



Dog Foster Manual



[Revised December 2023]



Welcome to Our Foster Community!

Thank you for joining us in our lifesaving mission by becoming a foster caregiver. The number of animals we can save depends entirely on the number of people who open their homes and hearts to foster them.

Being a pet foster family has rewards beyond the essential value of helping a pet in need find a new home. For some, it is a chance to have an animal companion without a lifetime commitment, or to try new companions for an existing pet. For others, it is the special challenge of helping an animal recover from an illness or injury, the trauma of losing a beloved owner or home, or to decompress.

No matter why you choose to foster, know that your care and commitment will forever change the lives of those you have chosen to take into your heart and your home.

This manual is reviewed regularly to adhere to best practices. **Foster Resource Page:** www.sanantoniopetsalive.org/foster-resources

NOTE: The purpose of this handbook is to provide a program description, policies, and guidelines for procedures to use while fostering animals for San Antonio Pets Alive! While many of the procedures are proven best practices, the foster team has extensive experience in working with fostered animals and is available at any time to answer questions. The foster team may also suggest procedures different from or not included in this handbook. The foster team acts under the auspices of the rescue, and in partnership with the facility managers. The foster program team is authorized to make decisions regarding all foster participation and practice.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide the programs and services needed to eliminate the killing of at-risk animals due to lack of space, adopter or foster.

Our Core Values

San Antonio Pets Alive! staff and volunteers are held to high standards to ensure the health, safety and success of the animals we care for. **The following are core values that all staff, fosters and volunteers are expected to uphold when working with SAPA! animals, adopters, and members of the public:**

- **Stewardship.** We are caretakers of the dogs and cats we save. Our stewardship also extends to the gifts we receive, our reputation and the goodwill of our community.
- **Integrity.** We believe integrity drives us to be honest and responsible in our actions and communications with our team and the general public.
- **Excellence.** We strive for excellence and efficiency in every program we implement, ensuring the best care for the dogs and cats we save and the families who love and adopt them.
- **Respect.** We treat all animals and people with dignity and kindness.
- **Lifesaving.** We believe that life is precious. We work tirelessly with compassion, care, and love to save the lives of dogs and cats and to do what is best for the animals, adopters and fosters.

Table of Contents

Program Summary	4
Facility Contact Information.....	6
Foster Support Contact Information	7
Emergency Protocol	8
Lost Foster.....	8
Dog Bite/Scratch Protocol & Incident Report	9
Suggested Supplies.....	12
Picking Up a New Foster Dog.....	13
Foster Dog Leash and Collar Protocol	14
Pet Proofing Your Home.....	16
Bringing Your New Foster Home.....	17
Introducing Your Current Pets.....	17
Common Medical Conditions.....	18
Severe Medical Conditions.....	20
Follow Up Treatment.....	21
Routine Medical Care.....	21
Spay/Neuter Surgery	23
Administering Medication.....	25
Care of Puppies	27
Care of Adult Dogs	31
Sanitizing Your Home	33
Quarantine Periods.....	34
Getting Your Foster Adopted	34
Thank You!.....	40

Why Foster?

Foster care provides temporary homes for animals that need a break from life in the kennels. Moving these animals into foster homes not only makes their lives better, but also saves the lives of those who take their place. Fostering a shelter animal is a rewarding experience but requires hard work and dedication.

What It Takes

The ideal foster care provider will have a basic knowledge of animal care and training, as well as a desire to find their foster animal a safe and caring permanent home. As a foster parent you will provide your animals with care including food, water, shelter, litter, training, grooming and trips to the SAPA! Medical Clinic to obtain medical treatment when necessary. SAPA! will supplement these supplies when possible.

What You Get

SAPA! will provide basic vet care, as well as adoption counseling and support as needed. Donations of food, treats, toys, and litter are often available for free to foster parents (Availability of supplies

fluctuates with the donations we receive and is not guaranteed).

All foster parents are also expected to bring their animals to adoption events hosted by SAPA!

How Long?

Length of foster care varies based on each animal. Some foster animals may only need a couple weeks of care, while others might need months. The length of time can depend on the animal's age, medical issues, or adoptability (The average length of stay for a foster animal is 15-90 days). Foster animals stay in their foster homes until they are adopted out, so marketing your foster animal is an important factor in length of stay!



SAPA! Facility Contact Information

151 Rescue Center

Contact:

placement@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Address: 4710 Highway 151 San Antonio, TX 78227

Hours: Monday–Friday: 11am–7pm
Saturday–Sunday: 11am–5pm

Petco Adoption Center

Contact:

petco.ingram@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Hours: Monday–Friday: 11am–7pm
Saturday–Sunday: 11am–7pm

SAPA! Medical Clinic

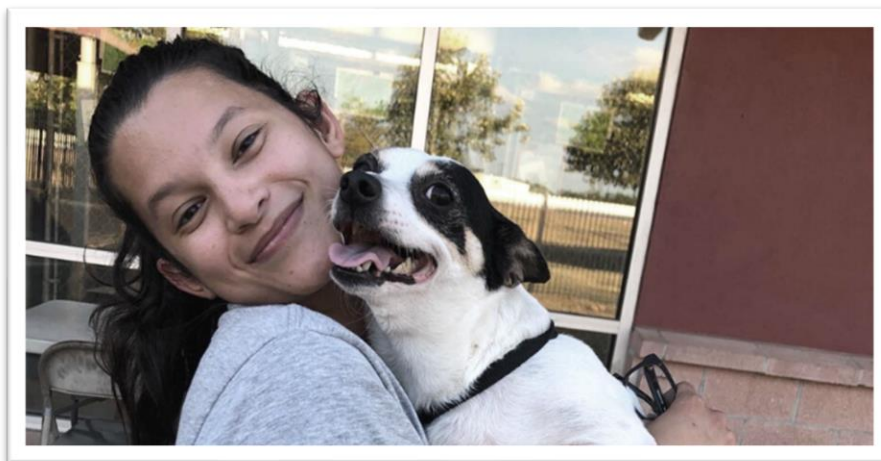
Contact:

appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Address: 9107 Marbach Rd. Suite #109, San Antonio, TX 78245

Hours: Monday–Friday: 12pm–6pm
Saturday–Sunday: 12pm–4pm

Address: 6001 NW Loop 410 Suite 103,
San Antonio, TX 78238



SAPA! Foster Support Contacts

The fostermedical@ email is volunteer based, so please allow up to 24 hours for a response. In case of a critical injury, contact the medical team at appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org or call 210-338-8225.

