



**TEAM UP!**

**A Guide To Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018**



Dear Rescue Colleague,

Every year since 1995, North Shore Animal League America has connected with shelters and rescue groups across the country — and around the globe — to coordinate a month-long adoption event called<sup>®</sup>.

Working together, we've found loving homes for nearly a million dogs, cats, puppies and kittens. We've raised the profiles of shelters from Australia to California to Washington, D.C. And we've introduced millions of people to the joys of adopting — rather than buying — animal companions.

And not incidentally, we've also redefined the very concept of shelter animals. No longer are they dismissed as "mutts" or "pound animals." Rather, they've earned a new and dignified identity as "Mutt-i-grees<sup>®</sup>," a term we hope you will consider using when you tell your community about your wonderful shelter dogs and cats.

So in the spirit of our shared commitment to saving lives, promoting spay/neuter, and celebrating Mutt-i-grees everywhere, we enthusiastically thank you for participating in 2018. Our goal is simple and profound: to increase the number of responsible, loving adoptions at your shelter and at participating shelters around the world. In other words, to save lives!

Thank you for the hard work you do all year long. With a shared vision and a shared voice, we'll continue to make this world a better place for animals and the people who love them!

Sincerely,

Joanne Yohannan  
Senior Vice President, Operations  
North Shore Animal League America

Matthew Carroll  
Associate Director of Offsite Programs  
North Shore Animal League America

® National Headquarters • 16 Lewyt Street • Port Washington, New York 11050 • USA

[animalleague.org/petadoptathon](http://animalleague.org/petadoptathon)

® Toll Free Hotline: 516.883.7900 ext. 455 • e-mail: [events@animalleague.org](mailto:events@animalleague.org) • Fax: 516.883.1595



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# I. Let's Get Going!



## LET'S GET GOING!

All participating shelters and rescue groups will kick off <sup>®</sup>2018 on the weekend of Saturday, May 5th, and Sunday, May 6th. Here at the Animal League, we'll be open for adoptions from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday.

Global Pet Adoptathon will then continue across the country and around the world throughout the month of May. More than 2,000 shelter and rescue organizations have already registered for this year's event, and we expect many more to join in this truly remarkable experience.

In this Team Up! Guide for Global Pet Adoptathon<sup>®</sup> 2018, we provide tips to make your Kickoff Weekend a success, along with suggestions for maintaining momentum through the entire month of May. As a participating shelter, you will receive the following:

- National public relations/media coverage
- Listing on our Global Pet Adoptathon website
- Toll-free Partner Hotline for questions that arise before, during, and after the event
- Free promotional materials to help you promote your lifesaving efforts.



## Where to Begin?

**Start by registering your animal shelter or rescue group for Global Pet Adoptathon Month 2018.**

We have updated our Global Pet Adoptathon 2018 sign-up page to help make sign-up for this year's event quick and easy!

Follow the steps below:

1. Go to this page: [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)
2. Click on create account
3. On the next screen, fill out your organizations information and click SIGN UP.
4. Your organization is now signed-up for Global Pet Adoptathon Month 2018!

Just like last year, we've pre-registered all returning animal shelters and rescue groups that participated in 2017.

If you fall into this category follow the steps below

1. Go to this page: [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)
2. Click on FORGOT PASSWORD.
3. On the next screen, enter your email address and click submit.
4. You will receive an email showing how to reset your password and update your organization's profile.

Congratulations! You've just taken the first step. But there's still a lot to do. Making May 2018 a major success for your organization and its precious dogs and cats requires a lot of organization and planning — and that's what this guide is all about. On the following pages you'll find a wealth of detail about how to publicize and prepare for your event, and how to tell us — and the world — about your success. And remember, throughout the process, we're here to help you. So let's start with information about how you can contact us.



## Get in Touch

- **Global Pet Adoptathon 2018**  
**Headquarters** North Shore Animal League America  
16 Lewyt Street  
Port Washington, NY 11050
  - **For Global Pet Adoptathon info, please contact:**  
Matthew Carroll, *Associate Director of Offsite Programs*  
Phone: (516)883-7900 ext. 455  
E-mail: matthewc@animalleague.org
  - **For media or public relations information, please contact:**  
Kathleen Lynn, *Director of Communications*  
Phone: (516) 883-7900, ext. 482  
Fax: (516) 812-7263  
E-mail: kathleenl@animalleague.org

## Handy Websites

- North Shore Animal League America [www.animalleague.org](http://www.animalleague.org)
- Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018 Main Page [www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon](http://www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon)
- Special Page for Participating Shelters [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)

## What to Do When Global Pet Adoptathon is over?

Please tell us about your adoption by June 15, 2018.

