

# WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in Gold Coast Greyhound Adoption, Inc.'s (GCGA) , Gulf Coast Chapter, Foster Program. GCGA is an all-volunteer non-profit 501c3 organization dedicated to finding responsible, loving homes for ex-racing greyhounds.

The care that the foster family provides to these special dogs is the bridge between kennel life and life as a family pet. Your role is very important in the successful placement of your foster dog. We hope that you will find this manual to be a helpful tool in acclimating your foster dog to his/her new life as a pet.

We brief you on each greyhound and provide you with this manual so that each dog we place who has been in a foster home has had the same experiences. We will be asking you to do things in a certain way so that their new families will know what to expect of their new pet. By following these rules you will assure your foster dog the best possible transition to its new life.

Without people like you the job of placing an ex-racer would be very difficult. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for opening your home to one of these wonderful animals. We think it will be an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for you as well. Each foster that comes through your home on its journey to its new life will leave their paw prints on your heart.



# Gold Coast Greyhound Adoptions

## Gulf Coast Chapter

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727-RUN-FAST

### ***FOSTER PROGRAM***

#### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Foster Program provides temporary housing, healthcare, behavior modification, initial training and evaluation leading to successful placements of ex-racing greyhounds into responsible, loving homes. The Foster Program always acts in the best interest of the dogs.



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# THE GOLDEN RULES

## (Thou Shall Not Break Them)

- Foster dogs are NOT allowed on the furniture. Their permanent home may not allow this and it is a hard habit to break.
- Crate the foster dog when you are not home. We will be recommending to the new owner that they crate their dog to help acclimate them to their new home. Work toward eventually leaving the crate door open.
- Feed your foster dog separately from your other pets. It helps to prevent any type of food issues between your foster and your own pets.
- Do not leave your foster dog unsupervised with your own pets or children.
- Leave the collar and tags provided with your foster dog on at all times.
- Complete the Foster Dog Information Form and the Placement Introduction Form before the foster dog is placed.
- Each foster dog will come with a foster name that has been derived from its racing name or call name. Please use it.
- Remember that your role as a foster parent is to promote love, nurturing, behavior parameters & modification. Be aware of your emotional attachment to your foster dog as one day he will be placed in another loving home.

### Foster Care Safety

- Always remember: **Safety Comes First.**
- Never do anything to jeopardize your safety, the safety of others, or the dog's safety.
- If you have children or small pets, use common sense. Introduce the dog slowly and carefully, and **ALWAYS** monitor any reaction between them and the foster dog.
- Educate children about the proper way to approach a strange dog.
- **Children do not foster, adults do.** Do not assign the responsibility for care of a foster dog to children.
- Educate visitors to be respectful towards the foster dog and to be mindful of closing doors
- Do not lie on the floor with foster dogs. Your head should always be higher than the dog's head.
- Use crates and muzzles when appropriate. Examples – transporting, introducing to children or pets, multiple dog situations, and when going into the vet's office.
- When transporting two dogs, muzzle them both.
- Toys, bones, or treats can be cause for a disagreement between two dogs, or between a foster dog and a child.
- Leashes and/or fences are a must. Sight hounds must **never** be off lead in an unfenced area. One visual distraction (squirrel, rabbit, and plastic

bag) plus one car equals one dead dog. Every town has a leash law. Don't break the law.

- Crate the foster dog when you leave the home. Be sure the crate door is closed and locked.
- Always double check that doors are shut behind you tightly. Be aware that greyhounds like to follow people out the door.
- Always grasp the dog's collar by the "handle" so the dog cannot slip away.
- **Should your foster dog ever escape, immediately call all of the numbers on the GCGA contact sheet.**
- If you are near the dog when it escapes, squat down and calmly call the foster dog. Coax the dog back to you with your voice. Make happy sounds. If that doesn't work try running in the opposite direction calling the dog in a playful manner. If you are near your car (or anyone's car), open the door – they love rides. Chasing a running dog only promotes flight.
- If you are unsure about what to do in a situation at any time throughout fostering, contact Joanne Wuelfing 9410376-0305. If you are unable to contact Joanne, please call any of the other people listed on your contact list if it is an emergency.

## GETTING STARTED

### To Do List

- Obtain the date, time and location of where you will be picking up your foster dog
- If the scheduled time is not convenient for you, please make alternative arrangements with your contact person.

