



Pawsitive Partner Policies

The Pawsitive Partner Program is the Animal Rescue League of Berks County's (ARL) comprehensive community initiative aimed at finding homes for the community's homeless pet population. To accomplish this, the ARL establishes and cultivates mutually-beneficial and productive relationships with private animal welfare organizations that assist and partner with the ARL to place animals. The placement partner takes ownership of ARL's animals and cares for them in shelters, foster homes, boarding facilities and/or their own private facilities.

The Animal Rescue League of Berks County is a private non-profit humane organization operating a progressive, no-kill, and no time limit sheltering facility serving Berks County. We receive approximately 5,000-6,000 animals per year including stray animals, animals surrendered from the public and animals brought in through cruelty, emergency rescue, police and animal control cases.

A Pawsitive Partner is a private animal welfare organization who has been accepted into ARL's Pawsitive Partner Program in accordance with the following policies:

1. ARL is concerned for the welfare of all animals in our care and retains control over the transfer process for all such animals. Transfer is complete when all required paperwork is complete and ARL no longer has ownership of the animal.
2. Animals are typically sterilized prior to release from ARL, unless a veterinarian determines that such surgery would be harmful to the animal. In that situation, the Partner will have the animal sterilized if/when its health allows. In certain situations, the Partner will take responsibility for sterilizing the animal and will provide proof to ARL upon request.
3. Consistent with the policies of the ARL, the Partner must agree to do their best to place animals with guardians who will provide love and companionship while meeting their medical and behavioral needs, or to provide long term sanctuary and care within their own organizational system.
4. The ARL requires the Partner to meet the minimum standards of animal care for appropriate housing, nutrition, exercise, medical care, and socialization for each species as described in the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters as well as all local, state and national laws.
5. The Partner and all of its consultants agree that it will not use behavior modification training techniques that involve the use of force or physical punishment in place of positive reinforcement and reward.
6. The ARL will disclose all known behavior and medical information concerning an animal that the Pawsitive Partner is considering accepting.
7. The ARL and the Partner agree to protect the health and safety of the public by not knowingly placing an animal that poses a threat to public safety. To that end, we agree to the following:
 - a. The ARL assesses dog behavior using historical information, observations collected during care, and the results of a behavior assessment.

- b. If an animal transferred from ARL to the Partner shows signs of previously undocumented aggression toward humans or animals or fails to respond to behavior modification, we request the Partner to consult with ARL before making euthanasia decisions. Depending on the circumstances, ARL may ask the Partner to return the animal to our care for further behavior modification or other placement decisions. At no time do we want our Partners to solely bear the weight of euthanasia decisions. The Partner can then schedule a return of an animal to ARL during normal business hours
 - c. Upon the animal's return to the ARL, a written description of the problems leading to the return of an animal shall be provided by the Partner. This information will be used by the ARL to refine its efforts to appropriately assess and match animals with partners and make final placement decisions.
8. Pawsitive Partners should only solicit and accept animals for their own organization. Organizations with whom the Partner has a relationship can apply to become part of our Pawsitive Partner program. This is to ensure that all requirements are met for out-of-state transfers, such as providing health certificates.
9. The ARL will attempt to contact Pawsitive Partners whenever an animal arrives at the ARL with identification that traces back to that partner. The ARL will adhere to its customary holding times and policies.
10. The ARL values the lifesaving contributions made by our placement partners. We believe strongly that more animals will be saved when our communication and collaboration is positive and constructive. The ARL wants to avoid inaccurate negative attention that will create artificial barriers to shelter adoption, volunteer engagement, and public utilization of ARL's services. We aim to inspire the community to join with us, and our partners, to save more animals. To that end, we ask that you join us in committing to the following:
 - a. ARL and partners will abide by and respect proper chain of command for efficient communication.
 - b. Questions and concerns will be welcomed by both parties, according to the agreed upon chain of command.
 - c. Questions and concerns will be presented respectfully and responses will be prompt and equally respectful.
 - d. ARL and partners will consider the impact of their public discourse with each other and will consider input that is in the best interest of the partnership. Unprofessional or negative public discourse, in venues such as online/social media posting, may be grounds for cessation of partnership.
11. Animals will be eligible for transfer as outlined in the Animal Eligibility for Transfer section below. Animals shall be transferred to Pawsitive Partners without a fee. Most animals will have vaccinations, FeLV/FIV testing for cats, testing/treatment for intestinal parasites when symptoms are present, and treatment for external parasites. The preceding may not be completed prior to placement depending on circumstances, such as, animals coming directly from owners to Partners. Additional services can be provided by ARL at cost to the Pawsitive Partner on a case-by-case basis.
12. While the ARL will do its best to provide the Partner with all the available information about an animal (including medical records, behavioral records and other observations), the ARL makes no guarantees concerning the health, behavior, breed or age for any animal which the Partner chooses to accept into its program.