It's a good idea to keep an ongoing tally of every May adoption to make your wrap-up easier.

**You can send us your results using any one of these easy methods:**

**Online:** [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)

**Phone:** 516-883-7900 x 250

**E-mail:** matthewc@animalleague.org



# II.

# Let's Make A Plan



## LET'S MAKE A PLAN

There's a lot to do between registering and sending in your adoption totals. So please allow us to help.

**For starters**, try to stay open as long as you can during the kickoff weekend, Saturday, May 5, and Sunday, May 6. On Long Island, we'll open for 11 hours each day. You, of course, are not required to do the same. We realize that staffing, arranging for volunteers, and other considerations probably make such long hours impossible for you. But whatever you can do to extend your hours and your visibility during the month of May will make your shelter more accessible to adopters and give your dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens an even better chance of finding homes.

## Planning for the Extras

- Extra staffing and volunteers to handle longer hours, additional animals, and more adopters.
- Extra housing/cages. If you don't have extra cages and/or extra housing space, or if you're a small facility, you may want to join with another organization in your area. One building can be devoted to adoptions and the other to the care and housing of the animals. Call us at 516-883-7900 x 250 or visit [www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon](http://www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon) to find out which organizations near you are also participating.
- Try to estimate your total number of adoptions for Kickoff Weekend, and plan to bring in the number and types of additional animals you think will be adopted (dogs, cats, puppies, kittens, etc.). Please note: If you plan to bring in animals from another organization, make sure they've been examined by a veterinarian, are up-to-date on vaccinations, and groomed.
- Extra bathroom facilities.
- Extra parking.



## **Planning Your Security Precautions/Retail Partnerships**

- If you have a facility, let your local police department know that you'll be open additional hours, if appropriate. If you don't have your own facility, but conduct weekend adoption events in a public location like a retail store, ask the management if you can extend your regular adoption hours.
- If you're in an area where potential adopters might be reluctant to visit at night, contact a local retailer and ask if you could hold your event at that location during Kickoff Weekend.

## **Planning for Permits or County Regulations**

- If you plan to hold Global Pet Adoptathon at another location, call your town hall to find out if any regulations apply.
- If you're using a tent or other temporary structure, find out if special permits or insurance are required.



# III. Tips On Promoting Your Event



## TIPS ON PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

Below are a few ideas for bringing Global Pet Adoptathon to the attention of potential adopters. Pick and choose as your creativity, time, and budget allow. And certainly, no single group can do all of the activities we suggest. But as you read, something might jump out as the perfect fit for your organization and community.

### Ideas To Make Your Kickoff Unique

#### APRIL

- Choose a theme. For example, you could hold a carnival weekend with games, prizes, cotton candy, and popcorn for sale. Or perhaps you could ask a couple of great recent adopters and their new pals (one cat and one dog) to be your “spokes-families.” Feature them on your posters and in your publicity as examples of how wonderful shelter adoption is. Testimonials are always powerful.
- Once you’ve selected a theme, decide what you need to make it work and which of those items your organization can provide and which need to be bought and/or donated.
- Select one person to serve as your media contact. This person will deal directly with all media and should be willing and able to be interviewed by radio, TV, and print media. Be sure your contact person mentions spay/neuter in all interviews.
- Create letterhead using both your logo and the Animal League’s official Global Pet Adoptathon® logo to demonstrate our partnership. Use the Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018 logo and your own logo on all correspondence to VIP’s, local media, and vendors. (We’ve provided Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018 logos online at [www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon](http://www.animalleague.org/petadoptathon)). And if you’ve developed a theme, be sure to use that on your letterhead, too.
- Write to local businesses and regular donors asking for materials for games, flowers for decorations, etc. Make sure to get any necessary permits and/or insurance for these activities. Also request donated printing for your advertising material.



## APRIL (CONT'D)

- Create posters with both logos and place them throughout your facility and community. Be sure your media contact info appears prominently on the posters and that all posters emphasize adoption and spay/neuter.
- Organize all necessary supplies such as contest entry forms and special T-shirts for staff and/or for sale. Don't forget decorations and props. All these items should be ordered well in advance of the weekend.
- Plan entertainment for families with kids. For instance, people in dog or cat costumes, coloring contests, face painting, etc. Consider asking a magician, clown, and/or face painter to volunteer at the event.
- Promote the message, "Support your local animal shelter/welfare organization!"

