

Guide for Dog Foster Homes

Top Tips for Foster Parents

- Check in regularly with your Foster Coordinator.
- Ask for advice if your puppy/dog has stopped eating.
- If your dog seems sick, check immediately for hydration - she should be drinking water urinating, have elastic skin tone and a moist mouth.
- Wash your hands and change your clothing after handling sick animals to prevent spread of illness.
- Never let your dog run loose outside; guard against escapes.
- Don't leave your foster dog unattended with any resident animal.
- Feed your foster dog separately from other pets in your home.

Important Contacts/Information

- ASVT Foster Coordinator
 - Dogs - Arlyce (Fred) Kratochvil; fred.krat2015@gmail.com
 - Cats - Tamra Dearing; tdearing@suddenlink.net
- ASVT Foster Medical Questions
 - Kathy Joslyn; kathy@blueheronbay.com; (936) 537-5768 (cell)
 - Hilliary Dumas; hdumas@lefco-inc.com
 - Juliene Pickens; jjpick@cebridge.net
- ASVT Foster Spay/Neuter Coordinator
 - Janie Gray; janie.gray214@gmail.com
 - Tamra Dearing; tdearing@suddenlink.net
- ASVT Foster Application Approvals
 - Ruby Cross; rcross2114@gmail.com
- ASVT Adoption Inquiries/Applications
 - Chris DelGreco; cdelgreco9@aol.com
- ASVT Offsite Adoption Event Coordinators
 - Please see adoption event email/Facebook post for coordinator
- ASVT Photographer
 - Bobbie Bennett; bobbiebennett52@comcast.net
- ASVT Treasurer
 - Elizabeth Jones; itjones61@comcast.net
- ASVT Shelter Database (RGO)
 - Account Number: 7261
 - User Name: will be provided via email
 - Password: Temporary password will be provided via email
 - Assistance: Elizabeth Jones; itjones61@comcast.net
- ASVT Facebook Page: Official Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas
- ASVT Facebook Foster Group: ASVT Fosters
 - Please request to join our group.
- ASVT Website: www.ASVTexas.org
 - FOR ASVT FOSTERS tab
- ASVT Email address: ASVTexas@gmail.com

Foster Home Supplies

- ASVT foster homes generally provide:
 - food, bowls for food and water, bedding, toys and treats, collars and leashes, cleaning supplies, and newspaper or puppy pads for their fosters.
 - If assistance with these items is needed, let the Foster Coordinator know.
- Cleaning supplies should include:
 - bleach, an odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) for housetraining accidents, detergent and towels.
 - All items and areas used by your foster dog should be cleaned and disinfected (using bleach) regularly.
- Additional information on a variety of cleaning issues can be found on the ASVT website.
- ASVT provides all medications including flea and heartworm preventatives.
 - All medications given to the dog should be noted on the dog's record in RGO.
- Wire crates, appropriately sized, should be used.
 - ASVT has wire crates and puppy pens to loan.
- ASVT foster tags must be worn by foster dogs at all times.

Health and Wellness

- Vaccines, Preventatives, Wormers
 - PLEASE DOWNLOAD AND PRINT THE VACCINE PROTOCOL FOR FOSTER PETS
 - Contact Foster Medical Coordinators
 - ASVT does not use Animal Hospital of Montgomery (AHOM) for vaccinations and/or preventatives.
- Veterinarian visits and emergencies
 - Contact Foster Medical Coordinators.
 - Provide dog's name, ID number, age, weight, temperature (if able) and other symptoms.
 - Medical Coordinators may suggest at-home care, including medications
 - Medical Coordinators can schedule appointment with ASVT approved veterinarians.
- **ASVT Foster Medical Coordinator MUST pre-authorize veterinarian appointments. You will pay for the visit if not pre-authorized.**
- Authorization for veterinarian visits will be given for:
 - Puppies under 12 weeks of age:
 - Diarrhea that last for more than one day.
 - Vomiting and diarrhea for more than 6 hours.
 - Vomiting more than once in an hour.
 - Not eating for more than 12-24 hours.
 - Lethargy without fever for more than 12 hours.
 - Lethargy with fever.
 - Dogs older than 12 weeks of age:
 - Diarrhea that lasts for more than 1-2 days.
 - Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than a day.
 - Vomiting more than 2-3 times in an hour.
 - Not eating for more than 24 hours.

