

# Short-Term Foster Care



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## Short-Term Foster Care

There are lots of great reasons why short-term foster care is great for shelters. It helps get dogs out of the shelter and reduces kennel stress. It enables more of the community to get involved with the shelter in a fun way. It enables shelters to learn more about the behavior of the dogs in their care and to market them in new ways.

Short-term foster care options make it easy for people to make a commitment. With busy lives, many people like the flexibility of having short-term foster options, so you'll find that these programs will increase your foster base. Better, what we found is that when short-term foster is tried, families often realize that they're also suited for long-term foster care as well.

There is a perception held by some of the public that shelter dogs are "unknown." Short-term foster care does much to combat this stigma. The better our shelters get to know the animals in their care, the better things will be for all shelter dogs.



## Weekend/Overnight Foster Care

Weekend and overnight foster care is a great way to get to know shelter dogs better, reduce kennel stress and find new ways to market them for adoption. Programs can be created based on the needs of your shelter.

Some programs focus on days and times that the shelter is closed, and some allow dogs to be taken home anytime. Depending on the shelter, all dogs may be available for weekend foster, or just a select few (for example, dogs with long shelter stays).

Consider these sample guidelines for weekend foster care:

- Foster caregivers must have adequate training to take home the dogs they are matched with.
- Only dogs on the adoption floor are eligible to go, unless a manager gives approval.
- Dogs must have had a rabies vaccination.
- List the day(s) and time(s) that the dog should be brought back to the shelter.
- Foster must read and sign Foster Contract.
- Advise that foster dogs be kept separate from other pets in the home, especially small animals, cats, and smaller dogs. The foster family should have a plan in place if they do wish to introduce the foster dog to

their dog (or other animal) and it doesn't work out – i.e., a place to keep their animals separated from the foster dog.

- Dogs must:
  - At all times wear a martingale collar with foster dog tags attached.
  - Be fitted with an Easy Walk or other approved harness, worn on walks.
  - Be walked using a leash.
  - Not go to any off-leash areas, including dog parks.
  - You might consider providing the following supplies to weekend fosterer:
    - Bowls
    - Crate
    - Toys
    - Treats
    - Bed/towels
    - Dog food, dry and wet. (*Note: remember to check for special diets!*)
  - Ensure that caregivers are given any medications needed by their foster dog. (*Note: always check for meds!*)
  - “Weekend Foster” sign placed in the dog’s cage card holder.

### **Weekend Foster Process Case Study: Austin Animal Center**

The shelter makes it just as easy to foster as it is to adopt. No sign-up is needed; volunteers and fosters can come to the shelter and take a dog on an overnight any day of the week. Customer service staff is trained to process fosters, and they're managed just like adoptions. This way, the only work that the program adds to the foster coordinators' plates is in promoting the program and the dogs taken on outings on social media and troubleshooting any issues.

### **Weekend Foster Process Case Study: Fairfax County Animal Shelter**

Volunteers and fosters are able to participate in weekend foster at the shelter. There are 4 trained weekend foster volunteers, whose job it is to help implement weekend foster. On Saturday, at least one of these volunteers is at the shelter to assist in making matches, getting paperwork in order and helping families get the supplies they need.

During the middle to the end of the week, an email is sent to fosters with the dogs who may be available for weekend foster. Fosters are encouraged to reply with questions and offers to take a dog home. Foster families arrive at the shelter around 4pm, when the shelter is about to close for the weekend. Foster volunteers help them locate needed supplies, assist with putting harnesses and leashes on the dogs and make sure the relevant paperwork is read and signed.

Families are encouraged to post photos, videos and stories about their weekend. There are two time slots when families can bring the dogs back from weekend foster.



## Field Trip Fostering

Field trip fosters take a dog off the shelter grounds for an outing, which can last from an hour to all day. The short timeframe makes it easy for busy volunteers and fosters (who may not have the ability to take a dog overnight) to get them out of the shelter and get to know them better.

