



MEMPHIS ANIMAL SERVICES

Dog Foster Handbook

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This foster manual was created thanks to the generosity of Austin Pets Alive! It is based on their original handbook and used with permission.

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE MAS DOG FOSTER PROGRAM

A. What is a Foster Home?

A foster home is a temporary living situation for pets while they are awaiting placement in a permanent home or to move to one of our partner organizations. We rely on our foster homes to take a dog into their care to help that dog's mental or physical wellbeing or to create space in our shelters for other dogs in need of rescue. Foster families provide shelter, food, care and love. The number of animals we can save depends entirely on the number of people we have to foster them.

B. Why Foster?

Most of all, fostering saves lives! The more animals there are in foster homes, the less shelters have to kill animals because their kennels are full. Also, many homeless dogs are not ready to be adopted. Finding a foster home for them may be the only way for them to get from a shelter, where they may be at risk of death, to their forever home.

But being a foster parent has rewards beyond saving a life. It can be a chance to have an animal companion without a lifetime commitment—puppies are wonderful, but do you really want a year of puppyhood?! A foster dog can be a great temporary companion for an existing pet (if medically and behaviorally safe to introduce the animals). In some cases, you can experience the special challenge of helping a dog recover from an illness or injury or the trauma of losing a beloved owner or home. You can also gain valuable handling knowledge and experience by working to train your foster dog or help your foster dog overcome a behavioral issue. And it's incredibly fulfilling to give extra TLC to these four-legged friends that need our help. Above all, you get the satisfaction and joy of knowing that you have saved a life!

C. What Types of Dogs Need Foster Care?

Foster homes are most needed for large adult dogs or orphaned puppies under 8 weeks old. We will occasionally seek fosters for pregnant dogs, moms with newborns, senior dogs, dogs needing medical care, or dogs awaiting transport to another facility.

Basically, foster care is for all dogs who need a little extra TLC! Fosters also help us save many more dogs than we could with just our shelter. Some foster homes choose to specialize in fostering a specific type of dog—for example, only seniors— while others choose to foster any dog in need.

D. What are the Responsibilities of a Dog Foster Home?

In general, foster homes are responsible for providing foster dogs with adequate food and water, shelter from the elements, exercise, and plenty of love. In addition to providing the basics, foster parents may also be asked to administer any necessary medications or other medical care. Foster parents are responsible for picking up their foster dog from Memphis Animal Services and transporting them to and from our clinic for appointments (see below for Clinic information), and in most cases, adoption sites and events. Foster parents are also expected to actively market their foster dog for adoption, be responsive to potential adopters, arrange meet and greets with potential adopters, provide meet and greet feedback to our staff, and arrange hand off with their foster dog's adopter. It is very important for MAS dog fosters to monitor their email.

In addition, foster parents play a crucial role in rehabilitating rescued animals. They are in a unique position to help our most in need animals learn how to love and trust again. Foster parents can help these animals become more "adoptable" by providing socialization and basic training. By teaching or re-teaching a dog how to live in a home setting, foster parents help increase the odds for a smooth and successful transition into a permanent adoptive home.

II. CONTACTS AND LOCATIONS

A. Dog Foster Coordinator

As an MAS Dog Foster Parent, you are not alone! The entire MAS team will be able to assist you, with your main point of contact being the Dog Volunteer & Outreach Specialist. We want you to have a positive experience fostering for MAS, so please do not hesitate to contact us if you are experiencing any difficulty or have any questions or concerns.

Dog Volunteer and Outreach Specialist: Jennyfer Hardin

Mas.foster@memphistn.gov

- Provides insight on pet behavior and information about MAS procedures and policies.
- Will assist you with all activities related to the adoption of your foster dog. This includes information on meet and greets and arrangements to finalize an adoption.
- Can assist you with most medical questions, but for emergencies, please follow the guidelines under section VI.

