

Greyhound Pets of America

Wisconsin Chapter

(GPA-WI)

Foster Manual

A guide to your responsibilities as a foster family!

(Revised: May 2019)

Welcome & thank you for participating in our Foster Home Program!

Families who will open their homes to a new dog and provide training and socialization are the heart of our program and are crucial to the adoption process. We will support you in every way we can to make your fostering experience a rewarding one.

We hope you will read this manual with an eye toward continuing to improve our Foster Program and sharing ideas and knowledge. Many of you will already know much of this material, but these guidelines are developed and reevaluated periodically to ensure that every aspect of fostering goes as smoothly as possible, both for you and your foster dog. Please feel free to make suggestions that you think would help other foster families.

Again, thank you for participating in our Foster Program. We hope that you enjoy teaching your foster how to retire to a life as a lovable, loyal, well-behaved family pet.

What is fostering?

An ex-racing greyhound enters your life for a few weeks ... usually 2 weeks, although some dogs have been in foster care for longer or shorter periods of time (some never leave ... the foster family ends up falling in love with and adopting the dog).

As a Foster Parent, you are responsible for teaching your foster greyhound:

- house training / potty training
- walking on a leash
- responding to his/her name
- appropriate behavior indoors and outdoors
- proper interaction with other pets
- playing with children and adults

Your foster must be kept indoors as a house pet. Greyhounds have no fur or body fat to shield them from temperatures, have always been kept indoors in temperature-controlled kennels, and are accustomed to being inside around people.

Your foster's personality will slowly develop and bloom. We will call you to get a profile of the dog's personality so that we can match him or her with the right adoptive family.

Remember: we are only a phone call away if you have questions or need advice!

Basic Program Guidelines

Ownership of foster greyhounds All foster greyhounds are the sole property of GPA-WI and shall be returned to GPA-WI upon request, or if the foster parent is not able to adequately care for the greyhound.

Care of the foster greyhound

Foster parents must provide the foster greyhound:

- good food
- fresh water
- love and affection
- soft and comfy beds and pillows, and
- LOTS of guidance, supervision and training!

Health treatment

GPA-WI will provide routine and emergency veterinary care through select veterinarians. Foster greyhounds are not to be treated by unauthorized veterinarians, except in cases of emergency. Expenses resulting from unauthorized routine care will be the responsibility of the foster parent. You must contact the foster coordinator for authorization prior to the veterinarian appointment. If your foster dog is in a life-threatening emergency, seek medical attention immediately and contact your foster coordinator as soon as possible.

Help with the placement process

Foster parents play an important role in the placement and adoption process and may be asked to be available to talk to and meet with the prospective families.

ID tags

Make sure your foster wears his or her greyhound collar and tags at all times. If your foster dog gets loose, the information supplied on the tags will aid in his/her return.

Veterinary and Medical Procedures

****Emergencies**** In the event of an emergency, get veterinary care immediately, with the dog's health and safety first and foremost. If the dog can be transported to a participating vet without endangering its life or health, please do so. If this is not possible, obtain care by the best means available. If anesthesia is required, be sure the vet is familiar with greyhounds and anesthesia. Notify your foster coordinator of emergencies as soon as you can.

All greyhounds are thoroughly examined and receive routine vaccinations, deworming and flea/tick preventative before being placed in a foster home.

Spay/Neuter/Dental

While in foster care, the greyhound may be scheduled for spay/neuter, and teeth cleaning along with any other medical procedures that may be needed.

After the Spay/Neuter

1. Rest and relaxation are the keys to a speedy recovery. Give your dog a quiet place to himself, such as his crate, or a dog bed out of traffic areas.
2. No running or jumping for 10 - 14 days following surgery. Leash walks only.
3. No baths for 14 days following surgery.
4. Check the incision area daily for swelling, redness, bruising, or bleeding. For males, make sure the scrotal area is flat. If the sac appears swollen or full, please contact your foster coordinator.
5. Do not let the dog chew or lick the stitches.
6. If your dog comes home the day of the surgery, it may vomit from the anesthesia. **DO NOT FEED.** Allow only small sips of water or allow to lick an ice cube.
7. The mouth may be sensitive due to teeth cleaning, so feed soft foods for several days. This can be done by adding water to dry food and letting it soak a bit.
8. **IF YOU SUSPECT A PROBLEM,** report any complications or suspicious conditions to the participating veterinarian who conducted the procedure and your foster home coordinator. Conditions to look out for include bloating, excessive bleeding or bruising, extreme lethargy or inability to settle down due to discomfort, or extreme panting, whining or crying.
9. **TO CHECK YOUR DOG'S TEMPERATURE,** use a baby or rectal thermometer. Lightly coat with KY lubricant. Gently slide the thermometer a little less than halfway into the rectum. Hold for two or three minutes. If the temperature is over 103 degrees, see a vet right away. (Normal temperatures for dogs and cats are between 100.5 and 102.5 degrees). A warm, dry nose is not necessarily a sign of fever, so use a thermometer to be sure.
10. **TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION,** disguise a pill inside some peanut butter, cream cheese, canned food, or something that the dog really likes. Pop into his mouth or serve in a dish. For liquid medication, tilt the dog's head up and use a syringe or spoon to pour the liquid down the throat.

