

Adoption Process and MNG Overview

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As a foster, you know your foster pet better than anyone. While the adoption team screens applicants for red flags, we rely on your insight to help determine whether a home is the right fit. Don't forget — we have helpful FAQs available on the [DPA Foster Portal](#).

Before We Begin: Thinking of Adopting Your Foster? Read This First!

If you or someone you know is interested in adopting your foster animal, you must notify us immediately by emailing foster@dallaspetsalive.org. We lovingly refer to these as “foster fails,” and we're happy to help you make it official — but timing is everything.

- **Do not wait.** If another applicant has already been contacted or a meet and greet (MNG) has been scheduled, we are obligated to honor that application first.
- If you are considering adopting but haven't decided, still let us know. It gives us a chance to pause on forwarding applications until you're sure.
- If someone else applies and you then decide you want to adopt, you will have to wait and see if the current applicant passes before you can move forward.

To foster to adopt:

- We can put the animal on hold for 1 week if you need more time to decide
- No need to submit an application
- You must pay the adoption fee donation
 - \$250 for puppies, \$200 for adult dogs, \$100 for senior dogs, \$150 kittens, \$100 for adult cats, \$50 for senior cats
 - Puppy/kitten = 6 months & younger
 - Adult = 6 months - 8 Years
 - Senior= 8 years +
- Email foster@dallaspetsalive.org, and your adoption counselor will text you the contract and payment link
 - If the pet is not “medically cleared” you will pre-adopt the pet by signing the contract and fee, we cannot delay this process

This policy ensures fairness and transparency for all applicants and helps avoid hard feelings later in the process.

Adoption Process Overview

1. **Application Review:** Adoption applications are submitted through our website and reviewed by DPA adoption counselors.

2. **Foster Interview & Meet and Greet:** Once an application is reviewed, the adoption counselor will connect the applicant and foster via email. The foster conducts a phone interview followed by an in-person meet and greet (MNG). This is your opportunity to ensure the adopter's lifestyle and expectations align with your foster pet's needs.
3. **Keep Your Counselor in the Loop:** After each conversation or meeting, please update the adoption counselor with your feedback.
4. **Approval & Adoption Finalization:** If both you and the potential adopter feel it's a good match, the counselor will send the contract and payment link. **Do not hand off the animal without approval from the adoption counselor.**

****Important:** Once the contract is signed, the pet is legally adopted. (Unless the pet is pre-adopted or foster to adopt.) If the adopter has asked to delay pick-up, please notify the adoption counselor and email foster@dallaspetsalive.org immediately.

5. **Transfer Timing:** Do not transfer the pet until the counselor gives the official go-ahead.

Foster Trials are not allowed unless explicitly approved by the counselor and leadership, and only on a case-by-case basis.

 **Reminder:** If you or someone you know is interested in adopting your foster, email us at foster@dallaspetsalive.org immediately. We cannot “hold” a pet once another applicant is in process.

Phone Interview & MNG Tips

- Be open-minded and listen actively.
- Assume positive intent and ask open-ended questions.
Use the application as a guide, but let conversation fill in the gaps.
- Share accurate details about your foster's behavior and medical needs.
- Avoid bias — focus on facts and fit, not personal judgment.

Reminders:

- We cannot deny an application solely because someone lives in an apartment unless breed or landlord restrictions apply.
 - Questions about schedule, work hours, or lifestyle should be framed around the pet's needs (e.g., “How do you plan to provide exercise or potty breaks?”).
 - It's normal for animals to be left alone during the workday. Help the adopter think through how they'll support the pet during those times.
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Meet and Greet Guidelines

Meet and greets are required. You must meet all human residents of the home. (Exceptions made on a case by case basis, please ask your adoption counselor or foster@dallaspetsalive.org if meeting all residents cannot happen.)

These meetings can take place:

- At the adopter's home or your home
- At a neutral, agreed-upon location
- At the [DPA Adoption Container](#) (at Community Beer Co.) — to schedule, sign up [HERE](#) or email container@dallaspetsalive.org with more questions.

Be honest about behavior concerns and training needs. A returned adoption is harder on everyone. It's better to say no now than later.

