

## What to expect when fostering

Potter's Angels Rescue does not have a physical shelter. All of the animals in our care stay in foster homes until they are adopted by their forever family. We can only help as many animals as we have space for in our foster system. Our foster homes are our most valuable volunteers because they are directly involved with saving the lives of the animals that we take on by providing them with a home to stay until they get adopted. Without them we could not save as many animals as we do so we try to make the process as easy on them as possible. Before you consider fostering for PAR you should read through this list of FAQ's to see if fostering is right for you. Thank you for showing interest in PAR's foster program! ☺

## What do foster parents do?

They provide an animal with a loving home until they are adopted. They work on any undesirable traits to make them more adoptable and better prepared for their new homes. Shelter/boarding environments can be very stressful on an animal and many of these animals are being locally surrendered from the only homes they have ever known, adding to the stress of a boarding situation. We ask our fosters to be empathetic and compassionate while providing strict boundaries and guidelines for the animals to adhere to while they are in foster. The foster parent can also provide us with valuable insight into their pet's personality, such as their likes or dislikes to aid us in finding the best possible match for their forever home. Most importantly, foster parents single handedly save precious lives!

If you join our foster program, we will provide you with whatever you need, at your request (food, crate, training materials/devices). We also provide any veterinary care that is needed for the foster pet. We will provide you with a phone list of Veterinarians that we use, as well as, the numbers for PAR board members and other fosters in case you have any questions or need any support from other experienced foster homes. We have just begun a private group on Facebook dedicated to our foster homes making it easy for everyone to communicate and receive advice or hear about other foster pets and how they are doing. This also comes in very handy in receiving updates from our fosters as the pets progress so we can update the website.

## What are my responsibilities when fostering animals?

We ask our fosters to give us weekly updates on their pet's progress so we can match them with good homes accordingly. If you have other animals in your home it is your responsibility to make sure they are up to date on the following vaccinations: bordatella, distemper, and rabies. They should also have flea/tick protection as well as Heartworm preventative. We will not be responsible for your veterinary bills should your own pet get sick from your foster pet. If you need any of these vaccinations for your animals (aside from rabies which has to be given by a licensed veterinarian) we are happy to provide them to you at cost (\$5 per vaccine/\$10 for flea treatment or heartworm preventative) but it is your responsibility to set this up with one of our board members. If you are fostering pets that are coming in from shelters it is especially important to have both the bordatella (given every 6 months) and the distemper (every 3 years after boosters) vaccinations up to date on your animals.

It is also your responsibility to let us know if the foster animal is in need of vet care. All vet visits need to be preapproved by one of our board members and brought to one of PAR's vet partners. Many ailments can be treated by us without the cost of a vet visit so we will decide the necessary steps to take after speaking with you. If it is an emergency (such as hit by car, ingested toxins, etc.) you will need to take them to your nearest emergency vet. You will be responsible for getting them to the vets if needed, so having access to transportation is a must. Once we have found the perfect adoptive home for your pet, we will often set up the final adoption through our foster homes and have them handle the final paperwork.

How long will I keep a pet?

It's impossible to predict how long an animal will be in foster care. It can range anywhere from 1 week- 6 months. If you can not commit to this kind of unpredictable long-term care, you may be interested in being on standby as our foster homes take vacations or volunteering in some other way. We expect our adopters to not give up on their pets, so we expect the same from our foster parents.

If you join our foster team, we will match you with a suitable pet to foster. For example, if you work full time, you would not be a good candidate for a puppy that needs a lot of training and attention or an animal that has separation issues. If you have a male dog that does not do well with other males, we will not place any males into your home. We will work with you to match you with an appropriate foster pet to avoid having to move them more than once.

What if my foster animal isn't working out?

PAR will make every effort to ensure a good and safe foster match. However, there are times when this will fail. In this case contact your PAR representative as soon as possible. If the issues are minor, PAR will work with you to address them. Many times, problems can be solved by trying something different and/or giving the animal time to adjust to your home. PAR will always move the animal if the issue can't be resolved, but we ask that you give us 24 hours to make a plan. If that is not possible, we will make emergency arrangements. PAR never wants to put the safety of foster people, their animals or the foster animal into jeopardy.

What if I become attached?

Getting attached to your foster pet is normal. After all, we do this because we love pets!! The most common reason given for people choosing not to foster is that they would get too attached and letting go of them would be too hard. It is hard to say goodbye to a pet that we have loved and taken care of, but the alternative is even sadder. Animals face a fate every day that they have no control over, which is, their last day to live because there is no more room in the shelter. When you look at it this way it seems kind of petty not to save an animal's life because you are worried about getting your feelings hurt for they have much more laying on the line of your decision. The first three dogs that I fostered I cried like a baby when they went on to their forever home, but they got to live and let me tell you those tears were well worth their lives- now I receive updates and am so thrilled for them and very proud of what I

did for them. And trust me it does get easier as you go along. And remember, as an adopter you can save one animal's life, but as a foster you can save dozens.

However, if you do decide you can't give up an animal, that's ok too. Foster parents can go through the adoption process and pay the adoption fee just like any other adopter, nonetheless, we require that you let us know that you are considering adoption as soon as possible to prevent us from doing extra unnecessary work. We also require that you commit to the animal within two weeks of them entering your home to avoid disappointing other potential adopters. The important thing for you to consider is what is in the animal's best interest. Sometimes, even if we love them, the best thing for the pet is to let them go.

Potters Angel's Rescue