

GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS TO DETERMINE IF DOGS ARE BONDED

- They came into the shelter together from the same household/address/location.
- They have lived together for an extended period of time.
- Their history shows they have been through some type of trauma together prior to entering the shelter and appear bonded.
- Their owner surrender information indicates they are bonded.
- They appear bonded – show closeness and repeated/continued physical contact; comfort each other, sleep together, etc.
- They show signs of affection such as cleaning the ears, licking the face, etc.
- They refuse to leave their kennel without each other.
- They tend to wait for the other one to eat and make sure the other one is getting food/treats; they often share food and toys.
- If one is more withdrawn than the other, they allow human contact more readily when they notice the other is accepting it.
- If one appears to be in pain or has a medical condition or deformity, the other one seems to care for it and seems protective.
- They might get particularly stressed or anxious when they are separated for any reason.

These guidelines should be **handled with flexibility** and sometimes the bond only really becomes clear on outings outside of the stressful shelter environment. Not all points might be present in all cases.

Any pair of senior dogs that appear bonded and came from the same address and/or lived with each other for an extended period of time or were labeled by the owner as bonded should be treated as a bonded pair unless observations suggest otherwise.