

Dog Fosters Needed

Home fostering provides the lucky break these dogs need. People are much more willing to consider adoption when they can get some feedback as to how the dog is in a home environment. Many people debate fostering because they think it will be hard to give up the dog. On the contrary!! This is a great way to find your own dog – a “trial run” so to speak. Or alternatively, there is no better feeling than to see the happiness on the people’s faces when they pick up their loving new addition. To know you had a part in providing that opportunity for that dog is extremely rewarding. Without foster homes, we cannot save these dogs. Please help!

Jeanne, Pet Haven foster, with Bart who was rescued in the dead of winter, frozen and starving. After two months in Jeanne’s loving care, he found his forever home.



Testimonials from fosters:

"If you're someone who REALLY loves dogs, fostering is the most fun you can have that isn't illegal or fattening!!! It becomes addictive - because the rewards are so great. You might lose your heart to your foster, as I've done more than once, but when you see him/her/they go to a home where they are loved and really WANTED, it eases any pain you feel from the loss.... and it makes you eager for the next one - just to go through the process all over again. I've been exposed to breeds of dogs I'd never heard of before... and then there are the mixed breeds (which comprise the majority of dogs I've taken in); this is REALLY fun because I'm forever trying to figure out WHAT they are. When you bring the new dog into your home, you begin to work on gaining their trust. Once that's done, they think you're the greatest thing since homemade dog biscuits! Who can resist being the most important person in a dog's life?? You can make such a difference - bring shy dogs out of their shells, teach puppy-mill dogs about playing with toys, comfort dogs who are separated from their former owners for the first time in their lives... the rewards are endless. I wouldn't give this up for anything!!!" – Jeanne T., Pet Haven foster since 12/04, and Small Dog Foster Coordinator

"Fostering is one of the easiest and most rewarding ways to volunteer. Where else can you volunteer 24/7 doing something you are already doing -taking care of animals? Pet Haven has the most supportive group of volunteers and has numerous resources to help new fosters if problems arise. Volunteering at Pet Haven has taught me strong leadership skills which has made me a better pet guardian. Working with the foster dogs has shown me how to live in the moment. The past can be overcome and life moves forward. The foster dogs are so grateful to have a loving safe place to stay. It is a thrill to see them go to their new families." – Laura L., Pet Haven foster since 3/2007



Laura L with her own springer Buddy and two springer fosters (Sweetie and Jack)

“Pet Haven has a great community of volunteers. One of my best experiences with Pet Haven is meeting the other volunteers and making new friends....friends that share the same passion and compassion for the animals that we help. it’s not just about the animals that we help, it’s about the people too.” – Paula V., Pet Haven foster and Dog Adoption Director



Being a foster at Pet Haven means joining a community of animal lovers who share a common passion, dogs and cats!

“I am able to give a homeless dog (or a pup someone gave up on) a safe, warm, loving, structured environment that most of them have never had ! It is hard to let them go, but It makes me feel good knowing that they have found their "forever family" where they will be loved and cared for!” – Leslie B. and Danny S., Pet Haven fosters since 4/06



Questions about Fostering:

How does it all work if I’m interested in becoming a foster home?

The first step is to send an email to Volunteer@PetHavenMN.org with a completed volunteer application which you can download from <http://www.pethavenmn.org/volunteer-membership.php>. After that, a trained volunteer will call you. The Pet Haven volunteer will thoroughly cover: what to expect with a new foster dog, how to introduce a foster dog to your current pets, answer any questions you may have and offer ongoing support during the whole time that the dog is in your home.

What responsibilities will I have?

Depending on your level of comfort and past experience with dogs, we try to match dogs that are suitable for your home. Most foster dogs benefit from learning basic obedience skills, to help increase their adoptability. Some may require housebreaking. Some may require getting used to being inside a household environment and benefiting from a regular schedule. Some may be basically completely trained “ready made” pets and require very little brush up work. Getting your foster dog “out and about” is very important to see how they interact in different situations, to different people and dogs. Getting to know them and what type of home would suit them best is

truly your job as a foster parent, and helping them acquire the skills and socialization to get adopted.



Walker and his mom Laura fostered Murphy. In this photo they are getting ready for the Kare11 showcase to promote our 2007 Tuxes and Tails event. Murphy has since found his forever home.

What is expected of me, and what should I expect?

We would also like for fosters to bring their foster dog to adoption events that take place on the first and third Saturdays of each month at PetCos around the Twin Cities. If for some reason you are unable to attend an adoption event, we have other volunteers who are able to pick up and transport your dog. Having your foster dog at the adoption events is critical to increasing their odds of finding their forever home.

Who we are looking for are people who are realistic about dogs, and responsible. Having patience, good dog knowledge and having owned a dog in the past, and a willingness to help out are all that is needed.

Potential fosters should understand that foster dogs may go through an “adjustment period” in the beginning while in the home, and be willing to work through the challenges. You will be assigned a foster mentor, and they will be available to help you with these issues if they arise. Most often or not, within a week the foster dog makes itself comfortable, like it’s been living there its whole life.

One also has to ensure that they have the time and energy to give the foster dog love, attention and the exercise it needs. Providing a foster home to a homeless dog in need literally saves its life!

Who provides the basic necessities?

Pet Haven will provide all vet care, a kennel, a leash (leashes have to be asked for; many don't come from the vet), collar, and food.

Where do the dogs come from?

Our dogs come from a variety of sources: various shelters around the area, owner surrenders, strays, animal control and impounds.

What if I have other pets already?

That’s okay, we’ll work with them. We’ll ensure ahead of time that the foster dog is safe and suitable to be around other pets, and match foster homes accordingly. Care will be taken when introducing a foster dog to your current pets, and techniques will be discussed to ensure that all members of the furry family will get along.

Sometimes having other pets around is very helpful to a foster dog. It may ensure that the dog has more options when it comes to a permanent home if it’s been well socialized with other dogs, cats or other small furrries.

Will I have to review applications and do home checks?

Not at all. An experienced screener is assigned to each dog and will review applications for (with)

you. If the application passes the initial screening criteria, the application will be passed to you for your review. The level of your involvement in screening and adoption process is up to you. As a foster, and if you choose to, you have a large say so on the home of where your foster dog goes to.

I'm worried that I will be in over my head with a rowdy, untrained dog?

We try to match the foster home's skills level with the particular dog. However, sometimes as dogs get more comfortable in a home, new behaviors start to come out. Pet Haven provides ongoing support and guidance for all foster homes while caring for the dog. Generally speaking, most dogs flourish and continue to improve while in foster care.

How long do I have to commit to?

If you decide to become a full time foster, we ask for a one year commitment where you would foster 3-4 dogs, with scheduled breaks between dogs. If that commitment is too much for you, then respite fostering may be the right fit. Respite fosters watch dogs on weekends, holidays, and for weeks when their foster parents go on vacation or travel.

But what if I "fall in love" with my foster dog?

This is that obvious risk one takes when becoming a foster! For some, it never happens, for others it happens after their first dog, others their fifth dog, and others their tenth dog! At Pet Haven, foster parents always have first right of adoption when a dog is in the process of finding a new home.



Marilou, Pet Haven's current president began volunteering in September, 2006 and failed shortly after taking in Missy, 2 yr old lab/ pit mix. "If I'm going to fail at anything, this is one failure I am proud of!"
