



Adoption Policy

Hours:

The Humane Society of Western Montana is open for adoptions:

Tues. – Fri. from 1 - 6pm

Sat. from 11am - 4pm

The Humane Society of Western Montana is closed Sundays, Mondays and major holidays.

Adoption Fees:

All fees assist in the daily care and needs of each pet admitted to HSWM. In addition to the fees, adoptive owners will be asked to pay an additional \$15.00 for a rabies vaccination if necessary (dogs, cats and ferrets over 4 months of age who are not yet vaccinated).

Spayed/Neutered dogs, puppies, cats and kittens	\$60
Unspayed/un-neutered dogs, puppies, cats and kittens	\$35
Spayed/Neutered ferrets	\$45
Rabbits (adopters will purchase a \$50 spay/neuter certificate with unaltered rabbits)	\$25
Guinea pigs, etc.	\$15
Rats, hamsters and mice	\$10
Other species	Fee varies

Included in the adoption fee:

Vaccinations and deworming
Feline leukemia test for cats and kittens
For cats – safety collar, id tag and cat carrier
For dogs – collar, id tag and leash
Free post-adoption veterinary exam
A dog training/cat behavior DVD

Special Adoption Programs:

Seniors for Seniors	Adoption fee is waived for those 60 years and older adopting a pet 7+ years
Buddy Adoption	First adoption of a cat or kitten is regular fee; second adoption fee is waived
Breed Rescue	No fee is charged for a pet transferred to an approved rescue or other shelter
Other Programs	Offered during the year – off-site, seasonal specials, adopt-a-thons

Commitment and goals:

Our adoption specialists have received 50 hours of training to assure the highest level of customer service. They are also knowledgeable in animal behavior, canine and feline assessments and matching people with pets. Our goal is to assist the adopter in choosing a pet that best fits their home, family and lifestyle.

Available For Adoption:

HSWM is dedicated to saving the life of every adoptable animal. All pets receive a medical exam by a trained Adoption Specialist. Additional veterinary care is provided as needed (paid for by the Emily Kantor Medical Assistance Fund). All dogs 6 months and older will be behaviorally assessed using the ASPCA Safer™ Assessment. Assessments will be performed on those dogs that have been at HSWM for a minimum of 2 days. Puppies will be assessed using the ASPCA MYM Puppy-ality™ Adoption Assessment/Programs. All dogs will also be further assessed using the Canine-ality™ Adoption Assessment/Programs. Dogs, puppies, cats and kittens showing aggressive tendencies may have placement restrictions or may not be available at that time.

All cats over 9 months of age will be assessed using the ASPCA MYM Feline-ality™ Adoption Assessment/Program. Our trained staff will assist in choosing the right combinations and provide counseling as needed for many common, yet preventable, cat issues.

Adoption requirements:

- Complete a MYM adopter survey
- Must be 18 years or older (driver's license or passport)
- All animals must be spayed/neutered upon adoption, unless surgery is not recommended at that time due to a health issue (i.e. rabbits under 6 months of age)
- All dogs/puppies will have a behavior assessment prior to adoption
- If the adopter has resident dogs it is recommended to bring them for a supervised introduction
- If the adopter rents, they must provide written proof of pet approval or the management company can be contacted
- If the adopter has children under 14 years it is recommended to bring them for a supervised introduction
- Adopters must agree to comply with all state and local laws, regulations and ordinances applicable to the pet being adopted
- If the adopter cannot keep the pet, the pet will be returned to HSWM

- Animals are adopted as companion pets only
- No pet will be adopted to any person with a history of animal abuse or neglect
- The adopter accepts the pet as is and assumes all risks of ownership of the pet including further financial obligations

Adoption may be denied if:

- The adopter becomes verbally abusive
- The adopter has a history of animal abuse/neglect
- The adoption is for food consumption, fighting or animal laboratory testing
- The adoption is for the purpose to sell for profit
- If the adopter is unable to meet the specific needs of the individual pet
- The adopter may be denied if not approved by Executive Director

Adoption procedure:

Prior to adopting a pet from HSWM, the adopter will be asked to complete an adopter survey. Our forms are available by fax, email or in person. There are three types of forms – specific to dogs and puppies, cats and kittens and ‘other’ pets such as rabbits, guinea pigs, etc. All forms will be kept on file for a period of one year.

Once at the shelter, the prospective adopter will be directed to the pet or assisted in finding a good ‘match’ using MYM if no specific pet is noted. The HSWM Adoption Specialists will explain the adoption process, introduce the adopter to the pet/s and supervise any introductions with other dogs, children, etc. Potential adopters may view pets without prior completion of the matchmaking form/adopter survey.

Dogs cannot be met with prior to having a behavior assessment. If a potential adopter is interested in a specific dog before the assessment is complete, an adopter survey can be filled out and placed in that pet’s intake sheet. After the assessment, an HSWM Adoption Specialist will review the forms and, based on the assessment results, will call those who have the most appropriate ‘match.’

Most adoptions are on a first come, first serve basis. Some pets available for adoption are so popular that multiple surveys are collected. In these situations the Shelter Supervisor or Adoption Specialist will look over the matchmaking forms and choose the home that provides the best match for person and pet.

A 24 hour hold may be placed on a pet. An additional 24 hour hold may be placed on the pet only if there is no other hold.

Some examples for placing a hold may be:

- Pending landlord approval
- Family member introductions
- Resident dog introductions
- Necessary medical or behavior consultations with a specific staff member or behaviorist
- Any other reason as approved by Shelter Supervisor

Once a pet is ready for adoption, the Adoption Specialist will discuss/provide the following:

- The adoption contract (with post-adoption veterinary exam)
- Applicable behavior handouts
- Rabies certificate/voucher
- Vaccination records and revaccination schedule
- Feline leukemia test results
- Medication cards
- Surgery-related aftercare, as appropriate
- Cat/kitten/dog/puppy food
- Collar with temporary id tag
- Microchip information
- Paws Ahead training information and HSWM training brochure and information
- Carrier or leash
- Those pets in the manageable/rehabilitatable/unhealthy categories will have additional adoption paperwork/counseling