

DRAFT - Possible Criteria for Authorized Rescue Groups:

Criteria:

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee has researched and prepared the following recommended criteria to identify what would constitute an Authorized Rescue Group that would be exempt from the Pet Limit by-law.

It should be noted, that in a case where an emerging rescue group cannot yet meet these criteria, or in a case of a group that prefers to follow a different set of guidelines, and are therefore 'unauthorized' that they are not prevented from doing rescue work, as long as they follow municipal by-laws and animal protection laws. Any unauthorized group would not be able to receive special privileges such as exemption from the normal Pet Limit bylaw, and would not receive temporary, free dog licenses and other suggested programs that are awaiting approval by Council.

Suggested Criteria for 'Authorized Rescue Groups'

> Choose ONE from this list:

1. Must be a member of 'Helping Homeless Pets.' ('Helping Homeless Pets' is an umbrella group that has a very strict set of standards to be met before a Rescue group can be registered with 'Helping Homeless Pets.')
2. Must provide two letters of reference from already approved Authorized Rescue Groups. (A striking committee can be set up temporarily made up of City staff and trusted members of London's Animal Rescue community to determine initial applications to be Authorized Rescue Groups. Once at least 4 Authorized Rescue Groups have been approved, this striking committee can be disbanded.)

Choose TWO from this list:

1. Letter of reference from a banking institution that handles the account for the rescue, to ensure that group funds are kept separate from anyone's personal funds.
2. Status of Registered Charity
3. Two years of records of adoptions that demonstrate that all animals are spayed/neutered at time of adoption, or at appropriate ages after adoption based on follow up records.
4. Strong adoption contracts and screening of adopters that includes home visits, and provide records of such.

5. Be actively promoting London animals for adoption.

Compulsory – for all Authorized Rescue Groups:

Agreement to:

- a) conduct proper foster screening including home visits and keep records of such.
- b) provide formal fostering agreements and keep records of such.
- c) Except in the case where a veterinarian provides written confirmation that spay/neuter is not recommended for age or health reasons, all cats/dogs will be spay/neutered before the adoption can take place; keeping record of such;
– or a strong adoption contract that does not transfer ownership of the animal until the spay/neuter has been completed and proof of such has been received from the Veterinarian who provided the surgery. Follow up must be undertaken and records of such provided to ensure that adopted animals become spayed/neutered at the appropriate time.
- d) At the time of the adoption all age appropriate vaccinations will have been completed; keeping record of such.
- e) No dogs or cats can go directly to the adopter from adoption events. There must be at least one day between the animal being delivered to the adopter's home or picked up by the adopter.
- f) Support and promote municipal by-law compliance, including licensing.
- g) Make adopters aware of the incentives in licensing (applicable fee exemptions) and provide the adopter with the City registration form where the rescue portion would have been completed.
- h) Never breed or allow the breeding of cats or dogs in their foster care. Any accidental foster animal pregnancies must be terminated.
- i) No unaltered animal will be brought to an adoption event.

Such animals who are deemed to be unsuitable for spay/neuter by a veterinarian due to age or health, can still be promoted for adoption by the group as long as the other requirements regarding spay and neuter are met, but cannot be brought to a public adoption event.

This requirement would still allow approved rescue groups to promote older animals for adoption, a classification of animals that are frequently in great need of re-homing.

This requirement will also provide the best protection against dog and cat breeders being able to present themselves as rescue groups in order to participate in adoption events.

It needs to be recognized that spay and neuter provide the only long-term and permanent way to reduce and eliminate the steady stream of homeless companion animals.

Spay and neuter are the hall-marks of rescue groups and what distinguishes such groups from those who simply sell animals.