



# Rehoming

Croney Research Group

# What is Successful Rehoming?

When a dog:

- Remains in their new home and has a good quality of life considering health, behavior, and environment
- Has a mutually beneficial relationship with their people that supports a positive bond

# Benefits of Successful Rehoming

Successful rehoming can benefit all involved:

- **Rehomed dog:** Results in lower stress and improved welfare for dogs not coping well in a kennel environment
- **New family:** Creates the potential for a lifelong relationship between a retired dog and their new family
- **Breeder:** Is the responsible and ethical practice for fulfilling obligations to retired breeding dogs
- **Dogs remaining in kennel:** Retains available resources



# Management Practices that Support Successful Rehoming

**Space:** Complex, indoor/outdoor

**Social interactions:** People, other dogs

**Exercise:** Outdoor yard, leash walks, sports

**Enrichment:** Toys, chew items, scents, sounds

**Training:** Leash walk & basic skills (e.g., sit, come)

**Ongoing socialization:** People, places, objects, sounds





## Preparing for Successful Rehoming

- All dogs should be supported in their transition to a new home, and some will require extra support and intervention
- Setting dogs up with management practices that support their physical and behavioral welfare helps insure an easier transition and results in reduced need for extensive preparation for rehoming

# Who Can Potentially be Rehomed?

**All retired dogs deserve the potential opportunity for rehoming!**

- Rehoming potential is not determined by age, sex, or breed
- All dogs and puppies should be prepared for potential rehoming
- Rehoming candidates must be both physically and behaviorally healthy
- At the time of rehoming, evaluations can be used to assess a dog's match for rehoming

# Dogs Who Are Not a Fit for Rehoming

- Not all dogs will be candidates for rehoming
- Consider potential for retiring in place at the kennel
- When interventions are not successful in preparing a dog for rehoming or retiring in place, identifying humane endpoints is also key in the protection of dog welfare
- Having dogs that are not good rehoming candidates indicates a need to re-evaluate management practices (e.g., genetic selection, maternal care, socialization of hold-back females, enrichment)



# What Can Inhibit Successful Rehoming?

1. Rehoming dogs without first evaluating their rehoming suitability
2. Not addressing minor or major behavior or health problems in dogs that could impact rehoming success
3. Waiting to prepare dogs for lives as companions until they are adults about to be rehomed
4. Ignoring the physical and psychological needs of dogs in the kennel
5. Inadequately screening rehoming organizations or new owners to ensure good welfare through the rehoming process

## What Can Inhibit Successful Rehoming?

6. Not ensuring the successful matching between dogs and new families
7. Not preparing new families for what to expect in the rehoming process
8. Withholding information from new caretakers about a dog's physical health or behavioral history
9. Neglecting to educate new caretakers on creating behavioral wellness including the positive impacts of participation in training classes
10. Not protecting dog welfare throughout their lifetime (not ensuring they may always return to the kennel)



## The Rehoming Process - Preparation

- Preparation for rehoming later in life should begin during puppyhood for all dogs and continue until rehoming
- Socialization, low stress handling, training, enrichment, interventions, acclimation to home environment through kennel design and management, and evaluations are key



# The Rehoming Process - Transition

- Ensure that a rehomed dog's welfare needs can be continuously met throughout the process and in their new home
- Share dog health and behavior records, along with supportive educational materials to set new families up for success

## The Rehoming Process – Follow-Up

- Follow-up with new homes to evaluate rehoming success and make adjustments when needed
- Prepare to welcome dogs back to the kennel or find a new home match as needed when initial rehoming is not successful








# Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

1

Attend to the physical and psychological welfare of all dogs housed in kennel facilities



A group of several puppies, mostly white with black spots, are sitting inside a wire metal crate. They are looking out from behind the bars. The crate is on a tiled floor. In the background, there is a person's leg wearing a white shirt and orange pants.

## Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

2

Prepare all puppies for lives as companions through positive experiences during the sensitive period for socialization (3-14 weeks) that mirrors typical life in the kennel as well as a pet home

# Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

3

Identify clear behavior and health criteria for evaluating successful rehoming candidates



# Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

4

Design interventions for dogs that may have developed minor or major problems that could impact rehoming success



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A photograph of a man and a young girl sitting on a bed. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue button-down shirt over a white t-shirt, smiling and looking towards the girl. The girl is on the right, wearing a dark blue jacket over a light blue shirt and jeans, looking at the man. A beagle dog is sitting between them, looking towards the girl. The background is a bright, modern living room with a white tufted headboard and a lamp.

## Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

5

Select new homes with the long-term best interest of the dog in mind



## Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

6

Educate new families about what to expect during the rehoming transition, both positive and challenging





## Seven Steps Towards Supporting Successful Rehoming

7

Encourage participation in reward-based training classes to support the dog-human bond and desirable skill development

## FAQ #1

**Is it likely that retired breeding dogs can be successfully rehomed after living in the kennel?**

**Yes!** When efforts are made to ensure a successful transition along each step of the way, rehoming is successful more often than not.

This includes preparing dogs for the transition beginning in puppyhood (or as early as possible) and following-up with support post-rehoming.



## FAQ #2

What are potential challenges to rehoming success?

- Global fearfulness (e.g., to new sounds, people, environment)
- Lack of training
- Housebreaking challenges
- Finicky eating



## Learn More:

- [Rehoming Breeding Dogs Handout](#)
- [Factors that impact dog selection and welfare](#)

### Authors:

Taylor Rezvani, PhD

Traci Shreyer, MA

Candace Croney, PhD