

Arizona Lost Dog Action Plan

By [Lost Dogs Arizona](#)

Don't give up! Many dogs are found weeks or months after they go missing.

IMMEDIATELY

- If your dog is microchipped, contact your microchip company to report your lost dog and to make sure your contact information is correct. If you have the chip number but don't know who to call, use www.petmicrochiplookup.org. If you don't have the number, contact the veterinarian, rescue or shelter who implanted it. It will also likely be with any adoption records you have.
- Place a blanket and/or clothing that smells familiar to your dog along with a dish of food and water outside where he/she was last seen.
- Assign one person to be point person for communications and coordination. Determine what phone number and email to use in all advertisements and on social media. Make sure spam folders and voicemail messages/texts are checked often.
- Organize all current information about the lost dog: name, color of collar, tags, current photo, breed, description, microchip information, where and when last seen, etc.
- Search the immediate area – inside your home and around your property and nearby property. Check closets, behind and under furniture, garages, vehicles, outdoor sheds, window wells, ponds, canals, swimming pools, fencing, places where your dog could have fallen in or be stuck in, trapped. Do not rely on your dog making noise. Search thoroughly.

CREATE FLYERS AND POSTERS

- Submit the form to have your dog listed with Helping Lost Pets and Lost Dogs Arizona: www.HelpingLostPets.com/LDAZ. A ready-to-print flyer is provided automatically. Check your email after submitting the form. Remove Helping Lost Pets from any spam filters.
- Print the 4 per page flyer and make at least 50 copies. You will give these to neighbors and businesses in the area.
- Print the 1 per page flyer and create posters that you will post as signs in the area, on poles, in stores, in your yard, etc. We recommend using the large photo option provided by Helping Lost Pets. Attach it to a piece of neon colored poster board. Use a plastic sleeve to protect the paper from rain. Write 5 words or less in large black letters on the neon board, including a description of the dog and your phone number. For more info: <https://missingpetpartnership.org/posters-and-flyers>.
- Another way to get the word out to a large number of people is car tagging: <https://missingpetpartnership.org/car-tagging>

SEARCH:

- Get a map of the area, divide the map into sections, at least 3 miles in every direction from where the dog was lost, assign each section to a volunteer to look for the dog, hang posters and hand out flyers.
- Each team member should carry tasty treats, water, a leash, poster materials (duct tape, posters), flyers, and a cell phone.
- Hang posters at intersections, focusing on those coming into and out of the area with the most traffic. Put them at eye height for a driver.
- Post a sign in your front yard.
- Distribute flyers to neighbors (go door to door if safe), delivery drivers (mail, UPS, FedEx, etc.), food delivery services, cab companies, bus drivers and local businesses. If your dog is not microchipped, put priority on getting flyers to nearby vet offices and places with scanners first, before a finder takes your dog in to get it scanned. Hand deliver flyers to vet offices; don't just call or email. Also provide flyers to other pet-related businesses in the area: retail stores, trainers, pet sitters, kennels, etc.

- Look for “Found” signs.
- Make sure your team knows not to call or chase your dog if he/she is seen. This may make your dog feel threatened and panic which could cause them to run even further, possibly into traffic. Even the friendliest dog may run from fear. Many dogs go into “survival” mode and may not even seem to recognize their owner at first. You want to sit or lie down, avert your eyes, don’t talk to the dog, lure the dog in with tasty treats.
- Record all sightings.
- Check posters often and replace them if they are removed or unreadable.

NOTIFY AND POST

You want to get the word out to as many people as possible. Utilize the flyers you printed to notify. When posting online, use the post on Lost Dogs Arizona or Helping Lost Pets because it contains all the necessary information.