## Ideas for kickoff weekend and the entire month of May

- Consider sponsoring a micro-chipping clinic and/or a vaccination clinic, which could be limited to rabies vaccinations.
- If feasible, consider co-sponsoring a low-cost spay/neuter clinic with your veterinarian.
- Consider doing "double cat" adoptions for a single adoption fee. It's a great way to promote the benefits of adopting two cats.
- Consider waiving the adoption fee for pets two years and older. This has proven very successful in increasing the adoption of adult cats and dogs.
- Invite a radio station to broadcast live from the shelter.
- Invite a local TV station to broadcast live from the shelter.
- Hold an off-site adoption event at a popular local spot like a park, a town square, a market, or a golf course.
- Invite a few local rescue groups to pool their resources to conduct a larger pet adoption event. This will increase the selection of animals and attendance.
- Hold a flea market/tag sale/bake sale in conjunction with your weekend events.
- Create and publicize a wish list for your group and invite attendees to bring items.
- Contact local schools to see if students would like to participate.

## Set Aside One Weekend In May

### Community Awareness Weekend

This could feature the following:

- Tours of the shelter (open house).
- Speakers discussing community outreach programs, humane education, and animal welfare topics.
- Meet the vet table.
- Meet the trainertable.
- Invitation to local groups such as fire department, police, EMT, etc.
- Consider an Adoptathon Referral Weekend. Global Pet Adoptathon adopters would receive a referral to give to a friend. The person must come to your facility on a designated weekend to adopt at a discount.
- Dog walk/adoption event.
- Sponsor a contest for the biggest dog/smallest dog/tallest dog/shortest dog, cat with the loudest purr, cat with the most dramatic colors, etc. Ask a local celebrity to



- be the judge and award the winners with donated gift baskets or a night out on the town.
- Car wash/adoption event.
- Concert on the shelter grounds.
- Visit from local celebrity to sign autographs.10 11

## MAY

### **Motivate Your Volunteers and Staff Before and During the Kickoff Weekend and the Rest of May**

- Select one or two people to coordinate your volunteer team.
- Build excitement and keep the entire staff informed as the event develops.
- Send letters/e-mails to your supporters and volunteers soliciting their help for this special weekend. Sign them up for two- or four-hour shifts and make sure everyone knows his or her role and responsibilities.
- Hold frequent meetings with associates and volunteers to keep communication flowing, to request feedback, and to assess progress. Remind everyone that Global Pet Adoptathon is all about the animals. Your goals are to find outstanding adoptive homes and to educate the public about responsible pet ownership, with an emphasis on spay/neuter. It's crucial to hold frequent personnel meetings prior to Kickoff Weekend so everyone is well informed and feels part of this exciting event.

## One Week Prior To Kickoff Weekend 4/30-5/4

### **The Final Countdown**

- Hold volunteer training meetings.
- Confirm vendor participation.
- Set up decorations and finalize onsite contests and raffles.
- Before any press events and before Kickoff Weekend, make sure volunteers, shelter staff, or professionals take time to groom all your adoptable pets so the animals look and feel their best.

## One Week After Kickoff Weekend 5/7-5/13

### **Post-Event Follow-Up**

- Send letters of appreciation to organizations and people who supported the event, and request their participation in next year's Global Pet Adoptathon.
- Put together a newsletter that celebrates and recaps the results of the event. Send it to everyone on your mailing list, especially if you have an online list. This saves the cost of printing and postage.
- Congratulate your staff and volunteers and any other team members for contributing to a spectacular Global Pet Adoptathon and helping to save the lives of tens of thousands animals around the world. Perhaps hold a small get-together to celebrate.



**TELL US ALL ABOUT IT BY JUNE 15!**

We want to compile a complete total of adoptions by mid-July, and we definitely want your successes counted! So please send us your numbers by June 15, 2018. Report total adoptions for the entire month of May. You can do this using any one of these easy methods.

**Online:** [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)

**Phone:** 516-883-7900 x 250

**E-mail:** [matthewc@animalleague.org](mailto:matthewc@animalleague.org)

**Take this opportunity to sign up for Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018!**



# IV. Using Media To Spread The Word



## USING MEDIA TO SPREAD THE WORD

As you know, clear and timely communication is crucial to the success of any event. We hope the following ideas will help you organize and orchestrate your publicity campaign for Global Pet Adoptathon 2018. We've included logistics, possible media activities, and samples of media materials you may personalize to reflect your organization and its unique mission.