### **The First 24 Hours:**

- Pick up your foster dog at the arranged time and place. Please be prompt.
- Please verify you have the following items before leaving with your foster dog:
  - ✓ Collar, with GCGA tag attached and matching leash
  - ✓ Muzzle & Food
- Ask if the foster dog has received its first meal. If it has not, feed a small amount of food about one or two hours after he/she arrives home.
- Take the foster dog directly home.
- Use the muzzle in the car and keep the leash on the dog. Keep the muzzle on for introductions to people and animals at home.
- The foster dog has just been through a very stressful day. He/she should spend most of the first day and evening in its crate where he/she can relax and observe its new surroundings. Leave the door open.
- **Crating is strongly recommended** when you leave the house or any time the dog is unattended.

## Foster Care Protocol

- Do not assume that the foster dog understands the day to day experiences we take for granted or that your own dog has learned.
- Remember each foster dog is an individual and will respond differently to different situations. Some foster dogs learn/adapt more quickly than others.
- As a foster home you should always promote positive behaviors.
- Reward a foster dog's good behavior with praise.
- Do not allow foster dogs on furniture. Not all adopting homes will allow this behavior. Supply soft bedding on the floor.
- Always supervise the foster dog in a fenced area. Left alone, they could dig out or jump over the fence.
- Do not leave multiple dogs unattended. Muzzle all dogs in the yard.
- Never tie the dog on a rope, chain or runner. They can choke themselves or snap their necks.
- Do not allow children under 12 to walk the dog.
- Do not remove the safety collar provided and/or tags for any reason.
- You, the adult are fostering, not the children.

## The Foster Dog's Name

- Each foster dog will be given a name for the foster home to use.
- Teach the dog to come by name as their first command. Call them by name and whistle. Be consistent each time you call. Reward with love & praise of the greyhound for EVERY positive response.
- When possible we will provide the "Call Name". If a call name is not available we will use a variation of the Registered Name.
- Please use the name provided when addressing the foster dog.
- Naming the newly arrived dog is the privilege of the adopting family.
- The reason for using their Call Name or part of their race name is so that something remains familiar to them during the transition from racer to retired racer. This is helpful if the dog is moved from one foster home to another.

# DAILY CARE

## Grooming

### **Fleas & Ticks:**

- Please check your foster dog for fleas and ticks for the first several days. Your foster dog has been treated for fleas and ticks and has been bathed. Ticks first appear as flecks of dirt and may not be visible at the dog wash. As the ticks feed they grow, thus the reason you should always double check.
- Should you find a tick **DO NOT REMOVE IT WITH YOUR FINGERS.** Always use tweezers and drop them into a jar of rubbing alcohol in order

to destroy them. Do not put them down the drain. They can and will crawl out.

### **Ears:**

- The initial ear cleansing at the dog wash does not necessarily remove all of the embedded dirt and sand. The ears should be rechecked and cleaned every few days for the first couple of weeks. Continue to check the ears a couple of times each month and clean as needed.
- Types of ear cleaners:
  - OtiClens, or other ear cleaning solution (purchase at pet store)
  - Ear cleansing wipes (purchase at pet store)
  - Vinegar/water (mixture of 1 part water to 1 part vinegar)
  - Chlorhexidine (anti-bacterial canine cleanser)
- Some dogs have sensitive ears (from tattoo verification) and may yelp while being touched, do not be alarmed. Use a muzzle while cleaning ears.

### **Coat:**

- Brushing eliminates loose hair, flaky skin and is therapeutic to the dog. You should brush the foster dog often using a soft bristled brush or grooming mitt.

### **Nail Clipping:**

- Approach nail clipping with confidence. Greyhounds can sense your insecurities.
- Muzzle the dog if necessary.
- If you have a second person to hold the foster dog's collar it makes the nail trimming easier. Remember to stay away from the dog's face while working.
- Clip the nail just below the quick. If unable to maintain short nails let a volunteer know as long nails interfere while walking & may be painful.
- The quick may not be visible with dark colored nails, so trimming less of the nail but trimming often could make the task easier.
- If you trim into the quick use Styptic powder, Quick Stop, baking soda, flour, corn starch or bar soap (non perfumed) to stop the bleeding. Do not panic! The bleeding will stop.
- Crate the foster dog and keep him quiet allowing time for the blood to clot.

