



Serving our Veterans, who served us all!

www.northwestbattlebuddies.org

Puppy Fostering Protocol

First, we would like to thank you for your interest in becoming a foster family, it is our responsibility to ensure that our puppies are placed in a loving secure home environment and we also want this to be a wonderful experience for our foster families. Having said that we must be diligent in evaluating our foster applicants, so we ask that you be completely honest and forthcoming with your answers on the application. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

The Beginning:

At 8 weeks old the priority for the puppies is to be crate trained, potty trained and socialized. We want the puppies to develop their social skills as well as discovering life and be exposed to various sounds and environments. Even though from the age of 8 weeks to 4 months old the pups' life consists of snuggles and cuteness, it is very important to purposely expose the pups to a variety of everyday activities.

Socialization: DEFINE (BREAKDOWN OF AGES)

Thank you for your interest and opening your home to a foster, if you currently have dogs in your home, that would be a great way to start the socialization of your foster puppy.

Socialization is not just taking the puppies/dogs out into public to get them used to new environments, it is to teach them how to act/re-act in their new environment and to get used to vacuums, hair dryer, lawn mowers or other things around the house. If puppy does react to items just ignore their reaction and go about your daily routine. If the puppy runs away from these items/sounds please contact Dorothy for instruction. After puppies are vaccinated they are welcome to go into public where other pets are allowed to go (Home Depot, Lowes). Exceptions NEVER take them to dog parks, PetSmart or Petco. Vests are ONLY to be worn upon the approval and training given by Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator.

Any puppies showing insecurity or fear must stop going out in public. Please notify Dorothy Benson for further personal one on one to discuss furthering the pups socialization skills.

When your dog is out in public at no time are puppies/dogs allowed to do a meet and greet on leash with any dogs.

Children: As we have more and more foster coming into the program a lot of the foster families will have children. For children there can be nothing more exciting than to have a new puppy in their home. With this also comes responsibility on the part of the parents to ensure that the puppy will be safe. Each child is different but for the most part children under the age of 10 should be supervised by a parent at all times. Puppies have sharp little teeth and they very often will be mouthy while playing with children, and if the child is young they may not know how to stop the biting and might get to rough with the puppy to make them stop or get away.

Children should not be allowed to handle the puppy on a leash, older children may take the puppy on a walk with a leash under adult supervision. This would need to be discussed and approved with Foster Coordinator, Dorothy Benson.

We want your children to be involved in this process and feel it is very important for ALL children to learn to understand the importance of proper handling and care of a puppy. NEVER leave a young child unsupervised with the puppy.

Crate training: Have no blankets, or absorbing material in the bottom of the crate. Pup can have safe stuffed animal to snuggle with, toy or safe chew. It is natural for the pup to whine after being separated from its pack, however do not ignore the whining unless you know the pup has already pottied outside before going in the crate. Always give the pup the benefit of the doubt if you are not sure. If pup whines and does not have to go out and go potty, then let him whine. He will discover that it will not work and will learn to surrender to the confinement of the crate. If he persists and it is excessive (hours) then a water bottle spray in the face may deter the behavior. If whining continues, then call head puppy coordinator for further instruction.

House Breaking: An 8-week-old puppy will need to go outside to go potty every hour or if sleeping take out right after he/she wakes up (no need to wake a sleeping puppy), during daytime hours only (nighttime as needed). Set a timer as a reminder. Take the puppy out the same door, to the same place and stay with it saying, "go potty" until the pup has done so, when he/she goes please praise (love on them, food is never a reward). It is important to stay with the pup, he/she may run back to the door and not relieve itself and then potty in the house. If the pup sits at your feet, start walking around and repeat "go potty." In time the pup will potty on command and make the process much easier. If the puppy does NOT potty at all at this time then place the pup in its crate for 10 minutes or so, then go outside again to potty the pup until it is successful. IF the pup has an accident in the house and you did not see it happen, then you can do nothing about it. Dogs live in the moment, you cannot scold the puppy for something you did not see happen. IF you see the puppy start to potty in the house, quickly pick the puppy up (this will generally startle the puppy and be enough of a negative to help deter the behavior) and take it outside to the appropriate place and be positive saying "go potty. Often when the puppy is still very young and coming out of a crate, or if it is a long way from the door to go outside, it is beneficial to carry the puppy outside to go potty. **If you have concerns about the frequency or concentrate or the urine please contact Dorothy Benson.**

Visiting: There may be times when you want to take the puppy to a friend's house for a visit or another foster puppies home to play. Your puppy may be potty trained at your house but remember that any new environment is going to be different for your puppy. They may not understand where it is "ok" to go potty. So you will need to watch your puppy carefully and take them outside to show them where to go potty.

