



Adoption policy

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Purpose of the adoption programme

The Furever Friends Foundation Adoption Programme exists to ensure that all animals are placed into safe, responsible, and permanent homes where their physical, emotional, and behavioural needs will be met for life. This policy outlines the responsibilities of adopters and the standards required to safeguard animal welfare and support successful, lasting placements.

General adoption principles

- All adoptions are subject to approval by Furever Friends Foundation.
- The Foundation reserves the right to refuse or revoke an adoption if welfare concerns arise.
- Animals are adopted as companion animals only and may not be used for breeding, guarding, or commercial purposes.
- Animals remain the responsibility of the adopter once legally adopted, subject to the terms of the Adoption Agreement.
- Furever Friends Foundation is committed to ethical, transparent, and welfare-led adoption practices.

Adoption process

The adoption process may include:

- Completion of an adoption application form
- A home check (virtual or in-person)
- An interview or discussion with an adoption representative
- Payment of an adoption fee
- Signing of an Adoption Agreement

Adoption fees contribute toward veterinary care, sterilisation, vaccinations, and ongoing rescue work.

Settling-in period (Applies to all adoptions)

All adopted animals require an adjustment period to settle into their new home. The Foundation strongly recommends a **minimum settling-in period of two to four weeks**, during which:

- Changes in behaviour, appetite, or routine are normal

- Training expectations should be kept realistic and gentle
- Introductions to new people, animals, and environments should be gradual
- Adopters should allow the animal to form a secure attachment at their own pace

During this period, animals should not be overwhelmed with visitors, training classes, or major environmental changes.

Veterinary Care and Preventative Health

Vaccinations

- Animals will be adopted out with age-appropriate vaccinations.
- **Follow-up booster vaccinations are essential** and must be completed according to veterinary guidelines.
- Failure to complete vaccination schedules places the animal at risk of serious illness and may void the adoption agreement.
- Follow up vaccinations to be paid by the adopter.

Sterilisation

- All animals adopted from Furever Friends Foundation must be sterilised at 6 months old.
- Animals already sterilised will be adopted out as such.
- **Puppies and kittens adopted prior to sterilisation must be sterilised at approximately six (6) months of age**, or as advised by a veterinarian.
- Proof of sterilisation may be required if done privately.

DOG ADOPTION POLICY

Housing and care

- Dogs must live as part of the household and not be kept permanently outdoors.
- Secure fencing is required where animals have access to the outdoors.
- Dogs may not be chained, tethered, or confined in ways that compromise welfare.
- Adequate exercise, enrichment, and mental stimulation must be provided daily.

Training and behaviour

- Only humane, force-free training methods may be used.
- Aversive tools (including choke chains, prong collars, shock collars, or punishment-based methods) are not permitted.
- Behavioural support should be sought from qualified, ethical professionals where needed.
- Any serious behavioural concerns must be communicated to the Foundation.

Socialisation and integration

- Dogs should be gradually introduced to new people, animals, and environments.
- Puppy socialisation should be age-appropriate and positive.
- Dog parks and high-arousal environments should be avoided during the settling-in period.

CAT ADOPTION POLICY

Indoor requirement

- **All cats must be kept strictly indoors for a minimum of two (2) weeks after adoption.**
- This period allows cats to:
 - Adjust to their new environment
 - Establish familiarity and security
 - Reduce the risk of escape or becoming lost
- After this period, outdoor access (if allowed) should be safe, gradual, and initially supervised.

Environment and enrichment

- Cats must be provided with:
 - Clean litter boxes (minimum one per cat, plus one extra where possible)
 - Scratching posts
 - Safe hiding spaces
 - Environmental enrichment such as toys and climbing structures

Multi-cat households

- Introductions to resident cats must be slow and structured.
- Adequate resources must be provided to prevent competition and stress.
- Behavioural concerns such as aggression or inappropriate elimination must be addressed promptly by a qualified behaviourist.

Follow-up and support

- Furever Friends Foundation may conduct follow-up checks after adoption.
- Adopters are encouraged to maintain open communication and seek advice if challenges arise.
- Early support improves outcomes and prevents unnecessary relinquishment.

Return policy

- If an adoption is unsuccessful, the animal must be returned to Furever Friends Foundation.
- Animals may not be rehomed, sold, or transferred without written consent from Furever Friends Foundation.
- Returns should be discussed as early as possible to ensure the animal's welfare.
- Adoption fees are non-refundable, at the discretion of the board of trustees.

Breach of policy

Failure to comply with this policy or the Adoption Agreement may result in:

- Mandatory intervention
- Repossession of the animal
- Legal action where necessary

Legal framework and compliance (South Africa)

Furever Friends Foundation operates in accordance with applicable South African legislation and recognised animal welfare standards, including but not limited to:

- **Animals Protection Act, No. 71 of 1962**
- **Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, No. 169 of 1993**
- **Nonprofit Organisations Act, No. 71 of 1997**
- Relevant **municipal by-laws** governing animal keeping, containment, and nuisance control

Adopters acknowledge that:

- They are legally responsible for complying with all national, provincial, and municipal laws relating to the keeping of animals.
- Failure to meet minimum legal or welfare standards may result in intervention by Furever Friends Foundation and/or referral to the NSPCA or relevant authorities.
- Animal cruelty, neglect, or abandonment is a criminal offence under South African law.

Ownership, repossession, and welfare safeguards

- Furever Friends Foundation reserves the **right to reclaim an animal** if it is found that:
 - The adopter has provided false or misleading information
 - The animal's welfare is compromised
 - The terms of the Adoption Agreement or this policy are breached
- Repossession may occur **without compensation** if welfare concerns are substantiated.
- The Foundation may conduct welfare checks at reasonable intervals, with prior notice where possible.

Limitation of liability

- Animals are adopted "as is", with known health and behavioural information disclosed at the time of adoption.
- While the Foundation takes all reasonable steps to assess health and temperament, **no guarantee can be made** regarding future behaviour or medical conditions.
- The adopter assumes responsibility for ongoing veterinary care, training, and management.
- Furever Friends Foundation shall not be held liable for injury, damage, or loss caused by the adopted animal after placement, except where required by law.