- Submit a lost dog report to your local animal control. Start with our list of shelters but ask about other organizations you may need to report to: www.lostdogsarizona.org/shelter-list.html
- For Maricopa County, file a Lost Dog Report by calling the Call Center at 602-506-7387 or the Lost/Found Desk at 602-372-4598. You can also email lostfound@mail.maricopa.gov or file a report at the West shelter at 2500 S. 27th Ave in Phoenix.
- Notify local Police Departments and city government. Many Police Departments have short term stray holding facilities.
- Find out who picks up deceased animals in your city and contact them. This might be the highway or public works department or it may be contracted out.
- Contact your veterinarian.
- Alert your Homeowners Association and other neighborhood organizations. Post to the Facebook pages for these organizations. Post to NextDoor.com. Check back often for found dog posts.
- If you haven’t yet posted to Helping Lost Pets/Lost Dogs Arizona, do that now at www.HelpingLostPets.com/LDAZ. Make sure you routinely check your post, login at least once every 30 days and make sure emails are not being sent to your spam folder. Check the Helping Lost Pets map and the Lost Dogs Arizona photo albums for matching found dogs.
- Post your lost dog on craigslist.org in both the Community/Pets and Community/Lost & Found sections, for your area and for nearby areas. Monitor craigslist for found dog ads and for “dog for sale” ads. If you use the craigslist email, make sure you check your email often, including your spam folder.
- Post your dog as lost on petharbor.com. Search shelter dogs listed and scroll down to “search pets found by public”. Check adoptable dogs if your dog has been missing more than 3 days. Remember that all information online can have errors so keep your searches broad and always visit the shelters in person.
- In Maricopa County, post your dog as lost on the county interactive map. If you filed a lost dog report with Maricopa County Animal Care and Control, this should be done for you but check to be sure the information and location is correct. Check for found dogs on the map as well. gis.maricopa.gov/ACC/Stray/index.html
- Monitor Twitter feeds if your county has one. For Maricopa, @NoLostPetsMC shows all pick-ups by animal control.
- There are many Facebook pages dedicated to lost and found pets. Post to as many as you can. We recommend sharing the post from Lost Dogs Arizona so that when it’s removed because your pet is home, the shares will also be removed. Post to Straydar, Lost Dogs of Arizona, Lost and Found Pets of Pima County, Lost Pets of Northern Arizona, Animal Lovers of Laveen, Animal Lovers of Chandler, Animal Lovers of Peoria, as appropriate, as a minimum.
- Post to local Facebook pages: Sell/Swap pages, HOA pages, your own personal page, outdoor groups such as hiking clubs, etc.
- Post and check ads in local newspapers.

- Check rescue websites. Some rescues take in strays and/or pull dogs from the shelters. See our Rescue list as a starting point www.lostdogsarizona.org/rescue-list.html but know that it is not all inclusive.

VISIT SHELTERS (Arizona shelter list: www.LostDogsArizona.org/shelter-list.html)

Important: In Arizona, the required stray hold is 72 hours. After 72 hours, your dog belongs to the county and will either be adopted, rescued or euthanized. You must go visit at least every other day to ensure you don't miss your dog.

- Visit all county shelters in your county and in nearby counties if you live near a county border.
- Visit other local shelters or rescues such as the Arizona Humane Society or Humane Society of Southern Arizona.
- If you live near tribal land, contact and visit their animal control facilities.
- Make sure you visit ALL kennels in the shelter. Some shelters will have kennels that are not accessible to the public for injured or bite dogs. You must ask about these.
- If your dog has been gone for more than 72 hours, make sure you check areas and locations containing adoptable dogs, not just those containing strays.
- Post flyers in each location and check back often to make sure the flyer is still posted. Also check posted "found" flyers.

CHECK SIGHTINGS

- Use a separate map to record sightings. Record the date, time and exact location of each sighting.
- If you have had multiple sightings in the same area, put out items that smell familiar to your dog in that area. You can also add a feeding station and a trail camera in the area to verify a reported sighting.
- Avoid bringing in large groups to areas where there have been sightings as they may scare a lost dog and cause him/her to leave the area.
- Humane traps can be used to trap a dog but make sure you have the appropriate size and know how to use it. There are experts who can help.
- Do not chase a lost dog. Chasing can cause a dog to run. Approach slowly, use treats to lure. Lost dogs may be frightened and may even run from their owner.
- If there have been no sightings, start from the beginning and expand your search area.

ONCE YOUR DOG IS HOME

- Take your dog to a veterinarian to be checked over.
- Remove all flyers and posters. Take down web postings and discontinue ads. Let all agencies you contacted know the dog has been recovered and thank them for their assistance.
- If not already, make sure your dog is micro chipped and wearing tags on a secure collar or harness.
- Update the status of your dog on the Helping Lost Pets website/Lost Dogs Arizona by changing to "Back Home" at <http://www.helpinglostpets.com/mypets>.