



**Pope Memorial  
Humane Society**  
Cocheco Valley

# **Short-Term Foster Care Welcome & Informational Handbook**

## **Dog Field Trip & Overnight Fostering**

*Please keep this for your records to refer back to at any time*



## FOSTER CARE CONTACT INFORMATION

You are required to keep in contact with PMHS during your foster care experience. PMHS is required to maintain current contact information for all foster parents including address, phone numbers, and changes foster status. We are here to help you and open communication is very important.

### **For Non-Urgent / Non-Emergencies**

For contact information changes, general questions, returns, etc. -

**Contact: Caryn Fugatt | Foster Coordinator**

**Phone:** (603)749-5322 ext. 110

**Email:** cfugatt@popememorialPMHS.org

**Contact: Amy Drapeau | Shelter Manager**

**Phone:** (603) 749-5322 ext. 102

**Email:** adrapeau@popememorialPMHS.org

### **For ALL medical related items such as scheduling of appointments, vaccines, worming, and weight checks, non-urgent medical concerns**

**Contact: Caryn Fugatt**

**Phone:** (603)749-5322 ext. 110

**Email:** cfugatt@popememorialPMHS.org

### **After hours emergency contact information**

**For urgent medical related emergencies -**

**Contact: Tracie Winslow | Medical Manager**

**Phone:** (603) 608-5893

**For urgent behavior issues, family issues, etc -**

**Contact: Amy Drapeau | Shelter Manager**

**Phone:** (603) 923-5839 - Call or Text

**Contact: Caryn Fugatt | Foster Coordinator**

**Phone:** (508) 320-2001 - Call or Text

*The above emergency contact numbers are personal cell phones. Please only contact in the event of a major emergency. Always leave a message and one of the above will return your call promptly or move on to the next contact option. Thank you!*

## HOW SHORT-TERM FOSTER CARE WORKS

1. PMHS receives a dog and ensures he or she is up-to-date on vaccines and medical treatment.
2. The dog is made available for adoption and/or foster after completing an assessment of behavior and temperament.
3. Volunteers interested in short-term foster care may be contacted if the PMHS staff feels the dog would benefit from time away from the shelter environment due to kennel stress, need for socialization, etc.
4. The animal is returned to PMHS for adoption after the agreed upon foster period has ended. The dog may continue to be available for short-term fostering as needed.

**All foster animals are property of the shelter and must be returned to be adopted out under our adoption contract.**

**PMHS provides veterinary care, medications, food and supplies for foster animals. Foster care volunteers provide time, shelter, patience, and lots of love.**

## TYPES OF SHORT-TERM FOSTER CARE

- **Field Trip Foster Care:** This program allows approved volunteers to take a dog off shelter property for part of a day. Field trips can last anywhere from 30 minutes to 7 hours. Destinations for field trips must be planned in advance with the Foster Care Coordinator.
- **Overnight & Weekend Foster Care:** Foster volunteers may take a shelter animal home overnight for one or more nights. Foster care providers should ensure that during a PMHS animal's stay, visitors to the home are kept to a minimum in order to reduce stress for the animal. Additionally, it is highly recommended that a caretaker is available to stay at home with the animal throughout the short-term foster period (weekend 'staycations' are great for this!).

## BENEFITS OF SHORT-TERM FOSTER CARE

Within the past few years, several studies have been conducted to answer an important question: can a few hours away from the shelter improve the welfare of dogs, therefore increasing adoption rates? The answer has been a resounding "yes!"; shelter dogs who had the opportunity to take field trips proved to rate higher on happiness, playfulness, relaxation, and confidence. These dogs also showed lower rates of fearfulness, anxiety, and insecurity. Additionally, short-term foster volunteers provide important insight and information about the foster dog's experience away from the shelter; this information is valuable when matching a dog with a forever family.

## FIELD TRIP FOSTERING

Field trip fosters take a dog off the shelter grounds for an outing, which can last from a 30-minute care ride to an all-day adventure. 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.

