



Humane Society of  
Western Montana

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## *Transfer Guide*

The Humane Society of Western Montana is committed to empowering the human-animal bond by being a leading resource for pets and their people. We enjoy a robust adoption program and strive to help as many pets as possible through our intake and transfer programs. Thank you for your interest in partnering with our organization.

We are very thankful for our community's commitment to:

- Adopting!
- Our training and assistance services that help families in need keep their pets
- Providing access to affordable spay/neuter options

We welcome questions and conversations about the development of our adoption and safety-net programs.

### *Program Personnel*

Primary Transfer Coordinator: **Liz Bois, Intake Coordinator**  
406-549-9864 x203  
[rehome@myhswm.org](mailto:rehome@myhswm.org)

Secondary Transfer Coordinator: **Nicole Nolte, Director of Operations**  
406-549-9864 x206  
[nicole.nolte@myhswm.org](mailto:nicole.nolte@myhswm.org)

### *First Steps*

1. Contact Liz to discuss partnering with HSWM.
2. Review the transfer guidelines in this document with your transfer personnel.
3. Review and sign the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).
4. Let's talk dates! Contact us to discuss potential transfer dates and pets.

## Health Guidelines

### VACCINES

We follow AAHA and AAFP shelter vaccination guidelines and ask that our partner agencies adhere to these as much as possible, placing primary importance on vaccination upon intake.

#### General Guidelines:

- All pets must be vaccinated with a **DA2PP** (dog) or **FVRCP** (cat) vaccine by the sending agency immediately upon arrival to the sending agency's facility/foster home, or have a documented current DA2PP or FVRCP vaccine.
- It is our preference that dogs and puppies (4+ weeks or age) receive a **Bordetella vaccine** upon arrival to the source agency, but they must receive this vaccine prior to the transfer. HSWM may be able to assist the source shelter with the cost of this, if prohibitive.
- Out of state pets (over the age of 3 months) must also receive a **Rabies vaccine** prior to entry in to Montana. Additionally, out of state pets must have a recent (within 10 days of transport) health certificate and import permit number from the Montana Department of Livestock (see 'Becoming a Montanan' below for more information) prior to entry into Montana.

### KITTENS & PUPPIES

#### Combo Vaccines (Cat FVRCP and Dog DA2PP)

- Kittens and puppies must be 8 weeks of age or older unless being transported with their mother.
- Kittens and Puppies must have received at least one modified live FVRCP or DA2PP, respectively, starting at 4-6 weeks of age.
- If kittens and puppies are held at the source agency or in a foster home for more than 14 days, they must receive booster FVRCP or DA2PP vaccines, respectively, every 2 weeks until the time of transfer or until they are 5 months old.
- There may be occasions when the transport of pets less than 8 weeks of age is merited. Please contact us to discuss the transportation of under-aged puppies and/or kittens.

### PARASITE TREATMENT & TESTING

- All pets should be given a dewormer, following age-appropriate protocols, effective against roundworms and hookworms.
- Depending on location, some source shelters may be asked to administer flea and tick treatment or to perform heartworm tests on dogs (over 6 months) prior to transport.

### MEDICAL TRANSFERS

Unless preauthorized, all pets will be healthy with no known or suspected health needs/concerns. Pets needing additional medical attention may be accepted on a case-by-case basis depending on HSWM's available resources and current pet population. It is important that any pet considered for a medical transfer be known to have a good temperament and a known history. Please contact us for consideration of a medical transfer.

Examples of transfers that would be considered medical, and therefore needing preauthorization, may include:

- known kennel cough or upper respiratory infection
- undiagnosed or unresolved hair loss
- cherry eye or hernia repair surgery
- dental disease
- chronic skin allergies
- untreated fractures or joint issues

#### **REGIONAL HEALTH CONCERNS**

HSWM is lucky to be located in an area with relatively few pet health issues – our winters are long and our summers are short and dry. Because of this our community is less knowledgeable about treatment options for diseases such as heartworm, Valley Fever or tick-borne diseases.

Please consult with the transfer personnel if there is a health concern common to your area. We would value the opportunity to consult with our veterinarian and yours to develop a plan that addresses the pet's needs and the concerns our adopters and veterinary community may have. We may ask that pets be treated, have preventative measures applied or have testing performed prior to approving a transfer.

#### ***Behavior Guidelines***

The success of our transfer program is dependent on HSWM receiving pets that are great with all potential family members and new experiences. Dogs and cats that do well with other pets and kids, who are easygoing and adaptable find homes very quickly in our community, opening the door to another homeless pet waiting to be given his or her second chance.

