

Foster Booklet 2008

Inside this booklet

Foster Care Rules and Regulations

Puppy Care

Medical Care

Behavioral Rehabilitation

Adoptions

Supplies

Contact Information

Application

Animal Rescue League of W. PA
6620 Hamilton Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
www.animalrescue.org
412-661-6452

Welcome!

This booklet is intended to serve as a reference guide for ARL Foster Families. From time to time, some of the information contained in this booklet may change and the Foster Coordinator will inform Foster Families of these changes.

Medical care information in this booklet is NOT intended to serve as a diagnostic tool. If the foster animal is ill or injured, you must bring it to the shelter for a diagnosis.

While some animal care is universal, remember each foster animal is unique in its needs.

Only Take What You Can Handle

For most of us, life is very, very busy. Consider how much time you have to devote to a foster animal or animals. There is the daily upkeep of medicating, cleaning and socializing as well as the scheduled and unscheduled trips to the shelter for medical checkups.

It's important to find enough time to put your hands on each and every one of your fosters at least once a day. This allows you to quickly catch any behavioral or medical concerns.

1,400 animals passed through the foster program last year. That's an increase of over 400 from 2006. Thank you for your support in helping these animals. You are their guardian angels!

The length of foster care for an animal is dependent upon a number of factors including age and health of the animal as well as space at the shelter. During the peak of kitten season in the summer, the shelter often runs out of available cages on the adoption floor. This may require the foster to hold onto a healthy, adoptable cat or kitten a couple of weeks after the animal is ready for adoption.

Moving Forward

We have an opportunity to increase the number of animals saved by expanding the types of conditions for which we can care. In years past a simple fungal infection such as ringworm meant the animal was unadoptable and wasn't even given the chance to be placed into foster. We are now being given the opportunity to find foster care for animals with various medical issues. All we need is to cultivate a better understanding of these medical conditions among the foster group. Something as simple as ringworm should not be a death sentence. However I need people to open their minds and homes to these animals. When you see these types of foster pleas, consider inquiring further. You may find that a word that makes you squirm may not be as skin-crawling as you think.

Rules

Person(s) responsible for the foster care must be at least 18 years of age.

The fostering party and all members in the household agree to treat the animal(s) with kindness and adhere to the anticruelty laws of the State of Pennsylvania.

The fostering party agrees not to remove the animal(s) from the location for which they have been approved without the permission of the Animal Rescue League.

The fostering party agrees to keep an ARL I.D. tag on the animal(s). If the animal grows out of the collar it is given, please bring the old collar with the animal's paperwork back to the shelter, and we will supply you with another collar.

The fostering party agrees not to alter, in any way, the appearance of the animal being fostered. This includes: declawing, cropping of ears, docking of tails, spaying/neutering, microchipping, or tattooing without the permission of the ARL.

The fostering party agrees to keep a female cat that comes into heat separate from any intact male cats. If this is not possible, the animal(s) are to be returned to the Animal Rescue League to prevent the animal from getting pregnant.

If an animal or animals being fostered requires medication, the fostering party agrees to administer the medication as prescribed and directed by the Medical Department of the Animal Rescue League.

The fostering party agrees to handle and continue necessary socialization of the animal(s) they are fostering to continue the normal development of the animal.

The fostering party cannot use the animal or animals being fostered for any commercial exploitation.

The fostering party will not become its own "Adoption Agency". If the fostering party knows of someone who would like to adopt a particular animal, they should contact the Foster Care Coordinator concerning the adoption process.

If the ARL determines that a foster placement should be terminated, the fostering party must surrender the animal(s) immediately.

If the fostering party were to move or change phone numbers, they agree to provide updated information to the ARL immediately.

If the animal or animals being fostered were to run away or be stolen, the fostering party agrees to contact the ARL immediately.

Food and other supplies used for the Foster Program are donated items, and the ARL will make them available to you if we have them in stock. Otherwise, the foster family will be responsible for the food, bowls, litter boxes, etc. If supplies are needed due to a medical condition, the ARL will supply them.

The fostering party agrees to return the animal(s) to the ARL at the date set by the ARL. This return will be done by appointment with the Foster Care Coordinator.

