

Recognizing a bad rescue from a good one is getting harder and harder, as the number of bad people involved in animal rescue continue to increase. It is important that everyone knows what warning signs to look for to identify a bad rescue because it can mean the difference between life and death for one or more animals. In addition, giving money to bad rescues just takes the money away from the good rescues and their animals that need it. Everyone involved in rescue needs to ask questions because the animals are counting on you to make sure they are safe. Here are some warning signs to watch for before you work with or donate to a rescue:

1. If a rescue does not network animals locally.
2. If local rescuers do not know who they are.
3. If the rescue always gets animals from far away. Why are they not helping in their local area or more locally to where they live? Are they unable to get animals closer to where they live for some reason?
4. If the rescue does not make adopters do an application and home-check, sign a contract, and or check on the adopter, foster, or rescue that they plan to send the animal to. They should have applications for potential adopters and fosters, as well as information on volunteering.
5. If the rescue will not allow you to visit. They might tell you that you can visit, but when their time comes are they available and willing to allow you to visit with them and their animals?
6. If the rescue does not post follow-up information and photos on their website of the animals after they are adopted. Follow-up photos should not just be taken just outside the shelter or when the animal first gets to rescue; but also while at the foster or rescue until adopted, and then an update and photos with their new family should be posted.
7. If the rescue does not hold adoption events, fundraisers, or use fosters.
8. If the rescue does not screen pullers, transporters, fosters, and adopters. They should not just adopt animals to anyone with money; if they are, then that is brokering.
9. If the rescue refuses to answer normal rescue questions. Remember if they are a 501 c 3, then they have to share certain information with you or you can report them to the IRS and state.
10. If the rescue starts attacking people asking them normal rescue questions and or starts bashing other rescuers in an effort to try to divert attention away from them and answering the questions you asked them.
11. If they will not release veterinarian's information or allow you to pay the vet directly via phone or mail.
12. If they are not using donations for what they are supposed to be for. For instance, if donations are for needed vet care, then that is what they should be used for. If a rescue is not getting an animal needed vet care then do not use them.
13. If they will not give you the name and location of a rescue they are sending an animal or animals to.
14. If the rescue has been reported for complaints or cited for any violations.

15. If the rescue does not report how many animals they have and adopt out as they are supposed to on their website and or Facebook page. They should have multiple photos of each animal taken from good angles. Also make sure the photos are not just of them with the pet, because that is also a bad sign. In addition, if they do not have pictures with follow-up information on all of the animals they have rescued.
16. If the rescue is always complaining about how broke they are, what bills they have, and they are always saying how they need money. Especially, when the rescue complains about all of their personal bills all the time and wants help paying them. If they are really always that broke, then are the animals getting the proper care at home and by a vet that they should get? Legit rescues do fundraising and get donations and do not usually need to beg for funds.
17. If you catch them lying or changing their stories.
18. If they will not allow you to adopt or apply to adopt or foster from them.
19. If they mainly or only rescue animals with high pledges.
20. If they are rescuing large numbers of animals in a regular basis. This is especially important when they are sending the dogs far away and to the same rescues on a regular basis. Where are they all going? Do they post follow-up photos of all of them in their new homes? Legit rescues know that it takes time to adopt animals out to qualified homes, often times months or years.
21. If they ask for donations or pledges to be paid while the animal is still in the shelter or before providing follow-up information and photos of where that animal went and if it was adopted or rescued.
22. If they are affiliated with any known animal abusers or rescue scammers.
23. If they have posted fake reviews online about themselves.

The most important thing is that you ask questions. Don't just pay your pledges without any information. Verify that the animal is truly rescued and safe per information and photos. One way to avoid this worry is to rescue and donate locally or more locally (within your own state). By rescuing locally you can visit the rescue and get to know the people operating it. In addition, you can also check on the animals yourself. When you find rescues you like locally, start donating money or supplies to them to help them to care for and to keep saving more animals. Remember, the animals are counting on us to keep them safe. They cannot speak up but we can. Ask questions and get answers or do not work with them. There are plenty of legit, good rescues that are more than happy to provide you with all the information that would love your support.

If you know about animal abuse or rescue scams, please report them to the proper authorities.