

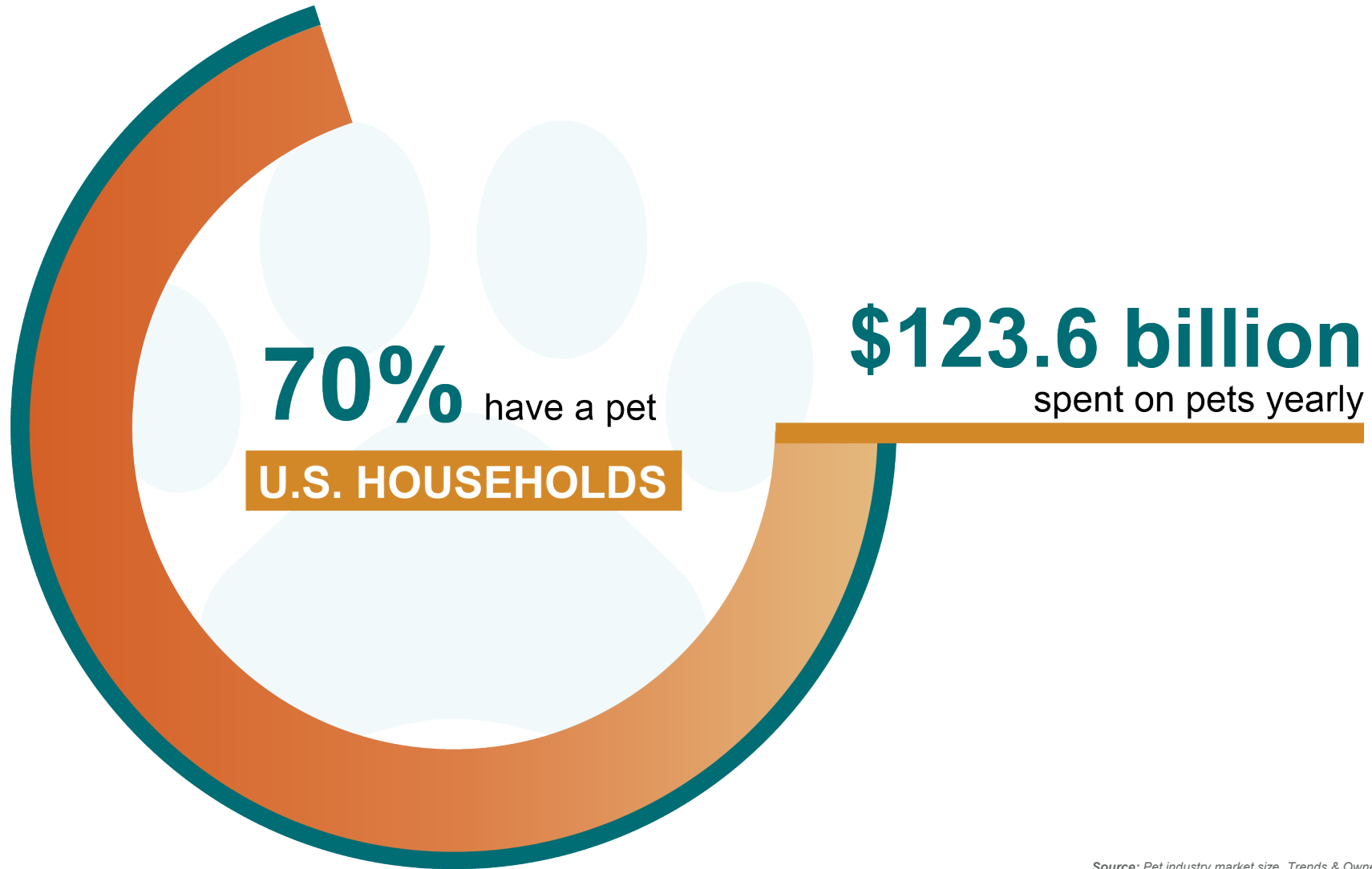


UC DAVIS KORET
SHELTER MEDICINE
PROGRAM

The Power of YES

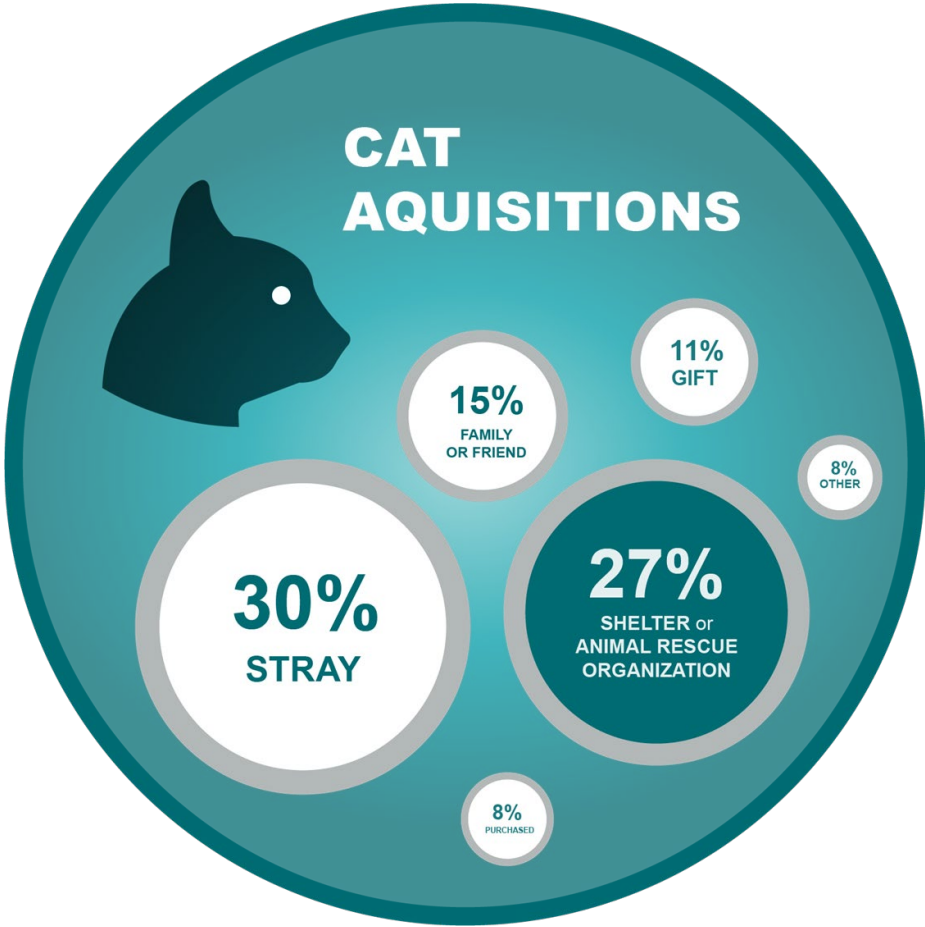
Removing Barriers from Adoption at Animal Shelters





Source: Pet industry market size, Trends & Ownership Statistics. American Pet Products Association. (n.d.). Retrieved September 16, 2022, from https://www.americanpetproducts.org/press_industrytrends.asp

