



## Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program



**Assistance Dogs**  
INTERNATIONAL  
ACCREDITED MEMBER

# Workshop Outline

Our **Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program Preparation Course** consists of 3x (free to attend) 1.5 hour sessions that will give you all of the information you will need to understand and care for your puppy.

Day 1	AN INTRODUCTION TO FOSTERING 1.5 hours	
	<b>What we expect from you &amp; what to expect from us</b>	
1. <a href="#">A Warm Welcome</a>	.....	
2. <a href="#">Our Mission Statements</a>	.....	
3. <a href="#">The Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program</a>	.....	
4. <a href="#">Foster Family Responsibilities &amp; Guidelines</a>	.....	
5. <a href="#">Foster Family Do's &amp; Don'ts</a>	.....	
6. <a href="#">Your Home, Your Family &amp; Your Pets</a>	.....	
7. <a href="#">Testimonials</a>	.....	
8. <a href="#">Remember Why You are Doing This!</a>	.....	
9. <a href="#">Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program Contract</a>	.....	
10. <a href="#">In Case of Emergency</a>	.....	
11. <a href="#">Hurricane/Tropical Storm Emergency Preparedness</a>	.....	
12. <a href="#">Help Us to Raise Awareness</a>	.....	
13. <a href="#">Resources &amp; References</a>	.....	
14. <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>	.....	
15. <a href="#">Confidentiality</a>	.....	

Day 2	CANINE BEHAVIOR & BASIC TRAINING 1.5 hours	
	How to Understand & Train Your Puppy	
1. <a href="#">Your First 48 Hours</a>	.....	
2. <a href="#">Introducing Equipment &amp; Body Handling</a>	.....	
3. <a href="#">Crate Training</a>	.....	
4. <a href="#">Understanding Canine Behavior</a>	.....	
5. <a href="#">Reading Canine Body Postures</a>	.....	
6. <a href="#">Dog to Dog Communication</a>	.....	
7. <a href="#">Basic Obedience Commands</a>	.....	
8. <a href="#">Common Behavioral Problems &amp; How to Deal with Them</a>	.....	
9. <a href="#">Aggressive Behavior</a>	.....	
10. <a href="#">Bite Inhibition</a>	.....	
11. <a href="#">Training Tips</a>	.....	
12. <a href="#">Games &amp; Outdoor Activities</a>	.....	
13. <a href="#">Standards &amp; Assessment for Service Dog Puppy &amp; Foster Family</a>	.....	
14. <a href="#">Puppy Training Protocol at DFL Facility</a>	.....	
15. <a href="#">DFL Foster Puppy Socialization</a>	.....	
16. <a href="#">Preparing for Puppy Class</a>	.....	

Day 3	HEALTH & WELL-BEING 1.5 hours	
<b>How to Look After Your Puppy From Nose to Tail!</b>		
1. <a href="#">Food &amp; Nutrition</a>	.....	
2. <a href="#">Canine Food Safety – Foods to Avoid</a>	.....	
3. <a href="#">Health</a>	.....	
4. <a href="#">First Aid</a>	.....	
5. <a href="#">Caring for Your Puppy/Dog in Florida’s Endless Summer</a>	.....	
6. <a href="#">Illnesses</a>	.....	
7. <a href="#">DFL Veterinary Quick Reference Chart</a>	.....	
8. <a href="#">Routine Maintenance/Grooming</a>	.....	
9. <a href="#">Graduation Day Do’s &amp; Don’ts</a>	.....	

## A Warm Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Dogs For Life **Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program**. We are delighted that you are interested in fostering. This manual will provide helpful advice and information to assist you in raising and caring for your foster puppy or adult dog. We look forward to working with you before, during and after your fostering experience.

- In 2018, Dogs for Life Inc. (“DFL”) began the *Veterans Training Veterans Program*, designed to educate veterans and volunteers about the organization. This is where we train them in every aspect of DFL operations including reception work, fundraising, training, dog fostering, and special events.
- Since then, the program has evolved to help with the training and housing of dogs in the DFL Service Dog Training Program.
- These specialized task-trained dogs will greatly improve the quality of life for those who become clients.
- Clients who receive a service dog often express the confidence, independence, and freedom they feel when a service dog is brought into their lives.
- Occasionally, our foster families volunteer to become "Ambassadors" for the organization, handling puppies at public presentations and fundraising events held by DFL.
- We welcome you to contact us if you have any questions about the information in this manual or at any time while you are fostering a DFL puppy or dog.
- Thank you for participating in this program. We hope you enjoy the experience of raising a future service dog!

Sincerely,

*Shelly*

Shelly Ferger

Founder, CEO & Director of Training Programs

## Our Mission Statements

*“We believe that together both dogs and humans can help enrich each other’s lives.”*

### Foster Program Mission

The mission of the **Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program** is to raise our puppies in loving, caring, conscientious and dedicated foster homes where the puppies will be handled, socialized and trained according to our policies and procedures in preparation for their final training as service dogs.

DFL staff are committed to offering the highest quality guidance to foster families in order to help them raise the puppies in the best possible manner. This guidance will be in the form of telephone or email communications, puppy classes, and field trips.

### The DFL Mission

DFL is a non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life for veterans and other individuals with disabilities through training hearing and service dogs, and owning an off-leash dog park.

## The Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program

Thank you for opening your heart and your home to foster a DFL service dog in-training. We are always looking for special people to give our puppies a happy puppyhood!

During this program, we will ask you to set aside **fifteen minutes, twice a day** to practice obedience with your puppy. Socialization is ongoing and happens 24-hours a day. It is imperative that you accomplish all the work assigned at each puppy class so that your puppy is prepared to learn what will be covered in the next class. Puppies that arrive unprepared hold back the entire class while material needs to be reviewed. Instructions on what you should be working on are given out at every puppy class. **We are here to help you through every step.**

Fostering a puppy for DFL is a rewarding and fun experience for the whole family. Foster homes are very important in the early development and training of service dogs. Foster families provide an environment where the puppies can be housetrained, learn proper house manners and basic obedience, and are socialized to many different situations, experiences and people that they are likely to encounter during their careers as working dogs.

A service dog is a dog that has been trained to do specific tasks or work that helps reduce a disabled owner’s specific disabilities. Service dog tasks are often used to help mitigate physical, psychiatric, and developmental disabilities.

Because one person’s disabilities can be so different from others, there is not a “one size fits all” approach to what tasks a service dog may know. Instead, each service dog is trained to do unique

tasks for the specific owner. As a result, many are cross trained or trained for multiple purposes and multiple tasks in different categories.

Overall, service dogs are trained to provide safety, mobility, and independence to people with disabilities. However, the needs that they address are based on the disability each client has. We currently train three different kinds of service dogs:

- Hearing – for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Service – for people with PTSD or other psychological disabilities
- Mobility – for people with physical disabilities

The most common dog breeds we use for service dogs: Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, Poodles, and mixes of those breeds.

DFL has built relationships with breeders that have many proven service dogs in their lines. A small percentage of our dogs are donated to us under strict conditions. For a dog to be accepted for the service dog training program, we require that it has received health checks for its hips, teeth, eyes, and overall well-being.

Costs can range from \$5,000 - \$30,000 to train each service dog. This includes ALL costs incurred from the moment it is acquired to the moment it graduates from one of the three service dog programs.

You will foster our puppies for the first 6-8 months of the puppy's life. You will be responsible for socializing and caring for our puppy - this is a time-consuming but rewarding task. We may also ask you to foster an adult dog from time to time.

DFL will provide full training and guidance as well as in person development sessions. We will also provide you with all the tools required to care for your pup. If you are in a financial position to pay for some of the costs associated with the pup, you will receive a receipt for your in-kind donation.

## **Foster Family Responsibilities & Guidelines**

Fostering a puppy can be a wonderful experience for both you and for the puppy but it is not without some heartache. Fostering a puppy is intended to be a short-term situation so there will come a day when your puppy goes to his new home.

This can be heart-wrenching for many people who foster. Before you make the decision to foster a puppy, you should consider how this will affect you and if this is something you can deal with. Lots of people cope with letting their foster puppy go by volunteering to foster another dog. For many people, knowing that their foster puppy is happy in a new home outweighs the temporary sadness of saying goodbye. It is good to remind yourself why you are doing this.

DFL will provide:

- Dog crate
- Puppy manual
- Training vest
- Training collar
- Dog food (dry & canned)
- Backpack
- Exercise pen
- Food bowl
- Gentle Leader
- Bed
- Brush
- Leash
- Poop bags
- Toys
- Dog treats & chewies
- General veterinary care\*
- Grooming (including nail clipping at a vet or groomer)
- Heartworm medication
- Flea control oral medication

\*Veterinary care for foster puppies is provided by veterinarians approved by DFL.

**Unless authorization/approval is received by the foster family, DFL will not pay for veterinary care provided by other veterinarians.** Foster families MUST contact DFL staff if they believe their puppy requires vet care – staff will refer families to the vet if necessary.

**Foster families may not contact the veterinarian directly, except in emergency cases.** If emergency medical attention is required, foster families must seek emergency veterinary care and call Shelly Ferger as soon as possible. **An emergency implies that the dog's life is in danger.** See [In Case of Emergency](#) for additional information.

Travel to and from DFL and the vet's office is at the foster family's expense.

Foster families **must be available** to come to DFL during our regular business hours for training classes, to pick up food, for veterinary appointments, or for other reasons as may be required from time to time.

Attendance at all training classes is **mandatory**.

## Foster Family Do's and Don'ts

**NONCOMPLIANCE WILL RESULT IN REMOVAL OF THE PUPPY FROM THE HOME**

### Do!

**DO** ensure your puppy wears his service vest as directed.

**DO** transport the puppy to and from the DFL facility center for classes and otherwise when directed by DFL staff.

**DO** train the puppy for public access (mall, elevators, stairs, fire escapes, public transit, high-traffic areas, etc.) when arranged by DFL, even if these things are not part of your family's regular routine, or if you have to travel around town to do so.

**DO** ensure each and every member of your household follows DFL guidelines carefully and consistently.

**DO** ensure other pets in the home are neutered, social, healthy, and up-to-date on vaccines.

**DO** inform DFL staff of any health issues, including but not limited to: accidents, injuries, illnesses, limping, running away, ingestion of foreign objects, behavioral changes, etc.

**DO** use the puppy's crate overnight and every time the puppy is home alone until the puppy can be trusted unsupervised.

**DO** obtain permission from DFL staff prior to traveling outside of town with the puppy, as well as when leaving the puppy with friends or family.

**DO** remember that the emphasis in this foster program is: SOCIALIZATION/BASIC OBEDIENCE (heel, sit, stay, down, come, etc.)/GOOD MANNERS (well-behaved and under control).

**DO** keep in mind that foster families DO NOT have the same legal access rights to public places as service dog trainers and clients. (DFL trains and certifies service dogs for public access that are impeccably obedience trained.)

**DO** always monitor and supervise your puppy.

**DO** preauthorize all vet appointments through DFL staff except as directed in an emergency.

## **Don't!**

**DON'T** forget that negligence or lack of supervision on your part (e.g., if the puppy gets into medication, garbage or poison, if the puppy is injured while running or playing off leash, etc.) is grounds for removal from the program. You also will be financially responsible for ANY veterinary care resulting from your negligence or lack of supervision.

**DON'T** leave the puppy home alone all day while your family is at work/school. Someone must be available to feed and relieve the puppy during the day.

**DON'T** use any training equipment or techniques other than those approved by DFL staff.

**DON'T** expose the puppy to any place frequented by other dogs until the final set of vaccines has been given at 4 months of age.

**DON'T** leave the puppy unattended in a car or outdoors any time of year.

**DON'T** allow the puppy to be off leash unless in a securely fenced area, under your supervision.

**DON'T EVER** hit the puppy to discipline it.

**DON'T** allow the puppy to get up on the furniture or sleep on your bed.

**DON'T** allow the puppy to beg for food or to be fed from the table.

**DON'T** feed the puppy anything but the diet and treats prescribed by DFL staff.

## Your Home, Your Family & Your Pets

The purpose of the foster family home visit is to meet the applicant's family and see the environment to be provided for the dog. The principal caretaker must be present for this visit, as well as any children living in the home. A tour of your house, yard, garage, and all living areas will be completed.

DFL must be comfortable leaving the dog and ensure the foster family applicant will provide a good and loving home. Various topics of discussion and things being considered from the tour of your home will be:

- Are there small objects, exposed cords, or houseplants that the dog may chew?
- Are cleaning materials secured in cabinets?
- Is the house reasonably neat and clean?
- Is the yard fenced? Is the fence in good repair?
- Are there areas in the yard where the dog could injure himself?
- Is the house on a busy road?
- Does the applicant express basic considerations to spouses, children, and other pets?
- Do the children seem like they would be respectful to pets?
- Will the adults monitor children's access to pets?
- Are there other pets in the house?
- Does the applicant understand there is a period of adjustment for all new dogs?
- Does the applicant understand crate training?
- Is applicant suitable for the dog in consideration or would a different dog be a better fit?
- Is the applicant able to provide the required exercise for the dog?
- What type of indoor living space is available to the dog?
- Would DFL staff feel comfortable leaving their own dog with the applicant?
- Do DFL staff think the applicant will provide a good and loving home?

Please be advised that the final approval is not made during the home visit. The foster family applicant will be contacted by a DFL representative to finalize foster care.

## Testimonials

### **Steve Defren – DFL Foster Dad**

“Fostering a puppy for the past 6+ months is as rewarding an experience as I’ve ever had. Watching a young untrained pup develop into a helpmate for life has to be lived; it’s not something that can be described. With the guidance and support that comes from Shelly and her staff, this can be a life changing, emotionally satisfying adventure ... not just for oneself, but for those with disabilities who need help as well.”

### **The Drinnon Family (Chris, Kristen, Meagan, Brock & Tyler) – DFL Foster Family**

“Fostering puppies for DFL has been a wonderful opportunity for our family to work together for a common goal. It was unifying and just plain fun for us!”

### **Harry Taylor & Family (Chris, Sheri, Joe, Sofie & Gramma) – DFL Foster Family**

“Being a foster dog raiser is hard work, but well worth the effort. I love playing with the puppies and watching them grow.”

## Remember Why You are Doing This!

Fostering a puppy can be a wonderful experience for both you and the puppy, but it’s not without some heartache. Fostering a puppy is intended to be a short-term situation so there will come a day when your puppy goes to his new home.

This can be heart-wrenching for many people who foster. Before you make the decision to foster a puppy, you should consider how this will affect you and if this is something you can deal with. Lots of people cope with letting their foster puppy go by volunteering to foster another dog.

You do need to think about the emotions involved before you agree to foster a puppy. For many people, knowing that their foster puppy is happy in a new home outweighs the temporary sadness of saying goodbye. *It is always good to remind yourself why you are doing this.*

# Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program Contract



Dog's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Family: \_\_\_\_\_  
Puppy # \_\_\_\_\_  
Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Color: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Home #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Work #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Microchip ID: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1) MISSION

- a) The above-mentioned puppy/dog is the property of DFL Inc. (DFL). This contract and placement do not confer upon the foster family any legal rights or entitlement to possession or ownership of the puppy/dog.
- b) The purpose of the Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program is to provide healthy, well-socialized dogs to DFL's training program.
- c) The role of the foster family is to raise and care for the puppy according to DFL's guidelines, under the direction of DFL staff. The foster family acknowledges/agrees that the puppy/dog shall not be used for any other purpose.

## 2) SUPERVISION AND CONTACT

- a) DFL staff are responsible for supporting and supervising foster families on a day-to-day basis and are familiar with DFL's policies and procedures regarding training, behavior and veterinary care.
- b) Foster families must contact DFL staff with questions or concerns and must keep the staff informed of all issues concerning their foster puppy.
- c) Contact with other foster families is for the purpose of socialization only and does not replace contact with DFL staff. All information related to each dog is confidential DFL information and should not be disseminated in any way without permission.
- d) Any public education, advertising, or promotional events must be approved by DFL. This covers all types of media, including but not limited to radio, newspaper/magazine, television, and websites. The foster family agrees not to use the foster puppy for any promotional activities without permission from DFL.

### 3) VETERINARY CARE, DOG FOOD AND OTHER EXPENSES

- a) DFL will coordinate veterinary appointments for all foster puppies and dogs in training. Foster families must inform DFL staff of any ailments or injuries to the foster dog immediately. Foster families must pre-authorize all vet appointments through DFL staff – foster families may not deal directly with the vet clinic, except as directed in an emergency.
- b) It is the foster family's responsibility to transport the dog to and from the veterinary clinic for appointments, which usually take place on weekdays during regular business hours. In case of emergencies, foster families must seek immediate veterinary care and leave a message with DFL staff as soon as possible.
- c) All DFL foster puppies are fed diets set by DFL staff. Food is available to be picked up by foster families at our training facility at puppy classes or during regular business hours. Please note that DFL **will not** pay for any other food purchased for foster puppies. **Foster puppies may not be fed any diet other than that provided**, except for temporary diets prescribed by our veterinarian.
- d) DFL **will not pay for** dog food, grooming expenses, toys, treats or veterinary care that **has not been pre-approved and/or that results from negligence on the part of the foster family**.