Foster Questions and Concerns:

foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org

General Foster Medical Concerns:

fostermedical@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Foster Medical

Appointments/Emergencies:

appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Spay/Neuter Schedule:

Your foster MUST be altered if they are over 2 months of age and healthy.
schedulemedical@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Adoption Coordination:

adopt@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Foster Marketing:

Start marketing your foster for adoption

fostermarketing@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Foster Events Information:

adopt@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Foster Placement:

For transferring from one foster to another.

foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Paperwork:

Lost your foster's paperwork?
adopt@sanantoniopetsalive.org

NOTE: We are happy to provide whatever support you need while fostering but ask that you weigh the extent of any emergency situation you encounter against the need to call staff or coordinator at home. If it is truly an emergency, feel free to reach out. Otherwise, consider waiting until the next business day, or asking your question via email. Thank you!

Emergency Protocol

On occasion, foster animals have medical emergencies that occur outside of normal business hours. In the case of such an emergency, contact the medical team at:

210-338-8225

To expedite your request, please have the animal's A# (A123456) readily available. An email should also be sent to:

appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org

SAPA! has agreements with low-cost emergency veterinary care across the city. With prior approval from the Medical Director, you may be able to utilize one of these medical facilities in an emergency. **Please note that if you decide to take the foster animal directly to an emergency veterinary facility without prior approval from SAPA!, we will not be responsible for any of the costs incurred.**

If your foster animal should pass away for any reason, please contact the foster team immediately with the animal's A# (A123456), Name, Date and Cause of Death. Deceased animals can be dropped off during

normal hours at the SAPA! clinic or fosters, with the foster team's permission, can choose to privately cremate their foster, however, this is not a cost SAPA! will reimburse or cover.

Lost Foster

Occasionally, despite your best efforts, your foster animal may escape from your home. If this following information: The Animal's A# (A12345).

- Last known location
- Date of escape
- What happened

We suggest that you put up fliers around your neighborhood and place ads on Petco Love Lost, Paw Boost, Facebook pages, Nextdoor, and Craigslist. Should the animal be picked up by Animal Care Services, San Antonio Pets Alive! will be notified and we will contact you immediately.



IMPORTANT: Dog Bite/Scratch Protocol

Bites or Scratches that break skin are required to be reported by the State of Texas. There is a mandatory 10-day quarantine required when a bite or scratch breaks skin (regardless of rabies vaccine status).

The following procedures should be followed if your foster dog bite/scratch breaks skin on you, a member of your household or anyone else.

- 1) The dog should be immediately moved to a safe environment: a crate or other option that both prevents further injury to the person and provides a calm environment for the dog.
- 2) The incident should be reported **immediately** to the foster team with pictures included in the email.
 - o **SAPA! requires an internal incident report** to be completed by the foster which will be sent to you via email by the foster team.
 - o The Foster Manager and SAPA! Director will report to the county the incident and determine if the cat should stay in the foster home and/or what behavior modification training is needed.

PLEASE NOTE: *Some cases with cat scratches and bites are accidents and related to play. A bite case does NOT mean that the pet will be euthanized or have any negative repercussions. In some counties, animal control will allow animals to be quarantined at home, otherwise at our Medical Clinic for the 10-day quarantine- the foster team will advise on the course of action.*

If the bite resulted in an injury, follow these additional steps:

- o With the foster team, assess the need for medical care. (See guidelines below)
- o The foster staff will verify the status of the dog's rabies vaccination and assist the foster in getting proof, as needed. **Note:** Puppies under the age of 3 months will not have been vaccinated for rabies.
- o Any animal that has bitten or scratched someone, and broken skin (regardless of whether they have been vaccinated) must be contained and then examined by a vet 10 days after the bite occurred. In most instances, this will occur at the Animal Care Services Quarantine Building-Hwy 151, per the City of San Antonio's ordinances. If the dog is given a clean bill of health at the end of the quarantine period, it could not have passed on the rabies virus at the time of the bite (10 days prior). **Please note:** the foster has the option to reclaim the animal and continue fostering as per agreement.



Dog/Scratch Bite Protocol (Cont.)

Bite Assessment/Wound Care:

1. Wash bite wounds with soap and water immediately.
2. Did bite break the skin?
 - a. If no, no further action is required.
 - b. If yes, did it puncture or scratch?
 - i. If scratch, watching for redness or infection should be sufficient.
 - ii. If puncture, will need oral antibiotics. Please see personal physician ASAP to prevent sepsis, loss of function, or even death.
 - iii. If bleeding, stop with pressure. If severe, call 911.

Bites are an extremely dangerous issue and must be reported to SAPA! management. An infected bite can cost well over \$10,000 if not treated immediately and can even cause loss of function. If the animal has rabies, a bite can cause death.

Although SAPA! is not responsible for medical bills associated with bites, we can often direct you on what to do after a bite occurs. If you choose not to seek medical help, SAPA! cannot be held liable for any resulting consequences of not taking appropriate action.



Behavior issues: Bites or scratches that do not break skin should still be reported to the foster team for pet temperament awareness, with the circumstances and details, to help place the pet into a home for the pet!

Behavior Incident Report

To be used for **all** bites, **all** serious dog-dog altercations where life is lost or there are serious wounds, **cat killing**, and **any** human aggression.

Must be filled out by all witnesses to the event.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email:

Phone #: _____ Dog's name: _____

Animal#: _____

Date of incident: _____ Location of Incident:

What is your relationship with this dog? (Foster/owner/staff/volunteer/customer)

Please describe what happened:

Was there any reason this might have occurred such as: food around, lots of excitement going on at the time (doorbell ringing, other dogs fighting, people yelling, etc.), cat running or anything else that could have excited the dog? Please describe what was happening in the environment at the time:

What injuries were sustained and to who? Was medical attention given?

Was there any prior warning that this might occur?

Is there any additional information you feel would be helpful?

Suggested Supplies

The number of foster animals SAPA! can support is limited by the resources available to the program. Foster caregivers are encouraged to donate supplies for their own foster animals in order to maximize the number of animals fostered by SAPA! each year. Below is a list of items you may need in order to foster an animal:

- o **Food-** SAPA! recommends Merrick or another high-quality brand of food. If you need further recommendations, please reach out to the foster team
- o **Blankets, towels, and linens**
- o **Paper towels and newspaper**
- o **Bowls** - Ceramic or Stainless steel are easiest to sanitize
- o **Crates** - a large crate with a divider is useful for different sized dogs. Your animal should be able to stand and turn around comfortably in the crate
- o **Grooming supplies** – Brushes, combs, and shampoo
- o **Soft plush toys** for puppies to snuggle

- o **Stain and odor remover** for the occasional accident: Nature's
- o **Miracle** or a simple vinegar solution typically works very well
- o **Toys** that can be cleaned and sanitized (hard rubber, nylon, etc.)
- o **Bleach and/or disinfectant**
- o **Gates** for sectioning- off parts of the house, if necessary
- o **Collars and leashes**



This list is not meant to be all-inclusive but consists of the basics that will help with dogs and puppies. The foster caregiver's best judgment should be used when obtaining supplies. We sincerely thank you for opening your hearts and homes to save a life in San Antonio!