Giving medication

The foster family will, when necessary, administer medication and follow veterinary instructions regarding the recovery and care of the foster greyhound.

Participating veterinarians

Arrangements for medical care are made by the foster coordinator and scheduled with our participating area veterinarian who provides services at reduced costs. Since we are a nonprofit organization, we are not in a position to reimburse foster families for routine medical care provided by their personal vets, if that care could have been provided by our participating vets. Please contact your foster home coordinator to obtain information about a participating veterinarian in your area.

Routine vet appointments Contact your foster coordinator if your foster dog is vomiting, having diarrhea, bleeding, limping, refusing to eat or drink, having seizures, or in any way seems sick. They will immediately assist you or schedule an appointment with the participating veterinarian.

Food, Care, and Training

Food and Water

Provide access to fresh, clean water at all times. Feed a high-quality kibble. Please talk with your foster home coordinator about a recommended brand of food, as products and brands are constantly changing. Your foster dog, fresh off the track, may be used to eating raw meat. We recommend you soften the food with water and mix in a little canned food with the kibble until the dog gets used to eating dry kibble. If your foster dog has loose stool at first, this is common, and you may want to feed a bland diet of rice and eggs or hamburger to help the dog make the transition from one type of food to the next.

NEVER FEED

- Raw meat
- Food that could be spoiled. Discard old food and wash your dog's food and water bowls thoroughly at least daily.
- Chicken bones, pork bones, or fish bones - these can be swallowed, and their sharp ends can pierce the stomach or intestinal walls.
- Any bone that could splinter or be swallowed whole
- Supplements - unless prescribed by a veterinarian or cleared by the foster home coordinator
- Chocolate, Grapes, Raisins, Garlic, Onion, Macadamia Nuts - these are all poisonous or can cause life threatening conditions such as allergic reactions or organ failure
- Xylitol - this sweetener is found in chewing gum and other human products and can be fatal to dogs if ingested
- Alcohol - thirsty dogs can drink fatal amounts quickly. Plus, nobody likes a slobbering, drunk, alcoholic dog!

Parasites - Tapeworms, Hookworms, Whipworms & Roundworms

All of the dogs coming from the kennel will have received deworming treatment and Frontline for ticks and fleas. However, if you see little white worms in the dog's stool or around its rectum, it is most likely tapeworms. They are not contagious and cannot be passed from one dog to another. They can only be contracted if the dog swallows an infected flea. **IF YOU SEE TAPEWORMS, YOUR DOG MAY HAVE FLEAS.** Please call your foster coordinator if you suspect fleas/tapeworms.

Hookworms and whipworms are microscopic and cannot be seen in the dog's stool. Signs of a dog infested with hooks or whips may be inability to gain weight and chronic, explosive or watery diarrhea. Roundworms are visible in the stool and look like cooked spaghetti (white noodles). Roundworms are frequently contracted from eating another dog's stool or stepping in an infected dog's stool and your dog licks it off their paws. The best method to preventing parasite infestations is to pick up the yard regularly, immediately or daily if possible, and make sure that your foster dog has received deworming treatment. All flea, tick and deworming that has been administered to your foster dog should be marked inside their folder. If you are fostering a returned or bounced dog, please check with your foster coordinator

Feeding time

When feeding your new dog, please keep your foster dog separated from your own dogs. Dogs new from the kennel may be protective of their food bowls. Feed the foster dog in their crate, a separate room or other area and SUPERVISE. Feeding in the crate is the preferred method. Reinforce the pack order at feeding time: the top (alpha) dog should be fed first, then the second, etc.

