



Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue
Harleysville, PA
Foster Guidelines

Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue provides safe homes with caring individuals to care for and socialize dogs that are in need of a temporary home before permanent placement.

We are always in need of new foster parents because they are truly the lifeline for getting animals out of the shelter—the more foster homes we have, the more animals we can save! We look forward to working with you, and hope you are sincerely excited to change the lives of dogs that have seen dark days, and who were saved from a certain tragic death in a gas chamber.

As a foster care provider, you should remember that this is an extremely rewarding experience, but that it is also time consuming and a big responsibility. You are working with us to help save the lives of homeless animals. We expect that you will take this responsibility as seriously as we do. Please give yourself time to consider all aspects of fostering.

Although this is a serious responsibility, it can also be a very fun experience. All of the dogs that are pulled have great personalities and temperaments, and just want to be loved. They will be very grateful for the opportunity you are giving them. Enjoy your time with them, as they will enjoy the time with you. Play and have fun.

Thunder's Angels is always available if you have any questions or concerns. For now, please feel free to contact us at any time at thundersangels@yahoo.com. Once you are approved into the foster care program, we will provide you with our cell phone numbers too.

Please read the following guidelines, and keep them as a reference for the future, since we have a lot of important information within these pages. And please remember, that you are greatly appreciated! Without you, all of this would not be possible!

Foster Care Agreement

- I understand that when the animal is ready for adoption, I will surrender him/her back to Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue for permanent placement. I understand that all dogs fostered by foster parents are a part of Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue and are subject to the same guidelines as any other adoption. Foster parents are strongly encouraged to assist in the placement process, but the designated Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue staff members will make the ultimate decision on finalizing adoption.
- Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue foster parents understand that some dogs will take longer to adopt than others and therefore may be in their care for an indefinite period of time.
- If asked, I agree to attend a volunteer orientation meeting. I also agree to thoroughly read the Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue foster handbook.
- I understand that as a foster parent I will need to provide food, water, toys and supplies for the animals in my care. Further, I understand that Thunder's Angels will pay for medical care but that I will be responsible for transporting the animal to and from veterinary appointments. I also agree that should a medical emergency occur, I will immediately notify Thunder's Angels by phone at the emergency number provided to me during my Foster Parent Orientation meeting.
- I agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the foster handbook, and by Thunder's Angels staff. Not following the policies and procedures may result in discontinuance from the foster care program and immediate relinquishment of your foster animal(s).

If you have any questions about any of the above statements, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Thunder's Angels Rights and Regulations

1. Thunder's Angels can request the return of the dog anytime during the foster care period.
 - a. A requested return will take place should the animal show signs of neglect when scheduled for a home check and vaccinations.
 - b. A requested return will take place if the scheduled home check or recheck is missed or if you are asked to bring the dog in for any reason and fail to notify Thunder's Angels that you are unable to make it.

2. If the animal in your care becomes ill, has a noticeable change in personality, or his/her condition changes for any reason, you **MUST** contact Thunder's Angels immediately.

3. You are agreeing to assume responsibility of the dog including, but not limited to, the necessary day to day care of the dog including food, water, and exercise. Decisions regarding the dog's welfare must be reviewed and accepted by Thunder's Angels, even in the case of an emergency. If an emergency arises, please contact Thunder's Angels immediately.

4. You have no rights to this animals or it disposition. You do not have the right to foster the animal to or with someone else outside of your household.

5. Foster families cannot hold Thunder's Angels responsible for the contraction of any disease, damage done to property, or injuries sustained by individuals in the home or other pets living in the home, while participating in this program. If a severe circumstance is to occur, Thunder's Angels must be notified immediately.

6. You may not falsely represent Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue.

Please understand, that any violation of these rights and regulations is grounds for termination from Thunder's Angels Foster Care Program.

Foster Care Qualifications

The following are the basic qualifications required of a foster home:

1. You will need a safe, secure space inside your home to house your foster dog.
2. You will need a schedule flexible enough to allow for routine exercise for your foster dog, as well as any potential emergencies that may occur.
3. You will need to provide transportation for your foster dog to meet with potential adopters on a scheduled basis, or to bring your foster dog to scheduled events during the weekend.
4. You must be able to commit time and effort to socializing, and training your foster dog as well as provide ongoing input on any behavioral changes.
5. As the primary foster care provider, you must be 18 years or older.