Picking Up a New Foster Dog

SAPA! will contact a list of potential foster parents by phone, email, or you can watch for our pleas on the [Facebook foster forum](#) when an animal needs foster care. The first foster caregiver who responds to the request and accepts the foster assignment will receive the animal. You **always** have the option to decline a foster assignment.

Once you agree to foster an animal, you will be provided options for arranging pick-up times. If you have hesitations about letting your new foster animal loose in your car, we recommend that you bring a transport crate or a leash.

You will receive the animal's current file, which will be comprised of all known medical & behavioral notes on the animal, as well as any special considerations for care. You will also receive any necessary medications,

dispensers, and instructions, if needed.



It is possible that when picking up an animal, they may have just had surgery. Please keep their cone on for 10-14 days. They might still be coming out of anesthesia, so please take caution not to startle and keep them calm so they do not injure themselves. Once you are home, put them in a quiet area so they can recover. If you were given medication, please check to see when they need to be given. *On occasion, it is possible that the adult dog may not be altered for medical reasons.*





A Note On Dog Parks:

SAPA! advises **against** bringing your foster dog to a dog park. Your dog is already dealing with the stress of a new home environment, and dog

parks are largely uncontrolled environments that can increase their stress levels and cause incidents.

Consider a regular park with large trails that allow dogs on-leash.

FOSTER DOG LEASH AND COLLAR PROTOCOL

Thank you for fostering! Because your foster dog is just coming out of the kennels, they may be under socialized and/or a flight risk. There are some special precautions you need to take to ensure that your foster dog does not escape and to keep your foster dog safe and your foster experience successful.

Please read the following and confirm that you agree to comply with this protocol.

If given the chance, your foster dog may try to run away. Please agree to take the following precautions:

- Your foster dog must be in a collar or harness at all times. Martingale collars are designed to stop the collar from slipping over the dog's ears and off the dog (this is the preferred collar to use).
- Your foster pup must be on a drag leash during the seven-day quarantine or until you feel the dog will not be a flight risk, including inside your residence. *(This is to ensure that when/if the dog is cornered, scared, or gets loose, there will always be a safe way to catch the dog without having to touch them. This can easily be made by linking a slip lead and a regular leash together.)*
- If your foster pup is outside, they must be on a leash that you are holding at ALL times until the animal has settled in and it's known that the pet is not a flight risk. Even small dogs can scale tall fences. They should not be walked outside of a yard until the Foster Team agrees that they are sufficiently acclimated to the leash and under your control whenever possible.

Your foster dog may be frightened or uncomfortable around small children. To avoid any behavioral issues, it is your responsibility to supervise young children while they are handling the dog and to show them how to safely handle the dog. For the dogs' safety, children should not be allowed to pick up the dog without an adult present.

The dog must be transported in a crate and not taken out of the crate until the dog is safely indoors with all escape routes blocked. If the dog is too big to be transported in a crate: (i) he/she can be transported with just a collar and leash but you must use extreme caution; (ii) tether your foster dog inside your car or use a doggie seatbelt; and (iii) make sure that you can control your foster dog before transporting him/her without a crate.

Make sure that everyone in the home and all visitors understand that your foster dog is a flight risk and that extreme caution is used when opening doors.

Check your home to make sure that doggie doors and windows are securely closed and that there are no other means of escape. Also check any fenced enclosure for holes or weaknesses and eliminate hiding places before taking the dog outside. Be advised that a scared dog may also try to climb your fence.

Make sure that new people go slow with your foster dog and give them the time and space necessary to feel secure prior to reaching for them, petting them, or attempting to pick them up.

Your foster dog requires extra attention to overcome their fears. If you have questions or need help, please contact our Foster Team at **foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org**.

*Should your foster dog escape at any time, please email **foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org** ASAP.*

Thank you again for saving this dog's life and helping them learn to trust again.

Printed Foster Name_____

Foster Signature_____ Date ____

Pet Proofing Your Home

It is important to ensure that your home and foster room are safe.

- o All cleaning supplies and medications should be kept out of reach, locking cabinets preferred.
- o Place all small chewable items out of reach (socks, shoes, etc.)
- o Block off all small areas and hiding places. Cover all trash cans securely.
- o Wires, mini blind cords, draperies, and shower curtains should be placed out of reach.
- o Count your foster animals when opening and closing closet doors.
- o Keep household plants out of reach and supervise your animals outside.
- o Make sure your foster dog cannot jump the fence before leaving him or her in the yard unsupervised.
- o Avoid toys that have small parts attached to them (i.e., eyes, ribbons, yarn, feathers, etc.)
- o Use sheets, tarps, and newspaper to protect carpet and floors.

Toxic Plants for Dogs



Philodendron



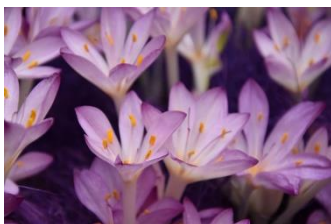
Oleander



Japanese Yew



Lily of the Valley



Autumn Crocus



Cyclamen



Sago Palm



Tulips

Bringing Your New Foster Home

Set up the area where your foster animal will be staying **before** you bring your foster home.

New foster animals should be kept separate from your existing animals for a period of 10-14 days. This quarantine period protects both your own animals, as well as the foster animal. Small puppies do very well in crate, bathroom, or spare bedroom.

Introduce your foster animal to one room of the house at first. Have homecoming be a quiet experience. Start by keeping the environment small and slowly expanding to keep stress levels at a minimum.

Dogs and puppies should have a crate that is large enough for them to stand and turn around comfortably in a circle without touching the top or sides. Allow your new foster quiet time to adjust to their new environment, as this can be a stressful time for them.

NOTE: SAPA! foster animals are not permitted to be left outdoors without supervision or overnight.



Introducing Your Current Pets

Introductions between a foster dog and the resident dogs should be in neutral territory.

If introductions are done at your home, take the foster dog to the backyard to sniff and eliminate first. Then put the foster dog inside and let the resident dogs out into the yard to investigate the smells left by the new dog. At that point, introductions can be made, preferably outside. Walking the dogs together side by side (never head-to-head) can also be helpful.

Keep your new foster on a leash so you can easily break up any altercations. Some growling is completely normal. Watch for signs of unusual aggression (fixation, sustained eye contact, not disengaging)

For multiple dogs, make introductions with a new foster one on one.

Always supervise interactions with your personal animals.

