



ANIMAL RESCUE OF THE ROCKIES

Foster Care Guidelines

“Saving one animal won’t change the world . . . but it will change the world for that one animal.”

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Introduction & Required Training Classes

Thank you for becoming a foster care volunteer for ARR. Love of animals brings us together and unites us in a common mission. These guidelines are designed to clarify Animal Rescue of the Rockies' (ARR's) philosophy and the procedures by which all volunteers operate when providing foster care for an ARR pet. This manual covers the process from placement in foster care through follow up after adoption placement. Each animal, foster home and adoptive home is unique. There will be new situations where flexibility is necessary.

Please read this guide carefully and keep it handy for reference. If you have any questions, please direct them to your Foster Coordinator. Each stage of the adoption process has guidelines listed in this manual. If any part of this process is not clear, please don't hesitate to ask for assistance. With each foster and adoption, you will gain experience and knowledge. Mistakes happen, and they provide excellent new learning opportunities. Lessons learned and shared can benefit all of us in ARR.

The Purpose of Foster Care

The purpose of foster care is to provide a safe home for rescue pets until the right forever home is found.

During foster care, the caregiver can observe the pet's temperament in a home environment to determine if he or she can safely live with a family and to help the pet learn the necessary things to make him a more adoptable pet. In the case of foster dogs, this often means brushing up on the dog's basic good citizenship and helping the dog to become the well-mannered pet he should be in his new home. Please ask for assistance if you need help with any training needs.

While a pet is in foster care, ARR will ensure that all medical requirements for adoption placement are met (veterinary exam, vaccines, heartworm test, microchip, and spay/neuter).

Note that A.R.R. requires all foster parents to bring their foster pet(s) to at least one A.R.R. adoption event per month, preferably more. This is the best way to gain exposure for your foster pet and find a good home as quickly as possible!

Will I Be a Good Foster Home?

Some people are reluctant to foster because they're afraid of getting too attached to their foster pet(s). It's true that letting go of a foster pet isn't easy. Many foster homes do turn into permanent homes, which is why rescue groups are always looking for new foster homes!

Helping a homeless pet become confident, happy, and well socialized is one of the most rewarding efforts you'll ever experience. The role of a foster is to bridge the gap between a shelter and a permanent home. The approved families who adopt our pets are terrific. You might wish they would adopt you too! Many of our adoptive families are so grateful for the work you did for their new pet that they will stay in touch for years to come with holiday cards and emails.

Transport Safety Requirements

*Note to fosters & volunteers: If you need supplies for transporting a pet, please let your foster coordinator know **before** transport occurs.*

Statistics show that 95% of pets who aren't wearing identification are never found after they're lost. All ARR foster pets need to be properly identified with both an ARR I.D. tag and a microchip.

ARR receives several calls each month from people who have found a pet wearing an ARR I.D. tag – so it does work! This is the quickest and easiest way for pets to be returned to their foster and adoptive homes.

Crating pets is the safest way to transport them to avoid injuries or escapes.

Transporting can be a stressful experience for pets, and even those who are normally calm can panic and escape from a leash or a vehicle. To ensure the safety of our pets as they are being transported or picked up from shelters, the following procedures need to be followed:

1. Each pet must have a collar with an ARR I.D. tag placed on it before leaving a shelter building or when being picked up during a transport. Those of you who transport regularly should keep a supply of collars in your vehicle with ARR I.D. tags already attached.
2. Small pets such as cats and small dogs must be placed in a crate before leaving a building or vehicle and should travel in their crate inside a vehicle. If potty breaks are needed, be sure the pet is securely leashed before allowing it outside the crate. Keep the pet in the crate until it is inside the destination home or building.
3. Larger dogs may be led to a vehicle using two slip leads or an EZ Walk harness. Two slip leads will lessen the chance that the dog can get away if it escapes from one lead.
4. If larger dogs are transported in a vehicle without a crate, secure them in this manner:
 - Tie a knot in the leash and place it on the outside of one window.
 - Roll the window up all the way, thus securing the dog's leash.
 - Now when you open the door, the dog won't be able to jump down and run off.
5. When transporting more than one large dog without crates, secure each dog's leash to a window in this manner, keeping them far enough apart so they can't reach each other to interact inside your vehicle.
6. As soon as possible, get the pet microchipped if it hasn't been already.

