



PawsCo | *Adoptions, Spay/Neuter, Pet Food Drive*

P.O. Box 6261 | Denver, CO 80206  
[www.pawSCO.org](http://www.pawSCO.org)

## PawsCo Foster Guidebook

### The Contacts:

Foster Support Team	720-307-5000	<a href="mailto:foster@pawSCOadoptions.org">foster@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>
Shelter Relations Team	720-307-5000	<a href="mailto:rescue@pawSCOadoptions.org">rescue@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>
Transport Team	720-307-5000	<a href="mailto:transport@pawSCOadoptions.org">transport@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>
Vet Team	720-307-5000	<a href="mailto:vet@pawSCOadoptions.org">vet@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>
Adoption Team	720-307-5000	<a href="mailto:adopt@pawSCOadoptions.org">adopt@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>
<b>Emergency</b>	<b>970-420-3316</b>	<a href="mailto:emergency@pawSCOadoptions.org">emergency@pawSCOadoptions.org</a>

### The Communication Flow:

PawsCo is completely volunteer-run, so we rely on our team structure to get the job done! Members on our teams work full-time jobs, have families and personal obligations, in addition to volunteering with PawsCo. Since we're all busy people and want to be as efficient as possible and be respectful of everyone's time, below is the communication process.

#### Who will contact you?

- **Foster Support Team** – will review your application when you apply to be a PawsCo foster, and will provide ongoing support throughout the time you have the animal if approved to be a PawsCo foster (your primary contact!)
- **Shelter Relations Team** – sends a weekly list of animals in need, reply to that email to tag an animal to foster, we will confirm which animal you will receive
- **Transport Team** – sends you pick up instruction for your new foster pet
- **Vet Team** – sends you vet appointment information and communicates with you on medical needs and plans for your animal
- **Adoption Team** – will reach out to you to schedule a meet and greet when they have an approved applicant for your foster pet

### The Process:

1. If you are approved to foster with PawsCo, you will begin receiving a weekly email from the Shelter Relations Team.
2. Select an animal from the weekly emailed "animals in need list" from the Shelter Relations Team.
3. Transport Team arranges transport for the animal to Denver. Intake is held on Saturdays and – regardless of which day of the week your animal comes in – is required for all fosters and their animals. At Intake, the following happens:
  - a. PawsCo Vet Team examines the animal and routine medical evaluation is performed: vaccinations, microchip implant, heartworm test, heartworm prevention, deworming, etc.
  - b. **Note:** Please follow the Vet Team's instructions at Intake for scheduling additional vetting such as rabies and spay/neuter at an approved PawsCo partner veterinary hospital. In addition, PawsCo does not allow any of the vaccines that are administered by the Vet Team to be administered at a vet clinic, unless you have permission from the director.
  - c. You can pick up needed supplies for the foster pet (Please Note: supplies are the property of PawsCo, should only be used for foster animals and in furtherance of our 501(c)(3) nonprofit purposes, must be returned after fostering).



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- d. Our photography team will take professional photos of your foster pet.
4. Take the foster animal to their new temporary home.
5. Fill out the [foster bio form](http://pawSCO.org/bio-sheet/) within 5 days of bringing the animal home:  
<http://pawSCO.org/bio-sheet/>
  - a. If you are considering adopting your animal please let the Foster Support Team know within 5 days of bringing the animal home – once an application is active, you will not have the first right of refusal to adopt, so please let us know as soon as possible!
6. The Bio Team will write a biography and post your animal on the PawsCo website, Petfinder, Rescue Me, and social media.
7. When an adoption application is received, the Adoption Team reviews the application and calls the potential adopter for a phone interview. They will then check references and schedule a meet and greet for you and your foster animal.
8. Foster animal is adopted ... repeat!