General care and grooming

Most likely your foster dog was treated for fleas and ticks at the kennel. Check their adoption folder for the care label inside where it should be listed or ask your foster home coordinator to find out that information. Look over your foster dog frequently for cuts, scrapes, fleas, and ticks. Do not apply additional flea or tick medications unless indicated or approved by your foster home coordinator.

Groom periodically with a grooming mitt or glove, as most dogs fresh off the track have never had much grooming or bathing. They will probably shed a little and enjoy the attention very much.

Crating

Greyhounds are used to being in a wire crate at the track, and we require that you continue with crate training your foster dog. Not only is it safer for the foster dog, but many greyhounds like the comfort of their crate or "den", since it is the only thing similar to the racing environment. It is important to maintain a crating schedule with your foster dog, so that when he/she goes to their new home, the adoptive family can crate the dog when they are gone if they choose to do so. We recommend using the crate as a positive tool by feeding in the crate and encouraging good crating behaviors by using treats or a Kong as reward for good crate manners. If your foster dog is having trouble with the crate, or is experiencing crate or separation anxiety, please contact your foster coordinator for help and advice on how to proceed.

Housetraining

Greyhounds come from the track crate-trained, and the transition to housetraining is usually accomplished relatively quickly if you follow the guidelines or suggestions given below. • When you are at home, keep the dog with you on a leash so that you can catch him or her in the act of having an accident. Correct the dog with a firm, "NO!" and take him or her outside. When the dog goes outside, praise profusely.

- When you are not at home, confine the dog to a crate in a room he/she is familiar with and feels comfortable in.
- Never correct a dog if you don't catch him or her in the act; dogs aren't able to connect your correction with an action that took place five minutes before.
- Do not allow the dog free run of the house until you are sure that he or she is completely housetrained. Remember that greyhounds have never had such freedoms at the race track, and even though they will acclimate rapidly to home life, it takes time and patient guidance to accomplish. It may take days or weeks for your foster dog to be able to have free roam of the house, based on their proven reliability. Err on the side of caution and do not give too much freedom too soon.

Walks

Take your foster dog for walks and teach him or her to stroll calmly on a leash. The exercise is good for both of you. Remember to use caution with dogs who have a high prey drive. Even cat friendly dogs will be interested in darting after a squirrel or rabbit encountered outside. Dogs new from the track or kennel often weave while walking or walk so close to your leg they run into you. This is normal behavior. Encourage your foster dog to walk appropriately at your left side without pulling or crossing your path. Keeping the leash short while on walks can help this when starting out.

Dog Parks

While we want your foster dog to receive the appropriate amount of exercise, we suggest that you wait a week or two to take your foster dog to the dog park, if that is an activity you regularly participate in. If the dog does not know his/her name well, is shy, doesn't listen well, or is not yet bonded to you, we suggest holding off on dog park activities.

Play Teach your greyhound to play! This is something he or she has probably never done. Most greyhounds love soft stuffed animals, especially if they squeak. Some greyhounds take time to learn how to play or may not play until they feel more settled in and comfortable in their surroundings. Again, this is normal behavior.

Outdoors, greyhounds can work up fairly good speed, even in a small yard. Look for small stumps or pipes that could break or dislocate a toe, or bushes with sharp, broken branches at greyhound eye level. Also check for poisonous plants; some of the more deadly plants are:

yew

mistletoe

English holly berries

philodendron

Jerusalem cherry

azaleas

rhododendron

foxglove

water hemlock

milkweed

rattlebox

corn cockle

Jimson weed

Jessamine

oleander

castor bean

NOTE: If you have a pool, be aware that although dogs are natural swimmers, they cannot pull themselves up! Most greyhounds have never seen a swimming pool and do not understand what it is. Often, they will just walk off the edge of the pool and fall into the water because they don't have any experience with pools. Never leave your foster dog unattended in the yard if you have a swimming pool. Greyhounds have very little body fat and tend to sink if they are not proficient swimmers.

Your foster dog and other animals

Socialization

SUPERVISE and socialize your foster dog with your own greyhounds, dogs, cats, and children if appropriate. Remember - your foster dog has been a racing machine thus far in its life. Your mission is to show this dog how to relax and be a good family pet. It is important to carefully observe your foster dog's body language while meeting new people or other animals. You should also use caution and be aware of another dog's reaction to your foster dog to prevent any inappropriate interactions.

Getting acquainted

Take precautions while you are getting to know the dog's personality, especially when he or she is around other animals and children. Introduce them to one another slowly. NEVER leave the foster dog alone with children, cats, small pets, or other dogs.

