



# Adoption Family Guide

June 2010

## Introduction

Bringing a new family member home is exciting. It's also a commitment to provide care for many years. Owning a dog is not inexpensive. Expect to spend about \$1000 per year for a healthy dog including food, tick/flea/heartworm prevention, annual health check ups and vaccinations, toys, treats, training, treatment of illnesses or injuries, etc. Goldens are a gentle, loving breed originally bred to work closely with hunters to retrieve water fowl. Year after year golden retrievers rate as one of America's top five favorite dog breeds. Golden Retrievers can easily live 15 years so bringing a golden into your family is not something you should do lightly.

Golden retrievers are often described as “velcro dogs” because they want to be near their family. Goldens require physical and emotional attention. They are a sporting breed so even older dogs need at least thirty minutes of exercise everyday and younger ones need more.. Their beautiful coats should be brushed frequently to avoid matting. To prevent ear infections their ears should be cleaned weekly; and like all dogs their nails should be trimmed and their teeth brushed regularly.

All golden retrievers are adopted as full family members who live in your home as companions. They are not adopted “for your children”, to be hunting dogs, guard dogs, service dogs, to be left in the back yard, etc.



# Find the Right Dog for Your Lifestyle

What type of golden will be a good “fit” with your lifestyle? Be realistic. If you work all day, don’t have another dog or a dog walker to come in mid-day, a young dog will likely not fit well with your lifestyle. If you plan to hike the Appalachian Trail with your dog, an older dog with arthritis isn’t a good match. Be considerate of the other dogs in your family. It is unkind to bring a young pup in that will torment your senior or a strong willed dog who will frighten your timid resident dog. Here are some general guidelines to help you find the right dog for your family:

## *Puppies and Dogs under 24 Months*

Goldens stay “puppyish” until they are about three years of age. Adopt a young dog if:

- You have a safe environment which usually means a fence.
- You or someone is home much of the day to provide the dog much needed attention and exercise.
- You’re willing to housetrain.
- You’re willing to have a few valuables get chewed up or destroyed.
- You love to see the world from a young pup’s vantage.
- You are willing to take your dog to positive obedience training.
- Your children are older and you do not have an elderly family member living with you who could be easily knocked over by an exuberant pup.

## *Adult Dogs 2+ Years Old*

Adopt an adult dog if:

- You have a safe, loving environment.
- You are willing to provide adequate exercise EVERYDAY even when it’s cold and raining.
- You have time to spend with your dog.
- You prefer your dog to be housetrained.
- You’re willing to provide routine health care and grooming.
- You have children old enough to realize when they are hurting a dog.
- You are willing to help a dog adapt to your lifestyle.

## *Senior Dogs 10 + Years Old*

Adopt a senior golden if you:

- You want a quiet, loyal companion.
- You are willing to help an older dog adapt to your environment.
- You have a quiet lifestyle.
- You can afford potential medical costs associated with aging – arthritis is common in larger dogs such as golden retrievers.
- You believe all dogs deserve a good quality of life.



## Foster Families

When Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland, Inc. is notified of a dog that needs to be re-homed an *intake assessment* is completed to learn as much about the dog as possible. Questions include:

- Basic information about the dog – age, sex, has the dog ever bitten, commands dog knows, behavior around kids, cats and other dogs, reason for give up.
- Medical information – last vaccinations, type of heartworm/flea prevention, any chronic medical conditions.

The dog is placed with a temporary “foster family” who provides love, care and basic training. Once the foster family feels the dog is ready, the dog becomes available for adoption. A dog’s foster family knows more about their dog than anyone else. They will ask you questions and you should ask them questions to make sure the dog you are considering adopting is a good fit. You will also be able to contact your dog’s foster family for information and advise once you adopt your dog. Don’t forget to send a card during the holidays to let your dog’s foster family know how they are doing. Foster families really love their dogs even though they only live with them temporarily.



