

MATCHDOTDOG PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The MATCHdotDOG adoption-matching program was developed to assist in the matching the shelter dogs with appropriate adopters. Each dog is assigned a color code, which is based on their behavioral history, their responses during the formal behavior evaluation and their behavior towards staff and volunteers while housed at the shelter. The color code for an individual dog may change if issues develop during the dog's stay at the shelter.

Potential adopters will be asked to fill out the simple adoption questionnaire before they view the adoptable dogs. An adoption counselor will review the questions and assign the person/s with one or more colored cards (see question response key below). Counselors should explain that the card/s represent the color-coding of the dogs that we feel would best suit their life style and expectations. Counselors should also explain why they were given the colors they were assigned (i.e. if they have children under the age of 6, it should be explained that only blue dogs are suitable for such young children because these dogs are calm, social, and tolerant). Many adopters may be matched to more than one color (adopters with children under the age of 6 can receive only one card – blue).

If adopters want a dog that is outside of their assigned color, a dialog can occur about why that dog may not be the best match for them and what his or her needs will be.

HOW ARE THE DOG'S COLORS DETERMINED?

After reviewing the results of the medical exam, behavior evaluation and our own experiences with a dog, the behavior department will assign a color to each adoptable dog. Colors will not be assigned until a dog is ready to move to the adoption floor and in some cases colors can change, depending on the length of stay and behavioral changes that occur as a result.

The dog's cage card will be printed on the appropriate color paper that reflects their color-coding.

THE COLORS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

There are 5 different colors: Blue, Yellow, Green, Orange and Purple

BLUE

Blue dogs are dogs that can be placed in just about any home. During their behavior evaluation they presented as very social, tolerant of all the handling, exhibited no signs of resource guarding with their food bowl or possessions, were not overly aroused in play, and were friendly or at least calmly tolerant of other dogs. Additionally, blue dogs have no issues of concern in their history. Blue dogs are the only dogs that can be placed in homes with children under the age of 6 years.

YELLOW

Yellow dogs are shy, fearful, or undersocialized dogs. These dogs will need extra socialization and confidence building. They are dogs that we would not place with children under the age of 6 years because they may be a bit too nervous for the actions of young children. They may be fine in a home with children over the age of 6, but depending on the particular dog may do better with older children (in which case this will be indicated – i.e. 12+).

GREEN

Green dogs are a bit on the exuberant side and will have greater exercise needs. They are typically dogs who have had little to no formal training and need some work in this department. Green dogs should not be in a home with children under 6, and may be too much for other young children. Green dogs are typically fine with other dogs, but may be a bit too playful for some. Green dogs will need an adopter dedicated to providing them with aerobic exercise and training.

ORANGE

Orange dogs are our senior dogs (8 years and older). They have low activity needs and often make perfect pets as they are housetrained and past the age of inappropriate behaviors such as chewing. We feel they would do best in a home without children under the age of 6 years due to possible or pending arthritis, lose

of eyesight and/or hearing. These dogs may require more medical care than some of the other dogs now or in the near future.

PURPLE

Purple dogs are the behavior modification dogs. These are the dogs for whom behaviors of concern have been identified and an in-house behavior modification program set up for them. They need to go to a home with an experienced dog owner who is willing to continue the behavior modification program. Purple dogs cannot go to a home with children under the age of 16 years. They are not appropriate for currently childless couples that plan to start a family in the near future.

MATCH MAKING QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) Have you owned a dog in the past? **YES NO**

- 2) Have you ever taken a dog to a training class? **YES NO**

- 3) Would you be willing to adopt a dog that requires some degree of training (for example an exuberant dog)? **YES NO**

- 4) Would you be willing to adopt a dog that requires some degree of socialization (for example a shy dog)? **YES NO**

- 5) How would you describe your home? **ACTIVE NOISY QUIET** (please circle answer)

- 6) Would you be willing to adopt a “senior” dog, or a dog over the age of 8? **YES NO**

- 7) What age children do you have or visit on a regular basis?

- 8) Do you want an **ACTIVE, MODERATELY ACTIVE** or **SEDENTARY dog?** (please circle answer)

COLOR KEY FOR ADOPTION COUNSELORS

BLUE – Everyone can have a blue card

GREEN (exuberant, needs training and lots of exercise)

Must answer **YES** for question # 1

Must answer **YES** for question #3

Must have **CHILDREN OVER 6 YEARS OR NO CHILDREN**

Must want an **ACTIVE** dog

YELLOW (shy, timid)

Must answer **YES** for question #1

Must answer **YES** for question #4

Must answer **QUIET** for question #5

Must have **CHILDREN OVER 6 YEARS OR NO CHILDREN**

ORANGE (senior)

Must answer **YES** to question #5

Must have **CHILDREN OVER 6 YEARS OR NO CHILDREN**

PURPLE (experienced dog owner only, on beh. mod. program)

Must answer **YES** for question #1, #2, #3, #4

Must have **NO CHILDREN** under age 16