



10 Commandments and Rescue Guidelines for TEWA members

1. The best interest of the animals should always be your first priority.

- Sometimes it is necessary to take a step back from a situation and see it in a different perspective. Always make sure that whatever actions we take are in the best interest of the animals. Politics and egos have no place in rescue where lives are at stake.

2. Always follow humane rescuing practices.

- Animals that are kept confined for long periods are not receiving the training, attention and love that they need to be ready for adoption. Because of their confinement, these animals may suffer from severe separation anxiety, develop barrier aggression, develop aggression issues with other animals, and regress in their training.
- Make sure that the animal you are rescuing will not put the health and safety of other animals in jeopardy. Many rescued animals have compromised immune systems from the stress of their situation and bringing very sick animals into your program should only be done when it does not put the health of other animals in danger. Extra care should be taken when placing animals that show aggression, especially in homes where there are other animals or children. In addition, always make sure that anyone who handles a sick or aggressive animal is aware of their condition and takes the necessary safety precautions.

3. Know your limits and stick to them.

- In order to be an effective rescuer, it is important to set realistic limits to avoid becoming overwhelmed. Unfortunately, there will always be more animals that need rescuing. Do not dwell on the animals that are beyond your ability and means to help, but focus on the ones you can help. It does not matter whether you are saving one animal or hundreds - you are making a difference and saving lives.

4. Always have adequate funding in place before taking on an animal.

- Avoid taking on a situation in the hopes that the funding will follow. Have a good idea of how much it will cost to care for each animal and maintain a solid budget that includes a reserve fund for unexpected costs.
- Pay all bills for medical care on time. Running up debts with vets and medical care facilities creates a negative working relationship that can influence that vet's decision to help you and other organizations in the future. It jeopardizes the safety of the animals since eventually the vet will find it necessary to cut off services until bills are paid which could leave animals without care in an emergency.

5. Always have a solid plan in place before taking on an animal.

- It is important to consider where you will take the animals you rescue. All too often, these animals go from one bad situation to something equally bad or worse. If you use foster homes always place animals in a pre-screened facility. Make sure that the people you work with to house your rescued animals provides the minimum standards for adequate care including the responsible practice of good animal husbandry, handling, management, confinement, feeding, watering, protection, shelter, transportation, treatment, grooming, and the provision of veterinary care when needed to prevent suffering or impairment of health. The foster home should be clean and safe for the animals you are rescuing, and you should be certain that they are treated humanely if not in your direct care. Things can always fall through so be sure that you have a safe place to take an animal in the event that a housing option falls through at the last minute.

6. Provide complete and timely medical care.

- All animals should be vetted, vaccinated, and treated for parasites by a certified veterinarian immediately upon entering your rescue program and before being placed in a foster home. If the animals are in your ownership all studs should be gelded as soon as it is physically possible or as advised by a veterinarian. Gelding stud colts has been shown to provide both physical and mental benefits to the animals

7. Finish the job.

- Rescuing does not end once an animal is out of a sudden death situation. It is important to take the time necessary with each animal and make sure that all the proper steps are being taken to find them a loving, permanent home if not being placed into a sanctuary.

8. Keep accurate records for each animal.

- Keeping clear and up to date medical records is vital to providing proper care – especially in the event of an emergency. Records should include all known procedures, dates for all treatments given and due dates for future necessary care such as deworming and vaccinations. Wherever possible, the name and number of the vet or medical facility where treatments were given should also be listed.
- Organizational records including information on foster care providers and a detailed list of all the animals in your care should be maintained at all times.

9. Use your resources, time and money wisely.

- Try to make local rescue or helping other rescues within the TEWA your first option. The cost of long distance transportation may not be the best use of funds. When transporting animals into Tennessee from other states please keep in mind a proof of negative coggins and health certificates are required on all animals.
- Try to utilize low cost medical options. You should also develop relationships with vets whenever possible to provide for discounted medical care beyond the basics. The TEWA will be working diligently to find these types of options for TWEA members.

10. Don't try to do it all alone.

- Rescuing animals is a very high stress endeavor. Caring for them is a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week job. It is important not to underestimate the amount of care and the level of commitment that is necessary to save lives.
- In addition to time and money, the emotional and psychological aspect of rescuing should not be overlooked. It is easy for people to become disillusioned and overwhelmed. Find support in people who share your philosophies and can help keep you focused so you can accomplish your goals.

Thank You for your commitment to the equine in Tennessee!

Rescues and sanctuaries serve an important part and are greatly needed!

**By adhering to the Tennessee Equine Welfare Alliance guidelines,
you show your willingness to do what is best for the animals within your care.**

