



MORRIS
ANIMAL REFUGE
- America's First Animal Shelter -

Dog Foster Care Manual

1242 Lombard Street - Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 735-9570
www.morrisanimalrefuge.org



Why Foster?

Foster homes are an essential part of rescuing! It provides temporary homes for animals in need, and it also helps with overcrowding at the shelter. When you open your home to a foster animal, you are not only saving his / her life, you are also freeing up a kennel spot to save the next animal in need! Fostering can be time consuming, but it is a very rewarding experience. The Refuge is in need of loving homes who can accommodate nursing dog with puppies, litter of puppies, and adult dogs who are not doing well at the shelter.

The more foster homes we have, the more animals we can save!

Responsibilities:

As a foster you must be willing and able to:

- Provide basic care such as food, water, shelter, medication, and training.
- Isolate your new foster for a minimum of **two weeks**. This is very critical and will help you keep an eye out for any illness.
- Keep your fosters up to date on vaccines, and any necessary medical care by coming back to our facility for follow-up care.
- Report any and all behaviors whether they are good or bad.
- Report any bite incidents that may occur.
- Only use positive reinforcement training.
- Crate train and house break.
- Promote your foster, and find them a loving permanent home!

****Foster animals must stay in the care and residence of the primary Foster Care Provider!****

Contact Information

Hours of Operation:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Sat 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Wed, Fri 8:30 am – 7:00 pm
Sun 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

**Thursdays the Refuge is closed to the public.*

Address: 1242 Lombard Street - Philadelphia, PA 19147

Telephone: (215) 735-9570

Fax: 215.735.6398

Website: www.morrisanimalrefuge.org

Elisa Mellis, Director of Operations

emellis@morrisanimalrefuge.org

(610) 212-6966

Josiah Ortiz, Medical & Foster Care Coordinator

jortiz@morrisanimalrefuge.org

(267) 357-3794

Ashley Rivera, Volunteer & Assistant Foster Care Coordinator

arivera@morrisanimalrefuge.org

General Inquiries

Foster@morrisanimalrefuge.org

****In the event of an emergency please contact the Elisa or Josiah!****

Preparing for a Foster / Basic Care

It is important to make your home ready for a new animal! MAR will provide food, crate, medication, and any other supplies you may need.

Where to Keep Your Foster(s)

It's recommended to keep your foster isolated from your resident pets for a

minimum of two weeks. This isolation period will help you identify any illness your foster may be carrying and will reduced stress for both the foster and your resident pets. During these two weeks, your foster should be placed in a quiet area where they can decompress. Once the two weeks have passed, and you are confident that they are not sick, you can start to introduce them to your resident pets.

Dog Proofing

Before letting your foster(s) settle in, please ensure that all areas are pet-safe!

- Check for any small spaces, holes, or nooks an animal can easily crawl into.
- Keep all medications, cleaners and other chemicals on high shelves.
- Keep all windows closed, or properly screened.
- Keep trash cans covered or away completely.
- Secure any loose wires, and keep them out of reach.

Food

Moms with nursing puppies, and puppies who are eating on their own should have access to both dry and wet food. Wet food should be offered twice a day and dry food and water should be available all the times

- For puppies who are just beginning to eat on their own, start them with a gruel mixture of puppy wet food and warm water. Once they are steadily eating the gruel, you can decrease the amount of water mixed in, and start to offer dry kibble.

Housebreaking / Crate Training

Why Crate Train?

Crate training is an effective short term tool for managing and training your foster. Crates can provide a safe, and cozy place for fosters if used correctly. They are also useful when introducing a new foster to your home and housebreaking! A crate can be used to keep your foster in a safe area during the night, and whenever you are not there to monitor them. Crates should be sized so that a dog is able to lie down, stand up and easily turn around.

Crating should never be used as a punishment!

When Not to Use a Crate

Some dogs will display fears and anxiety associated with crates. Please do not crate your foster if you see any signs of anxiety such as:

- Damage to the crate itself from trying to escape.
- Hurting themselves while trying to escape.
- Excessive barking / howling.
- As punishment.

Some dogs will need to be introduced to a crate very gradually, over a period of week or longer. If you are in need of help or guidance, please reach out to us!

Using a Crate for House Training

Dogs generally do not like to soil in the areas that they sleep in, so naturally they will try to avoid eliminating in their crate. Using a crate can help you predict when your foster needs to eliminate and control where. If you decide to keep your foster in the crate overnight, chances are that they will want to eliminate as soon as they get of their crate - this is when you should immediately take them outside!

