

Foster Manual



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Recommended Supplies List for Fosters

We will provide the below anytime needed: info@anmdogrescue.org

- Food
- Bowls (For Food & Water)
- Collar & Leash
- Crate

Strongly recommended:

- Dog Bed
- Poop Baggies
- Toys (Hard & Soft)
- CHEWS! (Rawhides not recommended)
- Treats
- Kong
- Animal First Aid Kit
- ID Tag W/Phone #

Not Required – But may make your life easier!

- Baby Gates
- Exercise Pen Dog Brush Doggy Shampoo & Conditioner
- Nail Clippers
- Ear Cleaner
- Enzymatic Odor Neutralizer
- Potty Pads
- Dog Food Storage Bin

Feeding

We recommend feeding adult dogs twice daily, once in the AM and once in the PM but you do not need to keep your foster on the same schedule. Please refer to the weight chart on your bag of dog food for appropriate feeding quantities.

If you have other resident dogs, DO NOT feed them together with your foster. Some animals can become protective of their food and we never want to learn this the hard way after a serious altercation. It is very important that your animals and your foster are kept separate during feeding times.

Fresh water should always be available for your foster dogs to drink. We never offer cow's milk, as dogs cannot properly digest it.

Housing

We recommend keeping foster dogs separate from resident animals for the first two weeks to wait out the incubation period for certain contagious illnesses like kennel cough and ringworm. This is also helpful for slowly and properly introducing a foster animal to your resident dogs as many dogs will not get along right off the bat. Bathrooms, baby gates and crates can be useful tools when working to keep animals separate.

DO:

- Sterilize surfaces between foster animals to minimize spread of possible contagious illnesses.
- House your foster primarily indoors.
- Supervise your foster in the backyard to ensure they don't attempt to escape or jump the wall.

DO NOT:

- Leave your foster on a "tie out" under any circumstances.
- Allow your foster to be off-leash outside the home ever.
- Visit a dog park.

Socializing

One of the most important parts of your job as a foster caregiver is to convince your foster dog(s) that humans are kind and loving. Some dogs will adjust quickly to you and their new environment, while others may take much longer. Be patient and allow your foster(s) time to acclimate to new surroundings.

Patience is the biggest kindness you can show your new foster as they adapt to home life. They don't understand who you are or what's happening and will need time to settle in. We see many failed adoptions for the simple fact that an animal wasn't given proper time and space to adapt before being introduced to new animals, people, environments, noises, etc. We call the settling in period the "decompression phase" and it often takes around two weeks before a dog feels confident and comfortable in the home. Every dog IS an individual though and will move at their own speed. Be calm. Talk quietly. Move slowly. Sit low. The more approachable you are, the more likely an animal is to come out of their social shell.

Health and disease

Vaccinations & De-worming

Your foster dog will be up-to-date on age appropriate vaccinations and de-worming at the time that you take them in.

Adult foster dogs may or may not need to return to the shelter for vaccines. At the time that you pick up your foster dog, we will set an appointment for you to return for this.

Seeking Veterinary Care

We will do our best to ensure that any medical concerns are addressed prior to a dog being placed in foster.

Dogs coming from the shelter have been exposed to many germs, do not have an established vaccination history, and their immune systems may be suppressed due to shelter stress.

Therefore, it is not uncommon for a dog to become sick shortly after arriving in a foster home. Please watch for the following symptom

In adult dogs:

- Not drinking for more than 24 hours
- Diarrhea that lasts for more than 1-2 days
- Vomiting more than 2-3 times in an hour
- Not eating for more than 72 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than a day OR Lethargy with fever
- Sneezing, coughing, or goopy eyes
- Lameness paired with discomfort or pain

If you notice any of these symptoms, please contact your foster coordinator asap. Your foster coordinator we will help assess the situation and whenever needed, make an appointment for your foster with one of our approved vets.

Emergency situations may include:

- Continuous diarrhea coupled with lethargy
- Continuous vomiting
- Bleeding of any kind (from the nose or mouth or in urine/ stool)
- Any trauma such as being hit by a car, dropped, stepped on, etc.
- Seizures
- Difficulty breathing

*If your dog is exhibiting any of the above **emergency** symptoms, please contact us immediately for instructions.*

Remember that ANM provides all veterinary care at no cost to you, but if you go to an outside veterinary clinic you will have to pay for the visit yourself and will not be reimbursed (but it may be tax deductible).

PROTECTING YOUR RESIDENT DOGS

As mentioned previously, dogs coming from the shelter sometimes have an unknown medical history and may be contagious to other dogs.

As such, all resident dogs should be fully vaccinated before a foster animal enters the home. We strongly recommend that you keep your fosters separate from your resident dogs at all times for at least the first 14 days and disinfect the environment before allowing resident dogs into areas that foster dogs have been in.

DECOMPRESSING YOUR FOSTER DOG

Decompression Phase

When adopting or fostering a rescued dog from the shelter, it's a happy time for you and a relief to the dog. As the new owners or foster of the dog, you're also excited because you're bringing in a new member of the family into your home.

Wait

Before you go showing off your new dog to your family, friends, and resident dogs, please give the new dog time and space to relax for a while. The last thing you should do at this point is rush them into a whole new dramatic situation that could get them into trouble if they're not ready for it.

Dogs that have been at the shelter for an especially long period of time need to decompress and get themselves back into a calm state of mind.

Decompression time varies with each and every dog. Some need more time than others, but it's safe to recommend at least one week to start.

Give every foster structure, exercise (dog walks, playing), and love and you will see them begin to blossom. If after the decompression phase, the dog starts to show behavioral problems that you feel ill-equipped to handle, please contact your foster coordinator immediately.

DECOMPRESSION CHECKLIST FOR FOSTER DOGS

When a dog suffers from kennel stress, it can take from several minutes to 48 hours or more for that pet's anxiety to return to near normal levels.

In some cases, the buildup of shelter stress can make a dog difficult to tire out. This will improve with time, but there are several things a foster should do to make this process go smoothly.

Suggestions for Decompression:

- Prepare needed supplies in order to engage your foster dog mentally. You may want to use food-filled frozen Kongs, puzzle toys, etc.
- Continue walking, either at the shelter, a park or in your neighborhood until your foster dog appears to relax.
- Consider only using essential (safety-related) commands during the first 24-48 hours. Don't want the dog to jump onto your couch while jumping around the house?

Think about saving that lesson for another day when they are more calm and available for learning, and engage your foster in another task that's incompatible with jumping on the couch, like a puzzle toy.
- Make sure your activities don't overstimulate the dog.
- When you arrive home, ensure that any family members who are meeting the dog for the first time are seated. They should let the dog come to them for attention, as opposed to soliciting attention from the dog.
- Keep your foster dog separated from your own dogs until your foster is visibly relaxed.
- If your foster is unable to settle down (panting, whining, constantly in motion, etc.) channel their energy into a task such as fetch, puzzle toys or any game that engages their brain until they are able to relax.
- Do only essential meet-and-greets for the first 48 hours to week, depending on the dog's comfort level.
- Consider playing soft music. Classical, reggae and ambient electronic work well for helping pets decompress.

Try to stick it out for the first 24 hours! It will get better, we promise!



As always, please reach out to our team if you need anything!