### 4) FOSTER FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Foster families are responsible for housetraining and socializing the puppies/dogs, and for teaching basic manners and basic obedience, as set out in the Foster Dog/Puppy Manual and during DFL classes. Every member of the foster family's household must consistently adhere to DFL's guidelines.
- b) Time must be set aside on a daily basis for working with the foster dog.
- c) Foster families are responsible for bringing their foster dogs to the DFL facility for training classes, and to the veterinary clinic as needed, usually on a weekday. **Training classes and vet visits are mandatory for all foster puppies.**
- d) **Manners** - Foster puppies are not permitted to bark, jump up on people, get up on furniture, sleep on people's beds, beg at the table, be fed people food, pull on leash, or any other behavior that would be inappropriate for a working service dog.
- e) **Socialization** - Foster puppies must spend most of their time in the company of their foster families – in the home. When arranged or approved by DFL staff, puppies or dogs may accompany you for specific events. Foster families are expected to invest a significant amount of time in socializing the puppy – taking it out with DFL trainers for walks, to busy streets, malls, offices, places of business, etc. Foster puppies are to be exposed to a variety of different situations that they would likely encounter during their careers as working dogs – elevators, open stairs, fire escapes, public transit, crowds, other animals, children, etc.

- f) **Other Pets** - Other dogs living in the foster family's home must be spayed/neutered, healthy, and up to date on all vaccines. A DFL trainer will assess the family dog and its interaction with the foster puppy/dog prior to approval.
- g) **Training Classes** - Foster families meet with DFL staff on a regular basis for the first six months of the puppy's life, then at minimum once a week thereafter or until the puppy is placed. Most of these meetings take place at DFL facility. Foster families must arrange to be available for these classes and to travel to and from the locations, as requested by DFL staff.
- h) Foster families must obtain permission from DFL staff prior to involving the puppy in any classes or events outside of DFL.
- i) Only training equipment and techniques approved by DFL staff are to be used with foster puppies.
- j) Foster puppies are never allowed to run off leash, except in a securely fenced area under close supervision of the foster family.
- k) Foster families must keep DFL staff informed of any and all incidents, including, but not limited to; accidents, injuries, illnesses, limping, running away, ingestion of foreign objects, unplanned mating, behavioral changes/problems, etc.

## 5) VACATIONS

Foster families must obtain permission from DFL staff prior to taking the puppy away on vacation or having the puppy babysat or fostered by another family.

## 6) RECALL

Trainers decide which foster puppies are to be recalled for final training, and at what age (typically between 10 and 18 months). DFL staff will advise the foster family of the recall date. After recall, trainers send progress reports to foster families informing them of the dog's progress and status. DFL staff will also invite the foster family to the dog's graduation ceremony. Occasionally, a dog's name may be changed to satisfy a sponsorship commitment or the wishes of the owner. Foster families will be advised prior to graduation if this is the case. Foster families are required to respect the name change at graduation and during any subsequent communication.

## 7) DISQUALIFICATION

Not all puppies that enter the Puppy Raising/Foster Dog Program will be selected for training. DFL decides which dogs enter the training program and which dogs are disqualified. When the puppy/dog is disqualified/retired from the program, placement and adoption arrangements are at the discretion of DFL.

## 8) CONFIDENTIALITY

Neither during the family's role as a foster family, nor anytime thereafter, will the family disclose or make personal use of any information belonging to DFL which the family knows, or ought to know,

is considered confidential. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: client/donor/foster family data, data and statistics relating to the training/fostering programs, financial information, and fundraising strategies. DFL information should not be disseminated in any way without permission, including discussion with other volunteers or postings.

## 9) REMOVAL

The responsibilities involved in fostering a dog must be taken very seriously. The sound physical and mental condition of the dog is essential to the ongoing success of DFL's training programs. The foster family's positive and supportive attitude towards DFL and its programs is also critical. Failure to strictly adhere to all of the above conditions will result in immediate and permanent removal of the foster dog from the foster family's care, and termination of any future involvement with DFL's programs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signatures of Foster Family

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
DFL Staff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

I have been provided with a schedule of puppy classes and understand that attendance is mandatory.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initial

## In Case of Emergency

DFL considers the following to be types of emergencies:

- 1) If for some reason you **cannot foster the puppy/dog** either temporarily or permanently, please immediately **contact Shelly Ferger**.
- 2) **Medical Emergency** – If you have an emergency and require speaking with a veterinarian, **please contact Shelly Ferger**. She will determine whether to have you visit the veterinary hospital closest to you as noted below:

### Veterinary Emergency Contact Information

#### Northern Area

Treasure Coast Animal Emergency & Specialty Hospital  
6580 69<sup>th</sup> Street Vero Beach, FL 32967  
772-569-4500 (open 24 hours every day)

VCA Florida Veterinary League  
1360 US-1  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
772-567-3070 (not 24 hours; hours vary)

Highlands Animal Hospital  
433 Sebastian Blvd  
Sebastian, FL 32958  
772-388-1833 (not 24 hours; 7am – 8:30pm – doctor leaves at 10:00 pm)

#### Southern Area

VCA Tri-County Animal Hospital  
1811 Okeechobee Road  
Fort Pierce, FL 34950  
772-461-1311

- 3) **Hurricane Emergency** – In the event a hurricane is forecast, **contact Shelly** to discuss whether you plan to shelter in place, evacuate, or if you need to bring your puppy/dog to the DFL facility.

## Hurricane/Tropical Storm Emergency Preparedness

Develop a plan prior to the storm emergency. Keep your DFL foster puppy/dog's food, medications, and pertinent paperwork in the same place all the time so they are easy to gather when necessary.

**Your DFL foster puppy/dog DOES NOT have legal access rights to hurricane shelters and SHOULD NOT be taken to a shelter that allows dogs.**

In the event of a hurricane, be prepared to discuss the following with DFL staff:

- Are you planning to shelter in place or are you planning to evacuate?
- If you are evacuating, are you able to take the puppy/dog with you?
- Please provide an alternate emergency phone number.
- If you are sheltering in place, is your home in a flood zone, do you have shutters, and do you have a generator?
- If it is determined that you cannot keep the puppy/dog with you during the storm, the puppy/dog is to be brought with his crate and other belongings to the DFL facility at least 12 hours before the storm is expected to arrive in the area.

If you hold the puppy/dog in your home during the storm:

- Make sure the puppy/dog has ample food and medications for up to three weeks.
- Feed the puppy/dog ½ of its meal prior to the expected arrival of the storm.
- The puppy/dog is to remain in its crate for the duration of the storm. Do not take him outside during the eye of the storm as debris or displaced animals could be present that could cause him injury.
- Prepare a place indoors, such as in the garage or another area inside, for the puppy/dog to relieve itself on an old blanket or large bath towels. Only take him outside when you have been able to thoroughly inspect the area to ensure it is free of debris and free-standing water.
- Contact DFL following the storm to report that you are safe and still able to hold the puppy/dog.
- Do not walk the puppy/dog in the neighborhood until all areas are free of debris and free-standing water. Never let your puppy/dog drink from a puddle of water.

### Disaster Kit

Prepare a disaster kit backpack or a case of some kind such as a milk crate on wheels or even a little suitcase. It should include:

- Your contact information, including phone numbers and addresses for your family or friends you may be staying with, as well as Shelly/DFL's contact information.
- A five-day supply of food and drinking water (1 gallon of water/day/dog) and related supplies (bowls, manual can opener, etc.).
- Medications and prescriptions.
- A first aid kit stored in a waterproof container.

- Two-month supply of flea, tick, and heartworm preventative.
- Information on feeding schedule, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of DFL's approved veterinarians.
- Photocopies of veterinary records, registration, and rabies certificate.
- Current photos and descriptions of the puppy/dog (e.g., breed, sex, color, weight).
- Up-to-date identification, including microchip information and an additional tag with the phone number of someone out of the area in the event the dog becomes lost.
- Sturdy leash, Gentle Leader, and carrier to transport the puppy/dog, as well as blankets or towels for bedding. Carriers should be large enough to comfortably house the puppy/dog for several hours or even days.
- Paper towels, plastic bags, and disinfectant for waste cleanup.

### **Post-Storm**

- In the first few days after the disaster, leash your puppy/dog when you take him outside even if your yard is fenced. Always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered, and he may become confused and lost. Also, snakes, crabs, and other dangerous animals may be brought into the area with flood waters. Downed power lines also are a hazard.
- The behavior of your puppy/dog may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly animals may become frightened, aggressive or defensive. Watch your puppy/dog closely.
- Always keep copies of emergency contact phone numbers on the refrigerator, in your wallet and in the dog's vest.

## **Help Us to Raise Awareness**

Please follow us on social media. We are always looking to raise awareness. A great way to raise awareness is to share posts and tag us in your pictures and pup-dates!

Perhaps you have a great idea for a fundraising event? Please contact us at our office: (772) 567-8969. We have staff who specialize in coordinating and organizing our promotional and fundraising efforts, and they would be more than happy to hear from you! We would ask you to do this in collaboration with us.

We are always happy to receive media exposure about our programs. Please refer all inquiries to our office: (772) 567-8969. We will provide an information package to ensure that all the right answers are given to local press and media outlets.

If you know of anyone who would like to volunteer with us, please share this link!

<https://www.dogsforlifevb.org/volunteer>

# Resources & References

## Resources

Perfect Puppy – Gwen Bailey

Do Dogs Laugh?: Where Dogs Come From, What We Know About Them, and What They Think About Us – Jake Page

Dogs, A natural history – Jake Page

Don't shoot the Dog – Karen Pryor

Before and After Getting Your Puppy: The Positive Approach to Raising a Happy, Healthy, and Well-Behaved Dog - Ian Dunbar

New Complete Dog Training Manual – Bruce Fogel

## References

Blood, D.C. and Virginia P. Studdert, Ballière's Comprehensive Veterinary Dictionary, Ballière Tindall, London, 1988.

Carlson, Delbert G., D.V.M. and James M. Griffin, M.D., Dog Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook, Howell Book House, New York, 1980, 1992.

Kilcommons, Brian and Sarah Wilson, Good Owners Great Dogs, Warner Books, Inc., New York, 1992.

Pratt, Paul W. (ed), Medical Nursing for Animal Health Technicians - First Edition, American Veterinary Publications, Inc., 1985.

Walkowicz, Chris and Bonnie Wilcox, D.V.M., Successful Dog Breeding, Prentice Hall Press, New York, 1985.

Zink, M. Christine, D.V.M., Ph.D., Peak Performance - Coaching the Canine Athlete, Howell Book House, New York, 1992.

# Privacy Policy

We recognize the importance of privacy of personal information, and we are committed to treating any such information we collect, use or disclose in a responsible manner and only as reasonably necessary for the purpose for which it was collected. We value the trust of those we work with and recognize that maintaining this trust requires that we have a clear policy on the use of information that is shared with us.

## Introduction and Accountability

This Privacy Policy governs our dealing with “personal information.” Personal information means any information about an identifiable individual, be they a client, donor, volunteer, staff member or other individual we are engaged with. Information could include age, gender, religion, ethnic background, family status, political affiliations, health, home address, e-mail address and phone numbers. Besides facts about or related to the individual, it may also include individual’s opinions or beliefs, or any information pertaining to a foster or service dog associated with them. Personal information does not include business information such as the name, title, business address, or telephone number of an organization. Our responsibility for information extends beyond information in our possession or control, to information to which third-parties may have access. This would include people acting on our behalf such as volunteers, accountants, information technology advisers, cleaners, bankers, or others. We will restrict access to such third parties as much as is reasonably possible and request their assurances that they follow appropriate privacy principles. DFL Inc. is committed to protecting the privacy of the personal information of our donors, clients, and volunteers.

## Information Collected

The privacy of our users is important to us. DFL Inc. does not collect any personal information about users, except that which is knowingly and specifically supplied to us by the user. We will not disclose any personal information about users to any outside parties. This information may be accessed on request to ensure that it is correct and current. We may require clients, staff or others to supply personal references for the purposes of verifying their suitability as a client, foster family or staff member. These will be kept private and confidential as pledged to the person providing the reference.

## Why We Collect Information

The primary purpose for which we collect, use and disclose personal information is to serve our clients or potential clients or to communicate to potential clients, donors or other audiences involved in our services.

For example, we primarily collect, use, and disclose personal information to:

- Evaluate potential client need for service dogs through the application process
- Maintain contact with our service dog teams to ensure that the team is still working well
- Process transactions related to donations
- Communicate in an ongoing manner with clients, volunteers, and donors

- Provide mailings, donation opportunities or invitations to events
- Communicate to specific audiences in DFL, volunteers and others
- Evaluate the performance of our services
- Report to required regulatory authorities

## **Consent**

Generally, all personal information is held in strict confidence, and we will obtain consent, either express or implied, to use or disclose personal information about an individual unless otherwise permitted or required by law. Provided that we are informed, an individual can withdraw consent at any time, subject to legal or contractual restrictions and reasonable notice.

## **Safeguarding**

We will take appropriate steps to ensure adequate safeguards are in place to protect the personal information which we obtain. Our safeguards include:

- Staff and volunteers will be required to sign a statement prior to coming on board, stating they will abide by our Privacy Policy, both while in their role, or thereafter. We will also endeavor to ensure that third-party contractors are aware of and abide by our Privacy Policy, as a condition of ongoing engagement.
- Ensuring paper information is stored in a supervised, secure location with restricted access to offices.
- Electronic information is also secured with restricted third-party access and through the use of passwords.
- We will use credit card numbers only to process a payment and will not use it for marketing purposes. For reasons of security, credit card information is not stored on our Web Server. We will retain order information for our records, but this information is never shared with third parties.

## **Retention**

We retain a limited amount of information for historical reference in servicing our clients and donors.

## **Openness and Sharing Information**

With some exceptions, we will give access to personal information upon request of the individual. Exceptions may include information that contains references to other individuals or contains confidential business information where such information cannot be separated.

## **Correcting Information**

Upon your request, we will provide access to, and ability to correct, certain information, such as contact information, transaction information and credit card account information. If at any time anyone wishes to access or update information or stop receiving communications from DFL, Inc., DFL should be contacted:

**office@dogsforlifevb.org**

**DFL Inc., 1230 16<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vero Beach, FL 32960**

Ideally, old and new contact information should be provided so that we can make the appropriate corrections. If there are any comments or concerns about this privacy policy, please contact DFL. If anyone believes there is a mistake in the personal information we have, they have the right to ask that it be corrected. If we agree that there is an error, it will be corrected. If we do not agree that a mistake has been made, we will include in our file a brief statement from you on the point to be included with the information during its use.

We will occasionally review and revise our privacy practices and this Privacy Policy on an as needed basis.

## Confidentiality

DFL Inc. is responsible for supporting and supervising foster families on a day-to-day basis and enforces DFL Inc.'s policies and procedures regarding training, behavior and veterinary care. Foster families must contact DFL staff with questions or concerns and must keep the staff informed of all issues concerning their foster puppy. **DFL staff is the only source qualified to give advice to foster families.**

Contact with other foster families is for the purpose of socialization only and does not replace contact with DFL staff. **Discussion of behavioral and/or health problems with other foster families, clients, breeders, or donors, in person or on website chat forums, is strictly forbidden.**

Any public education, advertising or promotional events must be cleared through DFL. This covers all types of media, including but not limited to radio, newspaper, magazine, television and websites. The foster family agrees not to use the foster puppy for any promotional activities without explicit permission from DFL, Inc.

Neither during the family's role as a foster family, nor anytime thereafter, will the family disclose or make personal use of any information belonging to DFL Inc. which the family knows, or ought to know, is considered confidential. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: client/donor/foster family data, data and statistics relating to the training/fostering programs, financial information and fundraising strategies.

This requirement for confidentiality extends to communications with other foster families and postings on website chat forums. **Absolutely no information regarding the puppy/dog's health, behavior or status is to be shared with anyone other than DFL Inc. staff.**

The responsibilities involved in fostering a puppy must be taken very seriously. The sound physical and mental condition of the puppy is essential to the ongoing success of DFL's assistance dog training program. The foster family's positive and supportive attitude towards DFL Inc. and its programs is also critical.

Failure to strictly adhere to all of the above conditions will result in immediate and permanent removal of the foster puppy from the foster family's care, and termination of any future involvement with DFL Inc.'s programs.

Concerns about any of DFL Inc.'s programs can be brought to the attention of the Executive Director.

**Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!**

# Your First 48 Hours

## Settling In!

### **Let them relieve themselves**

When arriving home with your puppy, take him to the outside designated relief area as he will need to relieve himself. The puppy's crate preferably should be placed in the main living area of the home.