## **Adoption Process**

Once your application is received, this guide is sent to you and you are notified that your application has been received.

You will be contacted to set up a time for a volunteer to come to your home to meet you, discuss your application and to determine what type of dog would fit into your lifestyle. We ask that all family members be present. The volunteer home visitor will typically bring a golden along with them to meet any animals you might already have.

You are notified by email (regular mail if necessary) that you've been approved to adopt a golden and if there are any limitations such as you cannot adopt a young dog because you live on a busy street and do not have a fence.

Review the web site. If a dog is available that you are interested in meeting, contact the Adoption Coordinator who will provide you with the contact information of the family who is temporarily caring for the dog.

Contact the foster family and set up a time to meet the dog.

If you are interested in adopting a dog, tell the foster family. If they are comfortable with the match you may be able to take the dog that day so always bring a dog tag with your contact information.

If for some reason, you and the dog are not a match, go back to step three. Keep an eye on the web site. The Adoption Coordinator works closely with the Intake/Foster Coordinator. If they learn of a dog coming into the rescue that might be a good fit for your family they will notify you of the dog's pending availability. Most dogs are not available for adoption until they have been spayed or neutered. You might be allowed to meet a dog before they become available to the general public. You may even be allowed to "foster to adoption" depending on the circumstances.

## Prepare for Your New Dog

If you are already a dog owner, preparing for a new dog will be easy. Your dog will come with:

- A collar.
- A 6 foot leash. (You may want to invest in a flex lead.)
- At least one month supply of heart worm/flea prevention medications.
- At least a week's of premium dry dog food.
- A dog information sheet.

If you are not already a dog owner you'll need to provide the following supplies for your new dog:

- Water/food bowl – stainless steel or ceramic.
- Food. (At least a week's supply of the premium dog food your dog has been eating will be sent home with him/her.)
- Dog bed – “memory foam” will be appreciated by an older dog. Younger dogs can sleep on folded quilts or blankets.
- A few toys – tennis balls, kongs, squeaky plush toy, etc.
- Treats – low fat tidbits you can use as rewards, Frosty Paws, etc.
- Crate or baby gate – if you are going to purchase a crate get one big enough for a large dog to stand, turn around and lay down.
- Flexi-lead. This is especially helpful in case the leash slips out of your hand. The dog will have a big plastic handle thumping along which may cause them to slow down enough to give you a chance to grab him/her.
- Brush.
- Nail trimmers.
- Tooth brush and tooth paste. Petrodex makes poultry and beef flavored paste dogs love. Brushing your dog's teeth and maintaining a healthy weight are the two best ways to maintain your dog's health.
- Dogs are most likely to be lost within the first 24 hours of bringing them home. **Bring a tag with your contact information when you come to pick up your new family member. Foster families may opt not to let you take your new dog home without it.**

**New Name:** A name is all that many dogs come into rescue with. A dog can learn a new name if you use it consistently. Start by linking it with the previous name. Consider that it will be much easier to your dog to adjust to a new life if they at least know who you are talking to, so unless your new dog's name is horrible, consider letting him/her keep their identity.



## **Introduce Your New Dog**

If you have other dogs, arrange for your resident dog/s to meet before finalizing the adoption. Reintroduce your new dog on neutral ground away from your property when you bring him/her home. It can be as close as a couple of hundred yards down the street, but it removes the territory issue.

Many find it helpful to immediately walk their new and resident dogs. Your new dog becomes familiar with the neighborhood, can relieve him/herself, if necessary, and both dogs see that you are in control.

Next allow your dog off lead in your fenced yard. This allows him/her to become familiar with the yard and “mark” his new home.

Enter the house and show your new dog around. By the way, your dog will explore everything, so dog-proof your house (place shoes inside closets, put electrical cords out of reach, move prized objects to higher ground).

If you are introducing a male dog to your home and he lifts his leg, give him a quick leash correction (a quick yank on the leash and release) and tell him "No" to disrupt the action, and then take him outside immediately.

