

AHCA Rescue

Policy and Guidelines for Afghan Rescue

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission and purpose of Afghan Hound Rescue:

1. Provide for and promote the welfare, protection and humane treatment of Afghan hounds.
2. Encourage responsible owners to retain their hounds rather than give them up, and offer advice, training and support to attain that end whenever possible.
3. Assist Afghan hound owners who must give up their Hounds in returning them to the responsible breeder or finding suitable new homes when possible.
4. Provide rescue assistance to Afghan hounds given up by their owners, found stray, in distress, or in animal shelters.
5. Return strays to the owners or breeders if they can be found and are willing and able to take them back.
6. Find good homes for the remainder where they may live out their lives as pets.
7. Educate people about Afghan hounds, their unique qualities and their proper care.
8. Provide mutual physical, mental and emotional support to all Afghan hound rescuers.

Always coordinate with the AHCA Rescue Chairman

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES — *these are only general, recommended guidelines. Every rescue situation is unique and the AHCA Rescue Chairman has absolute authority and discretion in every rescue. Coordinate your efforts with the Rescue Chairman to be certain your actions are consistent with current rescue policy and to determine what veterinary care expenses might be eligible for reimbursement.*

1. You and Shelters: Administratively, the easiest rescues are those that you acquire from an animal shelter or pound. With these dogs, no owner has come to recover the dog, nor is there an identifiable breeder. Nevertheless, there are things to consider. Develop an openly honest, friendly and working relationship with Animal shelters, city pounds and local humane societies. Become a facility is a "kill" or "no kill" operation, and what their track record is in working with rescue groups. When dealing with a "kill" shelter, speed is essential in getting a dog out before its "clock" runs out too. Comply with their requirements, and obtain whatever records and information they can or will provide with the hound, and always thank them for supporting you. Ask the shelter staff if the dog was checked for a tattoo or microchip. Find out what medical care the animal received while at the shelter. You may need to take the dog to a veterinarian for microchip scanning or inoculations if not already received while in the shelter, or follow-up care if required. If the hound is intact, spaying or neutering will follow after any other medical problems are taken care of and you've had a chance to evaluate the animal.

2. Strays: If an Afghan hound is found stray and turned over to you instead of animal control, comply with state and local laws on holding strays. Time requirements vary from none to up to 90 days, according to the circumstances and local laws. In the meanwhile, have the Afghan hound vetted but do not spay or neuter until you have legal control of the dog. Ask your vet to scan for microchips and check for tattoos. If there is no identification tag, tattoo, or microchip, proceed as you would with an Afghan hound from a shelter (see above) after the required "holding" time is up. You may want to run "found dog" ads in the local newspapers or social media sites while in the holding period. In some locales, law requires this. If you acquire a stray whose owner can be identified through tag, tattoo or microchip, make every effort to return the Afghan hound to the owner. Most people do want their Afghan hounds back. If the owner declines to take the Afghan hound back, obtain a release form if possible and follow the procedures in Paragraph 4 below, or document the conversation declining to take the Afghan hound back and proceed as you would with an Afghan hound from the shelter. The AHCA Rescue Chair may suggest you coordinate with a local attorney on required documentation.

3. Owner Releases: Before accepting an owner turn in, ask if the owners have papers on the Afghan hound and are required to contact the breeder in case of returns, based on the terms of their purchase contract.

- a) If so, ask them to contact the breeder about return policies. You may wish to follow up with the breeder to be certain they were contacted, and see if the breeder would like any help from Rescue in reclaiming the dog. If the breeder cannot be found or is unable or unwilling to take the Afghan hound back, there are no impediments to treating this as a rescue. Always get a release from the former owner giving complete ownership and control of the Afghan hound to you. A sample release form is attached. You may wish to review the sample document to see if it complies with the statutes of your municipality and state. Some people may have lost the sales documents on the dog or purchased the Afghan hound without a contract. If so, obtain a signed release form from the owner which permanently gives you ownership and total control of the Afghan hound. Get medical records, shot records, medications if the dog is taking any, bedding, crates, toys and anything else that may ease the transition for the Afghan hound. Items from "home" frequently ease a dog's anxiety in an owner release situation. Then proceed with vetting, rehabilitation and rehoming.
- b) If a breeder is involved with an owner release that comes to you, and cannot or will not take an Afghan hound back, talk to the breeder if possible, and find out why. Inform the Rescue Chairman and the Breeder Liaison so appropriate written notification can be sent to the breeder from the Club.