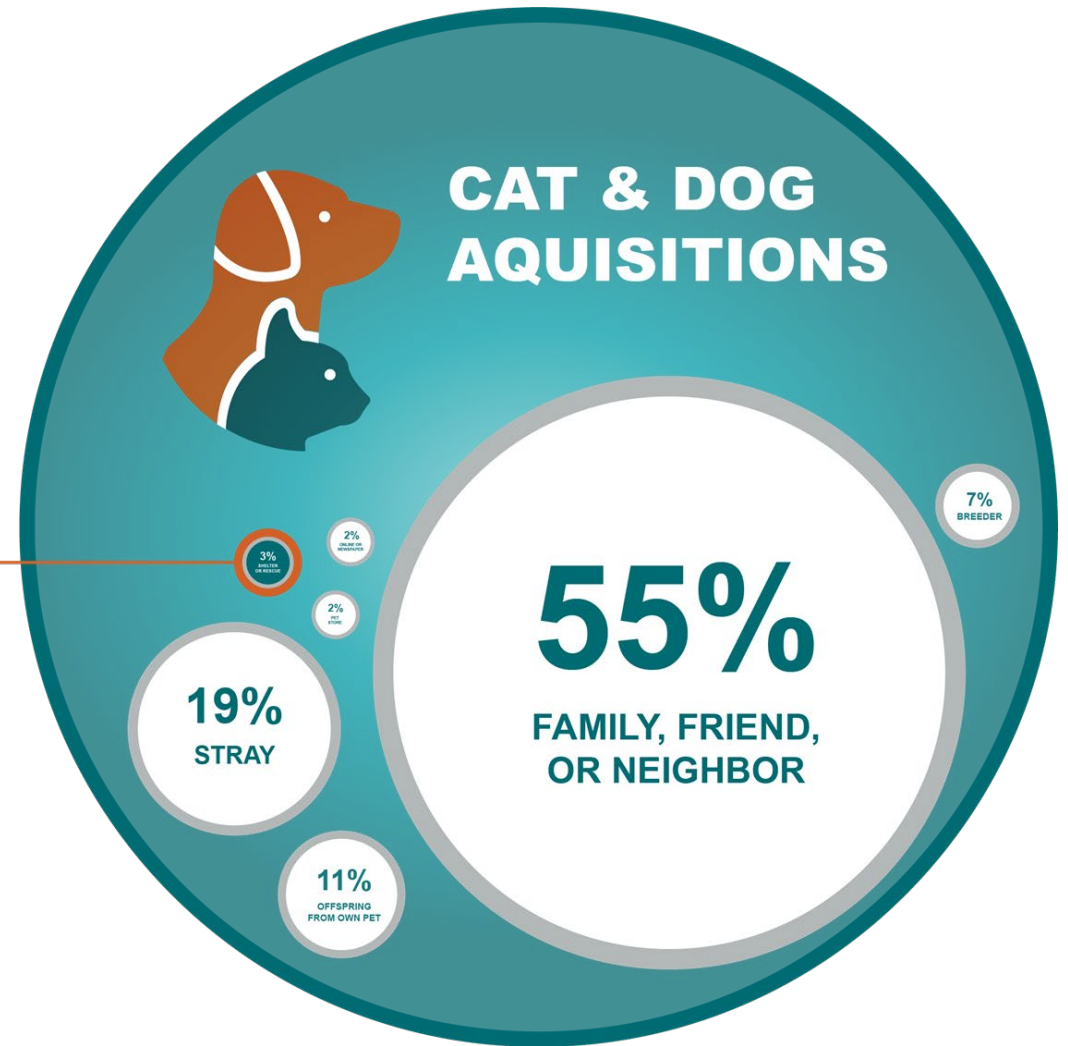
Where U.S. Households get their pets?



Source: Access to Veterinary Care Coalition. (2018, December 17). Access to Veterinary Care: Barriers, Current Practices, and Public Policy (2018). Retrieved September 16, 2022, from <https://pphe.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/avcc-report.pdf>

Where
**communities
of color**
and
**low-income
families**
get their pets.

3%
SHELTER
OR RESCUE



Source: HSUS Pets for Life



What does this mean for **animal shelters**?



“

There are

**7.3% more animals entering shelters
than leaving so far this year**

up from 6% in the second quarter (Jan-Jun).

