



Foster Parent Guidelines

Foster parents are a critical part of our program at Clancy's Dream, Inc.(CDI). Without our dedicated foster parents, we would not be able to offer so many dogs a second chance at finding their forever family.

While fostering requires time and patience, the rewards are immeasurable. When you foster a dog, you give that dog the stepping stone to a long happy life. Fostering is the life blood of CDI. With the help of our dedicated fosters, we can distribute our money and energy toward vetting and saving more dogs. Watching your foster dog blossom in your care and eventually go to their forever home is truly an amazing experience. If you are interested in fostering, please read through the information below to determine if the CDI foster program sounds like it will be a good fit for you and your household.

What does CDI provide and what do foster parents provide?

Foster parents provide a loving home, food, basic training, exercise and socialization for the animal. In addition, fosters will provide the food and treats. If needed, CDI can provide a crate, collar or leash. CDI will pay for all necessary, pre-authorized vet care.

How long are dogs in foster care?

This varies greatly, depending on the individual dog. The duration can range from a week to several months, with an average stay of three to four weeks. We ask that foster parents commit to fostering a dog until the dog is adopted. It is extremely stressful for a dog to be moved around once they are in a foster home. We ask that foster parents only request a transfer when absolutely necessary, such as an unexpected family emergency, significant changes in schedules or unforeseen difficulties in addressing a dog's specific needs.

How can I become a foster?

There are two primary steps to becoming a foster.

Complete an application. Once received, your application will be reviewed by the foster team. If you are a good fit for our program, you'll need to sign the Foster Agreement Contract, which covers all program requirements.

If you are interested in becoming a foster, please fill out a foster application. Filling out an application does not obligate you to foster, but we do ask that applicants considering fostering

make a commitment which will allow CDI to schedule foster dog assignment and transport accordingly.

Can I adopt my foster?

Absolutely YES! As long as foster parents meet the rescue's requirements for adoption, foster parents will be considered to adopt their foster.

How are foster dogs promoted?

Photos and stories of all adoptable animals in foster homes are posted on our Facebook page and our website. We ask that foster parents post pictures and updates on our Facebook page to keep the dog noticed and potential forever families updated on the progress and behavior of the dog while in your care. Foster parents can also help promote their foster dog to their family, friends, colleagues and the general public through a variety of means and even just by walking the foster dog in local neighborhoods with an "Adopt Me" bandana or leash.

What if I have vacation or travel plans while I am fostering?

We also offer foster sitting if you need to travel out of town while you are fostering.

I live in a condo, townhome, or apartment, can I foster?

Yes, you can still foster an animal living in a small environment. Some of our animals need one-on-one socialization, so a small space can sometimes be beneficial. However, it's important that the dog selected is the appropriate animal for your lifestyle and you are willing to commit to providing the foster dog with the needed physical and mental stimulation. And of course, you still need landlord approval and must abide by any restrictions.

What if I have children?

Fostering is a wonderful family experience and can build a foundation of love for animals in your children. It's important to select a dog that is "age" appropriate with your children, and as a general rule, children under 16 years old should NOT be left alone and unsupervised with any animal. You must also be diligent about providing guidance, instructions and rules to your children about caring for a foster dog. With that in mind, we generally do not encourage fostering for families with very young children.

If I don't have a yard, or it's not fenced, can I foster dogs?

Yes, although a fenced yard is ideal for those early morning, or late night potty breaks and for a game of fetch, it is not a requirement. Moreover, foster dogs are not allowed to be left unattended in a yard. The reality is that the majority of dogs don't exercise themselves when left outside. Unfortunately, dogs left outside unsupervised can develop bad behavior issues like fence running, barking, or digging. Dogs need focused physical activity, mental stimulation and socialization and the best way to do this is by spending personal time with your foster dog on a leash or fenced-in area.

If I have my own animals, can I foster dogs?

Yes! It is important to understand how to properly manage multiple pets during the introduction period (the first few weeks a foster is in your home). Our director can answer any questions, give you suggestions and help you manage any introduction behavior issues.

Do I have to crate-train my foster dog?

