



AN INTRODUCTION TO FOSTERING

We would not be able to help as many dogs as we do at All Dogs Matter without our dedicated team of foster volunteers. This introduction contains important information about dog fostering with ADM and will help you decide if you are willing and eligible to foster one of our dogs.

Q: Why do you foster out dogs?

- Some dogs find the kennel environment very distressing, so we need foster carers that can offer them a loving temporary home to improve their welfare until they we can find them a forever home.
- The kennel environment is also not a great place for dogs recovering from illness or surgery. Foster carers can offer these 'vulnerable patients' a warm and safe environment until they are well enough to go up for adoption.
- If a dog is stressed in kennels, we will not always see its true personality and behaviour. Foster carers can provide us with valuable information about their foster dog and help us match them up with the best possible forever home.
- Foster homes also allow us to free up space in our kennels, which means that we can help to rescue and rehome many more dogs.

Q: How does the fostering application work?

- Firstly, we will ask you to complete the Dog Fostering Application on our website. This form allows us to register all your details and you to state the type of dog you are willing to foster, including size, temperament and behaviour.
- Secondly, you will have an informal interview/chat with an ADM representative, so we can get to know each other better.
- Then you will receive a home visit from an ADM volunteer to confirm that your home environment will be suitable for type of dog you are thinking of fostering. However, it is worth noting that this may not happen until we have found you a suitable foster dog.

Q: Can anybody become a foster carer?

- **Can I work and still foster a dog?**
- No. All the dogs we foster out are needy in one way or another and therefore need someone around most of the time. So, if you work full-time and the dog would be left alone all day, you would not be eligible to foster unless there was a secondary adult foster carer in the home to provide the company and exercise your foster dog needs.

- **Can I foster if I have very young children?**
- We do not foster out dogs with very young children unless we know for certain that they have previously lived with them or they are very young puppies. Again, the choice of foster dogs for families with children under the age of 10 is very limited.
- **Can I foster if I already have a dog?**
- Yes, in fact we often have dogs that need to live with another dog. However, we do **not** foster out dogs of the same sex as the existing family dog and your dog must be neutered or spayed.
- **Can I foster if I have cat?**
- We do **not** foster out dogs to homes with cats unless they are very young puppies. The main reason being that there are so many people looking to rehome cat-friendly dogs that we don't need to!
- **Can I foster if I don't have a garden?**
- Ideally you will live in a house or ground floor flat with direct access to a garden. However, we do foster out dogs that are used to not having a garden but your choice of dog will be much more limited. No puppies for instance!

Q: How long will I have my foster dog for?

- On average dogs will be in a foster home for 3-4 weeks before they go onto a permanent home. However, you need to be prepared that your foster dog could be with you for just 3 or 4 days or as long as 3 or 4 months.
- If you have a foster dog and need to take an unplanned absence from fostering, we will of course take the dog back but the more notice we have, the better the arrangements we can make.
- Unfortunately, we are unable to accept applications from homes that are only available at weekends. This is because it is more traumatic than beneficial for the dog to go into a new unfamiliar home for such a short space of time before having to come back to kennels.

Q: Will I get expenses?

- Unfortunately, being a small charity ADM is unable to provide travel expenses, but we can provide food, bedding, toys and all other equipment needed. However, as a charity we welcome and appreciate any help towards these provisions.

Q: Does it matter where I live?

- To foster dogs, you will need to be located within the M25 and be willing and able to travel to either our kennels in Waltham Abbey or our office in North Finchley to collect a dog. In extenuating circumstances, we may be able to find a volunteer driver to deliver or collect a dog, but much depends on how far away you live.

Q: How long will I have to wait for a foster dog?

- It depends on any available dogs that are suitable for your needs. This may mean that sometimes we do not have a good match for you. Under these circumstances we ask for your patience and be sure we will contact you when a dog becomes available.

Q: Can I choose a foster dog?

- Yes and No. You must be a suitable match but if you like the look of a dog on our website that needs a foster home just drop us an email or call us and we can tell you right away if you would be a suitable foster carer.
- Once we have a suitable match for you we will tell you all we know about the dog. In some cases, this will be a lot as the dog has been given up by its owner and we know all about them but if a dog comes into us as a stray, we have no history of them at all. However, we will have assessed them in kennels for how they are with people and other dogs.
- If you like the sound of the dog, we will ask you **and** your family **and** any existing family dog to come and meet your potential foster dog. If the introduction goes well, you can sign the fostering agreement and take the dog home.

Q: Any tips for when I get my foster dog home?

- **Don't** expect too much in the first couple of days. Remember every dog will need time to settle in. You will need you to be patient.
- **Do** take your foster dog straight out into the garden. Wait with them until they toilet and then give them lots of praise and a treat. We will have told you if we think they are housetrained or not but lots of dogs have accidents in the first few days. So again, give them time to get back into a toileting regime.
- **Do** keep your foster dog on a lead or longline when in the park for a minimum of five days while assessing his or her recall. After that only let them off lead or longline once you are confident you can recall them easily regardless of any distractions.
- Also, if directed by ADM to keep your foster dog on a lead or longline for the entire foster period you must stick to it.
- **Do** stick to any training programme or training device [i.e. a harness or halti] that ADM has recommended.
- **Don't** let too many people come to meet your foster dog until they have settled in or you could overwhelm them.

Q: What if I have a problem?

- Once you have your foster dog we will always be at the end of a phone. You can call or email the office during office hours [9am to 5pm] Monday to Friday or in an emergency outside those hours or at weekends there's the 24-hour Foster Mobile.
- Obviously, your foster dog will need time to settle in but from time to time a dog will simply not work out in the foster home. In that case we will always take the dog back either the same day or as soon as kennel space allows, depending on the severity of the problem.

Q: What if my dog becomes sick

- You must contact All Dogs Matter immediately if your foster dog becomes ill or displays any unusual symptoms and if necessary, get him or her to an ADM approved vet for prompt treatment.
- If your foster dog needs veterinary treatment you must only take him or her to an ADM approved vet unless it is an emergency injury or life-threatening illness and you have been unable to contact an ADM representative.
- You understand that if you choose to take the foster dog to a private vet you will be responsible to meet all the direct and associated costs and understand that ADM is not able to pay or assume responsibility for private veterinary fees.
- You must follow the advice of the ADM approved vet while your foster dog is in your care and keep your foster dog away from other animals in the case of infectious illness.

Q: What happens when someone wants to adopt my foster dog?

- If you choose to foster a dog, you will need to be comfortable with prospective adopters visiting you in your home to meet the dog. Visitors to your home will have already been interviewed and vetted by ADM.
- While ADM will take very seriously any opinion you have about a potential new home for your foster dog, we will have the final decision.
- While we realise you cannot be available at all times for a potential adopter to view your foster dog immediately it is important that you are as available as possible and at least be able to arrange a viewing within 48 hours of being contacted

Q: What if I want to keep my foster dog?

- At ADM we understand it is inevitable that even with the best intentions some foster carers may choose to keep the dog they are fostering. However, if we have someone who has already viewed your foster dog and have agreed to rehome him or her then you decide you want to keep the dog, you must realise this would be very upsetting for them. And in some cases, if ADM consider them a more suitable home for the dog they will have priority.