### **Crating**

The foster dog is accustomed to spending most of its time in a crate. **We do not want to set the foster dog up for failure by not properly crating.** The crate provides a familiar, safe and secure place for the dog. GCGA will provide you with a crate.

### **Crating is Mandatory:**

- When you are not home
- Anytime you (the adult) cannot fully supervise the dog

### **Crating Philosophy:**

- Be sure to always make the crate a happy place. Never use the crate for punishment.
- Always use positive reinforcement when the dog is behaving and quiet in the crate.
- You are in charge, not the dog. If you want the dog in the crate, put him in. Do not give in to a resisting dog. Use small biscuits when needed for encouraging the foster dog into the crate.
- Do not let a crying greyhound out of the crate. Once you let a crier out he just learned “it works!” Make sure he is not in need of a bathroom break!

### **Crating Techniques:**

- Set up the crate in a location where you have a straight path through the door.
- A foster dog may feel more secure by your presence in the room.
- Take the dog by the collar and walk it into the crate while saying “crate” or “kennel up.”
- If the dog resists going into the crate, do not push down on its head. Cradle its hind quarters with your arm and gently lift the dog up. The head will automatically go down allowing you to guide him through the door by its collar. The front legs will walk forward into the crate. Use plenty of encouragement as the dog goes in.
- If the dog is vocalizing while crated, use a strong verbal “NO” combined with a firm tap on the top of the crate. Never let a crying dog out of the crate. Make sure he is not in need of a bathroom break!
- Use the crate periodically when you are home so the dog remains accustomed to being in the crate. This allows the opportunity to observe the dog’s behavior in the crate. Use corrections and positive reinforcement when appropriate.
- Leaving a light on, turning on the radio or TV, or placing a mirror in front of the crate is often enough to calm a dog left alone.
- When leaving the house don’t make a fuss over the greyhound & the same on returning for about 10 minutes! You don’t want to give the impression that your leaving the house is a big deal.
- Do not invade the dog’s space by allowing children to play inside or near the crate.

## **Housebreaking**

### **The Basics:**

- When you let the foster dog out of the crate, be prepared to take the dog directly outside. The ex-racer’s routine has always been that when it is let out of the crate it is for the purpose of going outside to eliminate.
- Always escort the dog to the same door.
- While escorting the dog repeat the word “outside.” This will help familiarize the dog with the new routine.
- Do not do anything – no play, no treats, no conversation – until the dog relieves itself.
- Praise the dog during elimination by using ‘Marking words’ like “go potty” for both urine & fecal elimination.

- If you do not have a fenced yard, take the dog out on lead. It helps to return to the same spot each time you go out so the dog begins to “catch on.” Give the foster dog its privacy by not staring or talking.
- If the dog will not eliminate on lead, put him directly back into the crate for ½ hour, then try taking him back out again. Use positive reinforcement when the dog eliminates. Eliminating on lead is a new experience for most retired racers. Be patient and relax.
- Even if you have a fenced yard we may ask you to work with the foster dog to eliminate on lead.
- A foster dog will need to eliminate four to five times a day. Set a schedule like just before going to work, when you return home & 2 times in the evening to allow the grey’s body to adjust.
- Always allow the grey to eliminate after feeding. It may also be a good idea to allow him/her to eliminate prior to “breakfast.”
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### **Prevention:**

Keep in mind prevention is the best solution to housebreaking.

Some accidents may occur because you have not learned to read the foster dog’s signals. (Examples – pacing, whining, sniffing, etc.) Be sure to keep the dog in the same room with you so you can see the signs. Your understanding of the foster grey’s ‘signs’ and their understanding ‘marking’ words are key to successfully housebreaking a dog.

If the grey is not fully housebroken & to avoid a housebreaking accident the foster dog must be crated when not being supervised by an adult.

If the dog begins the act of eliminating, verbally correct him with a firm ‘NO’ and immediately take him outside while saying ‘Go Potty’....and then praise him when he does eliminate.

If you find an accident after the fact, do not reprimand the foster dog.

### **Problem Solving:**

If the greyhound is having accidents in its crate limit its intake of water. Set a cut off time for access to the water bowl if necessary. Urinating in the crate could be a sign of a urinary tract infection. Contact GCGA if this persists. A vet appointment will be arranged.

### **Clean Up:**

We recommend a disinfectant to clean up. Follow up with a solution of 1 part water and 1 part white vinegar to deter your foster dog from returning to that spot. The most effective solution contains an enzyme to eliminate the urine crystals. Most enzymes will not work if you have already used other cleaning products on the “mess.”

