

DID YOU FIND A DOG? ARE YOU WONDERING WHAT TO DO?

Houston has an animal overpopulation crisis and there are few options for homeless or unwanted dogs. Rescue groups are overwhelmed with dogs needing homes and most of the city's shelters euthanize them, even adoptable ones, because there are just too many. As a result, if you find a dog but cannot help it yourself, odds are no one else will. Please be your own hero and help an animal in need.



IF YOU SEE A HOMELESS OR ABANDONED DOG, APPROACH IT CAREFULLY.

If it is injured, call the SPCA at 713-869-SPCA (7722) and report its location so they can pick it up. It will probably be euthanized but at least it won't be suffering. If the dog is aggressive, contact BARC at 311. If the dog is not aggressive and is otherwise approachable, give it food and water and take it to a vet to scan for a microchip. Get it treated for any medical conditions. Most street dogs will have fleas and intestinal worms. Some may have old injuries; others may have mange, heart worms or be malnourished.

After helping the dog feel better, look for its owner. Distribute Found Dog flyers in the area where you found it and post the animal on the Houston Lost & Found Pets Facebook page. Post on NextDoor and any other neighborhood specific sites and on your Facebook.



THE DOG HAS NO ID AND I CAN'T FIND ITS OWNER. WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

If you can't find an owner and can't keep the dog, there aren't many options. You can take it to BARC or Harris County Animal Control but they may euthanize it. Other shelters charge a surrender fee and also euthanize. An animal rescue group may have room for the dog but that is rare. Your best bet for keeping the dog safe and alive is to find it a home yourself.

FINDING THE DOG A HOME: NEXT STEPS.

Start by getting the dog vaccinated and if necessary, spayed or neutered. Assess the dog around other dogs, on a leash, and indoors and outdoors to see how it behaves. If the dog has displayed no aggression and you think it is safe, assess how it interacts with children and cats. You are now ready to look for a home for the dog.



PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE!

Make a flyer with cute photos of the dog and a short bio with basic information like approximate age and breed, size and weight, demeanor and vetting status. Describe how it gets along with other dogs, children and cats. Then share the flyer at work, church and other places. Post it on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Send it to friends, coworkers and relatives and ask them to forward it to others.

WHEN YOU FIND A POTENTIAL ADOPTER, CHECK HIM OR HER OUT THOROUGHLY.

Barrio Dogs can provide an application for potential adopters. Meet the adopter at a dog park or other public area and ask the person to bring their own dog(s) if any. Ask about fencing and security in their yard, whether the dog will be kept indoors or outdoors, where it will sleep, etc.

If you can, do a home visit. Trust your instincts; if the situation doesn't feel right, don't proceed with the adoption. Ask for photos of the dog once it's settled into its new home. If the adoption doesn't work out, please offer to take the dog back.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING THIS DOG BUT THERE IS STILL A LOT TO DO.

Reach out to the mayor and other elected officials and tell them Houston needs to do more to address our animal overpopulation crisis. Tell them you care very much about this issue and that we need a comprehensive and humane plan to address it like, for example, more spay neuter options in low income areas. For more information, contact us at info@barriodogs.org.