If a medical problem develops with a fostered animal, the veterinary clinic of the ARL should be called immediately and their advice followed by the caregiver. The caregiver should then give their name and number to the ARL employee on the phone and wait for our veterinarian to call them back. If, while on the phone, the ARL veterinarian determines that the life of the animal may be in danger without immediate care (i.e., the animal needs care before the ARL clinic opens or after it closes),

the ARL will provide the caregiver with the name, address, and phone number of an emergency clinic. The ARL will pay for the care given to the animal.

Documentation from the emergency clinic veterinarian will be needed for reimbursement. This is the only circumstance under which the ARL will pay for services provided outside its own medical facility.

You will need to provide written proof of your own animal(s)' vaccination records. **This includes bordatella for dogs.** If your animal(s) is/are not up to date, you may make an appointment at the ARL's clinic (at your own expense).

The Foster Coordinator may call your veterinarian for a reference check or conduct a home check at any time.

Getting a Foster

You will be notified by phone or email when an animal is in need of foster care.

To ensure timely service when picking up or dropping off a foster, please call the foster department at 412-661-6452 x231 to set up a time. We cannot guarantee we will be able to help you if you stop by the shelter without an appointment, although we will always do our best to accommodate you.

All foster transactions, except medical, should go through the foster department. On days when the foster department isn't staffed, please see the Volunteer Coordinator Monica Garcia or the Open Paw Coordinator Joe Tedesco. (Contact information at back of packet).

When you come to pick up your foster animal, you will be given all applicable paperwork for the animal including kennel card and treatment sheet if necessary. The ARL will also retain copies. You must bring that paperwork with you every time you need to bring the animals into the ARL.

You must provide a **separate** area in your house for each litter or individual

you take in. If your own animal gets sick, the ARL will be unable to provide free medical care.

Puppy Care

Adorable and playful, puppies can be quite a handful. Good news is you get to give them back in a few weeks.

Puppies under the age of 8 weeks are quite fragile creatures. Their immune systems aren't well developed and their athletic abilities aren't well honed. This makes puppies prone to infections and injuries.

Each day you will need to observe your foster puppies and check for any signs of illness or injury. At the first sign of any issues, you will want to contact the clinic.

With Mom

If you are fostering a mom during her final week of pregnancy, it is important to remember the following:

She may not have a big appetite because the puppies are crowding her organs.

Feed her several small meals daily rather than one or two larger meals. Leave dry puppy food and water out at all times.

Prepare a box. Place it in a dry, warm, relatively dark and out-of-the-way place, and put mom in it. If she doesn't want to stay in it, don't insist, but encourage her by petting her and giving her little food treats.

The box needs to be clean, dry, warm, and draft-free at all times.

Mother dogs will provide ample heat but extra bedding may be added to provide additional heat.

With a mom dog things should be somewhat easier for you and the puppies. For the first few weeks, mom will feed, clean, and train the puppies. You get the chance to observe this relationship and socialize with mom and pups.



A nursing mother will need to eat a lot! She should also be fed puppy food for the extra protein and calories. Offer her canned food as well. It will not only serve to keep mom's fat stores up but it is also a great transitional food for the puppies.

Mom will wean the babies when the time is right. This is generally around 4 weeks of age. Make sure there is canned food available for the puppies. This is the easiest transition food for little teeth.

Without Mom

There's nothing like a litter of motherless puppies to pull at your heartstrings. You will be mom for the next few weeks.

These puppies will rely on you for all of their needs.

Bottle Feeding

If they are under 4 weeks of age, you may need to bottle feed. Not everyone can handle this task as you must be available to feed every few hours (even at night). Bottle feeding takes a bit of practice for both the puppy and human. However nature should soon prevail and your puppies will be nursing eagerly from the bottle. Bottle-fed puppies

require specialized formula which the shelter provides. **(No Cow's Milk)**

Keeping Baby Warm

It's best to keep bottle babies in a box or plastic carrier. You will line the box or carrier with towels under which you will place a heating pad set on low. Puppies this young should be confined so they stay warm and don't get injured.