Basic Care of your Foster Dog

Below are the basics needed to ensure a great experience for your foster dog:

1. Give your dog a nutritionally balanced diet, including constant access to water. Also provide basics like a leash, bed, and toys.
2. Be patient with your new foster dog, especially for the first few days. Your new foster has been through a *lot* of stress. They were on death row in a shelter, and then transported a very long distance to be with you. They will need time to adjust to the new surroundings, and adjust to you. Please make sure the expectations you have of your new foster dog are reasonable.
3. Give your foster dog enough exercise to keep him/her physically fit, but not exhausted. Playing with your foster, providing toys for their entertainment, and walking them twice a day for approximately 30-40 minutes, usually provides enough exercise. This may vary depending on the type of dog, their age, and their physical condition.
4. Give your foster dog adequate shelter. A fenced yard with a dog house is a bonus, however, Thunder's Angels does not require either to be a foster home. If you do have a fenced in yard, never leave your foster dog unattended while not home – this could lead to the dog being stolen for dog fighting bait or for cruel animal testing. Dogs left alone outside have also been known to be beaten, and poisoned, even if the dog was only left outside for just a few minutes. During hot weather, your foster dog may become dehydrated if left out for a long period of time. During cold weather, your foster dog may be subject to frostbite.

*** Thunder's Angels does not permit the chaining of your foster dog in your yard.

5. Outfit your foster dog with a collar and ID tag. No matter how careful you are, there is always a possibility that your foster dog may get lost. Some dogs could be a flight risk, and this is a good precaution in case the dog tries to run away. The ID tag greatly increases the chance that your foster would be returned safely.
6. Follow local laws and ordinances. For information on your local laws, please contact Thunder's Angels, or your local humane society.
7. If your dog is off of your property, or is not within a fenced area, please keep them on a leash. Even with a valid license and ID tag, your foster dog should not be allowed to roam freely in an open area. It is best to keep your foster dog on a leash to prevent him/her from running away, getting hit by a car, or getting into any kind of trouble.

*** Thunder's Angels does not permit the use of choke or prong collars as they can be painful for the dog and cause tracheal damage over the long term. If a dog strongly pulls when leashed, please contact us so that we can advise you as to the most appropriate type of nylon harness – we feel that a harness is always the safest and most comfortable option for the dog.

8. Keep a log of any behavioral changes that may occur. If your foster dog begins to change in any negative way, please inform Thunder's Angels immediately. Also keep a log to assure positive progress is being made.
9. Keep a log of any health changes that may occur. If your foster dog begins to change in any negative way, please inform Thunder's Angels immediately. If you have accepted a dog that came to you when ill or pregnant, it is a good idea to keep a log to assure positive progress is being made.
10. Please do not crate your foster dog. Thunder's Angels does not suggest the use of crates while your dog is unsupervised. It is extremely unfair and stressful for your dog to be locked in a small cage. A better option is to puppy-proof your home and set aside a small room for your dog when you're away. The kitchen is typically a good place since there isn't any carpeting and 'accidents' won't be a problem to clean. When you will not

be home for a significant amount of time during the course of the day for work or school, please make arrangements to take the dog out for relief.

11. Allow enough time for socialization of your foster dog. Dogs are pack animals, and depend on your love and protection. When left unattended, dogs can become depressed or anxious—especially the ones we’re taking in that have been discarded by their previous families. Please allow time to make your foster dog feel like a part of your family, even though it’s only a temporary home.
12. Allow time to train your dog. Dogs and humans speak different languages, and it is important to find a way to convey your feelings for when your foster may be doing things that you do not want them to do. Compassion, clarity, and consistency are important when trying to train your foster dog. Also, keep a log of any words or motions used to help train your foster dog, so when they are adopted, their new family will be able to continue using those commands.

*** Thunder’s Angels does not permit the use of electric shock collars. Thunder’s Angels also does not permit hitting, kicking, smacking, or yelling as forms of training or punishment.

Thunder’s Angels recommends the following books as good resources for training:

A Well-Trained Dog by Deborah A. Jones, Ph.D.; The Power of Positive Dog Training by Pat Miller; and, for solving dog behavioral problems, If Only They Could Speak, Dogs Behaving Badly, and The Dog Who Loved Too Much, all by Nicholas Dodman.

13. Take your foster dog out regularly to relieve themselves – when your dog first arrives, we recommend every hour or two since s/he may not be housebroken or may be nervous in new surroundings.
14. If you decide to take your foster dog out with you, do not leave them unattended in a car. Even on a 78°F day, the temperature inside a shaded car is 90°F, while the inside of a car parked in the sun can reach 160°F in minutes. Animals don’t sweat as we do and can quickly succumb to heatstroke.

Dog Behavior Tip Sheet

Sometimes, dogs may show behaviors that are considered improper. Below is a list of these potential behaviors, and tips on how to work to correct these behaviors:

Barking – This could occur due to social isolation, attention seeking, territorial behavior, fears and phobias, and separation anxiety.

