



A Guide for Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue Foster Parents

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Thank you for your interest in Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue, Inc.'s Foster Program!

Please read through the following information prior to filling out the online foster application.

- **Read through our Adoption Policies, located on our website. These policies were put in place by the Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue Board and will not be deviated from.**
- **All animals in your home must be spay/neutered and up-to-date on all shots.**
- As a foster home, you will be expected to provide the pet with nutritious food, water, exercise, enrichment, basic training, and love. You will need to provide adequate space for the pet, dog dishes, and dog beds. The rescue will provide you with all the other supplies and equipment needed throughout your foster experience.
- Our foster dogs need to live indoors. Of course we want them to get plenty of exercise and play time outdoors, but they will need to sleep indoors and be indoors when foster parents are not home. **We do require that our foster dogs get a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise twice a day.**
- We do not allow the Rescue dogs to be taken to off-leash dog parks for exercise and socialization. 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, thus creating liability.
- Our foster homes are one of our best sources for finding adopters for our pets! If you know of an interested adopter for your foster pet (**or are interested in adopting your own foster pet!**), they need to read through our Adoption Policies and complete the adoption application on our website: www.mapawsmepetrescue.com. It is important that all potential adopters go through the usual adoption procedure before taking a Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue pet into their care.
- **You will be expected to do home checks. Sometimes this could be a 3 to 4 hour round trip. Someone from the Rescue will go with you on the first couple.**

If you are still interested in fostering, please complete our Foster Care Application on our website: www.mapawsmepetrescue.com. You will also be required to complete our Volunteer Agreement and Indemnification and Release from Liability forms.

When you foster your first pet through Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue, you will receive a one-on-one training and introduction into our program. Ma, Paws & Me Pet Rescue will be here for you to provide you with educational materials, guidance, and support. We want you to have all the resources and knowledge that you need to feel confident in your fostering adventure!

Thank you!

Welcome!

In this packet, you'll find information on our policies and procedures, as well as information on regular pet health and care. You'll also find information on what to do if something is not going well with your foster pet behaviorally or medically. We want to keep in contact with each foster home to get regular updates on how your foster pet is doing, even if everything is going very well. Any updates will help us learn more about the animals, which will help us ensure we are finding great matches for our adopters and pets.

We strongly feel that foster homes provide a solid base for finding a wonderful forever home. Having our pets in foster homes gives us a true view of how the animal will react in their forever home. Thank you so much for your commitment to helping animals in need and to helping save lives! Most of the pets we take into our program would otherwise be euthanized due to shelter overcrowding, so you are truly making a difference.

We do not want our foster homes to feel pressured or overwhelmed. Let us know how we can better help you help the pet(s) in your home.

Standard Protocol Expected of Fosters:

Commitment and responsibilities depend on the individual pet and situation. It's essential that foster parents understand that foster pets may be stressed and moving the pet to the foster home is also very stressful and emotional. Foster parents must be willing to be patient and commit to the pet if at all possible because our goal is to keep them in a stable and consistent environment.

Dogs will come with collars and identity tags, leashes/harnesses. Sometimes pets will come with additional items based on their needs.

Ma Paws, & Me Pet Rescue will provide food, some treats, enrichment toys, and a crate if needed. If you foster puppies, we will provide food, paper towels, pee pads and some treats.

As a foster home, you will be expected to provide the pet with nutritious food, water, exercise, enrichment, basic training, and love. You will need to provide adequate space for the pet, dog dishes, and dog beds. The rescue will provide you with all the other supplies and equipment needed throughout your foster experience.

Our foster dogs need to live indoors. Of course we want them to get plenty of exercise and play time outdoors, but they will need to sleep indoors and be indoors when foster parents are not home. **We do require that our foster dogs get a minimum of 30-45 minutes of exercise, brisk walk/run twice a day, with plenty of play time. The amount of exercise will be different for older dogs and puppies.**

We do not allow the Rescue dogs to be taken to off-leash dog parks for exercise and socialization. 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, thus creating liability.