Older Puppies

Puppies older than 4 weeks of age but younger than 8 weeks of age should be eating solid foods but will still need time in foster to reach surgery weight.

At this point in their development, they have two modes: play hard, sleep hard. Make sure they have bottomless bowls of food and water! Make sure their room is puppy proof.

This is also a great time to introduce the puppy to their toilet – your yard! Further in this packet you will find tips on housebreaking.

Cleaning Up After Baby

It is very important to thoroughly clean between fosters. While many of us do not appreciate the harsh smell and environmentally unfriendly nature of bleach, it is an effective disinfectant as well as a virus and fungus killer. It is a staple for any foster home.

A diluted solution of bleach (10 parts water to 1 part bleach) should be sufficient for cleaning cages, bowls, and toys. If reusing bedding or towels, you should wash those in a diluted bleach solution as well. Do not apply bleach directly to the animal.



Medical Care for Dogs and Puppies

All dogs and puppies entering the shelter receive age-appropriate vaccinations.

Advantage

This is a once-a-month **topical (not ingested)** application to rid the dog or puppy of live fleas and their eggs. Since many dogs and puppies are in foster over a month, you will need to come back to the shelter for an Advantage.

Nemex

All shelter animals receive a dose of nemex when they arrive. Nemex is effective against roundworms and hookworms. Puppies will need to be dewormed every two to four weeks until they come back to the shelter for adoption.

Vaccinations

Duramune Max 5CVK/4L (DHLPP-C): This vaccination is against distemper, parvovirus, parainfluenza, adenovirus type 2, corona, and leptospira. It is generally given at time of arrival or at 4 to 6 weeks of age and twice more 2-4 weeks apart.

Bronchi-Shield III (Bordatella):

This vaccination is against bordatella and parainfluenza – kennel cough. It is given upon entry into the shelter and twice more 2-4 weeks apart.

Rabies:

Given at 3 months of age and updated yearly.

Heartworm Test

All dogs 6 months and older are tested for heartworm. The shelter doesn't place dogs on a heartworm preventative. For dogs that test positive, they may undergo further treatment to eradicate the infestation. Treatment for

heartworm can be very hard on the dog's body and requires them to be kept crated a majority of the treatment period. It is best for a dog on Heartworm treatment to be in a quiet foster home.

Panacur

If your foster is having poop problems, you may be going home with this dewormer. Panacur is effective against hookworms, roundworms, whipworms, and certain tapeworms.

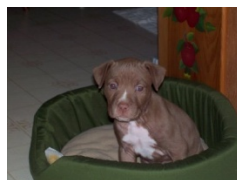
Albon

Oftentimes Albon is prescribed in conjunction with Panacur. It is used for the treatment of coccidiosis (coccidian) as well for a wide range of bacterial infections.

Antibiotics

Many oral antibiotics are liquid and will be dosed using a syringe. It is best to maneuver the syringe into the mouth on the side and toward the back. This ensures that *most* of the medicine makes its way down the dog's throat.

Some antibiotics come in pill form. Most dogs will fall prey to the *hide it in a chunk of cheese or hot dog ruse*.



Common Medical Concerns with Puppies

Kennel Cough: Signs of Kennel Cough infection are: sneezing, lethargy, lack of appetite, ocular or nasal discharge. Kennel Cough is caused by one of several viruses. The virus cannot be treated and must run its course, but secondary infections are treated with antibiotics.

Intestinal Issues: Puppies are prone to bouts of bloated bellies and diarrhea. There can be any number of causes. Common causes are: worms, coccidia, and change in diet. If your puppy has a swollen belly or diarrhea, please bring in a stool sample right away. Diarrhea can quickly lead to dehydration in puppies. To keep worms at bay, make sure you are deworming your puppies at the prescribed intervals. A time table can be found in this packet. Generally a stool sample and current weight of the foster is all that is needed for us to supply the right medicine.

Fleas: All fosters are treated with Advantage before going home with you. However Advantage must be reapplied once a month. If you have had your foster over a month, please get an application of Advantage from the clinic.

With any medical concern, it is best to seek advice and care as soon as possible. Issues can develop quickly especially in puppies under two months of age. Most medication is dosed by weight. If you are not bringing the animal with you, you must have an accurate current weight.

