

Moving with Your Pets

Moving to a new home is usually a stressful time for people and it can also be stressful for pets. During this time it is important to be patient, understanding and provide lots of affection to your pet who may not understand what is happening. You can help your pet adjust more easily by constantly reassuring them and providing them with familiar items and scents. Here are some more tips to help you and your pet settle in safely.



Before you move:

- Make sure that your pet's medical records are up-to-date and bring copies of their records with you.
- Make sure that you have a supply of any medications that your pet may need.
- Make sure all of your pet's have collars, ID tags, and a rabies tag.
- Purchase a sturdy, comfortable transport carrier if needed.
- If your pet is not accustomed to traveling in the car you should take it on short rides around the block several weeks before you move and gradually increase the distance. Keep in mind that some pets will never be accustomed to riding in the car and you may need to consult your veterinarian about medication or sedatives to reduce or eliminate motion sickness, constant agitation, and crying.
- If transporting by plane, try to book a direct flight and keep in mind that some airlines do not allow pets on board. For those that do you can expect to pay at least a \$75.00 pet traveling fee.
- Locate pet-friendly hotels before your trip.
- Make a point to maintain your pet's regular routine right up until the moment you leave. If they are accustomed to a morning walk, make sure you take it. If it's a bowl of their favorite food, make sure to feed it to them. Whether you travel just a few hours or several days, make sure to pack your pet's regular food and fresh water. A common mistake made by pet owners is to bring "special snacks" and treats as comfort food, but this often causes a disruption in diet and can lead to your pet's nausea or diarrhea.
- Pack a roll of paper towels, a pooper-scooper, and trash bags with you to clean up after your pet.

During the move:

- If possible, you may want to leave your pet at a friend or relative's house. That way you won't have to worry about your pet getting in your way, or worse, running away.
- If you do take your pet with you, avoid feeding or giving them water for several hours before your trip.
- Cats should always be transported in a carrier and a litter box should be available at all times. Dogs can be restrained with pet seat belts that can be purchased from a pet supply store. **NEVER** transport a dog in the back of a pick up truck and **NEVER** leave your pet unattended in a car, especially in warm weather. Make sure to stop frequently (approximately every 2 hours) to allow your pet to exercise and relieve itself. Both dogs and cats should be on a leash/harness at all times when they are outside of the vehicle.

After the move:

- **CATS:** For the first few days in your new home, it is smart to confine your cat to one room, while you work on putting the rest of the place in order. Prepare the room with your cat's bed, litter box, food/water bowls, and favorite toys. Gradually you can increase the area that you allow your cat to explore. It may take days, weeks, or even months for your cat to feel comfortable in your new home and all of its scents and noises.
- **DOGS:** Ideally, your dog's introduction to his new home will be familiar furniture already in place, including his bed/crate, food/water bowls, and favorite toys. Just like with cats, you may want to limit your dog's access to one room at a time until they begin to feel comfortable. Once your dog begins to feel at home, take him out for a walk so he can start to become familiar with your new neighborhood.
- As soon as possible locate a new veterinarian. You can call the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) at (800) 883-6301 to help you find a vet in your area. Take your pet to the new vet for a check up. You should also inquire about the nearest emergency vet clinic and take a practice drive there. Trying to find it when you really need it can waste precious time. It is also a good idea to learn basic pet first aid.

***NOTE:** Some pets may not be able to handle a move (i.e. ill or aged pets) and may be better off staying with a friend or relative. Also, if you are thinking about getting a new pet, it is best to wait until you are settled into your new home, so you can provide lots of extra attention to your new pet, which you will not be able to do during this busy time.

**San Bernardino County
Animal Care & Control Program
1-800-472-5609**

