



PAWS NEW ENGLAND

Questions & Answers - Foster Homes

How do dogs get to New England?

Our dogs come to New England on a USDA-certified transport service. Dogs make the 1,000-mile, 20-hour trip securely created in a temperature-controlled trailer. Careful attention is given to their comfort and safety, and several stops are made during the journey to exercise and water dogs.

What if I can't pick up my foster dog on the scheduled day/time?

There are a couple of options. If there is another foster family in your area who is making the trip perhaps they can pick up your dog for you. We don't mind if you ask a trusted friend or family member to pick up your dog and we prefer it rather than expending another volunteer's time if they already have a dog, are working etc. Just let us know. Contact our foster home coordinator (DEB KLINCH) if you need to make alternate arrangements.

We're home. What's next?

Your dog may be stressed from his trip and may need a few days to recover, in rare cases up to two weeks. He may need some "down time" in his crate. Some stress-related behaviors include: poor appetite, pacing, skittishness or fear, sleeping a lot, hyperactivity, having accidents in the house, panting, and drinking a lot of water. Always keep your foster dog leashed and/or fenced. Be patient with him during this transition; spend time with him and help him settle in. After a few days, he will recover from the trip and stress-related behavior will disappear, but he may continue to feel a little insecure. Side note from an experienced foster: Dogs fresh off the transport really need down time, they are so tired & confused. They need at least a couple of days to get their paws on the ground before they show their true potential!

Any suggestions on how I should introduce my dog to my foster dog?

Introduce your foster dog to your dog on neutral territory, such as a park. If this isn't possible, introduce them in your yard, but never inside the house. To help prevent jealousy, re-assure your dog that he is not being replaced. Feed him first, pet him first, and spend quality time alone with him.

What if my dog and the foster dog don't get along?

Although we strive to match our foster dogs with an appropriate foster home, there are occasions when dogs -- just like people -- don't get along. Please keep in mind that our dogs have had a long, hard trip to New England, so it may take a few days for them to get comfortable and for their true personality to shine through. If after a few days you feel the placement is not going to work, please contact our foster home coordinator to let us know that the placement is not working. We will work quickly to find an alternate foster home. Because foster homes are limited and are not always readily available, it may be a day or two before the dog can be moved. Alternatively, we can kennel a dog if necessary until an appropriate home can be found. Although this is not an ideal living situation for the dog, and means incremental cost to the rescue (which is already operating on a shoestring budget).

When taking in a new foster you should always feed them separately and take up all toys or treats that could cause them to compete for. Feed your established dog first & in the normal place that they usually eat. Your foster should be fed in a crate or a separate room to avoid issues. Newly rescued dogs often remember how they previously had to compete with other dogs for a meal. Once they learn that a regular meal of their own is coming they will no longer display any anxiety over resources.

NOTE: Quite a few of our dogs have been outside dogs for their entire lives which presents two problems – housetraining may take a bit but something a lot of people mistake for hips problems, they do NOT KNOW HOW TO GO UP OR DOWN STAIRS. We receive at least 1-2 emails per week from families saying they have to carry their dogs up and down because they must have hip problem ☺. If you have another dog, it makes it easier as they will eventually follow them. Some are slow to do this some are quick.

What kind of food should I feed my foster dog?

We want the fostering experience to be as simple as possible for you, so please feel free to feed your foster dog whatever food you feed your own dog (please keep in mind that puppies should always be fed puppy food and adult dogs should be fed adult food). You can purchase foods that are good for all life stages which sometimes make it easier if you will be fostering dogs of various ages (Canidae makes a good one).

Should I use a crate?

PAWS strongly encourages foster homes to crate puppies (this helps with house training and saves personal items from being chewed!). For older dogs, please use your discretion based on the dog's history.

As mentioned above, most of the dogs we rescue have been “outside” dogs most of their entire adult lives – many are housetrained however some will need work or reinforcement; our “southern” fosters do their best but some of them have upwards of 20-30 dogs who are also outside for the most part and thus it's not always easy for them to determine the exact housetraining status for a dog either - in short, they will do their best but crating is the best and easiest way to get a dog to learn fast.

What if my foster dog requires medical attention?

PAWS prides itself on ensuring all our dogs are in excellent health. All dogs are examined by a veterinarian prior to being transported to New England. Despite our best efforts, dogs will, very rarely, demonstrate cold-like symptoms and other minor conditions that may concern you. If you believe a trip to the vet is in order, please contact Joanne (joanne@pawsnewengland.com) or 617-650-3452 (please include a brief description of the dog's condition). PAWS is partnered with several vets throughout New England who extend a discount on their usual fees. If a vet visit is required we can pre-approve the cost & the vet can direct bill PAWS at no cost to the foster; this has to be approved prior to the visit. Of course, if the situation is a medical emergency and the dog's life is in danger, please get the dog to a vet as soon as possible. The health and well being of our dogs is of utmost importance and should never be sacrificed or compromised because a PAWS representative could not be reached. If a dog requires treatment due to a life threatening emergency a foster might have to front the money for treatment and will be reimbursed.

How does the adoption process work?

Our volunteer adoption coordinators dedicate their time and effort to re-homing our dogs with loving forever families. We have an in-depth screening process that helps ensure our dogs are placed in the very best homes. The process includes a written application, phone screen, vet and personal references check, and a home visit (in most instances).

What is my role in the adoption process?