Your dog will be excited and anxious about his new home. Don't be surprised at panting and pacing, houstraining accidents, excessive drinking or chewing, or gastric upset. Tell every member of your family to resist the temptation to overwhelm a new dog. Give him some time and space to get settled.



## Settling In

During the transition period, a dog needs time to adjust to the rules and schedule of your household. A dog is a pack animal looking for guidance, and it is up to you to teach him/her acceptable behaviors. Dogs like routine and will quickly follow the lead of the resident dogs in adapting.

Use a crate, baby-gate the dog in the kitchen or laundry room, or separate the dogs whenever you are away from the home or cannot actively supervise the dogs for the first few days. Always give a treat when putting the dog in the crate or secure area. Your dog may be very hesitant to go into a crate if they have been kenneled or were in a shelter.

Don't bring out high value treats or toys as this can start a fight. Feed your dog/s first. Praise and tell your dog/s how good they are. Watch dogs carefully for the first few days. Curled lips, raised hackles or low growls (if the dogs are not playing) are indicators of a potential fight. If a dog fight starts, **DO NOT PUT YOUR HANDS INTO IT** as chances are you will get bit. A loud verbal correction can many times stop it. If that doesn't work, use something to separate the dogs – a broom, a chair, a baby gate. Spray water on the dogs. Throw a blanket over the aggressor.

It may take a week or two before you trust your dog with free run of the house. Until then, when you cannot supervise him, confine him in a safe place such as a crate or baby-gated kitchen. Leave him toys to play with.

Keep dogs on-leash when outdoors in unfenced areas. Otherwise, you'll have no control if your dog obeys instinct and chases a squirrel into the street, tussles with another dog or runs after a child. Supervise even when the dog's in a fenced yard. If there's a way to escape, most dogs will find it.

Don't kiss your dog or place your face at the dog's eye level before you've established yourself and other humans in the home as higher up in the hierarchy. Dogs may perceive a face placed at their eye-level as a threat, and then bite.

Dogs are creatures of habit. A consistent routine for feeding, exercising, and potty time will help your dog adjust.



## Feed Your Dog

Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland feeds/provides premium dry dog food to adoptive families as we believe many of the skin and ear problems that often plague golden retrievers are associated with feeding a poor quality diet. We ideally wish our dog were all fed a balanced raw diet. Dogs, as people, enjoy variety. Don't hesitate to add lean meats, poultry, fruits and vegetables to your dog's diet. Occasionally, "cook dinner" for your dog. Whole grain brown rice, chicken or lean hamburger and green beans make a dinner you can both eat!

There are a number of excellent dry dog foods on the market. Unfortunately most are not sold in grocery stores. The following provides tips on what to look for in a quality dog food.

### Look For Foods that

- List whole meat or fish as their first two or more ingredients.
- Do not have meat "by-products".
- Are made with organic ingredients.
- Good examples include:
  - Honest Kitchen (Embark/Force/Thrive)
  - Wellness Core.
  - Innova Evo.
  - Orijens.
  - Newman's Own.
  - Royal Canin Natural Blend.
  - Precise.

### Don't Buy

- Foods that contain low-quality ingredients such as animal fat, meat meal, animal digest.
- Products whose protein is derived almost completely from meat by-products.
- Products lacking expiration dates.
- Foods containing artificial coloring.
- Products containing "meat and bone meal" as these are very low-quality proteins.
- Foods that are sweetened to temp the dog's appetite.
- Avoid the following:
  - Purina Dog Chow.
  - Old Roy.
  - Gravy Train.
  - Cesar.
  - Alpo.
  - Purina's Beneficial.
  - Pedigree Complete Nutrition.
  - Dad's.
  - Kibbles 'n Bits.

**Learn More** - The authority on dog foods is *Whole Dog Journal* available at <http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/>. It's a bit pricey - \$39 for an annual subscription, but it's the BEST short journal (24 pages).

