



Low Riders of the West

Low Riders of the West is a 100% foster-based, volunteer rescue. Our dedicated foster families assist in housing and caring for our rescued animals in between adoptions. Low Riders of the West's fostering program is at little or no cost to you, as we provide all food, supplies, and medical care. Fostering takes dedicated individuals, yet is truly one of the most rewarding experiences in rescue. Our foster program sign up requires a minimum three week commitment.

This manual is designed to be a tool to assist you in being the best foster parent you can be. It is a fluid document and updated information will be included periodically. We encourage you to share your ideas and techniques

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long are dogs in foster homes?

It completely depends on the dog and the situation. The average stay in a foster home is about 2 - 3 weeks. However, most puppies and some dogs with great photos and stories on the web may have a shorter stay. Others, recovering from an injury, newborn puppies and senior dogs, may stay much longer.

2. Can I adopt my foster dog? YES!

As long as foster parents meet our requirements necessary for adoption, foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster dog.

3. How are foster dogs promoted?

Photos and stories of all adoptable dogs in foster homes are posted on Rescueme.org, adoptapet.com, facebook and our website. Foster parents can also help promote their foster dog to their family, friends, colleagues and the general public through a variety of means including facebook, instagram, word of mouth, and even just by walking your foster dog in local neighborhoods with an "Adopt Me" bandana around its neck.

4. What supplies are needed to foster?

Foster parents provide space, basic training, exercise and love for the dog. The shelter will provide you with all the other supplies and equipment needed throughout your foster experience. We provide food, crates, vet care and medicine.



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5. What if my foster dog becomes sick?

All veterinary costs are paid by Low Riders of the West. If a foster dog becomes sick, foster parents must call the Veterinary Appointments and Care Coordinator in order to get authorization for a vet visit. Once a veterinary visit has been authorized, you can make an appointment with one of the veterinarians listed below. These veterinarians bill the shelter directly so there is no cost to foster parents. If you visit a vet that is not on the list, you will not be reimbursed for the cost. If you have any general questions regarding the health of your foster dog, you can contact your Veterinary Appointments and Care Coordinator by messenger, email, or by the phone number they gave you.

Be sure to review the section for “Veterinary and Medical Care” in this manual.

Our Vet Clinics

Castle Pines 562 East Castle Pines Pkwy #C5, Castle Rock, CO 80108 (303) 688-3660

Hours of Operation -

Sunday	Closed
Monday	7AM-7PM
Tuesday	7AM-7PM
Wednesday	7AM-7PM
Thursday	7AM-7PM
Friday	7AM-6PM
Saturday	7AM-6PM

Deer Creek 10148 W Chatfield Ave, Littleton, CO 80127 (303) 973-4200

Hours of Operation -

Sunday	24 hours
Monday	24 hours
Tuesday	24 hours
Wednesday	24 hours
Thursday	24 hours
Friday	24 hours
Saturday	24 hours



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Dusty Plains

131 Co Rd 17, Elizabeth, CO 80107

(303) 646-0545

Hours of Operation -

Sunday	Closed
Monday	8AM-5PM
Tuesday	8AM-5PM
Wednesday	8AM-5PM
Thursday	8AM-5PM
Friday	8AM-5PM
Saturday	Closed

6. Can I take my foster dog to an off-leash dog park for exercise and socialization?

No. You are not allowed to take any foster dog from Low Riders of the West to an off-leash dog park. While these parks can be fun for some dogs, 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 a huge liability to the Low Riders of the West. Also, taking a leashed dog to a dog park can create barrier frustration and aggression in dogs.

7. How can I help my foster dog become more adoptable?

There are two ways to make a foster dog more adoptable. First and foremost is marketing. If no one knows about your foster dog, or how wonderful it 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 dog 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.

Secondly, our orphaned dogs benefit greatly from the exercise (with the exception of those with some medical conditions), basic training, special love and attention you give them. While marketing provides you with applicants, it’s always the dog that “closes the deal.” Providing a foster dog with basic training and manners will increase their adoptability. Shy dogs 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.

8. Can I return my foster dog to the shelter if I am unable to foster any longer?

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We prefer that foster parents continue to foster until we find a permanent home for their foster dog. It's extremely stressful for a dog to be moved around from foster home to foster home. However, we understand that situations change and it may become necessary to discontinue fostering a dog. We request that a foster parent provides as much notice as possible (minimum 1-2 weeks) so that we can find an alternative foster home to transfer the dog to. Of course, in an emergency a foster parent may always bring their dog back to Low Riders of the West.

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

If given enough notice, we can usually find volunteers that can foster sit for short durations. We ask that foster parents always keep their foster coordinators aware of any temporary foster sitting situations.

IMPORTANT RULES AND REMINDERS REGARDING YOUR FOSTER DOG

- **No off-leash park visits.**
- **Foster dogs must be on leash at all times when outdoors unless in your own secured fenced yard.**
- **Any aggressive behavior must be immediately communicated to your foster coordinator.**
- **All vet visits must be pre-approved by calling your foster coordinator.**
- **You must visit a vet listed above**
- **Foster parents must respond within 24 hours to communications from Low Riders of the West, your foster coordinator or potential adopters.**

GETTING READY TO FOSTER A DOG

After being approved by Low Riders of the West, but before you bring a foster dog home, we suggest you prepare yourself, your family and your home for a new canine companion. Be physically and mentally prepared. Fostering is a family affair, so please make sure that everyone in your household is ready, willing and able to provide a loving home for an orphaned dog. Many adults and children have a difficult time adjusting to a new schedule or routine, and also have a difficult time "giving up" an animal to its forever home. Make sure everyone is ready for this new, albeit temporary, addition to your family. Be realistic about your time commitment to a foster dog.