Outdoor cleanup is very important. Be diligent about picking up eliminations by the foster dog. This will help reduce the risk of your dog contracting parasites.

## **Feeding**

### **What to Feed:**

Feed a good quality lamb & rice or chicken & rice formula. Stay away from grocery store type dog foods. Most kennels feed Pro Plan dog food and we suggest you use Nutro or what we supply. We will supply your food, but give us notice when running low, not that you've run out!!

### **Do Not Feed:**

- Table Scraps
- Canned dog food, although you could add a tablespoon to coat the kibble.
- Imported treats (pig ears, raw hides, greenies, etc.)
- Food containing red dye or soy
- Do not free feed your foster dog

**Doing any of the above can lead to diarrhea and can cause confusion when watching for medical concerns.**

### **How Much to Feed:**

- Based on the weight of the dog when it arrives GCGA will determine the amount of food to be fed. The amount will be advised when you receive the dog.
- Observe your foster dog's weight gain/loss and discuss it with a GCGA representative if you have concerns.

### **Method of Feeding:**

Feed two times a day in the AM and the PM. Allow approximately 30 minutes for the dog to eat and then remove its food. Offer the food again a few hours later. This helps maintain a schedule and helps to prevent the dog from becoming a finicky eater. The adopting family will thank you.

Do not feed too closely before or after strenuous exercise (absolutely not within an hour before or after).

Do not free feed (leave food down all the time). This hinders the housebreaking schedule. It can also hide possible medical concerns.

### **Feeding Concerns:**

If the foster dog does not eat in 24 hours or skips three consecutive meals contact GCGA.

On rare occasions you will encounter a finicky eater, so an eating pattern will need to be established leave the food for 30 minutes and remove it after the time expires. Offer the food again a few hours later. Do not supplement with treats. If this persists contact GCGA.

If the foster dog is “inhaling” its food, you can feed from a flat dish or place a tennis ball in the bowl to slow down its eating. Usually the dog will grow out of this behavior.



### **Water**

- Water should always be available when the dog is not crated.
- Do not place water inside the crate.
- Do not let the foster dog over drink. Sometimes they will try to drink too much water when they are nervous. Pick the water bowls up if you see them drinking too much & contact GCGA

### **Children**

The most difficult thing about introducing a greyhound to children is the sensitivity of the greyhound. Gentle, affectionate and even-tempered, the greyhound is great with kids in most cases. However, even the docile greyhound has its limits. Some greyhounds are timid and could react by snapping out of fear.

### **Greyhounds and Children Philosophy:**

- Dogs are pack animals. They perceive children on their level and treat them as such. They may approach children with the expectation of a playmate, or possibly prey.
- Use a muzzle for the initial introduction between greyhound and children of any age. Continue to use the muzzle until everyone including the foster dog is comfortable.
- The child should always be supervised and taught how to interact with dogs. The child should be above or higher than the dog. No children on the floor with the foster dog. Dogs on the floor, people (of all ages) on the furniture.

### **Behaviors to Watch For:**

**PAY ATTENTION.** When the greyhound has reached its tolerance levels be aware of his signals.

- The dog may shake
- Look at you pleadingly
- Make attempts to move away from the child when he has had enough
- Reflection in the mirror indicates how the dog will react when another dog approaches “his space.”

Remember, all dogs can bite when mistreated or provoked.

Proper training and respecting the dog are always the best solution.

### **Setting the Rules:**

- All family members should follow these rules.
- It is critical to maintain consistent behavior modification & boundary setting rules
- **Do not leave a child unsupervised with the foster dog.** You need to be present to observe and correct both the dog and the child’s behavior when needed.
- Keep your face away from the dog’s face. Do not hug the dog. In dog language grabbing it around the neck is a dominance move.
- Let sleeping dogs lie. The dog may snap out before it has even opened its eyes. Dogs at the kennels are never touched when asleep. If you need to wake the dog up (i.e. to go outside before bed), announce your presence verbally, and watch for a reaction before touching the dog.
- Do not lay or sit on the floor with the dog. Always stay above the dog.
- Stay away from the dog while it is eating – should be crated to eat.
- Children should never attempt to take bones or toys away from any dog. Never play tug of war with the dog.
- Stay away from the crate. It is not a playhouse.