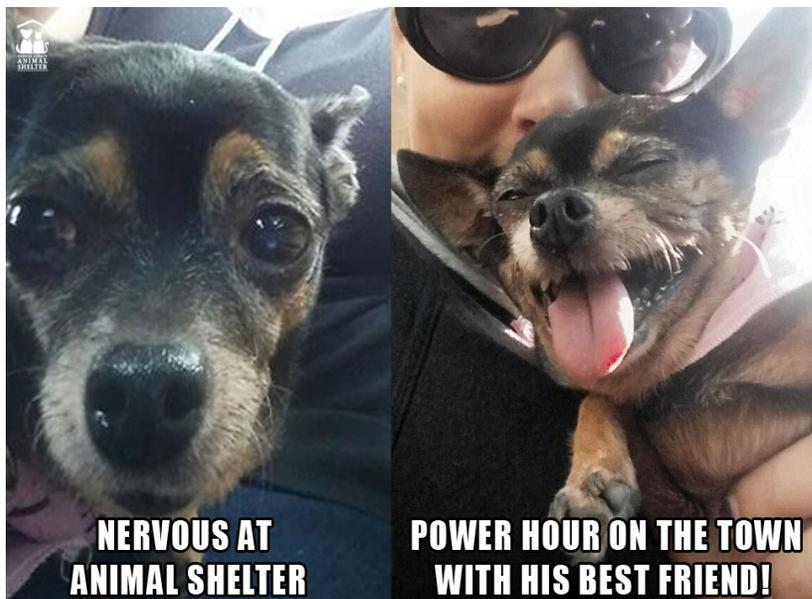
Fosters should be aware that the purpose of the outing is to learn more about the dog's behavior outside the shelter and to get the dog adopted by documenting what is learned through photos, video and text. Fosters should take the dog to fun places that will make for great pictures. It may be helpful if they bring a buddy so that one person can take pictures while the other is handling the dog.

### Suggested Items to bring on Field Trips:

- Water
- Bowl
- "Adopt me" vest or bandana
- Treats
- Dog waste bags
- Leash
- Properly fitted harness
- Foster dog tags
- Properly fitted martingale collar (snug-fitting with room for no more than two fingers between the collar and the dog's body)

## Suggested Rules for Field Trips

- Foster must read dog's biography before checking dog out
- Only dogs on the adoption floor are eligible to go, except with manager approval.
- Dogs must have had a rabies vaccination.
- Foster must read and sign shelter's Foster Contract.
- Dogs need to:
  - Be wearing a martingale collar with foster dog tags attached at all times.
  - Be walked using a leash.
  - Not go to any off-leash areas, including dog parks.
  - Be fitted with an approved harness.
  - Be wearing an 'Adopt Me' vest.
- Put a 'Foster Field Trip' sign on the dog's kennel.
- No interaction with other dogs except with manager's approval.
- Fosters must have shelter's emergency contact numbers programmed into their phone.
- Foster caregivers must have adequate training to take home the dogs they are matched with (if the shelter uses a colored dot system for behavior)



## Field Trip Foster Case Study: Austin Animal Center

The people who take dogs on short outings are already volunteers, fosters or staff members. The volunteers manage the short-term foster outings themselves, with oversight from the shelter's foster coordinators. They get the dogs ready, get their own supplies and check out with customer service.

### Field Trip Foster Case Study: Fairfax County Animal Shelter

The shelter’s volunteer coordinator creates slots in the shelter’s volunteer management software so that volunteers and fosters can sign up to take dogs for “Power Hour” foster at specified times. The slots coincide with times the shelter is closed, such as mornings and Sundays. This enables the dogs to get more exercise before the shelter opens to visitors and enables the dogs to be visible at the shelter while it’s open.

The shelter has several trained volunteers who assist with the Power Hour program. These volunteers arrive at the shelter before the power hours begin, assist in matching fosters with dogs, help fosters gather needed supplies, and check Power Hour fosters in and out via the shelter’s software, saving the foster coordinator’s time.