Common Medical Conditions

Upper Respiratory Infection

URI's can infect both puppies and dogs. Sometimes called "kennel cough" in dogs, a URI is basically the same thing as a common cold in humans. Symptoms for both species include sneezing, coughing, discharge from the nose or eyes, lethargy, loss of appetite, and fever. Treatment is the same as with a human with a cold: rest, fluids, and comfort. **SAPA! will provide medication.**

Diarrhea

Healthy feces are brown and well formed. Diarrhea is loose, watery, and discolored, and can be a symptom of illnesses, parasites, or overfeeding. If your foster develops diarrhea, feed a bland diet of cooked white rice and boiled chicken (3 parts rice to 1 part meat) until the diarrhea subsides. Due to the stress of a new environment, your foster may experience diarrhea for the first day or two. If it goes on for longer than 2 days, please email the Medical Care Center at appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Dehydration

Animals with diarrhea can quickly become dehydrated. To check for dehydration, pull up gently on the skin at the scruff of the neck. If it bounces back quickly when you let go, hydration is fine. If it does not go back or goes back slowly, your foster animal is dehydrated and needs medical attention.

Fleas

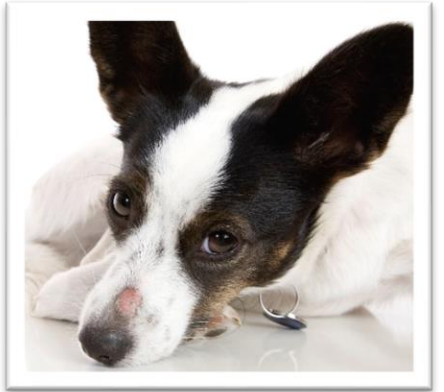
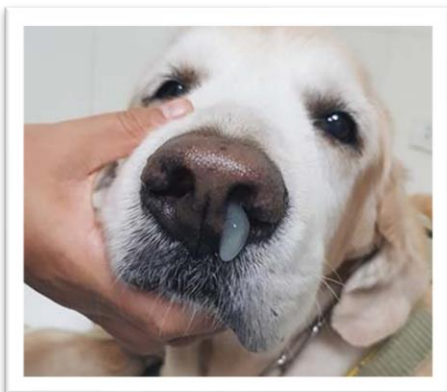
A foster dog with fleas will be given a general flea treatment prior to leaving the SAPA! facility. Do not use any over the counter flea treatments on your own. If you notice fleas within a week of having the animal in your home, email the foster medical coordinator. All animals are required to be on flea and tick preventative while in foster care. Preventative can be obtained at the SAPA! Medical Clinic during open hours.

Worms

Your foster will be treated for the most common type of worms before coming to your home. If you detect worms in your foster's stool, or your foster's stomach seems distended, contact the Medical Care Center to determine treatment. It is important to note that animals being treated often show dead or dying worms in their stool. There is no need to be alarmed.

Ringworm

Ringworm is a skin infection caused by a fungus, not an actual worm. Ringworm is transmitted in a variety of ways, although physical contact with an infected animal is the most common. Dry scaly spots will appear after one to two weeks and are usually confined to the hairier regions of the scalp, forearms and face. Hair will break off at the roots, creating bald spots. If you suspect your foster dog has ringworm, contact the foster medical coordinator.



Severe Medical

Heartworms

Your foster (If over 6 months of age) will be tested for heartworms before coming to your home. If your foster tests positive for heartworms, there is a specific protocol for treatment.

Within 30 days of picking up your foster, you will need to bring the dog into the SAPA! Medical Clinic for a pre-treatment evaluation with our veterinarian. If the veterinarian determines that the dog is healthy enough for treatment, then you will receive a treatment plan.

Parvovirus

Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious viral disease that can produce a life-threatening illness. Symptoms include lethargy, severe vomiting, loss of appetite and bloody, foul smelling diarrhea.

If you suspect your puppy has contracted parvovirus, contact the medical coordinator immediately!

Canine Distemper

Canine distemper is a virus that affects a dog's respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems, as well as the conjunctival membranes of the eye. Symptoms include sneezing, coughing, and thick mucus coming from the eyes and

Conditions

nose. Fever, lethargy, sudden vomiting and diarrhea, depression, and/or loss of appetite are also symptoms of this virus.

If you suspect your dog has contracted canine distemper, contact the medical coordinator immediately!

Mange

The parasite that causes mange is transmitted through physical contact. Infected animals suffer blisters, scabs and hair loss. There are two types of mange: sarcoptic and demodex.

Sarcoptic mange can be transmitted to people and other animals.

Demodex cannot be passed from one animal to another. If you suspect that your foster dog has mange, contact the medical coordinator immediately.



Follow Up Treatment

Your foster animal may require follow-up treatment for an existing condition, or for vaccinations that require them to be of a certain age or weight. Puppies will have their follow up information in their file, you are required to follow it. Although in many cases they can be marketed for adoption at that time, puppies must weigh **2lbs.** to be spayed/neutered.

Please be prepared with the following information when you bring your foster animal to the shelter for a follow-up treatment or exam:

- o All foster paperwork, including kennel card and medical history.
- o Is the animal eating regularly?
- o Is the animal drinking regularly?
- o Any diarrhea?
- o Activity level?
- o Date of last medications given?
- o When were the last signs of illness observed?

Routine Medical Care

You are responsible for ensuring that your animal receives routine and preventative medical care. However, if the team has not contacted you and you know that a vaccine or other medical need is due, please contact the medical clinic at appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org.

Foster Dog Vaccine Schedule

SAPA! vaccinates for DHPP (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus), BORDETELLA ("Kennel Cough"), and Rabies. In addition, all dogs receive flea/tick (Frontline) and heartworm (Ivermectin) prevention. Dogs and puppies are dewormed. **Please Note:** Rabies vaccines are not given until 12 weeks and only by a licensed vet.

Medical Protocol by Age:

Reference the following table for scheduling your foster dog's vaccines and care.

	2 Wks.	4 Wks.	6 Wks.	8 Wks.	10 Wks.	12 Wks.	14 Wks.	16 Wks.	18 Wks.	20 Wks.	6 Mo.
Strongid	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Frontline			X		X		X		X		X
Ivermectin			X		X		X		X		X
BORDETELLA			X								
DHPP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Rabies						X					
HW Test											X
Spay/Neuter				X							

After the first 5 months (20 wks.) of age, your foster dog will require the following regular preventatives and vaccinations:

- o **Frontline:** Monthly
- o **Ivermectin:** Monthly
- o **BORDETELLA:** Every 6 months
- o **Rabies:** Every 1 Year
- o **DHPP:** Every 1 Year
- o **Strongid:** Monthly

Note: Adult dogs receive the following upon intake (unless we have documentation that they have already received these): Strongid, DHPP, Frontline, BORDETELLA, and Rabies.

The SAPA medical team provides all medical to our foster animals. **SAPA! WILL NOT** reimburse foster parents for any medical expenses incurred without pre-approval by the SAPA! Medical Clinic.

Spay/Neuter Surgery



Barring any medical issues, your adult foster must be spayed or neutered within **30 days** of picking them up.

Puppies are spayed or neutered at **8 weeks** of age unless they are under 2 lbs., malnourished, ill, or are generally, not healthy enough for surgery. Older dogs are spayed or neutered as soon as they are medically ready. Nursing moms can be spayed after their pups have been weaned and the mom's milk has dried up (normally 8 weeks after birth).