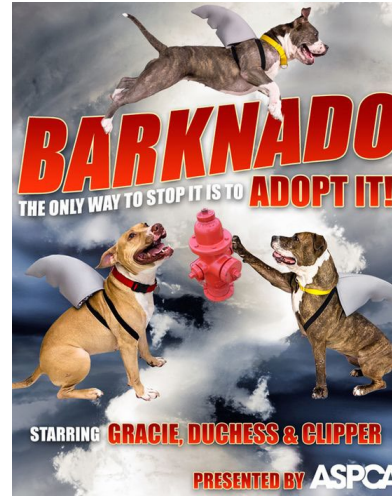
**...This is still the largest gap in 4
years.**

”

Shelters Animals Count ,The National Database
(Q3 Analysis, 2022)

Despite tremendous
messaging efforts,

**why
aren't
shelters
the top
choice?**



Barriers to Shelter Adoption



Cost



**Application
Process**



Communications



Cost Barrier

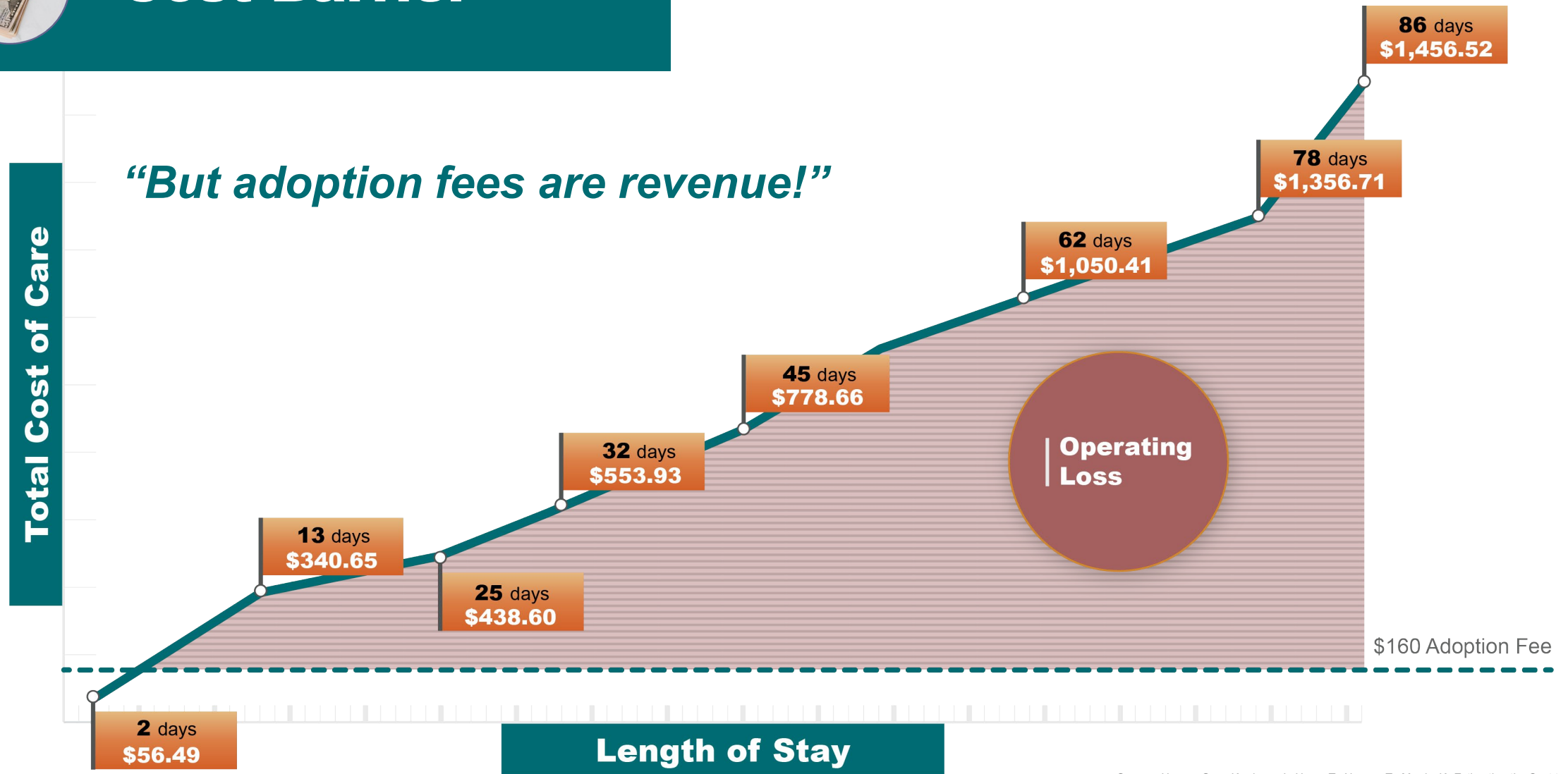
“Adopters don’t value free pets.”