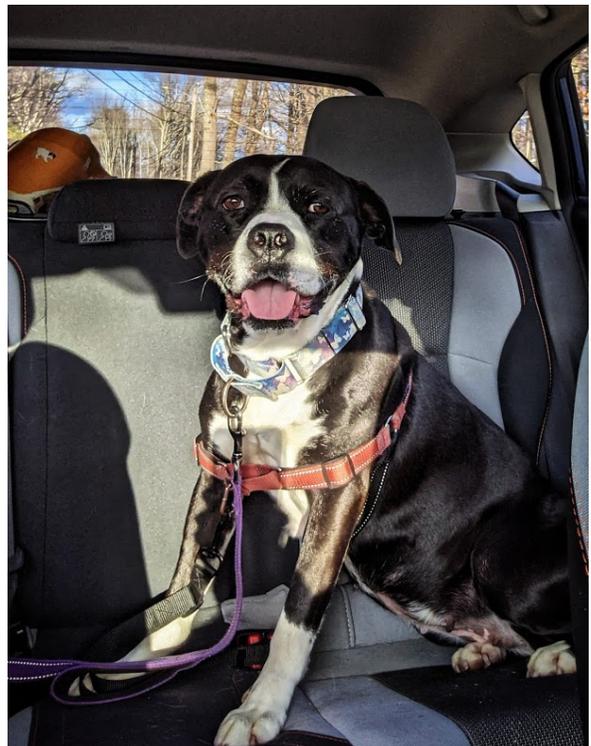
Not only does the outing relieve stress for the dog, but it allows the shelter staff to learn more about the dog's behavior outside the shelter. By documenting what is learned through photos, video and text, the dog has better chances of being adopted more quickly. Fosters should take the dog to fun places that will make for great pictures!

### PMHS will provide:

- Food (if needed), Water, and Treats
- Bowl(s)
- "Adopt me" accessories
- Dog waste bags
- Leash and Properly Fitted Harness
- Properly Fitted Martingale collar
- Emergency Contact Information

### Ideas for Field Trip Destinations:

- Henry Law Park  
1 Washington Street, Dover, NH  
3.6 miles away
- Bellamy Park  
23 Bellamy Road, Dover, NH  
3.5 miles away
- Dover Community Trail  
38 Fisher Street, Dover, NH  
3.6 miles away
- Willand Pond Trail  
475 High Street, Somersworth, NH  
2.6 miles away
- Dog-Friendly Outdoor Cafe or Ice Cream Shop  
Check for availability of dog-friendly seating in advance;  
Ensure that you and your foster dog will be seated away from any crowded areas
- Your Couch, Yard, or Neighborhood  
Dogs benefit from exploring new scents, and if you're able to welcome a dog into your home, some time on the couch or a walk around your neighborhood can be a perfect opportunity for a shelter dog to relax.



## OVERNIGHT & WEEKEND FOSTERING

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. With the help of weekend and overnight fosters, we can better match PMHS dogs with the perfect forever family!

As a weekend or overnight foster volunteer, your job is simply to spend time with your foster dog and get to know him or her better. *Please be sure to take pictures of your foster dog so that we can share their adventures with potential adopters!*

**PMHS will provide you with supplies to last for the agreed upon foster timeframe, including:**

- Food & Treats
- Bowl(s)
- "Adopt me" Accessories
- Dog Waste Bags
- Leash & Fitted Harness
- Fitted Martingale Collar
- Toys
- Blankets
- Medications (if needed)
- Foster Dog Tags



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Can I bring my foster dog hiking/to the park/to a friend's house?** This will depend on the dog you're fostering. PMHS staff will provide information about what settings would be best for your foster dog. *Please avoid dog parks, playgrounds, and heavily populated settings* as a precaution. Always keep your foster dog on leash and in your control.
- **Will I need to give medication to my foster pet?** Some pets do require medication every day. If you are fostering a dog overnight, you will need to continue to administer their medication as directed by PMHS staff.
- **What if my foster dog doesn't seem comfortable at my house?** The best thing you can do is give him time and space. Dogs make connections with their environment through scents, so let your foster pup sniff around your yard and house (on leash), and then allow him to relax on his bed or in his crate in a room with you. Don't try to push your foster dog to partake in things that make him uncomfortable; with patience, he will likely feel comfortable and want to engage in play and cuddles soon!
- **What if the foster situation isn't working out?** Your foster dog can be brought back to the shelter at any time during the foster care period. Contact Shelter Manager, Amy Drapeau or Foster Care Coordinator, Caryn Fugatt, to arrange after-hours return (see contact information, page one).

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

Proper disinfection is key when fostering any animal. Foster animals should always be provided with clean bedding, clean food and water. Please do not give any medications, vitamins or supplements without permission from Management.