Thank you for working with us to ensure the safety of all pets in our care!

Preparing for the Arrival of Your Foster Dog

If you will be fostering a dog, pick up and put out of reach any chew bones and toys that could be considered food or high-value treats. You need to know more about your foster before you introduce these items. We recommend that you keep a spray bottle handy filled with water or a solution of 75% water, 25% vinegar to stop undesirable behavior.

Crating your foster dog is essential training and should be started immediately. If you don't have a crate, the Foster or Rescue Coordinator will try to provide one to you or will arrange for you to get one. These crates are the property of ARR and should be returned to us when you are not fostering. If you wish to purchase your own crate, that is great. (The crates ARR has in stock are usually donated and aren't always the best crates. We often pick them up at garage sales.) If you see any crates for sale that are under \$25, let a coordinator know and we'll see if we can't buy it and add it to our supply. If you have an old blanket, you may want to place it in the bottom of the crate. Some dogs like this, some don't. Most like a very nice, cushy bed to lie on. A folded up comforter or a dog bed can work well. Costco usually has dog beds for under \$20.00.

Your foster dog will need food and water dishes. ARR has a few sets of these, but it is easier if you have your own.

Baby gates are good tools to help you keep an eye on your new charge. During the first few days, it is wise to keep a very close watch on your foster. Baby gates provide a way to make your house smaller and more manageable.

Another useful idea for younger or small-to-midsize dogs is to use an old baby playpen with the flooring removed. It can be placed directly on top of a sheet of plastic and newspapers/towels to make a safe containment area for the pet.

Your foster dog should arrive with a collar and an A.R.R. I.D. tag. If your dog is not already microchipped, you'll need to arrange to have this done asap through your Foster Coordinator.

Preparing for the Arrival of Your Foster Cat

Your foster cat will need at least one litter box and its own food and water dish, preferably placed in a quiet, private area, away from your home's everyday activities. A soft bed and a "hiding" spot such as a cardboard box turned on its side with a towel or blanket on the bottom can give your foster cat a feeling of security and safety. We recommend confining your foster cat to a small area of your home at first and gradually introduce her to the rest of the house. A spare bedroom, laundry room, or bathroom will fit the bill perfectly.

You can expect your foster cat to be shy or even scared at first. Cats do not like change, and any type of "newness" is stressful for them. Some cats will hide beneath furniture or in any tight space if they feel threatened. Give your foster cat time to adjust to its new surroundings, and it will eventually feel safe enough to come out and interact with you and your household. This can take anywhere from a day to several weeks, depending on the cat's personality.

Introducing the Foster Pet to Your Family

It is a good idea to plan carefully before introducing the foster pet to your home and those living there. Many animals are territorial and may respond differently to the introduction of new animals. You know your pets best, so if they need to be introduced to the newest household

member on neutral territory, plan to provide it. For dogs, meeting on the sidewalk or in a park is a good idea and is generally better than the front or back yard. Cats should usually be isolated from your other pets at first in a separate area, as mentioned above.

Plan to have someone on hand such as an adult family member, friend, or neighbor to help you when you introduce your foster dog to its new (temporary) home and family.

Talk to family members beforehand about the new foster and what they should expect. Children especially should be made aware that the foster might initially behave differently than their own dog or cat. The foster does not know them and may be shy or very boisterous – every pet is different. Children also need to know that they play a part in the fostering experience – what they see and experience are very important. As with any new non-human addition to your family, you should monitor your children's interaction with the foster pet at all times.

Introducing the Foster to Your Home

- ◆ Have all dogs on leashes and introduce them one at a time.
- ◆ Have someone on hand to help you with the leashes, etc.
- ◆ Keep your foster dog on a leash when introducing it to your other pets. Dogs are natural hunters, so cats, rabbits and birds may all look like prey. If you introduce your new foster dog to a 'prey' animal and the dog goes 'on point' – stops dead in its tracks with a very intense stare at the animal, and maybe lifting a paw, you will want to remove both animals from the situation immediately.
- ◆ Observe carefully how the foster pet responds to your children.
- ◆ Discuss with family members their observations and reactions to the pet.

