New Bedford Pet Detective tips: “I lost/found a pet, now what?”

As the New Bedford Pet Detective, a few volunteers and I have helped over a thousand lost pets get back to their owner. In a typical week, helping a dozen pets get home through the New Bedford Pet Detective and New Bedford Guide Facebook pages is common. I thought I’d write this article to educate people on what to do when a pet is lost or found in the Greater New Bedford area.

I Lost a pet, what do I do?

1. The first thing you should do is note the time your furry friend went missing and the last location he/she was seen. It’s important to have a starting point. This will help animal control and volunteers.

2. Get some recent photos together.

3. Contact your local animal control officer. Here’s a list of phone numbers locally.

LOCAL ANIMAL CONTROL

Acushnet 508-998-9040	**Marion** 508-748-1212
Dartmouth 508-910-1840	**Mattapoisett** 508-758-4142
Carver 508-866-3444	**New Bedford** 508-991-6366
Fairhaven 508-979-4028	**Rochester** 508-763-2022
Fall River 508-677-3137	**Wareham** 508-295-1473 x250
Freetown 508-763-4017	**Westport** 508-678-6353
Lakeville 508-947-3174	

The New Bedford Animal Control website has a form to report lost or stolen pets **here**. I would fill out the form and call them.

4. Message New Bedford Guide through our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/NewBedfordGuide/) or email info@newbedfordguide.com and message the New Bedford Pet Detective (https://www.facebook.com/nbpetdetective/). the minimum details to provide are day/time/location lost, details about the pet (collar, color, name, size, and medical conditions), and most importantly your contact information such as a **phone number and/or email**. Asking us to tag your Facebook page won't be sufficient since Facebook may spam messages from people not in your friend's list.

Don't send an email that you never check! There is nothing worse than finding your pet and not being able to reach you.

5. If animal control doesn't have your pet, it's a good idea to call local animal hospitals. Here's a list of **local animal hospitals**.

6. Provide an update to us and animal control. First, there is no reason to continue to waste resources if your pet has been located. Second, concerned people on social media deserve an update – they are sharing your pet and maybe even looking for him/her. Help us close the loop!

I Found a pet, what do I do?

Generally, the steps are the same, contact animal control and New Bedford Guide/New Bedford Pet Detective. Provide details. New Bedford Animal Control also has a form for found pets on their website **here**. Fill that out and call them.

But the most important thing once you find someone claiming to be the owner is to VERIFY that the person claiming the pet is the owner. There are TONS of scammers just looking for animals to claim. They could want a pet, could sell it or even use it

for dog fighting. It shouldn’t be hard to verify the owner – make them come with photos, vet records or some type of proof. If you do NOT feel comfortable for any reason, just bring the dog to animal control or a local pet shelter and inform the person claiming the pet. In New Bedford, pets are sent to Forever Paws in Fall River:

Forever Paws Animal Shelter
300 Lynwood Street,
Fall River, MA 02721
Phone: 508-677-9154
E-Mail: fpas1@foreverpaws.com
Office Hours: 11:00am – 4:00pm daily

It is very important to get the animal to the owner, animal control or a shelter as soon as possible. Some pets have medical conditions and animal control and shelters have the resources to not only take care of the pet, but locate the owner.

Hopefully, this quick guide helps! Have a tip? Share them in the comment section below!