Anytime the puppy is removed from its crate, he should immediately be taken outside. Until he is collar-trained, the pup should be carried outside. We will provide you with a puppy log to record solid bowel movements. This is good to record to ensure your pup is in good health.

### **Show them around**

The puppy can be taken into other parts of the house, but only when supervised and preferably on a leash. An exercise pen is used for play time when the puppy is not supervised or on a leash. A Kong (rubber toy hollowed out for treats), chew stick, or other toys can be used to keep the puppy entertained. This will help the pup to focus on something and not find his own entertainment.

### **Play!**

Spend time playing with your puppy with their toys and chews. They need to be educated as to what games are allowed and what things they can chew on. Refrain from telling your pup "off" if they start chewing furniture or children's toys, etc. - they will only learn to chew on them when you are not there. Call your puppy away from the item they are chewing, give them one of their own toys or chews instead, and vocally praise them. Make it fun to play with their toy.

### **Give them space**

Puppies will generally be awake for two hours, then sleep for two hours. Try to refrain from constantly being with the puppy on the first day. Allow time for him to sleep in his crate and get used to being left on his own for short periods of time. This will help at night when the rest of the family wishes to go to bed.

### **Exercise pen**

The exercise pen is to be used for periods of time when you are not able to supervise the puppy. The pen should not be placed on rugs; it is probable the pup may relieve itself in this area for the first few days. This pen gives the pup a bit of freedom to play when not in his crate or on the leash outside.

## The First Night – *Pup should not be fed anything after 6 pm*

- Take your puppy outside for a “busy” (i.e., to relieve himself) so you know the puppy will have an empty bladder/bowel.
- Put the puppy in the crate. You can place inside the crate a warm hot-water bottle wrapped in a t-shirt or sweater that a member of the family has worn.
- Give this to the puppy along with a couple of treats inside a Kong or bone.
- Leave a radio on quietly and/or place a ticking clock near the crate.
- If the pup has been left alone for a short period during the day, he will feel less stressed and hopefully fall asleep quickly.
- After the first night, refrain from going to the puppy if he begins to howl or bark during the night – if he gets no attention, he will normally go quiet after a short period of time. A pup quickly learns that if he barks and you come running to the rescue, he will have you up all night. Even negative attention (e.g., telling him to “be quiet”) is better to him than none.

## The First Few Days

- For the first few days allow the pup to settle into his new environment and routines.
- Get him used to having his collar on and practice walking the pup on the leash in the house using a few food treats to help keep the pup’s attention.
- Introduce the *sit*, *down* and *stand* commands using some soft treats that can be broken into small pieces, about the size of your small fingernail.
- Encourage the pup to walk at your left side. If he lunges or pulls forward, call the pup’s name, show the food reward, and encourage him back to the desired position. Remember to keep this exercise short and fun. No more than 3-4 minutes in any session.
- Short (20-minute) walks are enough for pups of this age. Mental stimulation will tire him out much more quickly than physical exercise.

# Introducing Equipment & Body Handling

Remember that almost everything in your puppy's world is brand new. Positive introductions to training equipment and handling will serve you well throughout your fostering term.

## Equipment

### Introducing the leash

The puppies have been wearing collars of some form from early on, but at this stage may never have had a leash attached to them. Before we even pick up the leash, there are a few points worth discussing that will help each pup start on the right foot towards leash respect and heeling.

Dogs pull for three reasons. First, it is a dog's natural instinct to resist into a given pressure (when the collar pulls into them, they react by pulling back against it). Second, dogs pull because it works. Finally, dogs pull because we let them! If pulling gets them where they want to go, it **very quickly** becomes a learned behavior.

### In the home

In the beginning, attach the leash to the puppy's collar, drop the handle and let him walk around the house for 10-15 minutes a couple times a day, simply to get used to the weight and feel of it dragging along. Keep a close watch on him, and if he's getting into mischief, make some happy noise and encourage him to come back to you. Then try picking up the leash and walking along with the puppy. You can follow him or encourage him to follow you. If he sits down refusing to move, or is resisting against the leash, stand beside him and wait it out or drop the leash and walk away. The puppy is likely to follow along.

### First outings with a leash

Most of your trips are going to be out to the relief area and back indoors. We need to keep relief and walk times or playtimes separate for the benefit of house-training, but even when going out to the yard, we want puppies to understand that pulling does not get them anywhere. When you head out on leash, encourage the puppy to follow you, using your voice and verbal praise for being on a loose leash.

If puppy pulls or is lingering near an area and you need him to move on, use his name and call him to you, clap your hands or tap the side of your leg to encourage the pup to move forward, and make it fun. As a simple guideline: if there is any tension on the leash, stop. When the leash is loose, you can start walking again. You can allow pup to sniff and check out his new environment - on your terms. If he pulls over to an area, change direction or call him to you, and then walk over to the area together.

### Introducing the service vest

Most puppies adapt well to their service vest because they are introduced early. However, some dogs have a high body sensitivity and react negatively to certain contact, including wearing the service vest. In these dogs, as they mature, they may shy away when the service vest is brought out

or display some passive aggressive nibbling, picking, scratching and anxiety while the service vest is on. This can also lead to a dog that sulks when the service vest is on. Acceptance of the service vest and body handling in general is a must for service dogs, as they will transition to different forms of touch later in their training.

We will introduce the service vests off and on during training with treats as a distraction. Otherwise, we'll put the service vest on the pup at mealtimes, removing the service vest immediately when puppy is finished eating and for short timeframes with treats to help develop a positive association. Put the service vest on, ask puppy to do a few sits, give a few treats, encourage him to follow or come to you, give a few more treats and take the service vest off. They have just started to learn that service vest time is work time, and work time is fun!

### **Introducing the Gentle Leader**

Introducing the Gentle Leader must be a very positive experience. Introduce the Leader in short, positive sessions during mealtimes and short training sessions to start. Hold a treat in front of the puppy's nose with the loop of the Leader in between the treat and his nose. He must put his nose through the loop to get the treat. Allow him to reach his nose in and out of the loop without latching the collar around his neck for the first few attempts. This will teach him not to move/turn his head away each time the Leader is presented.

Once he is deliberately putting his nose through the loop for the treat, latch the collar part around his neck, say "good puppy" and give more treats. Keep him busy and distracted so that he isn't concerned with the new device he's wearing. Keep the first few sessions short and sweet, feeding him dinner, etc. but not leaving the Leader on long enough for him to fight at it. Discourage any fussing, rubbing, or pulling on the Gentle Leader. Never remove the Leader when the pup is fighting or rubbing. Distract just long enough to say "good dog" before removing the Leader.

The first time you use the Gentle Leader on leash, take the pup to a higher distraction location. He's less likely to focus on it if there are more interesting things happening around him. It is a Band-Aid solution to pulling, but you can use it to your advantage in training.

### **Martingale collar or training collar**

A Martingale collar may be introduced after 6 months. These collars will be introduced at the direction of DFL staff. If you have used a Martingale with a past dog, please remember that each pup is different, and the equipment used on each dog is up to the discretion of DFL trainers.

*NOTE: Choke chains, harnesses, chain leashes or similar training devices are not acceptable or permissible.*

### **Body Handling and Proofing Tips**

Remember that almost everything in a young puppy's world is brand new. Positive introductions to handling and training equipment will serve you well throughout your fostering/puppy training term.

- All dogs need to be handled on a regular basis, and all of our dogs should be introduced to a variety of handling.

- At least once a week in the beginning, dogs will be handled from head to toe. Look in his ears, open his mouth, hold each paw, apply light pressure to his belly, lift his tail, give a tug on each nail – i.e., do all the things a groomer or vet may do. Do not make this a game; be calm and matter of fact.
- Gently, from under the dog's chin, hold the dog's muzzle in one hand while you run the fingers on the opposite hand around his eyes.
- If you have a puppy that will require clipping, run a set of clippers or an electric toothbrush nearby so that he can get used to the noise.
- You can give treats as you go.
- You can sit on the floor with the tired pup at the end of the day giving a puppy massage as you handle each area.
- Keep the sessions light and positive.
- If the puppy pulls its paw away, have it stand on all fours, give a treat, lift one paw, give a treat then come back later to try again. The moment he stops struggling give a treat and release the paw.

We also want to proof the puppies against certain handling that may typically generate a negative reaction. For example, toddlers can often be a bit hard and haphazard about patting a puppy, and the pup may feel uncomfortable with such handling.

You may find yourself on occasion having to quickly take hold of the pup's collar, and if done in the heat of play with another dog, or when the pup has something he feels is his, he may be inclined to resist, turn at you, or pull away—which may not work for him at 20lbs, but it will work at 70lbs. So please take the time to handle the dogs in these ways, desensitizing dogs to having their collars pulled and touched. Start by handling under the dog's chin, over time working to the side, and then lastly to the top of the neck of the pup.

Under the direction of the trainers, try some gentle tail tugging or a light pull on a handful of hair, all while providing some treats and positive feedback for calm responses. Do not turn these exercises into games. It could encourage puppy to play or become excited and get mouthy. Always have a toy nearby to redirect mouthiness while being handled.

Keep your sessions short, positive and always maintain control of the session. If he is getting wound up, throw in some obedience commands, and get him to settle. Once he settles down, end the session.

## House-training

**The puppy must be taken outside for relief** first thing in the morning; after eating, playing, napping, or drinking; if he is sniffing around or acting restless; at regular intervals throughout the day; and last thing at night.

- The puppy must be relieved **on leash** and on different surfaces outdoors on command.
- Puppies are like babies – their immature bodies cannot hold for long periods. Do not leave the puppy crated for long periods (overnight or during the day) while you are trying to houstrain him. **You must be home during the day!**

- Don't wait for the puppy to ask to be let out – take him out on a regular basis (every half hour at first, then gradually increase the amount of time between intervals).
- **Do not** train the puppy to ask to go out! He must adjust to **your** schedule!
- Wait until the puppy relieves **before** allowing playtime.
- Use the same door every time you take the puppy out for relief. This will encourage him to go to the door when he needs to go out. However, this should not become a reason for you to respond after a few weeks or it can turn into a learned, repeated behavior when not necessary.
- Try using a command to let the puppy know what you want him to do (“busy busy”). This command can later be used to encourage the puppy to relieve when and where you want. The goal, as a future service dog, is to get him to relieve on command.
- If the puppy wakes up during the night, he should go out to relieve, then **immediately be put back in the crate.**
- **DO NOT paper train the puppy.**
- If you see the puppy eliminating in the house, get his attention by making a loud noise to startle him (**if possible, not associated with you**) - this should make the puppy stop. Immediately bring the puppy outside and **wait** until he finishes eliminating. (Note: this may take some time, as you just surprised him with the correction!)
- **If you do not catch the puppy while eliminating you cannot discipline him.** If you don't catch him in the act, just clean it up and make a mental note to watch him more carefully. If you catch him in the act, clap your hands loudly and say “**NO**” firmly - This should startle him enough to make him stop. Immediately take him outside and wait until he finishes what he started, then lavish him with praise (“good busy”) and bring him back inside. This may take a while, but it is imperative that he finishes outside - this helps him understand what you expect of him. Make sure that the puppy is getting out for relief on a regular schedule (first thing in the morning, after meals and naps, after play, last thing at night, etc.).
- Puppies do not understand the concept of time. Even 5 seconds after ... it's too late! **Prevention and consistency** are the best ways to housetrain a puppy. If accidents happen, the best way of cleaning and removing the odor is with a vinegar and water solution or a product from your local pet supply store.
- Consistency and attention are the keys to successful house-training. The more consistent and attentive you are, the faster the puppy will housetrain.
- Remember to lavishly praise any success right away! Don't wait until he's back inside to praise; give him a treat on the spot.

***REMEMBER: PUPPIES HOUSE TRAIN AT DIFFERENT RATES. BE PATIENT!***

# Crate Training

Crate training provides your dog with a safe and cozy place to call his own. When introduced early and in a positive way, the puppy will love his little den. Crate training is a tremendous aid that protects your household items in your absence and keeps your puppy safe when you cannot be there. That last point is reason enough on its own to crate train your dog. On entering intensive training, service dogs are trained in a kennel environment. Ensuring that they are comfortable in their crates throughout their fostering term lends a smoother transition to the kennel setting. The following tips will help you in crate training your dog. Wire crates should be covered on all sides except the door.

## **Size matters**

Select a crate that will accommodate your dog when he is fully grown. Your dog will need enough room to stand full height, turn end to end, and lie down comfortably. If it is too large, he will be tempted to sleep in one end and use the other as a toilet, but a large crate can be partitioned while the puppy is young.

## **Placing the crate**

Keeping the crate in a common room - the living room or kitchen, for example – provides easy access throughout the day. Once crate training has begun, changing the location from being near you to being in another room can be a very difficult transition, so it is recommended that you start with the crate outside of the bedroom and preferably in the main living area of the home.

## **Getting the dog into the crate**

Place a Kong stuffed with treats and a couple of safe toys in the crate and close the door with your dog on the outside. Let him be tempted for a while and then open the door and watch him run in. Every so often (without puppy seeing you) toss a treat in and let your pup discover it all by himself. When puppy is napping gently scoop him up and place him in the crate, leaving the door open. He will wake feeling refreshed and happy. When you do need to close the door during waking hours, leave a safe puzzle toy – like the Kong with treats inside to occupy him. It is recommended that you not use the toy overnight, as it can encourage play and distract from your dog sleeping through the night. Be matter of fact when you leave your dog. Making a fuss will cause him to think there is something to worry about. Put it on command. When you toss a treat in tell him simply “kennel” or “crate.”

## **Crying**

Your pup is in a new home with new people and may be away from his siblings for the first time. When you tuck puppy in, be prepared to listen to some crying. Also be prepared to ignore it. Any reassuring words (or even barked out commands like “quiet”) will reinforce your dog and he will continue. If your dog has relieved himself before bed, there is no reason he cannot settle. Though 10-20 minutes of crying will tug severely at your heart strings the first night, with consistency your pup will be drifting off to sleep with little to no noise within a few nights.

A young puppy will usually wake once overnight and then early in the morning. Dogs do not like to soil where they sleep so most pups will whine or cry. Go to the crate, wait for a second of silence and then get him outside quickly. As soon as he has relieved, tuck him back into his crate. In most cases pup will drift back off with little to no complaint.

Does he need to go out for relief? Has he messed in his crate? Are other pets or children teasing him? If so, address these issues, but do not give the puppy any positive attention because of his barking. **Ignore him completely!** Continue to ignore him until he is quiet, then let him out and praise him. Do not let him out while he is barking. If you do, he will quickly learn that barking gets him out of his crate. Any response he gets to the barking should be negative. If ignoring him isn't working, tell him "QUIET" in a firm and angry voice. Sound like you mean it! Do not give in to his antics by avoiding use of the crate. Service dogs must be accustomed to spending time in their crates. Avoiding the use of the crate does not solve the problem. For young puppies who are crying in their crates, try a ticking clock or a radio playing softly nearby - he may just be lonely. Also, make sure that the crate is positioned in such a way that he does not feel isolated from the family. The den, kitchen and family room are good places for the crate - the garage or laundry room are not. Is the puppy bored? Try saving a special toy for the crate - maybe his favorite Kong stuffed with a bit of peanut butter and some kibble. (You can even moisten it, then freeze it for an extra challenge.) Give it to him when you are putting him in the crate - not when he starts to bark.

### **Letting the dog out of the crate**

Do not rush in the morning or when you first arrive home to remove the pup from its crate. Make sure the dog is quiet when you open the crate. As the puppy gets a little older, ask the dog to sit before you open the door and have him exit with a release command ("OK"). This helps prevent pup from bursting out with gusto. Do not make a fuss over your dog immediately after leaving his crate. Again, be matter of fact.

### **Feeding**

Young puppies get fed in the crate at noon in the training center (refer to the chart in the kitchen for the quantity). Put the puppy in a "sit" outside the crate before placing the food in the crate. If the puppy does not eat the food within a 15-minute timeframe, take the food out and put it in a Ziploc bag with the puppy's name and the date.

### **Time outs**

*Never use the crate as a punishment.* A time out or cool down time is acceptable only after your dog is comfortable with his crate. A negative association early on will ruin your previous efforts.

If he was being too rough and you asked him to be gentle (with no response), walk him to his crate, place him in and close the door. There is no need to get angry, just be matter of fact. A moment later, as long as he is quiet, let him out, reminding him as he's coming out "now be gentle."

### **Kids and crates**

Please ensure that children in the home and visitors know that puppy's crate is much like his own private space. Do not allow children to tease or bother the puppy in his "room."

## **When and when not to crate**

In the beginning, your pup should sleep in his crate overnight, be crated in your absence and should also be crated whenever he cannot be strictly supervised within the home. Puppyhood can very quickly feel like a 24-hour-a-day job if you are following pup around from morning till night. Remember a young pup is still sleeping about 16 hours a day, so do not be afraid to use the crate to help you establish a routine with your pup that works for you and your family. Service dogs throughout training are asked to adjust to changing schedules. This early training will help make them more adaptable.