Feeding Your Foster Pet

Some fosters come into rescue with a known diet. In these situations, continuing with that diet and slowly switching to the diet you would like to feed is important. Some dogs have sensitive stomachs, so a slow transition in food is advised to avoid intestinal upset. (You don't want to get up in the middle of the night to clean up a mess!) We recommend a slow transition with 1/2 of the dog's original food and 1/2 of the new food. Try that combination for up to a week to make sure there are no problems. If no problems are encountered, move to a combination of 3/4 of the new food and 1/4 of the old food for a week. Continue with this process until the original food is weaned out.

Cats can be finicky eaters or voracious eaters – it depends on the cat. Generally speaking, cats adjust more easily to new types of food than dogs.

Some pets will come in to rescue overweight; some may come in malnourished. If you have a question about whether your foster is over or under weight, please let the Foster Coordinator know your concern, and advice will be given to provide the appropriate amount of food and exercise for pets that do not come into rescue at a healthy weight.

While ARR does not have restrictions on what brand of food must be fed to foster dogs, we do recommend a few things. The first is that corn-free food and treats be given to the foster dogs in your care. Corn is a common allergen. We also recommend at least two feedings per day. Never free-feed a foster pet, and never feed one large meal per day. This can cause a potentially life-threatening condition called bloat in dogs.

ARR has foods that it can recommend. If you are interested in learning more, please let the foster coordinator know and one of the volunteers will discuss options that have worked for other dogs in rescue and in permanent homes.

What NOT to Do with Your New Foster Pet

- ◆ **Off Leash Dog Parks** – This is never a good idea until you know how a foster dog responds to your commands and other people/dogs/situations. It will take time to get to know your foster dog and for it to listen and respond to you.
- ◆ **Off Leash Outside** – Your foster dog may not know your voice or respond to the “come” command. Because ARR is ultimately responsible for a foster dog, do not allow the dog to be out of your control or off leash unless you are in a securely fenced area outdoors. You don’t want to be running panicked after an escapee in heavy traffic or in a public area.
- ◆ **Cats Need to Be Indoors Only** – Never let your foster cat outdoors for any reason, even if you think it will be alright if they’re supervised in your backyard. Cats can easily jump a 6-foot fence, and once they escape, it’s difficult to get them back. Cats are subject to dog attacks, coyote attacks, and many other dangers outdoors.
- ◆ **PetSmart** – Along the same lines as the off-leash parks, pet supply stores that allow other dogs are never a good idea until you know how the dog responds to your commands and other people/dogs/situations. It will take time to get to know your new dog and get your dog to listen and respond to you.
- ◆ **Alone in the Backyard** – Dogs need to feel secure with their new foster family and home. Leaving a foster dog unattended in the backyard may make the dog feel abandoned or neglected. The dog may get bored and become destructive. Some dogs feel the urge to wander in search of something to do or might chase a squirrel/cat/bird out of the yard. The dog needs to be familiar with his/her surroundings and this takes time. Please supervise your foster dog in your backyard until the dog feels comfortable being left alone or with your family dog(s).

Walk your dog through the neighborhood to familiarize it with the area. **Should your foster pet get lost, notify A.R.R. immediately by calling 970-389-4277.**

- ◆ **Roam the House** – Dogs and cats need to be shown where things are located in the foster home. This means that you need to show the pet where food, water, crate and bathroom areas are and reinforce these areas with words and treats. A pet left to roam the house, whether you are there or not, is never a good idea. The pet is not familiar enough with this new territory and new rules. When you are not present in the house, the pet should be confined to a safe area (see "crating" below).
- ◆ **Grooming** – Although your foster dog or cat might need grooming, most will not be comfortable enough to allow this. So, during the first few days, refrain from baths, nail trims and ear cleaning. Wait until you’re certain the pet trusts you enough. Simple brushing should be approached with caution and positive reinforcement (treats & calm, soothing words).
- ◆ **Free-feeding** – Sometimes rescue pets have been deprived of food. Do not fall into the temptation to free-feed them. Some larger dogs are susceptible to a condition called bloat or Gastric Dilatation Volvulus (GDV). This is where the stomach twists on itself and without prompt diagnosis and surgery, the dog will die a painful death. The best action is to feed

your foster dog small portions two or three times a day (1 to 2 cups per serving, depending on the age/activity level of the dog).