Due to the limited number of surgery slots, it is **vital** that you keep your scheduled appointment. If your animal is ill, or you cannot keep your appointment, please email schedulemedical@sanantoniopetsalive.org as soon as possible.

Your foster animal's surgery will be scheduled at one of these locations.

- o Animal Care Services Clinic (4710 Highway 151, San Antonio, TX 78227)
- o Marbach Clinic (9107 Marbach Rd #109, San Antonio, TX 78245)
- o SA Wellness Spay and Neuter Clinic (4922 S Zarzamora St., San Antonio, TX 78211)

NOTE: The location of your foster's surgery is determined at the time of intake and cannot be selected or changed.

Pre-Surgery Instructions

Do not feed your foster animal after midnight the night before surgery. Water is permitted.

If your foster animal has undergone treatment for illness, or is currently experiencing any symptoms such as sneezing, diarrhea, coughing, lethargy, lack of appetite, hair loss, vomiting, nasal or eye discharge, etc., please contact the medical coordinator as soon as possible. If your animal is showing signs of illness when you drop off, you may be turned away.

Post-Operative Care

Your foster animal will likely be groggy when he/she gets home. This might include dilation of the pupils, stumbling, whining,

disorientation, fear, hallucinations, etc. This is all completely normal and should wear off after a couple of hours.

Your foster will receive an e-collar (cone); it must be worn for 2 weeks. Your foster may receive sutures that need to be removed in about 2 weeks. You can bring your foster animal to the SAPA! Medical Clinic for this procedure during open hours.

Check the incision regularly. If it is swollen, hot to the touch, extremely red, has a lot of discharge, or is bleeding, please contact the medical clinic immediately.

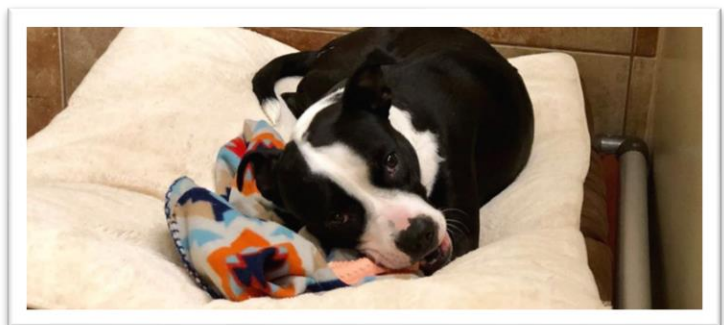
If the incision gets dirty, you may clean it with hydrogen peroxide and a cotton ball or clean rag. **Do not use** Neosporin, bandages, or any other cleaners on the incision.



Your foster animal will typically receive pain medication following surgery. Do not administer any other pain medications to your animal as they may be toxic if given in conjunction with the medication already received.

Do not bathe your foster animal or allow it to swim for 7 days following surgery unless otherwise instructed by the SAPA! medical staff.

Restrict activity for adult males, adult females, and female puppies for the first 5-7 days. Attempt to keep your animal from running, jumping, rolling, or excessive playing during this time. Male puppies may resume normal activity levels following surgery.



Administering Medications

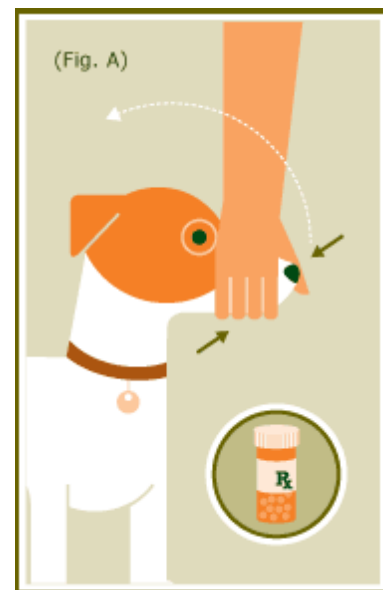


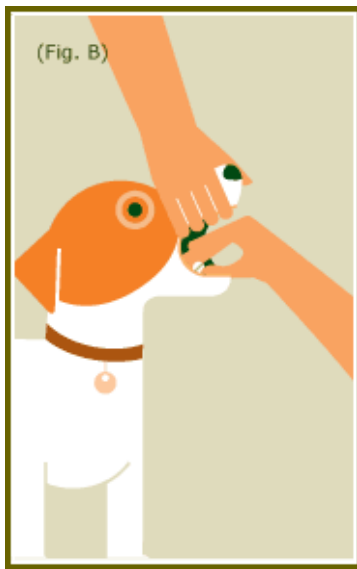
Administering Pills:

If the medication can be given with food, the easiest way to give pills is to hide it in a piece of food. A small amount of butter, peanut butter, cream cheese, canned food, or a hot dog is often used. If the dog will not take the pill in food or cannot have food with the medication:

- o Have the pill out and in a convenient place.
- o Call the dog in a happy, calm voice.
- o Take the dog to a spot where he or she is on steady footing.
- o Squeeze behind the upper canine teeth and tilt the animal's head back so he or she is looking at the ceiling. His or her jaw will automatically drop a bit.

- o Place one of the fingers from the hand holding the pill between the lower canine teeth (long front teeth) and push down.
- o Quickly place the pill as far back as possible inside the dog's mouth being sure to get it over the hump in the tongue. Do not place your hand in the dog's mouth too far because it might gag.
- o Close the dog's mouth and hold it closed while you gently blow or rub his or her nose. This will stimulate swallowing.





Administering Liquid Meds:

Insert the dropper between the upper and lower teeth in the back and tilt the chin upward.

Slowly administer the medication while being careful not to go faster than the dog can swallow. Always remember to praise the dog and offer a treat after the medication. This will make administering medication easier in the future.

Pills can also be administered by crushing them up, mixing with water, and dispensing as described above. If using this method, all the liquid must be taken in by the dog.

Applying Eye Drops and Ointments:

Before applying eye medication, be sure the eye is clear of discharge. You can use warm water on a cotton ball to gently clean around the eyes. Use your thumb and forefinger to open the eyelid.

With your other hand, place 12 drops (as directed) or a small amount of ointment on the eye or the pink tissue around the eye. The foster animal will blink, and the medication will cover the entire eye. When applying medication to the eye, try to avoid the animal's direct line of vision when approaching and avoid touching the eye with the container of medication.

(<https://pethealthcare.co.za/PetFriendly/Articles/tips-give-your-pet-medication>)

Care of Puppies

Puppies younger than 4 weeks who do not have their mother may be fostered with experienced neonatal fosters at the discretion of SAPA! staff.

Puppies younger than 4 weeks are usually not fostered without their mother. Most mothers do a good job caring for their newborns. However, it is important that you be observant, as a puppy's condition can change very quickly.



