



Always and Forever Foster Rules and Regulations

Getting ready for your foster pup? We have some tips to help you and your family (human and fur) to help make this the best possible experience for everyone. We want you to be physically and mentally prepared.

Fostering is a family affair, so please make sure that everyone in your household is ready, willing and able to provide a loving home for an orphaned dog. Many adults and children have a difficult time adjusting to a new schedule or routine, and also have a difficult time “giving up” an animal to its forever home. Make sure everyone is ready for this new, albeit temporary, addition to your family. Be realistic about your time commitment to a foster dog.

Where to keep your foster dog?

Planning where you will keep your dog before you bring your dog home will make the entire process easier for everyone. When you first bring a foster dog home, you’ll want to confine them to a single room, such as a kitchen or family room. This room should not be an isolated room, but a room where you spend a large part of your day or evening, as dogs are pack animals and want to be with you. This room is especially important when you’re at work or away from the house, as it will be a new environment in which they need time to become familiar and comfortable. Use a baby gate to block off the entrances to other rooms. By keeping the dog in one room, you’re helping prevent “accidents” that may occur because of stress or adjusting to your routine. (Even a house-trained dog might have an accident or two during this adjustment period.) For dogs that are not housetrained, keeping them confined to one room will help start this important training as you must be able to monitor their activities. This will also help the foster dog decompress. As exciting as this time is and wonderful for the dog to be going in a home- it is still a huge adjustment for the dog. Going as slow as can be and not overstimulating the dog will help with the adjustment period for all.

We ask that you always use a crate in this room for times when you are away from the house or in a completely separate room from your other animals.

Beautiful Rex was a beloved family member of one of our fosters, who lost his life to a foster pup who had carried hidden emotional damage. We cannot stress the importance enough of making his life matter by crating ALL foster dogs when you are away to prevent such tragedy. We want everyone to know how important your safety is and all of your family’s safety is as well. Remember we know very little about their past.

DO’S

Keep your foster dog indoors in a location with a crate available
Keep your foster dog in a warm/cool (depending on the season) and dry location.

Keep your foster dog on a leash at all times when outdoors unless in your secured fenced yard. When in a secured yard, you must supervise him at all times. It is very common for a foster dog to try and escape so always supervise your shelter dog.

DON'TS

Leave your foster dog uncrated when you are not home OR leave unattended with a child or your own dog

Place your foster dog around other strange dogs as we often do not know the dog's past history.

Foster dogs should not be put in a position of possibly fighting with a strange dog, reducing their chances for adoption and increasing their chances of euthanasia

Never take your foster dog to an off leash park - this is a liability to the Always & Furever - taking a foster dog to an off-leash park will result in the removal of the foster dog and end your role as a foster parent.

Transporting your Foster Dog

The safest way to transport your dog from the shelter to your home (or anywhere else), is in a secure crate. The crate should be secured so that it doesn't tip over or move around. Another option is to use a grill between the back of the vehicle and the back seat. If you have a sedan, then you may be able to secure a crate on the back seat. It is always a good idea to put a blanket down under your crate or in the back section of your vehicle, so that if your dog becomes car sick, or has an accident, the blanket will protect your seats and carpet. If you can't fit a crate into your vehicle, your dog is safest in the back seat. Use either a special harness for your dog that hooks on to a seat belt, or a leash that attaches to the seat belt. Avoid letting your dog ride in the passenger seat next to you. Not only can your view be obstructed, but if you brake suddenly your dog could get injured by hitting the windshield or by the air bag. You might need a few treats to encourage a dog to jump into a car. If you can get a dog to put his front paws up, then you can lift his back end by supporting his hind quarters (as if he were sitting on your crossed arms). If you need to completely lift your dog, the best way is by putting one arm behind his hind legs and one arm in front of his front legs – essentially a scoop. Another way is to have one arm just behind his front legs, and one hand behind his hind legs. This way the dog's weight is being supported in the same general area of its legs. Keep in mind, most dogs don't really like to be lifted. Remember to always keep a handle on his leash.

Introducing your Foster Dog

Always & Furever is happy to assist you with introducing your dog to a foster dog.