Standard Medical Protocol for Intake of Pets

Prior to adoption, Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue will update pets with the following medical care, if not already received:

-Heartworm Test for dogs (you will be informed and given information if your foster dog is HW positive. There will be a special care plan. Dogs get HW from mosquito's—it is not contagious in a household from one pet to another).

-Dewormer will be administered for dogs.

-Rabies Vaccination (one or three year—will be noted on Medical Form) for dogs

-Distemper Vaccination (one year) for dogs

-Bordetella Vaccination (one year—"kennel cough" vaccination—for dogs)

-Pet will be **spayed or neutered**

-Dogs will be kept up to date on heartworm and flea/tick preventative. Dogs should receive this monthly year round, so please contact us (if a dog is in your care more than a month) when another dose is required. Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue will provide this medication. Arrangements will be made to pick it up.

-Pet will come with any necessary medication and instructions will be provided on how/when/how much to administer.

-Pet will be microchipped. The microchip will be registered by Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue, Inc.

-Foster home will be made aware of any restrictions on the animal, and any things to watch for that are unique to that animal.

-CVI for dogs. We are required to have a current CVI (Certificate of Veterinary Inspection). Typically most of our dogs come with a current CVI. IF your foster dog has been with Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue for over 30 days we will need to update the CVI (prior to adoption). This can happen after a meet and greet goes well and adoption is moving forward, we will schedule an appointment for updated CVI and then dog can be adopted.

Behaviors to Watch For and Report

We do our best to catch concerning behaviors from the beginning with our intakes. Please report any concerning behaviors to us immediately.

Aggression in Dogs

- **Becoming very still and rigid**
- **Guttural bark that sounds threatening**
- **Lunging forward or charging at the person with no contact**
- **Mouthing, as though to move or control the person, without applying significant pressure**
- **“Muzzle punch” (the dog literally punches the person with her nose)**
- **Growl**
- **Showing teeth**
- **Snarl (a combination of growling and showing teeth)**
- **Snap**
- **Quick nip that leaves no mark**
- **Quick bite that tears the skin**
- **Bite with enough pressure to cause a bruise**
- **Bite that causes puncture wounds**
- **Repeated bites in rapid succession**
- **Bite and shake**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who should I contact if I have a question? – When texting or calling (unless in an emergency situation), please keep it between the hours of 8am-8pm whenever possible.

Jen Blossom, President, mapawsmepetrescue@gmail.com

Where do the pets come from?

We will partner within state shelters needing assistance. We will help over populated states throughout the US and when possible we will assist with re-homing a pet so they don't have to be surrendered to a shelter.

How long are pets in foster homes?

It completely depends on the pet and the situation. The average stay in a foster home is about 2 to 4 weeks for dogs. However, most young animals and some pets with great photos and stories on the web may stay only a week. Others: recovering from an injury, certain breeds, senior pets, or small animals may stay much longer.

Can I adopt my foster pet?

YES! As long as foster parents meet the rescue requirements necessary for adoption, foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster pet.

How are foster pets promoted?

Photos and stories of all adoptable pets in foster homes are posted on our Facebook page, Petfinder.com, and on our website, www.mapawsmepetrescue.com. Foster pets can also be promoted at special events monthly. Foster parents can also help promote their foster pet to their family, friends, colleagues and the general public through a variety of means including:

- You can email Ma, Paws, & Me staff updates for Petfinder (pictures, short videos, profile updates) mpmgeneralinfo@gmail.com
- You can volunteer to take your foster pet to outreach events that we schedule.
- You can share updates on your Facebook page for your friends to spread the word.

What is the process for adopting a foster pet?

The steps are briefly outlined below and are subject to change without notice:

- Potential adopters are required to submit an adoption application for review before they physically meet a foster pet.
- Suitable applicants may be contacted for additional screening (reference checks).
- Once approved, meet and greets with the foster pet and foster parents will be scheduled with qualified applicants. A representative for Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue will come to adoption meetings for new foster homes, or for foster homes who feel most comfortable having a Ma, Paws rep at the meetings to answer questions and facilitate the adoption/meet and greet.
- Home checks are required and may be done prior to the meet and greet or at the same time as the meet and greet.