- Lethargy without fever for more than a day.
 - Lethargy with fever.
- Contact Foster Medical Coordinator if you observe any of the following symptoms
 - Unusual discharges from eyes, nose or other body openings
 - Abnormal lumps
 - Limping
 - Difficulty getting up or down
 - Loss of appetite
 - Abnormal waste elimination
 - Other abnormal behavior.
- Visit ASVT website for additional information on various health issues:
- **Spay/Neuter**
 - Contact Foster Spay/Neuter Coordinator to schedule an appointment.
 - ASVT uses Texas Litter Control (TLC) for most spay/neuter surgeries.
 - Spay/Neuter surgery **MUST** be done prior to adoption, unless the dog is too young.
- **NOTE:** Email or mail any paperwork received from a veterinarian or clinic to the Foster Coordinator.
 - All medical procedures and medications received are recorded in RGO.

RGO (RescueGroups.org) - ASVTs Foster Database

- You will receive an email with ASVTs RGO Account number (7261), your User Name and a temporary password.
- Log into RGO as soon as you receive the email to update your Contact information
- You are responsible for keeping your foster pet's information (weight, description) up-to-date.
- Animal's photos and information such as age, weight and description are uploaded from RGO to animal adoption websites, including:
 - Petfinder.com, Adopt-A-Pet.com, PetHarbor.com, ASPCA.com and many others
- Find more information for accessing and changing data in RGO on the ASVT website.

Behavior and Training

- Housetraining
 - BE PATIENT!!!!
 - Even house-trained adult dogs will make mistakes
 - Some foster dogs may "mark" their territory if there are smells in your house from another dog or cat
 - Redirect mistakes immediately and calmly - escort him outside where he can finish.
 - Use an odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) on the areas where the dog "marked" to insure he will not smell and mark that area again.
 - Some suggested guidelines for house training puppies and new adult dogs.
 - Begin to housetrain a puppy at 8 weeks of age.
 - Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate - backyard, side yard or indoors on newspaper or puppy pad.
 - Take him on a leash to the same spot every time with a spoken command (such as "do your business").

- Take him out when he wakes up, after he eats or drinks, after a play session, or at least every 2 hours.
 - Puppies should go out every 45 minutes until you learn their pattern.
 - Stand with him for 5 minutes.
 - If he goes, reward him (with treats, praise, a favorite game).
 - If he doesn't go in 5 minutes, take him back inside and try every 15 minutes until he goes.
 - Every time he goes, make sure you reward him!
 - Supervise the puppy or dog closely while you're inside.
 - If he starts to sniff the floor, or even squats to go, interrupt with a calm "Oops," scoop him up quickly, take him to the approved spot and praise when he finishes.
 - If he eliminates in the house while you're not paying attention, don't correct him - it's not his fault.
 - Clean it up and go back to your schedule.
 - Use an odor neutralizer to get rid of the smell.
 - NEVER put a dog's face in his mess or yell at him; he won't understand you, and you will only be teaching him fear.
- Crate Training
 - Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs.
 - Crates calm the dogs and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking and house training mistakes.
 - Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old, plus one.
 - For example, a 4-month old puppy should not be crated longer than 5 hours.
 - How long an adult dog can be crated will depend on many factors.
 - For example, if your foster dog was left outside, he has never been required to hold it for any period of time. It will take time to learn to hold it, and you will need to start slowly.
 - Older dogs and dogs with some medical conditions may only be able to successfully hold it for short periods of time.
 - Provide vigorous exercise before and after long periods in the crate.
 - Good chew toys should be in the crate at all times.
 - You may want to use a crate the first few nights in your bedroom
 - most dogs feel more secure in their crate and it protects your home from accidents.
 - Crates should never be used as a means of punishment.
 - It should be a place dogs like to be and feel safe and secure.
 - Crates are not to be used for keeping puppies under 6 months out of mischief all day.
 - Crates should be thought of as a dog playrooms, with games and toys.
- Attention and Playtime
 - Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies.
 - Gentle and calming human contact is important for dogs.
 - Be sure to give your foster dog several minutes of playtime periodically through the day.
 - Teach children to leave a dog alone when he is eating, chewing and sleeping.
 - 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.