Feeding: Puppy may need to be offered food for up to 4 to 5 times per day at 8 weeks. Individual feeding instructions may be necessary please contact Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator. Food is to be put down in a quiet environment for 10-15 minutes and then if puppy has walked away, the food is pulled until the next feeding. **DO NOT FREE FEED.** The pup must learn to eat when food is presented. **NEVER** are puppies to be fed or given **ANY** treats by hand. Food or treats are **ALWAYS** placed in the puppy's bowl for consumption. **ALWAYS** soften food with warm water or chicken broth. It is very important to maintain a good weight on the puppies, it is bad for their joints to become overweight.

Below find a guide, every puppy/dog is different (this is only a guide)

Age	Weight	Amount	Times Per Day	Total Amount per Day
8 ~ 12 weeks	10 ~ 20 lbs	1 cup	3	3 cups
3 ~ 4 Months	20 ~ 30 lbs	1 ½ cups	3	3 cups
5 ~ 7 Months	30 ~ 40 lbs	2 cups	2	4 cups
8 ~ 12 Months	40 ~ 50 lbs	2 cups	2	4 cups

*****Fresh water should always be available.**

Treats: Only approved treats and toys will be allowed to be given to pups. Approved treats consist of bully sticks, chicken strip type treat, femur bones or antlers. **NEVER FROM THE HAND..IN THEIR FOOD BOWL.**

Toys: Approved toys any durable stuffed animal (please pick up stuffing) they may still like the carcass. Kong toys, or any toys that cannot break apart and be consumed. (no rope toys or rawhides) We provide toys to start but you can buy more, if you have a question about a certain toy please do not hesitate to email or call Dorothy Benson.

Training: Puppies will have training by Northwest Battle Buddie approximately every 3 to 4 weeks. All puppies are trained under the supervision of our Master Trainer. If you have behavioral issues between these trainings, please contact Dorothy Benson.

Grooming:

Bathing: As service dogs our dogs are bathed more than the regular household pet, so we would ask that you expose them to regular bathing, you do not need to use shampoo every time, just getting the puppies used to the bath tub and running water is enough.

Collars: You will be provided with a collar when you bring your puppy home, it is very important to check for the correct fit, you should be able to put two fingers between the collar and your puppies neck, please contact your local representative if you need a larger collar.

Drying: You do not need to blow dry your puppy every time, but please introduce him/her to the sounds of a blow-dryer.

Nails: It is very important for you to play with your puppy's paws, pads so they will get used to having their paws touched. NEVER cut your puppies nails, have them done professionally or if you are close to Man's Best Friend (Battle Ground) call 360.666.3260 or Dorothy Benson (Spokane) call and we will take care of it.

Furniture: Puppies are allowed on furniture and in the beds of the foster family. When the veteran receives their service dog, being in the bed and on the furniture is encouraged. We want the pup, when it is an adult, to feel comfortable in the space of the human to help assist in waking the veteran up from nightmares as well as interrupting panic attacks. Note**** The pup is only allowed in the bed when it is housebroken and will not potty or be destructive during the night.

Respect: Even though we are not concerned about formal obedience at this age, it is important that the puppy be respectful to the human. By the age of 4 months old the puppy should not be jumping or mouthing (biting in play) the human or jumping on the furniture or your lap without invitation. A slight touch in the ribs when the puppy is jumping up on or mouthing the human would be appropriate followed by an "off" command. **IF THE PUP HAS ANY INSECURITIES AT ALL, NONE OF THESE CORRECTIVE TECHNIQUES SHOULD BE APPLIED UNTIL PUP IS OLDER AND BOLDER AS INSTRUCTED BY HEAD PUPPY COORDINATOR.**

Leash Training: All puppies should be allowed to explore on leash until 4 months old. Pulling ahead with excitement is permitted until further instructed by Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator. A flat nylon collar is appropriate for puppy to wear until other training equipment is advised. Unless in a fenced area, puppies **MUST** be on leash at all times! Puppy is NEVER allowed to run loose for its protection.