- If the potential adopter wishes to adopt, adopter fills out contract and returns that and payment to Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue. This should be given to foster before turning animal over to adopter. Give medical folder to adopter. Foster parents can mail contract and payment to Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue, N6304 Coffee Road, Johnson Creek, WI 53038.
- The adoption is official and the foster pet then goes to his or her new forever home.

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

Yes, but keep in mind that it's always a health risk to expose your animal to other animals whether it's walking at parks, vet waiting rooms or other common animal areas. The health risk is minimal if your animals are current on their vaccinations, maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle, and are not very elderly or very young. If you or someone in your household is immune-compromised, consult your doctor before fostering since working or living with animals exposes humans to a group of diseases called zoonoses. A zoonotic disease (there are about 200) is defined as a disease transmitted from animals to humans and also from humans to animals. To find out more about zoonoses, talk to your doctor and/or veterinarian. Proper hygiene, preventative measures and an understanding of these illnesses can reduce the risk of disease.

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, 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 punishment. We can provide you with some information on crate-training if necessary.

Do I need to have prior medical knowledge or expertise?

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

What if my foster pet becomes sick?

- All veterinary costs are paid by the rescue unless the visit is not pre-approved. Please see the Ma, Paws, & Me Foster Home Application for additional information on emergency vet visits. If a foster pet becomes sick, foster parents must contact Jen Blossom. All vet visits emergency or otherwise must be approved. If you feel your foster pet needs to see a veterinarian for routine care or non-emergency care, you must secure pre-approval from us. If you feel your foster pet requires care you must advise us within 1 hour of entering the emergency clinic.

How much time each day is needed to foster?

Commitment and responsibilities depend on the individual pet and situation. It's essential that foster parents understand that foster pets may be stressed and moving the pet to the foster home is also very stressful and emotional. Foster parents must be willing to be patient and commit to the pet if at all possible because our goal is to keep them in a stable and consistent environment. Dogs may 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. Older dogs may only need an evening stroll. Puppies need to be attended to every 3-4 hours.

How can I help my foster pet become more adoptable?

There are two ways to make a foster pet more adoptable. First and foremost is marketing. If no one knows about your foster pet, or how wonderful he or she is, then it will be next to impossible to find them a forever home. In addition to supplying great photos and a bio and updating these regularly, giving a foster pet additional exposure by telling friends and family about them 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. Working with your foster dog with basic training and manners will increase their adoptability. Shy pets 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. And while puppies are adorable, they need a lot of love, attention and hand-holding from humans to develop properly and feel secure.

Am I responsible for finding my foster pet 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 pet and the 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. The rescue greatly welcomes these referrals! If you think you have found a perfect forever home for your foster pet, remember they still must go through the application process and be approved by the rescue staff.

Can I return my foster pet to the rescue if I am unable to foster any longer?

You are not a failure if things do not work out with your foster pet! Sometimes matches aren't made in heaven. If you are seeing behaviors you are not sure you can tolerate, please talk to Jen to see if there are any tools or tricks that can be put into place to keep the pet in your home. It is least stressful on the pet to leave him or her in the current foster home if accommodations can be made, but sometimes that won't work for the foster home. We request that a foster parent provide as much notice as possible so that we can find an alternative foster home to transfer the pet to.

What if I go on vacation or have a business trip?

Give us as much notice as possible. We can find volunteers that can foster sit for short durations. If we cannot find coverage and you know someone who is willing to foster sit, let us know. They will need to complete the Volunteer Agreement. This must be done anytime a Ma, Paws, & Me animal is in the care of someone else and the foster parent is not present. The form can be placed in the folder and turned in after adoption. We ask that foster parents always make Ma, Paws, & Me staff aware of any temporary foster-sitting situations. If you utilize a pet sitter for your own pets when you leave town, you are welcome to leave your foster pet in those caring hands if you think the pet will do well in that situation.

