



DOG FOSTER PROGRAM FOSTER COMMUNICATIONS

DOG FOSTER ADOPTION PROCESS EMAIL

Subject: ADOPTION PROCESS - [INSERT APPLICABLE SITUATION]

Hello APA! Foster Parent,

Thank you for being an Austin Pets Alive! Foster Parent! Because you are a crucial part of getting your foster dog adopted, it's very important that you understand our adoption process, which is described in this email. Please make sure you read it carefully and let us know if you have any questions.

We also want to introduce you to our Dog Foster Adoption (DFA) Team. We are your ongoing contact for everything adoption related. We are responsible for processing adoption applications and scheduling adopters' interviews for your foster dog. **Please note it is very important that you DO NOT send adopters directly to one of our shelters - Town Lake Animal Center (TLAC) or Tarrytown (TT).** If adopters arrive at TLAC or TT without a scheduled interview, they will be turned away and asked to contact the DFA Team for assistance.

Please also familiarize yourself again with this [Dog Foster Team Contact List](#), which lists the most important APA! contacts for you as a foster parent. Please keep this somewhere you can easily reference it. You can email any of the listed teams directly for assistance.

ADOPTION PROCESS PROTOCOL

[INSTRUCTIONS TO DFA TEAM: CHOOSE THE APPLICABLE SITUATION IN THIS BRACKET:

Your foster pup is available for adoption.

OR

Your foster pup is available for adoption with a Behavior Consult (BC). This means that your foster pup has some specific behavior quirks that need extra attention, and any potential adopter must meet with the Behavior Team as part of the adoption interview to be sure that the potential adopter fully understands your foster pup's behavior history and future behavior needs. A Behavior Team member should have already spoken with you about your foster pup's particular behavior issues before you took him or her home. If you were not counseled about this when you picked up your foster pup or you are not aware of your foster pup's behavior issues, please email the Behavior Team and copy the DFA Team. Please ask specifically about your foster pup's ability to go to adoption sites and events, to be around other dogs, and to be around children.

OR

Your foster pup is available for adoption with a Medical Consult (MC). This means that the Medical Team is still monitoring your foster pup's medical issues, and any potential adopter must meet with the Medical Team as part of the adoption interview to be sure that the potential adopter fully understands your foster pup's medical history and future medical needs. A Medical Team member should have already spoken with you about your foster pup's medical issues before you took him or her home. If you were not counseled about this when you picked up your foster pup or you are not aware of your foster pup's medical issues, please email the Dog Foster Care Team and copy the DFA Team.

OR

DFA: IF THE FOSTER PUP IS BOTH A BC AND MC, ADD BOTH PARAGRAPHS ABOVE.]

Below are the steps that you need to understand in order to comply with Austin Pets Alive!'s dog foster adoption policies. Please review the following steps carefully and let us know if you have any questions or concerns about the adoption process.

STEP 1. MARKETING YOUR FOSTER DOG: *THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. PLEASE DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP.*

Foster Dog Online Profiles and Facebook:

- Please visit your foster dog's profile page by entering his/her name in the search field here: <https://www.austinpetsalive.org/adopt/dogs/>. Read the profile, and if it needs to be updated, email your proposed changes or new photos/video to the Dog Marketing Team (dog.marketing@austinpetsalive.org). Keeping your foster dog's profile current is very important in attracting adopters. Please note that if your foster dog is not yet available for adoption, they will not appear on APA's website.
- If your foster dog is not yet on APA!'s website, please submit at least 3 good photos to the Dog Marketing Team (and preferably a video), and please complete this form: [Dog Bio Questionnaire](#) so that the Dog Marketing Team can write a bio for your foster dog.
- Always copy the Dog Foster Adoption Advocate (DFAA) at: dog-foster-advocate@austinpetsalive.org on any correspondence with the Dog Marketing Team so that the DFAA can track your foster dog's marketing efforts.
- The information you provide to the Dog Marketing Team is critical towards the success of finding the *right* forever home for your pup.
- At any time, you can send any pictures / video / updated profile information and/or ask any marketing questions directly to the Dog Marketing Team or DFAA.

- If you use Facebook, please “like” our [Foster Dog Adoptions Facebook Page](#) and use this page to market your foster dog. Please also use these [Dog Foster Social Media Marketing Templates](#) to help you with marketing your foster dog on social media.

