



## Altered Pet Policy

Guardian Angels for Soldier's Pet© requires any DOG or CAT to be spayed or neutered prior to being placed into a specific foster. In spite of this policy, we periodically receive requests to foster pets that are unaltered, along with questions about the purpose of our policy. Please consider the following information and note that we do provide for a couple of very specific exceptions.

While there is strong consensus among veterinarians that spaying and neutering dogs and cats makes them happier, healthier pets, adding up to two years, on average, to their life expectancy, Guardian Angels for Soldier's Pet© has no "pet politics" agenda at play, here. The policy is simply a matter of practicality.

- **FACT:** Most of our foster home volunteers already own one or more pets. The frequency and severity of fighting and other undesirable behavior problems is greatly increased when there is an unaltered pet in the household.
- **FACT:** When faced with "nature's call" to reproduce, unaltered dogs and cats can exhibit behavior ranging from mildly unsettled, to excessively stressed, to agitated and even belligerent. These pets are more inclined to wonder off and some are determined to escape, despite the best efforts of the foster home to contain them. The safety of both pets and care givers are a genuine and reasonable concern.
- **FACT:** Few foster homes are willing to take on the increased hygiene needs of a female in heat.
- **FACT:** If unaltered, neither Guardian Angels for Soldier's Pet© nor foster home can guarantee that a female pet will avoid unwanted pregnancy, or a male pet will not cause one. Unwanted pregnancies introduce unwanted health, financial and other liabilities that Guardian Angels for Soldier's Pet© is unable to assume.

### Exceptions

We have two (2) | very specific exceptions. Meeting one of these criteria does not guarantee the availability of a suitable foster home, only that we will attempt to locate one for you.

- **MEDICAL:** Very rarely a pet may suffer from a disease or health condition which makes any surgery inadvisable. A full health history and letter of explanation from the veterinarian is required.
- **AGE:** It may be advisable, in the youngest pets, to delay alteration until age-appropriate as determined by the veterinarian. A written, signed plan (age/date, payment arrangements, clinic of choice, etc.) for the surgical alteration must be executed in advance, and accompany the foster care agreement

### Situations Usually Unable to Assist With:

- **PREGNANCY/LITTER:** We can attempt to locate a foster home willing to take on the tremendous burden of a litter if necessary, but success is unlikely. If a foster home is available, arrangements for spaying as soon as medically safe to do so will be required. A written, signed plan for both the surgical alteration and the litter must be executed in advance, and accompany the foster care agreement
- **ACTIVE SHOW ANIMAL:** Dog/cat is a finished or pointed champion (conformation only) intended for formal breeding program. Pedigree, registration papers, title documentation, and breeder or breed club referral required. Simply having a desire to breed your pet does not meet this criterion! **NOTE:** If you own a show pet as defined above it is best to contact your breeder about your circumstances. Most reputable breeders would be a willing and helpful resource in locating an appropriate temporary "show home."