Animal Eligibility for Transfer to ARL Pawsitive Partner

In deciding which animals are available for transfer, the ARL will consider the best interest of the individual animal's needs, the safety of our community and the needs and goals of either agency. The ARL recommends that Pawsitive Partners carefully consider all available medical and behavior information prior to deciding whether to accept an animal for placement. While the ARL will provide Partners with all known information concerning an animal's medical condition and behavior, the ARL does not guarantee the medical or behavioral condition of the animal or exact age and does not warranty any medical/behavior problems/complications/illnesses that may arise with a particular animal after transfer to a Partner.

Animal eligibility for transfer through the Pawsitive Partner program is as follows:

1. Animals may be eligible for transfer to a placement partner under the following circumstances:
 - a. The ARL has determined the animal shall be made available to Partners
 - b. The animal's stray holding period is complete.
 - c. There is no prior or anticipated interest by public adopters.
 - d. The animal does not have a known medical condition that poses a significant risk to public health. Practices must take into account state requirements for transfer. Requirements vary by state, but often include specific vaccinations and health certificates.
 - e. The animal does not pose a known danger to the community. Determining what poses a danger to the community is challenging and any approach must balance animal welfare and public safety. Partners acknowledge that this process requires communication, trust, and transparency between partners, as well as a review of related laws. Prior to making a decision, the ARL will make reasonable efforts to fully disclose all facts related to safety concerns and the Partner will disclose to the ARL what steps it will take to assess safety, address concerns, and proceed with adoption. The Partner shall sign a liability release for the animal.
 - f. The animal does not have medical and/or behavioral condition(s) that significantly compromise the animal's quality of life as evaluated by a veterinarian.
 - g. The animal is not under active quarantine by a municipal authority.
2. If, after an animal has been confirmed for placement with a partner, the ARL becomes aware of a new health or behavioral issue not previously observed or present during the initial evaluation, ARL staff will attempt to contact the Partner to inform them of the status. However, if the Partner cannot be reached and an urgent decision needs to be made, the ARL retains the right to make this decision and act accordingly.
3. Animals with a bite or aggression history to either people or other animals may be limited for transfer to Partners who have specific experience and resources dealing with animals that display those behavioral issues.
4. ARL will notify Partners of possible transfer candidates by e-mail or telephone:
 - a. The information cannot be forwarded to anyone outside of approved Pawsitive Partner organizations. We would be happy to add more organizations to our program at any time if you have recommendations for referral.
 - b. Partner notifies the ARL if they are committing to placement for that animal through e-mail by the commitment date given in prior communications.

5. Partners must coordinate transfer pick up of the animal within a reasonable time frame discussed with an ARL representative. Please note that the ARL may require immediate transport for certain animals with significant health or behavior problems and/or in the event of an emergency.

Animal Rescue League of Berks County's Commitment to Pawsitive Partners

Once the applying organization is accepted as a Pawsitive Partner, ARL agrees to do the following:

1. Accept the services of the Partner when appropriate animals are internally identified and communicated by the ARL.
2. Respect Partner's preferences for type of animal, breed, behavior issues and medical issues.
3. Provide all the information available about an animal (which may include copies of veterinary records, behavior assessments, and daily animal care notes) to enable the Partner to make an informed decision about the animal.
4. Provide instructions on ARL procedures that impact the Partner.
5. Provide support to the Partner in our routine interactions within the partnership, including responding to calls and emails in a timely manner.
6. Respect the skills and expertise of the Partner and as well as their resource limitations.
7. Provide feedback on program interactions, and provide an opportunity for the Partner to provide feedback so that both agencies are able to mutually better accomplish our respective tasks.
8. Be available to the Partner and willing to discuss issues of concerns, either in an impromptu discussion or by arranging a specific meeting time.