Adoption Sites & Events: If your foster dog can go to APA!’s adoption sites (typically located at area Petcos) or events, you will receive a weekly email, asking you to reserve a spot for your foster dog. If you do NOT receive one of our weekly adoption site emails and you want to bring your foster pup, please email the Dog Foster Events Team at dog-foster-events@austinpetsalive.org. **WE ASK THAT YOU ACTIVELY MARKET YOUR FOSTER PUP BY TAKING HIM/HER TO EITHER ONE OF OUR WEEKLY ADOPTION SITES AND/OR ONE OF OUR MANY EVENTS AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH UNTIL THEY FIND THEIR FOREVER HOME.**

STEP 2. RESPONDING TO POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

- You will receive inquiries from potential adopters via the APA! Adopt Line at adopt@austinpetsalive.org. **Please respond to each potential adopter within 24 hours.** Reply to adopters in the order you receive the inquiries (keep a log for you records).
- Before scheduling a M&G, please start a dialog with the potential adopter; ask for the characteristics that they are looking for in a dog and share with them some of your pup's unique traits. This is also a good time to let any potential adopters know about any major medical and/or behavioral issues and/or any of your pup’s special needs (e.g., needs a home without stairs, needs a low-traffic home). It helps to have a canned email prepared to send to potential adopters. Below is an example of what you *might* want to send to potential adopters:

Thank you for inquiring about my foster dog NAME. He/she is so sweet / so cute / so happy. He/she loves to play ball / lay on the couch and watch TV / go out for walks. He/she is great with my kids / dogs / cats and can be left alone / crated when you are not around. We are still working on potty training / crate training / walking on a leash / shyness but making great progress. Can you tell me what you are looking for in a puppy? Do you have any kids (ages) / other dogs / cats? How long will the pup be left alone during the day/night? Where will the puppy be kept during the day/night?

- If it seems like a good match, please arrange a M&G as soon as possible (no later than 5 days after the inquiry). **You should schedule the first inquirer that seems like a good match as the first M&G.**
- **We adhere to the guideline that the first inquirer of which you are notified that submits the first acceptable application will have priority to adopt your foster dog.**
- Please DO NOT tell any potential adopters that they are the first / second / third ones to meet your foster dog, make any other representation as to their priority / order, or make any guarantee that they will be able to adopt your

foster dog. This can lead to confusion and cause hurt feelings, which we want to avoid at all times. Please DO, however, let potential adopters know that there are or may be other potential adopters.

STEP 3. MEET AND GREETINGS (M&Gs)

Person-Dog M&Gs:

- Must be at least 30 minutes long.
- Should be in a safe and familiar environment.
 - **If your foster pup is four months or younger**, M&Gs must occur in your home (**do not take a puppy to a public place for a M&G**).
 - **If your foster pup is older than four months**, M&Gs should occur in your home if at all possible. The foster home has proven to be the best place to have M&Gs as the pup is already familiar with this environment and will be at his/her best.
 - If you are not comfortable having a potential adopter come to your home please contact us for assistance.
- During the M&G, continue the dialog with the potential adopter and ask questions that you believe will help you determine if they are a good match for your foster dog. Please pay close attention to the interaction between the potential adopter and your foster dog and make sure that you share with the potential adopter any behavior and/or medical issues.
- Please use safe hygiene practices at the M&G, especially for puppies.

Dog-Dog M&Gs:

- For most foster dogs, APA! does not require a dog-dog M&G with any potential adopter's dog(s). APA! may, however, require a dog-dog M&G for a foster dog designated as a "Behavior Consult"; if your foster dog requires a dog-dog M&G, we will let you know.
- Even if a dog-dog M&G is not required, potential adopters may prefer to introduce their dog(s). If a potential adopter requests a dog-dog M&G and you have questions or concerns on how to proceed, please discuss this with the Behavior Team (dogbehaviorfollowup@austinpetsalive.org) in advance. APA! may not have any information on how your foster dog will do around another dog since we are often unable to get detailed information on a dog's history when we pull the dog into our program, so it's important that we speak to you about the proper procedure for dog-dog M&Gs beforehand if your foster dog has no known dog-dog notes.
- **NEVER ALLOW A DOG-DOG M&G IF YOUR FOSTER DOG IS NOT FULLY VACCINATED (THIS APPLIES MOST TO PUPPIES FOUR MONTHS OR UNDER) OR HAS A DISTEMPER LABEL.**

STEP 4. ADOPTION APPLICATIONS

- After the M&G, please email the DFA Team your thoughts on the M&G and why you believe the potential adopter is (or is not) a good fit for your foster pup. Please let us know immediately if you have any concerns that you would like us to address if the potential adopter applies.