Medical Timeline

All animals at the shelter receive routine medical care. It is the responsibility of the foster to keep track of what vaccinations and medications your foster needs and when your foster needs them.

Please follow the medical care timeline for your foster.

If you are picking up puppies ask for extra Nemex (dewormer) to take home.

	1 wk	2 wks	3 wks	1 mo	5 wks	6 wks	7 wks	2 mos	9 wks	10 wks	11 wks	3 mos	6 Mos
Nemex		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
Advantage				✓				✓				✓	
Fecal	Whenever the foster has diarrhea or bowel issues.												
Heartworm Test													✓
Bronchi-Shield				✓			✓			✓			
Duramune Max				✓			✓			✓			
Rabies												✓	
Spay/Neuter								✓					

Clinic and Surgery

Appointments

Appointments are made through our clinic. The Foster Department cannot schedule appointments for medical care.

Puppies are ready for spay/neuter surgery at 2 to 3 months to of age.

When your foster is ready for surgery or needs an appointment, please call the ARL clinic at 412-661-6452 x223 or call the receptionist at 412-661-6452 x210.

If you plan on taking your fosters home for recuperation please make a notation on their paperwork.

Hello? Hello?

There will come a time when you may not be able to reach a live human being at the shelter. If you are concerned for the health and well-being of your foster animal, do not wait for a return phone call. The shelter is open 7 days a week. Generally someone who can help is in the building from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. most days. We even have staff here during the day on holidays!

Emergency Care

If your foster animal is in desperate need of immediate medical attention, please come to the shelter between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. or 8 a.m.

until 5 p.m. on the weekends. Even if a veterinarian is not in the building, Dr. Hughes is on call. If we cannot provide the care Dr. Hughes may authorize a visit to another clinic. Generally the shelter will not cover the cost of an outside vet visit unless pre-approved by Dr. Hughes. If you take the animal to another facility without prior consent from the ARL, you may not be reimbursed.

Loss of a Foster

It is a sad fact that foster animals, through no fault of your own, sometimes die.

Catastrophes don't happen very often, but depending on how long you have cared for the animal and how attached you have become, you will feel something between distress and devastation.

We offer this: Although we sometimes fail to save them all, your participation is vital to this program and the lives of thousands of animals each year.

If an animal in your care should pass away please call us. We may need to examine the animal.

Pennsylvania Dog Licensing Law and Foster Parenting

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that all foster dogs 3 months or older be licensed to the foster parent as a "temporary owner" of the dog. This means that while you are acting as a foster parent for the dog, you are viewed by the state of Pennsylvania as the dogs "owner" and are completely responsible for the dog's behavior and well being. In other words, if your foster dog gets loose and is picked up by animal control, you will be responsible for the fines. If your foster dog bites someone, you will be responsible for any legal or medical issues that arise from that bite. Rarely do such situations arise in foster homes; however we want to make sure you are aware of the law.

City of Pittsburgh: If you foster and live within the city limits, the City of Pittsburgh is waiving the ARL's duty to license your foster dog.

Allegheny and Other Surrounding Counties in PA: If you live outside of the City of Pittsburgh, your foster dog must be licensed to you as "the owner" of the dog. ARL will cover the cost of the license and the license can be transferred (\$1 charge) when the dog is permanently adopted. If the foster family lives in a county other than Allegheny, the dog must be licensed by that county. You must complete a license application at the time you foster the dog.

Behavioral Fosters

Have you experienced the shelter through a dog's eye view? Take a moment to mentally place yourself in their paws, and you can quickly determine that shelter life is difficult.

The smells, the noises, the new food, the small cage...have you gone crazy yet?

Now consider the fact that a majority of the dogs and puppies passing through the shelter do just fine adapting to the situation. Amazing, isn't it?!

They are quite wonderful and that's why we love them.

For a few others, shelter life is unmanageable. The only way to a forever home is through foster care.

Please keep in mind that all ARL Fosters and Volunteers are required to use only positive training methods. Training should never include punishment such as hitting, pushing or jerking the dog's neck with the leash. Remember you may be the dog's first encounter with a NICE human being.