Recommendations:

- Walk your dog at least twice daily—it's good exercise, both mental and physical. Walks should not only be considered "potty breaks."
- To help fill the hours that you're not home, provide safe, interesting toys to keep your dog busy. Having a second dog always helps with this!
- If your dog is barking to get your attention, make sure he has sufficient time with you on a daily basis (petting, grooming, playing, exercising).
- If your dog is well socialized and you have your employer's permission, take your dog to work with you every now and then.
- Teach your dog a "quiet" command. When he begins to bark at a passerby, allow two or three barks, then say "quiet" and interrupt his barking by shaking a can filled with pennies.
- Desensitize your dog to the stimulus that triggers the barking. Teach him that the people he views as intruders are actually friends and that good things happen to him when these people are around.
- If your dog barks while inside the house when you're home, call him to you, have him obey a command such as "sit" or "down," and reward him with praise and a treat.
- Don't encourage this type of barking by enticing your dog to bark at things he hears or sees outside.
- Identify what's frightening your dog and desensitize him to it.
- During thunderstorms or other frightening times, mute noise from outside by leaving your dog in a comfortable area in a basement or windowless bathroom, and leave on a television, radio, or loud fan. Block off your dog's access to outdoor views that might be causing a fear response, by closing curtains or doors to certain rooms.

Chewing – This could occur due to social isolation, attention seeking, playing, boredom, fears and phobias, and separation anxiety.

Recommendations:

- Take responsibility for your own belongings: If you don't want it in your dog's mouth, don't make it available. Keep clothing, shoes, books, trash, eyeglasses, and remote control devices out of your dog's reach.
- Don't confuse your dog by offering him shoes and socks as toys and then expecting him to distinguish between his shoe and yours. Your dog's toys should be clearly distinguishable from household goods.
- Until he learns the house rules, confine him when you're unable to keep an eye on him. Choose a "safe place" that's dog-proof, and provide fresh water and "safe" toys.

- Give your dog plenty of people-time. Your dog won't know how to behave if you don't teach him alternatives to inappropriate behavior, and he can't learn these when he's in the yard by himself.
- Increase your dog's opportunities for mental stimulation.
- Provide your dog with a wide variety of toys.
- Rotate your dog's toys to refresh his interest in them. "New" toys are always more interesting than old ones.
- Make your dog's favorite "off-limits" chew objects unattractive to him by covering them with heavy plastic, aluminum foil, hot pepper sauce, or a commercial "anti-chew" product.
- Teach your dog a "drop it" command, so that when he does pick up an "off-limits" object, you can use the command and praise him for complying. The best way to teach "drop it" is to practice exchanging a toy in his possession for a tidbit of food.

Digging – This could occur due to seeking entertainment, seeking prey, seeking attention, and seeking escape.

Recommendations:

- Walk your dog at least twice daily—it's good exercise, both mental and physical. Walks should not only be considered "potty breaks."
- To help fill the hours that you're not home, provide safe, interesting toys to keep your dog busy
- For dedicated diggers, provide an "acceptable digging area." Choose an area of the yard where it's okay for your dog to dig, and cover that area with loose soil or sand. If you catch your dog digging in an unacceptable area, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise and say, "No dig." Then immediately take the dog to his designated digging area. When he digs in the approved spot, reward him with praise. Make the unacceptable digging spots unattractive (at least temporarily) by setting rocks or chicken wire into the dirt. Make the acceptable area attractive by burying safe items for him to discover.
- Search for possible signs of "pests" and then make your yard unwelcome to them. Avoid methods that could be toxic or dangerous to your pets or other animals.
- Provide an insulated doghouse. Make sure it affords protection from wind and sun.
- Provide plenty of fresh water in a bowl that can't be tipped over.

Other behavioral issues may include:

- Eating Strange Objects
- Escaping
- Aggression
- Urine marking

If any of these behaviors occur, please contact Thunder's Angels for recommendations on how to improve the behavior immediately.