Call PMHS if your foster animal(s) exhibit any of the following:

- Discharge from eyes/nose
- Lameness
- Sneezing
- Eye/ear issues
- Coughing
- Not urinating/defecating
- Vomiting
- Increased urination
- Fever
- Excessive diarrhea
- Not eating
- Lethargy

**Veterinary visits must be approved by the Shelter Manager or Medical Manager. Non-emergency visits may be scheduled at the shelter. All other appointments may be made at the discretion of the Shelter Manager or Medical Manager (emergency, after hours, etc.).**

NON-EMERGENCIES	EMERGENCIES
<p>Monitor First</p> <p>If condition worsens, contact PMHS – refer to contact information page one</p>	<p>Require Immediate Veterinary Attention</p> <p>Must contact a PMHS staff member for emergency vet care approval – refer to contact information on page one</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Runny discharge from the eyes or nose</li> <li>● Lack of appetite</li> <li>● Lethargy</li> <li>● Diarrhea lasting for than 3-4 feedings</li> <li>● Vomiting</li> <li>● Weight loss</li> <li>● Coughing and sneezing</li> <li>● Lack of bowel movements for more than 24-36 hours or straining to urinate/defecate</li> <li>● Swollen eyes or eye held closed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continuous diarrhea longer than 24-36 hrs.</li> <li>● Continuous vomiting longer than 12 hours</li> <li>● Loss of appetite lasting longer than 24 hrs.</li> <li>● Bleeding of any kind</li> <li>● Any trauma (hit by car, limping, unconscious, dropped, etc)</li> <li>● Difficulty breathing or labored breathing</li> <li>● Animal that is non-responsive</li> <li>● Lethargy with fever</li> </ul>

## PREPARING FOR YOUR FOSTER DOG

Before your foster dog or puppy first arrives at your home, a room should be set up for your foster pet. Prepare the room by removing any hazards (plants, exposed wires etc.), and place a crate with a blanket or bed inside in a low traffic area. Place baby gates to separate him/her from other areas of the house. By keeping the dog or puppy in one room, you are able to monitor his or her activities as well as help prevent “accidents” if you are in the process of housetraining.

### Recommended Supply List:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food and water bowls | <input type="checkbox"/> Odor neutralizer  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard & Soft Toys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treats               | <input type="checkbox"/> Poop Bags         | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut Butter    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scoop/Measuring Cup  | <input type="checkbox"/> Crate             | <input type="checkbox"/> Spray Cheese     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bedding & Blankets   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet First Aid Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby gate(s)     |

## FEEDING

Create a consistent schedule for feeding your foster dog(s) by feeding them at the same time every day. A separate space for your foster to eat will help him/her to feel more comfortable. If you have other dogs at home, separate them during feeding to prevent any arguments over food. Do not feed any “people food”, doing this can cause stomach irritation as well as potentially start a bad habit of begging.

The amount of food per feeding will depend on the animal’s weight and needs, and the PMHS staff will provide this information for you, along with the food the animal is currently eating.

## HOUSETRAINING

Be patient with your foster dog. Even house trained adult dogs can make mistakes. Never scold the dog or rub his/her nose in any “accidents”. If you catch the animal in the act, thump on the wall to startle him/her then bring the dog outside where he/she can finish. You can use an odor neutralizer on the area where the dog “marked” to ensure there is no lingering smell.

When you have determined where your foster dog should eliminate, take him/her to the same place every time. This should be done throughout the day, including when they wake up, after they eat or drink, and after play sessions.

Even if you bring home an adult dog that is housebroken, you may want to follow these guidelines for the first couple of weeks while the dog adjusts to his new surroundings and to your schedule.

## PLAYTIME & SOCIALIZATION

One of the most important parts of your job as a foster parent is to convince your foster pet(s) that humans are kind and loving. Some pets will adjust quickly to you and their new environment, but to some, you may seem like a strange and frightening giant! Be patient and allow your foster(s) time to acclimate to new surroundings. This may mean extra physical attention, or simply allowing the pet to explore on its own.

The principles of socializing are the same for all domestic dogs and cats: love them and they will respond. An outgoing, affectionate kitten or puppy can be cuddled and played with freely. The less social animals will need some extra encouragement.

## TOYS

There are many options for toys on the market today. Kongs, Nylabones, balls, fleece ropes and stuffed animals to name a few. Rope toys should be used under supervision and thrown away when they begin to fray, or strings are easily pulled apart. All toys should be free of removable parts like eyes, buttons, batteries or other small parts that can be swallowed and potentially dangerous to your foster. Stuffed animals should be able to withstand washing with bleach to sanitize them properly. Do not give your foster dog rawhide, pig ears, hooves or vinyl toys that cannot be easily digested or that may become a choking hazard.