- Studies show amount paid doesn’t correlate with retention or value of the pet.
- Cost of adoption may be a barrier for adopters.
- **Important note:** waiving fees is not the only factor.





Cost Barrier



Source: Hawes, S. m, Kerrigan, J., Hupe, T., Nawyn, T., Morris, K. *Estimating the Cost to Care for Animals at Austin Pets Alive! Program Evaluation Report, November 2018*. Retrieved October 18, 2022, from <https://www.maddiesfund.org/assets/grants/FinalReports/cost-for-care-at-apa.pdf>



Application Process

Restrictive, lengthy adoption procedures are a barrier to adoption.

- Multi-page application in only one language
- Essay style questions with “right or wrong answer” implied
- Requirement to speak to landlords
- Intimate questions about people’s personal lives
- Checking people’s social media
- Prejudice and discrimination in interviewing



Application Process

Example Policies

"Staff will go through the applications submitted and call back the ones that seem the best match."

"Agree to a possible futured home inspection if the dog is large breed or dog that has been identified to need additional attention."

*"Never have had any **animal control violations**, cruelty convictions or broken any adoption contracts in the past."*

Including a leash violation?





Communications Barrier

Non-Inclusive Communications

- Events promoted only in English
- Industry jargon used in communications
- Assumptions are made about the community's attitude towards animals
- The adoption process is vague or unclear.



Animal Shelter Adoption with Fewer Barriers



**Simplify
Adoption**



**Partner with
Community**



Mitigate Bias

Simplify Adoption



- Regularly review your policies and practices and **challenge the way things have “always been done”**
- **Reduce length of application**, use plain language, and remove jargon or industry speak
- Remove housing related questions****
- **Simplify vague or unclear language** in your application and documentation
- **Provide resources** verbally, in writing and by follow up afterwards

Partner with the Community

- Get to know your communities
- Learn about **current and historical housing policies** in your area
- Understand **pet-inclusive housing** in your area
 - <https://www.foundanimals.org/pets-and-housing/>
- Learn what **languages** are prominent in your area



Partner with the Community

Make applications and other materials available in **multiple languages**

Eventos de adopción

Nuestros MEGA eventos de adopción en el sur de Texas tuvieron mucho éxito. ¡Más de 200 mascotas encontraron a sus familias y se fueron a casa! [Lee más »](#)



Mitigate Bias

- Create a **welcoming and inclusive environment** for all potential adopters
- Verify **staff and volunteers understand our goal** of finding homes for pets
- **Don't let** match-making turn into screening
- **Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging** into your policies and practices.



Mitigate Bias

**Black and Latinx
survey respondents
report not feeling
welcomed
at animal shelters.**



Study by Habri and Petco Love

Lowered Barriers in Action

“We believe in lowering the barriers to adoption and because of this we do not require a minimum adoption fee. We do, however, rely on financial contributions. Any funds received is at the discretion of the adopter and goes toward the care of animals in our rescue.”

- Seymour Mutts Rescue

Relatively short adoption questionnaire

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the 'Online Adoption Questions' form for Seymour Mutts Rescue. The form is titled 'SEYMOUR MUTTS RESCUE' and includes a logo of three dogs. It contains several sections: 'Contact Information' with fields for name, address, and email; 'Household Information' with questions about the pet's intended use and household composition; and a 'We'll explain this new pet's medical history and behavioral history' section with checkboxes for various topics like feeding, exercise, and training. A progress bar at the bottom indicates 0% completion.

