

FAQ

Things to know before becoming a foster:

1. How do I know what animals need my help?
 - a. They all need your help. For each animal fostered out more room is created at the shelter. You're not just saving the animal you're fostering but also the one who would have had to "leave" the shelter to make more room.

2. What do I need to do to start fostering for WSAL?
 - a. Join WSAL's [MEETUP Group](#)
 - b. Complete the WSAL Foster Application and Volunteer form and email to westsideanimals@gmail.com
 - c. If possible, come by and attend an adoption even, meet the other volunteers and find out what being a volunteer and foster is about first hand. This will be a valuable tool to you in your upcoming adventure.
 - d. If you are bringing an animal, you already have in your possession into the group (something you rescued, a stray, a personal pet), THAT HAS BEEN APPROVED by the Board for intake, you will need to provide the following items BEFORE the animal will be posted or be officially added to the organization. This includes animals we tagged for you at the shelter that you picked up or that were transported to you by someone other than a board member. Please be sure to request them from the transporter or make sure arrangements have been made and follow up to ensure records were received.
 - 1) Medical records. If a personal pet this is required. If it is a stray, we need anything you may have, vaccination records etc. You may keep the original to provide to the adopter but we need a copy and if you lose it you will need to get a new rabies tag (\$5.00)
 - 2) If it is an animal you pulled/adopted from a shelter we must have a copy of the shelter records
 - 3) Pictures and bio must be sent

****If monthly updates are not received or no events are attended for two consecutive months, without contact initiated by the foster, the animal will be removed from the active list and pulled from the posting sites. After 3 months the animal will be archived and dropped from the group. We will release the animal to you and you will become the owner/responsible party. If the animal was a foster that WSAL covered medical or expenses for you will be liable for adoption fees. We do understand that things come up and that everyone is busy sometimes. We just need you to check in. We are committed to helping you place these animals but need your help to do so. This is a commitment and does take effort on your part.**

3. How do I get a foster pet?

- a. We will send out emails with animals that we would like to bring into the group if a foster can be located for them or with fosters already within the group that need to be relocated. Please sign up for our [MEETUP Group](#) to be added to these distributions. Most animals sent out on these emails are very urgent so please respond ASAP if you are interested in fostering one.
- b. We will also use Facebook to circulate animals in need of a foster. Text or PM us if you are interested in one that is posted.
- c. If there is an animal in the shelter that you would like to foster you can contact us at westsideanimals@gmail.com with the information on the animal (name, breed, pet ID etc.) and the shelter contact information. **Please contact us and not the shelter directly, only board members are approved to tag animals.** We will contact the shelter and determine if the animal can be brought into the League. If approved we will tag the animal and make arrangements with you to pick up the animal.
- d. All animals must be approved by a Board member prior to becoming a WSAL foster. If you find a stray, have a personal pet you wish to rehome (you must agree to foster until placed), are contacted by a third party etc., you will need to send an email that includes:
 - 1) Pet information
 - 2) Pictures
 - 3) Reason for request to rehome
 - 4) Any known medical status (vaccinations, altered, illness)
 - 5) Your contact info and/or the person in possession of the animal

We may require a meet and greet and other information before bringing it in to the group. Some animals may not be admitted to the group if we do not have the resources to accept them or assist them. This could be monetary or related to behavior etc.

4. What are my responsibilities to my foster pet?

- a. Provide a safe, warm, secure environment where the animal can feel love and hope as it learns to socially interact as part of a family.
- b. Keep track of vaccination dates, dates of HW preventative, flea and tick preventative etc. This will be for dates given and future dates due. If you do not have supplies, please contact us at least a week ahead of any due dates to make arrangements.
- c. Bring the pet to at least one adoption event a month or attend meet and greets outside of events.



West Side Animal League

Working to Save Animal Lives

5. What will my responsibilities to WSAL be?
 - a. Immediately after acquiring your foster send an email to westsideanimals@gmail.com that includes:
 - 1) Email Subject Line – Animal Name – Breed - Your Name - Shelter pulled from (if applicable or put stray etc.)
 - 2) Your contact information (yes, we already have this on file but including it in the email makes them easier to sort and access)
 - 3) Animal age
 - 4) Sex
 - 5) Approx. size/weight
 - 6) Medical status – altered, vaccinations, wormed, etc.
 - 7) Where they came from
 - 8) Brief background if available
 - 9) First impressions on temperament or needs
 - 10) PICTURES!!
 - b. Provide updates on your foster's progress at least 1 time per month to westsideanimals@gmail.com or the Foster Coordinator.
 - c. Coordinate with WSAL to meet potential adopters. We know everyone has busy lives but if we can't get in contact with you someone can miss their new fur-ever home!
 - d. Keep in contact. Remember you are responsible for one foster pet (possibly more). We are responsible for up to 100 foster pets including our personal fosters.

