

Secondhand Hounds: Lost Dog Action Plan

This action plan is for adopted or owned dogs. If you are a Secondhand Hounds volunteer whose foster animal is loose or missing, please immediately contact the Lost Foster Coordinator.

We are so sorry to hear that your dog is missing; we know how scary and stressful this can be! Below are a series of action steps you could choose to take, including search tips, where you could post flyers online and in person, and a list of Twin Cities, MN area retrieval organizations that are extremely qualified to further help if needed.

Most important:

Even a friendly pet turns into a skittish animal when out alone. This is a good thing because they have great survival instincts. But, RESIST THE URGE TO CHASE THEM. This WILL make them run farther. Without being chased, they'll likely run a bit, then find somewhere safe nearby to hunker down.

First steps and general tips:

- Make your home stinky. Get the dog's kennel, blankets, and your dirty socks or gym clothes outside. Put some warm hot dogs or something suuuuper stinky and enticing in a bowl and set that out as well.
- Next, get liquid smoke (if you don't have this, it's super cheap and located by the steak sauce in grocery stores). Make a trail in all directions from your home outward by about ½ mile.
- When you are out looking for your pet, do NOT call for them. This will spook a dog in fight-or-flight mode, making them hide or bolt. Even if your dog is usually friendly, they're most likely in a more animalistic mindset right now. Instruct anyone out with you not to call for them.
- If you have another dog that your dog has met and likes, you can take that dog out with you. Dogs are more likely to approach other dogs, and they can smell each other from quite a distance.
- Check in garages, under decks, in window wells, under bushes, and any sheltered area. Your dog may have gotten stuck, or be hiding where they feel safe. Even if your dog is typically rather vocal, they are likely to keep quiet while missing. Ask people you see and

who live around you to check these sheltered areas on or in their own property and to tell their neighbors. Security cameras are your friend.

SUPER IMPORTANT!! Places to post physical signs and flyers. This is the primary way animals are reconnected with their humans!

- **Signs:**

- Get signs up right away!
 - Most important: Right in front of your home, and around your neighborhood. Anywhere that streets funnel together to exit a neighborhood/area is a great place as more people drive past.
 - Places with stop signs are best-- people have to stop and can usually loop back to the sign easily.
 - Exits to grocery store parking lots-- people going to neighborhoods nearby will see signs at this location.
- Signs should say: LOST DOG - CALL (your phone #). Neon paper is great. You can add a picture if you want as well. Covering paper in packing tape can help make it waterproof.



- **Flyers:**

- Places to share printed flyers:
 - In newspaper slots of your neighbors,
 - local vets,
 - Pet stores (we just recently reunited a foster through the finder seeing the flyer in the pet store!)
 - Pizza delivery places so their drivers know who to call if they see the dog!
 - USPS drivers
- To the right is an example of an eye-catching flyer:

MISSING DOG



(952) 373-1386

South Minneapolis, red collar
DO NOT CHASE
Call ASAP with sightings



Places to post & publicize online:

I use the same flyer online like the ones we are posting around town - people are more likely to remember it if they've seen it multiple times or places.

- Neighborhood Facebook groups: The more locally targeted the groups are, the better the success rate of receiving sightings of your pup. Find groups for your neighborhood and surrounding towns.
- Nextdoor App
- [PetFBI](#) (connects to the FB of Lost Dogs Minnesota, the biggest lost dog FB group in the area. If you are outside of Minnesota, PetFBI also connects to large and active Facebook groups in most states!)
- [Petco's Love Lost](#)
- [Pawboost](#)

People to contact to report a dog as missing:

- Local Sheriff
- Local Police Dept (sheriff and police sometimes share info but not always)
- Microchip company

When you see your dog or have a sighting called in:

Do not publicize their exact location. We don't want people out who don't know what to do and may spook them from the area.

Bring suuuuper high-value treats. Rotisserie chicken, hot dogs, ground beef, a hamburger, or cheeseburger with no onion.

STAY CALM. You're actually going to ignore your dog if you see them. Sit on your bum, or lay on your side on the ground at a 45 or 90-degree angle to them, only watching them from the corner of your eye. Pretend to eat the yummy treats, conveniently tossing a bit in their direction. Do not try to force or entice them to you. Everything right now is going to be the dog's decision. As your dog approaches, continue to ignore them, but you can toss the treats closer and closer to you if they're eating them. This process of getting them to trust you and calm down may take quite a while if they're in fight or flight mode. That is okay and normal. Take your time.

Who to contact for added expertise:

The below organizations are absolutely WONDERFUL and have whole teams of volunteers trained in retrieval strategies. They also have retrieval-specific tools if your pup is extra skittish. Both are amazing, both are extremely qualified.

- [Lost K9](#) - Centered in southeast suburbs
- [The Retrievers](#) - Statewide support, but centered around the Twin Cities

Please note: These are all general recommendations, and we at Secondhand Hounds cannot be held responsible for, nor guarantee, your or your dog's health or safety. Please use the buddy system,

follow all laws and 'rules of the road', and use caution throughout the searching process. Any input made by any Secondhand Hounds staff member or volunteer with regards to searching for or retrieving your dog should be first considered by you as far as legality, safety, and reasonableness before taking action.