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Where to keep your foster dog

Planning where you will keep your dog before you bring your dog home will make the entire process easier for everyone. When you first bring a foster dog home, you'll want to confine them to a single room, such as a kitchen or family room. This room should **not** be an isolated room, but a room where you spend a large part of your day or evening, as dogs are pack animals and want to be with you. This room is especially important when you're at work or away from the house, as it will be a new environment in which they need time to become familiar and comfortable. Use a baby gate to block off the entrances to other rooms. By keeping the dog in one room, you're helping prevent "accidents" that may occur because of stress or adjusting to your routine. (Even a house-trained dog might have an accident or two during this adjustment period.) For dogs that are not housetrained, keeping them confined to one room will help start this important training as you must be able to monitor their activities.

The Do's

- Do keep your foster dog indoors in a location with a crate available.
- Do keep your foster dog in a warm/cool (depending on the season) and dry location.
- Do keep your foster dog on a leash at all times when outdoors unless in your secured fenced yard. When in a secured yard, you must supervise him at all times. It is very common for a rescue dog to try and escape so always supervise your shelter dog.
- Do keep your puppy indoors in a kitchen, bathroom, mudroom or laundry room (you may want to use baby gates to limit access to other parts of your home). Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and should not be isolated.

The Don'ts

- Do not place your foster dog around other strange dogs as we often do not know the dog's past history. Foster dogs should not be put in a position of possibly fighting with a strange dog, reducing their chances for adoption.
- Do not allow your foster dogs outdoors unless supervised by an adult.
- Never take your foster dog to an off-leash park. This is a liability to the rescue.
- Taking a foster dog to an off-leash park will result in the removal of the foster dog and end your role as a foster parent.

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How to dog-proof a room

Walk into the room in which you plan to confine your foster dog, and ask yourself:

- Is there room for the crate (dog's safe place)?
- Is there quick access to the outside for bathroom breaks?
- Is there anything that can be chewed, such as drapes, a couch or rugs?
- Are there exposed electrical wires?
- Is there anywhere the dog can hide? Will you be able to get the dog out if hidden?
- Are there coffee tables with objects that can be knocked off by a wagging tail?
- Are there plants in the room? If so, make sure it is not a toxic plant.
- Where will I set up the crate once all hazards are removed?
- Is the crate in a quiet, low-traffic area of the room?
- Is there a blanket in the crate to train your foster dog that it's his bed?

Items you may need

Low Riders of the West get's plenty of donations so please ask your supplies coordinator for anything you may need when you are picking up your foster dog.

- Food and bowls.
- Crate - you can ask for one.
- Bedding - a clean, old blanket or towel or a dog bed that is washable.
- Odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle); it's the only thing to clean housetraining mistakes.; If you clean mistakes with soap and water, your dog will still smell the urine and go to the bathroom in that spot repeatedly.
- Flea comb/brush.
- Toys such as: hard rubber balls, Kongs, fleece toys, rope toys or nylabones. Do not give your foster dog hooves, rawhide, pigs' ears or vinyl toys that can cause diarrhea or choke the dog.
- Harness, your supplies coordinator will provide you with one.
- Leash, your supplies coordinator will provide you with one.
- Baby gate(s).
- Bitter Apple (to spray on leashes, woodwork, drapery — anything you don't want chewed).
- Bandana that says, "Adopt Me" These are available from you supplies coordinator.

Transporting your foster dog

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The safest way to transport your dog from the shelter to your home (or anywhere else), is in a secure crate in the back of a SUV or station wagon. The crate should be secured so that it doesn't tip over or move around. Another option is to use a grill between the back of the vehicle and the back seat. If you have a sedan, then you may be able to secure a crate on the back seat. It is always a good idea to put a blanket down under your crate or in the back section of your vehicle, so that if your dog becomes car sick, or has an accident, the blanket will protect your seats and carpet. If you can't fit a crate into your vehicle, your dog is safest in the back seat. Use either a special harness for your dog that hooks on to a seat belt, or a leash that attaches to the seat belt. Avoid letting your dog ride in the passenger seat next to you. Not only can your view be obstructed, but if you brake suddenly your dog could get injured by hitting the windshield or by the airbag. You might need a few treats to encourage a dog to jump into a car. Remember to always keep a handle on his leash.

INTRODUCING YOUR DOGS TO FOSTER DOGS

Typically dogs of the opposite sex do better together. And even if your dog has many different canine playmates, you should still bring your dog to the shelter to meet a potential foster dog. Dogs are like people, and sometimes a dog may not like another dog for no apparent reason. What to do once you are home with your foster dog

- Do be alert and make the reintroductions gradually and calmly. Even if they got along great at the shelter, your dog may be extremely territorial in the home.
- If possible, go for a walk around your neighborhood with both dogs and two handlers. Walk the dogs side by side on leashes and allow them to sniff one another and become familiar with each other.
- Do give your own dog LOTS of love and praise.
- Do leave leashes on the dogs when you are in the home, so that you can get immediate control if needed. You may only need to do this for a short time.
- Do talk normally. Letting the dogs know that you are fine; they are fine; everything is fine!
- Be patient and go slowly with your foster dog as they may have been through a stressful surgery, abusive situation or a lot of recent changes.
- Don't leave your foster dog unattended with your resident dog. Even if they seem to get along well in your presence, you should separate the dogs when you leave your house. After a week, you may determine that this is no longer necessary, but be sure to always remove all toys, food, chews and start slowly.



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Some common mistakes

- Holding the leash too tensely as dogs may react with defensiveness.
- Leaving toys and chews around the house. This can cause resource guarding which can escalate very quickly. Remove all toys and chews before you arrive home with your foster dog.
- Feeding your foster dog with your resident dog. It's best to separate them initially, and to supervise always.
- Over-stimulating your foster dog with introductions to many people or your neighbors' dogs.