### **National Media: Leave It to Us!**

- The Animal League America will handle all national media. Every year we distribute information about Global Pet Adoptathon to an extensive list of national media outlets.
- As we move closer to the kickoff of Global Pet Adoptathon month we contact national media to generate interviews coverage.

Please contact Kathleen Lynn at [kathleenl@animalleague.org](mailto:kathleenl@animalleague.org) or (516) 883-7900, ext. 482, regarding any national media requests.

### **Making News in Your Community**

While we're busy working with the national media, it will be your task to capture the imagination and interest of your local news and information outlets. Together, we'll reach a wide range of potential adopters for all of our wonderful dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens.



Below are suggestions for creating publicity to showcase your unique Global Pet Adoptathon events.

### **1. Media Alert (See sample on page 20)**

The below example to send a clear, detailed, and lively media alert to local media outlets. Be sure to include your community's newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, as well as weekly papers and online news sites. Media alerts are perfect for giving a brief overview of your organization's involvement in Global Pet Adoptathon and describing planned activities. If you have an ongoing relationship with a reporter or a news personality this is the time to make it work for the animals.

### **2. Calendar Listing (See sample on page 21)**

Being included on a calendar of events is an easy way to publicize your event. Calendar listings should give the date, time, and location of the event, as well as a brief description of activities and notable attendees who will attend. Go to the websites of your local newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations to submit your calendar listing. Check the deadlines in advance for each media outlet.

### **3. Radio Scripts (See samples on page 22)**

Sending a variety of radio scripts (varying in lengths of 60, 30, and 15 seconds) that detail your organization's Global Pet Adoptathon activities makes it easy for local radio stations to work the scripts into their programming. The scripts should be lively and crisp. If you have a theme, tie it in.

### **4. Local Sports Support Plea (See sample on page 23)**

It's a great idea to contact sports teams in your hometown to ask for their support in promoting your message at the ballpark or sports arena.



V.

# Media Samples For You To Adapt



## 1. Media Alert (Example Only)



### **MEDIA ALERT**

**PET ADOPTATHON 2017**  
**DATE/TIME(S)**

**Shelter Name**  
**Shelter City, State**

**(YOUR SHELTERS NAME) IS JOINING NORTH SHORE ANIMAL LEAGUE AMERICA FOR THE 24th ANNUAL GLOBAL PET ADOPTION EVENT TO SAVE ANIMALS LIVES ON [(DAY(S) & DATE(S)]**

***There Will Be A Variety Of Adorable, Adoptable Animals Seeking Loving Homes***

**WHAT:** (INSERT SHELTER NAME) will open its doors at (INSERT LOCATION), on (DAY, DATE & TIME) to adopters for the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Pet Adoptathon 2018. Adopters will have access to adorable, adoptable puppies, kittens, dogs and cats.

Throughout the weekend there will be (list specials and activities)

Over 2,000 animal shelters and rescue groups around the world will be joining Animal League America for this premiere global pet adoption event to help save the lives of homeless pets. Come down and find your next best friend! To find out more about Pet Adoptathon, please visit [INSERT

**WHEN:** Day, Date from Time

**WHO:** Great visuals of adorable dogs, cats, puppies and kittens

**WHERE:** Address of Event

**Media RSVP to:**  
**Name, cell phone and email for contact person**

#### **About (Insert Organization's Name)**

Insert boilerplate

#### **About North Shore Animal League America**

North Shore Animal League America—the world's largest no-kill rescue and adoption organization—has saved the lives of over 1 million dogs, cats, puppies and kittens at risk of euthanasia. Through our many innovative programs, we reach across the country to rescue animals from overcrowded shelters, unwanted litters, puppy mills, natural disasters and other emergencies and find them responsible, loving homes. As a leader in the no-kill movement, we are dedicated to promoting shelter pet adoptions; encouraging spay/neuter programs; reducing animal cruelty; ending euthanasia; and advancing the highest standards in animal welfare. Please join us in saving the lives of innocent animals by donating to support our lifesaving mission.

#### **About Pet Adoptathon®**

Pet Adoptathon® is an initiative developed by North Shore Animal League America that, for more than two decades, has brought together the international animal shelter and rescue community to raise awareness of the plight of homeless pets worldwide and to find them loving and permanent homes. In 2017 Pet Adoptathon® included more than 2,000 participating animal shelters and rescue groups in 50 states (plus Puerto Rico, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and internationally in Australia, Bolivia, Canada, China, Hong Kong, India, Peru, Philippines. The result was more than 40,000 shelter pets being placed in loving, permanent homes.