#### **Tips for the First Week:**

- Take a foster dog for a walk around the block so they can familiarize themselves with your neighborhood. If they were to escape, they may be able to find their way back “home.”
- Give a foster cat a safe room or area -- a place of their own where other animals cannot access them. It is ok to have the cat in this room for a few days to acclimate before giving them free roam of the house. Even then, a baby gate in the doorway helps keep this room a safe place for the cat to go.
- Your foster animal may not eat the first day – this can be part of the transition and it is OK. Just monitor them and keep us informed if it persists. You can add a small amount of wet food or treats to the food to entice them.
- Keep a collar, harness, and PawsCo tag on your foster pet at all times and be careful not to let them outside unattended – remember this is a new place. The last thing you want is to have your foster animal escape.
  - If your foster animal escapes, inform the Foster Support Team immediately
- Help your foster establish routines – going outside too much at first is better than not enough!
- Love them and treat them as your own! It’s about time for them to receive a little TLC! They deserve it, and it helps them become comfortable with humans.
- Give your foster pet a bath. But please note: that you may not bathe animals for two weeks following a spay/neuter or after a surgery.
- It’s common for new dogs to try to escape your home, so be cautious around the door! If you have to have your door open for any reason, put them on a leash – they CAN & WILL run!
- Your foster dog may mark inside and outside – marking outside is harmless, so allow that. For inside marking, be diligent in watching them the first day or so they are in your home. PawsCo has doggie diapers, if needed. Reward your foster dog for relieving themselves outside.
- Your foster animal may be scared of stairs, mirrors, hair dryers, home appliances, etc. – this is normal, as many have not been in a true home environment. Be patient with them – they normally catch on quickly. Routine helps!
- Your foster dog may cry or bark when you are gone or may dislike their crate. You can try placing them in an area with a baby gate and placing their bed, some toys and water in the area. You can



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even leave a shirt that smells like you to comfort them. Try short periods of leaving and coming back and not making a big deal about it. Contact the Foster Team if you're interested in connecting with a PawsCo trainer.

- Please remember these animals have just been rescued and need a safe environment, a routine and TLC. Do not put the animal in a situation that puts it at risk – it is better to take it slow.
- The foster animal may not be best friends with your animal(s) – having your pet and the foster ignore each other is ok and having them play rough is ok.
- **If there is a medical emergency:** Call AND text 970.420.3316.
  - If you truly believe it is a matter of life-or-death, take the dog to an emergency animal clinic immediately, preferably one of the partner veterinarians, if they are close. If the partner vets are not close or open, proceed to the nearest emergency or after-hours clinic.

#### **PawsCo Foster Policy:**

- Once you tag an animal for rescue, you commit to that animal until they are adopted.
- The PawsCo Foster Support Team will not move a foster animal to a new foster home except for extreme circumstances when safety is a concern. Because we are 100% foster-based, we have nowhere to move animals should you no longer feel comfortable with them in your home. We have no shelter available as a backup, so we ask that you carefully consider every possible implication before tagging an animal for rescue.
- The PawsCo Team is a 100% volunteer team supporting more than 120 PawsCo fosters – it may take up to 48 hours to receive a response.
- Taking care of your foster animal may require sacrifices by yourself and your family.
- As a foster, you are responsible for filling out a Foster Bio Form and sharing photos of your foster within 5 days of bringing them home.
- As a foster, you are responsible for attending PawsCo Intake and any other veterinary appointments as directed by the Vet Team. All vet appointments must be pre-approved by the Vet Team and take place at PawsCo vet partners.
- All cat fosters must keep their fosters separate from other cats (unless they are from the same litter) until they get tested for FELV/FIV.
- We advise that dog fosters also keep their animals separate until vaccinated, just to be safe. Any health concerns related to animals in the home that are not PawsCo fosters, is the responsibility of the foster, regardless of reason for the issue.
- Animals must be fully vaccinated and spayed or neutered prior to being in the public, going to dog parks or being at adoption events. Male dogs are fertile for 2 weeks post-neuter.
- All animals in a foster home must be spayed or neutered for a household to be approved to foster.
- While we work to learn as much about animals as we can before they are brought into the rescue, PawsCo does not, and cannot, know everything about an animal. PawsCo may not know, for example, what behaviors they may display or what illnesses they may have. Animals have not been screened by the PawsCo Training Team or Vet Team for potential behavioral issues or communicable diseases.
- PawsCo expects fosters to have a basic understanding of handling and caring for animals.



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- Supplies received from PawsCo are property of PawsCo and are only to be used for your foster animal.
- The PawsCo Adoption Team screens all adoption applicants.
- PawsCo has sole discretion in deciding whether any applicant can adopt an animal. We respect your opinion about potential adopters and will listen to it, but please understand we believe that, so long as a home is safe, people of all different race, religions and economic backgrounds can provide a loving home. PawsCo remains sole owner of all foster animals until an adoption is finalized.
- PawsCo fosters are held to the highest standard, and PawsCo expects fosters to maintain a high level of professionalism with all PawsCo volunteers and vet partners.