B. Locations

Memphis Animal Services (MAS)
2350 Appling City Cove
Memphis, TN 38133
Hours: 7 days a week 12:00-4:00PM

III. BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT

A. Responsibilities and Considerations

Fostering is a tremendously rewarding experience, but it takes a lot of time and effort. The basic responsibilities are:

- Provide a safe, clean, and caring environment
- Provide food, water, toys/enrichment, and shelter
- Provide exercise and socialization, as appropriate
- Monitor any medical and/or behavioral problems
- Transport to/from any medical appointments
- Transport to/from adoption sites and events
- Respond to email inquiries regarding your foster dog and communicate with potential adopters within 48 hours
- Arrange a date, time, and place for potential adopters to meet your foster dog and provide meet and greet feedback
- Take pictures/video and create a bio for your foster dog.
- Arrange hand off to your foster dog's adopter

In addition to the basics, please consider the following before deciding if fostering a dog is right for you:

- Are you permitted to have dogs in your residence (e.g., if you rent, does your landlord allow dogs)? Are there any restrictions on the type of dog that is permitted (e.g., breed, size, etc.)? If there is a required pet deposit, are you willing to pay it prior to taking a foster dog? If you live in a community with shared walls (e.g., apartment, condominium, townhome), will a dog's barking or whining present a noise issue?
- If you do not live alone, is everyone in your residence ok with you fostering a dog? Fostering is a household affair. Even if you do all the work, everyone will be affected by having this addition to your household. This is especially important if you have roommates. Everyone in the household needs to consent to your fostering a dog and understand and follow the Dog Foster Program's protocols for the health and safety of you, the other residents, and your foster dog.
- If you have other animals:
 - How will they react to a new dog in the home?
 - Are they spayed or neutered? Some of our foster dogs will not yet have had spay or neuter surgery, so we want to ensure that they don't have contact with any "intact" dogs.
 - Do any of them have any health issues that might make them more susceptible to disease or other medical concerns?
 - Have they been fully vaccinated for DAPP, Rabies, and Bordetella? The latter is for kennel cough and is not a routine vaccine. However, if you board your dog it was probably required. Please check your vet records to see if this specific vaccine has been done. If your dog(s) are not up to date on vaccines, you should wait a minimum of 5 days after your dog's vaccinations have been administered before taking in a foster dog. We also recommend that you follow your vet's recommendations regarding the addition of a foster dog to your home.
 - Do you have the ability to separate your foster dog from your resident animals? We recommend that you keep them separate for at least the first week. There are two reasons for this. First, we want to protect your resident animals from any undiagnosed medical conditions. Second, from a behavior perspective, it is usually best to slowly introduce a new dog to the "pack."
- Do you have the time to devote to caring for a foster dog? Young puppies may need to be fed as often as every few hours. Adult dogs need the stimulation and exercise of daily play. As a foster, you are expected to provide transportation, put forth marketing efforts, and participate in meet and greets with potential adopters.

- **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO TAKE YOUR FOSTER DOG TO ANY DOG PARK OR OTHER PUBLIC OFF-LEASH AREAS.**

B. Application Process

If you are reading this, you are likely already approved to foster dogs. But if not, and you are interested in becoming an MAS Foster Parent, you first need to submit our dog foster application. We will review your application and contact you if we have any questions.

Once approved, please join our Memphis Animal Services Dog Fosters Facebook page. We use this group to alert you to dogs that need foster and other Dog Foster Program news or information.

IV. GETTING STARTED

This section describes the steps you need to take before bringing home a foster dog. Your advance preparation will help ensure that your foster experience is a good one for you, your foster dog, and any other animals or people living in your home. These guidelines are designed to answer the most common questions and ease the transition for all concerned.

A. Preparing for Your Foster Dog

The following is a checklist of items you will need before bringing home a foster dog:

- Food and water bowls.
- Handling equipment: In most cases, we will be able to provide you with a collar, a leash, and a harness, but it would be a good idea to have these items on hand.
- Food and treats. We feed the dogs at the shelter Hill's Science Diet. However, any good quality food is okay. Puppies and nursing or pregnant moms should get puppy food or gruel (depending on their age). It's a good idea to have both dry and canned food available.
- Chew toys and other enrichment items, appropriate to the size and age of your foster dog. If you provide rawhides, watch your foster dog the first time to ensure there is no problem, such as trying to swallow too large of a piece.
- Travel carrier or crate (for transporting your foster dog, keeping your foster dog safe and out of trouble while you're away, and help with house-training).
If you don't have a crate, we can usually loan you one.
- Dog bed or blankets to provide your foster dog with a comfortable place to sleep.
- Puppy formula, puppy pads, newspaper, or old sheets (if you are fostering puppies).
- Hand sanitizer.
- Bleach.