- Never allow a child to remove a toy or any other prized possession from a dog.
 - Do not play tug of war or wrestle with your foster dog.
 - Do not throw a toy toward a shy or fearful dog; he may think you are throwing things at him and become more fearful.
 - Put toys away after you have finished playing with it. You control the toy and playtime.
 - Have the dog sit before giving him a toy or treat. The toy or treat becomes a reward the dog works for.
- Behavior Issues
 - Many “problem” behaviors are really just normal dog behaviors.
 - Behaviors such as barking, whining, digging, chewing, scavenging and hunting other animals
 - Our task is to provide more appropriate outlets for these behaviors.
 - If your foster dog is exhibiting any behavioral issues, ask yourself the questions below:
 - Is my foster dog getting enough exercise?
 - Is he being left alone for long periods of time?
 - Does he have interesting toys to keep his mind engaged and stimulated?
 - Is he getting enough attention and playtime?
 - Am I reinforcing bad behavior? Some examples include verbally scolding a dog when he is seeking attention or engaging the dog when he uses bad manners to get you to play.
 - Does my foster dog have a safe place that is dog-proofed with appropriate chew toys, or am I leaving my own belongings within reach?
 - Am I providing specific outlets based on his natural instincts and drives?
 - ASVT does not expect foster parents to be miracle workers.
 - If your foster dog requires more attention, exercise or training than you can provide, talk to your Coordinator - another foster home might be best for both you and the dog.
 - ASVT does not condone punishment.
 - It does not address the cause of the behavior and in fact it may worsen behavior that’s motivated by fear or anxiety.
 - Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs who aren’t currently fearful.
 - The dog doesn’t know what he’s done wrong; he only knows that you’re upset.
 - Punishment after the fact not only fails to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may lead to other undesirable behaviors.

Showcasing Your Foster

- Online Presence
 - A good description of your dog will increase the number of inquiries he receives. Try to include things like:
 - What does the dog like to do? (play fetch, go for walks, etc.)
 - Is she a cuddler?
 - Does she have experience with other animals and children?
 - Any cute things she does or anything you want to point out about her fur or appearance is good as well.
 - The description should generate interest, not turn people away.

- If your dog has some bad habits, discuss them during the first phone conversation or meeting.
 - We don't want to mislead people; however we really try to focus on the positive.
 - The description needs to be added to the dog's RGO record.
 - The typical description is a paragraph or two.
 - Use your personal Facebook, Instagram and other social media accounts to showcase your foster.
 - ASVT does not allow negative comments to be posted on social media; keep all posts upbeat. Do not post "Hurry, this dog is going to be EU'd" type comments. Posts like these reflect badly on our organization.
- Photos
 - An ASVT photographer will contact with you if there are not pictures of your dog uploaded into RGO.
 - If you have access to a digital camera and would like to take the pictures yourself, you are welcome to do so.
 - Crop photos so the dog is the main subject.
 - A head shot and whole body shot should be included.
 - You can upload photos into your dog's record in RGO.

Adoption

- The ASVT website includes printable adoption applications and contracts.
 - All paperwork and fees must be sent to the ASVT treasurer.
- ASVT Adoption Events
 - Events are posted on the ASVT Facebook page.
 - Emails are sent with information on where and when the event will be held.
- Take your foster dog to outside festivals and cafes, parks, etc.
 - Identify your foster dog with a vest or leash cover.
- OPA Adoption Events
 - ASVT foster animals are welcome to attend OPA (Operation Pets Alive) adoption events.
 - The ASVT website has information on how to sign up for OPA adoption events.
- "Foster Failures" - You and your family decide to adopt your foster dog!
 - As soon as a decision is made, let the Foster Coordinator know.
 - Adoption paperwork and adoption fee will be completed and paid.

More Information

- The following websites contain excellent information helpful to foster homes.
 - www.aspcapro.org
 - www.animalsheltering.org under the Resources Tab
 - www.pets.webmd.com

Acknowledgements: Much of this information was found on the ASPCA Pro website (www.aspcapro.org).