

DOG FOSTER INFORMATION PACK

AID: _____

Food: _____ cups food _____ a day



Palm Beach County
Board of County Commissioners
Public Safety Department
Animal Care and Control Division



Welcome to the dog foster program!



Palm Beach Animal Care and Control is the only open admission animal shelter in Palm Beach County. Founded in 1969, our top priority is to connect animals in need of rescue with loving homes. With thousands of cats and dogs entering our shelter every year, PBCACC staff and volunteers provide the utmost love and care for every animal that comes through our doors. Our mission is to inspire compassion for all animals, provide shelter and humane care to homeless animals, and promote adoptions and responsible pet guardianship in our community.

Why fostering is important:

- FOSTERING SAVES LIVES.
- Provides a safe and healthy environment for animals to grow.
- Provides LOVE and ATTENTION away from a stressful shelter environment.
- Provides SPACE in shelters for other animals in NEED.
- Provides SOCIALIZATION and helps them become candidates for adoption
- Fostering is temporary but provides a lifetime of difference at a critical time for these animals.
- Fostering helps save two lives: the one you are fostering and the one coming in behind it

Without the support of fosters, the impact PBCACC has on the population of homeless pets in the community would be greatly minimized. We are fortunate to have a wonderful team which helps so many kiddos find their forever families!

THANK YOU FOR SAVING LIVES!!

Palm Beach Animal Care and Control

Foster Dog FAQ

- What is a dog foster and why is it important?
- How do I set up my home?
- What do I need to have to foster a dog?
- What should I expect?
- How do I care for my foster dog?
- How do I read dog behaviors?
- Who do I contact if there are behavior questions?
- What is the 3-3-3 Rule?
- How can I train healthy behaviors for my foster?
- What is enrichment?
- Who do I call if I need medicine or a checkup and who do I call in an emergency?
- How can I get my foster dog adopted?
- Can I adopt my foster dog?





What is a dog foster and why is it important?

A dog foster helps a shelter dog by bringing them into the care of their home.

It can free up space at our shelter, and provides a quiet place for canines to begin decompressing. It allows a dog to also be away from the stresses and contagions which come from living in a larger population of dogs.

Dog fosters may be short or long term, but in both cases fosters have been shown to make dogs more adoptable at the shelter after their foster stay.

Finally, a dog foster can help build a strong behavior foundation to make a dog be more comfortable in their future family.

How do I set up my home?

- If you have personal pets, make sure they are up to date with rabies vaccines.
- Before your new foster comes home, try to not do anything too stressful with your own pets. Anything you can do to reduce stress such as mental stimulation, long walks in a non-distracting environment full of great sniffing opportunities, and calm couch time is recommended.
- Brush up on training! Revisit basic manners training like sit, down, watch, leave it, or go to mat/crate
- Set up management tools: baby gates, crates, and drag leashes to create an environment where all animals have space to feel safe while they get to know one another. For example, even if your current dog or cat is not a counter surfer, your foster may be, so putting these items in place in advance will prevent unwanted behaviors. It also gives your resident animals a chance to adjust to the new layout before the foster arrives.
- Pet-proof your home. Make sure no hazards or electrical wires are able to be chewed from crates or bedrooms. Toys that can be ingested should not stay with the foster when you are not home to monitor.
- Use bedding that is easily washed to make it easier to disinfect it between foster pets. Areas with tile, hardwood or other impermeable surfaces are ideal places to house your foster animals.
- Preparing your yard: If you have a fenced-in backyard, check that there aren't holes in the fence or any other escape route. Remember, never leave your foster dog in the backyard without your supervision. Never leave a foster dog unattended or unwatched outside. ALWAYS keep your foster dog on a leash when walking outside.

****Keep in mind: Certain essential oils can be toxic to pets. Ask if you are unsure! ****



What do I need to have to foster a dog?

