



ADOPTION BOOKLET

Adopting a Pet

Adopting a pet is a wonderful choice and owning a pet can be one of the most rewarding experiences. At AWS PE, we believe that owning a pet is a life-time commitment and it is important to choose a pet that matches your personality and fits in with your lifestyle. We pride ourselves on being able to match adoptable pets with potential owners so that both end up having a real happily ever after story!

Adoption Procedure

1. Visit our shelter to meet our adoptable pets, bring the whole family if possible. If you need help in choosing the right furry, speak to our Adoption Specialists! They specialise in matching dogs, cats and people.

You can also ask our Adoption Specialist to arrange a meet and greet between your dog and the one you are interested in adopting to see how they will react when together. Please call 041 3661660 to make an appointment.

If you have decided on a meet and greet, please come back on the pre-arranged date and time to the shelter and bring your dog along (on a lead).

Please note: In order keep the stress levels of our animals as low as possible, your pets are not allowed in our kennels and/or pens. If you bring your dog for a meet and greet, but have not yet decided on who you would like to adopt, ask a family member or friend to visit with you and “dog sit” while you stroll the kennels/pens and meet prospective pets. Please ask our Adoption Specialist or a staff member to assist you.

Only decide on the adoption once you, members of your household (including your pets) and our staff agree that you've found a great match.

2. Complete the adoption application form with our staff in reception. Please complete the adoption application in full. Our adoption application form contains important questions!

Adoption forms are legal and must be signed by the new owner, who must be over 21 years.

3. Your application will be reviewed by the adoption team and an AWS PE Inspector will visit you to do a home check. Before our Inspector visits, we may contact you to clarify information that might not have been clear on the application form.

Our inspector will visit your home to ensure your property is suitable for the animal that you want to adopt. We will take into account:

- the size of property
- fencing/security around the property (including the height of the perimeter walls)
- children's ages
- other animals in the family
- level of the family's activity (whether the dog will be exercised)
- whether the animal is allowed inside your house
- how long a pet will be left alone in the day

You will be called once the inspector has been to let you know if your home check is approved or not.

4. If your home check is approved, you can complete the adoption process by completing our Adoption Agreement at the shelter, paying the adoption fee at the shelter and taking your new furry friend home! Please bring a cat basket or a lead when you come and collect your new pet.

Please note: Our Adoption Agreement states that if you are unable to look after your adopted pet, you need to surrender him/her back to our Society. Our Adoption Agreement is a legal document and must be signed by the new owner, who must be over 21 years.

Adoption Rules

All cats and dogs that are adopted from AWS PE will be:

- sterilised to prevent them from having any unwanted kittens/puppies
- vaccinated to safeguard them from contracting diseases such as distemper/parvovirus/snuffles
- dewormed to assist in the elimination of internal parasites
- defleaed (via deflea spray or dipping) to ensure that there are no external parasites

Dogs and puppies will also receive a form of identification - AWS PE numbered ID tag and collar. If you adopt a puppy or a kitten, our office staff will make a sterilisation booking for your pet on the day that you adopt. Your puppy or kitten will be sterilised by our very experienced in-house veterinarian.

Responsible pet ownership is very important to us and in keeping with the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro's Municipal Bylaws, we require that your current pets are all sterilised before you will be allowed to adopt.

Our inspector will also do a homecheck to ensure that you can provide a safe and secure home environment for a pet.

If you are renting you will need permission from your home owner or letting agency for keeping pets on the premises. Owners living in a communal complex environment will need permission from the Body Corporate before they can adopt.

Stray animals cannot be adopted until it is established that their owner cannot be found.

We don't adopt out pets as safety measures, AWS PE adopted pets are family!

Adoption fees

Puppies and adult dogs - R800 per puppy/adult dog

Kittens - R600 per kitten

Adult cats - R450 per adult cat

Things to Consider Before Adopting

1. Cost

Can you afford to feed your pet and take him/her to the vet when necessary?

Cats and dogs both need annual vaccinations, rabies vaccines and annual distemper shots, and they will need to be checked for parasites regularly, be dewormed and kept flea and tick free. Dogs need to be vaccinated against parvo virus. Cats will need to be tested for Feline Leukemia and FIV.