House training is not an exact science - there's no sure-fire formula or timetable that will work for every dog. The important thing is to make it a positive experience. Here are a few tips to help you through it:

Do: Supervise your dog. Limit the dog's run of the house to the one or two rooms where you are able to monitor them at all times. Dogs usually show "pre-potting" behavior such as sniffing, circling and walking with stiff back legs; all signs that you should get them to the potty area ASAP! As the training begins to take hold, you can slowly enlarge their territory.

Don't: Yell at a dog for a mess they made earlier. If you catch them in the act, it's okay to startle them by clapping or making a noise (hopefully this will stop them long enough for you to whisk them outside). But a dog will not learn anything by being scolded for a past accident, even one a few minutes old. Just clean it up and soldier on.

Do: Offer big praise when they gets it right. Whether your goal is for your dog to eliminate on pee pads indoors or to do it outside, you have to really throw a party for them when they succeed. Lavish your foster with praise, affection and don't forget some yummy treats!

Don't: Rub their face in it. In addition to this action making your dog fear you, they're incapable of making the connection that it's the act of soiling indoors

you object to - to them, you just really hate pee and poop. If they think that the waste itself is what you dislike, they'll only get sneakier about hiding it from you.

Medical Information & Concerns

As a foster, you are responsible for bringing your foster(s) back to the shelter for any necessary medical care which include vaccinations, spay/neuter or any treatment they may need. Your foster's paperwork will indicate when you will have to come back to the shelter.

It is important for fosters to observe any changes in an animal's appearance, behavior and health in order to detect any signs of illness. The following are symptoms that will require immediate attention:

- Difficulty breathing, erratic breathing pattern, gasping for air.
- Very high or low body temperature.
- Very pale, blue, or grey gums.
- Weight loss.
- Diarrhea.
- Vomiting.
- Sneezing or coughing.
- Seizures or neurologic symptoms.
- Accidental injury or trauma, including but not limited to cuts and fractures.
- Unable to stand or walk.
- Failure to eat or drink. (Two days for adult dogs, One day for puppies)
- Signs of lethargy or uncharacteristic / abnormal behavior.
- Straining to urinate or not urinating for more than 24 hours.
- Failure to defecate for more than two days.
- Difficulty giving birth.

If your foster(s) is experiencing any of these symptoms, please call Elisa or Josiah immediately!

Scheduling Spay / Neuter

If your foster is at the appropriate weight/ age, free of any illnesses and not on any medication, please email foster@morriscanrefuge.org to schedule an

appointment to get them spayed / neutered. Please remember to include the animals ID number and gender.

Pre-Surgery Care

In order for your foster to undergo surgery, they must be in good health. Your foster should not have access to any food or water starting at midnight the night before surgery.

Day of Surgery

Surgery is a same day procedure. You can drop your foster off between 8:30 am - 10 am, and once your foster is ready to be picked up, you'll receive a phone call.

Post-Surgery Care

Limit activity and place your foster in a quiet place to recover. A small amount of food should be given 4 - 6 hours after surgery. If your foster vomits, do not be alarmed, it is a side effect from the anesthesia. However, if your foster does continue to vomit throughout the night, please call Elisa or Josiah.

You will receive a detailed sheet of after-care instructions when you pick up your foster.

Finding an Adopter

Online Promotion

Many adopters start their search for their new pet right online! Using social media is an effective way of giving your foster exposure. Post your foster on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. You can also promote them to your family and friends!

In your foster folder, you'll find a bio questionnaire which can be filled out and sent to foster@morrisanimalrefuge.org along with a few photos. We'll then create a bio and post your foster on MARs website and other social media sites.

Adoption Events

Attending adoption events is a great opportunity to get your foster adopted. Email foster@morrisanimalrefuge.org to find out about any upcoming events!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What if I have to leave town and my foster(s) isn't ready to be adopted?

A. Occasionally things come up that require you to leave town before your fosters are ready to be adopted. No worries! If this happens, please call us to arrange for the foster animals' care.

Q. How much time do I need to spend with the fosters?

A. As much time as you possibly can! The more time you spend with your fosters, the more you will help with their socialization. You'll also spot symptoms when/if your fosters are not feeling well - with young puppies that could be critical since they are so fragile. Besides, it's a lot of fun to play with your foster animals!

Q. What if I get overwhelmed and can't take care of my foster animals any longer?

A. If you feel that you are unable to give adequate care to your fosters, contact us right away and make arrangements to bring the animals back to the shelter.

Q. Can I adopt my foster animal?

A. Absolutely! Foster parents are given the first opportunity to adopt. (Standard adoption fees will still apply).

Q. Who do I call in case of a medical emergency?

A. Call the Director of Operations immediately at (610) - 212 - 6966!

Q. Can I take my foster animal to a private vet for medical care?

A. No, you must seek all medical care at the shelter. MAR will not / cannot reimburse for any outside veterinary care.