There's a companion pub – *Your Dog*, published by Cummings Vet School that's also excellent and a bit more conventional available at <http://www.tufts.edu/vet/publications/yourdog/index.html>.

Treats such as kongs with low fat peanut butter that have been frozen will keep your dog busy for quite a while. Frosty paws, available at most grocery stores in the ice cream section, are a refreshing snack for your dog when you have ice cream. Provide low fat treats as rewards for good behavior. Keep plenty of appropriate chewies available for your dog. We like “pizzles” and compressed rawhide sticks available at low cost with quick delivery from [www.carealotpets.com](http://www.carealotpets.com). “Soup” or marrow bones, available at most supermarket meat counters or butchers, are very inexpensive, long lasting and can help keep your dog's teeth clean.

Feeding plain rice can help a dog get through a digestive problem. If your dog is on antibiotics, add plain yogurt to his food to help replace the good bacteria in his system.

For health reasons, use stainless steel or porcelain bowls without painted surfaces. Plastic bowls are a breeding ground for germs. Wash food and water bowls between feedings.

**Don't feed your dog grapes, raisins, chocolate, macadamia nuts, sugar substitutes or onions.**

## Medical Care

If you do not have a vet it may be a good time to get recommendations from friends and family and contact vets in advance to develop a relationship with them for the future. Most vets will be happy to meet you and your pet BEFORE you need them.

Medical conditions common in golden retrievers are allergies that result in skin and ear problems. Most large breed dogs, and goldens are no exception, have a tendency towards hip dysplasia. Older, overweight goldens may suffer from arthritis. Cardiac problems and seizures are also fairly common in goldens. Cancer is the number one killer of goldens.

Medical treatment provided by Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland includes:

- Spay/neuter surgery.
- Rabies vaccination.
- DHPP (distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, parainfluenza).
- Heartworm test/prevention.
- Worm/parasite test/treatment.
- Flea/tick prevention.
- Treatment for minor problems such as skin/ear infections/worms.
- Medications for chronic conditions seizures, arthritis, thyroid if needed.

Dogs are sent to their new families with at least a one month dose of flea/heartworm prevention.

# Housetraining

Your new dog will likely be house trained, but they may have an “accident” during the first couple of days at your home. They may urinate submissively, be unsure of how to “ask” to go out or they may be overwhelmed or stressed by their new environment. Most dogs will be house trained before adoption. House training is usually easy as goldens want to please. To house train:

- **Watch for signs** of discomfort, restlessness or circling. Take him outside.
- **Praise when she goes potty.** Give her a treat or kibble to reinforce the behavior. If 15 or so minutes pass without pottying, bring the dog inside for about five minutes and then go back out.
- **Confine when you can't watch...**in a crate or a part of the kitchen. Don't leave food out. Do leave water.
- **Realize that dogs can't "hold it" for long periods.** Even adult dogs may need a mid- day dog walker if you work long hours. And puppies need to urinate and defecate frequently, so they'll need to go out at least every 4 hours to get housetrained.
- **Feed on a schedule.** Feed your dog the same times each day. Take him out after feeding. Young puppies are usually fed three times a day; older puppies and adult dogs twice a day. Don't make abrupt changes in food.
- **Keep a potty routine.** Take your dog outside first thing in the morning, when you get home from work, within an hour after the dog eats, just before bedtime, and following vigorous play. Young puppies may need to be taken outside every two hours. They will get house trained much faster and reliably if someone can take them out midday during the workday.
- **Don't end the walk outside when your dog potties.** Or she'll get the idea that outdoor fun ends when she relieves herself. This is why some dogs hold it until they are brought back inside. After your dog "goes," praise, give a treat and keep walking a bit longer.
- **Interrupt vs. scold.** And use your voice, not physical force. Typically, a dog goes because she just has to. If you catch her in the act, try to interrupt the action with a loud, startling AH-AH-AH!! or NO! and an immediate trip to the potty spot. Use a loud, deep, firm vowel sound; muttering or repeating commands won't convey the message. You want to alert, not punish, your dog. When she resumes relieving herself outside, praise lavishly.
- **Punishment teaches only fear.** Never shove a dog's nose in his mess or smack a dog which teaches him only to fear hands. A dog is unable to associate past behavior with a punishment he is now receiving. He can associate the pain and anger with the person administering the punishment.
- **Clean up.** Try not to let her see you clean up a mess, or she may think it's an interactive game. Use an enzyme-based pet odor neutralizer like *Nature's Miracle* or *Simple Solution* to kill the urine scent. Cleaning up extends to the outside, too. Many dogs dislike going in a poop-riddled yard. Note: paper training postpones learning the desired behavior.



