

# ABHDR Adoption Process

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**PLEASE READ this before sending in an application.**



We are not a shelter, nor do we have a public facility, with regular store hours where potential adopters can drop in at any time and go home with a dog of their choice. All of our animals are fostered in private homes, which allows us to properly assess their temperament and behaviour, and understand the type of family that will best suit their needs.

Potential adopters will be put in touch with the foster home if they would like more details on a particular dog and/or would like to arrange a visit before starting the process but the foster home cannot release the dog until the application has

received final approval.

We will consider long-distance adoptions however, we would first recommend checking the two websites below for rescue organizations, or dogs in need of homes, in your area. Both websites are a good place to start if a flight or road trip is prohibitive to adopting one of our dogs.

[www.canadaguidetodogs.com](http://www.canadaguidetodogs.com)

[www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com)

Please note that many of these herding breeds are sent to us because they either exhibit

1. excessive herding behaviours that many pet owners do not know how to deal with or
2. no herding behaviours that the stockmen & ranchers are looking for or
3. high intensity & drive that require an appropriate outlet, such as dog sports.

We rarely get a "couch potato" that is happy to just sit in the yard and watch the world go by. It is even rarer that we get puppies (< 1 yr old) - it is more likely that we will get a dog that was found as a stray; was chasing livestock and in danger of being shot or would shut down when worked on livestock, was nipping the kids or smaller animals or chasing bicyclists/cars; is somewhat fearful of specific types of people; barked excessively; has resource guarding issues or some other obsessive behaviour often left to manifest into a bigger problem than the owners were able to deal with.

We also get dogs transferred from shelters because many of these breeds do not do very well in a shelter environment and thus, they do not show well at all to potential adopters. The longer they stay in a shelter, the greater the chance they may develop other unwanted behaviours due to the noise and higher states of arousal/stimulation and the less chance they have of being adopted.

Our job, first and foremost, is to help these dogs learn how to be good pets so that the general breed-knowledgeable public can adopt them and live with them. We do not expect every adopter to want to do dog sports or get involved in herding but we do expect that adopters realize that these dogs need regular physical and mental exercise to keep them happy and be easier to live with. This is often much more than most other breeds need but even so, a herding dog should also know when to work and when to relax and be able to co-exist in the house with the adopter, their family members & other pets.

It is possible for herding breeds to be great family pets, but more often than not, many of them are not good around children. Some dogs are so excited or eager to do something, they will jump up, knock over or grab toys/treats very fast around children, not realizing they can do harm. If they have high herding instincts, it is not uncommon for them to nip moving things, especially bikes or small animals or children who move funny and often fast, as it is instinct for them to control and bring together the scattered "livestock". If you think getting one of these breeds will be "good for the kids" or "will make a good friend for a current pet" or will "just hang out in an un-fenced yard while you are away, we ask you to reconsider the breed you are looking for. A herding breed may not be the best choice.

We are looking for active pet homes that are engaged with their dogs regularly or for working homes that know how to train them for the herding job they need and who have a safe place for them when they are not working. There are many, many training methods out there & every dog will respond differently to different training methods. We are strong advocates for reward based training, whatever the reward is that works for each particular dog. We do not condone the use of pinch or E-collars. It is our strong belief that the ONLY time these methods should even be considered is if it is the

difference between life & death for the dog. If these are your "go to, every day" methods, then one of our dogs is probably not a good match.

Hopefully you will understand that our animals' best interests are at the heart of what we do and our **ultimate goal** is to find perfect matches! We do not have an adoption quota or a timeline to meet. We live with these dogs, work with these dogs, build bonds with these dogs and make sure their care and vet needs are met. That may be weeks, months, even a year or longer if that is what the dog needs to become adoptable. They are in loving and caring foster homes, not in a shelter of concrete and steel, with plenty of access to exercise and social activities. For that reason, our foster families always have the first option to adopt, for all the time and care they give to the dog to get them to the adoptable stage. We also rely heavily on their opinions and gut instincts on what they observe between the dog and the potential adopter during a meet-n-greet, as they know the dogs best.

We require that potential adopters travel to meet our dogs as we will not ship them to places or people unknown. We will make every effort to have all stages of the process done before a trip is made so that if the Meet'n'Greet goes well, the dog can go home with you on the same day. It is important to note that the greater the distance, the longer the process may take as we will need to find and contact volunteers local to your area for home visits. If we are unable to find local volunteers, we will consider virtual home visits if technology will allow us. Having said all that, if you are sure that one of our foster dogs is the perfect match for you, then please follow the steps outlined below.

## **THE ADOPTION PROCESS**

- Please email [HerdingDogRescue@telus.net](mailto:HerdingDogRescue@telus.net) for an Adoption Application.
  - Those dogs listed as a "Courtesy Post" on our FB page are not under our care and thus do not go through our process. Please contact the person or rescue listed in that dog's photo album about their requirements or adoption process.
- Fill it out as completely as possible, sign and email it back to [HerdingDogRescue@telus.net](mailto:HerdingDogRescue@telus.net).
  - Please **include 3 written references** or have your references email [HerdingDogRescue@telus.net](mailto:HerdingDogRescue@telus.net) with information that will support your application. Including or emailing written references will greatly speed up the process.

- You can snail mail it to the address on the last page, although this would likely be less reliable and take longer. Sorry but we do NOT have a fax number.
- If there are any questions or concerns about the application, we will contact you for clarification.
- Once we can line up a volunteer to do the home visit, we will introduce you to them by email so that you can arrange a time convenient to you both. Generally, except during high vacation seasons (summer & Christmas), this step can be done within a week of receiving your application.
- If there are specific requirements for some dogs (for example, deaf dogs will require a secure, high fenced yard), they are there for a reason and the home visit is primarily to ensure us that you can provide what the dogs need with respect to the type of training you are willing to do and what is expected to keep them safe.
- Once the home visit is complete, arrangements are then made with the foster home for a Meet'n'Greet. At that point, if it goes well, the adoption contract is signed and we transfer the dog over to you.
  - Visits with the dogs can be arranged prior to the home visit, to ensure the dog is likely a good fit, but they cannot go home with you at that point.
- Adoption fees are due upon the transfer of the dog. If, over the 30 day trial adoption period, the dog turns out not to be a good match, the adoption fee will be returned upon the dog's return to our rescue.
- If, for any reason, the adopter can no longer keep or care for the dog they adopted from us, we will ALWAYS take them back as long as we continue to operate.

In the event that we receive multiple applications for the same dog at the same time, we will process those applications in the order we receive them but it is the **best match** (NOT 1st come, 1st served) that will get first approval. If, after the 30 day trial period, the dog is not the perfect match, the dog must be returned to Herding Dog Rescue at the adopter's expense. At that point, we will revisit other applications (if any) received for that dog. There may be disappointments because even if it is the only application, it does NOT automatically get approval. We have to be confident that the adopter will not only provide the basic standards of care but will continue to work with the issues the dog may have using positive, reward based training.