

Finding a New Home for Your Cat

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, people must sometimes find a new home for their pets. The most common reasons are allergies, moving and new babies.

Before you begin looking for a new home for your cat, please consider the following:

- If you are expecting or have a new baby, plan ahead. Alberta Health Services offers an excellent class for expectant parents called *New Baby, Old Pet* about integrating pets and babies. Information is available by calling Alberta Health Services, Perinatal Education at 403-955-1450 and online at www.birthandbabies.com. The relationship that grows between pets and children can be a wonderful and rewarding experience.
- If you suspect a pet allergy, please see a doctor who specializes in allergies and get an allergy test. Before you find a new home for your cherished pet, you should make absolutely sure that your cat is the cause of your allergies.
- If you are moving, take your cat with you. Plan ahead to find pet friendly accommodation in your new city or town. An airline trip or car trip with your pet is only a short term stress. Your cat will quickly adjust to its new surroundings because it will still have you. A new family and new home is a far greater stress and hardship.

If you absolutely must find a new home for your cat, here are some general tips to follow:

- When looking for a new owner, ask family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues you trust and who share the same values in pet care as you do.
- Post an ad on a free community classifieds site like www.kijiji.ca.
- Advertise by putting up posters at your work, church, convenience and grocery stores, community halls, coffee shops, around your neighbourhood and anywhere else you can think of that will allow.
- Always charge a fee for your pet. MEOW recommends charging between \$50 and \$100. A 'free' cat implies it has no value and that cats are disposable. Serious and responsible pet owners will appreciate the value and will happily pay a fee.
- Feel free to ask to do a home visit before placing your pet with a new owner. Ask for references, such as their veterinarian.
- Offer the new owner a trial period to make sure things will work out for your cat.
- Please remember to collect the new owner's information (correct spelling of names, all phone numbers, address and email address). Call your veterinarian or microchip company to register your pet with all the new information.

If you need to re-home your pet immediately and cannot find a new home, ask a trusted family member or friend to temporarily foster your pet while you continue to search for a new home.