(Aside) The situation may be permanent or temporary. If possible, cultivate a good working *relationship* with breeders and explain what rescue does, and how. Breeders can be a real asset to rescue when they learn that we are part of the same family of Afghan Hound Fanciers as they are. You can develop relations with breeders who may provide future transport, fostering, and other help for rescues as a "thank you" for your assistance to them. If a breeder is involved who can and will take an Afghan hound back from the surrendering owner, that is part of the agreement between the owner and the breeder. You can offer to assist, but remember, you are not a party to the contract.

- c) If you know the breeder and have a waiting home for the dog: Call the breeder, tell the breeder you have the dog and also a good home for the dog, and ask permission from the breeder to place this dog in the good home.

4. Reimbursements: The AHCA will reimburse Afghan hound rescuers for required shelter fees (*if the shelter does not offer reciprocity*) and imminently necessary medical treatment that is reasonably priced; which may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Initial physical examinations
- b) Vaccinations
- c) Fecal examinations and initial deworming
- d) Blood screening for heartworm
- e) Spaying / neutering when deemed medically safe (and necessary for the placement of the dog, as determined by the AHCA Rescue Chairman)
- f) Micro Chipping

Such expenses may be reimbursed up to a maximum expenditure of \$400.00 per dog as of the date of this document. No expenses are eligible for reimbursement, regardless of medical necessity or prior approval; if it is determined other funds are/were available to mitigate the expenses. Excluded expenses include but are not limited to routine dental cleaning or treatment. Rescue will always be secondary to any other source, be it donated monies, regional club funds, adoption fees, or others. If funds from another source become available after AHCA Rescue has paid expenses, AHCA Rescue must be reimbursed for the amount it already paid, to the extent allowed by the amount of funds received from that source.

Medical procedures should be determined jointly between the rescuer, the veterinary staff, and the AHCA Rescue Chairman. ***The AHCA Rescue Chairman has sole discretion when determining the eligibility of expenses for reimbursement.***

If it appears that expenses bulleted at the beginning of this section (4,) may exceed the \$400.00 per dog limit, contact the Rescue Chairman immediately to determine if the Afghan hound in question qualifies as a special needs case (allowing for certain medically necessary expenses in excess of the cap, as determined by the AHCA Rescue Chairman).

5. Special Needs Cases: An Afghan hound may be considered for special needs status depending on a variety of factors which include but are not limited to the rescuer's personal assessment of the Afghan hound, its age, general physical condition, the hound's temperament and any behavioral issues, nature of the illness or injury, and willingness and ability of the rescuer and his or her regional club to conduct and participate in special fundraisers for the Afghan hound. Such cases will be presented on the website as stand-alone or joint special fundraising events if there are two or more Afghan hound's involved at the same time. Final decision on AHCA funding for a special needs case rests with the Rescue Chairman.

6. Regional Clubs: Regional Club rescue chairpersons should be active in rescue and in fundraising for their programs. Afghan hound rescuers are encouraged to join regional Afghan hound breed clubs and participate actively in their rescue activities. Regional clubs provide a vital source of manpower and money and publicity for local rescue programs. Rescue programs, in turn, are valuable public relations assets for the clubs that can garner much favorable publicity for the Club's activities. If you are in a local club, go to the meetings, make friends, and be useful to the Club. The level of cooperation and enthusiasm for rescue will rise proportionately to your positive involvement with other Club activities.