FOSTERING – THE FIRST WEEK

Now that you're home with your foster dog, you should start a regular routine so your dog can begin to adjust to your household. During this adjustment period, please keep stimulation to a minimum. Some recommendations include:

- Find a quiet route to walk or run your foster dog (depending on energy level) to familiarize him with his new environment. This also helps start the bonding between you and your foster dog.
- Don't introduce your foster dog to people you meet on your walk. For the first 7-14 days (could be more or less) your foster dog should lay low while he tries to figure out just what this new situation is. You may not see any unwelcome behavior initially. Eventually all will be revealed.
- Do not introduce your foster dog to other dogs (other than your own resident dog). This includes neighborhood dogs, and dogs belonging to your family or friends. Why? There is no way to tell how your foster dog will behave when introducing him to other dogs. If your foster dog bites a person or dog you are required to report it to the shelter immediately.
- Don't throw a party, or have a lot of people over to your home. During the first week you should try to spend quality one-on-one time with your new foster dog.

The most important thing to do during this initial transition time is to clearly but NON-confrontationally establish the household rules. As well, take care not to "indulge" your foster dog's timid, tentative or fearful behavior; we understand how tempting this may be as many of our orphans have come from less than ideal situations, but in the long run it does not benefit the dog.

Additional information for the first week - If your dog is available for adoption, take new photos and write a new bio for your foster dog. One of the many benefits of adopting a dog from foster care is



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that the foster parent can provide detailed, personal and anecdotal information about their foster dog. Your dog will be adopted more quickly if you update this information as soon as possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON FOSTERING A DOG

Expectations of behavior

Allow time for adjustment. While it usually takes about 24 hours for a dog to settle in, it will take much longer for their overall adjustment to this new environment. Watch their behavior closely. Begin training with some basic commands and crate training. Your foster may have been traumatized before coming to you – you'll be teaching that people are good and can be trusted. You should handle and work with your foster dog every day. If he shows any signs of aggression or fear (growling over food or toys, snapping or hiding), contact your foster coordinator for guidance.

FEEDING

What to feed your foster dog

The food you feed your foster dog is important because, as the saying goes, "You are what you eat," and this applies to dogs as well as humans. It especially applies to dogs who have been sick, injured or found as strays. If you need assistance with dog food, Low Riders of the West will provide you with food.

Diet change

Some dogs react to a change in diet with diarrhea. If this happens, feed them cooked rice mixed with boiled chicken for a day or two. Then reintroduce the dry kibble.

Feeding schedule and quantity

Create a consistent schedule for feeding your foster dog. Feed at the same times every day. Create a separate space for your foster dog to eat so they will feel comfortable. If you have other dogs at home, feed your foster in a separate room and close the door - this will help prevent any arguments over food. Do not feed any "people" food. You do not know what the adoptive family will want to do, so don't start a habit they will have to break; and by feeding only dog food, you are also discouraging begging. Feeding will depend on the age and size of your foster dog.

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- Adult dogs: dry adult dog food twice a day, once in the morning and once at night.
- Adolescent dogs (4 months to 1 year): dry puppy food, twice a day
- Weaned puppies (6-8 weeks to 4 months): dry puppy food three to four times a day. Can be moistened with water or puppy formula.
- Nursing mothers with puppies and unweaned puppies (4-8 weeks)

The quantity of food you provide your foster dog will vary depending on weight, age and activity level. Please refer to the suggested amounts on the dog food package you are feeding your foster dog as the amounts may change depending on the brand. Remember to reduce this amount to compensate for any treats, including chews. Obesity is an epidemic for pets in the US, and can lead to health problems, exacerbate existing health issues and reduces overall quality of life. Please do not overfeed your foster dog.

Training Tip: Building a positive relationship with your foster dog

Establishing leadership: A leader in a dog pack is not the biggest dog, not the meanest dog and not necessarily the oldest dog. It is the one who controls the resources! Within a pack of dogs, strong canine leaders rarely use physical means to control other dogs; this is true in both wild and domesticated dogs. Humans can apply this concept of hierarchy by controlling all the resources in the home and doling them out contingent upon desirable behavior.

Training: We suggest positive, rewards based training for dogs. Increasing your foster dog's obedience skills has many benefits. Not only will the future adopter appreciate these skills, but your foster dog will "show" better when visiting with potential adopters and you will have a much happier fostering experience. Some basic obedience cues that your foster dog should learn are: sit, down, come, crate/bed, stay, heel, and an attention cue such as "watch me." These are very helpful in managing any dog. If you have a dog that does not like other dogs, these cues will be helpful on walks as well. For example, a dog that can heel nicely and that has been taught to "watch" you has less likelihood of making eye contact with another dog and getting aroused.

Why positive training? Many times, owners ask why one should use positive based methods. Please understand that force-based methods including "alpha rolls," "flooding" techniques (i.e., forced exposure at an uncomfortable distance to the object or being that the dog has an issue with), the use of choke chains, prong collars, electronic shock devices, and "correction" can all be problematic for a number of reasons. First, if a dog has aggression issues, using force can further exacerbate an



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already potentially dangerous situation. Second, using “correction” only or force does not teach the dog what you WANT him to do; only what you don’t want him to do. Third, a foster parent can damage his relationship with the dog if they are always correcting the dog or using aversive methods.

Housetraining

Be patient with your foster dog. Even housetrained adult dogs will make mistakes, especially if they’ve been at the shelter for a long time and have been eliminating in their kennel. If there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some foster dogs may “mark” out their territory. This action should be re-directed immediately with a calm “Ah-Ah” and escort him outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer (like Nature’s Miracle) on the areas where the foster dog “marked” to insure he will not smell and mark that area again.