What to do once you are home with your foster dog

- Be alert and make the reintroductions gradually and calmly. Even if they got along great at the shelter, your dog may be extremely territorial in the home.
- If possible, go for a walk around your neighborhood with both dogs and two handlers. Walk the dogs side by side on leashes and allow them to sniff one another and become familiar with each other.
- Give your own dog LOTS of love and praise.
- Leave leashes on the dogs when you are in the home, so that you can get immediate control if needed. You may only need to do this for a short time.
- Talk normally. Letting the dogs know that you are fine; they are fine; everything is fine!
- Be patient and go slowly with your foster dog as they may have been through a stressful surgery, abusive situation or a lot of recent changes.
- Don't leave your foster dog unattended with your resident dog. Even if they seem to get along well in your presence, you should separate the dogs when you leave your house. After a week or two, you may determine that this is no longer necessary, but be sure to always remove all toys, food, chews and start slowly.

Some common mistakes

- Holding the leash too tensely as dogs may react with defensiveness.
- Leaving toys and chews around the house. This can cause resource guarding which can escalate very quickly.
- Remove all toys and chews before you arrive home with your foster dog.
- When feeding your foster dog with your resident dog. It's best to separate them initially, and to supervise always.
- Over-stimulating your foster dog with introductions to many people or your neighbors' dogs

Common Questions & Answers

1. How long are dogs in foster homes? It completely depends on the dog and the situation. The average stay in a foster home is about 2 months. Many dogs recovering from an injury, certain breeds and (obviously) senior dogs, may stay much longer.

2. Can I adopt my foster dog? YES! As long as foster parents meet Always & Forever's requirements necessary for adoption, foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster dog.

3. How are foster dogs promoted? Photos and stories of all adoptable dogs in foster homes are posted on our website, on Petfinder.com and on Facebook where the public can view them. Foster dogs are also promoted at special events throughout the year. Foster parents are required to participate and help promote their foster dogs via sharing pictures, stories, emails or attend an event. Foster parents can also help promote their foster dog to their family, friends, colleagues and the general public through a variety of means including flyers, emails and even just by walking your foster dog in local neighborhoods with an "Adopt Me" bandana around its neck.

4. Do I have to crate-train my foster dog? No, but it is one of the most efficient and effective ways to house train or re-train a dog. Some dogs do not like crates, and most dogs need to be transitioned or "trained" to use a crate, so it's up to the foster parent to decide whether to crate or not. We STRENOUSLY promote crating, especially if you have your own dog as to a safety issue while you are not there. See Rex's story above. Putting the dog in a crate while you are gone will give you peace of mind knowing that they are in a safe place, away from harm, and not doing any damage to your belongings or themselves. For many dogs, a crate can also represent a safe and comfortable place to call their own and provides them with a sense of security. Dogs actually like having a "den" to cuddle up in. Crating should never be used as punishment.

5. How can I help my foster dog become more adoptable? There are two ways to make a foster dog more adoptable. First and foremost is marketing. If no one knows about your foster dog, or how wonderful it is, then it will be next to impossible to find them a forever home. In addition to supplying great photos and a bio and updating these regularly, giving a foster dog additional exposure by telling friends and family about them will help create a "network effect" and will speed up the process of finding a forever home. Simple steps like taking a foster dog on walks in local parks, outdoor shopping areas and other high-traffic areas will help find potential adopters. Secondly, our orphaned dogs benefit greatly from the exercise (with the exception of those with some medical conditions), basic training, special love and attention you give them. While marketing provides you with applicants, it's always the dog that "closes the deal." Providing a foster dog with basic training and manners will increase their adoptability. Shy dogs will benefit from your patience, routine and slowly exposing them to new people to build their confidence. Rambunctious adolescents who learn good manners will help show off their

trainability and long term potential. And while puppies are adorable, they need a lot of love, attention and hand-holding from humans to develop properly and feel secure.

6. Am I responsible finding my foster dog its forever home? No, but we do need your help. Once a qualified applicant is identified from our adoption team, we will ask you to talk to the applicant to share your dogs information/personality. If this goes well, and you are comfortable with the application as well, you will be asked to schedule a meet and greet with your foster dog and the potential adopter. The Adoption team member will walk you through this process as well. Your quick response and then final input on the potential adopter is critical to finding a great match. Many times a foster parent will find a perfect match through their own network of friends, family and colleagues. Always & Furever greatly welcomes these referrals! If you think you have found a perfect forever home for your foster dog, remember they still must go through the application process and be approved by Always & Furever.

7. What if I go on vacation or have a business trip? If given enough notice, we can usually find volunteers that can foster sit for short durations. We ask that foster parents always keep the foster team aware of any temporary foster sitting situations.

SO YOU'RE ALL SIGNED UP? THE PUP IS HOME. NOW WHAT?