## 2. Calendar Listing Example

[ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] and thousands of animal welfare organizations across the country and around the world are teaming up for North Shore Animal League America's Pet Adoptathon® 2018. This event was developed to bring together pet-loving adopters with animals in need of permanent, loving homes. Global Pet Adoptathon® begins with a special adoption Kickoff Weekend on Saturday, May 5, and Sunday, May 6, and continues throughout the month of May.

Besides having adoptable shelter [TYPES OF ANIMALS YOU WILL HAVE, such as DOGS, CATS, and PUPPIES AND KITTENS] ready for new homes, the event will also [INSERT SPECIAL ACTIVITIES].

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

ADDRESS

DAY/DATE

TIME

For more information, call [ENTER THE PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MEDIA CONTACT] or visit [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE]. For details about the global effort, visit the Global Pet Adoptathon website at [www.animalleague.org/adoptathon2017](http://www.animalleague.org/adoptathon2017)



### 3. Radio Script (Example Only)

#### 60 seconds

On (Insert Day & Date) [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] and thousands of animal welfare organizations across the country and around the world are teaming up for North Shore Animal League America's Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018. In addition to having adoptable shelter pets [TYPES OF ANIMALS YOU WILL HAVE -- IE: DOGS, CATS, PUPPIES AND KITTENS], the event will also offer information on the benefits of adopting shelter pets, behavioral education, and special services available to all pet owners. [INSERT SPECIAL ACTIVITIES]. Specially trained staff will help you find your perfect four-legged match. So visit [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] at [EVENT LOCATION] on (Day, Date & Time) to find the best friend you'll ever have. For more information, call [ENTER THE NUMBER OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MEDIA CONTACT] or visit [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE].

#### 30 seconds

Find your best friend forever on (Day & Date) when [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] joins with rescue groups around the world for North Shore Animal League America's Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018. Besides meeting adoptable shelter [TYPES OF ANIMALS YOU WILL HAVE — IE: DOGS, CATS, PUPPIES AND KITTENS], you'll also have a chance to [INSERT SPECIAL ACTIVITIES]. Our trained staff will help you find the perfect pet to match your lifestyle. For more info, call [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PHONE NUMBER] or visit [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE].

#### 15 seconds

Meet your four-legged match on (Day & Date) when [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] joins with groups around the world in North Shore Animal League America's Global Pet Adoptathon® 2018. For more info, call [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PHONE NUMBER] or visit [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE].



## 4. Local Sports Support Plea

### North Shore Animal League America

April XX, 2018

Mr. Max Simpson  
Citifield  
Flushing, NY 11368

Dear Mr. Simpson

Throughout the month of May, [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] will be hosting a community adoption event in cooperation with North Shore Animal League America's Global Pet Adoptathon®2018. Our goals are to promote adoptions, bring attention to the plight of orphaned animals, and find them permanent, loving homes.

Global Pet Adoptathon®kicks off with a special adoption weekend on Day & Date. To bring the news of this event to as many potential adopters as possible, [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] requests that [LOCAL SPORTS TEAM] display our message on your electronic scoreboard. The words can read something like this:

“Save a Life. Adopt a Pet During Global Pet Adoptathon®on Saturday, May 6, and Sunday, May 7 — And All Month Long” — at [ENTER YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME].

This is a major event with one significant message — there are hundreds of thousands of innocent pets who need loving, caring, and permanent homes. We need you to help us send that message to your hundreds of thousands of fans throughout the [LOCATION] area.

Your support will help make this a successful event and save more lives than ever. It will also identify you as a team with an open, animal-friendly heart.

Thank you

## 5. Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are just some properties we recommend you use in order to make your Pet Adoptathon event successful on social media. We suggest that you post about your participation in our event on a weekly basis. However, you can always choose to post more. This will help build awareness about your Pet Adoptathon shelter activities as well as help grow your audience. When posting about Pet Adoptathon, we request that you use the hashtag **#PetAdoptathon** this way we can monitor and share your posts with our audience.