Figure 1: Volunteers knew that getting a ‘puppachino’ was French Fry’s favorite way to end an outing

### Field Trip Foster Location Examples

It may help to give your fosters a list of suggested locations for power hour fostering (or better yet, ask one of them to create a list!). The following is an example of locations near the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in Fairfax, VA. The locations are listed from closest to the shelter to farthest, and include parks, outdoor shopping areas and stores that allow dogs.

Fairfax Government Center- 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax, VA

- Less than 5 minutes away
- Expansive lawn in back, with paths leading to short, wooded trails.

Fairfax Corner- 4100 Monument Corner Dr. Fairfax, VA

- Approx. 5 min away from shelter
- REI, Lucy, and Plow and Hearth are dog friendly. Cupcakes Actually sells Pupcakes.

Old Town Clifton- 7150 Main St, Clifton, VA

- Approx. 10-15 min away
- Petersons – sells mini dog sundaes

Frying Pan Park- 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon, VA

- Approx. 15 min
- Interact with kids and farm animals

EC Lawrence Park- 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly, VA

- Approx. 15 min

Reston Town Center-11900 Market Street, Reston, VA

- Approx. 15 min
- Shelter dogs can get exposure

Burke Lake- 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA

- Approx. 20 min
- Great for energetic dogs-hiking/trails. Loop around lake is 5 miles.



## Offsite Walks and Dog Walking Groups

A dog walking, hiking or running group is a great way for shelter dogs to expend energy and practice walking on leash with other dogs. The best part is, even reactive dogs tend to walk calmly after the first half-mile or so of walking with others.

Pack walks are easy to set up and run. They can be designed with formal rules or a more informal style. Shelters can schedule offsite walks for volunteers and/or the public, and volunteers can be trained to lead them. Informal groups outside the shelter can create dog-walking groups as well.



### Group Walk Case Study: Animal Ark Rescue

Animal Ark Rescue runs a successful group hike program that is open to the public. They hold hikes once a month and use Facebook to invite supporters to join them. They generally have between 10-20 volunteers who hike for a few hours with a shelter dog and then have a picnic lunch. They focus on bringing their longest-stay dogs and have had several dogs adopted by hikers and supporters who have seen a dog in photos of the hike online.

## Rules

- Participants must be 18 years or older with a valid photo ID, or 16 years old with a parent or guardian present.
- Participants are asked to go to the shelter prior to the hike to pick a dog.
  - Play group coordinator helps to make good matches.
- Dogs are 1 to a vehicle.
  - Exception: if dogs have already been paired and one or both are kenneled
    - They lend airline crates for transport.

## The day of the walk

- Upon arrival, group is given a safety briefing on handling tips, medical and environmental emergencies, how to handle dog bites or fights, etc.
- Volunteers are asked to check the dog's harness and collar to ensure that they cannot slip out.
- Group is asked to focus on the dogs and not allow the dogs to socialize.
- If a dog becomes reactive, they ask that the handler step off the trail and create a safe distance between their dog and the group.
- Volunteers coming up behind others are asked to notify other hikers if they are about to pass them.
- Staff brings water, an extra bowl, a map, bug spray, sunscreen and a first aid kit; volunteers are also asked to bring water for their dog.

## Marketing

- Create FB event for the hike 1 month in advance.
  - Share once a week to encourage people to participate.



**JUL 23** Dog Hike In Pine Mountain  
Public · Hosted by Animal Ark Rescue

★ Interested   ✓ Going   ...

🕒 Sunday, July 23, 2017 at 8 AM  
about 5 months ago

📍 Animal Ark Rescue  
7133 Sacerdote Ln, Columbus, Georgia 31907   [Show Map](#)

**About**   Discussion

## Details

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Our first hike in Pine Mountain went so well we decided to make it a monthly field trip! Anyone 18yrs or older with a valid photo I.D. may participate.