You can begin to housetrain a puppy at 8 weeks of age. Even if you bring home an adult dog that is housebroken, you will want to follow these guidelines until your foster dog adjusts to his new situation and to your schedule.

- Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate - it could be the backyard, side yard or an indoor substrate such as a Pup Head, litter system or one you have designed.
- When you have determined where he should do his business, take him to the same place every time, and tell him to “do his business.” Take him out when he wakes up, after he eats or drinks, after a play session, or at least every 2 hours. Puppies should go out every 45 minutes until you learn their pattern. Stand with him for 5 minutes. If he eliminates, reward him (with treats, praise, a favorite game and your own special happy dance). If he doesn’t go in 5 minutes, take him back inside and try every 15 minutes until he goes. Every time he goes, make sure you reward him!
- Supervise the puppy closely while you’re inside. If he starts to sniff the floor, or even squats to go, interrupt with a calm “Ah-Ah”, scoop him up quickly and take him to the approved spot and praise when he finishes.
- If he goes in the house while you’re not paying attention, don’t correct him - it’s not his fault. Clean it up and go back to your schedule. Use an odor neutralizer (like Nature’s Miracle) to get rid of the smell. Never put the dog’s face in his mess, or yell at him, he won’t understand you, and you will only be teaching him to fear you.

Crate training

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Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs. They calm them and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking and housetraining mistakes. Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old, plus one. For example, a 4 month old should not be crated longer than 5 hours. How long an adult dog can be crated will depend on many factors. For example, if your foster dog was left outside, it has never been required to hold it for any period of time. It will take time for this dog to learn to hold it and you will need to start slowly. Older dogs and dogs with some medical conditions may only be able to successfully hold it for short periods of time.

Rigorous exercise should be given before and after any long periods in the crate, and good chew toys should be in the crate at all times. You may want to crate your new foster dog for the first few nights in your bedroom - most of them feel more secure in their crate and it protects your house from accidents.

Crates should never be used as a means of punishment for your foster dog. If used for punishing, the dog will learn to avoid going in the crate. Crates are not to be used for keeping puppies under 6 months out of mischief all day either. Crates should be thought of as dog play rooms - just like child play rooms, with games and toys. It should be a place dogs like to be and feel safe and secure when they are there.

Attention and playtime

Lots of human contact is important for recovering, sick, injured or neglected dogs. Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies. Attention and playtime is a reward for your foster dog. Be sure to give your foster dog several minutes of playtime periodically through the day.

As a general rule, children under 16 years old should NOT be left alone and unsupervised with any dog, but specifically a foster dog. Do not allow children to behave with the foster dog in a manner you would not want the child to behave with a younger sibling. Teach children to leave a dog alone when he is eating, chewing and sleeping. Never allow a child to remove a toy or any other "prized" possession from a dog. A child will not differentiate between a foster dog and a dog they have grown up with, so you must make sure to keep everyone safe.

Do not play tug of war or wrestle with your foster dog. If you have a shy or fearful dog, do not throw the toy toward the dog, because he may think you are throwing things at him and become more fearful. After you have finished playing with a toy, put it away. You are controlling the toy and the



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playtime. When giving the dog a toy or treat, have him sit before giving it to him. That way he has to work to get the toy or treat - making the toy a reward.

After your foster dog has settled in and has acclimated to his new home, it's time to get him out into the world. The more you can do this, the better socialized he will be. Get him used to different people and different environments. Start slowly and don't over stimulate as many foster dogs may not have had exposure to what seems like a "normal" environment. When you are out and about, you should remain calm as this will help your foster dog key off of your behavior. But always be aware of your surroundings. Always keep a good handle on your leash and be extremely careful around busy streets, or in parks where there are squirrels or birds or other distractions. If your dog reacts to someone/ something on your walk, interrupt the behavior by crossing the street or walk in a different direction.

If you're a runner/jogger, start off slow and keep an eye on your foster dog and see how they react. Many dogs pull when they are in front of you, and running can intensify this behavior. Keeping them at your side, rather than in front can help eliminate this pulling behavior. You may need to start and stop many times, but be patient. Remember, these runs should be about the dog, not about your own exercise. Puppies under 6 months old should not run with you and only occasionally, for short distances after 6 months. Also, remember your foster probably is not used to running regularly, and like a person, will have to improve his conditioning and stamina over a period of time to avoid injury.

If you're fostering puppies, make sure they have lots of new experiences, so they are well socialized and will be adaptable as an adult. Since it's best not to take puppies out in public until they are fully vaccinated, bring new experiences to them. Find out from your foster coordinator if there are other puppies in foster care and schedule a puppy play date. Expose them to men and children as much as possible. Have friends over and invite children over to play. Always supervise playtime with children and dogs closely! Take your foster puppy in car rides (crate them for safety) to get used to the car. Keep in mind that puppies need to go to the bathroom frequently so be sure they eliminate before you go on a car ride, and keep the ride brief, since they will have to go again soon.

NO off-leash parks – No Exceptions

All foster dogs are required to be on leash at all times if outside of your secured yard. You are not allowed to bring your foster dog to an off-leash park even if you keep them on a leash as this can create leash aggression. There are no exceptions to this rule. Do not bring puppies to any public



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parks. Puppies are not yet fully vaccinated and can pick up viruses, particularly the Parvo virus, through contact with feces and urine in areas where other dogs congregate.

BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

Some foster dogs will have specific needs regarding behavior, training or socializing. Your foster coordinator will advise you if your foster dog has a behavior problem that may require your help, such as an abused or fearful dog who needs socializing or confidence-building with other dogs or people. A dominant puppy may benefit from an adult dog in your home to “show them the ropes” and appropriate behavior. A dog with an unknown/questionable history may just need to be observed in someone’s home before being adopted. Many times it is the foster parent that is the first to learn about a foster dog’s specific behavior so constant communication with your foster coordinator is important. There are many resources that we can provide to help you manage most behavioral issues.