Also, as puppies in this program will go many places with you and/or a DFL trainer, this can contribute to creating some separation anxiety when left alone. Using the crate to leave pup home alone for short periods, or throughout the day when you need to get some things done around the house, or just to give pup a nice place to have a special treat to himself, will help to teach the pup that you do not need to be in constant sight.

As the pup gets older, we do ask that you try to have short periods throughout the day when pup is alone in the home without crating, and to spend some nights, when you are able to confine the puppy to one room, allowing him to sleep out of the crate. It is important to see that the puppy is trustworthy in the home. You can leave the crate open, and perhaps block access to stairs or additional rooms to test pup in small steps.

## **Understanding Canine Behavior**

Dogs, by nature, are social creatures. This does not mean that all dogs are fully accepting of whatever life throws their way. Socializing will help your pup to develop into a well-rounded, adaptable dog. We do not have to go into the whole science of canine development, but we do need to know three important facts. First, the ideal time to begin socializing is between 3-16 weeks of age. Secondly, all dogs will go through at least one (and usually two) fear imprint stages before they turn one year old. Last, and most importantly, socialization must be ongoing.

### **What Is Socialization?**

Socializing is about gentle, consistent, positive introductions to environments, people, other dogs, other animals, and even exposure to sounds. Encourage and reward your dog's natural curiosity and reinforce a shy dog for minor improvements. Remember that everything in your puppy's world is brand new; the key is to show him the world is a wonderful place. DFL will schedule outings for you to take the pup as many public places as possible. When people come to your house, let them give the pup treats. When meeting with people, let them pet and interact if puppy is happy (and has all four feet on the ground). If you don't have kids, find some over at a neighbor's or at the park down the road to introduce the puppy. When introducing your dog to other dogs, you do need to keep in mind that he does not have full vaccination until 16 weeks of age. Know the dogs you are introducing him to and be aware of their overall health. Also, if your dog is going to require regular

grooming, do not wait until he needs a full clip; introduce him to the groomer early. Make time to have puppy bathed, brushed, and nails trimmed between the ages of 8-16 weeks; he'll handle subsequent grooming better.

## **Fear Imprint Stages**

Everything is progressing well, and you have a happy-to-go-anywhere puppy who suddenly balks out on the street. What's going on? Your dog has likely entered a fear imprint stage. He is simply more aware and concerned with specifics in his environment. This typically throws foster families for a complete loop, and if handled incorrectly can seriously impede training or worse, create an on-going behavior problem/fear. How do we handle these situations? The first step is being aware. Regardless of what triggers the fear your puppy will demonstrate **one of two reactions - *flight***, where he turns and runs/hides; or ***fight***, where he barks/growls, physically tenses and possibly lunges. When you see any signs that pup is concerned be confident and relaxed. Be matter of fact. If possible, walk the dog over to the item/person and give him some treats (this may take some encouragement). **Do not force the dog**. If this is not possible, simply walk away, but note what he is afraid of on his training log. Do not touch your dog or coo reassuring words - he'll learn that his behavior is right, and his fear justified. When these guidelines are followed the pup will get through the fear imprint stage in no time and come out the other side an even more adaptable dog. He'll bounce back from any future fears much more quickly.

All this talk of fear may have you worried about your own pup. Most dogs do indeed sail through with proper socialization and in many cases you will see only minor incidents, if any, during his fear imprint stages. Again, this is about prevention. Having this information tucked away will save you from making errors in training if your dog does suddenly show fear of anything. If you are concerned that your dog is not making progress in socialization or is not bouncing back from instances of fear, talk to DFL staff.

## **Where, how, and how often?**

Socializing must include exposure to all types of events and scenarios puppy may encounter in life, and this includes being alone. Be sure that you are leaving pup alone in his crate for periods of time early on. You can do this while you are in the home simply by going into a different room for up to a couple of hours. Remember, we need puppy to adapt to our schedule and routine. You can use this time to tuck puppy into his crate and get some housework done (much quicker without a pup under foot!), or you can run to the grocery store and pop in for a haircut while puppy is home learning to be alone. Self-occupying is another behavior that serves our dogs well. We appreciate a dog that is happy to be with us, but we would also love to see a pup comfortable enough to get a toy and go off for a chew without worrying each time we move.

If it seems like a lot to cover in the early stages, remember that socialization is ongoing, and just about every activity you participate in with your puppy is an exercise in socialization.

## Reading Canine Body Postures

While dogs cannot speak, they do display their state of mind via their body language. By taking careful note of their ear position, pupil dilation, facial tension (particularly around the muzzle and the forehead), tail carriage and body weight distribution, an observer can detect whether a dog is relaxed or fearful, or acting in a submissive or dominant manner towards the observer.



This threatening posture is used to chase another away or, if need be, to attack in order to protect possessions, pack or self.

The dog has been stimulated by something in his environment. When the dog is excited by something pleasurable, the hackles will be down and the tail will be carried a little lower and will loosely wag. The muzzle will be relaxed and the tongue may be seen. This posture may be displayed to subordinates in order to express higher ranking pack position.



### ACTIVE SUBMISSION

This pacifying posture is used when a dog acknowledges another dog or human's higher social ranking, or to inhibit another's aggression.



### PASSIVE SUBMISSION

Bellying up indicates surrender, a pacifying gesture offered to a more dominant or aggressive individual.

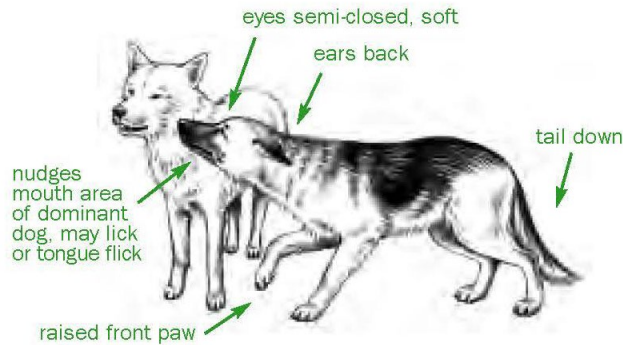


### DEFENSIVE AGGRESSION

When fearful, a dog will give warning signals to indicate he does not wish to be approached. If, unheeded, he will bite to protect himself.

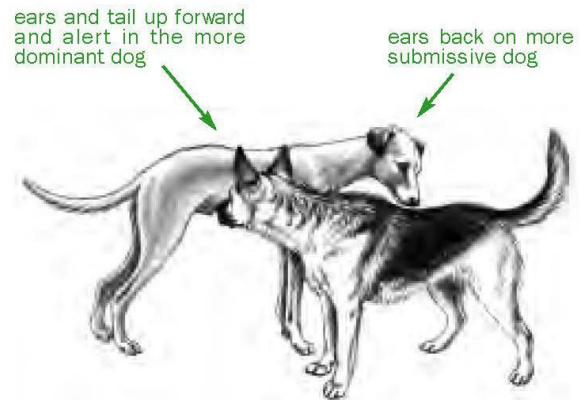
# Dog to Dog Communication

When dog meets dog, they signal their status in relation to each other. Actions like raising a forepaw, looking away, licking or nudging at the other's muzzle or bowing with the forelegs are submissive gestures. Mounting, raising up stiffly on one's toes, or placing one's head over another's withers indicates the more dominant individual of that interaction.



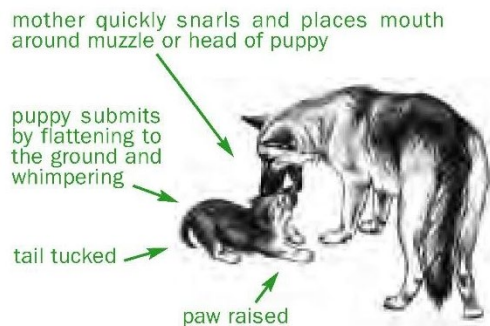
## GREETING BEHAVIOR

A submissive dog may greet a more dominant dog with a muzzle nudge as an appeasement (pacifying) gesture.



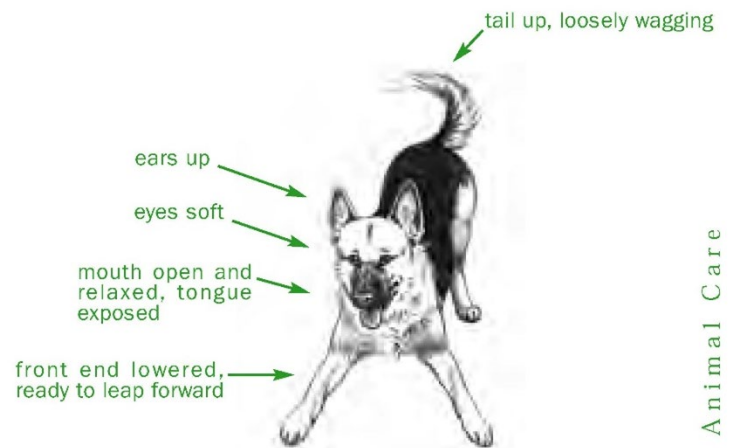
## GREETING POSTURE

Dogs sniff each other's genital region when greeting to gather information on sexual status.



## MATERNAL CORRECTION

A mother dog will discipline a pup with a quick muzzle grasp. The pup learns to offer submissive body postures.



## PLAY SOLICITATION

The play bow is a combination of dominant and submissive gestures. It is offered to invite another to play or as part of courtship behavior.

# Basic Obedience Commands

## Look/Focus (It's all in the Name!)

Your “look/focus” command should mean “Look at me and wait for the next command.” It is an attention getting command and should be followed with another request. If your dog is already focused on you, simply give the next command. Try not to overuse pup’s name; if your dog does not respond, getting louder and angrier is likely to have him tune you out.

- Remember that your dog turning and looking at you is exactly the behavior we want when we use *look/focus*. Mark that on occasion with a “Yes” to let him know he’s done well. Then follow through with your next command.
- Do not use your dog’s name when punishing him. A negative association with his name will lower his response level.
- If your dog is tuning you out, do what you must to get through the situation, but promise yourself you’ll do some exercises to get his response level back up.
- Every so often when your dog provides a positive response to his name, give him a treat – just for that. As our dogs learn more commands, we sometimes take for granted the simple ones like his name. Over time we do not want to lose the significance that we have established.

## Sit, Down and Stand

Sitting, lying down and standing are all very natural behaviors. Putting them on cue requires just a little work. *Sit* being the most used command often becomes voluntary over time; *stand* and *down* will require more frequent use and reward to begin. To introduce *sit*, *down* and *stand*, we are going to use canine body mechanics to lure the dog into position. Our goal is to achieve a first command response, so we are going to make sure we have the dog’s attention, ask for a *sit*, and lure the dog into position.

- For a *sit*, if the nose goes up, the bum will go down. Don’t hold the treat too high above the nose or puppy will jump or climb up for the treat.
- For a *down*, if the bum is on the floor and the nose follows, the dog will lie down. Hold the treat in between your thumb and index finger so puppy can’t get it, lower the treat slowly from the nose. Working on a tile/slippery floor often helps. Once your dog lies down, give him a few additional treats to encourage him to stay down for a moment, rather than popping right back up. For a full down, we want to see puppy rolled onto one hip, rather than sitting up on his legs. If he is rolled onto a hip it takes more effort to get up which provides you extra time to correct him if he tries to get up from the down.
- For *stand*, lead the dog forward from his down position. You’ll need a little extra enthusiasm in the beginning to avoid pup crawling along the floor.

## Off

*Off* is a wonderful command, especially when it is used to its full potential. Many people use *off* only in regard to jumping, but fully defined it actually means get your nose and front paws off of whatever they are on. We can use it to get the dog's nose off the coffee table, off the garbage bag or off of people. *Off* is another of those commands we need to follow through on with another command. Mark a correct response with a "Yes!" and occasionally a treat. Once he is off, give him something else to do – *Sit, Down, Come*. If he is doing any of these, he is not immediately returning to what you just got him "off" of. Over time, start rewarding less for the *Off* and more for the response to the second command. When the alternative behavior (*Sit* or *Down*) works better for the dog he'll start making the better choice the first time around.

## Leave It

*Leave it* as a command covers a broad number of situations. Defined, it essentially means no interaction with that remote, that person, that dog, that cat, that child, etc. *Off* gets the nose and/or front paws off whatever they are on. In some situations, it is more useful to tell the dog to *leave it* before he has the chance to get his nose or paws on it. If you see pup going for something tell him *leave it* and direct the dog away/past the item. It can also be used as a follow up after the *off* command.

## Come (Recall)

The most important rule when using the *Come* command is that more often than not you need to call puppy to you just because. *Come* should be a minor and joyful interruption to your dog: he comes, gets a treat or a cuddle, and gets to go back to whatever he was doing. While coming will at times end the fun, as long as the good outweighs the bad your dog will continue to perform.

Remember to use all the steps below when calling your dog:

- Call your dog's name
- Mark his looking with a "Yes!"
- Follow up with the next command – "Come"
- "Yes, good boy to come!" as the dog approaches
- "Sit" (if this isn't yet voluntary, it will be). Mark it occasionally with a "Yes!"
- Take hold of the collar; give a treat.
- Let him go with the release word "OK"

## Stay

*Stay* means "stay in this position, in this location until I return to you from the side and release you." *Stay* is a formal command and as such, you need to follow a few specific guidelines to ensure a solid *stay*.

- Time before distance. Be sure that pup is doing a solid 30 second stay before you begin stepping away. When you do, take one or two steps and move back to the dog.
- Give a few treats during the stay.

- Return to the right side of the dog and give a big release “OK” while touching the dog.
- No treats for/or after the release. If puppy’s stays are falling apart, lower your expectations and work up again slowly. Do not put your dog in a stay, walk six feet away and call your dog to you.

## **Wait**

In some situations, a formal stay is not required or practical. *Wait* simply means wait for the next command. We are essentially placing the dog on standby. The most common uses for *wait* are during the feeding routine, entering and exiting doors (including vehicle doors) and at intersections. In a *wait*, the pup can be released from a distance. When it is safe to cross the road, get out of the car or when you’re ready to proceed through a door use “OK” to move on.

## **Gentle**

*Gentle* is the term we use in training [Bite Inhibition](#). You can apply it anytime your dog is being too rough, whether it’s with another dog or with you and the kids when playing games with the dog or when playing with toys.

## **Heel**

*Heel* is used to a) get the dog into starting position for a walk and b) as a method of getting the dog that is too far ahead back to your side. We don’t require a *heel* as formal as you might see in a show ring, but we do need a loose leash at all times. We’ll work more on this in class. Additional information can be found under [Introducing Equipment & Body Handling](#), and some leash exercises can be found in [Games & Outdoor Activities](#).

## **Easy-U TURN**

*Easy* is a pace command used to get the dog to slow down. It is often used when we need to turn into the dog, as a warning to take it down a notch, or for the dog that is just starting to rush a little. Apply a little tension on the leash and tell him *easy*.

## **Hurry Up - ABOUT TURN**

Again, a pace command, it is used to encourage a dog that is lagging to pick up the pace. It is often used when we are turning away from the dog to let him know he needs to get moving.

# Common Behavioral Problems & How to Deal with Them

In reading the information below you will find that what are often listed as behavioral problems are all very natural canine behaviors and methods of social interaction. The “problem” is that they are not always socially acceptable, and/or they become a problem if they present in excess.

## Mouthing

Puppies use their mouths a lot, for a variety of reasons, and often interact with humans the same they would another dog. The problem is we are not dogs. While we can find a pup nuzzling our hand, or even taking our hand in their mouth, to be cute, it very quickly turns into an attention-seeking behavior. It becomes excessive and inappropriate. Imagine yourself with a physical disability; you have limited mobility or severe arthritis in your arm/hand. Now imagine how much more irritating a puppy mouthing at your hands would be in this situation. Also keep in mind that a pup greeting others in this way is inappropriate. Some people are just not “dog people” and we need to respect that; not to mention a pup greeting everyone in this way would be incredibly time consuming. Mouthing is not to be allowed or encouraged. **A firm “No” introduced early on and consistently** will go a long way to preventing a common behavior from developing into a problem behavior. This is a great opportunity to redirect the mouthiness into a toy by shouting “No,” then giving the dog a toy and saying “Yes!”

## Barking

Barking is again a natural canine behavior that can become problematic if we do not implement some guidelines. Dogs bark, and we actually need them to bark, but only when asked.

**Barking in play** is acceptable – we aren’t too worried about reprimanding that bark, unless your pup is barking to excess during play. If your dog is barking too much during play with you or with another dog, end the play session. Give him another chance to resume play, but if he persists you’ll need to end the session altogether.

