

LEASHES OF VALOR | FOSTER FAQ



Does it cost anything to foster?

No! We provide everything you need, including veterinary care, food, treats, preventatives, leashes, bowls, toys and service dog training vests (when they're old enough to go out in public!)

How long do I have to commit to fostering?

As long as you want! We are always in need of short- and long-term fosters. Short-term fosters can fill in on weekends or for a few days or weeks as needed. We're also looking for summer fosters to fill in when many of our long-term fosters take vacations. And some of our fosters stay on for years.

How long do I get to keep a dog?

For long-term fosters, our goal is to rotate the dogs every few months. The more environments dogs are exposed to, the more well-rounded they are as adults. We also don't want dogs (or humans!) to get too attached.

Can I foster if I have other animals in the house?

As a general rule, having other animals in the house is a bonus. Our job is to ensure the service dogs placed with veterans have as much real-life experience as possible, and many will go into homes with pets (and small children!) One of our current foster families lives on a farm with donkeys, goats, horses and chickens.

How do you learn how to train a service dog?

We teach you! We also keep it simple, working on just one or two commands at a time. We have regular group training sessions, usually on weekends, or at other times that are convenient for you.

Do service dogs in training ever get to just be 'dogs'?

Pretty much all the time! Puppies train for about 10-15 minutes three times a day. Older dogs need to go out in public four to five times a week. You can also work on skills at home.

I'm a student. Can I get volunteer hours for fostering?

Yes! We are happy to fill out any necessary paperwork to ensure you get credit for the time you foster.

What if I sign up and I realize fostering is not for me? What if a particular dog doesn't fit with me or my family?

No problem. No judgment. No questions asked. We mean that. In fact, as much as we work to pair the right dog with the right veteran, sometimes it's just not a good fit. Life happens. Circumstances change. You're not letting us down.

Is it hard to give up a foster dog?

Most of our fosters say it's bittersweet. It's a lot like being a teacher: You love them and teach them as much as you can for the time that they are with you. But you know they are going on to fulfill their purpose – saving lives. Hearing the stories of the veterans who receive their service dog makes the challenge worth it. Goodbye is the goal!

Will I ever get to see my foster dog again after it's paired with its veteran?

Follow-up communication with and care for the veterans we serve continue for life. As a result, you will often read regular updates about the dogs and their warriors. In some cases, fosters have had the opportunity to visit with the dog they fostered and their veteran, although this is not guaranteed. But we hope you can be assured that we have a stringent application process and policies in place to help ensure the long-term health and happiness of our dogs.