

# Central MS Turtle Rescue Adoption Application and Contract

Completion of this application does not guarantee the adoption of a turtle or tortoise. Your information will not be shared with the public. YOU MUST ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED AS AN ADOPTER. You may attach additional sheets as necessary if there is not enough room for your answers on this form.

## Filing Process:

**Electronic filing:** You may fill this application out on your computer. This is a fillable PDF form that allows for electronic signature. If you cannot electronically sign the document, please sign the last page of the application, scan to your computer and email it to: [turtlerescuemembers.adoptions@gmail.com](mailto:turtlerescuemembers.adoptions@gmail.com)

**How long does the process take?** The answer depends on the availability of your references, and the opportunity for our staff and board to look over your application. You will generally hear from a member of our staff within 72 hours (Mon-Fri) regarding any additional questions or required information. A final decision should be expected within approximately one to two weeks after that. **Please be patient with our all-volunteer rescue.** During the time of year when rescues are at their peak (spring/summer/early fall), our responses may be slower than usual.

**\*\*Special note:** This application is quite extensive. Please don't let the length or questions intimidate you into not applying. If you don't currently have the appropriate setup, but are willing to provide it, then we are more than willing to work with potential adopters and provide guidance on turtle/tortoise ownership.

## General Adoption Information

By state law, our facility is NOT open to the public. We are a home-based group and therefore do not offer open tours to view the turtles in our care. Once you submit the application, we will be in touch and, if approved, can set up an appointment to view the turtle you're interested in. Detailed information about each available turtle is available on request. Please email [turtlerescuemembers.adoptions@gmail.com](mailto:turtlerescuemembers.adoptions@gmail.com).

Please note:

- In most cases, minimum enclosure size for a single adult box turtle is 15 square feet. (Smaller enclosures will be considered for young box turtles if adopter is willing to up-size as the turtle grows.)
- Glass tanks are never appropriate for box turtles or tortoises.
- Minimum tank size for an aquatic turtle is 10 gallons of water for every inch of shell length.
- Space requirements for tortoises vary depending on species. No matter the type of turtle, more space is always better.
- Pre-approved 24-hour/day predator/security-proofing is required for any turtle that will be housed outdoors or if housed indoors in a home with other pets or children. **No exceptions.**
- We will check your references, including your current vet. We believe that prior vet history with your current or past pets provides great insight on how you treat animals in your care.
- We will not supply mass turtle breeders. If your intent is to adopt a turtle from us and breed him or her repeatedly for profitable gain, please look elsewhere.

Please remember that most of the turtles we offer for adoption are wild animals. They were not bred to be pets and were not raised as pets. The only reason they are in captivity and are available for adoption is because they cannot be released. We favor adopters who intend to provide an environment as closely resembling their natural environment as possible, or as close to that as possible considering any special needs the turtle may have.

We do not charge an adoption fee and we do not sell any turtles. All potential adopters will be heavily screened. We are willing to ship, on a case-by-case basis - adopter pays all shipping costs. If a turtle is to be shipped out of state, the adoption must also first be approved by the MS Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. Shipping is temperature-sensitive. Depending on where you live, we may not be able to ship to you during summer or winter. **There will be absolutely no adoptions, local or otherwise, between Thanksgiving and New Year.**

## You and Your Family

*Please Note: You must be 21 years old or older to be considered.*

(1) Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (2) E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(5) City: \_\_\_\_\_ (6) State: \_\_\_\_\_ (7) Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(8) Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ (9) Best Time to Call: \_\_\_\_\_

(10) If you are approved for adoption, and the turtle will be shipped to you, is the address above the same address we should use for shipping? \_\_\_\_\_

(10a) If no, please provide the correct shipping address: \_\_\_\_\_

(10b) Is the shipping address residential or business? \_\_\_\_\_

(11) Applicant's year of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ (12) Employer of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

(13) Names and ages of all residents (including children) living in the home:

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(14) If no children, but you have children that visit, please list their ages:

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## Turtle/Tortoise Preferences

(15) Are you interested in a specific turtle/tortoise from our site or Petfinder page? \_\_\_\_\_

(15a) If yes, please list name of turtle(s):

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(15b) If you would rather we match you with a turtle or tortoise we feel will be suitable for you, please describe the type of turtle you have in mind. (turtle/tortoise, young/adult, terrestrial/aquatic, etc.)