We recommend that you bring the following:

- Travel Carrier/Crate (one can be borrowed, if needed)
- Blankets/Covers to protect your car from scratches or accidents
- Paper towels/wipes for car cleanup

Puppies don't need a collar, but should be transported in a travel carrier/crate

Supply list:

- Food*
- Crate*
- Leash and collar*
- Bowls for food and water
- Dog-safe toys
- Waste bags
- Treats for training

A comfy bed or used old bedding or towels and a few chew toys will also help them settle in. The first few days are important for helping your foster feel comfortable and safe.

*PBCACC provides these items when available

What should I expect?

Most foster dogs sleep a lot for the first few days, but some do cry at night until they adjust.

Why are some foster dogs so skittish, even though they're in a nice, loving home?

The dog you are fostering might have come from unknown backgrounds, sometimes negative situations. They might have traveled a long while to get to you. They are confused, scared, and maybe even sick or malnourished.

If your foster has endured trauma or abuse, you might be tempted to nurture them when they cry. Unfortunately, this teaches them that they can whine or bark to get your attention — which is the opposite of what you want. Try to prepare for some noise the first night.

In any case, change can take time. So be patient with your foster dog. You might be the first real home they have slept in.

To help your foster adjust to their crate, plan short training sessions during the day. Here are a few more tips for crate training your foster dog:

- Leave the door to the crate open throughout the day, and let your foster explore it at their own pace.
- Place a comfortable (but durable) dog bed in the crate to make it extra cozy.
- To create a positive association, try feeding your foster a meal or high-value treat in the crate.



How do I care for my foster dog?

Feeding:

Hill's Science Diet Dog Feeding

Guidelines for AM & PM

PBCACC feeds Hill's® Science Diet® foods to the foster animals. We will send home some of the diet they are on to help transition during foster time.

Large Adult Dogs

2 feedings per day unless otherwise noted.

1 cup dry adult dog food and 2 tablespoons of wet/can food

Small Adult Dogs

2 feedings per day unless otherwise noted.

1/2 cup dry small dog/puppy food and 2 tablespoons of wet/can

Puppies 6 months to 1 year:

2 feedings per day unless otherwise noted.

1 cup dry small dog/puppy food and 2 tablespoons of wet/can

Puppies under 6 months:

3 feedings per day unless otherwise noted.

1/2 cup dry small dog/puppy food and 2 tablespoons of wet/can



Puppies between 2 - 6 months old will typically eat three times a day. Anything older will eat twice daily. Occasionally foster animals will be put on a special diet. What they are eating will be explained to you when you pick up the foster. Please do not feed your foster dog "people food", unless directed by medical.

Walks/potty breaks: You should potty your dog before and after feedings, the more that you encourage potty time, the fewer accidents you will encounter.

Water: Clean, fresh water should be offered at all times. Change daily.

IF YOUR FOSTER DOG GETS LOOSE OR IS LOST, IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY OUR SHELTER DISPATCH 561-233-1200, ext. 0



How do I read dog behaviors?

Calm and Neutral

Relaxed body posture, tail down, no tension in body, tail might be gently wagging. It's usually safe to pet a relaxed dog, but make sure they are not fully asleep, which may startle the dog



Excited

An overly excited dog might jump up and knock you over, scratch or nip with teeth. Fast wagging tail, ears forward



Submissive

On back, feet and tail tucked. Most dogs who do this are scared or insecure in a situation



Dominant

Tall forward posture, high tail wag



Playful

Front play bow, Tail wagging, relaxed face



Anxious and Nervous

This dog is uncomfortable. Leaning back or turning body, tail low, Head low, ears back. Best not to pet an anxious dog, might bite in defense



Alert

Ears are forward, mouth might be closed, leaning forward posture



Aggressive

Stiff posture, tail stiff and waving like a flag
Lip licking, Hard stare



Florida State law requires any dog or cat that bites and breaks the skin to be placed on a ten-day quarantine for rabies observation under a veterinarian. Call 561-233-1200 ext. 0 to report any incidents.

Who do I contact if there are behavior questions?

