



FAQs for Interested Foster Families

FOSTER HOMES FOR RETIRING GREYHOUNDS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED!

The more foster homes we have, the more Greyhounds we can prepare for forever homes.

What Makes a Good Foster Home?

A place where the Greyhound will be given the same food, water, shelter, love & attention you would give your own pet. A home in which the people patiently & compassionately teach the retired racer about life as a pet. These special dogs are making an adjustment from living on a farm or in racing kennels to living in a home. They may need an introduction to some things you & your pet take for granted, like mirrors, wood floors, carpet, glass doors, pet doors, soft beds & toys. It may take them a little time to get comfortable in this new environment with all new stimuli.

I've never had a greyhound before. Can I foster?

Absolutely. It helps to have some experience with dogs in general, but having your own pet greyhound or prior experience with the breed is not required.

Can I become a foster parent if I have cats?

Yes. Many greyhounds do well with cats. We cat test the dogs before placing them in foster homes, so if you have cat(s) you will only foster cat-safe dogs.

Can we foster if we have other breeds of dogs?

Yes. Most greyhounds get along well with other breeds of dogs, big & small. We can use homes with all kinds of situations (cats, no cats, other dogs or not, children or not). Greyhounds have various personalities & needs; we test each dog prior to foster placement.

I've heard greyhounds are really active & need a lot of exercise. Is that true? No! Greyhounds have short bursts of energy & then rest a lot. They are often referred to as "40 mph couch potatoes". Taking them out on longer walks a few times a week should be adequate exercise.

Do I have to have spacious house with a large yard? No. Many greyhounds live happily in apartments, town homes & condos. **A Backyard is NOT Required!**

However, if you do have a backyard, it must be completely fenced with a minimum 4-foot fence, 6-foot preferred, as Greyhounds can reach full speed in under 3 seconds. Otherwise, 3 or 4 short, on-leash walks per day should suffice.

Do I have to own my home to foster greyhounds? No, but you must have permission from your property manager to have pets. GPA does not pay for any additional pet deposits or rent increases.

What do I do with my foster dog if I have to go out of town or on vacation? You may travel by car with the dog if you wish, or another GPA foster parent will sub-foster for you. Please notify the Foster Coordinator of travel plans; request in advance if a sub-foster is needed.

How old are the foster dogs? The dogs mostly range in age from 1-5 years old, with 2-3 being typical. Occasionally seniors & special needs dogs become available & need experienced homes.

How long are greyhound in foster care?

Normally, a dog is in foster care from 2-12 weeks, usually 3-4 weeks.

What are my financial obligations to the foster dog & GPA-CT? Minimal. Good quality dog food twice daily, fresh water, a quiet place to rest inside your home, & time for walks, treats, brushing, & affection, plus at least once per month visit to meet & greet events. Occasional transport for veterinary follow-up may be necessary.

What if I want to keep my foster dog? Can I adopt him/her? Fostering is a good way to find out if adopting a Greyhound is right for you! Many foster families fall in love with one (or 2 or 3) of their foster dogs & end up adopting them. You will just need to fill out an adoption application & pay the adoption fee—be prompt, before someone else falls for your foster! We hope you'll continue to foster other dogs after adopting; many people do!

What if my foster dog gets sick or injured? GPA funds veterinary care for greyhounds in foster care. Contact the GPA Foster Coordinator who will schedule an appointment for your foster dog at an approved vet clinic in your area.

What if my foster dog gets lost? Call the GPA Toll Free Hotline immediately. Though you're required to keep your foster dog leashed any time it's not indoors or in a fenced outdoor area, unfortunately they do occasionally get out due to gates being left open, digging under fences, etc. **GPA has a TOLL-FREE NUMBER. We respond quickly to locate lost dogs.**

CONTACT: GPA-CT Foster Coordinator
foster@gpa-centex.org
1-855-4GO-FAST, ext 3



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Why Foster?