**Barking at the doorbell/door, at strangers, at other dogs on walks, or at inanimate objects** are all to be discouraged. As these are all natural behaviors, we don’t intend to remove them altogether. The general rule of thumb is that two or three barks is acceptable, but beyond that we are going to intervene. Ideally, we want to interrupt the bark without pup realizing the interruption has come from us. Barking is always an attention-getting behavior. Pup is trying to alert his pack, so any attention, whether positive or negative, will reinforce the bark and can cause barking to escalate further. Outdoors (or in), a small soft toy, or a couple of bean bags can prove useful. If puppy begins to bark, toss/drop the bean bag near him or on him (without him seeing where it has come from). He’ll stop barking to investigate this toy that’s fallen from the sky; he may even pick it up and carry it for a time. Either way, he is no longer barking. You can now provide attention for being quiet (“Yes, good quiet!”). You can also follow up by moving him on.

Ask him to sit, down or heel, and he's now refocused on you; he's getting attention and he's less likely to return to barking at whatever he was alerting about. One of the most common barks that we see within the fostering term is the pure **attention seek**. This is when you are busy talking with someone in person or on the phone; it often occurs in line ups at the shops, or when you're at home doing housework or watching TV and ignoring the pup. He's simply saying: "I'm bored, pay attention to me!" For this bark we are going to be a bit more firm and give a big "Hey!" followed by a tossed shaker can/noise maker, a stomp of a foot (if pup isn't looking), or a quick spray with some water. This will usually end the bark (followed, of course, by praise after he's been quiet for a moment.). In time, the "Hey" may be enough and you can redirect pup from there. Your smart little one will occasionally put all of this together and start to bark to initiate the whole process. "If I am quiet, my handler does nothing. If I bark and then become quiet, I get attention." Be sure that the pup isn't seeing the diversion come from you and be certain that over time the quiet after the bark is longer and longer before rewarding. If your pup is a talker, try engaging and praising him in these scenarios before he gets bored and barks. **Do not teach your puppy to bark/speak on command.** This is left to their intensive training team if it is required within their program or for your pup's eventual client's specific needs.

The one exception to this barking business is **fear barking**. In a situation of fear, a bean bag dropping from the sky or a foot stomping loudly behind them at the same time may add to an already scary situation in the pup's mind. In a fear reaction, be confident and matter of fact with your dog. Do not pet or touch your dog as this can reinforce that he has reason to be scared. Keep a distance and allow pup to settle; see whether his natural curiosity will allow you to approach the item in time. If the pup is not settling, or not willing to approach, walk away and make a note to provide more exposure in this area.

## Jumping

Jumping is another of those behaviors that we may require from your dog later in training, but at the puppy stage it is unacceptable. Puppy cannot be in a position to pick and choose when/who he is going to jump on (or he'll pick everyone!). Honestly, pups can be terribly brutish about the whole thing early on. If we require them to jump and make contact with someone, it is something we will introduce within their intensive training, when they are certain to have a better understanding of body respect and the concept of only jumping on request.

An 8-10 lb. puppy is certain to jump, and at that weight/size he can be managed. A 60 lb. dog that jumps is just unmanageable. Ask any one of our experienced foster families and they will tell you just how much easier prevention is than cure in the case of jumping!

*There are a few easy steps that can be used in combination with each other to control jumping:*

- **Stand on the leash**

If pup is leashed, put the leash down and step on it about 6-8 inches down from the collar. This allows just enough room for pup to pop, without completing a full jump. The corrections are self-inflicted, and pup will often sit after a few pops. *Make it uncomfortable* for pup (without frightening him). The pup has little concern with the idea that jumping is uncomfortable for humans. We need to

stop accepting it as discomfort and make things just as uncomfortable for the puppy. We don't go as far as a knee in the chest, but don't be afraid to walk into the dog, bump him, or flail your legs a little. Pup will come to learn that the human body is capable of different movements and he needs to be mindful of his approach.

- **Do not allow pup to make contact on a jump**

A jump is rewarded the second the pup makes contact. Make that contact uncomfortable or turn/step back quickly so that pup simply falls back to his feet. Follow up, give pup something else to do. If pup has something else to do (sit, down, heel, get a toy), he's less likely to carry on jumping, as the alternative positive behavior is going to allow you to provide the attention he was looking for.

- **Appropriate greeting in the home**

Jumping is often more sustained during home greetings with company coming in or while greeting strangers on the street, as pup has some idea that he can get away with jumping on people who do not know the rules. In the home have the pup on leash, baby-gated away from the entrance, or in his crate when people are coming in. Once pup is settled, he can come say hello, at which time it's often best to control him on leash. We want to avoid giving pup the freedom to develop poor greetings at the door. Prevention is much more effective than un-training! As in other off-leash activities, we will wait until the pup is settled, sitting or in a down position before very quietly unclipping the leash. On the street, allow room when greeting people, and keep a distance so that pup cannot make contact if he does jump. Do not be afraid to walk away from people that are not willing to comply with your instructions on greeting the pup.

## Pulling

Remember that dogs pull for three reasons. First, it is a dog's natural instinct to resist into a given pressure (when the collar pulls into them, they react by pulling back against it). Second, dogs pull because it works. Finally, dogs pull because we let them! Teaching your pup to walk nicely on leash will take consistent work throughout your fostering term. When your pup comes in for intensive training, if he's walking nicely on leash our trainers can focus on the program requirements, rather than corrective training.

Pulling may become severe enough that we cannot undo the behavior. It can also lead to some other behaviors that can actually prevent the dog from going on in training. Keep in mind that tension very quickly turns into a pull, whether that tension is created by the dog or by you. Be comfortable and confident in your handling, and give yourself space in high distraction areas. Always focus on maintaining a loose leash; we'll fine tune this into a more controlled "heel" nearer the end of his term when he's mature enough to accept the training. Refer to the section on introducing the leash (in [Introducing Equipment & Body Handling](#)) and leash exercises (in [Games & Outdoor Activities](#)) and reintroduce those activities with your dog.

## Over-stimulation

The difficulty in this scenario may not be the over-stimulation, but the pup's reaction (and ours to him). In high distraction or high energy situations, puppy may become overexcited, have difficulty

focusing, or he may shut down altogether. Always try to give a young pup time to settle into a new environment before walking about. As the dog gets older and is travelling into unfamiliar environments, he'll need less time to settle, and often you'll simply be able to go about your errands with him. Be aware of your dog. Is he feeling up to par, or is he a bit off? Is he in need of exercise to help blow off some energy? Does he need to relieve himself? Is it his usual nap time?

Another thing to be mindful of is your level of praise. Your level of praise (or reprimand) can also bring your dog up or down. Often when puppy is young, we are more willing to lavish big, happy verbal or physical praise. We are also more likely to keep our reprimands lower key. As pup ages we tone down the big, happy praise, but our reprimands often stay the same. While pup is young, there are occasions that we need to be larger than life with praise to get and keep their attention, but we also want to teach pup from an early age to respond to a level or even slightly muted tone, to really listen.

By the time the pup comes in for training, we've levelled right off on the praise, our trainers step in with that big praise and suddenly puppy cannot contain himself. Keep your pup familiar with all levels of praise. Correction can also work in the same way. Be very mindful of your pup's level of sensitivity and reprimand appropriate to the situation. A weak correction is simply ineffective. A strong verbal reprimand can crumble a soft dog or can very effectively take care of a problem behavior quickly.

Work on bringing your dog's energy/excitement level up and down with praise and reprimand. If the pup gets too excited and begins jumping or barking, make a game of it. Lower your tone of voice to calm the pup and praise when you get the response you're looking for. When you find yourself in situations where the pup is over-stimulated, he's more likely to be receptive and responsive if you've practiced calming this behavior.

- ***My puppy is digging in the yard, what can I do?***

Foster pups should always be supervised. If he is digging in the yard, he has been left unattended for too long. Dogs naturally dig up the ground to find a cooler spot to lie down. Digging may also occur if a dog is hunting and can be a sign of boredom, so you may need to take the pup out for a walk or do some obedience work to help exercise him.

- ***He goes crazy when he sees other dogs!***

When the puppy is on leash, he is on your time and should be attentive to you. Foster puppies are not allowed to play with other dogs when they are wearing their puppy service vests – they must remain calm and attentive to their handlers. Visiting and playing with other dogs is a necessary part of the socialization process, however it needs to be done in a controlled manner. First, the puppy needs to know how to walk nicely on leash. With that in mind, you can then give him a leash correction for pulling to visit other dogs, compelling him to pass nicely.

- ***She always jumps up on people to greet them!***

This is a common problem with dogs, but not a difficult one to fix. She just needs to be taught the proper way to greet people. Have her sit when greeting people. After all, she can't sit and jump at

the same time! NEVER give her ANY positive attention when she is jumping up, even when she is a young puppy - this will only encourage her. Also, be very firm in not allowing other people to give her attention when she is jumping up on them, even eye contact. If she gets away with it some of the time, she's likely to try her luck, but if she never gets away with it, she'll eventually give up. DO NOT pet her or talk to her until her paws are on the floor. When she jumps up, get her off of you by stepping back and turning away if you are standing. Tell her "OFF" (not "get down") while doing this. The minute all four paws are on the floor, pet her and talk to her in a pleasant voice. She will quickly learn that approaching nicely gets her lots of pleasant attention - and approaching the wrong way gets her nowhere.

**SPECIAL NOTE FOR HEARING EAR PUPPIES** - As jumping up is part of the skills training that hearing ear dogs receive, we ask that you not be too firm in discouraging these pups from jumping up on people or furniture. If she is jumping up on you, simply step back or turn away (**never knee her in the chest**). You can also have the pup on leash and use a **gentle** tug to get her onto the floor. Use the word "**OFF**" as you would with service dog pups.

## Aggressive Behavior

Service dogs are selected for a level disposition and many dogs will never show signs of aggression. However, as aggression is a natural canine behavior, you may witness signs as the dog is maturing within its first year. It is important that we discuss common motivators, signs and preventative measures. Any concerns with aggressive behaviors should be reported to DFL staff as soon as possible so that we may assess and assist you and your puppy within your given situation.

### Definition

"Aggression is a natural behavior, in which a dog may demonstrate conflict to cope with a situation. The motivator may be actual or perceived." Aggressive displays may include anything from lip curling, growling, or intense barking to snapping, attacking and biting. Refer to [Reading Canine Body Postures](#) for further body cues that may present.

### Common Motivators or Types of Aggression

Fear	Resource Guarding	Predatory (Prey Drive)
Pain	Leash Induced	Protection of Pack
Dominance	Play Aggression	Redirected Aggression
Food Aggression	Territorial	Maternal

### Prevention

Early positive socialization is a significant contributor to preventing aggressive behavior. Be relaxed and confident in your handling. Know your dog – watch for early signs of stress or tension in a situation. While stress or tension do not necessarily lead to aggression, if inadvertently reinforced, they can lead to developing ongoing and increasing aggressive behavior. Throughout the manual you will find further information on some of the more common types or causes of aggressive behavior. The key is prevention, which will be addressed through early exercises in socialization.

If you have any questions or concerns about aggressive behavior, please talk to your DFL staff.

## Bite Inhibition

Perhaps the most valuable lesson that puppies learn from their littermates is what we call *bite inhibition*. Puppies use their mouths a lot: they use it for play, for defending themselves, and for exploring new things. *Bite inhibition* helps to teach the dog acceptable levels of pressure to use with other beings in his pack and social circle (including people).

When pups play together and one gets too hard with his mouth, the offended pup will end the play. He may yelp, bark, snap, walk away or any combination of these. The puppy that was too rough has just learned to be gentler with his mouth and play resumes in a few moments. This is vital training and we would all benefit if dog owners continued teaching *bite inhibition* once we have removed pups from their litter.

It has been statistically proven that dogs that are taught *bite inhibition* are less likely to do damage if they are ever in a position where they feel the need to bite.

How do we continue *bite inhibition* training? Hand-feed your dog at least a portion of his meal on a regular basis. Hold the kibble between your thumb and index finger, and tell pup to be “gentle” or “nice.” If he applies too much pressure, you need to screech or yelp, and make your dog believe you are in significant pain. Initially you may not have to exaggerate, but after a few repetitions you will. The only way you are going to release that kibble is when he is being ever so polite with his mouth. We do not want the dog to stop using his mouth altogether. Remember all dogs are potential biters; if pup never uses his mouth on us how do we know he is getting this “gentle” business?

Regardless of how hard or soft your pup’s mouth is, we will be introducing *bite inhibition* training. Why? Most important is the prevention aspect. Also, as future service dogs, our dogs are sometimes required to hold, carry, or tug on items - this needs to be done with a controlled mouth. Besides, it is simply good manners to be gentle. Once a week, hand feed your dog at least a portion of his meal to make sure he is still being gentle. *Bite inhibition* training leads us directly into “give and take” exercises. From a training standpoint, these activities are invaluable, and are covered in further detail later in the manual.

## Training Tips

Raising a potential service dog is different from raising a family pet. Certain tricks or commands that are fun or useful with a pet are inappropriate for potential working dogs. Here are some training tips to help you experience success with your foster pup.

**Equipment:** you will need a flat collar and a 6-foot long leash. Later in training, a Gentle Leader or a Martingale collar may be introduced. Other equipment is not necessary.

- Do not allow your puppy/dog to play with other dogs while on leash or in his service vest.
- Do not teach your puppy to roll over, shake a paw, or speak.
- Training sessions should be short and positive using commands once or twice a day.
- Commands are a small part of training. Concepts include leash respect, body respect, self-control, self-occupying, and adaptability, which are all vital to your dog's overall training.
- While treats can bring training along quickly, we do need to know when to phase out a treat from a known behavior and then use when teaching a new behavior; your pup can quickly learn to wait for a treat before performing if your timing is off. Use treats each time you are introducing a new command, and once the command is being performed with some consistency you can use treats intermittently. Eventually you will use a food reward only to reward the very sharpest of responses, or sporadically to reinforce a job well done.
- In training sessions, always set the dog up for success and always end on a positive note.
- All commands should be introduced in the home in a low distraction time. Then move out to the yard, the driveway, and eventually to higher distraction areas.

Our goal in training with all commands is to achieve a first-command response. The more a command is given by you and ignored by the dog, the less effective it becomes. Your dog needs to respond the first time! In time, a first-command response will leave you no reason to touch your dog to sit, or down, or any other command. Commanding your dog when he is not in arms reach is incredibly valuable.

To introduce your pup to the first-command response concept, follow these guidelines with every command: ***verbal, lure, prompt, follow through.***

For example: ***Verbal:*** "Puppy, sit." If needed, ***lure*** with a treat starting at the nose and moving it up over the dog's head. If he still isn't sitting, ***lure and prompt a second time, then ignore and do not move until the dog sits. Now you can verbally say "good sit," but do not give a treat.***

An easy way to keep you in the right frame of mind with this idea is **COMMAND ONCE, ACTION TWICE**. Expecting a first-command response from your dog is perfectly reasonable so long as you have spent time laying the groundwork and proofing him in high distraction areas.

Follow through; persevere! If you ask your dog to sit, and especially if you repeat the command, then you give up and move on before pup sits, he has just learned that commands are simply optional suggestions. *Always set yourself up for success by having the pup's attention first and using your hand signal, or you just have to wait.*

## Games & Outdoor Activities

The following games may not seem like a barrel of fun on paper, but your dog will thoroughly enjoy these interactive activities with you, making them fun for you and your family as well. They are fantastic training tools for your pup.

### **In and Out (Kennel)**

This is a wonderful first game for you and puppy to partake in together, and the early training will be ultra-rewarding when pup is going through his teenage times. In the beginning, we are going to allow, and perhaps encourage, some enthusiasm, especially on entering the crate. Have puppy sit on the outside of the crate, with the door open - you can block the way by standing in front of the opening. Step to the side, toss a small treat to the back of the crate, and tell puppy "Kennel." In the beginning, let pup get the treat, and immediately exit the crate if desired. Once he is having some fun going into the crate, you can introduce the "Out" part of the game. Once puppy is in the crate, reposition yourself to again block the opening. Ask puppy to sit and wait, then release with "Out" as you step to the side. Once puppy exits the crate, ask him to sit and then give a treat. Over time you can play this game without physically blocking the entrance/exit and puppy will be entering and exiting the crate in a controlled manner. At 5-7 months of age you may want to reintroduce this game to reinforce your pup's good manners.

### **Figure 8's and Circles**

Figure 8's are a great way to encourage your dog to look up the left side of your body as he walks. They also reinforce our pace commands, "easy" and "hurry." Set up two pylons about 5-6 feet apart (3-4 feet for our little ones). Laundry baskets, kitchen chairs ... almost any similarly sized items will do. Start by getting your dog into heel position in the center of the two pylons. Tell your dog "Heel" as you begin to move forward around the obstacles. As you are coming around and your dog is to the outside of a pylon he will have to hurry to keep up, and as you come around with the pup on the inside of a pylon he will have to slow down to avoid being cut off by you. A few rounds of figure 8's and pup will be trotting along, watching for your direction and speed changes. This is a great rainy-day activity and a great time to reinforce pup for checking in with you. When he does look up your left side, be sure to praise him. A dog cannot pull and look up your left side at the same time! Try it out in the yard, and out on the driveway too. Give some positive verbal feedback along the way, stop every so often to ask for a sit and give some physical praise or an occasional food reward. You'll want to avoid giving constant feedback, as puppy may come to depend on it. It seems harmless, but if you need to talk to your dog all through a 30-minute walk, imagine how tiresome it could be for our clients in a full working day! Circles to the left and right can work in the same way. When walking in a circle to the left, puppy will have to slow his pace; circle to the right and he will

have to hurry to keep pace. Vary the size of circle, start with a large circle and make a smaller loop each lap, then turn the opposite way and expand your circle with each lap. Mix it up and pup will soon be happily bouncing along beside you.

