

# I FOUND A LOST ANIMAL

**Notes for Shelter:** Consider language that thanks the finder for helping the lost animal. Tell the finder that they are very likely to find the animal's home if they follow the tips you provide. Remind the finder that a lost animal, even one who is on the street for a day or less, can easily look disheveled and scared. Their scruffy appearance does not mean this animal was not loved and cared for by its family.

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## Action Items for Finder:

- 1.** If the found animal is wearing a tag with a phone number, call the number immediately and leave a message if you reach voicemail. Try sending a text message since the number you see may be for a mobile phone. Most people open text messages at a higher rate than accepting a call from an unknown number.
- 2.** If safe to do so, walk the animal around the area where it was found and ask anyone who may be there if they recognize the animal. Try asking everyone you see: families, U.S. Postal workers, delivery personnel, and so on.
- 3.** After trying the phone number and asking persons nearby, bring the animal to a veterinary office where it can be scanned for a microchip. In addition to a veterinary office, chip scanning can be performed almost anywhere pet chips are sold (such as a PetSmart store).

If a chip is detected, use this link to find the registered owner: [PetMicrochipLookup.Org](#) The place that scanned the animal can help you with this step. Offer a way for the finder to get in touch with you or someone at the shelter if needed. If there is an email account that is monitored with any frequency, consider this option and be honest about how long it will take someone to get back to the finder.

- 4.** Take a facial photo of the animal and register it as found with [Finding Rover](#).
- 5.** File found animal reports with local animal shelters. could be looking for their lost pet in another location.

**Note:** Include the link to your found animal submission form, along with any link to nearby shelters. Explain in the text that a lost animal will often travel when panicked, and their home and their families could be looking for their lost pet in another location.

## I FOUND A LOST ANIMAL (cont...)

6. Create a found animal flyer and post in the area where the animal was found, especially major intersections or at stop signs so they are easy to see.

**Note:** Include a link explaining how to make a flyer, such as this: <https://search.petfbi.org/flyer.html>. Offer assistance in printing flyers at the shelter if needed, not everyone has a printer at home.

7. Post a photo and information about the found animal on the following sites (Note: include direct links):

- Nextdoor Community Pages
- Neighborhood Facebook pages
- Community lost and found Facebook pages (include links to the most highly utilized pages)
- Craigslist.com community pages

8. Check to the lost animals reported by the public Check this page frequently for pets reported as missing

**Note:** Insert link to your found pet alerts. Make sure to include information on what to do if a match is detected. The shelter should be a resource at this point.

9. After finding an animal, it is best to keep the animal with you (and at your home) while continuing efforts to find the missing family. If necessary and possible, temporarily foster the animal until their home is found.

**Note:** If support is available from the shelter (such as pet food, a crate, and vaccinations), make it clear here.

Some agencies require direct management of the fostering process for the animal. If that is the case, then make this process as easy as possible for the finder, being sure to offer praise and thanks for their help in keeping the pet safe until the family is found. You cannot overdo thanks for someone in this situation.

10. Not all finders are in a position to do everything listed here. If you are unable to directly help in returning an animal home, follow these instructions.

**Note:** Link out to, or clearly detail how a found animal can enter the sheltering system. Again, keep in mind, this person did the right thing by contacting the shelter for help.