# VI. Tips And A Timeline



## TIME PERIOD

## PLANNING/MEDIA ACTIVITY TASKS

### April

- Contact the mayor's office to determine if the mayor or another local official can make a special appearance at Global Pet Adoptathon. Make sure to confirm your arrangements in writing.
- Invite special guests and celebrities to attend (i.e., sports figures, prominent citizens, local news personalities). Make a list of VIPs who accept, including where and when they can be contacted for media interviews and how they intend to participate on the day of the event. (e.g., signing autographs, personal appearance, phone interviews, judging contests, etc.).
- Compile a media list of local editors and reporters who might be interested in your organization's Global Pet Adoptathon activities. The list should include television and radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, and local magazines. Be sure to include contact name, address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- If you don't already have one, draft a brief background/fact sheet about your organization and its mission. Include a short history of your organization and its achievements, your approach to the adoption of dogs and cats, and any facts about your organization you want to highlight.
- Prepare your organization's press material. This includes a press release, calendar listings, radio scripts, and fact sheet/background information about your organization. The press materials will be distributed as part of your event media outreach prior to the event and also will be handed out to editors and reporters at your shelter during the event. The complete media package supplies editors and reporters with all pertinent information. (You have been provided with a sample media package as a template.) Be sure to customize it for your organization's activities. After all, as far as your local media are concerned, you and your shelter animals are the big story. (See samples.)
- If you plan to have professional photographs of your event, locate/hire a professional photographer.



TIME PERIOD	PLANNING/MEDIA ACTIVITY TASKS
<b>May (1st week):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check local media for deadlines and distribute your calendar listing to daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations based on those deadlines. Radio stations may include your organization’s activities in a listing of community events. Your local cable network may list your organization’s activities on a community bulletin board. A newsperson (your local meteorologist is a good bet) may mention the event during broadcasts or may agree to do a live remote broadcast from your adoption site. If you have ongoing relationships with reporters, editors, or radio/TV personalities, this is an opportunity to make those relationships count.</li><li>• Be sure to add the calendar listings to your own website and to let the media know this information is available on there.</li></ul>
<b>May (2nd week):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call editors and reporters to follow up on the calendar listings that you’ve sent them. You may need to re-send or re-fax the calendar listings to ensure that they get to the right person. During your conversation with editors and reporters, offer to set up interviews (either in person or on the phone) with VIPs and local celebrities.</li></ul>
<b>May (3rd week):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Media blitz! Distribute complete media packet and radio scripts to local media. The press package provides your local print and broadcast media with details about your organization’s involvement in Global Pet Adoptathon and invites them to the event. Many radio and television stations work on short notice and don’t schedule current events until approximately one week — or less — before the event, so you’ll probably have to call several times before they can commit to sending a staff person. Continue calling and re-contacting editors and reporters at local print, radio, and television media to determine their interest in covering your event. Re-fax and re-send information as needed.</li></ul>
<b>May (4th week):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your organization’s spokesperson should be ready for media interviews at the event. Prepare a one-page listing of talking points and have your spokesperson rehearse them. Reviewing your organization’s fact sheet, the agenda of your organization’s activities, and background information about Global Pet Adoptathon as an international event is helpful in determining the points to make about your organization and its mission. Your spokesperson should be prepared to answer questions about Global Pet Adoptathon, the adoption process, your schedule of events, your organization’s involvement in the event, and VIP participation.</li><li>• Phone the mayor’s office and VIP participants to confirm their participation and to answer any last minute questions</li></ul>



TIME PERIOD	PLANNING/MEDIA ACTIVITY TASKS
<b>KICK-OFF Weekend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your media spokesperson should greet any reporters and photographers who attend the event and distribute your organization’s compiled press materials.</li><li>• If you’re using a photographer, work with him or her by pointing out photo opportunities and collecting the names and titles of people in the photos.</li><li>• By the end of the kick-off weekend, email a photo with a caption highlighting the number of dog and cat adoptions at your organization to the editor’s desks of newspapers, radio and television stations.</li><li>• The media spokesperson should accompany attending media representatives to all of your organization’s activities and be on hand to answer questions.</li><li>• If a VIP is available at the event, the media spokesperson may suggest a live interview with visiting media. The spokesperson should be present during interviews to support the VIP and answer questions.</li></ul>
<b>Post-Kickoff Weekend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After Kickoff Weekend, the only thing you’ll want to do is take a well-deserved rest. But first, there are a couple of important things to do before the rest of you May events kick in.</li><li>• Phone editors and reports who attended to make sure they have everything they need. Thank them for their support and focus on your weekend adoption success and the fact that the event will continue both locally and internationally throughout May.</li><li>• Weekly newspapers often lack the staff to send reporters to cover events, so be sure to send a photo and caption. The caption should highlight your organization’s ongoing Global Pet Adoptathon activities, focusing on your weekend adoption success and the fact that the event will continue both locally and internationally throughout May.</li><li>• Be sure to send thank-you letters to local media and celebrities who attended your organization’s event. It’s wise to do this again for those who follow your event throughout the month. Everyone likes to hear “thank you,” especially those who feel they may have contributed to saving the lives of needy pets.</li></ul>