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## Caring for a Chelonian

(16) Have you previously owned turtles/tortoises or any other reptile? \_\_\_\_\_

*No experience is required to adopt, but this gives us an idea of what information you might need to care for your new turtle properly.*

(16a) If yes, please give a brief description of the animals and the care and husbandry you provided:

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(16b) If the animals are no longer in your care, please explain why:

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(17) Have you done research regarding the species of turtle(s) you're interested in? If so, please cite the sources you used. If by the internet, please list specific websites. *(If your answer is a Facebook Group beginning with "World Wide", please do additional/alternate research at other sites/groups and list those below.)*

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(18) If you currently own turtles/tortoises or other reptiles, please give a brief description of their habitat and care. *Please also submit photos of your enclosures with as much detail as possible, when you submit this application.*

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(19) Do you own your own home? \_\_\_\_\_

(20) Do you intend to house the turtle(s) indoors or outdoors? \_\_\_\_\_

(20a) If outdoors, what is your plan for cold weather/hibernation?

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(20b) If you already have an outdoor enclosure, is your habitat completely predator proof on all sides? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please include photos of your enclosures, showing predator-proofing.*

(21) If you don't already house turtles, please describe the habitat you will provide for the turtle(s) you wish to adopt. \_\_\_\_\_

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(22) What diet do you now, or plan to, provide:

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## Your Home

(23) Please check which applies to your current residence.

Home Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Home Renter \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

(24) If you rent a home or apartment, do they allow pets? \_\_\_\_\_

(25) If you rent, will your landlord allow an aquarium over 30 gallons? \_\_\_\_\_

(26) If you rent, will your landlord allow outdoor land turtle/tortoise enclosures? \_\_\_\_\_

(27) Length of time at current residence? \_\_\_\_\_

(28) Please list all **current** pets that you own or foster. **Include breed/species, age, gender, and how long you have owned them, and if they live indoors/outside:**

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## Veterinarian Information

(29) Please list the names and addresses of all veterinarians who see or have seen the animals listed above.

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**We will be calling your veterinarian(s) as a reference so that we can better understand your pattern of care for your past and current pets. (Please call your veterinarian(s) to ensure we are able to obtain information, when we call.)**

(29b) If you don't currently have a veterinarian, please explain why:

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(30) If your regular veterinarian does not see turtles, do you know of one in your area that does? \_\_\_\_\_

(30a) Name of vet: \_\_\_\_\_ (30b) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(30c) Clinic Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Legal Stuff

If you are a Mississippi resident, the following types of licenses are required to possess **native turtles** in this state. Please indicate which license you hold and provide a copy of said license. If you do not currently hold any of the following licenses, we will gladly hold your application until you have been able to obtain one. Please communicate this to us so that we can discuss whether or not we can hold the turtle you're interested in as well.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Resident Sportsman's License
- \_\_\_\_\_ Resident All Game Hunting and Freshwater Fishing License
- \_\_\_\_\_ Small Game Hunting and Freshwater Fishing License
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Resident All Game Hunting License

Information regarding turtle possession in Mississippi:

<https://www.mdwfp.com/fishing-boating/freshwater-commercial/turtle-information/>

Information regarding hunting/fishing licenses in Mississippi:

<https://www.mdwfp.com/license/hunting/>

\*\*If you are not a Mississippi resident, CMTR asks potential adopters to inform themselves on any local, city, state, etc. policies or laws pertaining to the ownership or possession of a turtle/tortoise.

Please provide a web address or link where we can find information about your state's laws pertaining to the possession and importation of turtles:

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**We will not willingly or knowingly adopt a turtle to a location where it is illegal to do so by law.**

## References

Please provide two names as personal references. You must include your landlord (if you rent your home or apartment) as a 3rd reference. Other references could include a neighbor or anyone who knows you, such as a friend, or co-worker who has knowledge of you with your pets past or present. **References CANNOT be related to you by blood, adoption, or marriage.** Your references will be checked! Your application will NOT be considered if you do not complete this section.

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1. Personal Reference Name: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Phone Number/best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Personal Reference Name: \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Phone Number/best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. LANDLORD (only if you rent) N/A
    - a. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Phone Number/best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Contract

1. I understand that my application does not constitute a guarantee or hold or any type of specific turtle/tortoise offered for adoption.

2. Should my application be approved and a turtle from the Central MS Turtle Rescue be placed with me, I agree to the following:

A. I understand that, unless otherwise specified in paragraph 4 below, this animal is in good general health at the time of adoption. I further understand that the stress that may occur as a result of the animal being moved from CMTR to its new location may cause stress-related illness or injury. If the animal does require medical treatment or medications, I will be fully responsible for these expenses, and will assure that such care as is needed is provided to the animal.

B. I agree to follow the rules and regulations promulgated by the state, city and county in which this animal will be housed, and that if permits or other permissions are required, I will obtain them and will be responsible for any expenses incurred in relation to the permit process. If the animal is seized due to failure of Adopter to acquire the requisite permits, custody and ownership shall revert to CMTR.

C. I agree to furnish the appropriate housing, food, water, light, heat, humidity, exercise and medical care to provide for this animal in a devoted and humane manner. To assure proper care, I have or will immediately purchase or otherwise acquire a book or other information to learn how to properly care for this animal. I further understand that if the animal I am adopting will be large when full grown, I will have to move this animal into housing large enough to properly accommodate the growing animal and its changing needs.