- ◆ **Introducing New Food** – If you know the brand of dog food your foster dog was fed, continue to use that food exclusively for at least a few days. The stress of a new home is enough to upset a dog's stomach, so keep them on what they know. If, after a few days, stools are solid and the dog appears to be in good health, slowly introduce the new food . We recommend $\frac{1}{4}$ of the new with $\frac{3}{4}$ of the old for a couple of days. Then half and half, and finally $\frac{1}{4}$ of the old and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the new. If all is still well, you can switch over to the new food completely.
- ◆ **Crating** – Even if you know for sure your foster dog is crate trained, do not start by putting the dog in the crate for the full eight hours you are at work. It is important to take crate training slowly to avoid frustrating you or the dog. If you can put the dog in the crate for five minutes while you get the mail, that is a perfect start. Then try 30 minutes while you run to the store, and so on. Make sure that the dog will not harm himself or escape from the crate before leaving for an entire day. Crating is not for every dog.

If the dog is not a puppy and has not been crated before, he may not react well to crating. Some foster parents like to use baby gates to confine the dog to a kitchen or other area that is not carpeted. Another option for small- to mid-size dogs is to find an old play pen (perhaps at a second hand shop) and remove the bottom. The rails of the playpen can then be placed on your tile or linoleum floor with newspaper (for untrained puppies) or blankets for house-trained dogs.

The Denver Dumb Friends League has some very good articles on crate training both puppies and adult dogs. Visit their site for the articles (<http://www.ddfl.org>).

- ◆ **Rule Breaking** – As wonderful as it is to have a foster dog that was in need or didn't have the best life, you will not want to start your relationship by breaking the rules you plan to live by in your home. A dog will count his experiences as the rules. For instance, if you say, "Just tonight we'll let our foster baby sleep on the bed," it will be very difficult to get your bed back to yourselves. If you start out with how you expect the dog to act in your home, it will be a much smoother and easier transition for the dog. Within the first few days, they will push all of the rules. It is their nature to see how far they can push and it is bred into them to learn from that experience.

Record Keeping While in Foster Care

Start a file folder for the foster pet (they may already have one) with all of the paperwork you receive. You should also be aware of the pet's medical needs so you can make plans. If you are not sure of the documentation, ask the Foster or Rescue Coordinator for assistance to interpret it.

Any heartworm preventive given to a foster dog or any type of medication given to a foster pet should be noted in the file along with invoices from any vet visit. This will be given to the adopting family and always stays with the pet. If a foster dog is in your care for over a month, ARR can provide heartworm preventive if needed.

If you are going on vacation, please notify the Foster or Rescue Coordinator well ahead of time so other arrangements can be made to house the pet until you return. The foster pet's paperwork goes with the pet until you return.

Obedience Training for Foster Dogs

ARR asks foster care providers to walk a foster dog to evaluate leash manners and their response to direction and control. If the dog learns the simple skills of sit, down, and recall, it will be very helpful for its new adopting family and helps to make the dog a better citizen. Any head start we can give them will make the chances for a successful adoption higher. ARR uses only positive reinforcement when training. Most dogs are highly treat motivated, so that is a good starting place.

When teaching the basics (sit, down, heel, and come), use short training sessions. When leash walking, if the dog is proving to be too strong, a head halter or no-pull harness may be needed to help teach the dog how to heel and not pull on the lead. ARR prefers not to use slip chains (aka choke collars). In the hands of someone who is not a professional trainer, these collars can prove devastating to the dogs. ARR has volunteers available for telephone or home visit training consultations. In the case of difficult behaviors, ARR works with several professional trainers that we will recommend.

General Veterinary Requirements for Adoption Placement

Before foster pets are ready for placement in adoptive homes, they need the following veterinary services.

Dogs: A heartworm test should have been done within the past six months for all dogs 8 months or older. The dog should be on heartworm preventive during summer months. Dogs should be current on all vaccines. Bordetella should have been administered within six months of placement. Distemper/Parvo should have been administered within one year of placement (unless it is an older dog on a three-year schedule). Rabies vaccination should have been administered within one or three years of placement (depending upon the type of rabies vaccine the dog has on record). Leptospirosis is becoming more and more common in the Denver metro area, and this vaccine can be administered if the veterinarian feels it is necessary.

Cats: A rabies vaccination is required. Additionally, cats should have received FVRCP vaccinations and should have tested negatively for Feline Leukemia and FIV.

All ARR pets placed for adoption will be microchipped, and the chip number will be entered on the adoption contract. All ARR pets placed for adoption will be spayed or neutered. If the pet is not healthy enough to undergo a spay/neuter surgery, the contract will state a date when a recheck on the pet's condition must be performed.