### **Give and Take**

Sit on the floor and use one or two of pup's favorite toys to introduce "Give it" and "Take it" on command. Encourage your dog to take the toy in his mouth. You may need to maintain contact with it as well, so a rope toy or chew stick might work well. With your free hand, offer a treat and tell him "Give it," then give him the treat when he has released the toy, and encourage him to "Take it" again. The most important step is that he gets the toy back. Occasionally allow the pup to have the toy on his own for a short reward. When puppy does get hold of something he should not have, tell him to "Give it" and offer him a treat or an appropriate item in return. Remember to use your "gentle" command if the pup is getting too rough.

### **Fetching vs. Retrieving**

There is a big difference between Fetching and Retrieving. Fetch to most pet owners is that ongoing, intense throw and run, throw and run that gets the dog very excited and encourages a dog's natural prey drive. This is something that is unsafe to promote in a working dog. Retrieve is simply the dog picking up an item and bringing it to you. You can drop, or lightly toss an item or two, and encourage the pup to bring them to you. Have the pup release the items directly into your hand or your lap, but no ongoing throws of the ball/toy please!

### **How about Tug-of-War?**

Tug-of-War, if introduced with proper rules in place, isn't as bad as some would have you believe. As we are uncertain which program your dog will be going into, we must ask that you leave this game out of your pup's repertoire. Tug-of-War training introduced without following the rules would be detrimental in some programs and, even if introduced correctly, could be just as hindering in another program.

### **Can my pup go to the dog park or off leash areas?**

In a secure area, your dog is allowed off leash. Dog parks are not the ideal training location as there is often too much activity, and some owners may not adequately control their dogs, setting you and your pup up for a frustrating and potentially unsafe experience. **The only dog park your pup may attend is at DFL where off leash play periods will be a part of your pup's regular training.** Always monitor and supervise your dog.

# Standards & Assessment for Service Dog Puppy & Foster Family

- As a foster family you will have the critical role of training a service dog puppy. Through your hard work and dedication, we will have a good foundation on which to build a working service dog.
- We are aiming for a dog that is happy, confident, relaxed and responsive in all situations.
- Throughout the time you have your service dog puppy he will be assessed regularly, and progress will be monitored to prevent any issues that may arise. This will also help prevent difficulties before they become an ingrained habit.

## Puppy classes

Puppy classes are a great opportunity for DFL staff to see how your puppy is progressing, and also to give you the opportunity to find out how to deal with any issues you may be experiencing. Meeting other families can be helpful, too. You may learn that others are having similar experiences.

## 6-Month Assessment

At around the age of 6 months a member of the DFL staff will meet you at home to carry out a six-month assessment. A checklist will be filled out and any problems will be addressed. We will take a short walk from home and will ask you what your puppy has experienced and what his reaction was. It is common for a puppy to be afraid of certain things (buses, for example), but what we look for is how quickly they recover from this experience. Some puppies quickly shrug off their scary experiences while others are much more sensitive and become suspicious of other objects/people/sounds throughout the rest of the walk.

Also, around the time of the six-month assessment, we are aiming to have achieved some good basic obedience responses to “sit,” “down,” “stand,” “wait,” “stay,” and “busy.” Through positive, consistent training sessions a couple of minutes a few times a day, good leash behavior (i.e., able to walk on a loose leash and respond to the “heel” command) and a good strong recall response can be achieved.

It is essential while the puppy is in your care that he becomes familiar with being handled. When your puppy is very young, he will probably only be able to tolerate very short grooming sessions. But as he grows, he will become more accepting of being groomed, having his feet dried and his ears checked, etc. This is helpful for vet visits, nail trimming, grooming and ultimately it also helps with the acceptance of puppy service vests and Gentle Leaders.

# Puppy Training Protocol at DFL Facility

*Due to the nature of the training program at DFL, it is not uncommon for multiple puppies or dogs to be on the premises at one time. For this reason, we have outlined the following protocols for interacting with, exercising, and training our dogs. This outline is for the safety of our staff, clients, volunteers, sponsors, guests, and dogs.*

## Greeting Dogs

**Removing Dogs from Crates** - Make sure the dog is quiet **before** you open the crate.

- Tell the dog to sit before unlatching the crate door. Start with undoing the bottom latch so the dog can't swing the top of the door at you. If the puppy breaks the sit, correct with an "eh-eh" and stop unlatching the door. Once the puppy is back in a sit, resume opening the door. This helps prevent the dog from bursting out with gusto.
- Have the dog's leash or Gentle Leader ready when the crate door is opened. The dog should remain seated while you leash up. Always latch the top latch of the crate after removing the dog; this prevents injury to others with crate doors being left open.
- Once the dog is leashed, give the release command of "okay!" and then "heel" as you proceed toward the door.
- Do not make a fuss and overstimulate the dog immediately after leaving his crate.

**Greeting Loose Dogs** - They may be loose in the training room or in the dog park.

- When you approach the baby gate at the training center door, the puppies will likely run up to you. Tell them in a firm manner to "Stay Back," unlatch the gate and walk in.
- After you have entered the room, be certain to securely shut the gate behind you. If the gate is not properly secured the puppies may be able to get out and could potentially be injured or injure someone else.
- When greeting a loose dog, you should discourage jumping by saying "Off" and putting a thumb in the collar under the dog's chin if you are bending to pet. If all four paws are on the floor you can greet the dog with an open palm under the chin and move down the side of the body to just in front of the rear leg. This is a proper greeting ritual that will hopefully keep the dog from jumping up. Be careful not to overstimulate the pup by using a high pitched voice or stroking too rapidly. If the dog does start to jump, turn your back to the dog and walk away if necessary, using the word "Off." **DON'T FORGET** to encourage and reinforce good behavior. When "all four are on the floor," say "Good Dog."
- Greet the dogs with a pet under the chin. This is a greeting ritual that should be adhered to as it helps reinforce their canine communication skills and helps them to learn both dog-to-dog and human-to-dog communication.
- After greeting the dogs, tell each dog to sit and leash them up using Gentle Leaders when provided.

## General Dog Park Protocol

- **The Gates** - When you are letting the dogs in to a section of the park, take their leads off in the section before that part of the park prior to opening the gate. Open it wide so the dogs can go in with no issues of leashes getting twisted. It is a safety issue too.
- **Water Bowls** - When in the park please fill up one water bowl and let the dogs drink while in the park. Before you leave, empty the bowl and put it on the top of the water station.
- DO NOT bring toys or treats out to the park as this can cause dog fights.

### Going Outside - limit 2 dogs per 1 person

- First thing is to check the puppy Busy Log as this tells you when the puppies have last gone out to do their business.
- Puppies under 6 months need to go out about every 40-60 mins in addition to every time they have been asleep, played or eaten. They need to be taken out every time they get over-stimulated, and that happens a lot when they are still learning about the world.
- After you have greeted the dogs, whether they are crated or loose, you can leash them up and prepare to take them into the park.
- When you have the dogs ready to go for a walk, go to the back door and tell them to “wait.” Reinforce the “wait” as you open the door, then walk out first and say “okay” to allow the dogs to follow. REMEMBER to flip the switch in the doorjamb to unlock the door before you close it. If you do lock yourself out, use the doorbell, knock or if no one responds, leash your dog and walk around to the front door. Upon reentry always LOCK THE BACK DOOR.
- If other people and dogs are in the small training area, you may take dogs to the large training/agility section. If both sections are in use, walk the dogs on leash to “get busy” in the all access/leashed area and come back inside to do some training or grooming with the dogs. You may be able to let them out later when the sections clear out.
- When you are letting the dogs into the park, take the leashes off in the gated area before the park section’s main entrance prior to opening the gate. Push the gate open wide so the dogs can go in with no issues or traffic jams.
- Once the dogs are loose outside, pay attention to the dogs and if they are “getting busy” (going potty). Poop bags are provided in the park - once filled, be sure to tie them off before putting full bags into the garbage can to keep the odor down.
- Fill up water bowls and let the dogs drink when in the park. Before you leave, empty the bowls and put them in the sinks of the water station.
- FOLLOW DOG PARK RULES and DO NOT bring toys or treats out to the park as this can cause dog fights.
- If the dogs are barking continually or running the fence line, break them up before they get out of hand. Call the dogs away from the fence or walk between them to distract them from the dogs across the fence and get their attention. Be careful on fence lines as running dogs can and will run into your legs, potentially causing injury or knocking people down. Keep dogs moving - when you walk around the park, the dogs will walk around too.
- Give the dogs time to do their business and burn energy, about 20-30 mins before you call them to be leashed. Start walking to get them to follow if they don’t come right away.

- Once they are back in the training center, separate the dogs and reward them for coming inside.
- If the dogs are wet, use a towel from the right-hand side closet cupboard. Plan ahead! If you know the grass is dewy or it has rained recently, have a towel ready by the door before you take the dogs outside. Place used towels in a trash bag and give to staff for cleaning.
- Remember to write on the “busy log” what times the puppies relieved themselves - initial and note if it was a pee or poop.
- Let the dogs lie down at your feet on a leash or if possible, loose outside of their crates to cool off and get a short drink before continuing with training. Use this time to get goobers out of the dogs’ eyes and get your grooming tools ready.

## Grooming

- Work with one dog at a time when grooming or training - put the other dog in a crate.
- Groom each dog - brush their hair and lightly touch and/or squeeze their feet. Look in and poke around their ears and lift their tails gently without making a big deal about things. We will work up to other training including putting on training vests and booties.
- When you are done working with the dogs, lead them into crates using the words “kennel” or “crate up.” Toss a treat lure/reward to get the dogs into the crates; do not force them. Slide the top latch locked first, followed by the bottom latch. Make a note about how well the pup tolerated grooming on the daily puppy log.

## Training

- When the puppies start training class, you should have the leashes ready and a full treat bag with a mix of puppy food and treats attached to your right-hand side.
- The trainers will instruct you on the day’s class and let you know whether you should use a leash on the flat collar or Gentle Leader.
- We will go through the class outlines for Puppy Training.
- Once class is finished, puppies will need to go out again for a potty break.
- Clean and put away all items used for the class - mats, leashes, toys, treats, etc.

## Cleaning Equipment

- Brushes must be free of dog hair before putting away. If necessary, brushes should be washed with soap and water.
- Toys should be placed in the appropriate bins. If toys are torn or dirty, they should be placed in a plastic bag and left with staff.
- Check with the trainers to determine if training equipment should be cleaned/disinfected or put away.

## Feeding

- Young puppies get fed in a crate at noon in the training center (refer to the chart in the kitchen for the quantity).
- Put the puppy in a “Sit” inside the crate before placing food in the crate.

- If the puppy does not eat the food within a 15 min timeframe, take the food out and put it into a Ziploc bag with puppy's name on it and the date.

## DFL Foster Puppy Socialization

### Checklist

Please use this list as a guideline for some things that your puppy should be comfortable with. DFL staff will assist in exposing puppies to more items during training classes and public sessions.

Always consider your puppy's age and temperament when socializing. Aim to make your training sessions a positive experience for your puppy. Speak to a puppy program staff member if you have any questions or concerns.

#### People

- Babies
- Children
- Adults (Men and Women)
- Seniors
- Wheelchairs / Walkers
- People in Uniform
- People in Costume

#### Surfaces

- Grates
- Slippery Floors
- Stairs

#### Animals

- Other Dogs – On Leash
- Other Dogs – Off Leash
- Cats
- Birds
- Squirrels
- Small Pets (Hamster, Rabbit)\**
- Large Animals (Cow, Horse)\**

#### Other Experiences

- Walk at Night
- Walk in the Rain

#### Sounds

- Quiet Traffic
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Thunderstorms
- Loud /Sudden Noises
- Applause

#### Travel

- Travel by car

#### Places

- Stores
- Mall
- Grocery Store
- Restaurant
- Park / Playground
- Vet Clinic

\*Items are optional and must be introduced carefully

## Preparing for Puppy Class

- **Puppy classes are mandatory.** We may have new or updated program information that will also aid our experienced foster families throughout their term. Also, we are using this time to assess your pup's progress, and these early assessments with your pup are necessary, regardless of your past fostering experience.
- **Please arrive 15-20 minutes before the start of class.** This allows time for you to let the puppy exercise in the park with his classmates before settling down to work.
- On arrival to puppy class, relieve your dog and enter class/gather with the group in a working manner.
- Do not allow your dog to pull towards others in class, linger near a distracted dog, or engage in any play while on leash.
- On leash, your dog may have a very brief hello sniff with another dog, and then you must have your pup move on. This is work time.
- We may be indoors or outdoors for class. Please dress accordingly.
- For public training classes, ensure you have coffee money as needed. We will be out on the town assessing the pups.
- Puppy classes are for your use and for the benefit of the puppy in your care. We are here to provide the information you need to have a successful experience with your pup. Please do not be afraid to ask specific questions about your pup/experience.
- We have a short amount of time to relay a lot of important and useful information. Please save your social time for the end of class.

# Food & Nutrition

## Feeding

**Foster puppies are to be fed only the food provided by DFL.** This will be provided when you pick up the puppy. DFL staff will give you feeding instructions.

All DFL foster puppies are fed diets set by DFL staff. As needed, additional food is available to be picked up at our facility at puppy classes or during regular business hours. Please note that DFL **will not** pay for any other food purchased for foster puppies. Foster puppies **may not** be fed any diet other than that provided, except for temporary diets prescribed by our veterinarian.

The amount fed should be gradually increased over time to meet the puppy's growing needs. Puppies are fed growth diets (puppy food) until at least 1 year of age. DFL staff will advise you when it is time to switch to a maintenance diet (adult food).

**The use of nutritional supplements is forbidden** as it can lead to nutritional imbalances that can impair healthy growth.

In general, young puppies are fed 3 times a day; eventually they switch to 2 times a day and continue eating 2 times a day through adulthood. DFL staff will determine when the puppy will stop eating 3 times a day.

When fed the correct amount, puppies should eat with an appetite but should not be "starving." The food bowl can be left down for 10-15 minutes. If the puppy has not finished his meal by then, remove the bowl until the next meal.

Please notify DFL staff immediately if the puppy has any sudden changes in his eating habits.

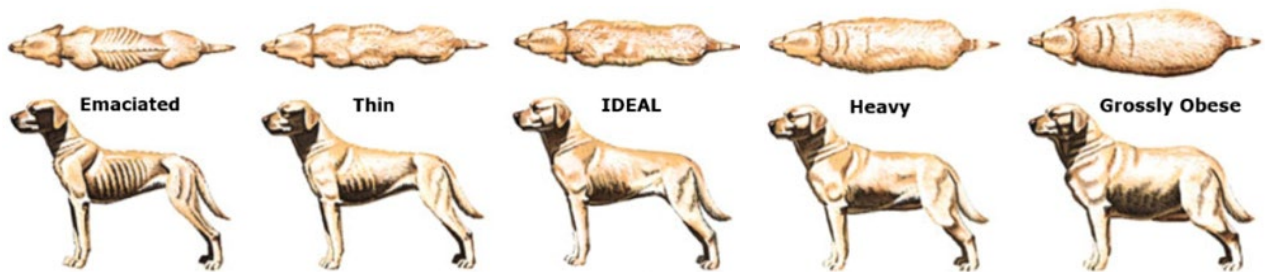
**Fresh water** should be available throughout the day; however, food and water bowls should not be left inside the crate with the puppy. Water and food bowls should be cleaned with soap and water daily.

## Tips and tricks for good "table" manners

- To begin the feeding procedure, have your puppy's food ready. Ask for, or in the case of a very young pup, encourage and wait for a sit. Having a finger tucked in behind the collar helps prevent the pup from getting up as soon as you start to lower the food bowl. If your pup does get up, lift the food again. He will soon come to see that the food gets to the floor faster if he maintains that sit.
- The waiting period should be brief to begin; 3-5 seconds is sufficient. Release with the word "OK" and allow the pup to approach (letting go of the collar).