The First Week - Start a regular routine so your dog can begin to adjust to your household. During this adjustment period, please keep stimulation to a minimum. Some recommendations include:

- Find a quiet route to walk or run your foster dog (depending on energy level) to familiarize him with his new environment. This also helps start the bonding between you and your foster dog.
- Don't introduce your foster dog to people you meet on your walk. For the first 7-14 days (could be more or less) your foster dog should lay low while he tries to figure out just what this new situation is. You may not see any unwelcome behavior initially. Eventually all will be revealed.
- Do not introduce your foster dog to other dogs (other than your own resident dog). This includes neighborhood dogs, and dogs belonging to your family or friends. Why? There is no way to tell how your foster dog will behave when introducing him to other dogs. If your foster dog bites a person or dog you are required to report it to Always & Furever immediately.
- Don't throw a party, or have a lot of people over to your home. During the first week you should try to spend quality one-on-one time with your new foster dog.
- The most important thing to do during this initial transition time is to clearly but NON-confrontationally establish the household rules. As well, take care not to "indulge" your foster dog's timid, tentative or fearful behavior; we understand how tempting this may be as many of our orphans have come from less than ideal situations, but in the long run it does not benefit the dog.
- Take photos, write a bio of the dog. One of the many benefits of adopting a dog from foster care is that the foster parent can provide detailed, personal and anecdotal information about their foster dog. Your dog will be adopted more quickly if you update this information as soon as possible.

General Expectations:

Expectations of behavior: Allow time for adjustment. While it usually takes about 24 hours for a dog to settle in, it will take much longer for their overall adjustment to this new environment. Watch their behavior closely. Remember that it will take up to a month before your foster dog bonds with you, so keep your expectations realistic. On the average, foster parents have their dogs for about 2-4 months before they're adopted. While this amount of time will not be long enough to fully train your foster dog, it will be enough time to give him a good foundation for his new family. Begin training with some basic commands and crate training. Your foster may have been traumatized before coming to you – you'll be

teaching that people are good and can be trusted. You should handle and work with your foster dog every day. If he shows any signs of aggression or fear (growling over food or toys, snapping or hiding), contact Always & Forever immediately for guidance and we will put you in touch with a trainer.

Feeding: What to feed your foster dog? You will be responsible for picking up any food at Always & Forever. Create a consistent schedule for feeding your foster dog. Feed at the same times every day. Create a separate space for your foster dog to eat so they will feel comfortable. If you have other dogs at home, feed your foster in a separate room and close the door - this will help prevent any arguments over food. Do not feed any "people" food. You do not know what the adoptive family will want to do, so don't start a habit they will have to break; and by feeding only dog food, you are also discouraging begging.

Exercise: Foster dogs should be exercised every day, rain or shine. The old age, "a tired dog is a happy dog," holds true for foster dogs. Most foster dogs will need at least two 30+ minute walks a day to release excess energy (less depending on age and energy level). A dog that is exercised regularly will tend to sleep when you are not at home - and a sleeping dog cannot do undesirable things, such as bark, chew, etc. The exception to this is if your foster dog is recovering from an illness or injury or hospice, then they may need rest.

Training: We suggest positive, rewards based training for dogs. Increasing your foster dog's obedience skills has many benefits. Not only will the future adopter appreciate these skills, but your foster dog will "show" better when visiting with potential adopters and you will have a much happier fostering experience. Yes they may be old but so many are willing to learn, training is done at your discretion.

Housetraining: Be patient with your foster dog. Even housetrained adult dogs will make mistakes, especially if they've been at a shelter or found themselves homeless for a long time and have been eliminating in their kennel. If there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some foster dogs may "mark" out their territory. This action should be re-directed immediately with a calm "Ah-Ah" and escort him outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) on the areas where the foster dog "marked" to insure he will not smell and mark that area again. Attached is also a training document from our rescue's trainer, Mikaila Evans.

Crate training: Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs. They calm them and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking and housetraining mistakes. You may want to crate your new foster dog for the first few nights in your bedroom - most of them feel more secure in their crate and it protects your house from accidents. Crates should never be used as a means of punishment for your foster dog. If used for punishing, the dog will learn to avoid going in the crate. Crates should be thought of as dog play rooms - just like child play rooms, with games and toys. It should be a place dogs like to be and feel safe and secure when they are there.

* Introducing the crate:

- Place the crate (with a blanket inside) in a central part of your home. Introduce your foster dog to the crate after a good walk, when he's tired and sleepy. Keep all chew toys in the crate so that he can go in and out as he pleases, selecting toys to play with. Feed your dog in the crate with the door open. If the dog hesitates going in, place the bowl inside the door so their head is in and their body is outside.