If an unexpected medical emergency should come up, can you afford to take care of it? If not, what would you do to get the money to pay for the medical bills?

2. Time Investment

Do you have the time to provide your pet with adequate exercise every day? If you do not have a fenced garden, do you have the willingness and commitment to take your pet for daily walks?

Cats should have their litter boxes cleaned daily.

What about training? If you bring home a puppy, someone needs to be home with it to housebreak it. A puppy can be especially time consuming, and puppies can be quite destructive.

3. Shelter

Does your housing situation allow pets? If you are renting or live in a complex / apartment building, you need to get written permission from the landlord and/or body corporate before making any final decisions on the animal you want to adopt.

If your dog is to be kept outside for any extended period of time, you need to provide him/her with adequate shelter during bad weather.

4. Life-Long Responsibility

Can you commit to keeping your pet for his/her entire lifetime? Most owned dogs can live to over 10 years of age, and cats up to 20 years.

If there are any questions or points above that you do not feel 100% comfortable with, you may want to wait until your situation has changed so that you are comfortable with all of the issues above, or re-evaluate your choice of adopting a pet. For example, if you feel like you might not have the time to devote to training a new puppy, but you feel comfortable with all of the other questions above, you could consider adopting an adult dog, or a cat. If you don't think you are in a position to adopt having read the information above, consider becoming a volunteer with us.

A Note on our Adoption Fees

The Animal Welfare Society Port Elizabeth (AWS PE) does not give away animals nor do they sell animals, our animals are ADOPTED from us. This may seem like we are playing word games but there is a big difference. Let us explain.

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This is what prospective owners are paying for whenever they adopt an animal from AWS PE. The actual animal itself is for FREE!! If you take into consideration that simply to sterilise a dog at your local veterinarian can cost anything between R1,600 and R2,200 and that a vaccination and deworming can cost R350 and upwards it quickly becomes apparent that the R450 to R800 adoption fee that we charge, covering all the above and more, is not expensive at all.

The public may argue that to purchase a puppy or kitten from the local pet shop does not cost as much as adopting an animal from us. It should be reiterated that the animal does not cost anything when adopting it from us, the fee charged merely subsidises (and does not even cover) the cost of the care and treatment provided to the animal. Anyone purchasing an animal from a pet shop or breeder must have the animal sterilised. The Municipal Bylaws in the NMBM state that it is illegal in NMBM to own a dog or cat over 6 months old that is not sterilised. Only registered breeders with the correct certificates from the Municipality may breed. It is also illegal to sell puppies.

Domestic animals deserve to be loved, cared for, taken to the vet when necessary, played with, taken for walks and more. AWS PE is careful to ensure that these aspects are provided for in all prospective homes. This is why we do not home dogs just for security and rather advise people to contact a security firm and hire a guard if they are concerned about safety. Our animals are homed as pets.

Members of the public have asked the question "If AWS PE have so many animals, why do they not give them away for free?" Whilst this question has already been answered, it should be added that if a prospective owner cannot afford to pay the modest adoption fee, how would they be able to pay for quality food, veterinary fees and other costs that arise in providing the best level of care for a pet? We home animals responsibly as we intend for homed animals to remain in that same home for the rest of their lives which may be in excess of 10 years. In an attempt to ensure this, all properties are inspected when an AWS PE animal is adopted. This is to establish that the property is large enough for the species of animal being homed, that any animals already living on the property are in good condition and will accept the animal being adopted, that the walls and gates are high enough to keep the animal in (obviously this particular concern would not strictly apply to cats, but they would still require a safe environment) and to ensure that there is some form of suitable shelter for the animal. No animal will be homed if it is going to be chained, not even a running chain, as this is no life for any animal. It may seem that the criteria for adopting an animal are stringent, but they are entirely in the best interests of the animal.

There is a saying that goes 'Owning an animal is a privilege and not a right'. The animals that come into our care are either strays that have become lost or been abandoned as well as cats and dogs that are unwanted and are handed over to us; and of course animals that have been neglected and ill-

treated and removed by our Inspectors in order to find new loving homes where they will never again be subjected to any form of ill-treatment. We take this difficult responsibility very seriously and AWS PE cannot permit any of these animals going to a home where they will be anything else but loved and cared for. As an animal welfare organisation we cannot be part of letting these animals down.