**TIME PERIOD**

**PLANNING/MEDIA ACTIVITY TASKS**

**Post-Event  
(June)**

- Phone editors and reporters who attended to see if they'd like to do a follow-up. Propose a feature story about one of the best adoptions your group made because of Global Pet Adoptathon. Let editors and reporters know how many dogs/cats were adopted at your group and at organizations around the world. Reinforce the fact that their coverage helped save lives.
- Please tell us about your adoption by June 15, 2018. You can do so using any one of these easy methods:

**Online:** [www.animalleague.org/pa2018](http://www.animalleague.org/pa2018)

**Phone:** Call our Toll-Free Partner Hotline at (800)214-4308.

**E-mail:** [matthewc@animalleague.org](mailto:matthewc@animalleague.org)



## Sharing Our Experience

For us here at the Animal League, one of the great pleasures of Global Pet Adoptathon® is having an opportunity to work with dedicated, professional groups like yours. Every year we see more and more groups getting involved, which means more and more potential adopters visiting participating shelters. We've learned from experience that a sudden influx of eager adopters can feel overwhelming.

We're sure you'll agree, however, that increased numbers and the exciting possibility of additional adoptions should never alter our goals or lower our adoption standards. It's our shared responsibility to do everything we can to make sure the pets who leave our shelter are going to the best homes possible. It's also our job to educate adopters on the proper care of their newly adopted pets.

Clearly, most people who come to shelters and rescue groups love animals and want to be good pet owners. Nevertheless, there are times when, in the best interest of the animal, adoption must be denied. Like you, we don't make this decision lightly, since every denial of adoption means a longer wait for the right home. Still, it's a necessary fact of life in sheltering. At the Animal League, for example, one out of five potential adopters fails to meet our standards and is rejected. This is a tough process, and it's taken years of experience to put in place what we think are solid guidelines for evaluating potential adopters.

We suspect you already have adoption criteria in place that will help ensure that the animals in your care go to great homes. However, if you've yet to establish guidelines, we offer the following information about our adoption criteria, some of which might help you develop or enhance your own policies and procedures. Please feel free to incorporate or adapt anything that's helpful to your organization.

We share the same goal — saving lives. It's our pleasure to share our ideas and many years of experience, as well.



# V. General Pet Adoption Information



## **Responsible Adoptions As Recommended By Animal League America**

### **Steps Animal League America takes to ensure animals are placed in good homes:**

1. Animal League America is open to the community for adoptions and we encourage potential adopters to walk through our shelter to get to know the animals. There are assigned staff or volunteers in each area and we observe the interaction that all of our potential adopters have with the animals and assist in making an appropriate match.
2. When a potential adopter decides to adopt one of our animals, they must complete an adoption application. The Associate then goes over the entire application with the potential adopter and an area kennel manager.
3. The application is then taken to be processed.
  - a. The adopter's last name, address and home telephone number are run through the "No Adoption List" to determine whether or not they have been denied an adoption previously. If there are no records found, the application is then ready for the next step.
  - b. The home phone number that the adopter listed on his/her application is called to ensure that it is a working number.
  - c. The adopter's address is checked in the New York State Housing Book to ensure the adopter does not live in public housing. If an applicant does, there are set standards that must be met before an adoption is approved. The Housing Office must be contacted to confirm restrictions.
  - d. The adopter's references are then called. They are asked specific questions regarding the adopter. The entire application must be verified for accuracy or the adoption cannot be approved.

### **What Animal League America looks for in a potential adopter:**

1. The adopter must be able to demonstrate a willingness to provide proper care for the animal they wish to adopt. A potential adopter's past pet history is a good gauge as to how the new animal will be treated.
2. The adopter must be willing to commit to this animal for his/her entire life which can be a fifteen to twenty year commitment.
3. The adopter must be willing to live by Animal League America policies concerning the adopted animal.
4. The adopter must provide proper medical care throughout the animal's lifetime. This includes annual visits to the vet as well as medical care as needed.