Introducing the foster to your greyhound(s)

1. Have them meet on neutral territory; for example, introduce them on the sidewalk in front of your house or down the block.
2. Muzzle all the dogs to ensure safety.
3. Keep the foster dog on a short leash close to your side. Bring out your dogs on leashes one at a time. Do not let them rush the new dog. Observe the reaction of the new dog and of your own dogs. Watch for signs of aggression and/or dominance: - head and tail held high, stiff, and rigid; - tail held high and wagging stiffly; - raised hairs along the spine from shoulders to tail; - growling or snapping of teeth; - one dog attempting to mount the other dog. Immediately correct any show of aggression with a very firm, "NO!"
4. With leashes still on, let them sniff and greet each other, then take them around your property or for a walk before taking them into the house.
5. If all dogs are behaving well with each other, you may remove leashes, but keep them muzzled. Continue to monitor and supervise. Do not leave dogs alone unattended until you are 100% positive that all are getting along well.

Introducing the foster dog to your cats - if the dog tested cat friendly

Introduce the greyhound to your cat indoors with the greyhound muzzled and leashed. Hold the leash tightly in your hand. Leave the cat on the floor. Walk toward the cat slowly. If the dog pulls or lunges, give a sharp pull on the leash and shout, "NO!" Keep the dog on a leash for the first few days when the cat is present. Correct the dog every time it shows interest in the cat. A spray bottle filled with water is helpful.

If you observe any of the following signs, please inform the foster coordinator:

- teeth clicking or snapping and ears alert
- fixed gaze or stare that cannot be broken
- trembling or lunging
- lip licking or drooling

Behavior toward small animals

NEVER allow the foster dog to run and play with cats or small dogs - indoors or outdoors. Play can turn to hunt very quickly, and no cat or small dog is fast enough to get out of the way of a determined greyhound. When you are introducing your foster dog to small dogs or cats, if appropriate, keep them on leash and muzzled to ensure safety and watch their body language and behavior carefully. If your foster dog is having trouble interacting appropriately, please let your foster coordinator know.

Introducing the foster dog to children

Remember that most greyhounds have never seen children or had much time interacting with them. Some greyhounds are fearful of little people, and some are too inquisitive. Again, like introductions to other things, please use caution. In general, children should not be approaching the dog, they should be calling the dog over to them. If the dog approaches in a calm manner, then the dog may enjoy interaction with well-behaved children. If the dog is fearful, lunging or jumping, or any behavior that seems inappropriate, call your foster coordinator for help. Never let a child hug or kiss a greyhound new to your home or approach the foster dog while it is on its bed or in its crate. Some greyhounds can be space protective or space defensive, so use caution and always supervise. As the old saying goes, Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.

Possessive behavior

Your foster dog may be possessive of food, toys, and space at first. Your own dogs may begin to exhibit possessive behavior. Do not leave dogs unsupervised with food, rawhides, toys, etc. Correct all possessive behavior with a firm No! or call your foster coordinator for advice on how to work through this type of behavior.

Do not let your foster dog on the furniture

Your foster dog's new owners may not want him/her on the furniture, and therefore, we don't want to teach a dog bad habits or have a new owner frustrated with their greyhound when they arrive at their new home. It will be up to the adopter to decide if the dog should go on the furniture or not. The best method, even if your dogs are allowed on the furniture, is to discourage your foster dog from doing so.

Leaving pets home alone

Separate the foster dog from other animals by placing it in a crate. Communicate with your foster coordinator, and the adoption rep to find out what the situation will be in the dog's new home, if that is known. Otherwise, crating your foster dog is the best method to be certain they are safe.

Insurance

We encourage you to enjoy your foster dog and socialize him or her as you would your own dog. We do, however, want to remind you that we do not carry insurance as a group that would cover your foster dog for liability. If your foster dog inflicts injury on another dog or person, your homeowner's insurance policy may cover you under the liability portion of your policy. You may want to check with your insurance company to find out how and when such protection is extended. For these reasons, it's imperative not only for your foster dog, but for

the overall good of GPA-WI to be extremely careful with interactions your foster dog may have with people and other pets.

Receipts & Reimbursements

Receipts may be requested for extra expenses incurred while your foster dog is in your care. This will be a receipt generated by the GPA-Treasurer which can be used for the purpose of claiming it as a donation/deduction on your taxes. Occasionally, situations will occur that might create expenses which are eligible for reimbursement. For instance, if your foster dog is having trouble adjusting to his new diet and supplements or a different food is recommended by a veterinarian. If you purchase these types of items for your foster dog, under the direction and approval of the foster home coordinator, please save your receipt(s) for submission to the GPA-Treasurer. All reimbursements must receive prior approval. Please contact the foster home coordinator for more details.