- If after the M&G the potential adopter wants to pursue the adoption, please refer them to their initial email from the Adopt Line, which includes a link to the online adoption application. Please let potential adopters know they can apply right after the M&G, but that submitting an application does not guarantee that they will be able to adopt your foster dog.
- Once they have submitted the application, the potential adopter must notify us of this submission at dog-foster-adopt@austinpetsalive.org.
- Once an application is submitted to us, you will be notified, and we ask that you cancel any further M&Gs. You can let any other potential adopters know that you will notify them if the adoption falls through.
- Upon receiving an application, we will contact you for your M&G feedback if you have not already submitted it. We will review the adoption application and address any questions and concerns that we might have on our end.
- If the potential adopters already have a puppy at home (under 6 months old), APA! does not recommend that they adopt another puppy until their resident puppy is over 6 months old.
- Please note that many potential adopters may want to adopt a parent and puppy(ies) or siblings. **Please note that APA!'s policy does not allow for the adoption of related dogs to the same household due to many studies showing that this can lead to behavioral issues.**
- We do not deny applicants based on certain general categories (this list is not exclusive):
 - Age - adopters must be at least 18 years old but there is no upper age limit
 - Occupation / being a college student
 - Lack of puppy / dog experience
 - Length of time a puppy / dog will be left alone IF the potential adopter has a plan for getting the pup out for exercise and socialization
 - Having roommates
 - Living in an apartment
 - Living alone / being single
 - Not having a yard
- Upon receiving your M&G feedback and our approval of their application, we will send the adopter a Next Steps email (and copy you) and ask them to select a location, date, and time/time slot for their face-to-face interview with an APA! Adoption Counselor. **Once this email is sent, your foster pup is no longer available for adoption, and his/her profile will be removed from our website. Please do not schedule any further M&Gs.**
- Please note that APA! Adoption Counselors are trained staff members and are responsible for making the final adoption decision. All puppy adopters will be required to sign a "Puppy Promise," which elaborates on the needs of puppies and what is required of the adopter.

STEP 5. TRANSFERRING YOUR FOSTER DOG TO HIS/HER FOREVER HOME

- After the adopter attends the adoption interview and pays the requisite adoption fee and surgery deposit (if applicable), the pup is ready to go to his/her forever home immediately following the adoption interview (unless it

is an out of state adoption and your foster dog has not been neutered or spayed; see more below).

- If your foster dog has not been neutered or spayed, then your foster dog's adoption will be considered a pre-adoption, and the adopter will have been required to pay a fully-refundable surgery deposit (\$100 for in area adoptions and \$200 for out of area adoptions) that is refunded after the dog has been altered. Please also note that out of area adopters (more than 60 miles from TLAC, but in state) must have their vet perform the spay/neuter surgery. This does not apply to out of state adopters since they will not have an option to pay a surgery deposit as unaltered dogs cannot leave the state, and the foster dog must stay with you until he/she is altered. See below for additional information on out of area and out of state adopters.
- The adopter will contact you to make arrangements to pick up your foster dog. **Before you release your foster dog to the adopter, the adopter must show you a signed adoption contract for verification. Please be aware that you will only be notified if the adoption DOES NOT go through.** If you do not hear anything from us on the interview day, you can assume that the adoption was approved and that the adopter must show you the signed adoption contract as verification.
- Because you'll know in advance when your foster pup is going to his/her forever home, you'll have plenty of time to prepare yourself to say "good bye" - not without a tear - but with no regrets because you know there is another rescue pup needing your help.

*****IMPORTANT REMINDERS*****

- M&Gs must be at least 30 minutes long and ideally in your home. During M&Gs, closely observe the interaction between the potential adopter and your foster dog.
- **Out of Area and Out of State Adopters:** Please do not tell potential adopters that are out of area (more than 60 miles from TLAC, but in state) or out of state that they will be permitted to adopt; adoption preference is given to applicants who live in the Austin area, and out of area/out of state adoptions are subject to our approval on a case by case basis. Please always alert our DFA Team if a potential adopter is out of area or out of state. If the potential adopter is out of state, they should have already received an email from our APA! Adopt Line (adopt@austinpetsalive.org) letting them know the out of state adoption requirements. **An unaltered dog that has been pre-adopted by an out of state adopter cannot leave the Austin area until the dog has been altered.**
- **Please DO NOT let a potential adopter take your foster dog on a trial basis, field trip, or sleepover; your foster dog must stay with you, an approved APA! Foster Parent, at all times until officially adopted.**
- **Please note that APA!'s policy does not allow for an adopter to adopt related dogs.**
- Weekend adoption sites or events are a great way to get your foster dog more visibility. Please respond to our weekly emails regarding adoption sites and events by the deadline set forth in the email.

We appreciate everything that you are doing for your foster dog. It's AMAZING people like you that make it possible for Austin to be a no-kill city and a role model for others. Thank You!

We look forward to working with you and realize this is a lot of information, so please don't hesitate to contact us with your questions or concerns.