6. What animals are a good fit for my family and my home?
 - a. Talk to other volunteers and fosters
 - b. Keep some things in mind
 - 1) Some dogs are very mellow and would be fine inside lying around all day with a short walk now and then. Others will be bouncing off all four walls, and possibly your ceiling, if they don't have a fenced yard to play in. (I still have paw marks on my ceiling fan!!)
 - 2) Puppies that aren't housetrained and youngsters who will put anything and everything in their mouth may not be a good combination
 - 3) Any dog that has shown even a potential for aggression will only be fostered under special circumstances with full disclosure. **HOWEVER**, be aware though that *all* dogs have teeth and claws and any interaction between children and your foster needs to be supervised. Usually no harm is meant, but these animals haven't always gotten a lot of attention and they get really excited or even really scared when someone gives them some. They may jump up or play too rough. This is one of the reasons they need to interact with people and learn manners.
 - 4) More often than not these critters love people. Not all of them are thrilled with other animals though. Always be careful about interaction with other animals if you already have pets at home.

7. Are the animals vaccinated and healthy?
 - a. We try to ensure all animals are vaccinated when they come in or make arrangements to have them vaccinated ASAP. This does not always include rabies, since those must be administered by a veterinarian. Rabies will be received at the time of spay/neuter, when the animal is at least 4 months old or as available.
 - b. We can also provide dewormer as needed.
 - c. Generally, if an animal is sick, it will not be sent to most foster situations. Sometimes symptoms will not appear until they've already gone home with someone though. Please make sure your personal animals are up to date on their vaccinations.
 - d. If you are fostering and need dewormer, vaccinations, HW meds etc. you must contact us ahead of time and we will normally bring items to the next event where you can pick up or where the pet can be vaccinated.
 - e. All medications/medical info must be documented and tracked (you can use the [Vaccination Log](#) for Fosters). Text Carol at 817-371-0394 with the animal's name and what med/vaccine/procedure was completed. You can text pictures of the records/vial etc. You can mail the records to West Side Animal League - ATTN Medical PO BOX 150673 Fort Worth 76108. If it cannot be mailed it must be brought to the next event.
8. How long will I be keeping this animal?
 - a. While we hope to find a new home for your foster in a matter of days, please be prepared to keep them as long as necessary including months or years in some cases.
9. How will people know my foster is up for adoption if he's not at a shelter?
 - a. We have volunteers who post on Adopt-A-Pet, Pet Finder, and many other locations. We hold adoptions monthly most of the year. The more exposure these guys get the better so you can post on your Facebook or post flyers at pet friendly locations, network your foster! There are only a few restrictions such as no posting on craigslist, buy/sell/trade sites etc. without pre-approval.
10. Will people contact me directly about the animal or will they contact the League?
 - a. This is your choice. Normally they will contact the League and we will contact you. The process moves quicker if potential adopters can speak to you directly for information on the animals. If it makes you uncomfortable let us know and we will make the initial contact. New foster families should arrange to meet adopters at the next scheduled event. This lets you see how we interact with potential adopters and gain experience.

I have a foster...NOW WHAT?!?:

11. What will my foster baby need at home?
 - a. All the things you would provide to a family pet, food, water, a fence (or an area to walk frequently), love. Toys are usually a good idea if you do not have other pets at home. They may look for things to chew on if they get lonely. By the same fact if you have others at home toys can sometimes cause fights over who the toy belongs to.
12. Can I give them a bath?
 - a. By all means. If you think you can do it go for it!

13. Can they be around my other animals?
 - a. This is a tricky one. For adoptions the recommendation is to keep them quarantined for 10-14 days...but let's face it, not real practical.
 - b. You do need to realize these animals have not been screened for health issues. We do not generally allow visibly sick animals to be fostered without taking precautions but sometimes things don't show up right away. ALWAYS make sure your personal animals are current on their vaccinations, including Bordetella.
 - c. Be cautious when doing introductions. If you do not have experience introducing animals and need help let us know.
 - d. Do not leave them alone together until there is an established history of them getting along. Even then we do not recommend leaving different species alone.
 - e. Even if everyone is getting along, always remain cautious, especially during feeding time etc.