- Do not poke or prod the dog.
- Do not allow children under 12 to walk the dog or pull on its leash.
- Keep persistent children separated from dogs who have reached their limit.

It would be very easy for children to take advantage of the greyhound's good nature. Please protect the dog from overbearing children. It is not fair to expect any dog to tolerate aggravation, torment or pain and not be upset by it.

If the children can not be taught behavior boundaries around dogs, then the household may not be suitable for a pet.

## Small Animals

### **The Introduction:**

- Foster dogs **MUST** be muzzled and on a lead when entering the home. This is for the foster dog's welfare and for the safety of your existing pets.
- During the introductory period of "small animal exposure," the foster dog must be muzzled and on a lead. As you learn to read the signs of a "keen" dog, you will begin to modify which tools you use. (See below)
- Initially it is helpful to gate off a room, such as the living room or family room where you can observe the foster dog's behavior in a confined area. This also helps the foster dog to focus on your corrections.

### **Exposure Procedures:**

- A GCGA representative will be present at the 1<sup>st</sup> exposure. With the muzzle and lead on, bring the foster dog into an area where the cats or small dogs are visible. Correct the dog when you see the following behaviors:
  - Lunging toward the small animal
  - Mouth opened to bite while sniffing
  - Pay close attention if the dog's ears are perked up as if the dog is focused only on the small animal
  - The foster dog is in a deeply focused "attention" stance
- Correct the dog with a strong verbal "NO" and gentle yet firm tug on the collar. Repeat the correction until the dog's ears relax down and the dog is paying more attention to you than to the small animal.
- Use positive reinforcement when the dog responds to correction. It is imperative that he associates this positive behavior with praise and affection.
- Even if a dog appears to be responding well to correction, **DO NOT** remove the muzzle or lead during initial exposure periods. As you become confident of the dog's ability to tolerate small animals, remove the lead first (remember to keep the dog confined to one room). After one or two sessions of positive behavior, remove the muzzle. Continue to correct any interest in the small animals.
- Keep an eye on the foster dog at all times. Do not assume that just because he is small animal-safe under your watchful eye that he will not become excited by a running cat when you are not looking. Your own animal's safety is a top priority.

**Never offer your small pet as “bait” by holding it up in front of the foster dog.**

## **Keeness**

- You will come across greyhounds that coexist with small animals easily, some that are “workable” and some that just cannot live with small animals at all. This has nothing to do with your ability to work with the dog. Do not take it personally.
- The keen dog will not respond to correction and may seem almost agitated by the small animals. He may seek them out each time he is let out of the crate. You must always keep a good grip on the collar or lead of the keen dog. Some will try everything to get away from you to find that small animal.
- You must contact GCGA as soon as possible to discuss moving the dog to a home without small animals if you are given a foster dog that is keen. You may be asked to exchange dogs with another foster family.

## **Stairs**

### **Up Stairs:**

- Keep the dog’s head pointed forward, looking at the stairs.
- For the 1<sup>st</sup> time simply try to lead the dog up the stairs while holding the dog on a short leash ahead of him to see if they will figure it out on their own. Call him as you progress
- Going up, place your body behind the dog at the first step, confidently taking the dog by the collar.
- Put its paw on the first stair while gently pushing him forward with the weight of your body.
- Continue up the stairs placing each foot in turn on the appropriate step.
- Do not drag the dog by the collar; remember to move its feet.
- Muzzle the dog if it appears nervous or fearful on stairs.

### **Down Stairs:**

- Going down, firmly hold the handle of the collar.
- Position the dog between your body and the wall or railing.
- Allow the dog to do one step at a time, being careful not to gain too much momentum.
- Stay in control; do not allow the dog to pull you down the stairs.
- Be aware, that the foster dog may have the desire to leap the whole staircase.
- Muzzle the dog if it appears nervous or fearful of stairs.
- Do not carry the dog up or down the stairs.
- Be aware that some staircases may be physically impossible for the dog to walk down safely, if the stairs are too steep, particularly if the grey is a larger one

### **Hints:**

Two people make the task easier. Begin practicing on carpeted and/or a short flight of stairs.

Should these fail find a short set of stairs in a complex with an elevator. Go to the top and walk the dog down the short set. Praise and turn around & go up the same set of stairs and praise. Repeat several times and the dog will know he is doing greyt with all the praise and learn the drill quickly!

