.
4. A large number of healthy, adoptable pets are euthanized in states that are still experiencing pet overpopulation. N.H. shelter relocation and importation programs save lives while supporting the needs of the communities served
5. N.H. shelters provide proactive education and training programs that serve to form a lasting relationship with adopters and prevent problems from occurring.
6. N.H. shelters are non-profit organizations whose main priorities include animal welfare, public health, and community service.
7. N.H. shelters ensure that spaying and neutering remain critical priorities; other establishments tend not to promote nor ensure this issue.