



F.O.R. Fostering Basics

Thank you for offering to foster with Friends of Rescue! We're an "all breed" rescue and work together to save as many dogs as possible in the North Alabama area.

Here is a brief overview of how it works:

Selecting your foster dog:

The fostering family selects their dog or cat with the help of their foster liaison. FOR has an ongoing wait list of dogs and cats needing help and also has relationships with local shelters. Our emphasis is on the dogs and cats in the most need, so those in high rate kill shelters are at the top of our list.

As a foster family, you'll consider the size dog you want to foster and other factors like children, your family dogs and cats, your activity level (do you want a dog you'll walk two miles a day or a low energy breed?), the number of hours the dog will need to be alone, etc. Choosing a foster dog that matches your lifestyle will make it easier for you both!

When you've decided the type of dog you should foster, you can choose from our wait list or visit the local shelter with your liaison. Together, we'll make a decision. All dogs coming into the FOR program must have a stable temperament and be adoptable and ***MUST be approved by the Friends of Rescue Board***. If the dog is heartworm positive or has health issues that must be addressed when requesting board approval to bring them into the program, and we raise funds to cover what we need for additional vetting.

We do ask that you commit to the foster animal you commit to. If you find fostering is not for you, then you never have to foster ever again. But please, **please commit to seeing the one you chose through to adoption**. It puts stress on the group to try and absorb an animal back into another foster home.

Bringing your foster dog home:

Before going home, give some thought to your home layout and have a crate ready. Crating your foster dog makes life easier. They need structure and they need to be successful in your home – so they won't wear out their welcome and the family will enjoy them more! Positive experiences are the best. Plan on crating your dog at night and when you aren't home. You'll also stress your personal pets less if you have a safe place to "house" the new dog at times. Their life shouldn't be too interrupted by the addition of a foster dog. Don't have a crate? The rescue has crates on hand that we can loan you for our foster dog's stay.

Homeless dogs are always stressed, whether or not it is clearly evident. Your dog needs to be brought home to a calm household and allowed to adjust at their own pace.

They don't need to go to shopping at Petsmart or to the dog park until you KNOW them. They also don't need to be around other dogs outside your home until they are fully vetted and have cleared any virus they might have picked up at the shelter. If your dogs are vaccinated, then they are protected against most viruses. Basically, settling time is important for them physically and emotionally.

It's also very possible that your foster dog will have one or more of the common ailments that result from neglect and their time "on the road" – digestion problems, skin issues, or kennel cough. Your foster liaison has dealt with many of these and can assist you. Our board has over twenty years of foster experience and is glad to assist with any questions or concerns you might have along the way. Once you get the hang of it, you'll know what to expect and it won't be worrisome. If your dog needs vet care, FOR will get it for them but vetting should be coordinated through your foster liaison, as we have vets who work with us at rescue rates. Often, they just need a little time, nutritious means, and rest.

FOR also serves homeless cats and kittens. All cats and kittens who are old enough are tested for Felv/Fiv before entering the foster home, for the safety of your personal cats. As with dogs, we ask our foster homes to provide a quiet place for cats to settle and a playroom for small kittens. We suggest that foster cats are dewormed and parasite free before sharing a litter pan with personal cats. Our Foster Liaison's are very experienced with cat fostering and adoptions and will give you guidance from day one.

ID Tag!!:

A FOR ID tag should be put on your foster dog IMMEDIATELY. A foster dog is very likely to slip out the door or jump a fence – they don't KNOW they are safe with you and they don't have any idea what is going on! ID on every dog is a must. Also, they shouldn't be left alone in the yard until you feel certain they won't dig out or jump the fence. A lost foster dog is NOT fun. If your foster dog does go missing – it is VERY important that you notify your foster liaison immediately so they can assist with recovery of your foster dog. The search must begin immediately, signs put up within hours, reports filed, and a volunteer team called in. We protect all dogs with ID tags BEFORE they arrive at their foster home.

Vet Appointment:

All medical treatment is covered by FOR and is done by one of our approved vets. An appointment will be made by your liaison to complete the dog's basic FOR requirements. This will be done within the first week or so, taking into considering other medical needs. Please do not contact any of our vet's offices regarding your foster dog. Work through your foster liaison. Since our vets are generous with their discounted rates to help us save more animals, we respect their time and cannot have multiple volunteers contacting them. Your liaison can and will contact them with any concerns you may have, to set up appointments and change appointments. Please be timely for

your scheduled appointment as we very respectful of our vet's time and do not want to be late for appointments.

All dogs are heartworm tested and treated if necessary, spayed or neutered, microchipped, vaccinated for bordetella-distemper parvo and rabies, dewormed, and are examined by a licensed veterinarian. Every dog also gets a 30 day preventative for fleas and heartworms. You'll be given the preventative when your pet receives their ID tag and collar.

All cats are Felv/Fiv tested, sterilized, microchipped, vaccinated for FVRCP and Rabies, dewormed, and examined by a licensed veterinarian.

Petfinder and Adopt-a-Pet:

Because we don't do weekly adoption events, these listing services are VERY important to us. We need excellent photos, video, and a well written bio for your dog. Your liaison will assist you.

Inquiries and Applications:

Inquiries about your dog will come to INFO@FORrescue.net - that's the address given on Petfinder and Adopt-a-Pet. Also, if you meet someone who is interested in your foster pet, you can give them the INFO@ FORrescue.net address.

When an application is received, the vet referenced is checked and the foster parent communicates with the potential adopter by phone and email. If all agree that it's a possible home match, a visit is scheduled. This process is adaptable, depending on the situation – your Foster Liaison will lead you through the process. The adoption is completed with a home visit, contract, and adoption donation. Typically, the donation for dogs is \$200, pups \$225, and cats are \$75.

Above all, we want to feel as sure as possible that the adopter will be a forever home. It states in the contract, and we assure them repeatedly, that the dog or cat must be returned to us if it doesn't work out ten days after the adoption or ten years. We want your foster pet to be safe forever – whether with them or back in our hands.

After a few days, you will need to check back in with the adopter to be sure all is going well. You may need to help them understand that every animal goes through an adjustment period. Most additions to the family take a few weeks to feel totally comfortable in their new home. Truly, most homeless animals have been through many home and shelter changes in the weeks before being adopted – and they may be very stressed. We coach adopters to be patient and understanding and help them problem solve through the initial period.

Lastly, every homeless dog has different needs and every situation is different! We ask that you be prepared to commit to your foster dog until they find an adoptive home. And we assure you that you will be totally supported by other FOR volunteers and FOR funds. **Thank you for caring about homeless animals!**