****All supplies for the Dog Foster Program are donated and can be given out to foster parents as long as supplies are in stock. For any equipment that we loan to you, please make sure to return it at the end of your foster experience****

Once your home is ready, make sure that you understand all of the information that the shelter has provided you and ask questions in advance. Our correspondence contains critical information that you will need to know before beginning, and throughout, your foster experience. It is very important that you

thoroughly read all the emails we send you, including any attachments, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of you and your foster dog.

B. Selecting Your Foster Dog

Everyday MAS is identifying dogs that need a foster home. Most adult dogs that are not on stray hold and don't have any major medical or behavior issues are eligible for foster care. You can visit the shelter anytime during open hours to meet these pets. Occasionally, our Volunteer and Outreach Specialist may send a "plea" for a dog or puppy with special needs to our established foster base. We rely on you to contact the Volunteer and Outreach Specialist via email if you are interested in fostering a dog with special needs.

Because we are often dealing with dogs at risk for euthanasia, our foster pleas are very time sensitive, and our ability to save a dog often relies solely on our ability to find a foster within a very short timeframe. Because of this, it is imperative that you frequently check your email and notify the shelter if you are interested in a particular foster dog. Your quick response to a foster plea can literally mean the difference between life and death for these dogs.

When corresponding with our team, it is important to let them know about any special considerations you might have:

- Do you have dogs that haven't been spayed or neutered?
- Are your pets current on all vaccinations?
- Do you have young children?
- Do you have a high-traffic home?
- Can you keep the foster dog separate from your resident animal(s)?
- Do you have any other fosters already in your home?

Please note that MAS does not allow more than 2 "sets" of fosters at one time. A set consists of one litter of puppies and mom, 2-3 puppy siblings, or 1 adult animal. In limited cases, a "bonded" pair may be placed together at the discretion of MAS.

C. Picking Up Your Foster Dog

After you have found your perfect match, the dog may have to remain at MAS for spay/neuter surgery. If this is the case, our team will give you a call when he/she is ready for pick up. Pets that are already fixed can leave with you that day!

We recommend that you bring the following when picking up:

- Travel Carrier/Crate (one can be borrowed, if needed)
- Blankets/Covers to protect your car from scratches or accidents Paper towels/wipes for car cleanup, if necessary

Before taking your foster dog to your car, please make sure they are secured on a leash or in a travel carrier/crate. If you are fostering a puppy that is younger than 16 weeks of age do not allow the puppy to touch the ground in any public area; this includes MAS! Put them in a travel carrier/crate or carry them. If your foster dog can touch the ground and is on a leash, give them an opportunity to relieve themselves before placing them in your car.

Rescue dogs can be scared and disoriented by the changing environment and are often excellent escape artists. If an MAS team member has told you that your dog is a flight risk, please follow these extra precautions:

- The dog must **wear a collar AT ALL TIMES**.
- The dog must **wear a harness AT ALL TIMES**, including inside the house.
- The dog must always be on a **HELD** leash when outside, including within an enclosed area like a yard or patio; the dog must never be off leash.
- The dog must be transported in a travel carrier/crate and not removed from the travel carrier/crate until the dog is safely indoors.
- All household members must understand and follow these rules.

D. At Home with Your Foster Dog

When you get home, make sure your foster dog has a chance to relieve himself before going inside. Neither of you want to start out with an accident! Begin by showing your foster dog his sleeping area, either the crate (strongly recommended) or a place with his own bedding. If you have other animals, we recommend you keep them separated from any resident animal for at least the first week. If you want to introduce your foster dog to your resident dog(s) after the first week, we can provide more information on the "best practice" for introducing dogs upon request.

If your foster was sent home with special handling equipment, please leave those items on at all times. We place this equipment on your foster dog for their protection and to reduce the likelihood of an escape. If you feel your foster dog no longer needs the harness, please contact the Volunteer and Outreach Specialist.