## GROOMING

The more a dog or puppy is used to being handled, the more socialized and well-adjusted they will be. However, if you are caring for a fearful dog, it is best to let the PMHS staff help you with any grooming needs.

- **Nail trims:** Puppy nails need to be trimmed as soon as 3 weeks. You can help puppies get used to this by touching and holding their paws during play and petting sessions. PMHS will trim nails as needed during routine check-ups.
- **Bathing:** You may need and/or want to bathe your foster animal. Oatmeal or conditioning shampoo is recommended. If a dog/puppy needs a special or medicated shampoo it will be provided for you.
- **Brushing:** Regular brushing is a great bonding experience with your foster. Not only does it improve their coat's appearance, but it also helps stimulate healthy skin.

## USING A CRATE

Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs and should not be used as punishment. They give them a place of their own to feel secure and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking, and house training mistakes. Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old, plus one. Adults can be crated for up to 9 hours, but this can be physically and mentally stressful for the dog. Rigorous exercise should be given before and after such a long period in the crate.

### **Introducing the crate:**

First introduce your foster dog to his crate after a good walk or play session. Put a bed or blanket and chew toys in the crate so that he/she can go in and out as they please. Feed your dog in the crate with the door open. If the dog hesitates going in, place the bowl right inside the door so that their head is in and their body is outside.

If your foster dog still refuses to go near the crate, put a high value treat/food in the crate (cooked boneless chicken, smelly tasty canned food etc.) and shut the door. Let the dog hang outside the crate for a while, smelling the food inside. Soon he should beg you to let him in!

When your foster dog is showing interest in the crate, throw some of his favorite treats in it. Let him/her get the treats and come right out again. Do this a few times. After, shut the door while inside and give him/her another treat through the door then let them out. Continue doing this gradually increasing the time spent in the crate. A peanut butter filled Kong is a great way to keep them occupied for about 10 min. If your foster whines/cries/barks, ignore them. Talking to them will reward the behavior. You can let them out when they have been quiet for a few minutes but remove the Kong. This teaches them good things happen in the crate.

## DECOMPRESSION TIPS

When a dog leaves the shelter and enters your home, there will be an adjustment period. The stress of the shelter environment has a huge impact on a dog - just imagine if you were taken away from everything you know and put in a kennel to be cared for by strangers! It's a scary experience! While every dog is an individual, there are some general guidelines for helping your foster dog decompress. Here are some tips to assist with this process:

- **Chill Out:** During this adjustment period, allow your foster pet to decompress in a quiet area. We recommend limiting the animal's run of the house to just one or two rooms, where you can also place the crate. This provides a calm sanctuary for the animal to relax in while he or she becomes familiar with the scents, sounds, and routine in their new environment.
- **Avoid Heavy Contact:** When it comes to acclimating dogs to new people and animals, keep in mind that it's best for a dog to smell before seeing, and see before touching.
  - Keep in mind that even dogs who are extremely affectionate and outgoing on walks with you at the shelter may need time to adjust to a new environment before feeling comfortable enough to snuggle.
  - Let the dog approach you. If they do approach and lean into you, go ahead and try petting with steady pressure.
  - If the dog isn't yet ready to accept your touch, that's okay! Be patient and take some more time just existing in the same general space as the dog. It may take some time for our more stressed animals, but you're doing the dog a huge favor by not rushing the process.
- **If your foster is unable to settle down** (panting, whining, constantly in motion, etc.) channel their energy into a task such as fetch, puzzle toys or any game that engages their brain until they are able to relax.
- **Consider only using essential (safety-related) commands during the short-term stay:** Think about saving more complex commands (like staying off the couch, or sitting in place) for another day when the dog is more calm and available for learning. Engage your foster in another task, like a game of Box Hide and Seek.



**Pope Memorial  
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**We thank you, and hope you will enjoy your foster care experience.  
Your love, time and patience can make all the difference in an animal's life.**

## READING BODY LANGUAGE

Dogs let us know how they're feeling in many ways; body language is one of them. Every dog and every situation is different. Always consider the context of the situation and the dog's whole body posture when referring to this guide.

### A happy dog

A dog who is happy will be relaxed.

1

Dog has a relaxed body posture, smooth hair, mouth open and relaxed, ears in natural position, wagging tail, eyes normal shape.



2

Dog is inviting play with bottom raised, smooth hair, high wagging tail, eyes normal shape, ears in natural position, may be barking excitedly.



3

Dog's weight is distributed across all four paws, smooth hair, tail wagging, face is interested and alert, relaxed and mouth open.