Introducing your Foster Dog to your Current Pets

If you currently have animals within your family, you may want to consider the following techniques when introducing your foster dog to your current pets:

- **Choose A Neutral Location** Introduce the dogs in a neutral location so that your resident dog is less likely to view the newcomer as a territorial intruder. Each dog should be handled by a separate person. With both dogs on leashes, begin the introductions in an area unfamiliar to each, such as a park or a neighbor's yard. If you frequently walk your resident dog in a nearby park, she may view that area as her territory, too, so choose a less familiar site.
- **Use Positive Reinforcement** From the first meeting, help both dogs experience "good things" when they're in each other's presence. Let them sniff each other briefly, which is normal canine greeting behavior. As they do, talk to them in a happy, friendly tone of voice; never use a threatening tone. (Don't allow them to investigate and sniff each other for too long, however, as this may escalate to an aggressive response.) After a short time, get the attention of both dogs and give each a treat in return for obeying a simple command, such as "sit" or "stay." Take the dogs for a walk and let them sniff and investigate each other at intervals. Continue with the "happy talk," food rewards, and simple commands.
- **Be Aware of Body Postures** One body posture that indicates things are going well is a "play-bow." One dog will crouch with her front legs on the ground and her hind end in the air. This is an invitation to play, and a posture that usually elicits friendly behavior from the other dog. Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response, including hair standing up on one dog's back, teeth-baring, deep growls, a stiff-legged gait, or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by calmly getting each dog interested in something else. For example, both handlers can call their dogs to them, have them sit or lie down, and reward each with a treat. The dogs' interest in the treats should prevent the situation from escalating into aggression. Try letting the dogs interact again, but this time for a shorter time period and/or at a greater distance from each other.
- **Taking the Dogs Home** When the dogs seem to be tolerating each other's presence without fearful or aggressive responses and the investigative greeting behaviors have tapered off, you can take them home. Whether you choose to take them in the same vehicle will depend on their size, how well they ride in the car, how trouble-free the initial introduction has been, and how many dogs are involved.

If you have more than one resident dog in your household, it may be best to introduce the resident dogs to the new dog one at a time. Two or more resident dogs may have a tendency to "gang up" on the newcomer.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my foster be spayed or neutered?

- Yes. All dogs that go through Thunder's Angels system will be spayed or neutered. Sometimes, a dog may be transported before being spayed or neutered or you may be fostering a nursing mom and her pups. In that case, an appointment will be scheduled for the surgery as soon as possible, and it would be your responsibility to make it to that scheduled appointment.

What equipment or supplies does Thunder's Angels provide?

- At this time, foster homes are required to provide the necessary equipment and supplies for their foster dogs. However, all purchases are considered tax deductible as a donation to the organization so keep your receipts 😊

Does Thunder's Angels provide gas money for transporting dogs to scheduled appointments or adoption events?

- At this time, we do not pay mileage costs. However, keeping a log of your mileage is recommended, as you can receive \$.13 per mile on your taxes since you would be volunteering your time to our organization.

How long will I have my foster dog?

- There is no exact timetable. Some dogs may get adopted quicker than others. It may be as short as an overnight stay or a few months.

Can I promote my foster dog to potential adopters?

- Yes. Promotion of your foster dog is highly encouraged. Although they will be posted on our website for exposure, we also encourage you use the internet to your advantage (networking sites like facebook and myspace and other message boards are great tools), as well as other mediums of promotion, as long as you are not falsely representing Thunder's Angels.

What if I find someone who wants to adopt my foster animal?

- All potential adopters must fill out an adoption application. That application will then be reviewed for approval by our staff. If you have someone that would be interested in applying for your foster, please direct them to www.helpsaveme.org to download an adoption application, or have them contact Thunder's Angels for more information.

Can I place my dog without going through Thunder's Angels?

- No. Every foster is a part of Thunder's Angels Dog Rescue. Adopting a dog without going through the proper procedures, giving away a dog, or selling a dog is a direct violation of our terms and conditions.

What if I have an emergency?

- If you have an emergency, please contact Thunder's Angels immediately at the cell number provided to you. We will then come up with a way to work through the emergency.

What if my foster dog is not working out within my household?

- As a foster, you are taking on the responsibility for the care of the dog. Just as we expect with our adopters, we expect that you would be able to carry out your full term with your dog. Behavioral tendencies can be rectified. However, if you are experiencing severe problems, please contact Thunder's Angels in order to work out the problem.

Can I refer someone to be a foster parent?

- Absolutely. We are always in need of great volunteers. Please refer them to www.helpsaveme.org to download a foster application, or have them contact Thunder's Angels directly for more information.

Is there any other way that I can help?

- Definitely. We are always looking for dedicated volunteers for various things. Please contact Thunder's Angels to find out how you can help, or to offer your services.

How do I say goodbye to my foster dog?

- Saying goodbye to a foster dog can be hard sometimes. However, please remember that you were providing a temporary home for the dog and you should take great pride that you helped save his/her life. And remember, they are going to a great home that will take great care of them. If you would like, we can give your information to the adoptive family and ask them to send you updates on the dog, or even visit the dog, if permitted. And just remember; now you can save another life! We hope you will foster again and again!