

Manchester Animal Shelter Fostering Program for Dogs

Why are foster homes needed?

First and foremost, they provide a more appropriate environment for learning and growth more than being housed in a shelter. In a foster home, a dog is exposed to all of the same experiences they would likely get in a real home and have a chance to properly learn, socialize and interact with people and sometimes other animals as well as situations and their environment. Foster homes better prepare dogs for their real home and in turn, make for a smoother transition when that comes. Fostering is the lifeblood of rescue. Selecting qualified foster homes allows us to bring unwanted dogs into our program and give them a second chance. Foster homes provide for the safety of the dog, monitor health needs, work on housebreaking and other types of training/behavioral issues when needed, provide exercise for the dog, meet prospective adopters and provide the dog with love, care and compassion.

What kind of dogs do we foster?

- a dog/puppy transported from the southern states where there is a high euthanasia rate.
- a dog who came in to our shelter appearing balanced but is going downhill physically and emotionally in the shelter
- a dog that has been at the shelter for several months and for some reason is still there although he is considered very adoptable (including senior dogs)
- a dog who may need to learn some house manners to become more adoptable
- a dog who is very shy/fearful/sensitive who needs a home situation

Are foster homes important to our shelter?

Foster homes are the backbone of organization. Our foster homes help the dogs to become better pets and more adoptable. Foster home caretakers are not expected to handle serious problems of resource guarding, aggression to people or other animals, or a serious medical problem. No dog will knowingly be placed in a foster home with these issues. If they come up while at home, the foster care coordinator must be informed immediately.

What is the responsibility of the foster home?

Foster homes will need to provide basic care such as food (supplied by the shelter), water, shelter, grooming and exercise. Your foster dog will need his own leash, collar, bowl and toys. You will probably need to give the dog a bath when he arrives. Also, it is helpful to work on any housetraining issues. Crate training is useful, especially for young, destructive, or unhousetrained dogs. If you have any basic training questions, contact the foster care coordinator and they will help guide you through some exercises.

The most important thing you need to provide is love and attention. Whether your foster came from a loving home or an abusive situation, he will probably be confused and anxious. Spend time cuddling, fetching, playing tug and just hanging out watching TV together. Be patient; it might take him a few days or weeks to really settle in.

How do I become a foster home for dogs/puppies for your shelter and southern transport dogs?

Go to our website www.manchesteranimalshelter.org. Click on fostering dogs & puppies. Fill out application. The foster care coordinator will then contact you for further information.

Does the foster home need to meet with anyone prior to fostering?

Yes. The foster homes are required to meet with the foster care coordinator. Arrangements are made with each individual.

How is a dog selected to go to a foster home?

Based on the information provided on the application, the coordinator will try and match the best dog to the household. The picture of the dog will be sent to the foster home prior to the arrival of the dog. Our intention is that once the dog is in the foster home, the dog is adopted without having to be kenneled in the shelter.

Where does the foster home pick up the dog?

If the dog is already at the shelter, then the foster home will pick the dog up directly from the shelter. If the dog is coming up through transport from the southern states they arrive either by plane or by ground transportation. If they arrive by plane, we ask if possible the foster homes to meet them at arrival at Wiggins Airfield in Manchester. If they arrive by ground transportation, the final destination is usually at the Manchester Animal Shelter. The foster care coordinator will keep the foster homes posted on the time of arrival.

What are the costs involved?

All foster dogs will have up to date shots, and be wormed. Most foster dogs will already be spayed or neutered. If any medical condition develops, let the foster coordinator or shelter manager know immediately and we will arrange for you to see our vet tech or send you to the Vet Emergency Clinic. We will also provide food for the dogs. Bedding, toys, leashes, collar, etc will not be reimbursed by our shelter.

When a southern transport dog comes up can the foster home bring him out in the public?

These dogs, by state law must **not** be exposed to the public for 48 hours of arrival. After that they may be in the public areas. A health certificate is provided from the state that the dog originated from. 48 hours to 2 weeks after arrival in NH a health certificate must also be done by a NH vet. The foster coordinator will inform you on how this is to be arranged when the dogs arrive.

What if the foster home is interested in adopting the dog?

You have the option to adopt your foster dog. But remember, if you adopt a foster dog then chances are that your home will not be available for future foster care. If that is the case, then you may or may not be able to help other dogs find a home depending on your home situation. The choice is yours. Please think about opening up your home to the “homeless”. We promise that it is a rewarding experience, but it can be difficult to let go of your foster to their new home.

How long does a dog stay in foster care?

A dog will typically stay in foster care from 1 week to a month depending on the situation of the dog’s needs. If an unforeseen event occurs and you can no longer foster for that dog, please contact the foster care coordinator immediately so other arrangements can be made.

What is the process for adopting a dog out in Foster care?

If someone has seen the dog on our website or notebook at the shelter and wants to adopt the dog they must go to the shelter to fill out an application. If the foster knows of someone interested in the dog they may see it at the house but they still need to fill out the application at the shelter. The foster home can’t promise the dog to the potential adopter. The staff will interview the applicants and select the best match for the dog.

The manager will then arrange for the foster home and the applicant to meet at the shelter before the dog is adopted to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the match. All final decisions are made by the FMAS staff.

Who to contact?

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Foster Care Coordinator, Carolyn.

Email carolyn@manchesteranimalshelter.org or call 603-717-2375