

Questions about the fostering process:



1. *How long will I be expected to foster this dog? If it's until a suitable home is found, how long do you expect that to take?*

- A foster commitment can be for as little as 2 weeks or longer based on the dog/puppy. We can only save as many dogs as we have foster homes for so please consider fostering.

2. *What happens if I can no longer care for the dog?*

- A Journey Home Dog Rescue makes every effort to fit each dog with a foster family where he will settle in and fit your family's experience level. However, if there is a need to remove the dog/puppy from the foster home, the rescue will work with you to place your foster in another home. Please understand that this cannot be an immediate move.

3. *Who pays for medical bills if they arise?*

- Veterinary care will be provided a veterinarian hospital contracted by the rescue. This includes all approved necessary medical needs for the dog. The rescue will also provide monthly heartworm, flea and tick preventative. Our participating vet offices are located in Naperville, South Elgin, Elmhurst and Wheaton.

4. *What should I do if there's a medical emergency?*

- If the need arises for emergency vet care, the foster family must receive prior approval from a representative of A Journey Home Dog Rescue. You will be provided contact numbers to reach AJH in case of an emergency. If the foster family is unable to reach a representative of A Journey Home Dog Rescue, then the emergency vet must be contacted.
- If the foster family does not contact A Journey Home Dog Rescue prior to taking the foster dog or puppy to the vet, they may be held responsible for unapproved expenditures.

5. *Who is responsible for communicating with potential adopters, screening them and introducing the dog to them?*

- A representative from A Journey Home will initially communicate and screen potential adopters. When a possible adoptive family is found, the Rescue, the foster family, and adoptive family will communicate and/or meet.

6. *Will I be required to bring him to adoption events and, if so, where/when?*

- The foster family will have the opportunity to attend and bring their foster(s) to events that we schedule. These are usually held in pet stores and training facility. We also ask to have the dog/puppy available for dates scheduled for meet and greets and adoptions. We encourage attendance but understand everyone has busy lives. A Journey Home will work with you so your foster will be in attendance.

7. *Will you provide food, supplies (such as a leash), medications, etc., or will I be expected to?*

- We pay for all food, medications, crate, toys, leash and collar for the foster dog or puppy.

8. *If I have a problem, whom can I contact? If I leave a message, how quickly will that person get back to me?*

- You can contact of the volunteer Team Members from A Journey Home Dog Rescue. Their phone numbers will be provided to you in the Foster Folder you will receive when your dog/puppy arrives. The team members will make every effort to return your call quickly if you have to leave a message.

9. Can I adopt my foster dog/puppy if I choose?

- If a foster family would like to adopt their foster pup, they are given the opportunity for priority consideration. The foster family will need to fill out an application and submit it to the board. As long as the foster family completes the application **before** the foster dog is posted to the public, they will receive priority consideration. If the foster families' application is received after the pup is posted online, it will be considered with the rest of applications that we receive.

Before You Foster

Before you foster, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you able to separate the foster pets from your own?
 - You should have a place where you can isolate your foster pet from your own companion animals. A separate room or enclosed area with no carpet will work best.
- Are you aware that there is a great deal of clean-up and even possible damage to your home when you take a foster pet home?
 - Foster pets have ruined drapes, carpeting, clothing, and other valuable items. Preparing your home and the area the animal will stay in can prevent most accidents, but not all of them!
- Are you able to monitor the health of the foster pet?
 - You will need to pay attention to signs of illness or worsening of symptoms and call the rescue group if you are concerned. Before taking in a foster, ask the foster care coordinator what to look for. If you see troubling signs, the medical coordinator will help you decide if you should bring the animal in for treatment.
- Can you get to the rescue's vet quickly in case of an emergency?
 - The shelter or rescue group works with a vet who will treat your foster pet at no charge to you. If the animal you are fostering needs medical attention, you will need to transport him or her to the vet's office or shelter for care.
- Are you emotionally prepared to return the pet after the foster period is up?
 - It can be very difficult to let go once you have become emotionally attached to an animal! Be prepared for tears and heartache when the day comes that you must bring your first foster pet to their possible new family. But remember, he or she is now much more likely to find a loving, permanent home because of YOUR care!
- Do you feel comfortable explaining to friends that these pets are not yours to adopt out and that they must go through the regular adoption process at the shelter?
 - If you are interested in helping to find a home for your foster pet, refer your friends and family to the shelter or rescue group to complete an adoption application.

Qualifications

To be a successful foster parent, you will need a compassionate nature, the cooperation of your family or roommates, flexibility, and some knowledge of animal behavior. The length of time a foster pet may stay in your home varies with the animal's situation. You will be asked to fill out a foster application. A *Journey Home Dog Rescue* Team Member may conduct a home visit prior to your receiving your first foster pet

How to Be the Best Dog Foster Parent

Fostering a dog is one of many ways you can help improve the lives of homeless pets. Most people are well aware of the pet overpopulation problem both nationally and internationally – there are millions of dogs that wait and sadly die in shelters and rescues annually, awaiting the forever homes they truly deserve.

While shelters and rescue facilities would like to house every homeless pet, this is often impractical and impossible due to a lack of resources or space. Dogs that would otherwise be euthanized due to lack of space can be saved through caring people who are willing to open their home and hearts to a shelter pet in need. Many homeless pets grew up in homes where they were well-loved family members. For whatever reason, these dogs find themselves homeless and alone. It is scary and stressful to go from a place where you are well loved and surrounded by your family to a place where you are surrounded by strange dogs, people, sights, and sounds. In many of these dogs, the stress is manifested in the form of unwanted or self-destructive behaviors. Foster homes are a great solution until the right forever home can be found. When you choose to become a foster provider, you will give these dogs a chance at life, and save them from the fate so many others suffer – euthanization while awaiting a forever home.

If You Already Have A Pet

Communicable diseases from the shelter environment could be carried into your own home where your pets may be infected. Talk to your vet about recommended quarantine periods for new foster pets, to keep your own pets safe!

Know Your Limits

- Do you have time to devote to a foster pet while giving your own pets the attention and care they need?
- What kind of behavior problems are you comfortable dealing with – counter surfing, pulling on leash, jumping when greeting, inappropriate elimination, separation anxiety, barking, reactivity? Don't accept a foster with behavior problems beyond your experience and knowledge, unless you are willing to consult with a qualified trainer.
- What kind of health problems are you willing to deal with? Medicating the dog frequently? Incontinence? Digestive disorders? Special dietary needs?
- Are you willing to provide the husbandry needed to keep this dog well-groomed and sanitary? Do you require a foster dog that is safe around small children or animals?

Happy Fostering

Providing foster care for dogs will certainly be a rewarding experience but will just as likely be emotionally challenging. Sending a successful foster to his forever home is bittersweet – you are saying goodbye to a friend, which hurts, but you are also sending him on to the greatest adventure of his life – a place where he will be cherished and loved.

Again, congratulations on your decision to start fostering. Let's review the steps:

1. Complete application process
2. Set limits
3. Bring home your foster dog
4. Smile and cry at the same time when he finds his forever home
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as often as possible!

Good luck, and happy fostering!