## Bedtime



Your dog should sleep in a room with the pack - you and your family. The dog should have her own bed to sleep on. For some dogs, sleeping on the human's bed can aggravate dominant behaviors, so exercise caution. If your dog begins to growl or show other signs of aggression to any one in the household, work on obedience training immediately to reestablish who is in charge.

The first few nights, you may want to confine your new dog in a crate in the bedroom, but start teaching your dog house manners so that you can provide increased freedom. It is not unusual for your new dog to bark or whine if confined to a crate. Dogs want to be with their pack members. (This is why dogs kept outside often are nuisance barkers or destructive. They are stressed being kept apart.)

Place the crate or bed where she can see you. If she barks at bedtime, correct her with a firm "No Bark!" Praise softly when she quiets down. Safe chew toys will give your dog something to do until she falls asleep.

Eventually you'll want to wean your dog from her crate. Pick a night after you've tired her out and keep the crate door open. You can transition to just a dog bed from there.

A night-time housetraining hint: put plastic bags in front of the bedroom side of the door. If she gets up, the crackling sound will alert you to your dog's need to go out.

## Leaving Your Dog Alone

Initially, your new dog may experience separation anxiety when you leave. They have been through a lot over the last few weeks and “know” that you’re a good person who cares for them and may become upset when you leave. A tired dog is a happy dog. Before you leave your dog for extended periods, exercise her vigorously. Then, for 20 minutes before leaving the house, go about your business calmly - then just leave. Don't make a fuss saying good-bye.

Until you are confident that your new dog will do fine in the house, confine him or her in the kitchen, laundry room, basement or hallway using baby gates. Jumping dogs may require you to piggyback two gates atop each other.

When you get ready to leave, quietly say "good dog!" and provide a small treat. Say good-bye and leave. Don't make a big deal about leaving. When you return, quietly praise the dog for being good and take her out immediately.

**Anxiety outlet:** Try a Kong™ (a rubber chew toy that lasts a long time, even with dedicated chewers). Stuff the inside with peanut butter, freeze it and your dog will spend hours trying to lick it out. Add dry kibble for more fun.



## Conquer Common Behavior Problems

Undesirable behavior is in the eye of the beholder. Many "bad habits" (chewing, mouthing, digging, jumping, chasing, barking) are *natural, normal* behaviors for a dog. But you can control and replace them with desirable behavior by taking the time to work with your dog. Give your dog opportunities to do something you can reward.

It helps to determine the source of unwanted behavior. It often stems from the frustration of being alone since dogs are social animals. If you leave your dog for long hours on workdays, consider doggie daycare or a mid-day dog walker. In some cases, misbehavior results from stress between the human members of the home, or another environmental change such as the arrival of a new household member.

**Active Dogs** - Most often, there is nothing wrong with reportedly “hyperactive” dogs. Dogs need attention and exercise. When people don't give them enough, the dog has to do something with that excess energy.