**\*\*No children will be allowed on the group hike for safety reasons. If you have a child and would like to take a shelter dog on an outing or hike individually, you may swing by the shelter any day during business hours and check out a child-friendly dog for an outing.\*\*** Children 16yrs or older may participate if accompanied by an adult. We will meet at the shelter at 8am sharp. Participants will need to be able to transport a dog of their choosing to Pine Mountain and back to the shelter. You may bring a crate to transport if you like. We have some airline kennels available, but limited quantity.

We recommend you come to the shelter a few days before to select a dog to hike with (take them on a test walk if needed).

**\*\*If you plan on transporting and hiking with 2 dogs, please come to the shelter 1-2 days prior to the hike to be matched with a pair of dogs\*\***

We are going to be hiking the Overlook Loop Trail. The trail is 3.4 miles. You will need to pay a fee to park in Pine Mountain. See the Pine Mountain Trail Association website for more details:  
<http://www.pinemountaintrail.org/>

Things to bring:

- Flat leash (No retractable leashes allowed)
- water (for you and the dog)
- bowl
- sunscreen
- bug spray
- snacks/dog treats
- picnic lunch (optional)

You are welcome to pack a lunch and picnic with us after the hike or you may head back to the shelter right after to drop your dog off. The choice is yours.

**\*\*This outing is for Shelter dogs only. No personal dogs allowed\*\***

This hike will take place rain or shine! This is a public event and any adults are welcome. Please share with your friends!



### Group Walk Case Study: Vanderburgh Humane Society

The shelter's Cardio for Canines program allows the public to take dogs for a walk at a specific park every Saturday morning from 8am to 9:30am. Participants don't actually have to walk in a group, but they walk along the same route. This program is managed entirely by volunteers and has its own Facebook page. The program's coordinator is a shelter volunteer, and she has other dedicated CFC volunteers who assist with training and preparation (they are all considered active VHS volunteers).

#### Preparation:

- The program coordinator and CFC volunteers personally spend time with each dog and place them into the following categories:
  - Walking companion
  - Running OR walking companion
  - Running companion
- CFC volunteers fit each dog with a harness and tie waste bags to each leash. They put together coolers of bottled water for the people and bowls of water for the pups at 2 stations throughout the park.

#### On Arrival:

- New participants fill out a short registration form and a waiver. This is kept on file, so they do not need to re-register each time.
- Participants are asked if they would like to walk leisurely or if they would like to take an energetic dog on a run. They are then matched with a dog based on their preference.

### After the Walk:

- Participants are able to fill out a Behavior Report on the dog they walked. Once a week, a volunteer enters this information into the shelter's software system and puts paper copies in the dogs' folders. This way, potential adopters and the shelter's adoptions staff can see how the dogs interacted with people and other animals at CFC.



### Group Walk Case Study: ResQ Crew by NOVA Pets Alive

ResQ Crew is a community based group dog walk geared towards socialization, fellowship, tolerance and education of all breeds. ResQ Crew is open to ALL dogs and their guardians!

#### Welcome Post:

ResQ Crew is a community based group dog walk geared towards socialization, fellowship, and education of all breeds. ResQ Crew is open to all dogs and their guardians.

We'd like to remind everyone that events should be inclusive to dogs, as that is the nature of this group (Although we do love our winery/brewery/yappy hour trips, and events that benefit animal rescues).

We love that this board has become a forum for questions and advice, but please keep posts to the topic of the group. So if you have questions or concerns, feel free to ask, share pictures, and comment! This is not a place to post adoptable pets or events that do not relate to dogs in some way. This is also not a place to rehome pets.

If you are interested in cross posting events from other groups, please create a (group name) event for that event. That way we can track how many people from the group are going and we know who to look for when we get there. If you are cross posting to gauge interest, that is fine, but make sure to create an event afterwards.

Thank you everyone and welcome to the group! If you have any questions please let us know!