## **Wait / Stay and Walk**

### **Wait / Stay:**

- For the safety of the foster dog teach it to wait / stay at thresholds such as the door of the house, the crate, or the car. Maintain control of the dog's lead and use restraint while saying the word "wait / stay". They seem to learn this command very quickly.
- Teach the grey to stay while simultaneously placing your hand stretched out, palm toward the dog.

### **Walk:**

- Attach the leash to the "D" ring on the handle of the foster dog's collar. This is the ring without the GCGA tag on it.
- Always carry a cell phone with GCGA's phone number programmed 727-365-8436 for quick access in case of an emergency.
- When walking the foster dog always keep the lead short. Wrap it around your wrist a couple of times after slipping the loop over your wrist.
- Do not allow him to wander back and forth. Work with the dog to walk calmly along side of you.
- If the dog displays keen behavior use the necessary collar correction while saying "No" or "leave it".
- Never allow children, under 12 to walk a foster dog. They should always be supervised as well.
- Expect the unexpected....do not become too complacent while on a walk. Remember the dog will see things before you do. Be alert.
- If the dog slips his collar first call him (remember this is the 1<sup>st</sup> command you taught him! If the dog continues running away, call his name and run in the opposite direction. If this works, keep running until he is close enough to catch. If this doesn't work call GCGA & alert others nearby (walkers, joggers, etc.) of the situation and the dog's name so they may encourage him & therefore catch him. Do not chase the dog! If the dog is out of sight drive around the neighborhood handing out paper with his name, coloring, tattoo numbers and our contact info. GCGA will assist in this endeavor as they can cover a lot of ground in a short time!
- Remember to check the pads of the greyhound frequently as it will take time to callous. Don't walk long distances on asphalt or other hard surfaces, build up distance walking gradually. Remember also that they don't have protection on their feet, so don't stop for any length of time on hot pavement.

## **Champagne (Martingale) Safety Collars**

### **About the collar:**

- Also known as a humane choke collar, martingale collar or greyhound collar
- The collar provided along with the GCGA tags should never be removed from the dog.
- Provides control without choking
- Made of durable, strong tubular nylon webbing and welded steel rings
- Escape-proof when fitted properly
- Owner can easily grip the collar by the safety loop
- Washable, dries quickly. Minimizes tangling, wearing and discoloration of fur.

### **How the collar works:**

- Open the larger of the two loops. This is the neck loop; it has a metal slide so you can adjust it to the right size neck.
- Slip the collar over the dog's head. No buckles, it is fast and easy. The greyhound cannot back out of his collar when properly adjusted.

### **Muzzles**

- Always be sure the muzzle is fitted properly. The nose should not be pushed up against the inside of the cage; however the strap should be secured tight enough behind the ears so the muzzle does not easily slip or rub off.
- The plastic nose guard faces up. The front/cage portion of the muzzle fits onto the muzzle/nose of the greyhound. The strap sits behind the greyhound's ears.

### **ABOUT MUZZLES:**

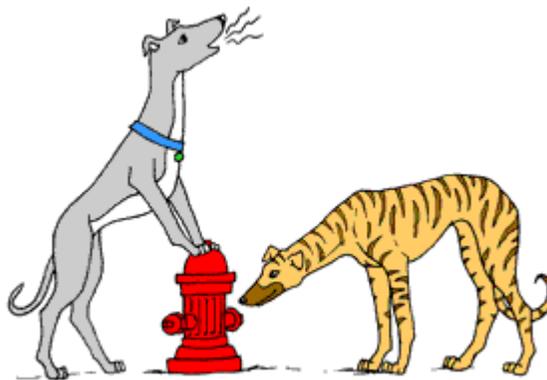
- The use of the muzzle is for safety, for all animals and people including the greyhound.
- It is NOT inhumane when used appropriately. They are used to wearing them.
- A greyhound can drink water through a muzzle.
- A greyhound can still grab or bite through a muzzle if it really has a desire to. However, wearing a muzzle slows the process down and a gives a person some time to get control of an inappropriate situation.
- Muzzles should be worn for all introductions with adults, children and other pets. The greyhound should continue to wear a muzzle during acclimation processes.
- Muzzles should be used when transporting the foster dog.
- Muzzles should be used anytime the greyhound is in a situation that makes you or the foster dog nervous.

### **New Experiences**

Remember, the foster dog has never lived in a home before. The following situations may be new to him.

