

# ApsoRescueColorado.org

## Mission Statement and Volunteer Promise

October 2002

Our goal and objective is to address the problem of homelessness of the Lhasa Apso dog. This includes rescuing, fostering and carefully placing homeless Lhasas in homes appropriate for the individual dog. It also includes temperament testing whenever possible before placement, providing important health care, spaying and neutering, grooming, as well as educating the public about the breed. Counseling pet owners who are having behavioral issues with their Lhasas is considered an important responsibility of our rescue organization, as we believe education and intervention can keep many Lhasas from losing their homes in the first place. As the rescue organization of the national breed club, we accept our responsibility for protecting the welfare of all Lhasa Apso dogs that are in need, while encouraging breeders to be responsible for all dogs they have bred or sired if it should become necessary at any time in the dogs life. We will strive for the highest possible standard as we conduct our rescue work and agree to abide by the policies set forth by our rescue organization.

### Policies and Guidelines

- Each rescue dog accepted in to our program should be carefully placed in a home that is suitable for its age, health and temperament and that matches as closely as possible, the environment that is best for that particular animal.
- Only approved volunteers are authorized to act as representatives for ALAC Rescue and must have been screened and approved by the National Coordinator, a Regional Coordinator, or a State Coordinator. They will then be considered AARV's or Approved ALAC Rescue Volunteers.
- ALAC members are not automatically authorized as AARV's and must complete the same forms and be approved, to be considered as such.
- AARV's are able to foster and approve adoptions with the guidance and oversight of their state or regional coordinator.
- All Rescue Lhasas in our program must be spayed or neutered before being placed in a home. Any exception would need to be approved by the regional or state coordinator and would only be considered for health reasons. Relative to that:
- No rescue dog should undergo a spay/neuter procedure within 15 days of being given annual shots.
- Anyone acting as an AARV, who takes in a rescue dog, is personally responsible for the dog and must be able to foster the dog indefinitely if they have taken the dog in. They are never to assume ALAC Rescue has an opening without checking with a coordinator or confirming an opening with another AARV.
- No AARV or Foster home should have more than 6 dogs per caretaker in the home or kennel. A caretaker can include a spouse or kennel help. Volunteers must be able to set limits on the number of dogs they take in, so they do not become overburdened thus short changing the dogs they are responsible for. Anyone found to be over the limit set above will no longer be considered an AARV for ALAC Rescue.
- All rescue dogs in our program should be cared for following these Basic Guidelines: They need clean and comfortable housing, they need a climate controlled indoor environment to escape the extreme outdoor elements, they need consistent and knowledgeable grooming, they need parasite control-

including heartworm preventative to keep them healthy, they need adequate and appropriate veterinary care, they need adequate socialization with people daily (playing, petting, loving, training), as well as daily fresh air and exercise. Anything less is not considered responsible rescue practice or dog ownership practice and will not be condoned by this rescue organization.

- Major veterinary bills for any and all foster dogs in our program need to be approved by a state, regional or national coordinator before the procedures are done. General health care, such as shots, medications, or the like, are not included in the above approval process, and should be covered by the local rescue coordinator. Large outlays, such as spay/neuter, dental work, or other complex or costly surgical procedures, must be approved by a state coordinator or higher, before the procedures to assure funds are available to cover them.

- No reimbursement of any medical bills will be made without a receipt from the veterinarian that performed the services or sold the medications. Copies of those receipts must accompany requests for reimbursements.

- Foster homes are responsible for the everyday needs of their rescue dogs, such as: food, toys, beds, bowls, etc. Grooming expenses should be covered by the local rescue coordinator.

- We strongly encourage all volunteers to work only with veterinarians that have agreed to discount their services. (This usually doesn't include medication discounts.) Twenty percent is a common discount although some vets discount as much as 50%. Expertise of the vet should be given a high consideration as well.

- Rescue dogs that have been deemed unadoptable because of aggression issues, extreme health problems or very poor quality of life should be humanely euthanized. All AARV's should have a realistic attitude toward this part of rescue and accept the fact that not every animal can be saved.

- A dog that has bitten in the past should not be automatically excluded from the program if someone with enough expertise is available to determine the degree of the problem and then work with the animal to rehabilitate it. Dogs who have bitten children are not automatically deemed unadoptable and may be placed in carefully screened homes that are "child free" and who understand the dogs' potential aggression toward children. This understanding should be put in writing and signed by all adults in the household before approving the adoption.

- All adoptive homes must be screened and all adults in the home are required to complete and sign our Adoption Application, Contract and Liability Release. No exceptions to this policy.

- Our policy is not to adopt our rescue dogs out to families with children (or that have children visiting frequently) under the age of 12. Exceptions must be approved by a regional coordinator or the national coordinator and would be approved only for Lhasas that have been socialized properly with children and have never bitten a child. The children themselves would need to be used to being around canines.

- Long distance adoptions are strongly discouraged. Any such adoptions should be done only under extreme circumstances, and need to be approved by the regional or national coordinator. Long distance adoptions are considered more than 250 miles from where the dog resides. If a long distance adoption does occur, our transport guidelines must be adhered to. (See Transport Guidelines)

- All prospective adoptive homes must be visited by someone representing us. This can be another breed rescue group when necessary, and a home check sheet should be completed by that person and submitted to the AARV in charge of the adoption. We would like to encourage the use of ALAC members (members for at least 5 years) whenever possible for home checks due to their understanding of the breed and years of experience. A coordinator should be contacted to locate an appropriate ALAC member for this purpose.

- A Lhasa Apso owned by, bred by, or sired by a dog owned by a member of ALAC or one of the Regional Clubs is not a rescue dog. This dog is the responsibility of the owner, breeder or owner of the sire. ALAC Rescue will ask the breeder, co-breeder or owner of record to rescue and/or reimburse the rescue fund for any dog we rescue of theirs.

- ALAC Rescue's policy regarding puppy mills and dog auctions is that we do not participate in taking dogs directly out of those environments. We feel this contributes to the perpetuation of these despicable and unethical situations.

\*\* The exception would be if there was proof that the puppy mill in question had been shut down by the authorities and we could verify that the money was not going to finance the continuation of this activity by the owners of the puppy mill or others.

- All our volunteers must agree to work with shelters in a respectful and professional manner at all times and should never cast a negative light on shelters that are the very places established to protect animals the most. Shelter workers are on the front lines every day, of one of the hardest jobs that there is and all your interactions with them should keep that fact in mind. Remember that without the shelter, thousands more dogs would suffer and die every day.

- It is not acceptable to turn a rescue dog over to any other rescue group if we have taken responsibility for that dog and brought it in to our rescue program. An exception would be if we brought a dog in that was discovered to not actually be a Lhasa, in which case, a legitimate and responsible rescue group that would be more suitable for placing the dog should be located.

- ALAC Rescue is run as a not-for-profit group and has applied for its 501(c)(3) status. Dogs are never sold, but an adoption and surrender fee is requested, so that we may continue our important rescue work. The adoption fee is based on age of the dog and veterinary expenses within a given area. Some high cost-of-living areas will see higher adoption fees than those areas where veterinarian expenses are much lower. This tiered system enables our rescuers to recoup medical expenses while caring for as many dogs as possible. It is important that we verify that adoptive homes are financially capable of providing annual veterinarian care, including dental care, and emergency medical care for any dog that we adopt out.

- All volunteers for ALAC Rescue must agree to abide by the policies set forth above to be considered in good standing.