**Barking** - Figure out what triggers your dog's barking. If trigger events occur outside, bring him indoors before the triggers appear. He'll be less likely to bark when shielded from the opportunity. When he barks and the targets bypass or leave your property, this reinforces the barking behavior - and your dog figures he did his job well. The key is to break the barking cycle. To the dog, this cycle is: "Detect trigger person/event ... barkbarkbark...feel good and useful...the trigger leaves...my barking works great...I'll do that again!"

If you can't avoid the trigger events, be prepared to re-focus his attention on you. You can do this by using small treats and praise. Re-direct his attention to you. Try to catch and stop him before he emits his first bark. Give the correction and command "No!" or "Hush!" When he attends to you, immediately praise him verbally and use tidbits to reinforce the praise. Keep this up and he will learn it is more pleasant not to bark.

**Chewing** - Chewing is how young dogs explore their environments and mature dogs relieve stress. Provide plenty of acceptable items to chew. Move objects you don't want chewed out of reach. Shield or hide power cords. Spray Bitter Apple on furniture legs and wood trim. Make sure your dog always has access to his own chew toys. Bully sticks, marrow bones and pressed rawhide are ideal as they take some time to chew even for the most aggressive chewers. When you catch him chewing something off-limits, direct him to "Leave it" or "Drop it". This requires that you first teach your dog this command using positive reinforcement. When the dog drops the item, praise lavishly and give him an acceptable item to chew.

**Jumping** - Jumping and mounting are behaviors dogs choose to seek a higher rank in the pack; sometimes they just jump out of excitement. Keep people from exciting your dog to the point of jumping up, barking or nipping. Often, jumping can be discouraged by simply ignoring the dog until he settles down. Just turn and walk away. You also can carry tidbits, and provide a treat and attention only when the dog sits calmly.

**Furniture-hogging** - Decide on the furniture and other house rules, then all family members must abide by the decisions. Consistency is key.

**Nipping and biting** - Give a strong “No” when your dog nips and withdraw attention. If nipping and biting continue, use Bitter Apple. If this does not work, consult a Golden Retriever Rescue Board Members.



## Grooming Basics

Goldens are fairly easy to groom. They need an occasional bath, coat and teeth brushed, nail trimmed and ears cleaned. Use warm water and a commercial dog shampoo for baths. If your dog has skin problems use a mild soap or one with oatmeal in it. Rinse, rinse and rinse some more.

Wipe the ear canals gently with a soft cloth or cotton pad. If you notice a blackish discharge, smell, the ears are very red, or the dog is hesitant to let you touch her ears it's likely she has an ear infection and needs to go to the vet. The longer you wait, the worse (and more expensive) it will get.

Use a commercial ear flush or a mixture of one part white vinegar to four parts warm water to clean the ears. Pour a small amount into an ear. Gently rub the solution into the ear by rubbing the base of the ear. Let your dog do the "doggie ear dance" and then wipe with a soft, dry cloth or cotton pad.

Many dogs are hesitant to have their nails trimmed. Don't try to trim nails until you both are comfortable with each other. However, don't let the nails get so long that they interfere with the dog's walking or if the dew claw is cutting into the dog's skin. Trim the very tip of each nail once a month. Your vet will show you how to do this.

Brush your dog's teeth. It's so much cheaper than getting them professionally cleaned and most dogs actually like to get their teeth brushed with poultry or beef flavored toothpaste. Use a regular, soft, human brush. Start slowly. The first couple of times simply let the dog lick the tooth brush. Slowly work up to brushing canines and then the rest of the teeth. Focus on the outside of each tooth.

# Commitment

Your new golden will have been through a lot over the last few weeks before coming to you. Golden Retrievers are remarkably resilient and will easily adjust. Should you be unable to keep your commitment to provide emotional and physical care please contact [www.goldenretrieverrescueofsouthernmaryland.org](http://www.goldenretrieverrescueofsouthernmaryland.org).

A copy of the Adoption Agreement follows. If you cannot abide by the agreement, please do not adopt from us. Thank you and good luck finding your new family member.