Do not leave your foster dog unattended in a fenced yard. If you have a doggy door, please keep it closed unless you are present to monitor the dog(s) at all times in the fenced yard. Although your yard may seem "escape proof," too often our foster dogs have managed to find a way out. This is also their time to begin bonding with people again and being left alone outside could cause them increased anxiety. Fully vaccinated dogs can be taken on walks, but always on a leash. Never allow your foster dog to be off leash in public. This means no dog parks or other off-leash areas. At this point, we don't know enough about the foster dog, or the other dogs at the park, to know how they will react.

Please do not feed your foster dog "people food." In limited cases, you may be asked to give your foster dog "people food" (e.g., yogurt or pumpkin to help with diarrhea), but in general it's best to stick to dog food. Puppies and nursing or pregnant moms should get puppy food or gruel (depending on their age) for the additional nutrition. If you want to bathe your foster dog, you can use a mild shampoo or detergent. Do not, however, bathe your foster dog for 48 hours after treatment with a topical flea medication as the shampoo could negate the effects.

Special precautions need to be taken with puppies. Puppies should be housed in a private, confined area. We recommend a bathroom or any room where they will not have full access to the residence. Very young, small puppies can be confined to a crate initially. Confining puppies not only helps protect your possessions, it also keeps them out of harm's way. Puppies have an uncanny knack for being able to get themselves into precarious situations! Again, do not allow your puppy(ies) to touch the ground in any public area; this includes MAS. Do not take your puppy(ies) to a public place, even if it's just to go to the

bathroom! This includes parks, pet stores, veterinary clinics or hospitals, boarding kennels, play yards, running trails, etc. It's very important that they are not exposed to the "germs" out in the world. If puppies need to be taken out in public—for example to the Clinic or an adoption event for which they are approved—they should be transported in a crate and only placed in a pen that has been sanitized. You should always have hand sanitizer handy and ask everyone (friends, family, neighbors, etc.) to use the sanitizer before touching your puppies. If your residence does not have a private outside area where unknown/unvaccinated dogs cannot go, you will need to use puppy pee pads as puppies cannot go outside on the ground.

If you need to have your foster dog moved, even temporarily, please contact the Volunteer & Outreach Specialist. We ask that you keep your foster dog until a new placement is found, if possible. Foster dogs can never be placed in the care of a neighbor, friend, pet sitter, roommate, or even a potential adopter without advance permission. Foster dogs are NOT allowed to travel outside of the Memphis area. It is important that foster dogs stay close enough to receive care in an emergency. If you plan to travel, please contact the Volunteer & Outreach Specialist to make arrangements for the care of your foster dog while you are gone.

IF YOUR FOSTER DOG GETS LOOSE OR IS LOST, IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY MAS BY EMAILING mas.foster@memphistn.gov.

V. BEHAVIOR ISSUES & TRAINING YOUR FOSTER DOG

It is common for a dog to experience some behavioral problems and need a period of adjustment when placed into a new environment. Foster parents are in a unique position to help increase the "adoptability" of their foster dogs by providing some basic training. This also gives you the opportunity to strengthen the bond with your foster dog and get him/her to trust people again. If you need help addressing behavior issues with your foster dog, please contact the Volunteer and Outreach Specialist. You should receive an email response within 72 hours. If it is time sensitive, please note that in the subject line of your email and contact mas.foster@memphistn.gov if you don't receive a timely response.

If your foster dog bites a human or other animal during foster care, immediately contact mas.foster@memphistn.gov. If the bite occurred to a child, the child should be taken to LeBonheur for treatment and a report is to be filed with the Memphis Police Department.

The following is a list of common behavioral problems as well as suggestions for behavior modification.

A. Lack of House-Training

Chances are your foster dog may need at least a refresher course in house-training. Many rescued dogs have spent most of their lives outside and never learned the rules of living indoors. Other dogs may have once been house-trained but may still have an accident or two when transitioning into a new home. Here are some key points to keep in mind during the process that are almost universally applicable:

1. Holding It: Every dog has their time limit. Puppies under six months are typically unable to hold it in for more than a few hours. Prepare for this! A healthy adult dog, even among smaller breeds, should have no trouble holding it for 8-10 hours in a crate or overnight. There are, of course, always exceptions.
2. Frequent Outings: To avoid accidents, you will want to make sure your foster dog has plenty of opportunities to go outside (if they are fully vaccinated). You also want to give them ample time.