Remember, you're not alone on your journey. If you need advice or have questions about your foster's history or temperament, don't hesitate to reach out to us at ACCFoster@pbc.gov or call the foster line at 561-233-1281.



What is the 3-3-3 Rule?

In the first 3 Days

- May sleep for many hours
- Feel overwhelmed
- May be scared and unsure of what is going on
- Not comfortable enough to be themselves
- May not want to eat or drink
- Shut down and want to curl up in their crate or under a table
- Testing their boundaries

After 3 Weeks

- Staring to settle in
- Feeling more comfortable
- Realizing this may be home
- Figuring out their environment
- Getting into a routine
- Letting guard down and showing personality
- Behavior issues may start to show

After 3 Months

- Finally completely comfortable
- Building trust and a bond
- Gained sense of security
- Set in a routine

How can I train healthy behaviors for my foster?

Remediating mouthiness

- Provide appropriate chew toys.
 - Withdraw attention if becoming mouthy
 - Make a trade
 - Provide plenty of physical AND mental exercise
 - Utilize a high yip noise and provide a treat. DO NOT punish for mouthiness, as this may reinforce the behavior
- 

Sit

There are two different methods for showing your foster dog what “sit” means. The first method is called capturing.

1. Stand in front of your foster dog holding some of their dog food or treats.
2. Wait for them to sit – say “yes” and give them a treat.
3. Then step backwards or sideways to encourage them to stand and wait for them to sit.
4. Give another treat as soon as they sit.
5. After a few repetitions, you can begin saying “sit” right as they begin to sit.

The next option is called luring.

1. Get down in front of your dog, holding a treat as a lure.
2. Put the treat right in front of the pup's nose, then slowly lift the food above their head. They will probably sit as he lifts their head to nibble at the treat.
3. Allow them to eat the treat when their bottom touches the ground.
4. Repeat
5. Once they understand the hand signal to sit, you can begin saying "sit" right before you give the hand signal. Never physically put your foster dog into the sitting position; this can be confusing or upsetting to some dogs.



How can I train healthy behaviors for my foster? (Continued)

Crate Training

- A crate is a great way to keep both your foster dog and your home safe. When using a crate, make sure that it is always a positive place for your foster dog. Never use a crate for punishment.
- When introducing a dog to a crate, use a happy tone of voice. Allow the dog to smell the area and become accustomed to it.
- When the dog enters the crate, give them lots of praise and a treat reward. If you have a difficult time getting the dog to enter the crate or if the dog seems afraid, try leaving the crate door open and placing the dog's food and water bowls just inside the door.
- Any time your foster dog shows any sign of curiosity in the crate, praise and reward him. You will notice the dog going to the crate and looking at you for assurance and praise.
- Allow the dog to wander into the crate and eat at their leisure. Once the dog seems more comfortable with the crate, you can try confining the dog to the crate for short intervals. Never confine a puppy to a crate for longer than 3-4 hours at a time or an adult dog for longer than 8-10 hours at a time. Remember, the dog will not want to soil their crate, so forcing the dog to stay in the crate longer than they can comfortably "hold it" is inappropriate.

House Training 101

Chances are your foster dog may need at least a refresher course in house training. Many rescued dogs have spent most of their lives outside and never learned the rules of living indoors. Other dogs may have once been housetrained, but may still have an accident or two when transitioning into a new home. Here are some key points to keep in mind during the process that are almost universally applicable:

1. **Holding It:** Every dog has their time limit. Puppies under six months are typically unable to hold it in for more than a few hours. A healthy adult dog, even among smaller breeds, should have no trouble holding it for 8-10 hours in a crate or overnight. There are always exceptions.
2. **Frequent Outings:** To avoid accidents, you will want to make sure your foster dog has plenty of opportunities to go outside.
3. **Reward Only:** NEVER scold a dog for going potty inside. More often than not, the dog won't understand that you are scolding them for going inside. They are more likely to think you are scolding them for going at all, and as a result they will want to hide from you to do their business.
4. **Prevention & Redirection:** If you are still in the process of housetraining, make sure you have eyes on your pup at all times. If you are preoccupied with other tasks, limit their access. Use a crate or exercise pen to keep them from going wherever they please.