- o If you have a litter of puppies, it is important that you can identify them. Make a list of their names and distinguishing marks so that you can keep a record. Remove all paper collars before they become too snug.
- o Puppies will have their first medical appointment at about 2 weeks of age if no problems have arisen.
- o The area where you keep your foster puppies must be clean, dry, warm and free of drafts. Puppies younger than 2-3 weeks cannot maintain their own body temperature and can die if they become chilled.
- o Be sure to use an electric heating pad that does not shut off or a Snuggle Safe to keep your foster animals warm.
- o Puppies with mothers should be kept separate from other animals in the house. The mother may be protective and can attack other animals or people if she feels that she or her puppies are in danger.
- o Use towels or blankets for bedding. Bedding should be changed daily (or more frequently if necessary). The mother will try to keep the area clean, but that can be a difficult chore, especially with a large litter.
- o The mother will take care of the babies' elimination needs by frequently cleaning and licking them. Puppies begin eliminating without stimulation from their mother at about 3 weeks of age.

Care of Puppies - Feeding

(<https://www.maddiesfund.org/orphaned-puppies.htm>)

Puppy Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart

Puppy Weight (lbs, oz)	Puppy Weight (grams)	Daily Caloric Requirement*	Amount of Formula Per Day (ml)**	Amount Per Feeding (ml)*	Approximate Number of Feedings Per Day***
2 oz	57 g	11 kcal	13 ml	2 ml	6
4 oz	113 g	23 kcal	25 ml	5 ml	6
6 oz	170 g	34 kcal	38 ml	7 ml	6
8 oz	227 g	45 kcal	50 ml	9 ml	6
10 oz	284 g	57 kcal	63 ml	11 ml	6
12 oz	340 g	68 kcal	76 ml	14 ml	6
14 oz	397 g	79 kcal	88 ml	16 ml	6
16 oz (1 lb)	454 g	91 kcal	101 ml	18 ml	6
2 lb	907 g	181 kcal	202 ml	36 ml	6

- Nursing mothers should be fed dry puppy food mixed with some wet food.
- They need to be fed more often and in larger quantities than usual.
- Starting at about 3-4 weeks of age, most puppies will begin trying to eat on their own from their mother's dish. At that time, make sure the dish is large enough for the litter to gather around or use multiple dishes.
- Mix ground dry puppy food with water and a small amount of canned food to make a semisolid mixture.
- Some puppies may need to be introduced to the food. Place a small amount on your finger and allow the puppy to lick it off or place a small amount on their lips. Slightly warming the food makes it more palatable.
- It is important to make sure that each puppy is eating. If it appears that one or more puppy is not making its way to the dish, set up another dish away from the first and closely monitor that puppy's intake.
- Do not feed cow's milk to a puppy.
- Remove the mother during puppy feeding times so she will not eat their food. It is also helpful to remove the mother 12 hours prior to feeding time to stimulate the puppies' appetites.
- Puppies will continue to occasionally nurse during this time.

Care of Puppies – Housetraining

Puppies will start to eliminate on their own at about 3 weeks of age. Puppies need to eliminate when they first wake up, about 20 minutes after eating and after playing vigorously.

Once puppies have begun to eliminate without additional help, housetraining should begin. The elimination area should be as small as possible. Keep it consistently covered with something absorbent such as newspaper or puppy pads. This will help puppies learn to keep elimination in one area and ease housetraining in the new home.

Consider keeping a log of potty times for your foster puppy. Younger puppies will need to have a place to potty indoors unless they are no longer at risk of contracting parvovirus from an outdoor environment. (If they have already had parvovirus or puppies over 5 months of age with all vaccinations.)

Care of Puppies – Puppy Behavior

Nipping is a common behavior in puppies. A high-pitched shriek (like the noise a dog would make if in pain) will usually get their attention, so you can give them a proper toy to chew.

Try to start your foster puppies off on the right foot by keeping them off the furniture, not letting them jump, and not letting them mouth or nibble on hands or fingers. This will make their transition to a new home easier.

Puppies should never be allowed to roam unsupervised outside of their crate.

A single puppy will cry a lot the first couple of nights. Make the crate as comfortable as possible by providing a blanket and a pet-safe stuffed animal.



Care of Puppies – Socialization

Beginning at 3 weeks of age, it is important to begin handling puppies frequently. Make sure each puppy is handled and played with regularly.

Gradual exposure to new and different things and people, sights, and normal household sounds is important to ensure that your foster puppy is well adjusted.

Puppies learn to play by wrestling with their littermates. If you are looking after only one puppy, consider adding one more or transferring the puppy to another foster who has a puppy of the same age.

Please refer to the “**Introducing Your Current Pets**” section (*See Page 14*)

on introducing foster animals to others.



Care of Adult Dogs – Feeding

Dogs should be fed twice daily at the same time every day.

- o The amount of food depends on the dog's age and weight. As a general rule, adult dogs get 1 cup per 20 lbs., and puppies get 3 cups daily (divided throughout the day).
- o Give the dog 15-20 minutes to eat the food and then remove it.
- o If your foster dog is unwilling to eat plain, dry food, you can mix in some warm water or a **small** amount of canned food.
- o Fresh water should always be available.

Care of Adult Dogs – Behavior

If your foster dog exhibits fearful behavior, do not give in to the temptation to comfort them. It is only natural to try to make them feel better, but what you are doing is reinforcing the message that being afraid is okay. Ignore the fearful behaviors and be alert for indications of curiosity or interest so you can praise them enthusiastically.


- o Dogs should be crated when you are unable to supervise them. Never confine a puppy to a crate for longer than four hours at a time, or an adult dog for longer than eight hours at a time.
- o Providing chew toys helps to relieve boredom and alleviate stress. Hard rubber, bone, antler, or hoof chew toys are recommended. Rawhide can be ingested and result in intestinal blockage.
- o Teaching your foster dog basic manners will help your dog become more adoptable.
- o Dogs should not be left outside for long periods of time.
- o Even if a dog is housetrained, an accident upon arriving at your home is not uncommon. The most important element of effective housetraining is extensive supervision. Correcting a dog for eliminating in the house is only effective if caught in the act. When the dog eliminates outside, give them lots of praise in order to positively reinforce the behavior.
- o Destructive chewing is a phase that all puppies go through while teething. Adult dogs usually chew on inappropriate things because they are anxious or bored, or because they have never been taught what is appropriate to chew on. The best solution for this is to provide your foster dog with something that is acceptable to chew on. It is also important to make sure that your foster dog is getting plenty of exercise. A tired dog will sleep, not chew!

When to Call for Behavioral Help:

- o Growling or snarling at humans
- o Snapping or biting
- o Fearful/hiding behavior that does not improve
- o Rough play, such as ripping clothing
- o Panic and destructiveness when left alone
- o Jumping up
- o House training concerns
- o Crate training concerns

For dogs needing special assistance with behavior, consider keeping a behavior “report card” or chart that can assist you with tracking their behavior and potential triggers from day to day. If assistance is needed, please email foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org and the foster team will connect you with our dog behaviorist.