## Group Rules

**It is imperative that the following rules be followed in order to ensure a safe and fun experience! Any members who do not follow the rules may be removed from the group.**

1. Every dog must be on a leash, 6 feet or less, and handled by an adult (18+) at all times. **NO RETRACTABLE LEASHES.**
2. Minors are welcome to participate in the walks but must demonstrate appropriate behavior and must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
3. It is expected that all parties participating follow all state/local laws as well as any park-specific rules.
4. Always ask before introducing dogs to each other, petting another dog, or offering another dog a treat. Some dogs may be reactive, fearful, nervous, or otherwise working on specific skills/training. Assumptions can lead to risk; communication is key to the success of every walk!
5. As the dog's guardian, it is your sole responsibility to walk your dog, engage in safe procedures, address any warning signs your dog gives, and heed fellow walkers' warnings.
6. Pay attention to your dog's needs and make sure to maintain a safe distance between dogs and others. Be aware of your surroundings and please be respectful of the needs of other dogs and individuals in the group.
7. **HAVE FUN!**

## Appendix A: Resources

### Field trip fostering

This New Year, resolve to start a 'Dogs Day Out' program at your animal shelter

<http://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2017/12/dogs-day-out/>

Give 'em a break: Program aims to give dogs a much-needed respite from daily life

[http://www.dailyprogress.com/newsvirginian/news/local/give-em-a-break-program-aims-to-give-dogs-a/article\\_69ac22c2-b4f4-11e6-b64b-0ba8b51d9539.html](http://www.dailyprogress.com/newsvirginian/news/local/give-em-a-break-program-aims-to-give-dogs-a/article_69ac22c2-b4f4-11e6-b64b-0ba8b51d9539.html)

We borrowed a shelter dog to go hiking. You can- and totally should- too

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arín-greenwood/shelter-dog-hiking\\_b\\_6041240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arín-greenwood/shelter-dog-hiking_b_6041240.html)

Dog shelter offers ice cream and adventures, sadly isn't accepting human applications

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/20/dog-eating-ice-cream\\_n\\_5514558.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/20/dog-eating-ice-cream_n_5514558.html)

Doggie day trips

<http://www.northernvirginiamag.com/family/pampered-pets/2015/03/23/doggie-day-trips/>

Hawaiian animal shelter on Kauai lets visitors take dogs on a daytime adventure

<http://www.latimes.com/travel/la-tr-d-1018-kauai-canines-20151018-story.html>

### Weekend/sleepover fostering

Study: do shelter dogs benefit from short-term foster sleepovers?

<http://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2017/09/study-do-shelter-dogs-benefit-from-short-term-foster-sleepovers/>

Sleepovers lead to forever homes

<https://signalscv.com/2017/02/sleepovers-lead-forever/>

This nonprofit's shelter pup sleepovers aim to help spur adoption

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/people-can-host-shelter-pup-slumber-parties-thanks-to-nonprofits-genius-program\\_us\\_57c83956e4b0e60d31dd6749](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/people-can-host-shelter-pup-slumber-parties-thanks-to-nonprofits-genius-program_us_57c83956e4b0e60d31dd6749)

ASU researcher finds way to reduce stress in shelter dogs

<https://asunow.asu.edu/20170328-solutions-asu-researcher-finds-ways-reduce-stress-shelter-dogs>

Foster sleepover program gives dogs a break

<https://compassionatecircle.bwar.org/foster-sleepover-program-give-dogs-a-break/>

Looking to adopt? A shelter dog slumber party might seal the deal

<http://people.com/pets/looking-to-adopt-a-shelter-dog-slumber-party-might-seal-the-deal/>

## Group Walks

A simple walk can teach reactive dogs how to make friends and help owners find the support they need

<https://animalfarmfoundation.blog/2017/03/22/a-simple-walk-can-teach-reactive-dogs-how-to-make-friends-and-help-owners-find-the-support-they-need/>

Georgia shelter tries anything- and everything!- to get pets adopted

<http://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2018/01/innovative-thinking/>