- If your foster still refuses to go near the crate, put the smelliest, tastiest wet food (or a steak!) in the crate and shut the door. Let the dog hang outside the crate for a while, smelling the food inside. Soon he should beg you to let him in! Now that the dog is familiar and willing to go near the crate, throw some of his favorite treats in the crate. Let him go in and get them and come right out again. Do this exercise three or four times. Then, throw more treats in and let him go in and get them. When he is in, shut the

door and give him another treat through the door. Then let him out and ignore him for 3 minutes. Then, put some more treats in the crate, let him go in, shut the door and feed him 5 bits of treats through the door, and then let him out and ignore him for 5 minutes.

- Next time, place treats, peanut butter, freeze-dried liver or frozen food and honey in a Kong , so it is time-consuming to get the food out of the ball, and put the Kong in the crate. After your foster has gone in, shut the door and talk to him in a calm voice. If your dog starts to whine or cry, don't talk to him or you will reward the whining/crying/ barking behavior. The foster dog must be quiet for a few minutes before you let him out.

- Gradually increase the time in the crate until the dog can spend 3-4 hours there. We recommend leaving a radio (soothing music or talk radio) or TV (mellow stations: educational, art, food) on while the dog is in the crate and alone in the house. Rotate the dog's toys from day to day so he doesn't become bored of them. Don't put papers in the crate - the dog will instinctively not go to the bathroom where he sleeps/lives. Instead, put a blanket in his crate to endorse the fact that this is his cozy home.

- To help your foster get accustomed to the crate, place his favorite bed inside it and place it in your bedroom. Be wary of dog crates during hot weather - a dog may want to lie on the cool floor, instead of the crate. Make sure the crate is not in direct sun.

Attention and playtime: Lots of human contact is important for recovering, sick, injured or neglected dogs. Attention and playtime is a reward for your foster dog. Be sure to give your foster dog several minutes of playtime periodically through the day. As a general rule, children under 18 years old should NOT be left alone and unsupervised with any dog, but specifically a foster dog. Do not allow children to behave with the foster dog in a manner you would not want the child to behave with a younger sibling. Teach children to leave a dog alone when he is eating, chewing and sleeping. Never allow a child to remove a toy or any other "prized" possession from a dog. A child will not differentiate between a foster dog and a dog they have grown up with, so you must make sure to keep everyone safe. Do not play tug of war or wrestle with your foster dog. If you have a shy or fearful dog, do not throw the toy toward the dog, because he may think you are throwing things at him and become more fearful. After you have finished playing with a toy, put it away. You are controlling the toy and the playtime. When giving the dog a toy or treat, have him sit before giving it to him. That way he has to work to get the toy or treat - making the toy a reward.

After your foster dog has settled in and has acclimated to his new home, it's time to get him out into the world. The more you can do this, the better socialized he will be. Get him used to different people and different environments. Start slowly and don't over stimulate as many foster dogs may not have had exposure to what seems like a "normal" environment. When you are out and about, you should remain calm as this will help your foster dog key off of your behavior. But always be aware of your surroundings. Always keep a good handle on your leash and be extremely careful around busy streets, or in parks where there are squirrels or birds or other distractions. If your dog reacts to someone/ something on your walk, interrupt the behavior by crossing the street or walk in a different direction. NO off-leash parks – No Exceptions!!!!!!!!!!

PROMOTING FOSTER PUPS

NOT ONLY ARE YOU SAVING A LIFE BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GET THE PUPS ADOPTED!

Ways you can help!

Work with your foster coordinator to share this info: name, gender, age, breed, weight, health, also very helpful – is your foster ok with cats? Ok with other dogs? Ok with children (indicate appropriate ages)?

We cannot stress this enough...a picture is worth a thousand words. The picture is the first thing people see when they visit our website, FB page or their bio on Petfinder.com/SheltrLuv. . If the dog has a poor

picture, visitors may move on to another dog without clicking or reading your dog's description. If you want to give your dog the best chance possible, take large, clear, good quality photos of the dog alone. A good picture is often the difference between a dog who generates inquiries and one who does not.

- Pictures taken outside in natural light are usually much better than those taken inside or with a flash. Lighting is very important for accurately capturing a dog's coloring and detail. Have the sun or light source behind you and check to make sure you are not casting a shadow on your subject.

- Use treats and/or a squeaky toy to capture the dog's best expression. Sometimes having two people makes this process easier.

