



It takes a truly special person to become a foster parent to a pet. You have to be willing and able to fully give your heart and home to an animal that will become part of your family for a few weeks or months. Many people think they couldn't love and care for a pet for only a short period of time, but then you realize that you are the integral link to that pet's finding a wonderful home rather than facing an unfortunate fate at the shelter. One of our fosters describes the experience: "Some people have wondered how I could foster a dog I will eventually have to give away, but the sadness of giving them away is nothing compared to the thought of never giving them a chance to live!"

Thank you for saving a life!

A FEW FOSTERING FAQs...

Will it cost me anything?

Likely, no! PAWS covers all vet care and monthly heartworm and flea preventative. We provide each foster dog with a new collar and PAWS ID tag and can even loan a crate or xpen if needed. We just ask that you provide food, any other basic supplies that your foster dog may need and treat them with the same love and care that you give your own pets.

Does the foster dog have to be kept indoors?

Yes. The rescue groups we work with only adopt to families willing to keep the pet inside and we want the dogs to learn about indoor living, housetraining, etc. while in foster care. Plus, dogs are companion animals and are happier with their people!

How long do I have to keep my foster dog?

Many times, there is no concrete date as we keep the animals in our southern foster homes until they are adopted and can travel to their forever home up north. Occasionally we are able to get a dog into a northern foster home and only need to keep them down here until transport can be arranged. Dogs must be out of a shelter

environment for a minimum of 3 weeks before they can be transported. Our average foster time is 8 weeks.

Will I be able to keep in touch with my foster dog after he/she is adopted?

Yes, of course! We couldn't do this without our amazing foster families and we never forget your generosity in opening your heart and your home to a shelter dog in need. We check in periodically with the adopters and share these updates. Facebook has also proved to be a great tool to help connect adopters and fosters.

What types of animals need fostering?

We primarily rescue dogs from the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter in West Monroe, LA but are occasionally able to help a shelter cat, horse, donkey or goat in need. Labrador retrievers are very prevalent at our area shelter and once pulled via PAWS, we work with a great Lab Rescue up north to find them loving homes. We have contacts with other purebred rescues throughout the country. We also work with several all breed rescue groups in the Northeast and try to help a variety of adorable mutts in all shapes, sizes, colors and ages.

GUIDELINES REGARDING...

Daily Care

The foster home will provide the rescued animal with sufficient food, water, exercise, socialization, and care for any foster dog as if it were their own. On occasion PAWS is able to provide dog food. The foster home will help the animal adapt to their new temporary home. This will include crate training and house training in most instances. The rescue groups we work with only adopts to families willing to keep the pet indoors, so we want the dogs to be comfortable inside and familiar with house training, etc. We truly believe that pets are happier indoors with their people.

Any tricks (sit, down, stay, shake, etc) that you can teach your foster dog will definitely make them more adoptable! Please email photos and/or video to the Rescue Coordinator if possible. Good photos of pets in a home environment and details about their personality help us keep their online profile updated and allows us to match them with a perfect forever home!

Please be patient as your foster dog learns how to be a loved and spoiled furry family member! Contact the PAWS Rescue Coordinator with any questions or concerns about their behavior. We are happy to offer advice and can call in a professional trainer if needed.

Housing

Foster animals must be housed indoors. When not indoors, the foster animal must be safely confined in a securely fenced yard or walked on a leash. At no time should the animal be allowed off leash outside of a fenced area. The foster animal must wear a collar with a PAWS ID tag at all times. Please let the Rescue Coordinator know ASAP if your foster dog has lost or damaged their PAWS collar/identification tag.

When a foster animal must be left alone in the house, he or she should be confined in a crate of adequate size. This will keep your foster dog safe and protect your home from any undesirable behavior such as chewing or potty accidents. It is also recommended that the animal be kept in a crate at night. Some animals are not acclimated to a crate but will adjust if given a few days. We can provide a crate and tips on crate training if needed.

Protocol with Children

- Introduce your new foster dog to children with caution as we often do not know the dog's experience with kids. Start slowly and have your child be still and quiet as the dog becomes acquainted to them.
- Be cautious and observant of any guarding behaviors of the foster dog's treats, toys or food with the children in the household.
- Children under the age of 15 should not walk the dog unless supervised by an adult.
- With small children, there is always a risk of being accidentally knocked over, scratched or bitten. Monitor all interaction closely.

Multiple Pet Households

- When bringing a foster animal to your home, introduce them to your pet(s) slowly and with lots of praise and reassurance. Meeting on neutral ground or even in the front yard often helps.
- Do not feed the dogs in the same room and be wary of leaving toys and treats lying around the house. If your own pets are protective of their things, this can be an accident waiting to happen.
- Use caution when introducing a foster dog to your cat and do the introduction slowly over a week or two, keeping the dog on a leash when the cat is near.

Veterinary Care

In most instances you will pick your new foster dog up directly from the vet. Upon pulling a dog from the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter, we take them directly to be spayed or neutered, fully vaccinated and tested for intestinal worms and heartworm. The Rescue Coordinator will let you know when and where to pick the dog up. Your

foster dog will likely need to be taken back to the vet in 7-10 days for removal of stitches. He/she will also go back in approximately 3 weeks to have their vaccinations boosted and more often in they are being treated for heartworm.

We will send you reminder emails when it is time for your foster dog to go to any vet appointments or when they are due for their monthly heartworm/flea preventative. PAWS of NE LA pays for all vet care but the foster is responsible for taking the pet to/from appointments.

The foster home should not take the animal to the vet without pre-approval unless it is an emergency and the PAWS Rescue Coordinator can't be reached. In this case, the foster home must notify the Rescue Coordinator at the earliest possible time. The current Rescue Coordinator is Jennifer Pesnell and she can be reached by phone/text 318-355-2778 or by email at jenpesnell@gmail.com or rescue@pawsonela.org.

Please note – all animals in the PAWS Animal Shelter Rescue program were pulled from the Ouachita Parish Animal Shelter in West Monroe, LA.