Here are some helpful hints on Socialization, Basic Obedience, and Housebreaking for your foster.

Housebreaking a Puppy

Do not expect puppies to automatically know their toilet is outside. This is most definitely something they must learn. If you have an adult dog with impeccable toilet habits, they will serve well as a teacher.

If you do not have a dog that can help to train the puppies, you will need to do this on your own.

Oftentimes it is best to confine the puppies to a small space such as a dog crate or tiled room when you are not

watching them. This will make accident cleanup a bit easier for you.

Never punish your foster by smacking him or rubbing his nose in his own feces or urine. This will not teach the puppy to toilet outside but may cause him to be fearful of people.

Housebreaking is all about schedules and patience. Puppies should be placed outside to potty upon waking, after eating, after playing, after meeting a new person or pet or anytime something exciting has just happened.

Keep a feeding schedule to aid in housebreaking. Allow your puppy outside after every meal. If you are feeding in the morning before leaving for work, give yourself enough time to feed and take the puppy outside to potty before heading out.

Expect the puppy to make mistakes. Don't be discouraged. Eventually the puppy will begin to understand and may even ask to toilet outside.

Socialization of a Puppy

Try to make every interaction rewarding instead of frightening. You will be the one that brings only good things – food, water, walks, toys and treats! Don't just go in for the grab and snuggle, wait for the puppy or dog to approach you. Sit on the floor as you will be smaller and less frightening then when you are standing.

You may even place the food bowl near you, or entice them with a toy. Some folks have even placed tasty treats near them.

Make sure to expose your puppy to a wide variety of people, places and things. Try to ensure that new exposure is as non-threatening as possible. Help your puppy see the world with a "glass half full" optimistic point of view. Watch for signs of fear and stress. Dogs who are underconfident often tuck their tails, turn their heads away and refuse to have direct eye contact with others. Stressed dogs may yawn, whine, leave

"sweaty" paw prints or distractedly scratch themselves.

Tip: If you are fostering an undersocialized adult dog, make sure to avoid rewarding him for showing signs of fear. Only cajole, hug, praise or reward when the dog is being brave. That means, if he is sniffing with his tail wagging or up, or if he is not backing up and trying to escape.

Basic Commands and Manners

WATCH-Also known as Look, or Watch Me: This lays the foundation for the stay commands. Sit or stand in front of your dog (toe-to-toe). Take a treat and trace an imaginary line between your dog's nose and hold it in between your own eyes. While the dog is still watching you, pop the treat into the dog's mouth telling her what a beautiful and smart girl she is. Repeat this 10 times. At the end of 10 repetitions, you can start saying the word "Watch." At this point you should be able to say "Watch" when your dog is not looking at you and he should whip his head around to look at you knowing that he's likely to get a treat. Make sure he gets one when he is looking into your eyes.

COME and SIT: Teach your foster to come when called. Each time you feed your foster, as the kibble hits the bowl, say "(Dog's Name), come!" When he comes to you, take a piece of kibble raise it over the dog's nose and right in between his eyes. When he sits tell him "good sit" pop the kibble into his mouth (while he's still sitting) and then place the food dish on the floor and let him eat. It's also a good idea to periodically drop some tasty food treats (tiny, tiny pieces) and a few extra pieces of kibble into the bowl so that he gets used to having human hands near the food bowl.

****If you notice any signs of food aggression: growling, snapping, dog freezing while eating or standing over the bowl and not eating, contact Carol Whaley (x 231) ASAP for more intensive food aggression management techniques.****

DOWN: Whenever you pass by your foster dog and she is lying down, tell her what a good dog she is. Additionally, you can lure the dog into a down, using a treat. Start from the sit. With the treat between your thumb and forefinger, lure the dog down and back (toward his own tail) underneath the chest. This will encourage him to lie down. As with the sit command, don't give him the treat until he is actually lying down. Then pop the treat into his mouth, telling the dog what a smart boy he is.

HEEL: Hold the leash in your hand and use a piece of treat to lure the dog so that his shoulders are right in line with your leg. Allow the dog to nibble on the treat as you walk, praising her for being in the right place. When you stop walking, use your treat to lure your dog into a sit, pop the treat into the dog's mouth while still sitting. Repeat!