### **PACFA Regulations**

The Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) Program is a licensing and inspection program dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of those animals in pet care facilities throughout Colorado. Please help PawsCo comply with all animal care regulations set forth by PACFA.

- Each foster may have no more than eight total animals in their home at a time, including their own personal animals. A female dog or cat with its kittens or puppies under 8 weeks of age count as one adult animal.
- All animals riding in a vehicle must be secured either with a seat belt harness or an enclosure that is secured to the vehicle.
- All foster homes must have an annual home inspection performed by PawsCo.

### **Fostering Frequently Asked Questions**

#### ***What does the rescue pay for?***

- Veterinary bills at partner veterinarians – all services must be pre-authorized by PawsCo
- Supplies provided, if needed: food, treats, crate, dog beds, toys, leash, collar, PawsCo ID tag

#### ***What do I do if my foster animal becomes lost?***

- Let the Foster Support Team know immediately ([foster@pawSCOadoptions.org](mailto:foster@pawSCOadoptions.org))
- Follow the instructions at <http://pawSCOadoptions.org/resource-center/lost-animal/>

#### ***How can I help my foster get adopted?***

- Give your foster some experiences and note how they react – that way when a potential adopter asks questions, you will have an answer (adopters most often want to know if the animal is good with dogs, cats, kids, crate trained, and good on a leash). If you have questions about introductions, please reach out to [foster@pawSCOadoptions.org](mailto:foster@pawSCOadoptions.org).
- Post your foster on your Facebook, Twitter or social media. Share a couple photos or a video and tell people about them. Encourage your friends and family to share your foster's information, too.
- Fill out the [foster bio form](#) within 5 days of bringing the animal home:  
<http://pawSCO.org/bio-sheet/>
- Take photos and videos and feel free to send updated photos and info to [foster@pawSCOadoptions.org](mailto:foster@pawSCOadoptions.org).
- Take your dog places that you feel they will be comfortable, and tell people that they are up for adoption. Use an “adopt me” leash or bandana.



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***Are there training options for my foster pup?***

Any behavioral questions can go to the Foster Support Team or your assigned trainer. If you want to go to classes with your foster pup, PawsCo has a training partnership with multiple organizations and trainers and there are many free opportunities – let the Foster Support Team know and we'll connect you.

***Can I adopt my foster animal?***

Fosters must decide if they would like to adopt the animal within the first 5 days of bringing the animal home so as to not delay the adoption process. If the animal already has an active adoption application, the Adoptions Team will move forward with that application first. If the animal does not have an active adoption application, a foster may apply to adopt the animal. Please let [foster@pawSCOadoptions.org](mailto:foster@pawSCOadoptions.org) know as soon as you decide if you'd like to adopt your foster animal.

***Is there an adoption fee for someone to adopt my foster pet and if so, how much is it?***

Yes, there is an adoption fee that helps offset the costs of getting the animal neutered or spayed and up to date on all vaccines so that they are “good to go” when they find their forever home. The adoption fee is \$150 for dogs 6 months and older and \$225 for puppies under 6 months (puppies incur more costs, contributing to the cost difference). Cats are \$50 and kittens are \$100.

***A person has submitted an adoption application for my foster, now what?***

The Adoption Team will call references and talk with the potential adopter, and give you a call to coordinate a time to meet with someone from the Adoption Team. We love for our foster parents to be at the meet and greet and to be part of the placement of the foster dog or cat – you know the animal better than anyone, so we love for you to be involved. We strive to connect your foster with this person/family within three days from the time the adoption application is approved. Usually this is at the home of the person that wants to adopt or a central location like a park. Adoption Team members often juggle multiple meet and greets in one day, so we ask you to be flexible in scheduling your animal's meet and greet.

***What is the adoption process?***

All applicants **must** fill out an adoption application

- The Adoption Team reviews the application and calls potential adopter for a phone interview
- The Adoption Team performs reference checks on potential adopter
- The Adoption Team will work with you to schedule and conduct a meet and greet at the potential adopter's home or a central location
- At the time of the meet and greet, the adopter is approved to adopt through PawsCo-we're just ensuring that the dog/cat and the adopter are the right fit for each other. If it's a great match, the applicant can move forward with an adoption following a meet and greet or can arrange to pick up their new companion within 48 hours of the meet and greet, if they'd like to move forward with adoption. Before a dog or cat goes home with an adopter, the adopter must fill out an adoption agreement and pay the adoption fee (via check, or credit card).