D. I specifically agree to keep this animal within my control at all times. I will take particular care when housing this animal to ensure the enclosures are escape-proof and that the enclosure in which they are housed is secured against possible escape and predators.

E. I specifically agree, except as otherwise provided for in Paragraph 3, that this animal will not be used for research, experiments, or in any other inhumane way.

F. I agree that this animal is a life-long commitment, and the animal will not be sold, traded, destroyed (except in cases of extreme medical conditions), abandoned or otherwise disposed of.

G. I agree to return the animal to CMTR if, as Adopter, I no longer desire or am otherwise unable to keep the animal, and will never sell, trade, give away or abandon the animal. If the animal is lost, I shall notify CMTR expeditiously and make every effort to recover it. If the animal dies, CMTR is to be notified, and the body is to be frozen until such time as it can be delivered to or picked up by CMTR or until other arrangements can be made (at the discretion of CMTR) for disposal.

H. I agree to allow CMTR at any time to investigate the premises where the animal is kept and to reclaim the animal if, in the judgment of the investigator, the animal is not being adequately cared for, if the Adopter has not complied with any provision of this contract, or if the Adopter has misrepresented any fact to CMTR. In the event that the Adopter fails or refuses to return such animal upon demand, the Adopter hereby agrees to pay reasonable attorney's fees in the event an attorney is consulted or if suit is brought for the return of the animal.

I. I agree to truthfully and completely answer any follow-up questionnaire which CMTR may send the Adopter regarding the animal.

3. In the event this animal is adopted by a school, nature center, science center or other educational institution, the adopting entity agrees to abide by the terms of this contract with the following modifications:

A. The animal may be used for educational purposes, with education defined as presenting the animal alive and in good health to teach the students or other general public about the field of herpetology, conservation, environmental education and natural history. This animal is not to be used for medical or scientific experimentation nor for dissection, even if such endeavors are otherwise considered to be educational in nature.

B. If this animal is kept in an educational facility, proper care must be taken to provide for the animal's needs during weekends, holidays and vacations. The animal is to be cared for only by a responsible individual who is experienced or otherwise knowledgeable in the needs of the animal(s) referenced in paragraph 2.c above. The animal is not to be sent home with a child or student unless the parent or guardian of said child or student understands the demands and needs that must be provided for, and if the adopting entity visits the child's or student's home during the course of the weekend, holiday or vacation to assure that the animal is being cared for properly. Failure to do so may constitute animal abuse, and will result in the reclamation of the animal by CMTR.

C. If the adopting entity at any time in the future no longer wishes to keep the animal, it shall be returned to CMTR. If the animal is lost, the adopting entity shall notify CMTR expeditiously and shall make every effort to recover it. This animal is never to be traded, sold, released into the wild or given away.

4. The information provided to the Adopter concerning the animal's description, history and condition is complete and correct to the best of the CMTR's knowledge and belief. CMTR recommends that the animal be examined by a licensed reptile veterinarian within 72 hours of the adoption.

5. The Adopter agrees to be solely and personally responsible for this animal and to indemnify and hold harmless CMTR and its agents from any and all claims of liability for the conduct or condition of this animal after the date of adoption. Adopter further agrees that this indemnification and release of liability shall apply to all known, unknown and unanticipated damages resulting from this adoption, or the ownership or control of this animal.

6. I understand that the animal may be classified as Threatened by the Endangered Species Act of the United States, and/or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and that permits or other documentation may be required to prove legal ownership or possession. I understand that certain other city, county, state or federal permits or licensing may be required and that I am fully responsible for researching and acquiring same. I further understand that failure on my part to secure such permits or documentation may result in the seizure of this animal by local, state or federal agencies.

7. The CMTR, as a continuing condition of the contract and obligation resulting from the adoption of the above described animal from the CMTR, agrees that the CMTR will:

A. Accept the animal back, keep and care for the animal for the rest of the animal's natural life, or adopt the animal to another Adopter with the same terms as this adoption, should the animal be returned for any reason.

B. Will remain available to the Adopter for ongoing advice as needed regarding the animal.

The undersigned attest that the information provided herein and on the Adopter's CMTR Adoption Application Form are true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(day) (month) (year)

The Adopter: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

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The following section is for CMTR use only.

Turtle Identifier(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Turtle(s) Mississippi native species? \_\_\_\_\_

Licensees attached? \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosure photos/details rec'd? \_\_\_\_\_

References checked? \_\_\_\_\_

Turtle(s) to be shipped? \_\_\_\_\_

Adoption application: APPROVED or DENIED

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adoption complete: \_\_\_\_\_

File closed: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff signature and title: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional space, if needed, to answer any of the questions asked above for which you didn't have enough room to answer. Please reference the question number along with your response.

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