It’s important to recognize that dogs are not humans with fur. Based on DNA evidence, dogs were domesticated from wolves about 15,000 years ago in East Asia. A few basic breed types have evolved gradually during the domesticated dog’s relationship with humans over the last 10,000 or more years, but all modern breeds are of relatively recent derivation.

Many of the behaviors that we find problematic, such as barking, whining, digging, chewing, scavenging and hunting other animals are really just normal dog behaviors and can be explained as “dogs truly being dogs.” In many ways, modern or urban dog training is what we do to decrease normal dog behaviors and increase those behaviors we, as city dwelling humans, prefer. But we should keep in mind that these behavioral “problems” are usually only problems to us. And remember that historically these behaviors were usually bred by humans into a particular breed of dog. For example, Siberian Huskies and others in the Spitz breeds are descendents of sled dogs and typically pull when on a leash. Australian Cattle Dogs drive cattle by nipping at their heels or tails and may do the same to children, bikes and cars. Terriers (everything from the diminutive Yorkshire Terrier, to the large Airedale Terrier) were bred to hunt and kill vermin and typically have a high prey drive and like to dig. The easiest way to coexist with our canine companions is to provide more appropriate (aka - human accepted) outlets for these behaviors. Some of the most common behavioral issues include:

- Barking
- Humping

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- Digging
- Begging
- Attention seeking
- Garbage hunting
- Leash pulling
- Greeting manners
- Destructive chewing
- Puppy nipping and rough play
- Submissive and/or excitement urination
- Urine marking behavior
- Fearfulness
- Separation anxiety
- Resource guarding
- Prey drive

If your foster dog is exhibiting any behavioral issues, ask yourself the questions below:

- Is my foster dog getting enough exercise?
- Is he being left alone for long periods of time?
- Does he have interesting toys to keep his mind engaged and stimulated?
- Is he getting enough attention and playtime?
- Am I reinforcing bad behavior? Some examples include telling a fearful dog that “It’s ok”, verbally scolding a dog when they are seeking attention, etc.
- Does my foster dog have a safe place that is dog-proofed with appropriate chew toys, or am I leaving my own belongings within reach?
- Am I providing specific outlets based on its breed?

You should also talk with your foster coordinator about any behavior issues. We don’t expect foster parents to be miracle workers. If your foster dog requires more attention, exercise or training than you can provide, the best solution for you and your foster dog might be a different foster home or to be returned to Low Riders of the West.

Regardless of the issue, we don’t recommend punishment as this is rarely effective in resolving behavior problems. Punishment will not address the cause of the behavior, and in fact it may worsen any behavior that’s motivated by fear or anxiety. Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs that aren’t currently fearful. Never discipline your dog after the fact. People often believe their dog



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makes this connection because he runs and hides or “looks guilty.” But dogs display submissive postures like cowering, running away, or hiding when they feel threatened by an angry tone of voice, body posture, or facial expression. Your dog doesn’t know what he’s done wrong; he only knows that you’re upset. Punishment after the fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may provoke other undesirable behaviors, too.

VETERINARY AND MEDICAL CARE

All veterinary care must be pre-authorized by calling your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator**. If it is not an emergency, please call between 8:00am and 4:00pm. Once a visit has been authorized, call to make an appointment at any of the vet offices listed in the Frequently Asked Questions. Please arrange to have your foster dog seen during regular business hours. Once treatment has begun, you must continue with the same veterinary clinic.

The shelter has basic supplies and medications available 7 days a week. This includes flea and parasite treatments and medication for kennel cough.

Please note: The shelter has a policy that it will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals if you do not receive pre-approval or go to an approved vet office.

Emergency/night time clinics are incredibly expensive and should only be used in cases of dire emergencies and only after pre-approval.

General guidelines for seeking vet visits Puppies younger than 12 weeks must see a vet for the following:

- Diarrhea that lasts for more than a day
- Vomiting and diarrhea for more than 6 hours
- Vomiting more than once in an hour
- Not eating for more than 12-24 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than 12 hours
- Lethargy with fever

Dogs older than 12 weeks must see a vet for the following:

- Diarrhea that lasts for more than 1-2 days



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- Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than a day
- Vomiting more than 2-3 times in an hour
- Not eating for more than 24 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than a day
- Lethargy with fever

Our Vet Clinics

Castle Pines 562 East Castle Pines Pkwy #C5, Castle Rock, CO 80108 (303) 688-3660
Hours of Operation -

Sunday	Closed
Monday	7AM-7PM
Tuesday	7AM-7PM
Wednesday	7AM-7PM
Thursday	7AM-7PM
Friday	7AM-6PM
Saturday	7AM-6PM

Deer Creek 10148 W Chatfield Ave, Littleton, CO 80127 (303) 973-4200
Hours of Operation -

Sunday	24 hours
Monday	24 hours
Tuesday	24 hours
Wednesday	24 hours
Thursday	24 hours
Friday	24 hours
Saturday	24 hours

Dusty Plains 131 Co Rd 17, Elizabeth, CO 80107 (303) 646-0545
Hours of Operation -

Sunday	Closed
Monday	8AM-5PM
Tuesday	8AM-5PM
Wednesday	8AM-5PM
Thursday	8AM-5PM
Friday	8AM-5PM
Saturday	Closed



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Spay and neuter

Most foster dogs are altered prior to going into foster care. However, puppies or injured dogs may need to be spayed/neutered during foster care or just before going into their new adoptive homes. If you are fostering an unaltered dog that is healthy and old enough for surgery, and it is beneficial to have the procedure done while in foster care for either behavioral or physical reasons please contact your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator**. All spay and neuter surgeries are done at the South Platte Valley Humane Society.