7. Selecting the Right Home: One of your most difficult jobs is determining the right home for a specific Hound, for either permanent placement or as a foster home. Are there children? What ages? Other pets? The list of actors to consider is almost endless. To this end, a copy of a general pre-adoption questionnaire is provided for your use and modification as you see fit for your specific location. Check the information provided by the prospective adoptive or fostering family. Call the references provided and, most importantly, make a home visit, or have an experienced Afghan hound person visit on your behalf to make sure that reality matches what is on the form. The questionnaire coupled with a home visit and much discussion will screen out most unsuitable circumstances.

8. Contracts: The adoption contract attached to these guidelines is provided for your use if you do not already have one. Please note that there is a mandatory "return to rescue" clause in the contract. This is a key clause for both rescuer and adopter and is binding on both. You may wish to have this contract reviewed by a local attorney to ensure that it meets the requirements of your city and state.

9. Follow-up: Ensure that adoptive families know that you are available at any time as their mentor on all matters pertaining to their Afghan Hound, it's behavior, health, demeanor, training, feeding, etc. Ask them to contact you weekly with "progress reports" during the first month. Afterwards, it is recommended that you contact them at least every six months. Proper follow-up can result in a potential second adoption or future foster home for your program.

10. Adoption donations: Adoption donations should cover your average shelter fees and medical costs involved in bringing an Afghan hound into the system. A nation-wide survey conducted in 2001 revealed that the average costs for a combination of shelter fees, medical evaluation, laboratory tests and spaying/neutering for our rescued Afghan hounds exceeded \$250.00, hence a cap on expenditures that has been updated by the Rescue Chair for the increasing cost of medical care. Some Afghan hounds will come to us in good health, already altered, and up to date on their shots. Others will not. The age of the hound may be a factor in considering a lower adoption donation. You are in the best position to determine at what level your local donations should be. Remember, if you used AHCA Rescue funds for a particular Hound, you are responsible to share the adoption donation with AHCA Rescue, up to and including, but not to exceed, the amount provided by Rescue toward that dog's care.

11. Working with Others: Most Afghan hound rescuers find themselves working alone to cover large geographic areas. Unfortunately there simply aren't enough rescuers for the number of abandoned Afghan hounds, nation-wide. There are solutions to this problem, however. Get acquainted with your nearest AHCA Rescue volunteers by phone, email or in person, and support them in any way you can. Sure, the nearest other Afghan hound rescuer may be 300 miles away, but she, or he, is a part of our nation-wide network of rescuers. If they need help, offer it. Split transportation runs, share ideas, trade home visits and just be there for them! We all need a shoulder to lean on or a hand up from time to time. This is very stressful work and to succeed at it, we have to operate as a team. Throughout the United States there are a large number of other breed-specific and all-breed or all-species rescue groups. They can be your greatest assets in getting the job done. Get acquainted with them. Introduce yourself, offer to help them (then do it) and you will begin to develop the network you need to cover far more territory than you can alone. Certainly, you may find yourself picking up or fostering a Borzoi, Irish Wolfhound or a Greyhound occasionally, but the amount of help you receive in return will be worth the small effort expended. Link up with an organization that develops and executes all-volunteer rescue transportation runs from one end of the country to the other. Check the websites for other National Breed Clubs, visit your local shelters or go to the Adopt-A-Pet section of your nearest large pet store and introduce yourself as a rescuer to the staff and volunteers. It works! Cultivate the people in your club and those who have adopted Afghan hounds from you. They are always a valuable resource to both promote your program and provide help in numerous other ways; picking up from shelters,

making home visits, fostering, transporting, fundraising. The possibilities are endless and limited only by your own initiative.

12. General Comments: The Afghan Hound Club of America supports the rescue program through fundraising efforts, voluntary club donations, and individual contributions. It should be the goal of each rescue group or, if not affiliated with a regional club, individual rescuer to become self-sustaining. There is no guarantee that there will be sufficient donations in a given year to support the demands placed upon the system. You can help. Raise funds for your own program first. Then, help raise funds for the National program by encouraging club donations and sales of fund raising items from the AHCA Rescue Website.