Tips for Finding the Right Veterinarian for You and Your New Pet

Having a relationship with a veterinarian will help to ensure a healthier life for your new pet. A veterinarian will be your partner in providing preventive care and any treatments for injuries or illnesses throughout the pet's life. Preventive care for pets includes physical exams, vaccinations for infectious diseases, medication for preventing parasites, travel advice, nutrition information and much more. As your pet ages, your veterinarian will guide you in providing geriatric care and comfort to your pet. This life-long relationship is important and these tips will help you choose the right person or practice for you and your pet.

Where to Search for a Veterinarian:

- **Personal references**: Friends and family in your area who have experience with pet ownership will be useful resources. Neighbors with animals can also provide information about local veterinarians.
- **Internet Searches of Veterinary Associations**: Searching your state veterinary medical association will often provide lists of member veterinarians. In Minnesota, this address is: www.mvma.org (you will find a category on the left of the screen titled "Get a Vet").
- **Local Directories**: Area telephone books will list veterinarians in the business section.
- **Your Current Veterinarian**: If you are moving out of state or are new to the area and you already have pets, your current veterinarian may have a colleague or information about the area to which you are relocating.
- **Animal Humane Society's List of Participating Veterinarians:** At the time of adoption, you are given a list of local veterinarians who participate in a program which provides your animal with a free examination. Not only does this first exam ensure the health of your pet, but it may be the beginning of a lasting veterinary-client-patient relationship.

Visit the Practice and Consider the Following:

- Are the business hours a good fit for your schedule?
- Is the level of internet operation (for appointments, test results, etc.) acceptable to you?
- Are same day appointments available for an urgent matter?
- How many veterinarians are on staff?
- Are you able to specify the doctor you wish to see?
- What medical services are provided (surgery, x-rays, ultrasound, access to specialists, etc.)?
- Is the practice clean and neat?
- Is the staff helpful and friendly?
- What methods of payments are taken?
- What methods of financing are available?
- Is the staff knowledgeable about pet insurance?
- Are there any services available besides veterinary care (such as boarding or grooming)?
- How are after hours emergencies handled?

We at the Animal Humane Society want your relationship with your new pet to be a success in every way. We hope you find this information useful as you choose a veterinary practice that suits your needs and provides your pet with life-long care.