By signing and submitting the Pawsitive Partner Profile your organization has agreed to the policies outlined above.



Pawsitive Partner Profile

The Animal Rescue League of Berks County (ARL) Pawsitive Partner Program is a crucial component to increase lifesaving opportunities in our community. We appreciate the opportunity to work together as a team and look forward to the dialogue that helps us get to know each other. Please help us get started by completing our standard profile, which will help us work together more efficiently.

To apply to become a Pawsitive Partner please providing the following information and documentation to Alexandra Young (Placement Manager) at ayoung@berksarl.org or mail to 58 Kennel Road, Birdsboro, PA 19508.

Please provide the following:

- A completed Pawsitive Partner profile
- A copy of the organization's 501(c)(3) status if applicable, submitted 501(c)(3) application or veterinary business license
- A copy of the organization's adoption application and/or a description of the adoption counseling process and adoption agreement
- A copy of the organization's spay/neuter policy
- A copy of the organization's euthanasia policy

Legal Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Physical Address:

Primary Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Primary Contact: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

(This is the person that is responsible for the organization and is our main point of contact and decision making.)

Alternate contact #1: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Alternate contact #2: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

(Alternate contacts have permission to pull animals on behalf of your organization and are approved to physically pick up and transport animals from the ARL. The ARL will not release animals to people that are not designated by the Primary Contact for the organization. More Alternate Contacts may be listed as needed.)

Please list full names of any organizations to which you have transferred animals over the past year (other than an adopter).

What is your return policy?

Which computer software or database management system, if any, do you use to track the animals in your care? _____

How many animals entered your program in 2018? Dogs: _____ Cats: _____ Other: _____

Your organization is: Open Admission Limited Admission

If Limited Admission, please list limitations:

How many foster homes did you have in your program at the beginning and end of 2018?

Beginning of year: _____ End of year: _____

How many animals were in your organization at the beginning and end of 2018 (either in shelter or foster)?

Beginning of year: _____ End of year: _____

How many animals in the past calendar year were successfully placed into permanent homes (adopted)? _____

What is your live release rate for the previous calendar year? _____

Describe how you determine a limit on the number of animals allowed in your program at one time:

What type of animals do you accept in your organization? Dog Puppy Cat Kitten

Other: _____

Do you prefer any specific breeds? Yes No

Describe: _____

If yes, will you take mixes of those breeds? Yes No

Please share any type of medical conditions your group accepts (i.e. dogs with heartworm disease, FeLV positive cats, etc.):

Please share any type of medical conditions that make an animal ineligible for your group (i.e. dogs with heartworm disease, FeLV positive cats, etc.):

Please share any animal behavior based conditions your group accepts (i.e. resource guarding, litter box issues, separation anxiety, etc.):

Please share any behavior based conditions that would make an animal ineligible for your group (i.e. resource guarding, litter box issues, etc.):

Are there any age restrictions for animals entering your program?

Lower age limit: _____ Upper age limit: _____

Please describe where animals will be housed after they leave the Animal Rescue League of Berks County (foster homes, boarding, a shelter facility, combination, etc.):

Please list the name, address, and phone number of the licensed veterinarian who serves as the organization's primary provider/consultant:

Please list the name, address, and phone number of the licensed veterinarian who serves as the organization's emergency provider:

Please list the name, address, and phone number of any behavior consultants and/or trainers who provide service to your organization.

Please provide three (3) references and full contact information who we can call or email to find out more about your good work, such as; veterinarians, shelters you have worked with in the past, trainers or behavior consultants, former adopters, other industry related references.

Reference #1: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Reference #2: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Reference #3: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

I agree that I have the authorization to enter into this agreement on behalf of the organization listed on this profile, and that I have read and agree to all of the Animal Rescue League of Berks County's policies to become a Pawsitive Partner outlined in this agreement.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Position: _____

Signature of ARL Representative: _____