PULLING ON LEASH: There are several different ways to combat leash pulling. You'll have to judge which one(s) to use based on personal preference and your foster dog.

Stop! As soon as your dog starts to pull, stop. Don't start walking again until you have Fido's full attention. When you begin walking, have your dog sitting beside you (on the LEFT). Tell her "Let's go" and step off with you LEFT foot (the foot beside the dog). Thus, you have given the dog a verbal cue ("Let's go") and a visual cue (Hey! The leg right beside me is moving, that means I move too!) Begin walking. When she pulls, stop and ask for a sit. Then start all over again.

Which Way Do I Go?! When your dog pulls, whichever direction he is pulling, spin around and walk the other way. (Make sure you have plenty of room to do this and that you are not prone to vertigo!) Your dog should start looking at you which will reduce pulling. When he looks at you praise him and keep walking.

Luring: Keeping your dog on a short leash, hold a treat right at nose level (for the dog) and even with your leg. Allow the dog to nibble at the treat (I find that soft, smelly treats-Snauages, jerky treats, etc.) work best for this. After you walk for a few yards, stop, ask him for a sit and pop the rest of the treat into his mouth while sitting. Repeat!

JUMPING: Dogs greet each other face-to-face. Since we humans tend to be a great deal taller than our dogs, the dogs try to jump so that they can engage in face-to-face greetings. When you greet your dog, crouch down. Only pet the dog (remember petting = praise) when all four paws are on the ground. If she tries to jump up to get to your face, quickly stand up and turn your back. Turn back around when all four paws are on the ground and give lavish praise. (Don't forget to smile at the dog!) The most important thing to remember: BE CONSISTENT. If even one person allows the jumping, Fido will try to jump on everyone. Incidentally, the "correct" term for telling a dog to stop jumping on you is **OFF**. (**DOWN** means lie down on the ground.) Since English is a second language for dogs, it's important to be as clear as possible when communicating with your dog.

Tip: If jumping on guests is a problem, keep a container of cat kibble near the door. As guests enter the house, scatter a small handful of kibble on the floor for Fido to concentrate *hoover*. Advise guests that you are training the dog to have good manners and that he can only be petted if all four feet are on the floor.

MOUTHING and CHEWING: Dogs **need** to chew. It is *essential* that you provide appropriate things for your dog to chew on while preventing him from chewing on inappropriate items. Do not give puppy old shoes or socks or clothing to chew on, he can't tell what's old and new and is likely to then chew on your new shoes.

Tip: Soak kibble in water for about 20 minutes and stuff the softened food into a Kong. Place the Kong in the freezer overnight and you have an instant way to soothe a teething puppy while simultaneously providing a snack and mental stimulation.

When playing with your dog. Each and every time dog teeth touch your clothing and/or your skin, say "OUCH!" in a high pitched, rather dramatic way and shun your dog for at least a minute. Then resume play. This is how puppies teach littermates bite inhibition and it generally translates pretty well for human/dog interactions. Again, consistency is the key. Make sure that you do this **every** time teeth touch skin or clothing even if it's an accident.

MULTIDOG HOUSEHOLD

Introductions: Ideally your resident dog(s) will already have met with the new foster, at the shelter. If there have been no introductions yet, you may want to have the dogs meet down the street from your home at a neutral location. Have the dogs meet and greet, then walk home with both dogs together.

Keep your resident dog's routine as close to normal as possible.

Areas of possible conflict:

- Food
- Toys
- Sleeping areas

Manage areas of conflict whenever possible. Feed dogs in separate rooms or place a baby gate between them so that they do not fight at feeding times.

Take out toys only when you are ready to play with the dog(s). If the dogs are fighting over a particular toy, one option is to "flood" the dogs with similar toys. Example: If dogs are fighting over a tennis ball, provide 15 tennis balls making the toys seem less valuable.

Crate dogs in separate crates at bedtime.

Adoptions

There will come a time when your foster is ready for their forever home. You may feel something from relief to anxiety when preparing to bring your foster back to the shelter. It's understandable that you have formed a bond with the dog and want to ensure its lifelong happiness. So does the shelter!