Flexi-leads: These retractable leads should only be used to take your puppy outside to go potty if you do not have a fenced yard. Do not use for walks, you have been provided a 6-foot black lead for this.

DOG PARKS: NEVER

Affection: If the puppy ever is experiencing stress or fear for any reason, it is imperative that the human does not share affection or comfort the pup. Affection or praise is to be shared only when we want to imprint the current positive experience the pup may be having. It is important not to be overexcited when sharing affection with the pup. It is always best if the human is in a calm state when sharing affection. If the pup is in distress, holding it on leash or in your arms is appropriate if affection is not being shared at this time, DO NOT PET. A strong confident presence will be the best support for the pup.

There may be times when you notice that your puppy pees when it gets petted or excited. If this is something that begins to happen with frequency it is best to not share affection with your puppy when they are excited. For example: if you puppy pees when you come home due to his/her excitement, come in and ignore your puppy until he/she has calmed down. Then you can share affection. Calm touch is the best affection.

Boarding or Kenneling: Northwest Battle Buddies puppies are never to be in the care of anyone that is not previously approved. If at any time the “foster” is temporarily unable to care for the pup, proper care will be arranged by the Foster Coordinator.

Strangers: Contact and petting by people other than the puppy foster is encouraged, however contact with dogs that are not approved is not. A negative experience with a dog that is not approved can imprint the wrong conditioning as well as jeopardize the safety and “service” career of the pup.

Photos & Social Media: As some of our puppies have been sponsored we require photos to be taken as we put together digital photo books for them, as well as for the Veteran they are paired with. There is a NWBB Foster page to also share photos with other foster families, please request to join.

Transportation: It is important that the pup be on car rides periodically to ensure that the pup does not get car sick. It is best for the pup to travel in a crate. As the pup gets older, (4 months) he/she may be allowed to ride in the back seat if the pup is calm and feels secure. This would be up to the discretion of the head puppy coordinator. The pup **SHOULD NOT EAT** prior to riding in the car, depending on how often the pup is eating will determine how the meals should be altered. Ask Foster Coordinator for guidance.

FOUR MONTHS AND BEYOND: Some puppies at four months and beyond will go and stay with Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator’s residence (Spokane) for semi-formal introductions to public exposure and service vest conditioning. This will be done on a case by case basis. The pup upon completing the semi-formal training (approx. 2 months) may be placed back in the original puppy foster home for the puppy raiser to continue the training and conditioning that has been established during this process. This will be decided on a case by case basis, depending on the needs of the individual puppy.

Puppy Fosters will have the opportunity to assist in the “public” conditioning of the puppies with the assistance and discretion of Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator

Some puppies will remain in puppy foster homes (and skip the semiformal conditioning) until the age of 8 months to a year, before going to the formal training facility for the 7 month training program. Upon completion of the formal training program, the dog will then be placed with his/her veteran.

Fleas and Ticks: Your puppy will be given these medications through the Veterinarian when they go in for shots.

Supplies: All food, equipment and veterinary expenses needed for the Northwest Battle Buddies foster program will be provided by NWBB. All puppies are legally owned by NWBB therefore puppy fosters must adhere to the above guidelines for the safety and well-being of the pup as it grows up being prepared to serve our American Heroes.

At any time the puppy shows adverse reactions to anything, please contact Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator for guidance. We want this experience to be a positive one as well as productive for the puppy and the puppy foster. **IF AT ANY TIME** the puppy foster wants to terminate their “foster” agreement, for any reason, Northwest Battle Buddies will collect the pup from the puppy foster immediately.

Let me express my deepest gratitude for your assistance is helping us raise up these lifesaving service dogs for our American Heroes. We could not do it without the help and dedication of people like you.

Sincerely,



Shannon Walker

CONTACT INFO:

Dorothy Benson, Foster Coordinator

dorothy@northwestbattlebuddies.org

509.292.8867 (Home)

509.999.1351 (Cell)

Man’s Best Friend (The Kennels)

1611 SW 20th Ave

Battle Ground, WA 98604

OPEN: Monday thru Saturday 8am ~ 6pm

CLOSED: Sunday