The Adoption Process

While the foster greyhound is in your care, GPA representatives will be reviewing adoption applications and attempting to find the perfect match for your dog, if your foster dog is not pre-adopted. For this reason, it is important that you keep the Foster Coordinator up-to-date regarding your foster dog's personality, behavior, habits, health, and idiosyncrasies. You may be asked to speak to the prospective adopters or allow them to visit the dog in your home. Help the prospective adopters interact with your foster dog and show him or her off to the best of your ability. You may or may not be asked to help transport the foster dog to the adoption location. We would appreciate it if you would bathe the foster dog and check him or her for overall cleanliness (ears, eyes, toes, teeth) before turning him or her over to the new family.

Adoption tips

If your foster dog is not pre-adopted, speak to your foster coordinator about whether it is appropriate to take your foster dog to events or out in public to promote his/her adoption. If appropriate, show off the dog's positive traits, and work on correcting any bad habits. Another tip to think about: what you say about your foster dog and greyhounds in general has a great impact on potential adopters. You can scare them away by jokingly saying the wrong thing. Emphasize your dog's positive qualities, cute expressions, and delightful personality. Stay positive. This is the best way to promote your foster dog and greyhounds in general.

Meet & Greets / Events

If your foster dog is available for adoption and has had reasonable time to learn appropriate behaviors in public, ask your foster coordinator if you should take the dog to Meet & Greets or other events. This is a great way to gain exposure for your foster dog and promote adoption. If you do take your foster dog out in public, be aware of your surroundings and the interactions with people and other dogs. If your foster dog has a high prey drive, or tends to act out with inappropriate behaviors such as barking or lunging at other dogs or people, you may want to discuss with your foster coordinator how to manage this situation, or whether it

is appropriate to bring your foster dog to these gatherings. Bad behavior by a foster dog can reflect badly on the group and likely will not help your foster dog get adopted. It is important to remember that not all dogs are meant to participate in these events, so use your good judgement when representing GPA-WI.

Surrenders>Returns

A surrender is a dog that has been adopted and is returned to us. When we get a lot of surrenders, it makes it harder for us to rescue dogs from the track. Some of the most common reasons dogs are returned are:

- housebreaking problems;
- separation anxiety;
- inappropriate behaviors;
- change of lifestyle (divorce, medical issues, financial issues)

Sometimes dogs are returned to GPA-WI that were not originally adopted through our program. They may have been adopted from the track, or perhaps the family moved here from another state. Regardless of where a greyhound originated from, our goal is to help all greyhounds in need if appropriate to do so.

As a foster parent, you can help reduce the chances that your foster dog is returned. Make sure your foster is appropriately housetrained. Practice leaving the dog home alone, so it gets used to a working person's schedule. Correct undesirable behaviors such as jumping, counter surfing, digging, chewing, soiling inappropriately, and pulling on the leash. If your foster dog is having problems or an issue, contact your foster coordinator for advice and help. Your goal, as the foster family, is to have the dog "graduate with honors" into its new home!

Important phone numbers

Ginger Gill (Foster Coordinator) 414-303-6761 gingergpa@gmail.com

GPA-WI Loose/Lost/Found Greyhound Hotline 414-301-2599 Call or Text 24/7

Kay Fleming (President) president@gpawisconsin.org

If you have any questions, or in case of emergency, please contact one of the coordinators immediately. If the emergency is life-threatening, take your foster dog to the nearest emergency animal hospital.

Thank you for your hard work as foster parents!

We and the greyhounds appreciate it!

RECOMMENDED READING

Adopting the Racing Greyhound, Cynthia A. Branigan.

The Complete Book of Greyhounds, Julia Barnes

Greyhounds: A Complete Pet Owner's Manual, D. Caroline Coile.

Retired Racing Greyhounds For Dummies, Lee Livingood

The Greyhound: An Owner's Guide to a Happy Healthy Pet, Daniel Braun Stern

The Guide to Adopting an Ex-Racing Greyhound, Carolyn Raeke

Living With More Than One Dog, Carol Cronan.

Childproofing Your Dog, Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson.

Good Owners, Great Dogs, Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson.

Good Dogs, Bad Habits, Jeanne Carlson.

Just Say "Good Dog": Teaching the Family Dog, Linda Goodman

Playtraining Your Dog, Patricia Gail Burnham