



Fostering Q & A

Why foster?

Opening your home to a confused, frightened shelter dog is an incredible gift as it allows that dog an opportunity to relax, recover from a stressful situation (living in a cage is not how dogs were meant to live, regardless of how amazing shelters can be). Fostering a dog in your home allows us to see their amazing personalities, helping us discover what type of home would be best-suited for them. With your time, energy, and patience you can help a dog on their journey to a happy new life.

What does a foster parent do?

Everything that a responsible pet owner would do! As a foster parent, you would be responsible for feeding, providing playtime, exercise and socialization. Additionally, it is likely you would need to transport your foster dog to the vet for vaccines, spay/neuter surgery, or treatment for an ailment. We partner with local vets and Waggin' Tails always pays for medical treatment. We do request that our fosters provide updates on their foster dog's behavior and personality. When necessary, and with guidance from our team, a foster will assist in basic housetraining and teaching basic queues. Our fosters will take an active role in adoptions as fosters know the dog the best.

What skills are needed to be a dog foster parent?

It's ideal to have some knowledge about dog behavior and health as many dogs in need of rescue require a little extra help or some training as they transition out of a shelter to a home. However, we work hard to place dogs in foster care that match the skill-set of the foster and our team is always available to help!

Where do the dogs come from?

Our dogs come from high intake municipal (animal control) shelters, smaller and rural shelters, along with owner surrenders. We strive to get as much information about a dog's background and health information as possible and always share that information with our fosters.

How long is the foster commitment?

The average length of stay of a dog is dependent upon the individual dog. Pups/younger dogs and smaller breeds are likely to be adopted quickly. Otherwise, factors like age, breed, size and any special needs can play a role in how long it takes to find a new home.

What supplies does Waggin' Tails provide?

Waggin' Tails ensures our fosters have all the tools necessary to care for your foster dog such as a crate (for keeping dogs safe and out of trouble while you're away and to help with house-training, if necessary) food and treats, bowls, ID tag/collar/leash/harness, chew toys, heartworm and flea prevention to name a few.

Our team is always available to provide resources you may need.

Can I foster if I work full-time?

Yes! Many of our volunteers work full-time jobs. We are happy to work with fosters who have a variety of lifestyles and careers.

Can I foster if I live in an apartment or rent a home?

Yes. We'll do our best to match you with a pup that we think would do well in an apartment setting. Please be sure to review your lease agreement for pet policies and whether there are size/breed restrictions prior to submitting your foster application.

I have a personal dog. Can I still foster?

Yes. Your resident dog must be up-to-date on vaccines and be spayed/neutered. We'll do our best to match you and your dog with a foster dog could do well with. Our team will help with introductions and help you take necessary steps to ensure you and the dogs stay safe.

What is a “special needs” foster?

Special needs dogs are those with medical conditions, like being heartworm positive, that get overlooked in crowded shelter systems. Often times rescue organizations are the only hope for a special needs dog. A dog's medical and/or behavioral needs can vary greatly but the rewards are greater for the foster parent in these cases. A special needs foster will always have full support of our team!

Is fostering fair to the dogs?

Won't the dog feel abandoned all over again when they get adopted? We understand how people can be reluctant to take in a dog, establish a bond, then allow the dog to be adopted but we truly see fostering as a bridge to a new life. It gives the dog a chance to get used to life in a home with a routine, a safe and secure place to sleep with humans who are kind. Fostering is just preparing these dogs for the transition to a new home.

How do you say good-bye to a fostered dog?

We get it! Giving up an amazing dog you've helped in immeasurable ways, even to the most wonderful family, can be emotional. As a foster, you will always have a say in where your foster dog gets placed. Knowing you were part of saving a life and helping that animal on his/her journey is incredibly rewarding! We feel strongly that the burden of letting a dog go is worth it to help another dog waiting for someone to save them from the shelter.

Can I adopt my foster dog?

We love when our fosters find a great match and adopt their foster dog.

How do I give fostering a try?

Submit your foster application today! Once submitted, a volunteer will reach out to chat with you about getting started and answer any questions you might have.

Not quite ready to submit that app? Call us at 248-788-7050. We'll help you decide if fostering is right for you.