

# IT TAKES A VILLAGE to Rescue A Golden



## Behind the Scenes



On the surface, to rescue one dog seems simple. The Intake Team answers the Woof Line and sends out an Intake Profile; the Placement Team finds a home; the Transport Coordinator sends out a Transport Request; a Transport Team member picks up the dog and drops it off at its new home; the Vet Team makes the appointments; the Follow-up Team calls the Foster or Adopter a few times; the Adoption Team finalizes the adoption, and everyone lives happily ever after. **WHEW! But what if...?**

If you look closer, you will see a much more complex picture. It takes a minimum of 10 people to accomplish the simple rescue of one dog. But, **IF** the Woof Line isn't the initial source, **IF** it is an emergency intake, **IF** the dog needs a foster before adoption, **IF** it takes three or more people transport, **IF** vetting/boarding is necessary, **IF** there are behavior issues, **IF** the transport didn't go as expected. There can be as many as 14 or more people simultaneously coordinating, deciding, communicating, acting, and documenting the rescue of this one dog.

Another consideration is that there is frequently more than one dog rescued and processed at once, which draws in even more people from each team, creating clusters of teams within the teams. All of these teams interact with each other through the process to be sure the decisions that overlap are consistent; they are ready to step in where and when needed at a moment's notice.

Urgent or emergency rescues require a quick response by all teams. Our teams are known to complete rescues from intake to delivery to the new home in another city, within a few hours. An example is an urgent intake message went out to the teams asking for an ASAP pick up of an abandoned dog kept outside in the heat. All teams were mobilized to beat an incoming storm. Just forty-five minutes later, the dog was picked up and resting safely with a temporary foster overnight, and then on to an adopting family ready to receive him as soon as we could get him there. Awesome teamwork!



For an urgent or emergency pick up, the sequence of events occurs out of order. The actions are sometimes in progress before the requests can formally go out in the proper format. It's sort of like the pins in the bowling alley that go every which way after the ball hits them. But in the end, everything falls into place because everyone knows their job.

The whole process of rescuing a dog is reminiscent of an ant colony. When you watch an ant colony, it looks like many ants randomly running around the hill. However, each ant has a specific job to perform, and the survival of the colony depends on it getting its job done. The same principle applies to a rescue. To see the process in action, check out A5 Charting the Path to Home.

It is difficult to determine the amount of combined time spent on one rescue. There are too many variables to come up with the number of hours donated by our volunteers; every dog would add up differently. A rough estimate for a simple rescue of an easy to place a dog that would involve pickup and delivery in the same city, with no medical or behavioral issues, would be approximately nine combined volunteer hours. The amount of time increases exponentially for each added factor.



All of this is accomplished by a ready-to-roll, Golden loving, dedicated group of people whose reward is hearing, "Good job!" and "Thank you.", seeing the joy on the faces of new families, watching dogs settle in a new, safe, loving environment, and at the end of the day knowing they played a crucial part in rescuing another Golden friend.

*In 2019, Rescue A Golden of Arizona rescued 63 dogs. Each dog went through this process; many required additional interventions and medical treatments before adoption by new, loving families. We never turn away a dog because of medical needs. If you can help a team, attend our Meet & Greet or events, or donate, please visit our website at [www.golden-retriever.org](http://www.golden-retriever.org) for more information about how to become a Golden hero.*