What to Look for During the MNG

Every home is different. If something seems off, ask questions before ruling anyone out. Focus on three key areas:

1. Household Environment

If meeting at the home, observe:

- Is the yard fenced? How will the pet be exercised?
- Are there obvious hazards (e.g., unfenced pool, toxic plants)?
- Is the environment safe and appropriate for this pet's needs?

If not meeting at home, ask those questions directly.

2. Human Household Members

Ask about:

- Ages of children and how they interact with animals.
- Daily schedules and time the pet will be left alone.
- Who is responsible for feeding, exercise, and care?
Any shared living situations, roommates, or accessibility needs?

Use this info to evaluate long-term suitability based on your foster's temperament.

3. Resident Pets

For dog to dog, do slow introductions:

- Start outside, then bring into the home if possible.
- Watch both your foster and the resident pets' reactions.
- Observe how the adopter handles any issues that arise.
- **Resources:**
 - [DPA Decompression Document](#)
 - [Introducing New Pets to Existing Pets](#)
 - [Dog-Dog Introductions](#)

Special Notes on Cats

Feline MNGs are suggested to happen at the foster's home. Cats do best in their own environment. Do not introduce cats to resident pets at the MNG.

Instead, discuss:

- The adopter's past experience introducing new pets
 - The foster cat's experience with dogs or other cats.
 - Reinforce that cat introductions take time and DPA offers support and resources.
 - [Introducing New Pets to Existing Pets](#)
 - [Dog-Cat Introductions](#)
 - [Introducing Cats & Dogs](#)
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Trial Runs & Why We Don't Allow Them

DPA does not allow trial adoptions, except in rare cases approved by leadership. Here's why:

- Trial runs can be confusing and stressful for the pet and foster.
 - A thorough MNG is usually enough to determine fit.
A "trial" can delay an adopter's full commitment.
 - Adoption is a big decision. Paying the fee and completing the contract ensures they're ready to make it.
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Final Notes for Fosters

Even if the meet and greet goes well, do not transition the pet until the contract is complete and the adoption counselor gives approval. This gives you the chance to debrief and raise any concerns privately.

Your feedback is critical. You know your foster best, and your opinion carries a lot of weight. If something feels off, speak up.

💡 One last reminder: If you or someone you know wants to adopt your foster, email foster@dallaspetsalive.org right away. If an outside applicant is already in process, we must honor their place in line.

Thank you for everything you do to help our pets find safe, loving homes. We couldn't do it without you!

Adopter Resources

The following information is available to adopters, and they will receive the following information post-adoption. If you hear from an adopter and they are having issues post-adoption encourage them to email alumni@dallaspetsalive.org. NEVER take back an adopted pet without approval from DPA first. We have a return policy and procedures and if you take back a pet without approval from DPA the liability will fall on you.

[DPA Adopted Pet / Alumni Portal](#)

- [Canine Adoption Packet](#)
- [Feline Adoption Packet](#)
- [DPA Decompression Document](#)
- [Newly Adopted Pet Resources](#)
- [DPA Behavior Support Resources](#)
- [Introducing New Pets to Existing Pets](#)



Adoption Process

For Foster Parents

01

Application

Interested adopters fill out an application online, which the adoption team reviews to determine if the adopter is a good candidate.

02

Phone Interview

An adoption counselor will connect approved applicants with the foster to set up a phone interview.

03

Meet and Greet (MNG)

The meet and greet is the chance for all adopters and all pets to meet, ask questions, and ensure a good fit. DOGS can meet at the adopter's home. CATS should stay where they are familiar; have the adopters come to you.

04

No Unapproved Hand-Offs

After the meet and greet, let the Adoption Counselor know whether you would like to proceed with the adoption or if you feel it is not a good fit. If you want to do an onsite adoption you MUST receive approval with at least 48 hours notice.

05

Contract and Payment

The Adoption Counselor will send a contract to the adopters and collect the adoption fee. The adoption team also sends the adopters medical records.

06

Transfer and Happy Tails!

Once the contract is signed and your foster pet is medically cleared, the Adoption Counselor will let you know you can transfer the pet to their new home!

[Adoption Process & MNG Overview Document](#)
[\(click here\)](#)

Questions? Email foster@dallaspetsalive.org