I know of a pet that needs help. Can I make him a Ma, Paws, & Me foster pet?

This is a case-by-case situation, so if the animal is family-friendly, has no considerable medical/behavior issues, AND we have an open foster home, we may be able to help. Please filter requests through Jen.

Are foster pets ever euthanized?

Much energy, love, time and vet care is devoted to our foster pets, and the rescue is committed to finding homes for all the adoptable pets within its care. If, after reasonable medical attention, these pets are too young or too weak to heal and are suffering, then Ma, Paws, & Me staff may make the choice to humanely euthanize these animals. Fortunately, most pets in foster care heal beautifully. On rare occasions, a pet in foster care may start to exhibit potentially dangerous behavior that was unknown or suppressed when the pet was taken in by Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue. The rescue may determine that this pet is too dangerous and will humanely euthanize the animal. Your (and the public's) safety is our first priority. You must always inform Jen if you see any dangerous behaviors exhibited by your foster pet.

Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue forwarded me an adoption application. What's next?

1. Ma, Paws, & Me will review and background check applications prior to sending them to you. If there are concerns, Ma, Paws, & Me will not send you, the foster parent the application. If there is something Ma, Paws, & Me missed that is a red flag to you, or something specific that makes this not a good fit for your foster pet and the applicant, let us know and we will be happy to be the person who lets the applicant know it's not a fit, and perhaps refer them to another pet or another rescue that may have a better match.

2. If you think it's possibly a fit, please contact the applicant via email or phone to tell them more about the pet. Things to address during communication:

- Items generally on the "Pet Profile" in the animal's folder (with your info added)
- Any positives/negatives about the animal's behavior, habits in your home.
- Any known medical issues that we have discussed with you (although this should generally have been noted on Petfinder profile where the person found the animal).

3. If that communication is positive and both you and the applicant are interested in a meeting, please set up a meeting.

4. You can set up a home check and meet and greet at their house at a time that works for you and the applicant – ideally with your mentor or mentor available via phone for the first couple fosters.

5. If a meeting takes place:

- If they have a dog, a dog introduction is a must. Studies show that these kinds of meetings are not always indicators of how two dogs will get along in 'real life'. Invite the applicant to bring their dog, but it is not an organizational requirement.
- It is required that all adult household members be present. It is preferred that all family members are present for the meeting. Please set the stage for if you are comfortable letting the animal go home after the meeting if it is a good meeting. If you feel most comfortable not letting the animal go home that same day, set the expectation that it is a meet-and-greet only meeting and that you'll all touch base the following day for a decision on if the pet is going home or not.

- i. If the meeting goes well, generally we would like the animal to go home, at the latest, by the next following weekend day. Special cases can be run past Jen; however we are typically not able to hold animals for an applicant for more than a couple of days.
 - ii. Can a foster pet do a trial overnight visit with the applicant? Most of the time, the answer should be no and this should not be offered. Our adoption contract gives an adopter 14 days to return a pet and get a full refund if it's not working out. When an applicant fills out an adoption contract, they are seemingly more likely to work through small issues with a pet versus transitioning the pet back without a feeling of commitment. Trials without an adoption contract also leave us in a gray area in terms of liability, as the dog is not in Ma, Paws, & Me's care, but we own the dog. In circumstances where a trial is approved by us (basically any time an animal is in the care of an applicant before a contract is filled out and signed AND no Ma, Paws, & Me volunteer is present), we'll need the applicant to fill out and sign a volunteer contract to make sure we're covered. We'll also have a set time (ideally within 24-48 hours tops) when the trial is over and a pet would be returned or an actual adoption would be finalized
 - iii. If any concerns come up during the meeting, contact us. You can let the applicant know that the expectation is that one of us will call them with an update in the next 24 hours.
- At the meeting, go over any quirks the pet may have. Let them know how a typical day looks like with the pet at your house. Use the Pet Profile in the folder as a guide of things to discuss. **Be open and honest—we'd rather have someone decline before taking the animal home than have an additional transition for the animal back into our care.**
 - If the animal is on any meds (ongoing or for a period of time), let them know how those work and the best way to administer the pill to the animal.
 - If the animal came with any known history, discuss that.