***If I meet or know someone interested in adopting my foster, what do I do?***

Potential adopters should visit the PawsCo website at [www.pawSCO.org](http://www.pawSCO.org) and click on the “Adopt” tab for more information. If they are serious about adopting, they can fill out and submit the required adoption application. We will not be able to move forward with an applicant until an adoption application has been completed. The link to the application is near the bottom of the webpage.



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***What medical care does PawsCo provide for foster animals?***

Please work with the Vet Team to get your foster animal to the vet for basic vetting and as needed. Foster animals will be given an exam, spayed/neutered, microchipped, dogs are tested for heartworm (age appropriate) and given heartworm prevention, dewormed (precaution), and brought up-to-date on all vaccinations, including rabies, distemper/parvovirus combination; cats are tested for FELV/FIV.

***What if I need something for my foster pet, like a certain play toy or more food?***

PawsCo supplies everything you will need to foster. If you feel your foster needs additional or special toys, please let us know and we will do our best to provide those things within reason (we are a nonprofit and must be selective with our limited funds). PawsCo asks that you pick up any additional supplies from our weekly intake session, usually Saturday afternoons. Please contact the Foster Support Team to verify the times and location if you do plan on dropping by. **Switching food:** since PawsCo food is donated, you might not be given the same type of food when and if you need more. Please do not wait until you are out of food to get more; there needs to be a transition period of about one week to keep the food change from upsetting your foster animal's stomach.

***I know I am going to be out of town in a few weeks for a couple nights. I still want to foster but I cannot take my foster animal with me. What options do I have?***

As soon as you know you will be out of town, let the Foster Support Team know. We do require at least two weeks notice prior to your travel plans. We have a network of temporary foster-sitters who may be available to watch your animal while you are unavailable to care for them. Having another foster watch your animal also helps us if we are setting up a meet and greet for your animal while you are out of town. Have a friend or family member who can help out? Email us so we can determine if they will be approved to watch your animal while you are out of town. All short-term sitters must agree to taking the animal to any vet appointments or meet and greets that may come up.

***How do adoption events work with PawsCo?***

Our adoption events (along with other events and volunteer opportunities) are listed on the [PawSCO Website](http://PawSCO.org). Animals must be fully vetted and approved for adoption before appearing in public, including adoption events. Not sure if your animal is approved to attend events? Email the Foster Support Team to find out.

***How do most PawsCo animals find their forever homes and families?***

PawsCo advocates for and promotes your foster on our website, Facebook, RescueMe and Petfinder.com (and at events). We track how our rescue pets find their forever homes and the majority is found via Petfinder.com and our website. However, we also find them homes through sharing pictures and bios on social media and sometimes fosters meet their new person when they are out for a walk or at doggy daycare.

***What do I do if I see an animal in need that I want to foster that isn't on the weekly PawsCo email list (on Facebook, online, etc.)?***

Email our Shelter Relations Team at [rescue@pawSCOadoptions.org](mailto:rescue@pawSCOadoptions.org). They will work with the shelter or facility where the animal is located to get set up to possibly transfer the animal to PawsCo. All animals must go through the Shelter Relations Team in order to be brought into PawsCo.

***I found a stray or lost animal. Can PawsCo take it into the rescue?***



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Please see our [Lost Animals](#) section on the PawsCo website. Bringing an animal to the shelter is the best way to reunite it with its caretaker.

***I have a friend or a family member who needs to rehome their animal. Can PawsCo rescue that animal and help find them a home?***

Because PawsCo's mission is to rescue animals from underserved shelters in the Colorado area, we do not bring in animals that currently have a home.

**Join Our Community:**

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Pinterest](#)

PawsCo Volunteer Facebook Group – you will be invited to join our volunteer group on Facebook; this is a place for sharing PawsCo specific updates and networking with other fosters and volunteers.

*Thank you for fostering! We'd love your feedback on the experience and the process, as we're always looking to improve! Please let your PawsCo leadership team know if you have any questions!*

*Thanks for all you do!*