

## Fitzgerald – Ben Hill County Humane Society

### Adoption Policies and Procedures

**The following policies, approved by the Board of Directors, will provide the guidelines for pet adoptions from the Fitzgerald – Ben Hill County Humane Society Animal Shelter. Implementing them will be the ultimate responsibility of the shelter manager/employee(s) and members of the board. Adherence to these policies should result in maximum safety and protection for the animals under our care.**

1. Animals should be placed only with adults 18 years of age or older, who intend to keep them as household pets.
2. No dogs should be placed to serve merely as guard dogs, and no cats should be placed just to function as barn cats or mousers.
3. Adopter will provide proper and sufficient food, water, shelter, and kind and care treatment to the animal at all times.
4. Adopter will regularly provide veterinary health care, including but not limited to vaccinations, worming and other care as recommended by a licensed veterinarian.
5. No animal should be released for adoption as a gift to another person. The recipient may not want an animal, the animal may not be suitable for the recipient's lifestyle, or the recipient may not meet the criteria for a responsible owner. The shelter may wish to consider issuing "gift certificates" that could be redeemed by the recipient when he/she visits to the shelter to select a pet. The certificate must include a statement that allows the shelter to refuse adoption if the recipient fails to meet the criteria for a responsible adopter.
6. No animal will be adopted to a student or transient, such as a person in the military or an individual living temporarily in the community, due to potential abandonment.
7. Adopters should be a permanent resident who is prepared to provide lifelong care to the animal adopted.
8. The shelter must require written permission from the landlord before an animal is adopted to a person living in rental housing.
9. The adoption contract/agreement should clearly state that the adopted animal cannot be sold or given away to another person; the animal must be returned to the shelter if the adopter can no longer keep it or care for it humanely.
10. Only domestic animals should be placed as pets. Wild animals should be given only to public or private wildlife sanctuaries that have demonstrated their competence in recognizing and dealing with the particular problems inherent in the rehabilitation and release of such animals into the wild. Federal, State and Local laws must be adhered to in the disposition of any wild animals.
11. Puppies must be at least eight (8) weeks old and capable of eating solid foods before being adopted.

12. The shelter must use a written application or pre-adoption questionnaire to learn as much as possible about the potential adopter's lifestyle and knowledge of responsible pet ownership. The shelter should verify the adopter's identity by means of a driver's license or other comparable identification.
13. If the adoption does not work out for the adopter and family within seven (7) days, the animal may be returned to the Animal Shelter for a refund of amount paid excluding ten (\$10) dollars to cover cost in processing the adoption.
14. If the pet does not work for the adopter and is returned to the Animal Shelter after the seven (7) day period but within thirty (30) days of the adoption date, the adopter may select another pet.
15. NO REFUND will be given after seven (7) days of the adoption.
16. The Animal Shelter makes no guarantees whatsoever as to the health, temperament, mental disposition and training of the animals adopted. Adopter must understand that the animal may have been exposed to various diseases received by the Humane Society, and agrees to adopt the animal as is.
17. Adopter will license the animal in compliance with the laws and ordinances in the jurisdiction in which the Adopter resides.
18. Adopter will obtain rabies vaccinations as required by law for an animal not yet vaccinated for rabies.
19. The Shelter must keep a file containing the names of person who, because of cruelty convictions, repeated animal-control violations, previous violations of adoption contracts, etc., should not be permitted to adopt animals.
20. Adopter will be required to take the adopted pet to a license veterinarian within ten (10) days after the adoption date to have any vaccinations or other medical care that the pet needs.
21. All adult animals must be taken to a licensed veterinarian within thirty (30) days after the adoption date to be spayed or neutered. Adopter will receive a certificate at time of adoption which will list the spay/neuter date.
22. The adoption of each animal may include a careful follow-up to ensure compliance with the contract and to assist the new owner in solving any problems that may arise. Reminder cards and follow-up letters for veterinary care and spay/neuter are helpful. A phone call to see how the new pet is doing will be welcomed by the owner and will give the shelter an opportunity to hear how the animal is adjusting. If the adopter is not complying with the contract, a follow-up visit should be conducted.
23. The adoption agreement/contract should specify that the agency has the right to inspect the pet's new home and is authorized to repossess the animal if it is found to be receiving inadequate care, is being improperly housed or handled, has not been spayed/neutered by the date specified, or if there is evidence that any of the other provisions of the agreement/contract are being violated.
24. No animal will be adopted to any person refusing to have it spayed or neutered.
25. Adopter must follow all State, County, and City Animal Control Laws and Ordinances, in addition to the Georgia State Animal Protection Laws.
26. It will be the responsibility of the adopter to notify the Animal Shelter if the pet adopted dies, runs away, was stolen, or any other cause that would prohibit the pet from being spayed/neutered by the given date.