What is enrichment?

Enrichment is something that allows dogs to do natural behaviors that help to also lower stress. Along with improving the dog's life it also boosts foster morale during the engagement. Enrichment decreases stress in the animals which decreases the rate of illness and increases the animals' adoptability. Stress is the #1 reason for upper respiratory infections in shelter pets. Some enrichment ideas include: lick mats, peanut butter in a Kong toy, snuffle mats, slow feeder bowl with frozen water and dog food inside.

Who do I call if I need medicine or a checkup?

Most of our animals come from unknown backgrounds. Sometimes animals will not show symptoms of illness for 10-14 days after initial contact with a virus/bacteria/fungi. This is why we ask you to quarantine your foster animals from resident pets in your home. Keeping your personal pets up to date on vaccines and parasite protection can help prevent most transfers of illness, but the safest course of action is always keeping them separate.

For non-emergencies you can leave a message for the clinic at 561-233-1223 and they will get back to you as soon as they are available.

MONITOR SYMPTOMS:

Call the medical team during operating hours (see the back of this booklet for shelter hours) if you are concerned/unsure with the following symptoms:

- Mild discharge from eyes or nose
- Lack of appetite; not eating much, skips a meal
- Mild lethargy
- Sneezing and/or coughing
- Diarrhea
- No bowel movement for 24-36 hours; straining
- Loose stool
- Hair loss; scaly and red skin

GET IN IMMEDIATELY:

Call the emergency number **561-233-1200, ext. 0** and come to the shelter ASAP!

- Repeated vomiting
- Diarrhea lasting longer than 24 hours
- Bleeding of any kind
- Any trauma
- Difficulty breathing
- A lot of greenish discharge
- Loss of appetite; will not eat/has not eaten or drank water in 24 hours.
- Extreme lethargy

If after hours, DO NOT take your foster pet to an ER or full-service vet, call the emergency number and the clinic will advise where to go.



How can I get my foster dog adopted?

As foster parents our job is to help our foster animal blossom into a loving member of a family. This helps them get adopted into the right home. Since you know them best, who better to market them than you? Here are some great ideas:

- If your foster dog is old enough (over 4 months old) and healthy, you may take them out with you while you run errands, visit stores and dog friendly restaurants, or even just in the neighborhood wearing "adopt me" or "foster me" gear to spread the word! Please make sure your dog is dog and people friendly.
- Post your foster on social media.
- Send us an amazing, detailed biography and great pictures for our website and social media!
- Spread the word to everyone you know - you never know who may be looking for a new family member. During the engagement, our foster coordinator will send you our foster report card which you are required to fill out. The more details that can be shared the better for potential adopters! Here is a copy of the link as well!
 - <https://survey.pbcgov.com/s3/Palm-Beach-Animal-Care-Control-Foster-Dog-Feedback>

Can I adopt my foster dog?

Yes you can! If you find someone to adopt, or you want to adopt them yourself, an adoption application must be filled out ahead of time. Please let the Foster Coordinator know before your foster engagement ends.