14. What kind of food is recommended?
 - a. Bland is usually best. The shelter uses many different kinds of food so feel free to ask what they are currently feeding and stick with that when feasible. Be aware...often times changing their diet can have some messy results.
 - b. We often have food available and can provide it if needed.

15. My foster doesn't seem to like me?
 - a. Give them a little while and don't take it personally. These critters have been through some really traumatic things in the last few days. They lost their people, they got locked in a cage in this loud, noisy...sometimes stinky...place where they didn't know anyone. Can you blame them for being a little skittish? They'll come around when they realize they can trust you.
 - b. If they show any actual aggression towards you, please let us know immediately.

16. My foster seems bored what can I do?
 - a. Play with them and make sure they have something to play with. If you don't give them something to do, they'll find something to play with and it won't always be good.
 - b. Consider taking another foster of a similar size, age and temperament. Sometimes two puppies are easier than one because they entertain each other (and wear each other out!)

17. Someone called wanting to adopt but they made me uncomfortable, what now?
 - a. Call and discuss it with a Board member. Fosters have a lot of say in who gets to adopt. If you really don't feel right about it, we will back you up. We generally recommend on the first contact to let them know others have also contacted you and you would like to get their information and if the animal is still available you will contact them. This gives you a graceful way to back out if you feel it is not the right fit.

18. I have a family that wants to adopt!!! Now what do I do????
- Make arrangements to meet them. You can do this at an adoption event or anywhere public. Contact us if you are not comfortable going alone. We never recommend giving a potential adopter your home address or meeting them at your home.
 - After they have completed the paperwork...and paid...they get to take their new fur-ever friend home and you're ready to take another foster!
 - Payment can be made by
 - 1)Check, payable to WSAL
 - 2)Cash
 - 3)Online (Go to www.westsideanimalleague.org and hit the Donate tab)
 - Please take photos of the application and text to 817-371-0394 or email to westsideanimals@gmail.com within 24 hours of adoption. Send in the original application (within 7 days of the adoption) to West Side Animal League – ATTN: Adoptions PO BOX 150673 Fort Worth 76108. If they paid in cash, you can write a check, exchange for a cashier's check or deposit and pay online through the league donate button on our website. Until the adoption fee is received by the League you are responsible for the amount.

What can... and often will go wrong: Please note: not all of these things will happen, hopefully, but you need to know just in case!

19. My new foster has worms!
- Let us know and we can provide some dewormer. Many dogs especially puppies will have worms. You give the dewormer for five days and often again for five days 2 weeks later. They will have worms in their poo for a day or so after. Be aware...it gets messy for a little while not to long after they take the dewormer so be prepared.
20. My new foster has fleas!
- If they are old enough use a flea and tick shampoo, the drops that go down their back, spray or for a one-time fix use CapStar (it only kills the ones on them right then, does not protect any time after that). If you do administer any type of medicated spray, drop etc. you must keep a record of when and what. We don't want anybody overdosed. Pups and kittens who are too young for anything else you can bathe them in Dawn dish soap...just keep it out of their eyes!
21. My foster doesn't want to go to sleep!
- Don't let them be too lazy in the evening. They need to get their energy out and make sure they go potty before bedtime. For younger pups sometimes white noise and something warm to lay with helps. Stuffed animals from goodwill make good surrogates. Be sure not to get ones that have plastic eyes or other choking hazards.
22. My foster ate my new shoes!
- This can and does happen. Unfortunately, WSAL cannot reimburse for destruction of property or any of the costs incurred while a foster is in your care. It is a big responsibility but also a rewarding one.
 - Always keep shoes, electrical cords, etc. put up and out of reach.

23. I think my foster is sick
- Please contact a Board member or Foster Coordinator/POC as soon as possible.
 - We can provide limited medical care but all veterinary visits etc. must be pre-approved. If you do not receive pre-approval, you will be liable for any expense incurred.
 - Any visits after 6pm cost more. If your animal is sick in the morning, please contact us then and don't wait and see. Often once you have talked to us, we may recommend holding off but please let us know when you begin to notice symptoms or if anything changes.
24. My foster is not housetrained
- Most aren't. That's one of the great things about these animals going to foster care, they usually get a head start on training and this is a selling point for adopters. Your kind of getting the short end of the stick on this one...Family Dollar does sell latex gloves 10 pair for a \$1.00!
25. My foster got loose and ran off
- This can and does happen regardless of any measures you take to prevent it sometimes. Always use common sense and realize the reason many of the animals ended up in the shelter was because they had run off before. WSAL provides tags that have the League contact information that all fosters should wear on their collar. Contact your Foster Coordinator/POC as soon as possible. We can help get pics and flyers to you to hang up in the neighborhood.
 - Drive around and look, check with neighbors and local shelters, post flyers.
 - Let us know if your foster is jumping the fence or digging under etc. and we can help with suggestions. We've all been there at some point.

