

Donation Acceptance Policy

1. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this Donation Acceptance Policy is to ensure that all gifts received by Fresh Start Rescue (“the Rescue”) support our mission, align with our Core Values, and protect the organization from financial, legal, or ethical risk. This policy provides clear guidelines for accepting, declining, receipting, and stewarding donations.

2. Types of Donations the Rescue May Accept

The Rescue may accept the following types of contributions:

2.1 Monetary Donations

- Cash, check, or electronic payments
- Online donations through approved platforms
- Recurring monthly donations

2.2 In-Kind Donations

- Dog food, crates, leashes, collars, toys, treats
 - The Rescue may accept opened bags of dog food or treats **at its discretion**, provided that:
 - The food is not expired
 - The food shows no signs of contamination, pests, moisture, or spoilage
 - The original packaging is intact enough to identify the brand and expiration date
 - The food is immediately transferred to a sealed container or closed and sealed securely
 - The food is used **only for foster homes**, not for public distribution
 - The Rescue reserves the right to decline any opened food donation that appears unsafe or unsuitable.
- Cleaning supplies
- Medical supplies approved by the Rescue
 - The rescue may accept certain unopened, unexpired medical supplies **only when permitted by state and federal law** and only when approved by the Rescue’s leadership.
 - Due to state regulations, the rescue will **not accept**:
 - Opened, partially used, or repackaged medications
 - Expired medications or supplies
 - Prescription medications not dispensed directly to the Rescue by a licensed veterinarian
 - Any medication that cannot be legally transferred under Minnesota law or federal regulations



- All medical donations must be reviewed and approved by the Board President or a designated medical coordinator before acceptance.
- Equipment or materials that directly support operations
- Note that all donations need to be clean, and in good condition.
- The Rescue reserves the right to update acceptable items based on current operational needs.

2.3 Restricted Donations

- Donations designated for a specific program or purpose
- Must be used only for the donor-designated purpose
- If the Rescue cannot honor the restriction, the donor will be contacted to redirect or release the restriction

2.4 Grants

- Foundation, corporate, or community grants
- Must comply with grantor requirements and reporting obligations

3. Donations the Rescue May Decline

The Rescue reserves the right to decline any donation that:

- Conflicts with the Rescue's mission, Core Values, or ethical standards
- Creates financial, legal, or reputational risk
- Requires obligations the Rescue cannot meet
- Comes from a source inconsistent with humane, ethical animal welfare practices
- Is in a condition that is unsafe, expired, damaged, or unusable
- Requires storage, transport, or handling beyond the Rescue's capacity
- Appears to be given with expectations of influence, special treatment, or preferential adoption outcomes

The Board President, Treasurer, or full Board may decline a donation at their discretion.

4. Donor Intent and Transparency

The Rescue is committed to honoring donor intent and maintaining transparency.

- Donors will be informed if their gift is not tax-deductible (before 501(c)(3) approval).
- Donors may request a receipt for any contribution.
- The Rescue will not misrepresent how donations will be used.
- Funds will be used responsibly and in alignment with the Rescue's mission and bylaws.

5. Receipting and Acknowledgment

5.1 Monetary Donations

- Donations of any amount will be acknowledged within a reasonable timeframe.

- Receipts will include the Rescue's name, EIN (once obtained), date, and amount.
- No goods or services will be provided in exchange unless disclosed.

5.2 In-Kind Donations

- Donors are responsible for assigning value to in-kind items.
- The Rescue will provide a description of donated items but will not assign monetary value.

6. Use of Donations

All donations will be used to support:

- Veterinary care
- Food and supplies
- Foster support
- Training and behavior resources
- Program operations
- Community outreach
- Administrative and operational needs

Restricted donations will be tracked separately and used only for their designated purpose.

7. Donor Privacy

The Rescue will protect donor information and will not:

- Sell donor data
- Share donor information without consent
- Publicly acknowledge donors without permission

Donors may request anonymity at any time.

8. Authority and Oversight

- The Board of Directors oversees all donation acceptance practices.
- The Treasurer manages financial tracking and reporting.
- The Board President may make immediate decisions regarding acceptance or refusal of donations when time-sensitive.
- Any questionable or high-risk donation must be reviewed by the Board.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure compliance with laws, IRS regulations, and best practices in nonprofit governance.

Approved: 07-22-2026