The **veterinary appointments and care coordinator** will work with the foster parent on scheduling the appointment. If the foster needs help making the scheduled spay/neuter appointment please contact your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator**. The foster parent can drop off the dog off at the South Platte Valley Humane Society Clinic the morning of the scheduled surgery between 7:30 and 8:00. The foster parent can pick up the dog after the surgery starting at 3:30, so the dog will see a familiar face after the procedure. The clinic will provide an e collar and pain meds for the next 3 - 5 days. Both male and female pups can be neutered or spayed as early as 8-10 weeks of age.

Address: 2129 W Chenango Ave, Littleton, CO 80120

Phone Number: - (303) 703-2938

Illness

Your foster dog may not display any signs of illness until quite ill. Therefore, it's up to you to observe your dog closely each day. Call your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator** if you see abnormal behavior; unusual discharge from the eyes, nose or other body openings, abnormal lumps, limping, difficulty getting up or down, loss of appetite or abnormal waste elimination.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea can be caused by several factors, including stress, change of diet, poor diet, eating garbage, parasites and viruses. If your foster dog has diarrhea and has no other symptoms, rule out change of diet by feeding your dog 2 cups of cooked rice mixed with one cup of boiled chicken for a day or two, and then reintroduce dry kibble.

Provide plenty of fresh water since diarrhea can cause dehydration. To check for dehydration, pull the skin up over the shoulder blades. If it snaps back quickly, the dog is not dehydrated. If the skin

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goes down slowly, then the dog is dehydrated and needs fluids. Dehydration can kill a puppy so call your veterinary appointments and care coordinator if you suspect your foster is dehydrated.

Fleas

Most foster dogs have been treated before arriving at the rescue. But additional flea treatments are available if needed. Puppies younger than 4 months should NOT be treated with toxic chemicals. Puppies over 8 weeks of age and adult dogs can be treated with Advantage or Revolution.

Flea treatments contain insecticides that can cause nerve and liver damage, impair the immune system and even cause cancer. Regular flea combing is the best way to control and monitor the fleas. Vacuum all areas of your house that your foster uses at least every 2-3 to three days.

To check for fleas, inspect your dog daily - inspecting the rear groin, belly, and tail, under the chin and head, and neck (common places for fleas). Look also for black specks of flea dirt, which is actually digested blood. Before you begin combing, get a bowl of tap water and put a few drops of dish soap in it. You can put any fleas you find in the water and they will drown. If you don't use soap, the fleas may swim to a fluff of fur and jump out of the water.

If fleas are present, treat as soon as possible. Change bedding and vacuum the floors daily. The washing machine will remove fleas, eggs and dirt. If your foster dog had fleas, watch his stools for short pieces of white rice that are tapeworms, which come from ingesting fleas. Tapeworms can cause diarrhea. If you see tapeworms, call your veterinary appointments and care coordinator who can provide you with medication that will treat parasites.

Kennel cough

Kennel cough develops when the dog is stressed or when the immune system is compromised. Kennel cough usually goes away as soon as the dog has a warm, quiet and soothing place to sleep, and where they can drink lots of water, eat healthy food and receive lots of TLC! Kennel cough is typically a dry, hacking cough. There may be some discharge from the nose and a clear liquid that is coughed up. It's generally a mild, self-limiting illness of the trachea and bronchi encountered in all age groups of dogs, but especially in those under unusual stress, crowding or close confinement.

Kennel cough exists in shelters, boarding kennels, groomers, veterinary offices, off-leash areas, etc. Because kennel cough is contagious, infected dogs should NOT be around other dogs until they're



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over their cough. If you have a dog at home and plan to foster a dog with kennel cough, we have found that if your own dog is healthy and has been vaccinated annually, then your dog will most likely not get sick.

Talk to your vet about giving your own dog the Bordetella nasal vaccination. Immunity to kennel cough is usually established 3-4 days after vaccination. We can compare this situation with humans in an office atmosphere - if you're healthy, well-rested and your immune system is not compromised, and a coworker has a cold, then you will not catch the cold. But if you're worn-down, stressed out and not eating or sleeping well, you probably will catch the cold. So if your own dog is ill or older, we would not recommend fostering a dog with kennel cough.

Kennel cough treatment

Treatment for kennel cough involves bed rest and doggie videos! Make sure your foster dog has plenty of fresh water and healthy food. If your dog is not eating, try cooking up something special and smelly such as eggs, chicken or steak. Take short, leashed walks. If your dog's energy is good and the cough seems mild, try some Vitamin C (5-10 mg/lb, 2-3 times a day with food), and Vitamin E (3-5 mg/lb, once a day). If you don't see improvement of the cough or cold after 3 days, OR if the condition worsens, call your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator**.

Dogs rarely develop a fever and lethargy with kennel cough. In fact, it can be difficult to keep them quiet. Strenuous activity can bring on coughing episodes, so limit activity and encourage rest. Even baths can be stressful to the system and should be avoided. However bringing your foster dog into the bathroom while you're taking a shower can be helpful as the steam can help loosen mucus. Incubation of kennel cough is 5-10 days; its course is 10-20 days with symptoms generally more marked the first week. Fever, lack of appetite and a yellow-green-brown nasal discharge can indicate secondary infections. Call your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator** if any of these symptoms occur.

Parasites

Parasites can cause diarrhea, stomach bloating or vomiting. Parasites include tapeworms, roundworms, hookworms and mange. Tapeworms will look like pieces of rice coming out of your foster dog's anus or in his stool. Round and hookworms may be vomited, and roundworms look like spaghetti (hookworms are smaller and rarely distinguishable without the aid of a microscope). Mange is an infestation of tiny mites that bite and cause intense scratching, reddened skin and loss of fur.