Sample: (<https://cthumane.org/volunteer/canine-foster-report-card/>)

 5. How did your foster dog **typically** behave toward the following? Please check the boxes.

	Unknown	Friendly	Fearful	Shows teeth/growls	Snaps	Bites	Other
People your dog knows							
Men							
Women							
Children							
Unfamiliar people							
Men							
Women							
Children							
Animals your dog knows							
Dogs							
Cats							

Sanitizing Your Home

You must thoroughly clean areas where a foster animal has stayed to prevent disease and parasites in your home. The period between foster assignments is a good time to do this.

- Wash bedding in hot water, detergent and bleach.
- Discard non-washable surface toys.
- Disinfect washable surfaces with a mild bleach and water mixed together (bleach/water ratio of 1:32 or 4 oz of bleach per gallon of water is recommended). Mixtures with bleach should be prepared as needed because they lose their strength after 24 hours. Bleach is inactive in the presence of organic matter so clean up dirt, hair, feces, etc.

before using bleach to disinfect. Bleach solution must stay in constant contact with the surface being sanitized for at least 10 minutes to be effective.

- Vacuum all carpeted areas.
- o Soak toys in bleach water for 20 minutes and scrub and bleach crates, carriers, scoops, food bowls.
- o Clean any urine or feces soiled areas with an enzyme cleaner immediately to avoid residual odor (Nature's Miracle Stain and Odor Remover works well).
- o Regularly clean up all waste in the yard to decrease the risk of spreading disease.



Quarantine Periods

Sometimes an animal is sent into a home before evidence of a serious disease has manifested. Quarantine periods are used to allow infectious diseases to die off while in a home environment. This protects future foster animals from being infected with the virus or disease.

Specific quarantine periods are as follows:

- o Feline Leukemia/FIV – **3 days**
- o Sarcoptic Mange – **1 week**
- o FIP-**3 weeks**
- o Distemper –**3 days (once thoroughly cleaned with bleach/Rescue)**
- o Ringworm – **3 months**
- o Parvovirus – **6 months**

If a foster animal is infected with one of the above illnesses, the foster parent will not be allowed to bring another foster into the home for the designated quarantine period.

Getting Your Foster Adopted!

Finding a permanent home for a foster animal is a collaborative process between SAPA! and the foster parent. Foster homes are required to market their animal on their own and all adoptions must be completed using SAPA! adoption procedures with an employed SAPA! Adoption Counselor. This valuable resource is available to you at any of our facilities during open hours.

As soon as you pick up your foster animal, you will want to begin the process of getting them into their forever home. If the puppies are under 6 weeks of age, you will not be able to complete any adoptions for the animal, but it doesn't hurt to get the word out that the animals will be available for adoption once they're of age and spayed/neutered!

If your foster animal did not come with a name, you will want to give them one! Carefully look over the paperwork you received with the animal. Do the breed and age descriptions match accurately? If not, please correct this information when you send the animal's information to the Foster Marketing Team.

Marketing:

Within **72 hours** of receiving your foster dog or puppy (depending on his/her age), fosters are **required** to contact the Foster Marketing Team using **fostermarketing@sanantoniopetsalive.org** so that SAPA! can begin marketing your foster for adoptions. The information you provide will be placed on the San Antonio Pets Alive! website, Petfinder, and other avenues to help get the word out so that your foster can find their forever family.

Please include the following information when contacting the Foster Marketing Team:

- o Name
- o Species
- o Color
- o Gender
- o Medical Issues/Special Needs
- o Good with Dogs
(y/n/unknown)
- o Up to 4 photos and/or a
video (must be in YouTube
format)
- o Pet's Animal ID Number
(A#####) (SAPA-A-#####)
- o Breed
- o Age
- o Good with Kids?
(y/n/unknown)
- o Good with Cats?
(y/n/unknown)
- o Biography of the animal
(traits, activity level, etc.)

Remember, when developing your biographies for your foster, you are trying to market them, rather than providing adoption counseling. By using “Stop” language such as “No Kids,” or “No Cats,” you are driving away potential adopters who may find another dog to fit their needs when they inquire about yours.

Save specific issues for the adoption counselor to go over or for you to explain during a meet-and-greet.



When Can My Foster Be Adopted?

Dogs and puppies can be adopted out from your home when they are 8 weeks of age and have been spayed or neutered. We offer Pre-Adoptions and a Foster-to-Adopt program for unaltered pets.



If your animal is injured or needs extra care, you can still begin marketing your animal to find it a forever family. Provided that the adoptive family is capable of providing continuing care, and the foster family and SAPA! believe that the animal will be a good fit for the family, you may proceed with the adoption and decide when would be a good time for the adoptive family to take possession of the animal.

Fosters needing assistance when assessing adopters are welcome to contact the foster team.

What Are My Responsibilities in the Adoption Process?

Phone and Email Inquiries – Fosters are required to respond to all inquiries (via phone or email) within 24 hours and schedule the meet and greet within 72 hours. Since you know your foster best, it's important that potential adopters hear about the animal directly from you.

Be careful immediately telling your potential adopter that your foster is still available. In order to avoid an uncomfortable situation, you can tell potential adopters that another application is pending, and they will be contacted if the adopter falls through.

Meet and Greets – Once you have scheduled your meet and greet with the potential adopter (we recommend a neutral location), you will want to determine whether the potential adopter is a good fit. If you have concerns, do not proceed with the adoption.

If you are fostering a puppy that is **under 5 months** of age, **do not** allow the puppy to touch the ground in a public place. Puppies that are not fully vaccinated are extremely susceptible to contagious diseases that may be present in these areas.

Approving the Adoption – When you are comfortable with the potential adopters of your animal, you will need to complete the SAPA! adoption paperwork at a SAPA facility or with an approved SAPA! adoption counselor. Both you and the potential adopter must meet with the adoption counselor to complete the paperwork. Be sure to bring all of the animal's paperwork and let the adopter know that the fee must be paid in cash or with a credit/debit card.

Still have questions? Email us at:
adopt@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Adoption Fees

Animal Type	Fee
Puppies – 6 month & under	\$150
Dogs – 7 months & over	\$60
Urgent Dogs (On Euthanasia List)	\$25
First “Foster Fail”*	50% Off Regular Fee

*Ambassadors will have other fees. *Foster “failing” is when fosters adopt the animal they are fostering. SAPA! provides a discount for those fosters “failing” for the first time. Regular fees apply for all foster adoptions after that.*



What if the Adopter is Unable to Keep the Animal?

First, get as much information about the potential return as possible. If the adopter is facing behavior issues with a dog, they will need to contact a dog behaviorist/trainer. If they continue to have issues, they can email returns@sanantoniopetsalive.org.

