

# Here's How Easy—and Rewarding—it is to Foster a Pet in Need

Written by Christina Silvestri

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Did you know that approximately 5.3 million pets end up in shelters every year?\* The [Arizona Animal Welfare League](#) (AAWL), the first no-kill animal shelter in Phoenix, is now seeking foster parents to offer their hearts and homes to foster dogs and cats in need.

Fostering not only saves lives, but also provides shared love, affection and entertainment between the animal and volunteer. If you've been curious about having a pet but are unsure about the commitment, fostering is also a great way to see if you're ready to have a pet fulltime. The goal is for animals in your care to be adopted into loving fur-ever homes, giving animal shelters more space and resources to help even more animals in need.

We caught up with the team at the AAWL to see just how easy it is to foster an animal in need and meet some foster pets.

## How do you become a foster with Arizona Animal Welfare League?

**AAWL:** It's easy! All you have to do is visit [aawl.org/foster](#) and fill out our foster application, which includes some reading, a video, a quiz, and a quick application on what types of animals/cases you are willing to foster. It takes less than 30 minutes, and then our Foster team will be contact with you about next steps.

## Why are fosters vital to AAWL's success?

**AAWL:** The more animals we can get in a foster home, the more space we have to take in more animals in need. Fosters also let us take on more difficult medical cases that other shelters often can't take on.

## What costs are associated with fostering?

**AAWL:** No cost! Our foster team provides you with everything you need to get started.

## How long do I have to foster for?

**AAWL:** It depends on each animal, sometimes it can be for a few days or others can be for several weeks or months. You can decide to just foster one time, and decide it's not for you! There is no pressure for long commitment. Just try it and see if it's right for you.

## What would I be responsible for?

**AAWL:** You would be responsible for providing:

- Enrichment & Socialization
- Feeding
- Giving Medication (if applicable)
- Monitoring Health & Weight
- Transportation to and from vet appointments
- Cleaning

## Can I foster with other animals?

**AAWL:** Yes, you can foster if you have other animals. Personally owned pets must be current on vaccines, be on flea/tick prevention, and must be spayed or neutered. Personally owned dog(s) may be required to come to the shelter to meet the dog you will be fostering.

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### Can I foster if I have kids?

**AAWL:** Yes, children must be supervised at all times when in the presence of foster animals. Children should be educated on how to properly handle the animals and on hand washing protocol. AAWL Foster Pets may not have been around children before so we do not know how they will react in certain situations. Remind children to go slow and allow the animal to go to them. Some may need more time to acclimate and accept children than others.

Now, let's meet some AAWL foster pets—

### Peyton



Peyton, a six-year old shih tzu mix, was surrendered to AAWL, and it was soon discovered that she had slipped a disc in her back causing severe pain and partial paralysis. After her back surgery, one of our amazing fosters took her home for eight weeks to help with her recovery. Peyton was recently cleared for adoption and quickly found her forever home!

### Momma & Her Pups

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AAWL gets several requests each week from our partners to take in moms and their puppies, but we don't always have enough fosters available to take them in. We need to recruit more fosters, so we can help our partners more often. This mom and her six pups recently arrived from one of our partners after they were rescued from a backyard breeding situation. This family has a foster home, but there are so many more that need our help!

### Rusty

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Rusty, who is deaf and recovering from valley fever, is currently looking for a foster home as he waits for his forever home. He doesn't do well in the shelter environment, and needs a break in a more relaxed environment. Our homeward bound program gives us the opportunity to learn more about these animals while they wait for their forever home.

Find out how you can foster pets like Rusty today at [www.aawl.org](http://www.aawl.org).

\*Source: Best Friends Animal Society