- Once the pup has demonstrated a fair understanding, you can stop using that finger in the collar. Remember to lift (or stop lowering) the food if puppy breaks the sit, and again ask him to sit and wait.
- Be sure pup is waiting for the verbal “OK” before breaking the sit. If at any time he starts to anticipate and break before the release, go back to step one. Occasionally sit on the floor and hold the bowl, or stand in proximity to it, or place a hand on the bowl while the puppy is eating. This is to condition him to be comfortable having people in and around his food. Over time you can increase the length of the wait and can eventually place your dog in a “sit and wait” position just prior to getting the food ready.
- We would also encourage all our foster families to ask for a brief “sit and wait” at the end of a meal, releasing with a verbal “OK.” This allows you to move in to the bowl, again with the dog being controlled. In multi-dog households and in kennel environments, this control is essential, as many dogs eat at different rates. It ensures all parties can finish their food safely, without fear of approach from a person or another dog.

## Guidelines for determining ideal body weight



### Underweight

#### (Emaciated and Thin)

- ribs easily palpated; may be clearly visible
- back & pelvic bone visible, minimal fat
- obvious waist & abdominal tuck

### Ideal

- ribs palpable with moderate fat covering
- waist observed when viewed from above
- abdomen tucked up when viewed from the side

### Overweight

#### (Heavy and Grossly Obese)

- ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat covering
- waist absent/barely visible
- abdominal tuck may be absent

## Canine Food Safety - Foods to Avoid

While dogs can eat some of the same foods that we do, there are many they should not eat.

*\*\* Please note that foster puppies should not be fed/ingest any human foods intentionally \*\**

### **Foods dogs should not eat:**

*(If your dog has ingested any of these foods, get veterinary help immediately)*

**Grapes and raisins:** Can cause kidney failure.

**Onions:** Destroy red blood cells and can cause anemia.

**Chocolate:** Can cause seizures, coma and death. Baker's chocolate is the most dangerous. A dog can consume milk chocolate and appear to be fine because it is not as concentrated, but it is still dangerous.

**Coffee, coffee grounds, tea and tea bags:** Drinks/foods containing caffeine cause many of the same symptoms as chocolate.

**Macadamia nuts:** Can cause weakness, muscle tremors and paralysis.

**Animal fat and fried foods:** Excessive fat can cause pancreatitis.

**Bones:** Can splinter and damage a dog's internal organs.

**Tomatoes:** Can cause tremors and heart arrhythmias. Tomato plants are the most toxic, but tomatoes themselves are also unsafe.

**Avocados:** The fruit, pit and plant are all toxic. They can cause difficulty in breathing and fluid accumulation in the chest, abdomen, and heart.

**Nutmeg:** Can cause tremors, seizures, and death.

**Apples, cherries, peaches, and similar fruit:** The seeds of these fruits contain cyanide, which is poisonous to dogs as well as to humans. Unlike humans, dogs don't know to stop eating at the core/pit and easily ingest them.

**Raw eggs:** Can cause salmonella poisoning in dogs. Dogs have a shorter digestive tract than humans and are not as likely to suffer from food poisoning, but it is still possible.

**Salt:** Excessive salt intake can cause kidney problems.

**Raw fish:** Raw fish, particularly raw salmon, has microorganisms that are extremely unsafe.

# Health

## Vaccinations

Puppies will need to do a course of vaccinations during the first 16 weeks. These will be done with DFL staff. Please **always bring your puppy's health record** when bringing your puppy **to the vet**.

### Puppy Vaccine Schedule

#### 6 – 8 weeks (first vaccination)

- Distemper
- Parainfluenza
- Adenovirus
- Parvovirus
- Coronavirus
- Bordetella

#### 10 – 12 weeks (second round)

- Distemper
- Parainfluenza
- Adenovirus
- Parvovirus
- Leptospirosis

#### 14 – 16 weeks (third round)

- Distemper
- Parainfluenza
- Leptospirosis
- Rabies
- Parvovirus
- Adenovirus

**\* Puppies should not be introduced to other dogs until at least two weeks after their last vaccination (full immunization). You can socialize your puppy with family or friends' dogs that you know have been vaccinated and have not been ill at any time. Avoid any unknown dogs until yours is fully immunized.**

## Health Questionnaires

Foster families are also asked to complete two health questionnaires about their puppy: one done at the six-month stage of fostering, and the second completed at the 12-month stage.

Please see the sample questionnaires on the following pages to familiarize yourself with the input you will be expected to supply.



## DFL Inc. Foster Puppy Health Questionnaire 1

COMPLETE THIS FORM WHEN YOUR PUPPY IS 6 MONTHS OLD

**Puppy's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Breed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DFL ID#:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate how often your puppy has experienced the following in the last 6 months:

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Always</b>
Runny / Infected Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dirty / Infected Ears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Itchy Skin / Allergies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urinary Infections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loose Stool / Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carsickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Additional details:**

---



---

Has your puppy experienced any other significant medical issues in the past 6 months? **If so, please describe below:**

---



---

Please return completed questionnaire to DFL staff: [office@dogsforlifevb.org](mailto:office@dogsforlifevb.org) **OR** drop form off during puppy class.



## DFL Inc. Foster Puppy Health Questionnaire 2

COMPLETE THIS FORM WHEN YOUR PUPPY IS 12 MONTHS OLD

**Puppy's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Breed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DFL ID#:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate how often your puppy has experienced the following in the last 6 months:

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Always</b>
Runny / Infected Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dirty / Infected Ears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Itchy Skin / Allergies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urinary Infections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loose Stool / Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carsickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Additional details:**

---



---

Has your puppy experienced any other significant medical issues in the past 6 months? **If so, please describe below:**

---



---

Please return completed questionnaire to DFL staff: [office@dogsforlifevb.org](mailto:office@dogsforlifevb.org) OR drop form off during puppy class.

# First Aid

## Heatstroke/Hyperthermia

Heatstroke is a life-threatening condition that requires immediate medical attention. As dogs are “air-cooled,” regulating their body temperature by rapidly exhaling hot air and inhaling cooler air (panting), they cannot tolerate high ambient temperatures as well as humans can. Humans, unlike dogs, are able to perspire to cool down.

### Common causes

- Being confined to a car in hot weather
- Being left outside without access to shade or water
- Being muzzled while under a dryer at the grooming parlor

### Signs

- Elevated rectal temperature (normal is 99.5 – 102°F)
- Thickened saliva
- Vomiting
- Weakness/collapse
- Rapid breathing (normal is 14 - 25/minute)
- Rapid pulse (normal is 60 - 120/minute)
- Bright-red mucus membranes
- Shock, coma, death

### Treatment

- Quickly reduce the dog’s body temperature by moving the dog to a cooler surrounding, such as an air-conditioned building or car.
- If possible, immerse in/spray with cool water or wrap in cold, wet towels.
- Monitor until the rectal temperature returns to normal (99.5 - 102°F).
- In severe cases, seek emergency veterinary care.

### Prevention

- Restrict exercise in hot weather
- Provide adequate shade and water
- Do not leave the puppy/dog in the car EVER

## Dehydration

Dehydration is the excessive loss of body fluids and electrolytes. It occurs when the loss of body fluids, mostly water, exceeds the amount that is taken in.

### Common causes

- Inadequate fluid intake (especially when the dog has a fever)
- Prolonged diarrhea and vomiting
- Excessive urination
- Blood loss
- Serum leakage from burns

### Signs

- Weakness, sluggishness
- Loss of skin elasticity (pinched fold of skin does not quickly spring back)
- Dry mouth, dull eyes
- In severe cases, sunken eyes and circulatory collapse
- Shock, twitching due to muscle tremors

### Treatment

- Treatment is directed at replacing fluids and preventing further loss.
- In mild cases without vomiting, fluids can be given by mouth. If the dog won’t drink, an electrolyte solution (Pedialyte) can be given into the cheek pouch using a syringe.
- Severe cases require immediate veterinary attention for intravenous fluid replacement.

### Prevention

- Restrict exercise in hot weather
- Provide adequate shade and water
- Do not leave the puppy/dog in the car EVER

## Insect Stings

The stings of bees, wasps, yellow jackets, and ants can cause painful swelling.

### **Treatment**

- Identify the insect
- Remove the stinger with tweezers (only bees leave their stingers)
- Apply a paste of baking soda and water directly to the affected area
- Apply ice packs to relieve swelling and pain
- Give Benadryl to reduce swelling (1mg per lb. of body weight)
- Use calamine lotion to soothe itching
- Seek emergency veterinary care in cases of hypersensitivity or toxic reaction

## Burns

Burns may be caused by heat, chemicals, electric shock, friction or radiation. Minor (superficial) burns are indicated by reddened skin and blisters - they are not generally life threatening. Major (deep) burns cause extensive tissue destruction, shock, and infection, and extensive fluid, electrolyte and protein loss.

### **Treatment**

- First aid is aimed at preventing further damage and reducing pain
- Keep the puppy quiet and prevent self-trauma
- Irrigate chemical burns with clean water to remove the burning agents
- Apply cold compresses to lessen pain and inflammation
- Do not apply oily dressings like butter or Vaseline
- Seek emergency veterinary attention

### **Prevention**

- Avoid walking on asphalt or concrete
- Keep an eye on the puppy near anything that could potentially injure him

## Caring for Your Puppy/Dog in Florida's Endless Summer

- As the heat of the summer gets higher, your dog can be susceptible to heat stress. Make sure to supply lots of cool clean water for your dog and to keep his environment comfortable as well.
- Always provide water to your dog when traveling.
- **Never** leave your dog in the car. Leaving your dog in the car during the hot summer months, and even spring and fall, can be a death trap even with the windows down in a shady spot.
- Avoid exercising your dog too much in the high heat of the afternoon. Break up exercise and play times to keep your dog more comfortable. Not all dogs will call it quits when overheating during play or exercise.
- Dogs are susceptible to sunburns, especially in areas where their fur is shorter and skin is showing, e.g., on top of the nose. Dogs who have recently been groomed are also at risk of sunburn.
- When a dog gets heatstroke, it can happen fast. Always keep an eye on your dog's behavior, watch for excessive panting, an anxious look, and dehydration. A dog with heatstroke will also have a rapid heartbeat and may collapse.
- If your dog begins behaving lethargically, you must cool the dog off immediately by running cool water over its face, mouth, stomach area and paws. The pup should be examined by a veterinarian.

## Illnesses

### Diarrhea

#### When your puppy is experiencing diarrhea:

If provided by DFL, feed him the canned veterinary gastrointestinal diet food. Otherwise, feed him small amounts of cooked rice or potatoes and, if available, you can add 1-2 tablespoons of probiotic yogurt. If the stool stays loose after 1-2 days, contact DFL staff to arrange to see a veterinarian.

#### Things to Look Out For:

It is fact that your dog will experience more than one case of diarrhea during the span of his life. Though most of them will be mild and warrant no cause for concern, some cases of diarrhea may result in, or be the result of, other underlying circumstances. When you first notice that your dog has diarrhea, look for the following:

- **Blood in the stools.** If you notice blood when the dog is experiencing diarrhea, you should immediately contact a member of the DFL staff. There could be many causes for this, from a viral infection to a parasite infestation. Do not take chances with this one.
- **Short-term, high intensity bursts.** This can be a warning sign for other, more serious conditions or causes. This is an identifier for many different viral and bacterial infections, as well as some other more common illnesses. Call a member of the DFL staff if you notice this.
- **Dehydration.** Dogs are much more prone to dehydration than humans are when experiencing diarrhea, so ensure that your dog always has an ample supply of water and that he is drinking it. If he isn't, and the dog is acting lethargic, sluggish or sickly, call a member of the DFL staff immediately.
- **Vomiting while experiencing diarrhea.** This is also a warning sign for a more serious illness. You should consult DFL staff immediately if you notice this.
- **Duration of symptoms.** If the symptoms persist for more than a couple of days, your dog may have an infection or other illness. Be sure to contact DFL staff for a vet appointment to learn the reason why it is persisting and to obtain any required medications.

### Canine Car Sickness

Most puppies gradually grow out of car sickness. Much of the time car sickness is not caused by the motion of the vehicle but by anxiety or fear. That is why it is important to understand that they have no control over it. For most puppies, the first time they are in a moving vehicle is when you bring them home. On the other hand, many adult dogs have learned that going for a car ride is often followed by something unpleasant, like going to a vet's office. To help your puppy's anxiety, here are some steps that you can take:

- First, see if your puppy **will approach the car** willingly or if he exhibits signs of anxiety such as licking his lips, yawning, panting, faltering, or trying to pull back on the leash. If your puppy shows signs of fear while approaching the car, **give a few treats** while being close to the car or feed him his dinner near the car. Repeat this over several sessions until your dog will go into the car willingly. Then, **get your puppy used to being in the car without turning it on or driving**. Offer his dinner or a favorite chew toy as a reward. Repeat this several times until comfortable before moving onto the next step.
- While in the car start giving your puppy a few treats or put his food bowl down so he can start eating. **Start the car**. Leave it on for just a minute and turn it off. Repeat this several times, calmly praising your puppy when he shows calm responses. If he seems fearful end the session as soon as you can, and next time shorten the session and stop before he becomes anxious. Work up to having the car running for longer periods of time.
- Once he is used to the car running without any fearful reactions, give your puppy a favorite treat or his dinner, then **back the car to the end of the driveway or a short distance on the street**. Praise him and make sure he can continue eating. Repetition is the key to success. The more you do this, the faster your dog will learn that the car is a great place for attention, praise and food.
- Once your dog seems relaxed, take a **short trip around the block**. It will be handy to have someone else in the car at this point to feed him treats and praise while doing this. Gradually increase the distance travelled until your puppy is calm no matter how long he's in the car. Travel to places that are fun for your puppy, not just to the vet! Go to DFL's dog park for a walk around a dog-friendly public park.
- If your puppy begins to salivate, licks his lips a lot or acts distressed, have his leash handy! Pull over and let him get his feet on solid ground and get some fresh air for a few minutes.

Some dogs do suffer from true motion sickness. These dogs feel better when they can't see out, such as **riding in an enclosed crate**. Crates are much easier to clean up than your car upholstery! Others feel better **looking out the window**. In either case, keep the car cool and well-ventilated. Unless you are systematically working on getting the dog over his fear of the car as described above, do not feed the dog right before a car ride. Travel prepared; pack cleaning supplies and paper towels. Cover the car seat and floor with a sheet or towel. Do not scold your dog or make a scene if he vomits, as it will only increase his anxiety.

## Parasites

A parasite is a living organism that lives on or in, and at the expense of, another living organism known as the host. Most dogs will suffer from parasites at some point in their lives.

### Internal Parasites

Internal parasites consist of protozoa and worms. Puppies can be born with them, or they can acquire them later in life. Signs that a dog is infected with internal parasites may include decreased appetite, weight loss, vomiting, anemia, and blood or mucus in the stool. All of our puppies are routinely

dewormed before being given out to foster families. However, we will ask that you bring a fresh stool sample to our vet on occasion for a routine fecal analysis.

### **Roundworm**

The most common canine parasite, it can cause serious disease in pups and young dogs. Roundworms are generally present in newborn puppies who have been infected by their mothers during pregnancy. Because of the life cycle of the roundworm, it is important to have the puppy checked for worms around six to nine weeks of age, even if it has previously been dewormed.

### **Hookworm**

This is a very dangerous worm that can infect dogs of all ages. It is often necessary to repeat fecal tests and treatments several times to eliminate hookworms once they've been acquired.

### **Whipworm**

Whipworm is mainly found in dogs over six months of age. It can be difficult to diagnose, even after repeated fecal tests, and generally requires several courses of treatment to eliminate the infection.

### **Tapeworm**

This parasite can affect dogs of any age. Fleas can carry tapeworm, so often a flea infestation is accompanied by infection with tapeworm. Tapeworm infection is most often recognized by the discovery of body segments (which resemble grains of rice) on the dog's stool.

### **Heartworm**

One of the most dangerous parasites of the dog is the canine heartworm. Heartworm is spread by mosquitoes that pick up immature worms, called *microfilariae*, in the blood of infected dogs and subsequently spread them throughout the canine population. The *microfilariae* migrate through the dog's bloodstream, eventually making their way to the heart where they mature and reproduce, thereby creating a new source of infection. All of our puppies and dogs are given medication year-round to prevent infection.

There are two types of heartworm in dogs. In Pulmonary Heartworm Disease, dogs have live heartworms in the pulmonary arteries. In Caval Syndrome, there are worms in the heart itself. The worms may be alive or dead. Heart worms in dogs tend to be between 25 and 40 centimeters in length. Many people ask if heartworm medicine is necessary for a dog. The answer is a resounding yes. With over 70 kinds of mosquitoes carrying the disease, it is highly likely that one will bite and infect your dog. Prevention is the best approach for this disease.

**Symptoms:** Dogs that have not had any treatments to prevent heartworm are checked for symptoms such as coughing, muscle weakness, weight loss, shortness of breath and vision problems.

**Treatment:** There are three treatments for heartworm in dogs. These include surgery (rare), treatments using drugs that kill the heartworms (Melarsomine Dihydrochloride) or no treatment if your dog has other problems such as liver problems. There are several treatments that are effective

in preventing heartworms. These approaches stop worm larva from developing during the first two months after infection. These drugs are used every month or in larger intervals.