Depending on how involved you would like to be, you will have two options:

As the foster parent, you will be asked to make initial contact with potential adopters to 1) assess the person (family) in terms of acceptability as an adopter and 2) assess if your foster dog is a good candidate for the lifestyle of the adopter(s). If you feel it is a potentially good match, you will advise the application coordinator for your dog (if you are not that person as well).

You then have the option of having your “adoption coordinator” perform the routine check of the application which will include checking all references, doing an assessor check for home ownership or checking w/ landlord to ascertain that

dogs are in fact allowed (especially certain breeds). If you wish to perform this application check yourself, we not only welcome it, we encourage it- the more you know about the family personally, the better you can make your decision.

PAWS will always stand behind your decision with regard to a potential adopter if your objections are reasonable (which they always are but there are occasions where perhaps lack of experience on a foster's part requires input from one of our more experienced volunteers.

Please do not release your foster dog to anyone without prior consent from a PAWS representative, Adoption Coordinator, or by the foster coordinator.

Talking to potential adopters...

When speaking to potential adopters try to keep things up beat. They will almost always ask what breed is in the mix. Please explain that a vet with the guidance of an experienced rescuer determine a breed and there is no degree of certainty as what the "mix" is. If ever you are unsure how to answer a question please refer them to their adoption coordinator. You can always offer to have a potential adopter chat with the southern rescuer, just have them get in touch with their adoption coordinator for contact information.

Most foster dogs experience things for the first time when they come to a northern foster home... ie: sleeping on a comfy dog bed, playing with toys etc. Tell potential adopters about these "first experiences" as they would have otherwise missed out on this aspect about their dogs life. New adopters love to hear about how their dog lived before they became "their dog".

Be honest with potential adopters even if that means that Fido likes to counter surf for treats or chew your best shoes when you're not looking. These are typical behaviors of newly rescued dogs & most of the time can be easily worked through. On rare occasion if a dog displays any type of aggression or behaviors that seems alarming please let us know as soon as possible so we can act accordingly.

How do I know who the adoption coordinator for my foster dog is?

If you do not hear from a coordinator about your foster dog, please e-mail Deb Klinch (info given below) to find out if an adoption coordinator has been assigned. The coordinators are pre-assigned by letters of the alphabet to all dogs on Petfinder.

When will my foster dog go home?

It is difficult to estimate how long a dog will be in foster care. It can be just a few days or a few weeks or possibly a couple of months. A dog can go home with an approved applicant only. If an applicant has already been approved for adoption (e.g., written application, phone screen, references check, and home visit) prior to visiting your home, the dog may go home with the applicant if the meeting goes well. Sometimes an applicant may meet a dog before their home visit is done. In this case, the dog may not go home with the applicant since they are not approved adopters. If you are not sure if the applicant is approved, please check with the adoption coordinator or the foster coordinators Kathleen & Jill. **Please do not release your foster dog to anyone without prior consent as noted above.**

What do I do when a dog is adopted?

The adoption coordinator will have made payment/contract arrangements with the adopter, but if there is any action required on your part, the coordinator will let you know. PAWS accepts PayPal and bank checks only as forms of payment (no personal checks). Again, the adoption coordinators will make sure the adopter has paid the adoption fee and signed the contract. Please be sure to give the dog's medical records and adoption packet to the adopter.

What if I want to adopt my foster dog?

PAWS aims to give foster homes “right of first refusal” when it comes to adopting a dog. However, we must balance that goal with the expectations of people who complete and submit applications with hopes of adopting one of our dogs. If you are interested in adopting your foster dog, please send a message to Deb Klinch **immediately** to see if there are any applications in the works for your foster dog. If there are none, you will have the opportunity to adopt your foster dog (e.g., remit the full adoption fee and sign the adoption contract). If there are applications in the works (meaning that one of our volunteer adoption coordinators has already done the required references check and spoke with the applicant to determine their suitability as an adopter), then we will move forward with that applicant. If for some reason the adoption doesn’t work out, you will be offered the chance to adopt the dog.

Can I provide input for my foster dog's online bio?

Absolutely! As the foster family, you know more than anyone about the dog and your input for their online bio is greatly appreciated. Input (and updated photos) can be e-mailed to Debra Klinch or Joanne Hutchinson. Our adoptable dogs' online bios can be accessed via our website at www.pawsnewengland.com.

Please know that any updated information and pictures will greatly improve your foster dog’s chances of adoption.

Can I reach someone by phone instead of e-mail?

The people who manage PAWS NE are volunteers with regular full-time jobs, homes, and families to care for (probably just like you!). As a result, e-mail is the preferred communication method. If you have an emergency situation that requires immediate attention, you can call Joanne @ 617 650 3452 or Kelly @ 617 620 9144 for emergencies.

PAWS NEW ENGLAND CONTACT INFORMATION:

Co-Founders:

Traci Wood - tparris2005@aol.com (Memphis)

Kelly Parker - kesalerno@gmail.com (Washington DC)

Joanne Hutchinson- joannepawsne@gmail.com (Plymouth MA)

Foster Assignments/Coordinator

Deb Klinch - dlc123@gmail.com

New Adoption Application Assignment

Jennifer Frankavitz - pawsjenn@gmail.com

Medical/Vet Questions for Fosters

Joanne Hutchinson- joannepawsne@gmail.com (Plymouth MA)

We have a large list of Volunteers that will be provided to all new volunteers upon request!