Walk them for at least 15 minutes to encourage them and give them plenty of time to go potty. When they do go outside, you want to capture this wanted behavior (just like when teaching a dog a new command). By capture, we mean giving lots of praise and treats for doing what we want.

3. **Reward Only:** It's vital to successful housetraining that we NEVER scold a dog for going potty inside, even—especially—when we catch them in the act. More often than not, the dog won't understand that you are scolding them for going inside. They are more likely to think you are scolding them for going at all, and as a result they will want to hide from you to do their business. (This means sneaking off to quiet, isolated corners of the home or behind furniture, and no one wants to play "Find the Smell!"). Instead, our focus should be on praising and treating every time the pup goes outside. If your pup is learning for the first time or is struggling with learning outside from in, you can amp up the reward by "jackpotting" even a little outdoor tinkle with a BUNCH of treats and praise (or toys, or whatever your pup thinks is a great reward).
4. **Prevention & Redirection:** If you are still in the process of housetraining, make sure you have eyes on your pup at all times. Keep a lightweight leash attached to their collar always (what we call a "drag leash" or "drag line") so that, the second they start to go, you can quickly pick up the end of the leash and walk them outside. Remain neutral until they're outside, and as soon as they start to finish their business out there you can reward! If you are preoccupied with other tasks, limit their access. Use a crate or exercise pen to keep them from going wherever they please.

B. Chewing

Destructive chewing is a phase that all puppies go through. It usually starts around three months and can last until the dog is one year old. During this time, the dog's adult teeth are coming in and chewing helps relieve the pain. Adult dogs may also have problems with chewing, but for different reasons. Adult dogs usually chew on inappropriate things because they are anxious or bored, or because they have never been taught what is appropriate to chew on. The best solution for destructive chewing is providing your foster dog with something that is acceptable to chew on. Alternate chew toys daily and do not leave all toys out all the time. Dogs generally get bored of toys and find alternative things to chew. If you catch your dog chewing on something inappropriate, interrupt them with a neutral (non-praise, but also non-punishment) noise that gets their attention. A mild "eh eh" or "no" or a light clap of your hands are a couple ideas. Offer them an appropriate toy or chew instead as a means of redirecting the chewing behavior.

If the destructive chewing occurs when you are away, consider confining the dog to a crate. A crate will help keep both the dog and your home safe. It is also important to make sure that your foster dog is getting plenty of exercise. There is an adage that "a tired dog is a good dog". Sometimes a dog chews for no other reason than they are bored (as one might chew on the cap of a pen in a dull meeting). It's important to make sure your dog has not only plenty of physical stimulation, but mental stimulation as well. Mental stimulation can include training games, puzzle toys, even a Kong stuffed with treats. A dog can run around the yard for an hour and still have stores of energy (or at least enough for chewing!), but put that same dog in front of a puzzle toy that takes them fifteen minutes and suddenly you have one pooped pup!

C. Separation Anxiety

It is common for foster dogs to experience some separation anxiety when left alone. The severity of the anxiety can range from pacing and whining to much more destructive behavior. A dog may experience separation anxiety simply because he has a very dependent personality, or because she is reacting to a history of abuse or abandonment. Whatever the reason, separation anxiety can be difficult to deal with

because you are not around when it happens. The most common sign that a dog may be suffering from separation anxiety is destructive behavior when left alone. A dog may scratch frantically at the door or make other attempts to get out of the house, or the dog may chew on things or engage in other destructive behaviors. If you have reason to suspect that your foster dog is suffering from separation anxiety when you are away, consider confining the dog to a crate. If used appropriately, the crate will help the dog feel safe and secure and hopefully relieve some of the anxiety. And, until the separation anxiety itself can be examined and dealt with, a crate will help keep both your home and your foster dog safe.