Fillable Studio - Online Adoption Questions

SEYMOUR MUTTS RESCUE

Thank you for choosing adoption! Please complete the following questions to help guide our conversation today.

Animal's Name:

Contact Information

Your Name(s):

Home Address:

Home Address:

Email:

Best contact number:

Best time to contact: ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Evening

Household Information

This pet is meant to be a gift. I am answering the following questions from the perspective of the lucky recipient.

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ X

We welcome adopters who rent, or live in an apartment or condo. We want to alert you that some landlords and management companies have size and breed restrictions, limits on number of pets, and/or require pet deposits or additional fees.

Tell us about members of the new pet's household (e.g., # of adults/seniors/young children):

Family Members:

Tell us about pets at home (check all that apply):

☐ Currently no animals in the household, looking to change that! ☐ We have one or more dog(s)

☐ We have one or more cat(s) ☐ We have one or more small animal(s)

☐ I'd like help with introducing a new pet to pet(s) at home.

Other information you want to share:

Other info:

We'll explain this new pet's medical history and behavioral history. Check additional topics you'd like to discuss:

☐ Feeding this pet ☐ House-training/litter box training ☐ Grooming/hair trimming

☐ Exercise, toys and fun activities ☐ Puppy/kitten-proofing your home ☐ Finding a trainer

☐ Introducing this pet to other pets ☐ Microchips and other ID options ☐ Finding a veterinarian

☐ Declawing ☐ Crate-training ☐ Moving with pets ☐ Pulling on-leash ☐ Flea/tick prevention

☐ Heartworm prevention ☐ Other

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

Provided by The Humane Society of the United States
www.animalsheltering.org/adopters-welcome

Submit Progress 0%

Adopter can ask for additional pet care information

Lowered Barriers in Action

Online

Step 1: Complete the Adoption Questionnaire

What kind of pet are you interested in? Complete the [Adoption Questionnaire](#) to let us know!

¿Habla español? ¡Complete [el cuestionario de adopción](#) en español!

If you would like to fill out a questionnaire in [Chinese](#), or would like a [PDF](#) version of our [English](#) or [Spanish](#) Questionnaire, please download the relevant form and email it to AdoptMCASAC@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Questionnaires and documents offered in multiple languages

¡Adopte el mismo día! *

¡Realizamos adopciones el mismo día! Una vez que recibamos y revisemos toda su información, se le pedirá que programe una cita para conocer a los posibles nuevos miembros de la familia. Si se enamora ¡se lo llevará a casa ese mismo día!

☐ Lo espero con ansias!

Source: Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/animalservices/adoption/howtoadopt.html>

Lowered Barriers in Action

Promotional materials are produced in multiple languages



People love pets

and want a place where they can find a companion and receive ongoing support.



- Access to Veterinary Care, Barriers, Current Practices, and Public Policy <https://pphe.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/avcc-report.pdf>
- American Pet Products Association https://www.americanpetproducts.org/press_industrytrends.asp
- Shelter Animals Count 3rd Quarter Report 2022 <https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/intake-and-outcome-data-comparison-for-q3-2022/>
- A Comparison of Attachment Levels of Adopters of Cats: Fee-Based Adoptions Versus Free Adoptions <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888700903163674>
- Estimating the Cost to Care for Animals at Austin Pets Alive! Program Evaluation Report, November 2018 <https://www.maddiesfund.org/assets/grants/FinalReports/cost-for-care-at-apa.pdf>
- Systemic Discrimination Among Large U.S. Employers <https://eml.berkeley.edu/~crwalters/papers/randres.pdf>
- CARE, Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity, Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) training <https://careawo.org/redi/>
- Best Friends Animal Society resources in Spanish https://support.bestfriends.org/site/SPageNavigator/es_us/inicio.html