No, but it is one of the most efficient and effective ways to house train a puppy or re-train an adult dog. Some dogs do not like crates initially, and most dogs need to be transitioned or "trained" to use a crate, so it's up to the foster parent to decide whether to crate or not. Putting the dog in a crate while you are gone will give you peace of mind knowing that they are in a safe place, away from harm, and not doing any damage to your belongings or themselves. For many dogs, a crate can also represent a safe and comfortable place to call their own and provides them with a sense of security. Dogs actually like having a "den" to cuddle up in. Crating should never be used as a punishment.

Do I need to have prior medical knowledge or expertise?

No, but you may be asked to dispense medicine to your foster animal so you will have to be comfortable following veterinarian's instructions if fostering a sick or injured animal.

What if my foster dog becomes sick?

All veterinary costs are paid by Clancy's Dream, Inc. All veterinary care requires prior approval from the foster coordinator unless the foster believes the emergency will result in the death of the foster.

How much time each day is needed to foster?

Commitment and responsibilities depend on the individual animal and situation. It's essential that foster parents understand that dogs may be stressed and transporting an animal to the foster home is also very stressful and emotional. Foster parents must be willing to be patient

and commit to the animal because our goal is to keep them in a stable and consistent environment.

Many of the dogs in the rescue are “adolescent” dogs between 1yr-5yrs. They typically have a lot of energy and require vigorous daily exercise. This means at least a 30-45 minute brisk walk/run in the morning and again in the afternoon, with plenty of play time in between. Older dogs may only need a morning and evening stroll.

If additional health problems develop, daily time commitments may be extended. For example, foster parents may have to transport their foster animals to the vet during regular business hours.

Can I take my foster dog to an off-leash dog park for exercise and socialization?

No. You are not allowed to take any foster dog from CDI to an off-leash dog park. While these parks can be fun for some dogs, there are far too many unknowns for it to be a safe and healthy experience for a foster dog. Diseases are easily transmitted and the temperaments of visiting dogs are unknown. Also, taking a leashed dog to a dog park can create barrier frustration and trigger aggression in some dogs. With advance notice, you are always welcome to come to the Shuck’s farm for a play date on 10 fenced acres with two ponds — free of charge of course!

How can I help my foster dog become more adoptable?

There are two ways to make a foster more adoptable. First and foremost is marketing. If no one knows about how wonderful your foster dog is, then it will be next to impossible for them to find them their forever home. In addition to supplying great photos and a bio and updating these regularly, giving a foster dog additional exposure by telling friends and family about her will help create a “network effect” and will speed up the process of finding a forever home. Simple steps like taking a foster dog on walks in local parks, outdoor shopping areas and other high traffic areas will help find potential adopters. Social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest also work well. Remember, everyone in this rescue is a volunteer and we all need to do our part to market the dogs.

Our foster dogs benefit greatly from the exercise (with the exception of those with some medical conditions), basic positive reinforcement training, special love and attention you give them. While marketing provides you with applicants, it’s always the dog that “closes the deal.” Shy dogs will benefit from your patience, routine and slowly exposing them to new people to build their confidence. Rambunctious adolescents who learn good manners will help show off their trainability and long term potential.

Am I responsible for finding my foster dog its forever home?

No, but we do need your help. Once a qualified applicant is identified, you will be asked to schedule a meet and greet with your foster and their potential adopter. Your quick response and then final input on the potential adopter is critical to finding a great match.

Many times a foster parent will find a perfect match through their own network of friends, family and colleagues. CDI greatly welcomes these referrals! If you think you have found a perfect forever home for your foster animal, ***please remember they still must go through the application process and be approved before an adoption can take place.***

Can I return my foster dog to CDI if I am unable to foster any longer?

Yes, but we strongly suggest that foster parents continue to foster until we find a permanent home for the dog. It can be extremely stressful for an animal to be moved around to multiple locations. However, we understand that situations change and it may become necessary to discontinue fostering an animal.

We request that a foster parent provides as much notice as possible (preferably 2 weeks) so that we can find an alternative foster home. If it is an emergency, we ask that you call the foster coordinator as soon as possible.