The ears should be clean, the nails clipped, and the pet brushed or washed, if needed.

ARR Veterinarians

ARR has working relationships with several rescue-friendly veterinary clinics. Please have your Foster Coordinator approve any visit to a veterinarian **prior to making an appointment**. We cannot reimburse fosters for expenses incurred without an approved appointment.

If an accident or medical emergency occurs with a foster animal while you are fostering, contact your Foster Coordinator immediately.

Critical Emergencies:

Denver Area:

VCA Alameda East 303-366-2639
9770 E. Alameda Ave. Open 24 hours
Denver CO 80247

Northside Emergency Pet Clinic 303-900-0546
945 West 124th Avenue Open 24 hours
Westminster CO 80234

**Columbine Animal Hospital
& Emergency** 303-979-4040
5546 W. Canyon Trail Emergencies: 24 hours
Littleton, CO 80128

Animal Urgent Care 303-420-7387
7851 Indiana Street Thursday: Opens at 5:00 pm
Arvada, CO 80007 Tuesday at 8:00 am (Open round the clock
(303) 420-7387 until Wednesday at 8 p.m.)

Northern Colorado:

Colorado State University (CSU)
300 West Drake Road
Fort Collins CO 80523
(970) 297-5000
Open 24 hours

Four Seasons Veterinary Specialist
4120 Clydesdale Pkwy.
Loveland CO 80538
(970) 800-1106
Open 24 hours

Routine Care – Denver Area

Downtown Animal Care Center 303-595-3561
1041 Galapago St. Hours of Operation:
Denver, CO 80204 M-F 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. appointments
Sun 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Vaccination Clinic

Animal Central 303-469-7387
8308 Church Ranch Blvd. Hours of Operation:
Westminster, CO 80021 M-F 6:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sat & Sun 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Emergencies: Fri. & Sat. open till midnight
Sundays till 10:00 p.m.

Animal Care Center of Aurora 303-693-6640
18511 E. Hampden Ave. #104 Hours of Operation:
Aurora, CO 80013 M-F 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Closed weekends

Columbine Animal Hospital & Emergency

5546 W. Canyon Trail
Littleton, CO 80128

303-979-4040

Hours of Operation:

M-F 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sat 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Sun 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Emergencies: 24 hrs.

VCA Aspenwood Animal Hospital

1290 S. Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80246

303-757-5646

Hours of Operation:

M-F 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sat 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (closed Sundays)

Caring Hands Vet Clinic

13741 Colorado Blvd.
Corner of 136th & Colorado
Thornton, CO 80602

303-451-7387

Hours of Operation:

M-F 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sat. 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sun Urgent Care 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Although we don't receive a rescue discount, Broadview Animal Clinic in Aurora has lower prices than some other vet clinics:

Broadview Animal Clinic

10330 E. Evans Ave.
Denver, CO 80247

303-755-1424

Hours of Operation:

M-F 7:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. appointments & walk-ins

Sat. 8:00 a.m. – Noon appointments

Sat. 8:00 am. – 11:30 walk-ins

Routine Care - Loveland/Fort Collins Area

Fort Collins Cat Rescue & Spay & Neuter Clinic

2321 E. Mulberry St.
Fort Collins, CO 80524

970-484-8516

Hours of Operation:

Vary – check online calendar at www.fccrsnc.org

Loveland Veterinary Clinic

1403 Monroe Ave.
Loveland, CO 80538

970-667-3252

Hours of Operation:

M-F 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Sat 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Closed Sundays

Fossil Ridge Animal Hospital

4848 S. College Ave.
Fort Collins, CO 80525

970-797-2322

Hours of Operation:

Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tues. by appointment only

Thurs 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sat. 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. and walk ins

For illness/injuries only:

Advanced Animal Care of Colorado

1530 Riverside Avenue
Fort Collin, CO 80524

970-493-3333

Hours of Operation:

M-F 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sat 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Closed Sundays

Routine Care – Boulder Area

Lyons Vet Clinic
412 High St.
Lyons, CO 80540

303-823-6767
Hours of Operation:
Mon 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Tues 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wed 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Thurs 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Fri 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sat 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Closed Sundays