### A worried dog

These dogs are telling you that they are uncomfortable and don't want you to go near them.

1

Dog is standing but body posture and head position is low. Tail is tucked under, ears are back and dog is yawning.



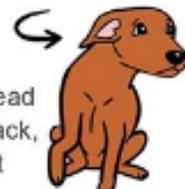
2

Dog is lying down and avoiding eye contact or turning head away from you and lip licking and ears are back.



3

Dog is sitting with head lowered, ears are back, tail tucked away, not making eye contact, yawning, raising a front paw.



### An angry or very unhappy dog

These dogs are not happy and want you to stay away or go away.

1

Dog is standing with a stiffened body posture, weight forward, ears are up, hair raised, eyes looking at you – pupils dark and enlarged, tail is up and stiff, wrinkled nose.



2

Dog is lying down cowering, ears flat, teeth showing, tail down between legs.



3

Dog is standing with body down and weight towards the back, head is tilted upwards, mouth tight, lips drawn back, teeth exposed, eyes staring, ears back and down, snarling.



## MARKETING YOUR FOSTER DOG

When you're marketing a pet for adoption, your ultimate goal is to find a forever home for that animal. You can do this by posting pictures and anecdotes to social media, or by sending documentation in the form of pictures, videos, and text to the PMHS Foster Care Coordinator to post. Many of our dogs become more comfortable outside of the stressful shelter environment, and this is when we start to see their personalities shine. So, have your camera ready to capture these memorable moments!



Instagram post interface showing 43 likes and a caption from foster\_pupper\_nh. The caption describes a road trip with a foster family and lists several hashtags.



Instagram post interface showing 34 likes and a caption from foster\_pupper\_nh. The caption lists three things learned during the first 24 hours of foster care.

Ultimately, we want to make the dog into a local celebrity! The more our community members see a foster dog out and about in the community, enjoying life out of the shelter, the more likely they are to form an emotional connection with that animal. This means that they will be likely to share that dog's story with others, which can lead to faster, more successful adoption outcomes! This chain of events starts with you, the foster caregiver. Send pictures to 508.320.2001 or cfugatt@popememorialCVHS.org

***Below is an example of what a foster parent signs and agrees to when an animal(s) is in their care***

Foster Care Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dog Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_ Time to Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### **Field Trip Volunteer Agreement**

Please read each item and sign to confirm your agreement.

- I hereby acknowledge that I have received a foster care manual.
- Approved foster-care provider must be in control of the dog's leash at all times.
- I agree to not change the collar and/or harness of the PMHS dog unless authorized by PMHS staff.
- PMHS dog cannot be allowed to be off-leash.
- PMHS dog will not be allowed to interact with other animals.
- PMHS dog must remain in harness and collar at all times.
- I agree that the dog shall remain the sole property of Pope Memorial Humane Society.
- I agree to return the foster animal upon request and/or the expiration of the designated time period, or if I am no longer able to adequately care for them.
- I will not hold PMHS liable for any injury or illness to myself, family, other person(s), or other animals' in the event that a foster animal should cause bodily harm or damage.
- I understand and acknowledge that I do not have any right or authority to keep or place foster animals with other individuals without the consent of PMHS. In the event that I know someone interested in adopting the foster animal(s), I will direct them to PMHS.
- I agree that PMHS is not responsible for any direct consequential damage to property caused by the foster animal(s).
- I will not hold PMHS liable for any injury or illness to myself, family, other person(s), or other animals' in the event that a foster animal should cause bodily harm or damage.

***This is signed by the foster parent at the time the foster parent takes the animal(s) into their care. This copy is for foster parents to refer back to at any time to assure they are following all guidelines required by PMHS.***



## Adopting Your Foster Pet is Easy!

Did you fall in love with your foster animal? We don't blame you! First speak with the PMHS adoption team to ensure your foster animal is ready for adoption. If the answer is "yes", we make it easy to adopt!

All the **adopter** needs to do is:

1. Complete the **adoption paperwork**
2. Pay the **adoption fee** (fees vary depending on animal and age)
3. Bring the **adoption paperwork and adoption fees** in to us (or complete these steps virtually via email and phone)

All the **foster or adoption supervisor** needs to do is:

1. Provide the **adoption paperwork**
2. Provide the animal's **medical history**
3. Provide the animal's **behavior history**
4. Provide the animal's **microchip information**

*Completed paperwork and fees are due upon adoption.*

Thank you for being a life-saving foster parent with Pope Memorial Humane Society!