



Society of Animal Welfare Administrators


Checklists for Animal Transport Planning

Animal transport is, at its most basic level, a supply and demand equation. However, there is much more to consider when establishing a successful program that benefits communities, adopters, overcrowded source shelters, destination shelters—and most important of all, companion animals.

Inside you'll find:

- Checklists covering four key areas:
 - Your organization's motivations for transport
 - Impact on/capacity of your agency
 - Impact on/capacity of your community
 - Partnership capacity between Source & Destination agencies
- A sample **Memorandum of Understanding**
- A **glossary** of terms

This checklist is an adjunct to and based on best practices outlined by The Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA) and the corresponding 7-part webinar series on [ASPCApro.org](https://www.aspcapro.org)

Courtesy of Society of Animal Welfare Administrators 

Sample Animal Transport Memorandum of Understanding

This animal transport Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into as of this day _____ and year _____ (*effective date*) and is made by and between

_____ ,

a _____ organization having an address of _____ (*Source Agency*)

and _____ ,

a _____ organization having an address of _____ , (*Destination Agency*).

WHEREAS, Source Agency confirms its intent to transfer certain animals to the Destination Agency and confirms it is the rightful owner of any animals that may be transferred and that such animals have surpassed any applicable state or municipality required stray hold period; and

WHEREAS, Destination Agency has the desire, as well as the available space and sufficient resources, to take ownership and possession of the animals with the intent of finding permanent placement for the animals; and

WHEREAS, Destination and Source Agencies shall mutually arrange for the safe and humane transport of the animals (“Transport”) through its own means or through the assistance of a reputable third party carrier; and

WHEREAS, Source Agency shall transfer, and Destination shall accept, all rights, ownership, control and responsibility of the animals in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein and for other good and valuable consideration the receipt of which is acknowledged, the Agencies hereby agree as follows:

AGREEMENT

Confirmation of the Viability of a Transport Program

Both Agencies have reviewed and confirmed the following:

- a. Each Agency’s motivation for participating in animal transport
- b. The impact on and capacity of each Agency to engage in animal transport
- c. The impact on and capacity of each Agency’s community if that Agency participates in animal transport
- d. A high likelihood of improving the outcome for animals if a transport program is implemented
- e. A strong commitment to transparent collaboration

Continued on next page.



Sample Animal Transport Memorandum of Understanding

(continued)

Key Transport Program Elements

The transport program operates within these parameters:

- a. Public health and safety will be the primary concerns.
- b. Agencies will be registered 501-C-3 or municipal organizations.
- c. Agencies and all their representatives will abide by all local, state and federal regulations.
- d. Humane standards of care will be afforded to every animal being transported.
- e. Animal Transport Best Practices (Exhibit A) as outlined by the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA) will be utilized to establish and improve the program.

Term

This MOU shall be effective as of the effective date written above and binding upon the parties until the notice of termination is provided by either party of this MOU. A 30-day notice of termination is desired but not required.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have, by their authorized agents, signed and delivered this agreement as of the effective date set forth above.

SOURCE AGENCY

DESTINATION AGENCY

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Companion Animal Transport Program Best Practices Glossary

Here are common phrases you'll come across in both the SAWA Best Practice document for Companion Animal Transport Programs and corresponding 7-part webinar series on ASPCApro.

- **Adoptable:** Animals meeting the criteria identified and set forth by an individual group as being safe, healthy, and responsible candidates to be rehomed in their community through their adoption program. For purposes relating to transport, adoptable is defined by the Destination agency.
- **Aggregator:** Unaffiliated third party providing the service of transportation between Source and Destination agencies. Provides care and complies with best practices for animals during transport; does not provide services for transport candidates prior to transport or after arrival at the Destination agency.
- **Behavior Assessment:** A method of information gathering regarding an animal's behavior that can be utilized as part of the decision-making process to determine adoption candidacy. A variety of formal assessments are available to be used.
- **Destination Agency:** Agency that receives animals transported from a Source agency. Transferred animals supplement adoption program population and do not infringe upon the resources and placement opportunities available to local community of animals.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A written agreement between two agencies to establish and define expectations as said agencies embark on a partnership. MOUs are established out of mutual respect to help groups adhere to commitments to one another throughout their professional relationship.
- **Population Imbalance** (also referred to as Community Imbalance): There is a greater number of animals surrendered to a local shelter(s) than there are individuals adopting animals in a community. Or, there are a greater number of individuals wanting to adopt than there are animals available for placement through the shelter(s) in a community.
- **Resources:** Availability and access to a pool of services and assets that contribute to the network providing care to animals in an agency's charge, including but not limited to financial support, staff availability, volunteer programs, veterinary services, behavioral expertise and housing accommodations.
- **Source Agency:** The agency from which transport animals originate. A Source agency is in need of transport opportunities for animals to provide immediate relief due to population imbalance and/or inadequate resources to address the medical or behavioral conditions of transport candidates.
- **Transport:** The physical act of relocating animals from a Source agency to a Destination agency.