- **GARBAGE-** Keep the garbage well-contained. It is very enticing to a Greyhound. You do not want a mess and you and GCGA do not want a sick dog.
- **LINOLEUM-** It is shiny, slippery, noisy, and can be very scary to a greyhound. It may take time for the dog to navigate across the floor. Be patient. Long toenails cause problems on the flooring, so keep nails trimmed. Rug runners (with non-slip pads underneath) can also be helpful.
- **PAPER PRODUCTS-** The bedding at the race track is shredded paper. The foster dog may have a tendency to shred newspapers, books, magazines, mail, Kleenex, toilet paper, etc. because paper products= bedding material to them.
- **OVENS/STOVES-** Cooking food entices the greyhound to be nosy, and that nose could get blistered.
- **MIRRORS/GLASS/SCREENS-** The reflection intrigues the greyhound, but it can be dangerous if lunged at. Screens can be deceiving and very easily broken through. Use post it notes on sliding doors, mirrors and screens. Introduce your foster dog to the “other dog” in the mirror while coaxing him to be nice.
- **GARAGE DOORS-** The noise from an automatic door opener may startle the greyhound and is a potential escape when unexpectedly opened.
- **POOLS-** Should not be accessible to the greyhound. They pose the same danger to dogs as they do to children.
- **TOILET BOWL CLEANERS-** Be very cautious if time-release bowl cleaners are used. Keep the lid down. The toilet should not be used as a drinking bowl.

Use unset mouse traps for training to deter bad behavior. Be sure to experience with the grey one “set up” in which the mouse trap is set and the grey sets it off. Set it on the garbage can or counter top. Once experienced they should avoid the unset trap wherever it is placed, ending the bad behavior.



## PHYSICAL HEALTH

**Bloat: (This Is Considered an Emergency)**

The greyhound as a large breed is subject to bloat. Bloat (Gastric Torsion) is a condition that is considered an emergency. Bloat causes the stomach to stretch beyond normal size and rotate or flip upside down, resulting in blockage of the blood supply.

**POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:**

- Type of food
- Change in diet
- Rapid eating or drinking
- Overeating
- Free feeding
- Swallowing air while eating
- Exercising before or after eating

**SUBTLE SIGNS OF BLOAT:**

- Anxiety
- Whining
- Pacing
- Repetitive standing up or lying down
- Stretching and looking at the abdomen

**PROGRESSIVE SIGNS OF BLOAT:**

- Abdominal fullness
- Swallowing frequently
- Drooling

**ADVANCED SIGNS OF BLOAT:**

- Non-productive attempts to vomit
- Retching saliva
- Abdominal fullness
- Difficulty breathing
- Collapse

**IF ANY OF THESE SIGNS ARE PRESENT, TAKE THE FOSTER DOG TO THE NEAREST VET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTION:**

- Supervise feeding to observe after-feeding behavior
- Limit intake of water immediately after feeding
- Avoid strenuous exercise one hour before and two hours after a meal

**Bloat is a fatal condition; recognizing the symptoms early and immediately transporting the dog for emergency veterinary care is of the utmost importance. Time is essential.**

**Once you have the dog at the veterinarian's office, then contact GCGA immediately.**

## **Poisoning (This Is Considered an Emergency)**

**All animals have the potential for ingesting poisonous items around the house or yard.**

If you believe the foster dog has eaten something it shouldn't have, try to identify the substance and call the Veterinarian immediately. Vets of record for GCGA are:

### **Our Vets –**

- We will establish an office for you to visit based on where you live.

### **After hours –**

- We will establish an office for you to go to based on where you are fostering.

### **Questions they may ask you:**

- What did they ingest?
- How long ago did they ingest it?

Have the label from the item the dog ingested with you when you call. They will look to identify the active ingredients in the product.

Follow the directions that are given to you and transport the foster dog to the closest veterinarian's office. Take the ingested poison container with you.

Once the foster dog has been stabilized, contact Joanne at 941-376-0305.

## **Prevention is Best. Puppy-proof your home.**

### **Common Household Poisons:**

- Anti-freeze
- Chocolate
- Lawn care products
- Rodent poisons
- Outdoor plants
- Household plants
- Household cleaners
- Human medication

## **Heatstroke (This Is Considered An Emergency)**

Heatstroke is an emergency that requires immediate recognition and prompt treatment.

Greyhounds do not tolerate high temperatures. They can dehydrate quickly and suffer heatstroke.

