

## **WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?**

A common question among dog adopters is, why are adoption fees so high? Shouldn't adopting a dog be free, or at least super cheap?

When you purchase a purebred from a dog breeder you may be paying anywhere from \$500 to over \$2,000 for your new puppy, but often that is all you are getting for that cost. When you adopt a dog from a shelter or a rescue group, your adoption fees are going to pay towards the cost of the care your adopted dog has received while in their care. Which is why adoption fees are often adjusted based on the age of the dog you are adopting. Here is a break down of what our rescue has put into your dog before you even adopt.

### **Spay & Neuter**

The average cost for veterinary care varies greatly depending on your geographical location (city vs. country), the size of the dog requiring care, as well as their overall picture of health and how it influences the complexity of treatments. The average dog spay or neuter can range from \$130-\$400. However, this does not include the cost of pain relief medication that the rescue will also be responsible for. That extra expense is another \$10-\$40 dollars. If you were to get your adopted dog spayed or neutered on your own it could cost you anywhere from \$200-\$500 plus, depending on said variables.

### **Shots**

The cost of vaccinating dogs to prevent Distemper, Parvo, Kennel Cough as well as rabies can cost approximately \$85.00 to \$200.00, or more. If your adopted dog has been in the shelter or a rescue foster care for a few months they may have received a monthly booster to keep them safe from multi-dog related illness.

### **Parasite Treatments and Preventatives**

Monthly flea, tick, and ear mite treatments are another monthly cost for all pets in rescue. De-wormer medications are often given preventatively as oppose to waiting to see evidence of worms. These treatments can cost approximately \$10-\$50 assuming that no lab work is needed. Lyme disease and heartworm tests are another cost the rescue will incur to ensure that your dog is in good health. If a dog tests positive, Lyme disease treatment can cost anywhere from \$20-\$100 depending on the size of the dog. However, if a dog needs to be treated for heart-worms the treatment can be extremely costly, and on average it can cost up to \$1,000.

### **Microchips**

Most rescues will not allow their animals to leave the premise without first being microchipped. Although a lot of pet owners insist that their adopted dog will never get

lost, as a rescue, we see it happen all the time— whether it be as a result of a natural disaster or an unfortunate accident. The cost for a rescue to microchip their animals is approximately \$45.00 to \$60.00.

### **Food, Shelter & Comfort**

The cost to feed a dog for a month in a rescue can range greatly based on the resources of the rescue, but a general ballpark estimate is around \$40-\$60. This does not include special diets for dogs that need weight loss food or dog food for specific digestive needs. Then there are toys, treats, bedding, and other necessities that the rescue often supplies.

### **Extreme Conditions**

If your adopted dog is put on ear infection medication, eye drops, or other antibiotics, the rescue will try to recuperate the cost from the adoption fees as well. This also includes X-rays, echo cardiograms and other specialized treatments. This means part of your dog adoption fees will go towards animals that need additional care even if your adopted dog was lucky enough to have a clean bill of health.

### **Extras**

Some rescues will provide you with a bag of food to go home with so you can slowly adjust your new dog to the brand you have chosen to feed them. Collars, ID tags, and leashes may also be worked into the adoption fees. If you've adopted a puppy or a dog that was transferred from one region or shelter to our rescue, the cost for the transportation can also be added into your dogs adoption fee.

Remember most non-profit organizations do not receive Federal or State funding. The dog adoption fees make caring for the animals in the rescue possible. Fundraising and donations acquired is what keeps the rescue afloat.