Routine Care & Emergencies – Summit County, Park County

Breckenridge Animal Clinic
11072 Hwy. 9, Suite 104
Breckenridge, CO 80424

970-453-0821
Hours of Operation:
M-F 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Sat 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Alma Animal Clinic

719-836-3127 (Call for Hours)

Park County Animal Hospital
1161 Bullet Rd.
Fairplay, CO 80440

719-836-1717
Hours of Operation:
M-F 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Sat. 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Emergencies 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. 7 days a week

Routine Care – Colorado Springs

Bijou Animal Hospital
123 Swope Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

(719) 471-4457
Hours of Operation:
M-Thurs 7:30 am – 7:00 pm
Fri 7:30 am – 5:30 pm
Sat 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Routine Care – Castle Rock:

Brekke Veterinary Clinic
856 Happy Canyon Rd., Ste. 120
Castle Rock, CO 80108

303-474-4260
Hours of Operation:
M, W, F 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Tues/Thurs 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Sat 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Closed Sundays

In addition to the basic medical requirements for adoption mentioned above, there may be other medical needs that arise. **If your foster pet seems ill, contact your Foster or Rescue Coordinator immediately.** Common medical issues are kennel cough, ear infections, urinary tract infections, worms, and digestive problems. Medical conditions other than these will require discussions with the ARR committee before treatment may be provided.

If a pet has surgery during foster care and is subsequently placed in an adoptive home, ARR will bring the pet to one of our preferred veterinary clinics for the removal of stitches and any follow up care needed.

If the pet's new owner assumes responsibility for follow up care, the requirements become a condition of the adoption contract. ARR will follow up to ensure all requirements are met. If the foster or adoptive family offers to pay for veterinary expenses, this enables ARR to help even more homeless pets.

Veterinary Expense Reimbursements

You will receive a reimbursement check from ARR **ONLY IF** you received **PRIOR** authorization for a veterinary expense.

If for some reason you pay up front for veterinary care, email a copy of your itemized invoice and receipt to: arrcolorado@gmail.com

Keeping a Foster Pet's Current Name

When the pet already has a name or has been named at a shelter, the name is not to be changed during the foster care period, as this can cause a lot of confusion. The pet is identified on our websites, veterinary records, and final adoption records by its given name. Many times pets come to ARR without a known name. Generally, they are named at the point where they are evaluated since we use that name immediately to communicate to the group and on our websites. If you would like to rename a pet that has already been named by rescue, please consult with the Foster Coordinator to ensure that the new name isn't already in use by another pet. We would like to reduce the changes for the pets as much as possible. Many times new adopters like to rename a pet anyway.

If you have a list of great pet names, please forward them to us. We are always in need of new ideas!

Dogs with Behavior Problems

Rescue is a safe environment for assessing and retraining, thus giving the animal better prospects for a successful adoption. If you see any behavior that makes you uncomfortable, please contact the foster or rescue coordinator immediately - even if it is just to discuss behavior and get a second opinion. In some cases, we may need to move the dog to another foster home that may be better able to make the assessment. For instance, if the potential adopting family has children and the foster home does not and the animal has not been exposed to children, we may move him or her to a foster home with children for assessment. We must be sure, to the best of our ability, that the pet is tested and that we can make a recommendation based on the response.

As a foster care provider, you should recognize that some that we will try to save may be likely to be a liability to the welfare of people or animals. We will not place a pet for adoption if we think there is a possibility of aggressive behavior.

Cats with Behavior Problems

To avoid potential behavior problems for your foster cat, it's best to keep the cat in a small area such as a bedroom or laundry room for a few days to a few weeks, depending on the cat's temperament. Some cats are very shy and scared and will feel safer in an enclosed area. Others have the necessary bravado to begin exploring your home immediately. Your Foster Coordinator will advise you on the foster cat's sociability.

If your foster cat hides beneath furniture or refuses to come out and socialize at first, don't worry. Eventually it will feel more comfortable and you'll be able to interact with it. Observe whether or not the cat is eating and using the litter box while it's alone. Most shy cats will eat when no one else is watching!

Don't force yourself on a shy cat – let it warm up to you and your family gradually. Cats have to make their own way with social interactions.

It's always best to introduce a cat to any current pets slowly and gradually. Some cats get along great with other cats and some don't. Likewise, some cats get along with dogs but not with other cats. Expect some hissing, growling, and raised fur when a foster cat first meets your current pets. As long as a real fight doesn't break out, the cat will eventually learn that your pets don't pose a threat.

