

## UAF Policy on Dogs and Cats found in the Community

United Animal Friends regularly receives phone calls from the community regarding found dogs and cats without identification and it is the intent of this Policy to provide a uniform protocol for these inquiries. Input for this Policy was provided by Shannon Gray, lead Prescott Animal Control Officer and two veterinarians on the UAF Board of Directors.

1. An attempt should be made to locate the owner by having the animal checked for a microchip, which most veterinarian clinics and Yavapai Humane Society offer free of charge. Postings around the neighborhood, on Craigslist, and contacting neighbors are additional options for trying to track down an owner.
2. If that is not successful or if the animal is suffering and in need of immediate medical treatment, contacting the local animal control is strongly urged. These numbers include Prescott: 777-1135, Prescott Valley: 772-9267, Chino Valley - open hours: 636-4223 ext. 7, Yavapai County and Chino Valley - after hours: 771-3260.
3. Some finders have concerns about turning over a lost and scared animal and may elect to try and locate the owner themselves. This is not encouraged by the local regulating agencies, as a frantic owner may be contacting the appropriate channels in effort to find their pets. The law does require every reasonable effort be made to publicize a found pet and the finder must contact Yavapai Humane Society Lost and Found (445-2666). It is encouraged that the finder use other social media resources like Craigslist and Lost Pet bulletin boards as well. Some people suggest leaving out one critical detail on the pet for any responding parties to identify (e.g. collar color or unique body marking), but a reasonable description must be provided in the spirit of the law.
4. According to Ms. Gray, the finder can provide appropriate veterinary care, including vaccines, if they are choosing to keep the animal while waiting for lost responses. They cannot, however, require reimbursement from an owner if the animal is claimed.
5. According to the UAF veterinarians, isolating the animal from the finder's pets is advised for a minimum of 48 hours, even if the finder's own pets are current on vaccines. Minimum vaccines should include rabies. Other suggested vaccines/checks include leukemia for cats, bordetella (kennel cough) and 4:1 (parvo/distemper) for dogs, and blood parasite test and fecal exam for both species. These would be at the finder's discretion and cost, and the finder cannot require reimbursement from an owner who later steps up.
6. If the finder has an interest in keeping the pet or turning it over to an alternate rescue group, the animal must be properly cared for the minimum of 7 days while trying to find an owner. At the end of 7 days, if no owner responds, the pet is legally the finder's. It is important to note that after 7 days, animal control will no longer respond and pick up the animal but will consider it the finder's pet.
7. If the finder wishes to contact UAF for assistance or request that UAF take in the pet, those arrangements should be made and approved prior to the end of the 7 day hold. UAF's position is that sincere effort must be made to locate an owner and the finder cannot expect UAF to fully fund any assistance required to help the pet. UAF's hotline number is 778-2924 but if the animal is in dire need of medical assistance, the finder should not wait for a call back. A licensed veterinarian or animal control should be contacted immediately. With pre-approval and confirmation that efforts are underway to track down an owner, UAF will assist with efforts to care for found pets or provide re-homing support.