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Only rare cases of mange (sarcoptic) are contagious to humans. If you suspect your foster dog has parasites, call your **veterinary appointments and care coordinator** to schedule a fecal test. Once diagnosed, parasites are easily medicated and treated.

Vaccination and worming

Your foster dog's vaccination and worming history will be given to you. Your dog has been vaccinated for Rabies, Distemper, canine Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza, Parvo, and Bordetella. Adult dogs are vaccinated once a year, while puppies may be vaccinated starting at 6 weeks of age and will be given a booster at 8 weeks old. If you are fostering a very young orphaned puppy, we will refer you to a Vet to determine age and vaccination schedule.

If you're fostering a puppy, you need to work with the rescue for the following vaccination boosters:

- 6 weeks: DHLPP and Bordetella vaccinations.
- 8 weeks: DHLPP vaccination.

Worming directions

Most likely, your foster dog had one dose of wormer upon arrival to the shelter. If you see worms in the dog's stool, return to the shelter for more wormer. You will be instructed on the correct dosage and frequency.

GETTING YOUR DOG ADOPTED

Many dogs that go into foster are already available for adoption. If not, and you are unsure if your foster dog is ready to be adopted, ask yourself the questions below:

- Did your foster dog or puppy gain or lose enough weight?
- Is your foster dog healthy? (Some dogs can be adopted with kennel cough)
- Has the dog recovered fully from an illness?
- Is your foster puppy at least 10 weeks old and weaned from its mother?
- Is your foster dog or puppy successfully socialized with no major behavioral issues?
- Does your foster dog or puppy have good basic manners?



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If your foster dog is ready for adoption or is already available, the first step is to create or update his bio and take new photos. Once you have your bio and photos ready, send this information to your online advertising coordinator. Make sure that you include the following specific details:

- Name
- Gender
- Breed
- Weight
- Age

Also very helpful – is your foster ok with cats? Ok with other dogs? Ok with children (indicate appropriate ages)? If you are unsure, contact your foster coordinator for assistance.

If you are fostering a dog that does not have a name, select a happy and positive name rather than one with negative connotations. The Foster Dog Team may edit or expand your bio based on past experience. If you need help writing a bio for your foster, please contact your online advertising coordinator for assistance.

TIPS FOR TAKING GREAT PHOTOS

We can't stress this enough...a picture is worth a thousand words. The picture is the first thing people see when they visit the shelter's listing on Rescueme.org, adoptapet.com or if they view the bio on the web page. If the dog has a poor picture, visitors may move on to another dog without clicking or reading your dog's description. If you want to give your dog the best chance possible, take large, clear, good quality (high resolution) pictures of the dog alone. A good picture is often the difference between a dog who generates inquiries and one who doesn't.

- Take a lot of digital pictures. You may have to take 50 pictures to get 1 or 2 really great shots. If you don't have a digital camera, borrow one from a friend or contact your online advertising coordinator and we can arrange for a special photo session.
- Pictures taken outside in natural light are usually much better than those taken inside or with a flash. Lighting is very important for accurately capturing a dog's coloring and detail. Have the sun or light source behind you and check to make sure you're not casting a shadow on your subject.
- Use treats and/or a squeaky toy to capture the dog's best expression. Sometimes having two people makes this process easier.



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- Try taking pictures using a neutral backdrop. Select a background that contrasts with the dog's coloring. Darker-colored dogs will show up better against a lighter backdrop. Most dogs look great against a lush green lawn.
- Try different props. If the dog likes to fetch, you might get a picture of the dog with his favorite ball. Wrap a bandana around the dog's neck to add a streak of color (especially good for solid and darker-colored dogs). A bright, cheerful collar is a nice touch. Avoid having chain and prong collars in your pictures.
- The dog is the subject of your picture so the dog should take up the majority of space in your picture. Avoid excessive amounts of background. The dog's eyes should be focused on you. Try to capture at least one "hero" shot, where the focus is on the dog's face. A full body picture is also a great way to show size and scale.
- Exercise the dog before your photo shoot. A calmer dog is easier to photograph, and a panting dog looks like she's smiling! Before snapping the photos, take the time to get the pet as calm and relaxed as possible, so the photos don't show an animal that looks anxious or scared.
- Check out the competition. Visit Rescueme.org or adoptapet.com and look at the photos of similar dogs and see which ones pop out to you. Then try to mimic these shots with your own foster dog.
- If your first attempts fail, don't be discouraged. Just keep trying and have fun. When you are having fun, your foster dog will probably be having fun too and it will show!

TIPS FOR WRITING A GREAT BIO

Accentuate the positive and let potential adopters know why they should consider your dog. You will improve your dog's chances of finding a home if you write a thorough description. A good bio is part press release, part story telling. Don't turn it into a lengthy restaurant review, but instead try to pull the reader into the bio so that they can start to imagine a life with this new canine friend. It can be very helpful to read the bios of other similar dogs on Rescueme.org or adoptapet.com.

Tell it from the animal's perspective - the most compelling thing you can write on behalf of an animal is what you imagine the animal is thinking, feeling or remembering. Most bios start off with the basics - but the most appealing bios are written so that they are not just a list of facts. One intro paragraph on "who your dog is" can help a potential adopter visualize the dog. Your second paragraph might go into personality traits, and provide information about any training, tricks or cute behavior. Your final paragraph should outline the required forever home environment.

Tell potential adopters what you know about your dog. Be honest and avoid negative statements. Choose wording carefully. A dog that is not potty-trained might instead be, "working on her house



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manners.” A dog that doesn’t get along with other dogs or cats merely “wants to be your one and only.” A dog that desperately needs obedience training is really “looking forward to attending class with his adopter.” If dog has special needs, mention them, but don’t dwell on them. You can go into these details once you have someone hooked on your dog. Your online advertising coordinator can also help – either by providing you with samples of bios written for other Low Riders of the West foster dogs or to create one based on your input.

