



P.O. Box 8311
Morganton, NC 28680

Phone: 828-584-6767

Foster Care

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For **A Better Life Animal Rescue**, the animals' welfare is our first priority. They have come to us from situations where they have been abused, abandoned, or placed in other at-risk situations. Consequently, we want to ensure that rescued animals are placed only in foster homes and adoptive homes where they will be safe at all times. We make every effort to find foster parents and adoptive parents who will provide constant love, respect, and responsible care for each animal.

Having a network of reliable foster caregivers is vital to every rescue organization. The more foster homes an organization has available, the greater the number of animals it can save. Following are some frequently asked questions about foster care that may help you in deciding whether foster parenting is for you.

What is a foster home?

Foster parents provide temporary homes for animals prior to adoption. Providing foster care is a wonderful and personal way to be involved in saving homeless pets.

Why do animals need foster care?

Rescued animals have come from situations where their lives were in danger. Most of them need some extra love and care before they can be adopted. Providing foster care can be a lifesaving gift for an animal.

Would I be a good foster parent?

If you want to do something to help the animals, fostering can be a flexible, fun and rewarding volunteer job. Here's why:

- It's more flexible than volunteer jobs that require you to show up at a worksite at a specific time for a certain number of hours.
- It's a great way to enjoy a pet if you are not in a position to make that lifetime commitment right now.
- Would you like to add a dog or cat to your household, but you're not sure? Fostering can be a great way to find out.

Taking animals into your home, loving them, and then letting them go requires a special kind of person. Your role as a foster parent is to prepare the animal for adoption into a loving home.

How much time will it take?

The specific needs of the animal will determine how much time is involved. For example, a frightened animal that needs socialization or training will require some extra time. You can discuss your availability with our rescue group to determine what animals you are best suited to foster.

What skills are needed?

It's best to have some knowledge about companion animal behavior and health, but you don't have to be an expert. Our volunteers can answer any questions you may have.

Some of the animals in need of foster care may require a little extra help or some training. Shy cats often need time to learn to trust and the quiet of a home environment. Dogs often benefit from a little obedience training, so if you can apply some basic training techniques, you can be a big help in preparing your foster dog for a new home. Patience, understanding and caring are three essential qualities in dealing with animals.

Just by getting to know the animal, you'll help us learn more about its personality prior to adoption.

What else is required?

We will provide you with our policies and standards. Specific requirements will vary depending upon the animal you are fostering. For example, some animals will need fenced yards or isolation from your personal pets. A big part of our effort will be to find the right match between a rescued pet and your interests, capabilities and family situation.

What about food and medical care?

We will supply food for fostered animals unless the foster parent indicates a preference for doing so at his/her expense.

We are responsible for the medical expenses of all our animals. Most of the funds we receive through donations and fundraising go toward medical expenses. If foster caregivers wish to help with medical expenses, they can make a donation earmarked for a specific animal's needs.

If an animal in foster care needs medical attention and the illness/injury isn't life-threatening, the foster parent should contact us so that we can arrange for the animal to be seen by our veterinarian. If the situation appears life-threatening, the foster parent should get the animal to the nearest veterinarian, and then contact us, and we will arrange to pay for medical care.

PLEASE NOTE: It is our policy to place animals coming to us from extremely high risk situations, such as animal control shelters, very young puppies or kittens, and animals in visibly bad shape, with our very experienced volunteers only. These animals are more at risk for developing complications, and they require extra knowledge, patience, and effort that we would not expect our foster caregivers to provide.

What about my own pets?

We ensure that animals being placed in foster care have been examined by a veterinarian, have received necessary vaccinations, and have been wormed. If there is an unusual situation where this is not the case, the foster parent would be informed before accepting the animal.

For the safety of your pets and the foster animal, it's important to keep your pets up-to-date on vaccinations. In some cases, the foster pet will need to be isolated from your own pets, either temporarily or throughout the foster period. We will work with you to determine what's best in each situation.

You'll want to consider how the animals in your household will adjust to having a foster pet as a "guest" in the house. Some animals do very well with a temporary friend and can help socialize the foster animal. Other pets have a harder time with new animals being added to, or leaving, the family. You're the best judge of your pet's personality.

Will I have to find a home for the animal myself?

It is our responsibility to find a forever home for the animal, though you can help by telling friends, family and co-workers about your foster pet. Every potential adopter must submit an application for adoption and be approved for adoption by ***A Better Life Animal Rescue***.

What about when it's time to say good-bye?

Giving up an animal you've fostered, even to a wonderful new home, can be difficult emotionally. Some people like to be there when the pet goes home with the new family. Seeing

your foster animal ride off into the sunset will help you remember that it has found a lovely new home.

A lot of foster families get photos and updates of their fostered dog or cat enjoying their new homes. Knowing you were part of saving a life and helping the animal find a loving home is tremendously rewarding.

Sometimes a foster home turns into a permanent home. That's why rescue, shelter, and humane organizations are always on the lookout for new foster homes.

TWO THINGS YOU MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER: 1) YOU made a difference for your foster animal when it needed you, and 2) once your fostered dog or cat has a forever home, there is always another one out there that needs you even more!

But is it fair to the animals?

Some people are reluctant to foster animals because they are concerned that it is unfair to take in a dog or cat, establish a bond, and then allow the animal to be adopted out into another home. Isn't that a second abandonment?

Not at all! Being in a foster home can be a lifesaving bridge for a stray or frightened pet. It gives the animal a chance to get used to life in a house, and an opportunity to learn that people can be kind, food is available, and there is a warm, secure place to sleep.

Foster care can help prepare a dog or cat for a new life in a permanent home. There's no shortage of animals that need this preparation time before finding their own people.

How do I give fostering a try?

Fill out the Foster Home Application on our website. Instructions for submitting the application are on the form.

Contact us if you have more questions about fostering. Call 828-584-6767 and leave a message. Someone will return your call.

Thank you for your interest in fostering an animal!