*DFL will provide the preventative treatment for internal parasites under the guidance of a veterinarian and will instruct you on how and when to administer it. Normally the medication is Heartguard.*

## **External Parasites**

External parasites can cause blood loss, skin irritation, spoiling of the haircoat, transmission of disease and destruction of tissues. They are often a seasonal problem and require diligence to eliminate. Always check for external parasites when grooming or handling your puppy.

### **Ticks**

A particular problem in rural areas, ticks are typically found in long grass and woods. They may transmit a variety of diseases to animals and people, including Lyme disease. **Avoid touching a tick with your bare hands** - please contact DFL staff or a veterinarian **before** attempting to remove a tick from your puppy.

### **Mites**

Most mites are microscopic and are invisible to the naked eye. *Demodex* mites may live on normal animals without causing problems, or they may burrow into the skin, consuming tissue and fluids, and causing intense irritation. This condition is commonly referred to as “mange.” Ear mites can cause scabs, lots of ear wax, and intense itching. Mites cannot live for long off of their hosts, so transmission is usually the result of direct contact with an infected animal.

### **Fleas**

Especially problematic in summer and fall, fleas cause intense irritation and itching with their bites. In dogs that are allergic to fleas, one bite is enough to cause rashes, hair loss and extreme discomfort. Fleas are easily transmitted between infected animals or through the environment. As fleas are the intermediate host for tapeworm, dogs that are infested with fleas are usually infected with tapeworm as well.

*DFL will provide the preventative treatment for external parasites under the guidance of a veterinarian and will instruct you on how and when to administer it.*

## Be aware of these Poisons!

### Poisons and Insecticides

A variety of toxic substances are used on lawns and gardens year-round. Foster families must be aware of their potential toxicity to a puppy.

**Slug Bait** - this is a highly toxic substance! It has a sweet taste that pets are attracted to and so they ingest large amounts. **Do not use slug bait in any area that the puppy can gain access to.**

**Organophosphates** - commonly used insecticides such as Diazinon and Malathion are very toxic to pets. **Always read labels.** These products lose toxicity as they dry. Restrict pets from the area sprayed for a minimum of one day.

**Rodenticides** - (rat poisons) Very toxic and difficult to treat.

**Antifreeze** - automobile antifreeze is extremely toxic to the kidneys. Its sweet taste attracts pets, and a very small amount can kill.

**Fertilizer** - all fertilizers should be properly contained so the dog does not have access, especially organic fertilizers or those containing milorganite. After fertilizing your yard, wait at least 24 hours before allowing the dog on the grass.

### Household plants

#### Plants that cause a rash after contact with the skin or mouth:

Chrysanthemum	Poinsettia
Creeping fig	Pot Mum > might produce dermatitis
Weeping fig	Spider mum > might produce dermatitis

#### Plants that may contain a wide variety of poisons:

Most cause vomiting, abdominal pain and cramps. Some cause tremors, heart and respiratory and/or kidney problems which may be difficult to interpret.

Amaryllis	Elephant ears	Pot mum
Asparagus fern	Glocal ivy	Ripple ivy
Azalea	Heart ivy	Spider mum
Bird of paradise	Ivy Sprangeri	Fern
Creeping Charlie	Jerusalem cherry	Umbrella plant
Crown of thorns	Needlepoint ivy	

**Plants that are irritating to mucus membranes (toxic oxalates):**

The mouth becomes swollen and there is pain in the tongue and the lips.

Arrowhead vine	Majesty
Boston ivy	Neththytis ivy
Collodium	Pathos
Drunk cane	Red princess
Emerald duke	Saddle leaf (philodendrum)
Heart leaf (philodendrum)	Split leaf (philodendrum)
Marble queen	

## Outdoor plants

**Outdoor plants that produce vomiting and diarrhea:**

Delphinium	Pokeweed	Indian tobacco
Daffodil	Bittersweet woody	Wisteria
Castor bean	Ground cherry	Soapberry
Indian turnip	Foxglove	Larkspur
Skunk cabbage		

**Outdoor plants with varied toxic effects:**

Rhubarb	Buttercup	Moonseed
Spinach	Nightshade	Mayapple
Sunburned potatoes	Poison hemlock	Jimsonweed
Dutchman's breeches		

**Hallucinogens:**

Marijuana	Nutmeg	Peyote
Morning glory	Periwinkle	Locoweed

**Be aware of these and other dangerous substances. If you think your puppy has ingested toxic material, try to find out what it was. If you think it could be a poison, call Poison Control in your community and DFL staff immediately. In all cases, if ingestion is suspected, immediate veterinary attention will enhance the chances of successful treatment. If possible, take the container along so that the active ingredients of the toxin can be specifically identified.**

# DFL Veterinary Quick Reference Chart

## Diarrhea

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Has the diarrhea lasted for more than 24 hours?
- Is there blood in the stool?
- Is the puppy vomiting?
- Is the puppy lethargic?

**If the answer to any of these questions is YES, please contact DFL as soon as possible.**

## Vomiting

Please remember that occasional vomiting is NORMAL! Please contact DFL if your pup vomits more than 3 times in 1 hour, or more than 5 times within a 24 hour period. DO NOT feed the pup until 24 hours after the last vomiting episode and begin with ¼ cup at a time. Water should always be provided.

## Heartworm Prevention

Please remember to give your pup his monthly heartworm preventative every month!

## Inappropriate Urination

If your pup is having frequent accidents in the house:

- If your pup is female, please collect a urine sample in a clean container and contact DFL.
- Confine your pup to his/her crate for 3-4 hours at a time. Ensure that the crate is just large enough for him to stand, turn and lie down (divide it if necessary). When he comes out of the crate, take him outside right away, and WAIT for him/her to relieve himself.
- Provide lots of positive reinforcement when he/she relieves outdoors.
- Ensure that your pup WALKS to the door to go out, do not carry him/her outside (provided he/she is collar-trained).
- Take him/her out FREQUENTLY.

## Fleas

DFL supplies flea preventative with heartworm preventative monthly. Watch closely for any sign of live fleas or flea dirt (brown specks against the skin – part the hair to check). If you suspect your pup has fleas, please contact DFL as soon as possible.

## Obesity and Feeding

If your pup is fat or obese, please take the following steps:

- Change to adult weight control formula food (obtained from DFL)
- Reduce the amount fed by 25%
- Minimize training treats
- AVOID ALL TREATS AND TABLE SCRAPS

## Lameness

If your pup is limping, please rest your pup for 24 hours (no running, jumping or off leash activity) BEFORE taking the pup to the veterinarian. If the pup has not improved in 24 hours or will not bear ANY weight on his affected leg, please contact DFL.

## Spay/Neuter

The Service Dog Industry general protocol is that all dogs are to be neutered, however there are exceptions for breeding or medical circumstances. DFL's standard is to neuter males and females before they reach one year old. Foster families are to provide loving aftercare during convalescence and ensure all out-patient protocols are followed, such as keeping the surgery site clean, ensuring the cone is worn, etc.

## Routine Maintenance/Grooming

A working dog must be in excellent physical condition to perform at its fullest potential. A regular program of routine maintenance will aid in preventing physical and medical problems and will allow early detection of problems that do occur. The following procedures **must** be performed on a regular basis:

### Dental Care

In addition to providing a good diet and appropriate chew toys, tooth brushing is an important part of maintaining a dog's oral health. The more often you can brush the puppy's teeth, the better. Brushing not only serves to maintain the teeth and gums in peak condition, it also gets the puppy accustomed to having his mouth handled. While you are brushing, watch for things like loose or broken teeth, discolored teeth, reddened gums and areas of gum swelling. Please report any abnormalities to DFL staff immediately. There are many special toothpastes on the market designed specifically for dogs and available in enticing flavors like beef and chicken. These can be found at most veterinary offices and pet stores. Do not use human toothpaste. Human toothpaste requires someone to spit it out. Unless your dog can spit on command (which would be a neat trick), avoid it. There are also special toothbrushes made to fit on your fingertip to make brushing easier. If you prefer to keep it simple, toothpaste is not necessary. Here are some how-tos:

*To introduce your dog to the daily ritual of canine teeth cleaning, it is best to step them into it. The entire job should take no more than 30 seconds and should be done two to seven times a week.*

**Taste** – To familiarize your dog with the toothpaste (using specially formulated toothpaste for dogs), have your dog taste a small amount. Another option for canine tooth-brushing is to introduce the brush first. Try using the brush without paste 2x a day for two weeks. Once your dog is comfortable with the brush, add toothpaste.

**Touch** – The next time, have your dog taste the toothpaste, then run your finger along his upper gums. Give your dog a treat or praise afterward. Use gauze or nylon stocking around a finger to get them used to the idea of brushing. Try not to go longer than a minute.

**Brush the upper teeth** – Get a soft toothbrush with bristles and use along the gum line instead of your finger. Use circular motions with the brush from back to front along the gum line. Hold the brush at a 45 degree angle (slightly tilted). You can use a soft human child's brush or one made for dogs. For many dogs a child's toothbrush is still too hard, so stick to one made for dogs. An alternative to a brush is your finger. Wrap a cloth around a finger, put a bit of paste on the end, lift the dog's lips and rub in a circular motion along the teeth and gums. Focus on the outside of the teeth. Canine tooth brushing should use 10 up and down motions, covering 3 to 4 teeth at a time.

**Brush all the teeth** – Always start with the upper teeth since these are more vulnerable to plaque. After the top, go ahead and brush the bottoms. Put the toothpaste between the bristles instead of on top of the bristles. This will allow more of the toothpaste to come in contact with the teeth.

## Eye Care

Most dogs occasionally accumulate debris in the corners of their eyes, and they will benefit from having their face wiped down with a moist cotton ball or cloth every day. It is ideal to check your dog's eyes every day, if not for cleaning then for him to get used to being handled.

If your dog's eyes look inflamed or have a greenish discharge, he could have an eye infection. Contact DFL to book an appointment with the vet.

## Skin and Coat

The puppy should be brushed daily. It only takes a few minutes when done on a regular basis, and the frequent handling is good exposure for the puppy – service dogs need to be comfortable with being manipulated.

For puppies with long coats (Golden Retrievers, Poodles) a brush and a comb will be necessary. For short coated breeds (Labrador Retrievers) a brush alone is good enough. If you brush the puppy daily, matted fur behind the ears and along the backs of the hind legs should not be a problem. While brushing the puppy, rub your hands over his body, feeling for lumps, bumps, ticks, burrs or anything else that needs attention. Go over the dog's body carefully - small objects can be easy to miss! Lumps and bumps under the skin, as well as lesions of any kind should be reported to DFL staff immediately.

## Ear Care

A bit of waxy, brown discharge in the ears is normal, but should be cleaned. Some dogs are prone to ear infections, so be vigilant! The ear should not be red or swollen, nor should it be painful for the dog when touched. Reddening, headshaking and/or a foul-smelling discharge are all signs that something could be wrong. If you notice any of the above, please contact DFL staff immediately.

You should have a bottle of ear cleansing fluid and some cotton balls at home as part of your puppy care kit. Ear cleansing solution can be purchased at a veterinarian's office – one bottle should more than last for the entire time the puppy is with you. The fluid should be warmed up to the pup's body temperature if possible. The procedure for routine ear cleaning is as follows:

1. Have the dog sit in front of you.
2. Squirt some of the fluid into the dog's ear.
3. Gently massage the base of the dog's ear (you will hear the fluid "squishing" in the ear).  
This loosens debris in the ear canal and floats it up to the outer ear.
4. Wipe the outer ear with a cotton ball to remove excess fluid and debris.
5. Repeat once or twice, if necessary.

Ears should be checked at least once a week and cleaned when necessary. More frequent attention may be necessary if the puppy is prone to ear infections.

Dogs with heavy floppy ears have the most problems with ear infections. Some breeds have lots of hair in and around the ear canal which causes them to develop ear infections. These breeds may have to have the hair removed. Dogs that spend lots of time in the water also are prone to developing ear infections. Dogs with skin allergies may have ear problems as part of their allergy.

*\* If your dog goes swimming or has a bath, apply an ear cleaner to help dry out the canal and prevent ear infections.*

## Nails and Feet

The puppy's nails and feet should be carefully examined every week to check for excessive nail growth, dirt or foreign bodies between the toes, and lesions on the pads and webbing. **Please let DFL staff know immediately if you find any abnormalities in the puppy's feet.** Nails should be trimmed once a week – and if not trimmed, then handled – not only to keep the puppy's feet in top condition, but also to get him accustomed to having his feet handled.

## Nail Clipping

Dog's toenails grow as human fingernails and toenails do. The nails should be kept well-trimmed to avoid scratching when the dog paws at bare skin and to keep the dog's structure as sound as possible. Long nails can cause a dog to rock back on his paws, causing strain on his leg assemblies and interfering with his gait. The easiest way to ensure problem-free nail clipping is to accustom your puppy to having his feet handled daily so that he'll sit still for this essential part of good grooming.

Steps: (Ask DFL staff to show you the correct technique the first time.)

1. Never use ordinary scissors to trim your dog's nails. Use trimmers that are specially designed for dogs.
2. Hold the dog's paw firmly and cut off the tip of the nail with a single stroke. Be very careful to stop short of the quick (the blood vessel inside the nail). Dog's nails have a blood supply (or "quick"), but the ends of the nails are dead tissue and can be clipped without pain.
3. Trim as close to the quick as possible without actually cutting it and causing it to bleed. If you do cut the quick you can stop the bleeding with cornstarch or Kwikstop (purchased from a pet store).

## Bathing Your Puppy

Frequent baths are not only unnecessary, they can remove natural oils that are essential to the health of the puppy's coat, leaving the skin dry and itchy. Regular brushing should be adequate to keep the dog looking and smelling clean.

If the puppy gets into something and really does need to be bathed, please follow these instructions:

1. Brush out the coat and remove any knots or mats. Matted hair tends to "set" when wet.
2. Wet the puppy thoroughly using warm water.
3. Lather with a shampoo intended for use on puppies (read the instructions). **Do not** use human shampoo, body soap or dish soap - the pH balance is different.
4. When finished, **rinse thoroughly**, making sure that the water runs clear and that there is no trace of shampoo left on the dog. Don't forget to rinse the feet, under the tail, and any other hard to reach areas. If the dog is not rinsed completely, the shampoo can irritate the skin creating scratching, dry skin, and skin problems.
5. Gently blot the coat dry with a towel. Remember that the coat may take several hours to dry, depending on the breed. You can either blow-dry the coat using a low setting or keep the puppy indoors in a warm spot until dry.

## Handy body handling hints while grooming

- Handle the feet a lot!
- Rub gently in between the toes and under the pads
- Hold the front legs out straight in front and also behind in a bent position and rub again
- Hold the hind feet straight out and back, spreading the toes while gently rubbing them
- If you have an old vibrating toothbrush, hold it on their feet and in between toes
- Lots of brushing
- Do NOT let the dog sit when he is being brushed
- If the dog sits, just keep lifting the back end up to a standing position, and say “stand”
- For face, do a lot of gentle holding of the muzzle; the longer you hold it, the less pressure you will need
- Get the dog used to bending the muzzle down to the chest and also to both sides, holding it while brushing towards the ears
- Start with the vibrating toothbrush around the nose, under the chin, close to the ears, then on the inside flap of the ears
- The last thing is to run a blow dryer while grooming at first, so the dog can get used to the noise. Start by slowly putting the hot air toward the dog when grooming. (Start to blow dry the dog even if he did not have a bath.)

# Graduation Day Do's & Don'ts

## Do!

**DO** enjoy yourself and be proud of the work you have done raising a puppy who has gone on to work successfully as a service dog!

**DO** bring your family, friends, camera and Kleenex

**DO** ask the client's permission before you pet or greet the dog

**DO** ask permission before taking pictures of the client and the dog

**DO** allow the client to get settled after the ceremony, and wait until staff bring you to the client to introduce you

**DO** feel free to prepare a photo album of puppy pictures for the client

**DO** respect and cooperate with the client's instructions to the dog

**DO** ensure that your children behave around the dog and are respectful of its new role as a working assistance dog

**DO** tell the client about your family and the home where the dog was raised

**DO** respect and adhere to a dog's name change

## Don't!

**DON'T** undermine the client's confidence in their new service dog by telling negative stories about what the dog did as a puppy

**DON'T** work the dog into a frenzy when greeting him or allow him to jump up on you or to behave in an inappropriate way

**DON'T** distract or interfere with the dog during the graduation ceremony

**DON'T** feel that you and/or the client are obligated to keep in touch

**DON'T** circulate or post photos and stories without the client's consent

**DON'T** take hold of the dog's leash or try to control the dog in any way

**DON'T** give the client advice about how to handle the dog or deal with medical or behavioral problems – refer any questions to the trainers

**DON'T** ask the client personal questions about the nature of their disability

**DON'T** make negative comments about other dogs in the program