

Fun with Flo

Flo has been living in our office during her stay at the shelter! We wanted to share some information about what we have learned about her during her stay with us in an effort to help ease her transition into your home. She is an amazing lady and is so lucky to have found such compassionate, patient humans!



Flo grew up in a yard outside, with little exposure to new things. When she was a puppy, Flo was not socialized and exposed to new sights, sounds, and people. Meeting new people and going new places may always be stressful for Flo at first, but with patience and positive reinforcement, she has shown that she enjoys playing and snuggling with people she trusts!

Flo benefits from positive reinforcement based training only. Corrections should not be used at any time with Flo, as this could be detrimental to her anxiety and behavior modification progress. Flo should be trained with valuable food and toy rewards.

When meeting new people, Flo prefers to keep her distance at first. No one should ever force petting or extend their hand for sniffing when greeting Flo. This will induce stress surrounding the greeting and make the adjustment process take longer. When meeting new people, Flo does best if they sit on the floor or a chair calmly and offer high-value treats, like hot dogs or chicken. Treats should be tossed and not hand-delivered. ***Hand-delivering treats could put the “scary” stranger too close to Flo too quickly, even if they are offering her food.***

People in Flo’s family can spend time bonding with her by speaking to her softly, offering her high-value treats regularly, and by caring for her through daily feedings, play, and walks, as she is comfortable.

Flo is growing more confident while walking on leash each day. Flo has recently learned to take small trips around the shelter on leash! This is a big success for her! Flo’s leash and harness should remain on during her adjustment period in your home, to ensure that you do not have to crowd her to clip the leash before she is ready. Flo should drag her leash around your house until she is comfortably approaching you reliably and allowing petting and touching. *This may take 10+ days or so.* When not supervised, Flo should be housed in a dog-safe space where she



cannot get tangled or where furniture cannot fall on her as a result of the leash getting tangled.

When practicing loose leash walking, it is imperative that you practice in an indoor or fenced area for safety and to reduce the presence of stressful stimuli. Never yank or jerk the leash, but walk slowly and calmly. Pay close attention to Flo's body language to ensure her comfort.

While Flo has grown more confident to walk certain paths at the shelter (she knows exactly where they are too!), she will retreat, tuck her tail, and raise her hackles at times when she is too stressed to continue the walk. It is encouraged to allow Flo to return to her "safe zone" when this occurs to avoid stressing her further.

Flo prefers to be housed loose in a dog-safe room vs. a crate. While in foster care, Flo chewed through a plastic crate and bent a wire crate, resulting in her swallowing some pieces of the crate. While housed in the office at the shelter, Flo has done very well loose 24/7! She has not disturbed cords, books, the rug, or couch. This, of course, may change as she grows more comfortable in her environment!

It is best to puppy-proof the area that Flo will be staying in, ensuring she cannot ingest any harmful objects. Much to our surprise, Flo has also learned how to twist and lock small door locks! She may benefit from a baby-proof door handle cover.

Flo likes to give kisses and little boops! When Flo is comfortable with her people, she gives the cutest kisses and loves to hop around like a bunny! We can't wait for you to experience this in person!

Flo has favorite foods. Flo has been eating 1 cup of Science Diet: Puppy dry food twice daily. Flo takes her medicine happily if covered in spray cheese or spray KONG Stuff'n: Peanut Butter flavor.

Flo potty training. Flo is veryyyy close to being fully potty trained! There were many days where she did not potty indoors at all. When she did, she mostly pottied on paper training pads. Paper pads have been placed in Flo's care package. Flo should be encouraged to drag a leash in a fenced in yard to potty or potty when walking on a loose leash, as she is comfortable. Since it may take her some time to grow comfortable to walk on a leash or go outside in her new home, the potty pads can be provided in the meantime. Flo prefers to potty on grass when outside.

Flo loves cats! Flo loves spending time with cats! We tease her that she is part cat herself! Flo has also participated in playgroups at the shelter with other quiet, gentle dogs. Flo is uncomfortable around other dogs that have a rough, rowdy style of play. *If approached by an active dog, she attempts to run away.*

Flo loves toys! We have placed some of Flo's favorite toys in her care package to go home with her! The plush fox seems to be her favorite so far, but anything plush seems to make her happy!

Celebrate the “small” things! Little changes in body language, growing more relaxed with family members, and walking slightly farther than before are all seemingly “small” successes that should be celebrated! Flo is not like “most” shy dogs who come around after a few hours or even days. Understand that winning her trust takes time and patience, but when you do, it is so worth it!



Contact us! The SHELTER can be reached at **CONTACT INFO**. Our staff is comprised of certified professional dog trainers, and we are here to answer any questions you may have. We would also LOVE to see any pictures or videos of Flo in your home!