If your pets do try to chase the foster cat, this is a sign that you need to separate them until they get more accustomed to each others' presence in the house.

Keep a squirt bottle filled with water handy to break up any tension between the foster cat and your pets.

Cats are naturally inclined to use their litter boxes. If your foster cat is eliminating outside the litter box, it could mean one of several things. Try placing the litter box in a quiet, private area. Your foster cat should have its own litter box instead of sharing one with your own cats, at least in the beginning. Sometimes cats prefer a different type of litter. Experiment to see if one works better than another.

A urinary tract infection can also cause cats to eliminate outside their litter box. If you see your foster cat straining to pee or observe any blood in its urine, please make a vet appointment right away. Male cats can get urinary tract blockages that can be fatal if not cared for immediately!

Reporting Behaviors and Problems

The following are examples of behaviors and problems that must be reported to the foster or rescue coordinator. If you observe other behaviors, problems with the pet's health or adjustment to family life, please consult with the foster or rescue coordinator.

- ◆ Growling, snapping, biting and raising hackles (hair on neck and rump) to humans or other animals.
- ◆ Incessant barking, jumping up on people, nervous chewing, urinating or defecating in the house, chasing cats, or any problems you believe would be hard for a new adopting family to accept.
- ◆ Any medical problems such as ear infections, skin conditions, kennel cough, lack of appetite, lethargy, excessive thirst, etc.

Dog Fights

Breaking up dogfights is not something that happens often, but you never know when you might be faced with it and need to know what to do.

Food can antagonize dogs so that is the first place to watch for issues. Feed your foster dog in its crate or in a separate room – this will keep it separate from your dog and help to prevent fighting over food dishes. A spray bottle with water can be a first offense when breaking up a fight. Try to spray both dogs in the face with the water bottle – don't get in the way of teeth and avoid being knocked around. If outside, a bucket of water or a hose can also be useful.

Never try to grab either dog's collar. The dog's adrenaline is going and its first instinct is to stay in control. Your hand can become a threat to that loss of control. Your hand close to a dog's mouth is a very vulnerable target. In these circumstances, dogs are quick and you are likely to get bitten. The dog won't even realize it is biting you – he's just focused on his adversary.

As a last resort, if you need to immobilize a dog that is the aggressor, get behind him and pick up the hind legs and keep lifting until the arch in the back prevents any strength to the head and neck area. Remember that a dog in a fight is not thinking normally. Go for the legs and lift up as quickly as possible. In this position, a dog generally cannot get the head around to you.

Fostering a Heartworm Positive Dog

Many "special needs" pets don't leave shelters alive. By opening your heart and home to a pet that needs extra care and attention, you're providing a very valuable life-saving service.

When a dog is heartworm positive and undergoing treatment, you're not likely to see its true energy level or even personality until it starts to feel better.

There are two typical ways to treat heartworm – the normal (quick – four weeks) method and the slow method (eight weeks). Care of the dog during both of these treatment types is the same – keep it crated at all times except for leash walking to do its business. Some dogs will not do well in a crate – it's more harmful to crate them than to keep them quiet out of the crate, but these are exceptions. The best way to look at this is that it is four or eight weeks out of the rest of the dog's life.

- ❖ The quick treatment is done over two days – immiticide shots are administered both days and the dog is then crated for four weeks.
- ❖ The slow treatment is done the same way except that the first immiticide shot is administered on day one, the dog is crated for four weeks and then the second immiticide shot is administered.
- ❖ At the end of both types of treatment, the dog must be given ivermectin to finish his treatment.
- ❖ There are stages you can expect to see as the dog recovers from heartworm: The first couple of days, the dog will feel great and will generally be bouncy and full of energy if that is what he was like prior to heartworm treatment.
- ❖ On day three of the treatment, you'll notice a change in the demeanor of the dog – he'll seem to be in pain and may circle around and not be able to get comfortable. This is normal. This should disappear in three or four days. You may also notice some coughing and lack of appetite. This is normal as well.
- ❖ Please let us know if the dog stops drinking water and starts to become dehydrated.