6. If the meeting goes well and everyone feels comfortable, discuss adoption finalization process:

- **They receive all medical paperwork we have on the pet.**
- **They receive coupons/info from partners.**
- **They review/fill out one copy of the contract (a blank copy remains in their folder for their future reference).**
- **Filled out contract and check (written to Ma, Paws, & Me Pet Rescue) or cash. Fees are for Babies (pup under 7 months), \$350 or \$250 if they put down \$100 deposit; for Teenagers (7 months up to 5 years) \$250; for Middle Aged (6 years to 9 years) \$125; for Golden Oldies (over 9 years) \$75 or \$50. The contract and money can be delivered or mailed to Jen Blossom at N6304 Coffee Road, Johnson Creek, Wi 53038.**

7. Follow up

- **Follow up emails will be sent 3 weeks after adoption and again 30 days after that.**
- **Remind them they are required to get their new pet into see their own vet within 30 days after adoption.**

7. Remind the adopter that they should contact us if they have any concerns.

8. Let them know we'd love to receive updates or check-ins. We have also recently moved the Alumni page to: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MPMAumniFamily>.

It's the day of your foster pet's meeting with a potential adopter!

Things to think about:

- Home checks are required. If you have already done the home check where will the meeting take place (your/their home, office, park, etc)?
- Where will your other pets be during the meeting?
- What special information about this pet do you want to discuss with the potential adopter? Your Adoptable Pet Profile needs to be completed prior to the meeting.
- What can you do in preparation for or during the meeting to best exhibit your foster pet's true self? Will a walk prior to the meeting, or quiet down time beforehand help?
- Do you have any remaining questions for Ma, Paws, & Me staff prior to the home check and meet and greet.
- If the pet could potentially go home at the conclusion of the meeting, do you have the pet's items together for a smooth transition? Did you have a few days worth of the pet's current food in a marked Ziplock bag to send with the adopter to mix in with the type of food they plan to feed the pet? Do you have the pet's supplies and medications together?
- Do you have the adoption folder with all the necessary paperwork?
 - Adoptable Pet Profile
 - Intake/Medical Sheet
 - Current CVI
 - Microchip Info (remind adopter that the Rescue will register the microchip)
 - Two copies of the adoption contract, one for adopter, one for adopter to sign and give to Ma, Paws, & Me
 - Any other necessary paperwork for that particular pet
 - *Special care information for a particular condition pet has
 - *Special care information for a particular behavior pet has
 - *Special care information for general care of pet
- Things you need to point out in the contract to the adopter:
 - They are required to take the pet to their vet within 30 days of adoption.
 - No matter the timeframe, if they need to give up or re-home their pet, it is required in the contract they need to return the pet to the Rescue, no questions asked.

If your foster pet goes missing...

- Do not chase the pet in most cases
- Use what info you know about the pet to lure him or her back—have the pet's favorite treat at hand, call the pet in a way the pet likes to be called, use a squeaker toy if they like that noise, follow the pet with a car and open the door when you get near if the pet likes car rides, bring out another pet on a leash if you think that will attract the pet back.
- Let Jen know immediately so we can help.
- As you are searching for pet, let your neighbors know you are looking for the pet. If possible, give the neighbors your address or contact info so they know how to reach you if they see or catch the pet.
- We will contact authorities/humane organizations in the area to help locate the pet.
- We will assist in making flyers to put around town to help draw attention to the missing pet.
- As soon as the pet is found, let us know.
- If you find the pet injured or possibly injured, let us know so that medical care can be set up (emergency or next regular appointment as required)