Take a shelter dog hiking

[https://www.petsmartcharities.org/blog/take-a-shelter-dog-hiking?utm\\_source=social&utm\\_campaign=content&utm\\_medium=facebook](https://www.petsmartcharities.org/blog/take-a-shelter-dog-hiking?utm_source=social&utm_campaign=content&utm_medium=facebook)

Appendix B. Cardio for Canines' Animal Behavior Report

# Animal Behavior Report

*Please Print*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Animal's Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Dog \_\_\_\_ Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe the dog's behavior:** (circle the answer that best describes)

Energy level - Low/Medium/High;      **Follows commands** - Yes/No/Sometimes;

**Knows tricks** - Yes/No; If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

**Easy to walk** - Yes/No/Sometimes;

**Chases other animals** - Yes/No/Sometimes; If yes, playful or predatory?

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Fearful** - Yes/No/Sometimes; If yes, of what?

\_\_\_\_\_  
**This dog may have been found as a stray. Any additional information is helpful in placing this dog in the right home. Would you like to add anything else?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Thank You!***

## Appendix C. Fredericksburg SPCA's Adventure Tails Protocol



Here are the rules of the game:

1. Person must be 18 years old to take one of our dogs off SPCA premises
2. SPCA Front Desk Personnel must confirm that person knows how to properly walk a dog:
  - A. Do not bring our SPCA dog to a dog park and avoid nose-to-nose interactions
  - B. Dog must remain on a leash at all times
  - C. Person "checking out" animal must have control of leash at all times
3. Front Desk Personnel will recommend an animal based on a list of approved dogs
  - A. Approved dogs MUST have all vaccines, be fixed, and be micro chipped
  - B. Approved dogs cannot be on our behavior watch list
4. Front Desk Personnel will put animal in a tight fitting harness and attach leash for dog walker
5. Front Desk Personnel will get a copy of dog walker's Driver's License, as well as TWO means of contact (phone, email, etc.)
6. Front Desk Personnel will have dog walker sign a liability waiver
7. Dog walker will be informed that SPCA animal should be kept hydrated, especially on 70 degrees plus days. Dog walker will be furnished with a pet bowl and a bottle of water
8. A sign will be placed on kennel of animal on a walk- "I am on an adventure!"
9. SPCA animals must be back to the building no later than 5:45pm
10. Front Desk Personnel will place liability waiver and Driver's License copy into an Adventure folder, which will be kept at the front desk. The front of the folder will have the dog check out sheet on it, and must also be filled out completely.
11. At 5:30pm, Front Desk Personnel will call any dog walker's who have not returned with SPCA animal to remind them of the 5:45pm drop off
12. When SPCA animal is returned, Front Desk Personnel will take a moment to ask how the dog behaved. Leash manners? Interactions with people? Notes taken will be put into PetPoint.
13. When SPCA animal is returned, they will be placed in their kennel with a full bucket of water. If their dinner is not in their kennel, Front Desk Personnel will find or prepare their dinner.
14. Any unusual behavior of animal must be reported to a supervisor immediately.





## Adventure Tails Dog Walker Agreement

Please Print Clearly

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dog's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your interest in walking and socializing our dogs. Please read and abide by the following dog walking rules and initial each line AFTER reading.*

- \_\_\_ Dogs can ONLY be walked by volunteers over the age of 18.
- \_\_\_ Dog leashes must be held securely and wrapped around your hand a few times.
- \_\_\_ Dogs must be kept on a short leash at all times.
- \_\_\_ Never allow any of the dogs to be off-leash.
- \_\_\_ Do not allow any dogs to interact with each other (because of aggression or illness).
- \_\_\_ Dog must remain in harness and collar at all times.
- \_\_\_ Check here if you would like to be added to our monthly email newsletter.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Adventure Tails Waiver

This Waiver and Release of Liability, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement

("Agreement") is between the Volunteer and the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA, 10819 Courthouse Rd in Fredericksburg, VA 22408 and its directors, officers, members, employees, agents, assigns, legal representatives and successors.