ADOPTION REQUIREMENTS

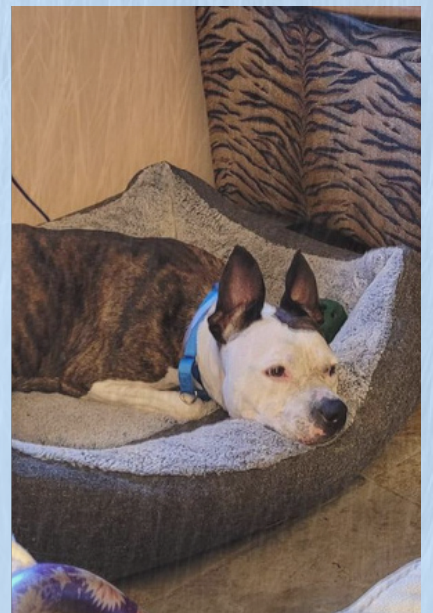
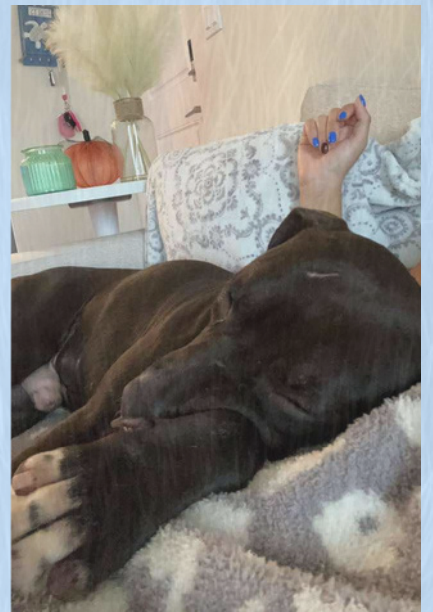
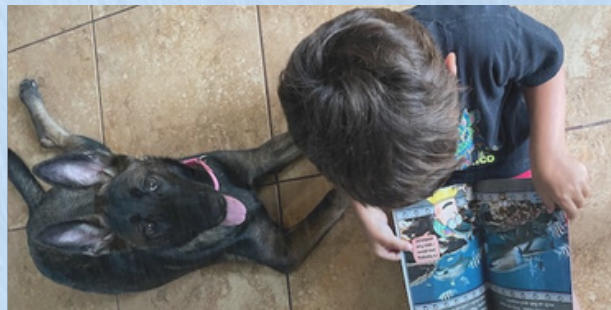
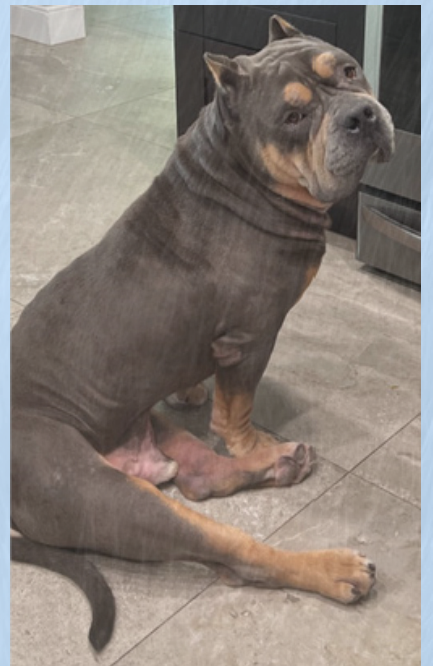
It is important that all animals in our care find the right home.

- Adopters must be at least 18 years of age to adopt.
- We require a government-issued photo ID.
- Every adopted animal will go home with a recent medical history, information on a microchip already registered to the adopter, and a sample bag of food.

When returning your foster dog, please return all the supplies lent out to you. If your foster dog is on any medication it is especially important to bring back any unused medication with you when returning your dog. If you have not submitted the foster report card, the foster team will remind you at time for return.

**Thank you so much for opening up
your heart and your home to
foster pets.**





**IMPORTANT FOSTER
CONTACT INFORMATION**

**IF YOUR FOSTER DOG GETS LOOSE OR IS LOST, IMMEDIATELY
NOTIFY OUR SHELTER DISPATCH 561-233-1200, ext. 0**

**For recheck appointments or medical questions, please call:
(561)-233-1223**

**For urgent medical emergencies only:
(561)-233-1200, ext 0**

Please explain to the dispatcher that you have a medical emergency regarding your ACC foster pet and need to speak with a veterinary technician.

For additional foster questions:

ACCFoster@pbcgov.org

PBCACC Shelter Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.