- ❖ If the dog develops a croupy cough and has noticeable trouble breathing, he needs to go to the vet. Please contact your Foster Coordinator to determine which vet he must go to. This type of coughing and breathing is generally caused by the worms breaking up and if not treated can lead to pneumonia. Proper treatment as determined by one of our vets is essential for the dog's survival. This type of cough can also signal kennel cough. Look for a runny, snotty nose to go along with this. Again, the dog should receive medical treatment.
- ❖ At the 10-day mark, the dog is past the critical stage of the treatment. However, this does not mean the dog can come out of its crate. He must be crated for the full time of the treatment. If you're sitting quietly, you may have the dog out with you but it should be leashed and kept close to you. Please use your judgment on this.

Once the dog is over the four or eight-week treatment, he may start exercising. However, it is essential to gradually build up his tolerance for this. His muscles have atrophied from being crated and his heart has been weakened by the heartworms. You can equate it to being bedridden for a month and then someone wanting you to go out and run a marathon. By beginning with an exercise level that is too intensive, you subject the dog to potential muscle/ligament injury and straining the heart. Common sense is the order of the day here. Walk the dog for 15 or 20 minutes on a leash and also allow it some playtime with your dog. You can gradually increase this as time goes on.

During the heartworm treatment, you will need to give the dog 1/2 a buffered aspirin twice a day. This may be increased to 1 buffered aspirin twice a day. The aspirin thins the dog's blood and makes it easier for the worms to dissolve and leave the body.

Fostering a Pet Recovering from Surgery

When you receive your foster dog right after surgery, you'll also receive a list of instructions. Please follow these instructions. If the surgeon advises you to crate the dog for six weeks with only potty breaks (on leash) allowed, then please follow his instructions.

You may notice some lethargy for a couple of days – this is normal. The dog is recovering from the effects of the anesthetic. You may also notice the dog will not have a bowel movement – this is typical as well. As long as the dog is drinking sufficient water, nature will take care of the dog in a couple of days. Please administer the medication you may receive as instructed by the surgeon. The surgeon will advise if and when a follow up appointment with him is needed (for bandage changes, x-rays, etc.). If you can't take the dog, please let us know and we'll make arrangements to get the dog there.

It's very important to follow the surgeon's instructions even if the dog is not happy in his crate. He could reinjure the surgical site, which would mean more surgery. Not only is this hard on the dog but it also increases the expense to Rescue.

If the dog needs an Elizabethan collar, check with rescue as we may have extras not being used.

Adoption Procedures

Your foster or adoption coordinator will take care of all transport, paperwork, agreements, and adoption fees needed.

If you have a friend, family member, or know someone who is interested in adopting your foster pet, please ask them to fill out an ARR Adoption Application online at www.animalrescueoftherockies.org

When ARR receives an adoption application for your foster pet, your foster or adoption coordinator will review the application and, if all looks good, schedule a home visit for the potential adopter. (If you are available to help do a home visit, please let your foster or adoption coordinator know.)

Not everyone who fills out an adoption application is approved for adoption. ARR is careful about who we adopt our pets to, as we want to make sure it's a good fit for the pet and for the adopter. We allow families to "Foster to Adopt" for two weeks if they want to make sure the pet is a good fit for their home. In this case, they fill out a Foster to Adopt Agreement. If after the two-week trial period they decide to adopt the pet, they need to fill out an Adoption Agreement at that time.

Your adoption coordinator will contact you to let you know the details for adoption day. ARR's adoption coordinator will arrange for transport of the pet to its new home, along with any necessary documentation and adoption fees.

Our adoption fees vary and are posted on our website. These fees allow us to ensure all dogs have current vaccinations, are microchipped, heartworm free and neutered or spayed. The adopter must provide payment for the pet at the time of adoption and must have a completed Adoption Agreement signed and initialed. Payment can be via PayPal on our website or in the form of a check, money order, or cash.

The adopting family gets a copy of the Adoption Agreement and Veterinary Records.

Saying Goodbye

We know this is the hardest part of fostering - saying goodbye to a pet you've grown to love. Knowing your pet is going to a new loving home helps ease the process, but it's still difficult. If you would like to hear from the new adoptive family, by all means ask them to let you know how your foster pet is making the transition!

Most pets adapt fairly readily to their new homes, and just as they became part of your household, they will quickly adjust to life in their new forever home.

You've helped save a life by fostering, and by caring for this foster pet, you've allowed it the chance to enjoy the good life it deserves!

And remember – more homeless pets are in need of foster homes every day, so we encourage you to consider fostering another pet as soon as you're ready!