Adopters will need to make every effort to find a new home for the dog. If a new home is found, SAPA! should be notified of the new owner's information so that we can update our database.

At this point, if all options have been exhausted, the adopters must email returns@sanantoniopetsalive.org. If the foster is in a position to take the dog back into their care, that is the preferred option. If the foster is unable to take the animal back into

their care, the owner will still need to email returns@sanantoniopetsalive.org SAPA! will contact the adopters soon. When space does become available,

the owner will be responsible for paying a **\$50 return fee**. The adoption fee is non-refundable.

Foster Events

Adoption events are a great way to get your foster animal adopted. These are often held at local pet stores or animal friendly events in the community.

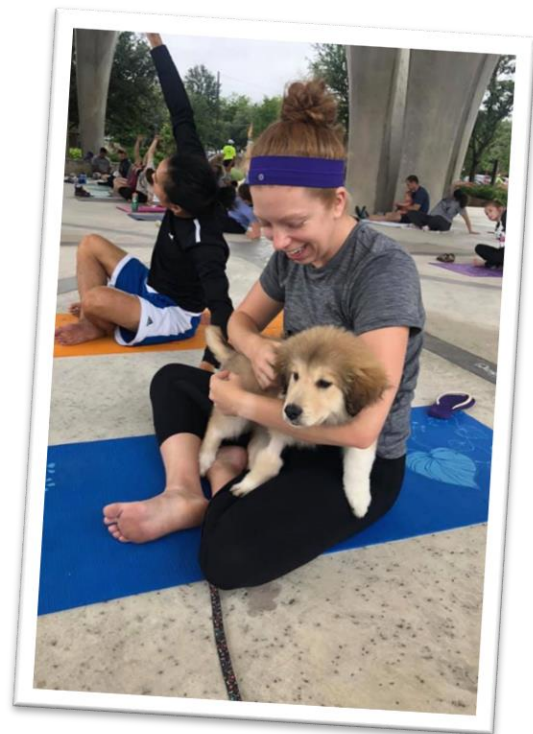
Typically, we have at least one foster event every Saturday. They are sometimes held on Sundays. Animals do not have to be altered, but they can only be pre-adopted or foster-to-adopted. You can also choose to sit at our Petco adoption centers and market your dog there. All adoptions must be completed by an adoption counselor.

Please keep in mind that while visiting Petco locations that all fosters must abide by the rules put in place by the store managers. SAPA!'s ability to continue having these events relies on fosters adhering to their policies and rules and cleaning up after themselves and their foster pets when visiting.

To see or sign up for foster events, join the SAPA! Foster Forum on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sapafosterforum>

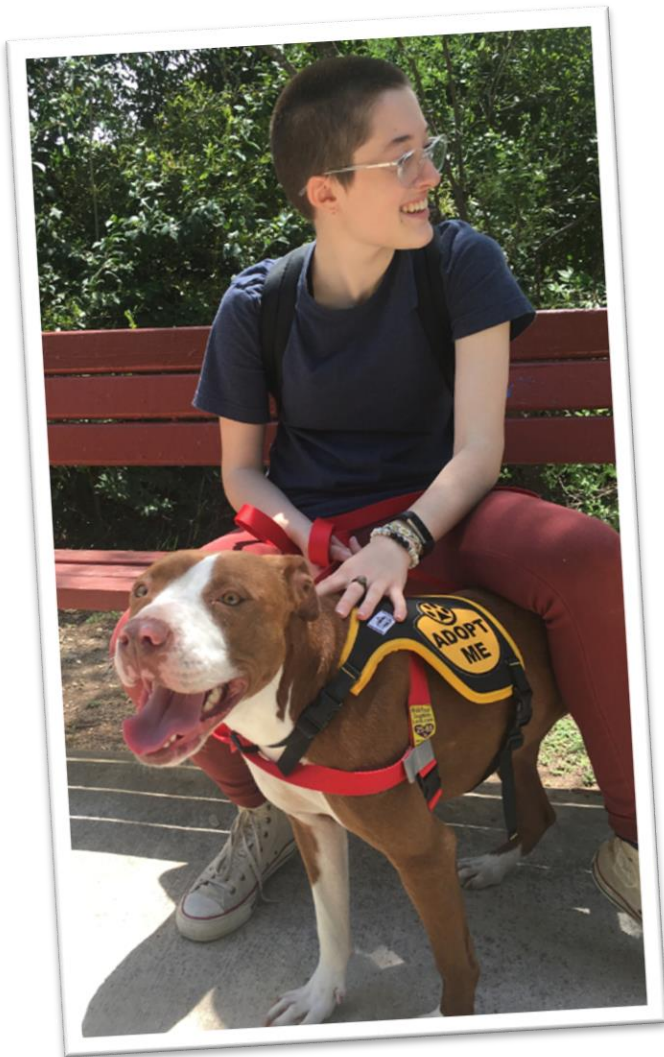
Your foster is required to meet all the following SAPA! health requirements to attend events:

- o Must be at least 6 weeks of age with at least 2 sets of vaccinations (*no paws on the ground for puppies under 5 months*)
- o Must be symptom-free of any illnesses and not on any medications
- o Must have rabies vaccination if 12 weeks or older
- o Must be human and dog-friendly



What do I need to bring?

- o A kennel or play pen
- o A few sheets of newspaper and a small trash bag or grocery bag
- o A chew toy or something to make the animal feel comfortable (*label the items if you want to ensure they are returned to you*)
- o A water bowl and a towel to cover the kennel
- o Copies of the kennel card, copies of proof of rabies (if over 12 weeks of age) and/or all medical records.
- o A slip lead or leash



More Adoption Resources

Still looking for ways to set your foster up for success? Check out the following resources:

Maddie's Fund –

Foster Caregiver Marketing Guide:

<https://www.maddiesfund.org/assets/documents/foster-resources/MF-foster-caregiver-marketing-guide.pdf>

Animal Farm Foundation –
Best Practices: Marketing:
<https://animalfarmfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Marketing-eBook-WEB.pdf>

Center for Shelter Dogs –
Managing Problem Behavior:
<https://centerforshelterdogs.tufts.edu/dog-behavior/problems-and-management/>



Thank You!

Our ability to save a dog often relies solely on our ability to find a foster within a short time frame. Your quick response to a foster plea can literally mean the difference between life and death for these animals. Bringing a strange animal in to your home may not be the easiest thing you have ever done but it just might be the most rewarding!

If you ever need anything while fostering or have any questions, please feel free to email us at **foster@sanantoniopetsalive.org**. We are dedicated to making sure you are as happy with your animal as the animal is in your home.

Thank you again for volunteering to foster animals with San Antonio Pets Alive! Fostering is often challenging, but it is also tremendously rewarding. There is no substitute for the feeling of nurturing your foster dog so they can move on to a new life in their forever family – and none of that would be possible without you!