



German Shepherd Rescue of New England, Inc.

Post Office Box 299 • Wayland, Massachusetts 01778

24-hour hotline (978) 443-2202 • www.gsrne.org



SAVE A LIFE – FOSTER A RESCUE GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG!



German Shepherd Rescue of New England, Inc. is looking for new foster homes. The number of dogs that we can save depends on the number of foster homes we have.

Becoming a foster home for a Rescue German Shepherd Dog can be one of the most rewarding activities you will ever engage in. Helping out a dog in its hour of greatest need is also a caring, wonderful way to contribute something meaningful to the German Shepherd Dog breed. If you enjoy working and living with German Shepherds, and love to love them, fostering a Rescue dog for GSRNE may be for you!

GSRNE representatives evaluate dogs before they are accepted into our program, and we exclude dogs that have been known to show aggression to humans or that show aggression towards the evaluators. This is not a guarantee that nothing bad could ever happen, as we're dealing with dogs, not sofas, but it helps to screen out obvious temperament problems.

Many dogs needing rescue need a better situation or an emergency home right away before euthanasia becomes a reality. Once a Rescue dog is evaluated and approved by GSRNE for our foster program, the dog goes on a waiting list for the next appropriate foster home that opens up. For shelter dogs especially, this can be a dangerous time. We cannot stress how important foster homes are for these dogs!

What does GSRNE provide for Foster Dogs?

All German Shepherd Dogs admitted to Rescue are taken to our veterinary facility first, given a thorough physical examination, receive necessary medical treatment, are immunized, heartworm tested/given preventative, and checked for parasites/treated and fleas or ticks before entering a foster home. Most are neutered/spayed before foster home placement, although some receive this surgery during their foster home stay. Senior dogs also get extra blood work to be sure they're healthy. GSRNE covers all of these veterinary expenses and other approved medical expenses the dog may incur while in foster care.

GSRNE also provides food for GSRNE Rescue dogs for the duration of their stay in foster care, most recently through our Buddy program where members donate food for foster dogs!

What do Foster Homes provide for GSRNE and the Foster Dogs?

Foster homes are asked to house, exercise, and provide some basic pet training for the dog (as coached by GSRNE Foster Home Coordinators via Foster Home seminars, individually via phone or email), as well as provide a stable, loving home environment until a new adoptive family is located. Foster families are vital to the rescue effort, as they provide each dog with a little something extra to help that dog shine for prospective adopters, whether that is the dog learning good house manners, neat little tricks, or is just living a stable life where the dog can develop self-confidence, bask in some love, and develop a shiny coat again. The more a dog knows and the more confident he is the easier and more successfully he is placed! In addition to attending occasional seminars with their foster dog, we also ask foster homes to return Foster Home Report forms on the dogs periodically and follow instructions from the Foster Home Coordinator so that the Adoption Coordinator is very clear on what each dog is like, in detail, so that she can match the right dog with the right family.

How long do Foster Dogs stay with me?

Foster dogs stay in their foster home until they are placed. Most are placed within ~16 weeks of coming to a foster home. Some are placed faster, some take longer. We use the first four weeks in a foster home to get a clearer picture of that dog so we feel his temperament is stable and safe, and so we get to know the dog so we can place the dog in the right kind of home. During this time, we ask you to safely expose the dog to different situations and ask you to fill out a short series of reports on how the dog reacts, what his strengths are, what his weaknesses are, etc. *During that first 4 weeks, we do not show the dog to adopters or attempt to place him.* We only show the dog after we have the information you provide us with during those four weeks. We run Foster Home Seminars to teach foster homes the basics of dog behavior, what to look for, how to expose the dog to new situation safely, etc.

Showing Foster Dogs to Adopters

Foster homes need to make time in their schedules to show the dog to prospective adopters occasionally. This is done by appointment only, at your convenience. Usually, only one or two people will end up meeting your foster dog, because they've been matched with your foster dog, and so they click and adopt! Prospective adopters are heavily screened by GSRNE before visiting any dogs, so feel rest assured that anybody looking at your foster dog is already screened and approved as an adopter. We do not display foster dogs at "adoption day" events only to have people see/want a dog that is not right for them. We match people with the *right* dog for their family from the beginning.

Adoption visits usually last for about an hour. Adopters must visit a dog twice before adoption (to prevent "impulse adoptions"). We ask foster homes for their input on how these visits go before an adopter can take the dog home. The adopting family usually takes the dog home after the second visit if they are a good match with that dog. We encourage foster homes to share everything they know about the dog with the prospective adopter, and we encourage adopters to bring their dogs with them to meet the foster dog. We instruct you on how to conduct these "dog meetings," don't worry!

Foster Home Requirements

The most important rule for foster homes is the foster family must love German Shepherd Dogs! Other than that, we have some basic policies we need foster homes to recognize and follow:

- You must agree to follow GSRNE protocols and rules regarding treatment of and training for the dog.
- Foster homes must live in New England.
- Foster dogs legally belong to GSRNE - you cannot show the dog to non-GSRNE adopters or place the dog on your own. If someone is interested in adopting, please ask them call us at the hotline to apply. We cannot promise dogs to people until those people have been approved to adopt from GSRNE.
- A fenced area attached to your house/back door is required in almost all cases. (Some very quiet senior dogs are exempt.)
- A visit to your home by a GSRNE representative is required in the foster home application process.
- GSRNE needs to stipulate that children of GSRNE fostering families must be age 10 yrs or older. While this may eliminate some otherwise wonderful foster families, we feel the safety issues at hand for a young child and a large dog we don't know yet are too important to ignore.

Foster Dog Information:

Rescue dogs generally range in age from 6 months to 10 years, in colors from black and tan, to sable, to bi-color, to pure black or white.

The dogs are usually neutered or spayed before they go to a foster home; if not before, it happens soon after placement in a foster home.

Rescue dogs come from all walks of life! Most come from shelters and pounds, as owner turn-ins or strays. Shelter dogs are usually living on borrowed time and we often need to place them in foster care quickly to help them in time, before they are put down. We work with you to determine what general type of dog will adapt to your household for a successful fostering experience for you. We provide strong support for you after you take in a dog to foster him. In some cases, you may need to work with us more often, and in other cases, things will be easier. GSRNE also runs Foster Home Seminars from time to time. We hope that you can attend them when they're given!

We usually try to give new dogs a bath before they come to you. Sometimes this isn't possible, but we try to schedule that in for you if possible, especially for dogs that have been kenneled/at shelters. We always inspect the dogs for ticks/fleas in their vet exams, and treat for that if it's an issue, as well.

If you would like to apply to foster a Rescue German Shepherd Dog for GSRNE, we'd love to talk to you! Please fill out the attached application and return it to the address indicated or call our 24-hour hotline at 987-443-2202. We'll be in touch shortly!