If you do have the time to work with your foster dog, there are several things you can try to help alleviate separation anxiety. Start out by leaving the dog in your home for very short intervals. Tell the dog to wait and then walk outside for a few minutes before returning. When you return to the house, praise the dog for waiting. Begin to gradually leave the dog for longer and longer periods of time. It is important that, when you leave, you remain calm and not make a big deal out of leaving. It is also important that you not be too excited when you return. You want to praise the dog, but calmly. You don't want your return to be such an exciting event that the dog anxiously anticipates the moment of your return. Perhaps the most effective treatment for separation anxiety is time. Be patient. As your foster dog spends more time with you, he will begin to feel more secure in knowing that when you leave, you always come back. Some destructive behavior that appears to be related to separation anxiety may, in fact, be the product of boredom, so make sure your foster dog gets plenty of physical and mental stimulation per the "Chewing" Section above.

D. Crate Training

MAS strongly recommends using a crate for your foster dog. A crate is a great way to keep both your foster dog and your home safe. If you decide to use a crate, make sure that the crate is always a positive place for your foster dog. Never use a crate for punishment. When introducing a dog to a crate, use a happy tone of voice and tell the dog to "kennel up." When the dog enters the crate, give her lots of praise and perhaps a treat reward. If you have a difficult time getting the dog to enter the crate or if the dog seems afraid, try leaving the crate door open and placing the dog's food and water bowls just inside the door. Any time your foster dog shows any sign of curiosity in the crate, praise and reward him. You will notice the dog going to the crate and looking at you for assurance and praise. Allow the dog to wander into the crate and eat at his leisure. Once the dog seems more comfortable with the crate, you can try confining the dog to the crate for short intervals.

Never confine a puppy to a crate for longer than 3-4 hours at a time or an adult dog for longer than 8-10 hours at a time. Remember, the dog will not want to soil his crate, so forcing the dog to stay in the crate longer than he can comfortably "hold it" is inappropriate.

VI. MEDICAL CARE

MAS cannot guarantee that the foster pet will be healthy when placed in your care. A dog that appears healthy at the time of placement can sometimes show signs of illness several days later. For this reason, it is very important that foster dogs are kept separate from your own animal(s), at least for that first seven days, and that you keep your own pets up to date on vaccinations.

If you notice that your foster animal has mild, cold-like symptoms (sneezing or coughing occasionally, clear ocular or nasal discharge), diarrhea or has vomited, but is alert, active, eating and drinking well, please notify the foster coordinator at mas.foster@memphistn.gov so that it can be determined how best to proceed.

It is important that you thoroughly clean all items and areas that have been in contact with a sick foster dog. You can use a 10% bleach solution to reliably kill most viruses and bacteria. Items and areas that need to be cleaned should be thoroughly wetted with the bleach solution and allowed to stand for several minutes before rinsing.

The MAS medical team provides most medical care for our foster dogs. MAS will not reimburse foster parents for the cost of ANY medical care outside of MAS or Animal Emergency Center (AEC).

A. Routine Medical Care

The Volunteer & Outreach Specialist schedules all routine and preventive medical care. However, if you have not been contacted by the team and you know that a vaccine or monthly preventative is due or other medical care is needed, please contact them.

Our Clinic is located in the same building as the shelter. It is the second door on the right once you enter the front gate. Please refer to the section below for emergency medical care.

MAS vaccinates for DAPP (Distemper, Adenovirus, Parainfluenza, and Parvo Virus), Bordetella (vaccinates against the most common form of Kennel Cough), and Rabies. In addition, all dogs receive flea/tick and heartworm (HW) prevention. Dogs and puppies are dewormed.

B. Spay/Neuter Surgery

Dogs and puppies are spayed/neutered prior to placement in a foster home unless they are a temporary transport foster, underweight, malnourished, ill, or are generally just not healthy enough for surgery. Older dogs are spayed or neutered as soon as they are medically ready. Nursing moms can be spayed after their pups have been weaned and the mom's milk has dried up. Because of the limited number of surgery slots, it is vital that you keep your scheduled appointment.

Your foster dog needs to be healthy for at least seven days before surgery. Please notify us if prior to his/her surgery date he/she is exhibiting any upper respiratory symptoms such as a runny nose, sneezing, coughing, and/or congestion or any other signs of illness; if so, his/her surgery will need to be delayed.

C. Emergency Medical Care

The Volunteer and Outreach Specialist can assist you with most medical questions; however, if you have an emergency, please email mas.foster@memphistn.gov (during shelter hours) or call Animal Emergency Center at (901) 323-4563 (6pm-8am).