- Try different props. If the dog likes to fetch, you might get a picture of the dog with his favorite ball. Wearing the "Adopt Me" bandana in the photos.

- Check out the competition. Visit Petfinder.com and look at the photos of similar dogs and see which ones pop out to you. Then try to mimic these shots with your own foster dog.

- If your first attempts fail, don't be discouraged. Just keep trying and have fun. When you are having fun, your foster dog will probably be having fun too and it will show!

All fosters are REQUIRED to write a bio. It can be short and sweet or long and wordy. It's up to you! Here are a few tips to write a great bio.

- Accentuate the positive and let potential adopters know why they should consider your dog.

- You will improve your dog's chances of finding a home if you write a thorough description.

- A good bio is part press release, part story telling.

- Don't turn it into a lengthy restaurant review, but instead try to pull the reader into the bio so that they can

start to imagine a life with this new canine friend. It can be very helpful to read the bios of other similar dogs on Petfinder.com.

- Tell it from the animal's perspective - the most compelling thing you can write on behalf of an animal is what you imagine the animal is thinking, feeling or remembering.

- Most bios start off with the basics - but the most appealing bios are written so that they are not just a list of facts.

- One intro paragraph on "who your dog is" can help a potential adopter visualize the dog.

- Your second paragraph might go into personality traits, and provide information about any training, tricks or cute behavior.

- Your final paragraph should outline the required forever home environment.

- Tell potential adopters what you know about your dog.

- MOST IMPORTANTLY be honest and avoid negative statements. Choose wording carefully. A dog that is not potty-trained might instead be, "working on her house manners." A dog that doesn't get along with other dogs or cats merely "wants to be your one and only." A dog that desperately needs obedience training is really "looking forward to attending class with his adopter." If dog has special needs, mention them, but don't dwell on them. You can go into these details once you have someone hooked on your dog.

AS A FOSTER YOU ARE SIGNING ON TO HELP US PROMOTE THE FOSTER DOG

The more you network your foster dog, the more quickly you are able to find it a great forever home.

Here are some simple ways to promote your dog:

- Send an email to your family, friends and colleagues. Let them know about your foster dog and ask them to help you spread the word and to tell their friends and colleagues.

- Post a flyer of your foster dog at your workplace or put one on your office door or outside your cube.

- Spread the word at your child's school, your place of worship, or other organization that you belong.

- Record a video of your foster dog or create a slideshow with more photos and have them posted on your foster dog's bio.

- Make sure you always walk your foster dog with an "Adopt Me" bandana- Post your foster dog on your own social media as well as "Always & Furever Adoptable pets" open FB group.- You must participate in at least ONE Always & Furever adoption event a month.

What if someone wants to adopt your foster pup?

Information for the adoption process of your foster pup!

All interested adopters must fill out an adoption application at [Alwaysandforever.org/forms](https://www.alwaysandforever.org/forms). The adoption team will then process their application. This process can take up to 2 weeks.

If an adopter is approved, a member of the adoption team will send an email to the approved adopter and CC you on the email as well. This email will have your information on it for the approved adopter to reach out to you to talk to you about your foster pup. We heavily rely on your information and your opinions of the potential adopter(s). If for any reason you do not feel like they would not be a good fit... please let the foster team member and adoption team member you are working with know. You have the foster pup in your home so you know them best! We will absolutely value your thoughts and opinions.

If you feel the approved adopter is a good match - you can set up a meet and greet with them. This can be done anywhere. It does not need to be done at the barn. If you feel you need assistance with this please let me or the adoption team member who is in charge of this adoption candidate/pup know. We can have a trainer there for this if needed. If all goes well at the meet and greet and they would like to move forward with adopting your foster pup please let me and your adoption team member know. There is a 24 hour waiting period from the initial meet and greet with the adopter and your foster pup to when they can take them.

Once all meet and greets are done and the adopter wants to move forward with the adoption... you can schedule a pick up time! Please let the adoption team member who sent the email on the potential adopter know when this is taking place. When the adopter picks up the pup, please remember to ask the adopter if they have signed the electronic adoption contract that was sent to them from the adoption team member prior to pick up. They must sign this before leaving with the pup. We also ask you take a picture of the adopter(s) and the pup so we can post! You can send this to myself or the adoption team member.

If there are ANY questions please reach out to me!

Also- if you are interested in adopting your foster pup, you have first rights to do so! Just let us know if that is something you would like to do!

ONLY BY WORKING TOGETHER CAN WE SAVE MORE LIVES!! Thank you for being a hero

A&F Foster team