As a volunteer that is 18 years old or older, I hereby understand and agree to the following: I agree to WAIVE and RELEASE the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA from all liability, manner of actions, causes of action, debts, contracts, claims and demands for or by reason of any illness, death, damage, loss or injury to person and property, which has been or may be sustained as a direct or indirect consequence of the Volunteer's volunteering at or for the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA and notwithstanding that such damage, death, illness, loss or injury may have been caused partly by the negligence of the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA.

I agree to INDEMNIFY and HOLD HARMLESS the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA for any costs or liabilities which they may incur as a result of my volunteering at or for the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA. I acknowledge and agree that I have carefully read this Agreement, that I fully understand the Agreement, and that I freely and voluntarily execute the same. I understand that I may seek independent advice prior to signing this Agreement. I understand that this Agreement is binding on me, my spouse, my executors, administrators, personal representatives and assigns and that this Agreement has important legal consequences. The terms of this Agreement are contractual and not mere recitals. This Agreement will be construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of the State of Virginia.

Signature of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**I AM ON AN ADVENTURE!**



**Check me out later!**

**I AM ON AN ADVENTURE!**



**Check me out later!**

## C: Austin Animal Center's Short-Term Fostering Information

### Short-Term Fostering Overnights and Outings

Want to give a shelter dog a break from the stress of the shelter and an opportunity for new experiences? Want to get valuable information about the dog's personality, behavior and needs, thereby helping adopters or rescuers make more informed decisions? The shelter has two different options for short-term fostering.

1. Overnights: Check out a foster in the evening and return the next morning
2. Outing: Check out a foster dog for one hour or an afternoon

Please note:

- Fosters interested in short term fostering opportunities are required to complete the Foster Program Orientation and Outings and Overnights Training.
- These types of outings are most important for longer stay dogs (dogs that have been at the shelter for more than 30 days), those who have behavioral challenges, or those that are overwhelmed in the shelter setting.

Requirements:

- You must be an approved foster and have a completed and signed Foster Agreement on file.
- You must have completed the additional training that is required for short term fostering opportunities.
- You must be available to pick up and return the dog during regular business hours.
- You must review the "Public Outings and Walks - Safety Tips for You and Your Foster Dog" section on page 12.

Steps:

1. If you are interested in taking a specific dog for an overnight or outing, please contact the foster coordinator to verify that the dog is available, review the dog's behavior records, and to confirm a pickup date and time. If you were not able to confirm with the foster coordinator in advance, please check in with customer service staff in the Cashier's Office for more information about the dog that you are interested in.
2. Once you have confirmed with staff that you will be picking up a specific dog. Staff will make a note in the dog's record concerning where it is going and when it will be returning.
3. When you are ready to pick the dog up, you will need to visit the Cashier's Office and speak to customer service staff.

4. Customer service will need to see a valid ID, get your DL#, confirm your current address/contact information, and have you sign a Foster Agreement if you haven't already.

Timing for taking a dog out:

For an overnight:

- Make arrangements ahead of time for taking a dog out.
- Pick up the dog prior to 7 p.m. in order to complete arrangements.
- Return the dog to its kennel at 11 a.m. the following day, so it will be available for customer viewing.
- Be sure to notify the animal care staffer in the run that the dog has been returned so staff can assure that the dog is fed.

For an outing:

- Pick up anytime between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Return the dog to its kennel by 7 p.m.
- Remember, being available for customer viewing during open hours increases the dog's chance of being adopted from the shelter. Heaviest customer times are generally on weekends, right after shelter opening, mid to late afternoons, and during special adoption events. The best time of day for an outing will also depend on the times of greatest activity or calm for a particular dog, and their specific needs.

**Kennel Sign & Supplies:**

Supplies and signage are located in the Cashier's Office.