Please give as much detail as possible. Be sure to include:

- Your foster dog's name and ID Number

- Your name and phone number
- A detailed description of your concerns
- Is your foster eating and/or drinking? If not, how long has it been without food and/or water?
- Any vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, or sneezing? If so, how long has this been going on?
- Does he/she seem lethargic?
- Any eye or nose discharge? If so, what color is it?
- Symptoms of an Emergency:
 - Not moving or unable to stand up
 - Bleeding
 - Not eating for more than two feedings if an un-weaned puppy
 - Not eating for more than 24 hours if an adult
 - Not breathing or open mouth breathing
 - Drooling profusely
 - Tremors or convulsions
 - Appears drunk or unstable when walking or loses balance when walking
 - Constant vomiting or diarrhea

D. Emergency Procedures

If your foster animal has severe symptoms, such as frequent vomiting, lethargy, yellow/green ocular or nasal discharge, previously undocumented hair loss, straining to urinate or defecate, please notify the foster coordinator at mas.foster@memphistn.gov. You will bring the animal to the shelter to be dropped off and seen by a veterinarian during our intake hours 12:00 PM – 3:30 PM Tuesday – Saturday unless otherwise instructed. If you are fostering a litter of kittens or puppies, even if only one animal is showing symptoms, the entire litter should be brought in to be examined. You will be notified when pets are ready for pickup. Please be aware that our veterinary staff must prioritize urgent/emergency situations, so wait times will vary.

E. After Hours Emergency

If you have a true emergency outside of shelter hours (6pm – 8am), please email the foster coordinator at mas.foster@memphistn.gov. Signs of a true emergency include but are not limited to lethargy, persistent vomiting, poor or nonresponsive, seizures, pain, severe bloody diarrhea, persistent vocalizing accompanying afore mentioned conditions, difficulty breathing, and difficulty urinating.

If you do not receive an immediate response via email, you can take your foster animal to Animal Emergency Center - 3767 Summer Ave, Memphis, TN 38122. When you present your foster animal to the emergency clinic, you must inform the staff there that it is a Memphis Animal Services foster animal and you must provide them with the animal's MAS ID#. The emergency clinic staff will then contact designated MAS staff to verify that treatment can be provided. If the foster parent is unable to provide emergency clinic staff with the animal's MAS ID#, the animal may still be treated, but at the foster parent's expense. Animals taken to the emergency vet clinic for treatment will be kept overnight at the clinic and an animal services officer will be contacted in the morning to transfer the animal back to the shelter for further treatment/care.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING MEDICAL CARE:

At intake, each dog receives a physical exam, vaccinations, a broad-spectrum de-wormer, and flea and heartworm prevention. We do not routinely test for nonserious illnesses and conditions such as intestinal parasites and skin parasites. Instead, we treat such illnesses and conditions symptomatically. In addition, intake exams are done by medical technicians, not veterinarians (unless we deem a vet check necessary). Please also note that because of the conditions from which most of our dogs are coming, it's very common for them to have worms, parasites, fleas, and/or upper respiratory infections (URIs). In general, our system of care recognizes that fosters are in the best position to identify non-serious illnesses and conditions, report them to the shelter, and quickly receive treatment to address them. This system means that each foster dog is receiving appropriate treatment/care in a home environment and enables MAS to continue pulling as many dogs as possible off euthanasia lists.

In terms of ongoing care, we aim to provide the same level of care that most animal lovers of average means could reasonably provide. This means that if your foster dog becomes ill or suffers an injury, our clinic team can provide an initial assessment and very basic diagnostics/treatments. Examples of diagnostics we can provide are fecal floats, skin scrapes, and "X-rays." If your foster pet has a condition that does not respond to symptomatic care or that requires more advanced diagnostics, you will be asked to take him/her to a private veterinary for evaluation. Please note that this visit will be completed at your expense.

While this protocol may be different than what you have come to expect from your private veterinary care, please know that when you foster a dog with MAS, you are not only saving the life of that dog, but of another dog in need.