Understand that the shelter is charged with finding homes for thousands of animals each and every year.

Puppies

Puppies are generally ready for adoption at 2 months of age. At this point, most are big enough to safely undergo surgery and small enough to meet the public's cuteness requirements.

Adults

Many of our adult dogs are in foster due to upper respiratory illness (kennel cough). It can be somewhat difficult to determine when the foster has actually recovered enough to return to the shelter. Your first clue may be the completion of the course of treatment.

However your investigation will not end there. Many a foster dog needs a bit more post-medication care before being fully ready to come back to the shelter. You'll need to make sure the eyes are clear, the appetite is healthy, the poo is formed, there's no more coughing or nasal discharge.

A good idea is to schedule a checkup with the ARL clinic. One of the veterinarians will be able to tell if the dog is ready to return.

Shelter Adoptions

Any foster dog or puppy ready for adoption can come back to the shelter. Always inform the Foster Department before returning your foster.

Adoptions from the Foster Home

If you are fostering a dog for behavioral reasons, you may choose to promote the dog on PetFinder and keep him in foster until the day he is adopted.

Any person interested in adopting a dog or puppy in foster care should come to the ARL **immediately** and go through the adoption process.

Never, ever give the foster dog or puppy to a potential adopter for a test drive! Until the animal is adopted, it must remain at your home.

Adopting Your Foster

So you've had the little furball in your house for a month or two and you've grown attached. You just can't imagine letting this special one go. Welcome to the club we call "Foster Failure." (We really don't believe you're a failure.)

Opening your heart on a more permanent basis leads to something called "The Adoption Process." Don't be afraid, it's actually quite simple.

When your foster is ready for adoption, fill out the necessary paperwork with an Adoption Counselor and go home and snuggle with your new friend.

As a foster parent, you receive a reduced adoption rate. Prices may change, so it's best to always ask.

Checking up on Your Foster

Shelter privacy policies disallow us to give out an adopter's contact information to foster parents. If you are interested in connecting with your foster's new mom or dad, fill out a **Foster Comment Sheet** and include your contact information. The shelter does follow-up calls on adoptions and tries to handle any issues the adopter may be having with their new charge.

If an adopter does contact you, please remember the following: Do not give out medical advice, instead have them call the ARL Clinic or their own veterinarian; If you are stumped by a behavioral question, have them call the Adoption Department at the shelter. It is also wise to stay away from implying that we may give refunds or exchanges if they are not satisfied.

We want to ensure, especially in the summer, that we have cage space on the adoption floor for your foster.

Foster Supplies

What will you need to take care of your foster dog or puppies?

Leash, collar, towels, newspaper, paper towels, bowls, toys, dry food, canned food (for young puppies and sick adults), bleach, lots of bags for poop retrieval and disposal.

Great places to get supplies inexpensively:

Wal-Mart, Dollar General, Family Dollar (or any variation on the Dollar Store theme), the ARL shelter gift shop.

Oftentimes the shelter is able to give food (dry and canned) and other supplies to foster families. Thankfully generous folks donate items to the shelter for just this purpose. When our donated supplies run out, we have access (albeit limited) to shelter food and litter.

Foster supplies are kept upstairs by the Foster Offices. You may help yourself to the **DONATED** items kept in the foster closets. If you are in need of shelter food (Science Diet brand), you **MUST** get this from me. I try to keep shelter food, especially canned food (a highly valuable item to our program), in my locked office. It is extremely important for me to properly account for all shelter food used by the Foster Program. Without proper accounting, the Foster Program will lose the ability to use shelter food.

If you are not a coupon clipper, you may want to start. For those who do clip coupons and do not use them, drop them off to me and I will make them available to the other foster families.

Crates

The shelter may also be able to provide dog crates. If you have borrowed a crate and are finished using it, please return it to the shelter immediately. An available crate can make all the difference in finding foster care for a particular dog or litter of puppies.

Puppy Milk Replacer

Puppy Milk Replacer is a staple here at the shelter. This is powdered milk for puppies under four weeks of age.