Fostering is a very rewarding activity, in which a foster family helps a Greyhound explore home life, recuperate from spay or neuter surgery, learn good manners, & best of all, learn that the transition to becoming a pet is journey filled with love. One of our foster family members says: "I foster because I can't own all the Greyhounds that are ready for homes. But I can touch the lives of many of them & help them transition from their life as a racer to one as a pet. I am constantly amazed at the emergence of their personalities as they adjust to new circumstances & begin to embrace their new role as a family member. I also see my "family" grow as I get to know the new adopters & share in the joy the Greyhound I have fostered brings into their lives. I'm also fortunate to own a Greyhound that easily accepts each foster & has an innate ability to bring them out of their shell, & help them blossom into the wonderful pets they can be."

Love them, then Let them Grow...

"I'm very happy for [my recent foster]. After all he has been through; no dog deserves a good home more than he does. To live out his life, and be with a family that values his company and love and accept him as a member of their group. It's why we all do what we do. That's the greatest joy and satisfaction available doing this kind of volunteer work. You love them all, but like we all know, you can't keep them all. So you care for them, and you teach them and most important of all, you constantly remind yourself that they are going to leave, and your reward is getting them to that destination. It's not about your feelings or selfish wants. It's about the dog, and what is in its best

interest. And for the most part, that works. I've gotten pretty good at the good-bye thing. I have, for the most part, learned to feel personally satisfied when a foster goes to their permanent home. I'm not losing a dog; I got a good dog into a good home, and I did a good thing. And that's the biggest reason I do this; the personal satisfaction of working to that successful end. Because, at the end of the day, it is about the dogs. But every so often, [when] a foster leaves to go to [their home] they take a little piece of you with them. I truly enjoyed working with this foster, and he will be missed."

Tips for Volunteers Transporting Greyhounds

Volunteers & Foster Families are often needed to help transport Greyhounds to/from veterinary appointments, & to/from their foster homes.

Practice Safety

Always crate or muzzle the dogs at all times when in the car, no matter how docile a dog may seem.

Walk the Dog--Before putting him in your vehicle
BE SURE THE DOG PEES & POOPS!

Do NOT feed the dogs just before you travel. (You may be cleaning up a mess, & the greyhound may learn that car rides are associated with feeling sick/upset.)

Prepare Your Vehicle Under blankets you put in the vehicle for the dog's comfort, place a plastic sheet. This way, if walking the dog as suggested above isn't effective, your vehicle will not be ruined.

Travel in Pairs & Use the Muzzle If you are transporting more than two hounds, it is good to have a second person in the vehicle with you to ride shotgun & hold a water spray bottle in the rare case an argument breaks out. A firm NO & using muzzles when confined in the car helps avoid disagreements.

Support: GPA provides continuous, ongoing support to the foster families throughout the foster experience. Resources loaned to foster dogs & foster families include:

- Muzzle (loan)
- Leash (loan)
- Martingale-style collar (loan)
- Crate (loan)
- Dog Coat (loan, for winter)
- "Greyhounds for Dummies" Guidebook (loan)
- Foster dog's veterinary care
- Pre-approved local veterinarian support
- Monthly protection from heartworm, flea & ticks
- Foster Manual & Guidelines
- 24-7 Toll Free GPA-CT Hotline
- Coordinate schedule with adopters to meet dogs
- Email reminders for Events & Meet-N-Greets
- GPA Central Texas Facebook page
- GPA Central Texas Website
- The publication "Children & Greyhounds"
- Weekly Meet & Greet Events--socialize & show your foster dog to potential adopters
- Continuous, ongoing Q&A support from Foster & Placement Coordinator: local, trained & experienced volunteer knowledgeable in intricacies of the Greyhound breed Experienced in fostering & well connected to resources of GPA; assists in recruiting, assessing & orienting foster families, scheduling veterinary appointments, providing ongoing advice & helpful suggestions on day-to-day challenges, behavioral/health, etc.

Problems or Questions?

Contact Foster Coordinator

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foster@gpa-centex.org

(Other Board members may also assist)