## **Adoption Criteria As Recommended By Animal League America**

1. A potential adopter must be 21 years of age or older, and the person responsible for the pet's care must also be 21 years of age or older. In some cases, proof of age is required.
2. A potential adopter must have valid identification with name and current address. Valid ID consists of a driver's license, major credit card, passport, or current utility bill.
3. A potential adopter must have a working home telephone or cell phone number in his/her name as well as a current business number.
4. A potential adopter must be gainfully employed. Unemployment compensation, welfare, and social services assistance are not acceptable.
5. Adult persons living in the household, but not present at the time of adoption must be contacted by phone. These people would include parent(s) of single adopters, roommate(s) of single adopters, and the spouse of a married adopter.
6. Adopted pets are not permitted to live in dormitories, group homes, or communes.
7. All information on the adoption application must be verified by references.
8. In some cases, landlords or rental agents will be called to verify that pets are allowed.
9. **GIFT ADOPTIONS ARE NEVER PERMITTED, AND THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PET MUST BE PRESENT TO SIGN THE ADOPTION AGREEMENT.** Therefore, a divorced spouse may not adopt a pet for his/her former spouse. Also, at no time may a friend, relative, or neighbor not living in the same household be responsible for the pet.
10. Puppies may be left alone for four hours per day at the most. Care given during a lunch hour and/or transferring the puppy to another household during the workday is not acceptable.
11. All of our dogs and cats are adopted as house pets only. They are not permitted to go to places of business. Dogs are allowed to be in the yard for exercise only and under strict supervision. They cannot be tied up or left to take shelter in a doghouse, garage, or shed. Dogs may not be used for hunting. **CATS ARE NEVER ALLOWED OUTDOORS.**
12. A potential adopter may adopt only one puppy or dog at a time, unless otherwise stated. Another dog or puppy may be adopted after 6 months with proof of required vaccinations and spay/neuter of the previously adopted dog.
13. Adoption will not be approved for a person who has taken a pet to a shelter that destroys or who has given away a League pet without Animal League America's permission. A potential adopter's entire pet history will be verified and any proof of poor pet history is reason for turndown.



## **Adoption Criteria As Recommended By Animal League America (cont'd)**

14. If a potential adopter has previously adopted and returned an Animal League America pet, a new adoption will be denied, unless otherwise stated.
15. If a previous pet died of an airborne disease, adoption of a new pet will not be allowed for one month after death.
16. If a potential adopter or a member of his/her household is allergic to pets, adoption will not be permitted.
17. Potential adopters who live in apartments will not be allowed to adopt large dogs.
18. A potential adopter must sign Animal League America's adoption agreement or adoption will be denied. No changes may be made to this agreement.
19. A potential adopter who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be denied a pet.
20. A person who refuses to have a pet spayed/neutered will be turned down. (For medical reasons, a small percentage of pets cannot be spayed or neutered prior to adoption.)
21. If a potential adopter is denied a pet, no one who was with him/her at the time is allowed to adopt.
22. If a potential adopter leaves the premises before his/her application is processed, adoption is automatically denied. Person(s) with a potential adopter may not adopt or leave the premises before adoption is confirmed.
23. To facilitate adoption follow-up, we try to limit adoptions to the tri-state area.
24. Animal League America reserves the right to deny adoption to person(s) who do not meet our specified adoption standards.



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## Pre-Adoption Questions Used By Animal League America

**These questions are a very important means to determine the potential adopter's willingness to care for his/her new pet:**

1. Does the potential adopter have proper identification? (Current address must be included.)
2. Does he/she have a credit card? (Established credit equals stability.)
3. Does he/she have a working home phone? (A home phone establishes stability.)
4. Does he/she have a work phone number? (No work number could mean unemployment.)
5. With whom does he/she live? (A 21-year-old who states he/she lives alone could actually live with parent(s) but does not want them contacted. A single person who does not work could be on public assistance.)
6. What is the pet history of parent(s) with whom a potential adopter lives? (If the parent(s) have a poor pet history, we would not want one of our pets in the home.)
7. Does the potential adopter live in an apartment building? (The landlord should be contacted.)
8. Where will the new pet be kept in the day? At night? (Doghouses, garages, sheds, and other non-home situations are not permitted.)
9. Has the potential adopter ever had a pet? If yes, what happened to it? (A person who has given away a pet might do it again, especially a dog who is not housebroken.)
10. What is the potential adopter's present pet history? (The current pet must be vaccinated and spayed/neutered.)
11. What is the potential adopter's past pet history? (Determine the life span, vaccination and spay/neuter history, and cause of death of all prior pets.)
12. Who is the potential adopter's veterinarian? (A person who has or has had a pet should have a veterinarian.)



RESCUE. NURTURE. ADOPT. EDUCATE.

North Shore Animal League America is proud to be the largest NO-KILL animal rescue and adoption organization in the world. Our goal is to help create a humane future for pets and the people who love them — a future in which no adoptable Mutt-i-grees<sup>®</sup> (rescued or shelter pets) are euthanized and all pets find responsible, loving homes.

[animalleague.org](http://animalleague.org)

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