- Hang the appropriate sign on the interior door of the dog's kennel, with its kennel card, so that staff and visitors will know that the dog is an overnight or outing.
- Grab an "Adopt Me" vest or bandana to help draw attention to your lucky shelter pup during your outing.
- When returning the dog to its kennel, remove the sign that you placed when taking the dog out, and return it to the Cashier's Office.

Keep the following in mind:

- If the dog will be visiting a place other than your home during your time together, consider whether they will truly benefit from, and enjoy the particular environment to which you will be taking them. Think about the surroundings, the traffic (both people and other animals), and whether or not the environment may cause further stress to your chosen dog.
- Crowded public areas should be avoided, including school grounds.
- You are prohibited from taking foster dogs to off leash dog parks or other off leash areas. Dogs must be on-leash, under your control, at all times.
- You are prohibited from having your foster dog socialize with other animals, except those in your home.

- Have a blast! Ride in the car, walk in the neighborhood, play, watch TV, whatever you want to do within the limits outlined above. Use structure, kindness, attention, training, and snuggling as needed. Some dogs will want to spend their time resting and some will want to do lots of fun things. Keep in mind the dog's safety and needs and yours, and have fun!

Share the experience:

- Complete a behavior profile for the dog documenting your experience. This can be done in person at the time of drop off, or preferably, via email beforehand. The Foster Dog Profile can be found in the documents section of GivePulse.
- Post fun pictures and details to the "Austin Animal Center Staff, Volunteers and Fosters" Facebook page.

### Public Outings and Walks: Safety Tips for You and Your Foster Dog

#### Before the Outing/Walk

- Make sure that you have the appropriate supplies. These include: a cell phone, poop bags, a bottle of water, a collapsible bowl, and a list of emergency numbers.
- Make sure that the dog is properly fitted with a collar. If needed, a harness can be used in addition to the collar. If you aren't sure whether or not the dog is properly outfitted, ask staff to check.
- The dog should have a leash properly attached to their collar, or harness. Check to be sure that all equipment is fastened, and that no equipment is frayed, worn or has stitching coming out. Flexi/retractable leashes should not be used.
- Take time to introduce yourself to the dog that you'll be walking. The dog may be excitable. Be calm and assertive and try not to get the dog any more excited or playful than it already is. If you feel that you cannot control the dog, please return it and select a dog that you can safely handle.
- Do not wrap the leash around your hand. It would be terrible for a dog to get loose, but much worse if the dog drug you, the handler, into a dangerous traffic situation. If you feel that a dog is pulling you of your feet or that you are at risk of losing control of the dog, please return it and select a dog that you can safely handle.
- Walk your dog on a short leash – a long leash gives the dog more strength and leverage.

#### During the Outing/Walk

- Be aware of other dogs, bicyclists, runners and walkers that might cross your path and give them the right of way. Keep your distance from other animals and do not introduce shelter dogs to privately owned dogs.
- Be visible! Wear bright colors so that you can be easily seen by oncoming traffic.
- Cross safely. Look both ways when you cross traffic and remember that the prey drive of any dog can kick in at any time. Be aware of your surroundings and do not let the dog walk far in front of you or far behind you.

- Do not use headphones or talk on a cell phone while walking the dog. Use all of your senses to ensure that you, those around you, and the dog remain safe.
- Pay attention to the dog's respiration rate and overall appearance and attitude. Since many of the dogs have been relatively non-mobile for weeks or months, they may become fatigued quite quickly. Make sure to offer water regularly and take breaks periodically so the dog can catch his breath.
- If you notice the dog acting strangely or you find yourself in a dangerous situation, do not hesitate to contact 311 for animal protection's assistance. You can also contact the foster hotline at 512-978-0541.
- If there is an emergency, such as a person being bitten, call 911 for assistance.

#### Additional Tips

- Use distance or distraction to reduce aroused behavior
- Keep two hands on leash for best control
- Let faster traffic pass on left, keep slower traffic on your right.
- Reward & praise the dog for calm behavior, easy walking or jogging, and sitting for greetings.
- Have fun!