



## Becoming a Foster Home: Is it Right for You?

A key component of GRRIN's rescue program is the foster home network. The principle behind fostering is to provide the dogs entrusted to our care with a home environment in order to evaluate their habits, health and behavior and to offer the new owner more information about the dog.

GRRIN needs caring, responsible Golden lovers to join our foster home team by opening their homes and their hearts to our rescued Golden.

Here are some questions people frequently ask about being a foster parent. Please take a moment to review them, and if you think fostering might be for you, one of our GRRIN volunteers will be happy to talk further with you about joining our team.

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### If I can't foster, is there some other way to help?

🐾 YES! You may volunteer to transport Golden to a veterinarian or to the foster home, or participate in any number of GRRIN activities including:

- \* Hotline
- \* Education
- \* Pet fairs
- \* Fund raising
- \* Home visits

🐾 If you are interested in any of these activities, give us a call. We'll be glad to have your help, and you'll be glad you got more involved in sharing your love of Golden.

### What will I need to do as a foster parent?

Foster homes are responsible for the *daily care of the foster dog*, including:

- feeding
- exercising
- socializing
- brushing and grooming as needed
- reinforcing basic obedience commands
- observing and evaluating general behavior and temperament
- and, of course, providing love and security to a special Golden at an often difficult time in their life.

GRRIN foster homes play a major role in facilitating the dog's adoption to a new home. As a foster parent, you'll make recommendations to help select the best adoptive family for your foster Golden (since you know him or her best!). Prospective owners will meet your foster dog in your home.

### How long does the dog stay in foster care?

If the Golden is healthy, two weeks to two months is typical. Dogs with special needs may stay longer in foster care.

### Do I need a fenced yard?

Yes, a fenced yard is required for all but select senior dogs. Foster dogs must NEVER be allowed to run loose. Outside of a fenced yard, the dog must be on leash at all times.

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## Do I have to be home with the dog all day?

No. Many of our foster parents are employed full- or part-time and still provide a quality environment for the dog. However, our first concern is safety: for you, your family, your own dog(s) and the rescue dog. Therefore, we suggest that any time you are unable to directly supervise the foster dog, he should be confined to a small, secure area. GRRIN has training crates to loan to foster families.

## How much time does it take?

It takes from an hour or two a day to however much time you care to spend with the dog. Some foster parents teach their foster dog obedience or other skills as a way to make the dog as adoptable as possible.

## May I choose which dogs I foster?

You may set limits on the kinds of dogs you foster. If you're asked to foster a dog that doesn't seem right for you, you can say "no." If a foster dog proves difficult to handle, he can be placed elsewhere.

## How much does it cost?

Lack of funds shouldn't prevent you from fostering, but you will have *some* expenses for good quality food, telephone calls, and any toys you choose to provide. Necessary veterinary expenses, including heartworm preventative, are paid by GRRIN.

## What if I have questions or problems with the dog?

All foster homes receive GRRIN's Foster Home Manual, which provides guidance on routines and special aspects of fostering. Our Foster Home Coordinator, Rescue Coordinator and Caseworkers are available for telephone consultation on behavior or health problems. Being a foster home is greatly rewarding, but you should keep in mind that some rescue dogs are not housetrained, may be ill, or may have had little socialization or obedience training. In spite of these challenges, our foster homes have found that – when given a chance – these dogs not only improve, they flourish.

## Will I become attached to my foster dog?

Yes, you undoubtedly will. They bond quickly and give so much back in return for your care and attention. But when you meet the new family who's ready to provide a permanent, loving home for the dog you've helped rescue, you will feel satisfied to see him move on to his new and better life.

## What if I want to adopt the Golden I am fostering?

If you decide to be a foster home, it should be with the understanding that you are working toward helping a deserving Golden transition into a permanent home, and not with the goal of "picking and choosing" a Golden you wish to adopt. We do recognize that fostering can lead to a special commitment; therefore, foster families have first option to adopt their foster dog.

### Getting Started

Once your family has decided together to foster a Golden, please call GRRIN at 402.330.6680 and leave a message on the voice-mail system. The Foster Care Coordinator will contact you to talk in more detail about your responsibilities and preferences and to answer your questions about becoming a foster home.