



Kneading Kitty's Rescue

Guidelines For Vetting Potential Adopters

Working in the Adoption Center is a fun and rewarding experience. It feels great to complete an adoption and help a kitty to find a loving forever home. But regardless of whether a kitty chooses a human or a human chooses a kitty, as volunteers one of our key duties is to insure that potential adopters have the right mindset, plan, and expectations for a successful adoption and integration into their home.

The information below is provided as a guideline to help you vet potential adopters based on the information they provide on the Adoption Application and the “interview” you conduct with them. It’s not an exhaustive list and you may encounter other scenarios that cause concern. The bottom line is, TRUST YOUR GUT. If alarm bells go off and your gut tells you this is not a good situation, simply inform the potential adopter that you need to send the application to the KKR Board for review and someone will contact them. You can also email, call, or text the Adopter Center Coordinators for review and assistance if you are unsure.

Key considerations:

- **Outdoor cat (Barn Cat or “Mouser”)** - None of the cats in the Adoption Center should ever be adopted out as Outdoor cats. We do occasionally have “barn cats” listed on the KKR website, or direct the adopter to one of the local rescues that specializes in this.
- **Indoor cat that will be “allowed” to go outdoors** – In Arizona, we have coyotes, owls, eagles, etc. as well as extreme heat and insane traffic. If a potential adopter indicates that they plan to allow the cat outdoors, remind them of these dangers. If they still insist that the cat will be allowed to go outside, do not allow the adoption.
- **Home has a dog door** - Similar to above. If it’s a simple flap type door, the cat can get out too. A high tech dog door that senses an RFID collar on the dog so the cat can’t open it on their own is a bit safer. But if it’s a large dog door, even with RFID, the cat may still be able to tailgate the dog and get outside.
- **Intent to declaw** – This is NOT allowed by our rescue as it is inhumane. If potential adopter believes otherwise and indicates that they plan to declaw, do not allow the adoption. In the rare event that KKR is adopting out a cat that was previously declawed, it’s critical to ask whether the adopter has other cats in the home that do have claws, or if the home has dogs. A declawed kitty is essentially defenseless and should be an only pet.

- **Got rid of a pet in the past** - It's important to understand the circumstances, both WHY they got rid of a pet and HOW they went about it.
 - **Why?** - If the reason was something like "not enough time" or "financial hardship", we need to probe to make sure this is not going to be an issue again with the current adoption. We want to insure the adopter has the means and commitment to take care of a pet. If the reason is related to "moved and couldn't bring" or "lease did not allow pets", we want to understand how that situation came about and if it is likely to happen again.
 - **How?** - If the pet was re-homed with a relative or close friend, that is generally the best answer. If they dropped a pet off at the Humane Society, put on Facebook, Craigslist, etc. make sure they understand our strict re-homing policy: cats adopted from KKR must be returned to KKR only! If a pet ran away, was lost/stolen, hit by car, died from an untreated medical condition, etc. these are red flags as they speak to potential neglect.
- **Dog owner that wants to adopt their first cat** – It's important to understand how well the potential adopter actually knows their dog's behavior around cats. One watch out is the question, "Can I bring the cat back if it doesn't work out?" It's a valid question, but not a sign of a strong commitment to our kitty. It's important to also make sure to read the KKR foster's description of our kitty carefully to know if they are good with dogs, not good, or have not been exposed to them. Under no circumstances are potential adopters allowed to bring their dog into the Adopter Center for a meet and greet! Provide the "Introducing New Kitty To Resident Cat or Dog" handout or refer the adopter to the document on our website as a resource to help them understand what they will need to do.
- **First time cat owner that wants to adopt "a pair of kittens"** - It's critical to help the potential adopter understand the magnitude of this commitment and the impact it will have on their home and life. Some people are well suited and know what they are getting themselves into, but those that are not prepared and educated on what it takes to raise a pair of kittens can find themselves overwhelmed, unhappy, and wanting to return the kittens to us. Guide this potential first time adopter to think very carefully about the commitment, make sure they have considered the safer and less stressful option to adopt just one kitten. Of course, an older and calmer cat may be an even better option for a first time owner, so be sure to ask if they've considered this option as well.
- **Experienced cat owner that wants to adopt more than 2 cats** - One concern is hoarding, but even when that is not the case, adopting more than 2 cats at time is quite unusual. The key question here, does the potential adopter know how to socialize and integrate multiple animals into the household at once? It's a lot of work and not easy, just ask our fosters! Even if the potential adopter is an experienced cat owner and feels they can handle it, we still need to insure our kitties go to a forever home where they will receive the individual love and care they deserve. Guide this potential adopter to consider adopting at most two. We often have adult bonded pairs, and this may be a good option for them. If the potential adopter insists on adopting more than 2 cat, consult the Adoption Center Coordinators and/or Board to help with the decision.
- **The cat is not interested in the potential adopter, or acts out of character around them** - It could be because the kitty has been out playing and is just tired or distracted or because the potential adopter is trying to 'force' a relationship with the cat. Cats can also be very sensitive to emotion and smells and may just not be interested in the adopter. If the interaction seems 'off' to you, guide the adopter to interact with other kitties to find a better match or suggest they come back another day and time to see if the interaction improves. If it doesn't, consult the Adoption Center Coordinators and/or Board to help with the decision.