Please keep the following in mind when selecting pets to transfer to HSWM:

- HSWM does not limit transfer intakes based on a pet's breed or perceived breed – **we are looking for personality plus!**
- HSWM cannot accept pets with a bite history or a history of aggression to humans.
- Please carefully evaluate the known history of a pet who is showing signs of fear and/or under socialization.
- Red flag/concerning behaviors include:
  - Cowering
  - Hiding
  - Not accepting treats
  - Excessive vocalizing
  - Lunging
  - Handling concerns (including inability to touch)
  - Other observed concerning behaviors

Any pet with one or more of these red flag behaviors needs preapproval prior to being considered for transfer. We are happy to discuss individual cases with your transfer coordinator to see if pets with concerning behaviors or history are good candidates for adoption in Missoula.

## *Prepping for Transport*

Please refer to SAWA's Best Practice for Companion Animal Transport Programs. Your safety and that of the pets being transported is a priority.

### **THE DAY BEFORE TRANSPORT**

- "The List" – The source shelter has finalized and HSWM has approved the list of pets being considered/included for transport. The final list should include a physical description, intake date, reason for surrender, dates of core vaccines, health and behavior status and any additional information for every pet on the transport.
- Pets will have received a physical exam by a trained animal care professional within 24 hours of transport. Any abnormalities will be shared with HSWM. HSWM may ask that the concern is resolved before pet(s) with medical abnormalities are transported.
  - Dogs and cats should have no congestion or difficulty breathing through the nose.
  - Ensure dogs and cats, especially puppies and kittens, have a good appetite. Please do not select emaciated pets for transport.
  - Keep it solid – check for stool quality. Please do not select dogs or cats with liquid diarrhea or blood in their stool.
  - Pets should appear bright, alert and responsive – a lack of these qualities may indicate early stages of a contagious or infectious disease.
- Please do not include a pet that has had spay or neuter surgery within 48 hours of the scheduled departure.

### **IDENTIFICATION & DOCUMENTATION**

- All pets should be individually identified with a tape collar indicating the pet's name or identification number. Identification, including final destination if multiple stops are planned, should also be included on the transport carrier for each pet.
- Records may be emailed to the transfer coordinator(s) ahead of time, but must be shipped with the animals in a plastic or waterproof sleeve.
- Records must include:
  - A valid **health certificate** (or certificate of veterinary inspection) and accompanying Montana import permit number (see below).
  - The **date and mode of entry** to the source shelter.
  - **Medical records** including a summary of any and all vaccinations, dewormings, treatments, tests, etc. received prior to transport.
- Records should include:
  - **Personality/behavior information** and home history, if known.

## *Becoming a Montanan*

Montana's Department of Livestock requires that all pets coming into our state on transports be issued an **import permit** and a **health certificate** with the following requirements:

- Health Certificate Requirements
  - A numbered federal VS 7001 form (or other MT state approved certificate). The number assigned to the health certificate will have a **two letter state abbreviation**, **veterinary license**

- number, date (MMDDYY), letter A (for the first certificate issued that date, letter B for the second and so forth) – i.e. CA 1234 052318 A, CA 1234 052318 B.
- Animals must be individually described with their current rabies vaccination status indicated on the certificate.
  - The Montana destination agency of the pets being transported in to Montana must be indicated on the health certificate.
  - Permit Requirements
    - Within 10 days prior to shipment to Montana, fax or email the completed health certificate to the Helena, MT office to request an import permit.
    - Provide a return call telephone number or email address for the permit number.
  - Contact Information
    - Email: [livpermits@mt.gov](mailto:livpermits@mt.gov)
    - Fax: 406-444-1929
    - Phone: 406-444-2976 or Brooke at 406-444-5200 (she's great and can answer all your questions!)

### *Returning Pets to Source Shelter*

HSWM will make every reasonable effort to update source shelters should a pet's health or behavior decline while in our care. When possible and in the best interest of the pet, we will give source shelters the option of redeeming the pet and returning him/her to your shelter. Please discuss your preferences with one of our transfer coordinators.

### *References & Resources*

- American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) Feline Vaccination Guidelines - <https://www.catvets.com/guidelines/practice-guidelines/feline-vaccination-guidelines>
- American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) Canine Vaccination Guidelines - [https://www.aaha.org/guidelines/canine\\_vaccination\\_guidelines.aspx](https://www.aaha.org/guidelines/canine_vaccination_guidelines.aspx)
- SAWA Companion Animal Transfer Best Practices - [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.sawanetwork.org/resource/resmgr/files/SAWA\\_Companion\\_Animal\\_Transp.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.sawanetwork.org/resource/resmgr/files/SAWA_Companion_Animal_Transp.pdf)
- Montana import requirements - <http://liv.mt.gov/Animal-Health/Import-Requirements/Pets>
- American Heartworm Society (incidence maps and resources) - <https://www.heartwormsociety.org/veterinary-resources/incidence-maps>