If you are fostering puppies that require formula, you may get this from the Foster or Medical Department.

The shelter generally supplies syringes instead of bottles. If you prefer bottles, those may be purchased at Wal-Mart or a pet supply store such as PetCo.

Toys

Many of our generous donors understand the intense need puppies and dogs have for play and supply us with toys.

Some of the balls and squeaky toys end up occupying our shelter animals.

Others are available for use in foster homes.

If you are taking home a litter of puppies and don't have toys, please ask if there are any. Oftentimes the best toy is a sibling!

Rarely donated items (but still worth asking about)

Beds or snugglers – On the cheap, you can use old rags or towels stuffed into a

cardboard box. Many puppies prefer this to an expensive bed anyway.

Bowls – As long as a dog can access the food and water, any bowl is fine. Bowls don't need to be fancy.

FOSTER CARE APPLICATION

Personal Information:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: (Include City and Zip Code)

Borough: _____

Zip Code: _____

Telephone:

Home: _____

Cell: _____

Work: _____

Email: _____

List all people in the house (including children): _____

Do you currently own any animals?
_____ Yes _____ No

List all animal residents in house
(Include Name, Age and Species):

Are they compatible with other animals?
_____ Yes _____ No

Are they spayed/neutered?
_____ Yes _____ No

Current Vaccinations?
_____ Yes _____ No

Who is your veterinarian?

Telephone: _____

Have you ever fostered an animal before?
_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, explain:

Are you currently fostering any other animals?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please list how many and what types.

What are some possible reasons you might return a fostered animal before it is ready for adoption?

Facilities Available:

Do you:

_____ Own Your Home?

_____ Rent Your Home?

Renting? Provide Landlord's Name, Address and Phone:

Is there a yard?

_____ Yes _____ No

Is the yard private?

_____ Yes _____ No

Is the yard fenced?

_____ Yes _____ No

Completely? _____

Partially? _____

Do you have space available indoors to house the animal apart from your own pets?

_____ Yes _____ No

Animals You Would Be Willing to Foster:

(Please check all that apply)

Medical Foster Homes:

_____ Puppy _____ Adult Dog

_____ Kitten _____ Adult Cat

_____ Rabbit _____ Other

_____ Unweaned /Bottle Babies

_____ Kittens with Mothers

_____ Puppies with Mothers

_____ Pregnant Cats

_____ Pregnant Dogs

_____ Sick

_____ Injured

_____ Malnourished

With training on how to do so, would you be willing to give medications to an animal you were fostering?

_____ Yes _____ No, not comfortable with that.

Behavioral Foster Homes:

_____ Undersocialized animals (shy, needs desensitized to noise, housebreaking issues)

_____ Animals needing

“Social Skills” work

(come/sit/stay/off commands; leash training; housebreaking issues)

Emergency Foster Homes:

(Short-term; most often needed spring/summer)

_____ Emergency Fosters

(Kennel is filled; need to free up cage space for incoming animals).

**ARL FOSTER PROGRAM
AGREEMENT OF
UNDERSTANDING**

I hereby accept a volunteer position with the Animal Rescue League. In doing so I agree to comply with the rules and regulations, instructions and mandates given me by the League and I understand that failure to do so may result in my immediate termination as a volunteer.

I acknowledge that my services are provided strictly on a volunteer basis without any pay or compensation of any kind and without liability of any nature on behalf of the ARL; all services to be performed by me are at my own risk.

I recognize that in handling animals there exists a risk of injury, infection, disease, including physical harm caused

by animals. On behalf of myself, my heirs, personal representatives, and executors, I hereby release, discharge, indemnify, and hold harmless the ARL, its agents, servants and employees from any and all claims, causes of actions, or demands and any nature of cause, including costs and attorney's fees incurred or sustained by me in any way connected with my services to the ARL but not limited to: animal bites, accidents, injuries, property damage, and veterinary fees.

Date: _____

Foster Name (printed)

Foster Signature

Foster Coordinator Signature

Required Documents

_____ Homeowner's/ Renters
Insurance

_____ Lease/Letter from
Landlord (if renting)

_____ Proof of personal
Health Insurance