IMPORTANT STUFF WE HATE TO TALK ABOUT... BUT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

26. My foster doesn't like my other pet (or my dog doesn't like the foster!)
- If you see tension between the animals, keep them apart. Never throw a new foster in with multiple animals. Give everyone some time to decompress and get used to each other's smells etc.
 - Even if they seem to be doing fine, leave the leashes on (tuck into collar if needed). This gives you something to grab if things take a turn.
 - It is not easy to have a foster that needs to be an only pet but it happens. Foster families with no other pets rarely come along, so you will be responsible for figuring it out (with some help from us!). It is inconvenient but animals can be crated, rotated, etc. and while they may not get as much attention as you would like to give them, it can work and it is better than their alternatives. We can help with kennels etc.
 - Dogs, even those that have been friends for years, can still get upset with each other and fights can happen. AGAIN, if you sense tension don't assume "they'll work it out". Sometimes they will, but it can go sideways also.
 - Don't leave them unsupervised until you are 100% confident, they are good and then still keep an eye on them.
 - Never leave children unsupervised with an animal and NEVER alone with multiple animals.

27. My foster and my dog are fighting

- a. FIRST – Be cautious trying to break up a dog fight. This is one of the most likely ways to get bit. Our first instinct is to jump in and break it up but not only can you put a body part in the wrong place at the wrong time, even a normally loving dog can get scared and confused and intentionally bite or turn on you.
- b. Get children out of them room if any are present.
- c. If possible, remove other animals from the area to prevent them joining in.
- d. Have a plan, keep leashes nearby in different rooms, have a bull horn, watch some [videos online](#). Even with a plan it is hard to remember all those plans in a real fight. Start with yelling, sometimes if they are not committed to it, this will be enough. If you have something you can throw between them a chair, small table (often a broom coming from underneath theirs heads and moving up can startle them and break their grip).
- e. Remember, those extra seconds to get water, or a chair or a leash are better than you getting bit.

28. The fights over now what?

- a. Make sure both animals are secured.
- b. Are any people injured? See # 29, My dog bit someone
- c. Evaluate any injuries, if the animal will allow it. Remember they are hurt and scared and may not react how they normally would.
- d. If only minor injuries (minor puncture wounds, small shallow cuts away from vital regions) call one of us. We can give you some recommendations on home care and can schedule a non-emergency appt to get them checked out if needed.
- e. If someone needs to go to the vet contact us ASAP. We will work to get the pet into a vet we have a relationship with that provides discounts etc. for rescue. We will cover the fees for the foster pet and will contribute where we can to any personal pet's care.

NOTE: There are limits to what can be spent on any given animal, if a foster's injuries are too severe, or there are other major medical issues, we may have to humanely let them go. This is never what we want to do but it is a reality of rescue. First and foremost, we don't want them to suffer but we have a very limited budget and cannot sacrifice all of the other animals' wellbeing for the life of one. This is a last resort and we have pulled some pretty remarkable rabbits out of hats, but everyone needs to know it is a possibility.

29. My dog bit someone!

- a. Make sure the dog is secure and everyone is out of danger
- b. Access the bite, is medical care required? Almost all animal bites require antibiotics or they can lead to infection
- c. Once everyone is safe and settled contact us.
- d. All animal bites that break the skin must be reported to the authorities. We will help guide you through this. Depending on the cause of the bite, we will also help determine next steps. An unprovoked aggressive bite or multiple bites will be handled differently than a pup that caught your finger instead of the ball you were playfully about to throw for it.
- e. As the person responsible for the pet, you will carry the financial responsibility. This will often be covered under your homeowners or health insurance. Again, we will help where we can but resources are limited. Please consider this when introducing your foster to other people. A loud party at your house is not the appropriate venue to let everyone meet your foster.



Feel free to contact any of the below Board members when needed. Please remember we all work during the day and cannot always talk unless it's an emergency. Texting is usually quickest way to reach us.

Carol McFarland – 817-371-0394

Lisa Morton – 817-271-2552

Sandy Phillips – 682-561-9024

Kelly Sansom – 817-320-0399

Barbie Garmon – 817-614-1840

Mallory Moffat – 469-744-3987