PROMOTING YOUR FOSTER DOG

Even though Low Riders of the West promotes your foster on social media, Rescueme.org, Adoptapet.com, and our website, the more you network your foster dog, the more quickly you are able to find it a great forever home. Here are some simple ways to promote your dog:

- Send an email to your family, friends and colleagues. Let them know about your foster dog and ask them to help you spread the word and to tell their friends and colleagues.
- Spread the word at your child’s school, your place of worship, or other organization that you belong.
- Record a video of your foster dog or create a slideshow with more photos and have them posted on your foster dog’s Rescueme.org or adoptapet.com bio.
- Make sure you always walk your foster dog with an “I’m available” bandana
- Post your foster dog on some of the popular free online classified sites and your social networking sites.
- Many companies have newsletters, email lists, blogs or intranets where you might be able to post information about your foster dog. See if you can bring your foster dog to work!
- Post a flyer about your dog at local dog parks. Most have a bulletin board for flyers. Even though you can’t take them to the park, you can still promote them at the park!
- If you’re a runner, enter a local 5K race and bring your dog. Check with the race rules first, but many will let you run with a dog. Don’t forget your dog’s “I’m available” bandana!
- Participate in any events that will help you promote your foster dog.

THE ADOPTION PROCESS

The process for adopting a foster dog is one that includes both the rescue and you, the foster parents. As a foster parent, your involvement in the adoption process is both extremely important and essential. After a potential adopter sees your foster dog’s bio and is interested in meeting the foster dog, the potential adopter is required to submit a completed dog adoption application. This application is available for download from the rescue’s website.



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Once the application is completed, it is screened by the rescue and suitable applicants are forwarded to the foster parent for them to look over to see if it would be a good fit. If the foster parent likes the application and would like to move forward with it, a home check will be scheduled with the potential adopters. The home check can either be done by the rescue or the foster parent. At the same time as the home check is being scheduled the vet references and personal references will be checked. If the home check and references check out, the foster parent will schedule a meet and greet with the potential adopters.

Once you have scheduled a meet and greet, please let your adoption coordinator know the date and time of the meeting so they can be available for the meet and greet. The rescue also requires that all family members of the potential adopter (including family dogs) must be present for the meet and greet, and or final adoption. After the meet and greet (and if the applicant is still interested in the dog), foster parents should make a recommendation to the shelter staff regarding the adoption. If the foster parent feels that it is a good match they should let their adoption coordinator know. Please remember that all adoptions must be approved by the rescue.

Once the adoption is approved by the rescue, the adopter pays the adoption fees and signs the adoption contract. You will be provided a checklist of things to remember to do during the adoption process. After all items have been checked off the checklist, the foster dogs can go to their new homes at this time. Remember to take a picture of the new family.

When it's finally time to hand over your foster dog, please be emotionally prepared. Even if you feel sad, the new parents are excited and happy about finding a new companion. Please remember to rejoice and celebrate that you have helped to find a forever home for your foster dog. Foster parents should stay in contact with the adoption coordinator assistance with the adoption process.

SCREENING QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Foster parents often say their goal is to find a home even better than their own! The rescue will screen for qualified applicants, but your input is critical to finding an appropriate forever home for your foster dog. Remember, this can be a very emotional experience, but it's important to stay neutral. Many times it's best to have rescue staff member present at the meet and greet. This way you have the opportunity to observe the potential adopter with the foster dog, rather than just answer, or ask questions.

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Some additional guidelines:

- This should be a two-way dialog, rather than just a one-sided Q&A session. Instead of just answering a question, use this as an opportunity to learn more about the potential adopter and find out if they are a good match. For example, if they ask you how much exercise does he get, turn this around “he gets a fair amount of exercise... how do you plan on exercising him?” And probe for specifics.
- Don’t over-sell, or under-sell your foster dog. This should be an open and honest discussion about what the potential adopter is looking for and how this matches the needs of your foster dog.
- Be objective about personality traits. The best way to approach this is to ask about what they are looking for in personality before you talk about what type of personality your foster dog has (beyond what is already mentioned in the bio). This way you can find out if they really are a good match, or if they are going on appearances alone.
- Ask a lot about their past experiences with dogs. Even if this is their first dog, how do their friends or family approach dog ownership? Most people are greatly influenced by those around them.
- Find out how they would approach training and/or behavior problems. Again, don’t tell them what you are doing, but find out how they would handle this. Better yet, find out how they handled this with previous dogs! This is where the hypothetical questioning can come in handy. “What would you do if you came home to find out she just chewed your brand new Jimmy Choo sandals?”
- What are the family’s expectations of a “rescue” dog? How are they going about finding a dog? Is this a thoughtful process?
- On a final note: Just because the potential adopter might approach something differently than you, this doesn’t mean that they won’t be a great home for your foster dog. Even if you hate/love clicker training, doesn’t mean that everyone must hate/love clicker training. That said, trust your instincts. If you don’t feel good about the potential adopters, then let the rescue know your concerns.

Don’t hesitate to contact the rescue for assistance or guidance. If the potential adopter isn’t suitable for specific reasons (they are couch potatoes and your foster dog needs to run 10 miles every day, etc.) Please let us know and we can change the dog’s bio to better reflect its needs.



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CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU !

Your foster dog has been adopted! You've found him a permanent home that might even be better than yours - if that's possible! Low Riders of the West greatly appreciate your time, energy and dedication. Please let us know if there's anything we can do to make fostering easier and even more rewarding. On behalf of all the graduate dogs of the Low Riders of the West, we thank you!