## **GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE OF SOUTHERN MARYLAND, INC. ADOPTION AGREEMENT**

This Adoption Agreement (“Agreement”), effective on \_\_\_\_\_(date), is between Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland, Inc., (“Rescue”) and \_\_\_\_\_ (“Adopter”), whose home address is \_\_\_\_\_.

This Agreement states the terms under which Rescue will provide and Adopter will accept a dog for adoption. Adopter and Rescue, intending to be legally bound, agree as follows:

1. Since a dog may come from an unknown genetic background, the Adopter agrees that Rescue shall not be liable for any medical conditions that may affect the dog, including but not limited to, eyes, hips, heart, allergies, or any other medical or temperament problems. Adopter acknowledges that the dog is provided **AS IS AND WITHOUT WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR ANY OTHER WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED.**
2. The Adopter shall provide the dog with humane care and maintain it in accordance with all the current and future state, county and municipal laws and ordinances where the Adopter resides. The Adopter shall obtain the appropriate license(s) for the dog in accordance with such laws and ordinances.
3. The Adopter shall provide the dog with necessary veterinary care as needed for sickness, disease, injury, or aging. The Adopter shall also provide a veterinarian visit for the dog at least annually for a health examination, recommended vaccinations, rabies vaccination as required by law, heartworm test and prescribed preventative, fecal parasite test, and any other treatment as necessary.
4. The Adopter shall provide the dog with a securely fenced yard or other humane means of exercise. The dog shall not be kept chained or tied out of doors or allowed to run at large, nor shall it be kept outside while the residence is unoccupied.

5. If for any reason the dog cannot reside with the Adopter, the Adopter must return it to Rescue. The dog shall NOT be given away, sold or exchanged without the prior written permission of Rescue. In the event of the Adopter's death, the dog shall be returned to Rescue or to an approved adoptive family.
6. The dog shall reside at and live inside the Adopter's dwelling.
7. The Adopter shall keep the dog as a household pet and shall not use it as a guard dog, hunting dog, or any other type of service dog.
8. The Adopter shall ensure the dog wears an identification tag at all times and shall provide a collar for the dog to wear at all times when allowed outdoors.
9. The Adoption fee is non-refundable.
10. Adopter agrees to release, indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Rescue and its trustees, officers, employees, agents, and volunteers, whether current or former, from and against any and all claims or liabilities, including court costs and attorney's fees, arising out of Adopter's adoption and ownership of a dog provided by Rescue.
11. The Adopter consents to examination of the dog by Rescue during reasonable hours, with or without notice. The Adopter also consents to reclamation of the dog by Rescue at any time, with or without notice, for failure to comply with the terms of this Agreement or for any misrepresentation(s) made by the Adopter on the Adoption Application. In circumstances in which the health or life of the dog is not in immediate danger, the Adopter may be given a notice period with a reasonable opportunity to remedy any violations of the terms of the Agreement.
12. The Adopter agrees to pay Rescue any and all reasonable expenses, including court costs and attorney fees, incurred by Rescue to enforce the terms and provisions of this Agreement.
13. This Agreement shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland without reference to conflict of laws principles.
14. If a provision of this Agreement is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, it shall not affect the other provisions, and this Agreement shall be construed as if such invalid or unenforceable provision were omitted.

AGREED TO AND ACCEPTED:

I (We) \_\_\_\_\_ the Adopter/s,

enter into this Adoption Agreement and acknowledge receipt from Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland, Inc. of the dog named and described as:

Dog's ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

I (We) acknowledge having read and agree to abide by the provisions of the Adoption Agreement as set forth herein.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Golden Retriever Rescue of Southern Maryland, Inc. Volunteer Adoption Representative

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Adoption Fee**

Effective March 1, 2011, adoption fees are as follows:

Under age one year - \$350

Age one to ten - \$300

Senior or special needs = \$100.