VII. GETTING MY FOSTER DOG ADOPTED

MAS takes full responsibility for finding permanent adoptive homes for our foster dogs; however, it is a collaborative process with the foster parent. As soon as you take your foster dog home, we want to begin the process of getting him or her to their forever home. Foster parents are encouraged to let others know that their foster dog is available for adoption, but any person interested in adopting a foster dog needs to follow the shelter's adoption procedures.

A. Marketing

When fostering for Memphis Animal Services, you can be the animal's number one advocate! By acting as an adoption ambassador, you won't just be a foster care provider. You will be a photographer, videographer, biographer, a marketing specialist, and an adoption counselor!

1. Take at least one clear, landscape-oriented (horizontal) photo of the foster animal and email it to mas@memphistn.gov to be added to the shelter's website and/or social media accounts.
2. Take at least one clear, short video of the foster animal and email it to mas@memphistn.gov to be added to the shelter's website and/or social media accounts.
3. Write a short bio for your foster pet. Include likes/dislikes, personality quirks, and all the things you love about them! Please email it to mas@memphistn.gov to be added to the shelter's website and/or social media accounts. Also include your contact information if you are comfortable handling adoption inquiries for your foster pet. No one knows them better than you do! Who better to find them the perfect home? Tip: Going to be a regular foster parent? Create an email account solely for your foster needs! Example: danisfosterpets@gmail.com
4. Promote the foster animal on your personal social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor. Include details on how to adopt! Be sure to use a hashtag with their MAS ID number (#A123456) to link all of their posts together!

Please send the best pictures you can get of your foster dog. Ideally, we prefer at least one good picture of his/her face (looking right into the camera makes a huge difference), a full body picture to give people an idea of overall size, and a picture that shows personality. Dogs with videos get more adoption inquiries because people love to see them in action. The sooner we can get your foster posted, the sooner they have a chance of finding their forever home!

B. Inquiries

Most of the inquiries about your foster dog will come through email. After marketing efforts are made, there is often an influx of interest in the foster dog. We will direct all inquiries your way.

We ask foster parents to respond to each potential adopter as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours after the inquiry, so it's very important that you frequently monitor your emails. Since you know your foster dog best, it's important that each potential adopter hears directly from you. Before scheduling a meet and greet (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 dog'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 dog's special needs.

If it seems like a good match, please arrange a M&G as soon as possible (no later than 5 days after the inquiry). Please be aware that adoptions for animals in our foster program are not on a first come, first served basis as they are for animals physically in our facility. As the foster parent, you may speak with and/or meet with different potential adopters before deciding which would be the best fit for the animal(s) in your care. You should schedule the first inquirer that seems like a good match as the first M&G. 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. Please **DO**, however, let potential adopters know that there are or may be other potential adopters. If you do not feel an adopter is a good fit for your foster pet, please respectfully direct them to Memphis Animal Services to see shelter pets available.

C. Meet and Greets

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.

Suggest neutral sites for M&Gs such as an on-leash park or a pet supply store. We do not encourage doing meet and greets at your home with strangers. If potential adopters wish to do dog-to-dog introductions with your foster pet, you may arrange a time to meet at Memphis Animal Services during our open hours to do an introduction with a staff member present.

D. Adoption

After the M&G, please email the Volunteer and Outreach Specialist your thoughts on the M&G and why you believe the potential adopter is (or is not) a good fit for your foster dog. Please let us know immediately if you have any concerns that you would like us to address. If after the potential adopter wants to pursue the adoption after the M&G, please follow these steps:

1. Contact the Volunteer and Outreach Specialist right away to let us know! We will set up a time/date for the adopter to come in and finalize the adoption!
2. Once adoption paperwork is completed and fees are paid, the adopter will be given a copy of the pet's full medical history and microchip information.
3. After the foster animal has been spayed/neutered and microchipped, he/she may be transferred to the adopter. The pet should not be transferred to an adopter until the vetting and adoption contract are complete.

Because you'll know in advance when your foster dog is going to his/her forever home, you'll have plenty of time to say, "good bye" - not without a tear - but with no regrets because you know there is another rescue dog needing your help. Saying goodbye will likely be difficult, but we hope you also feel tremendous joy in the role that you have played in getting your foster dog to his/her new forever home!

Thank you for reading this Handbook and for helping us save another life!