### **SIGNS:**

- Rapid, frantic, noisy breathing
- The tongue and mucous membranes are bright red
- The saliva is thick- constant drooling

- The greyhound may frequently vomit
- High rectal temperature, sometimes over 106 degrees F
- Greyhound may become unsteady or stagger
- Bloody diarrhea

**If the condition is not treated, the dog becomes progressively weaker and coma and death ensue.**

**TREATMENT:**

- Mild cases may respond to moving a dog into cooler surroundings such as air conditioning.
- Apply ice packs to the neck area so that the blood supply entering the brain gets cooled down as soon as possible. (It may help to minimize brain damage)
- If the dog has a temperature over 104 degrees F, or it is unsteady on its feet, cool the dog down by immersing it in a tub of cool water or wet it down with cool water from a garden hose focusing on its head, belly & neck.

**TRANSPORT THE FOSTER DOG TO THE VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY! Once the foster dog has been stabilized, contact GCGA.**

**PREVENTION:**

- Restrict exercise during the heat of the day, especially in the summer
- Keep the dog out of the heat and sun
- NEVER leave a foster dog outside in the yard
- NEVER leave a foster dog inside a vehicle.

**The Scoop on Poop**

Greyhounds center their stress in the digestive system. The foster dog is going through many new experiences; therefore, they are prone to a soft or loose stool. Diarrhea can be caused by the diet change from track food to pet food. These changes in stool can also be attributed to stress in its new environment, worms or other medical conditions.

More likely than not the foster dog will have "stress stool", which could consist from watery stool to soft but formed stool. Be alert for mucous or blood tinged stool.

As the comfort level of the foster dog increases, you should see an improvement in the stool. Always observe the stool after each elimination. You are looking for grass, worms (thin spaghetti shape or rice type) or anything else unusual. Contact GCGA immediately with questions or unusual observations.

If your foster dog has loose stools you can feed it a mixture of boiled hamburger and rice until the stool starts to firm up. Canned pumpkin added to the rice is another treatment.

If the stool continues to be loose a fecal sample should be taken to the vet to be checked for worms. Always pick up the stool in public & clean yards frequently of elimination.

### A volunteer writes - **Loose Stools and Gas**

For sometime my 2 greys were having trouble with loose stools (as in, not well formed and hard to pick up!) and gas, not a happy combination for the humans in their family!

I had tried several high quality foods, one of which was holistic, as well as adding in plain yogurt or pumpkin but I was not having good success until someone suggested that the ingredient that might be contributing to the problem was lamb. Apparently, because lamb is a rich meat, it can sometimes cause digestive problems such as mentioned above!

I switched to Nutro Chicken and Rice, Sensitive Stomach Formula (the pale green bag). Immediately upon switching there was a complete change. They both now had firmer and *smaller* stools, making cleans up much easier, and NO gas!!!!

We are now all happy campers!

### **Urinary**

#### **Signs to be aware of:**

- Increased frequency (wanting to go out more than usual)
- Postures to urinate, but doesn't urinate
- Straining to urinate
- Blood in the urine
- Accidents in the crate or house when previously O.K. (do not confuse with housebreaking)
- Urine is dark in color
- Urine has a strong odor
- Increased water consumption

If the foster dog has any of these signs, contact GCGA

### **Ears**

#### **Signs to be aware of: (If the foster dog has any of these signs, contact GCGA.)**

- Discharge from the ears
- Odor from the ears
- Rubbing the ears
- Shaking the head
- Holding the head to one side.

Remember some ex-racers are sensitive from having their ear tattoos verified before each race (a racing official looks at the tattoos in their ears). Whenever in doubt, use the muzzle.

## **Skin**

### **Signs to be aware of:**

- Increased redness
- Open sores or scabs
- Excessive licking or chewing
- Loss of hair (patchy)
- Excessively dry skin or dandruff

Some greyhounds will have “flea dermatitis.” It is an irritation caused by living in flea-infested surroundings. In most cases once a dog has been bathed the skin will clear up. It takes time for the skin to heal. Contact GCGA if you are concerned that the skin condition is worsening.

## **Tail Injury**

An injured or bloody tail is sometimes referred to as “happy tail”.

It is not unusual for the tip of a greyhound’s tail to be sore or bloody. This condition can result from breaking open the end of the tail from wagging and hitting a hard surface. (There is only skin and bone, so it is a delicate area.) If you notice small spots of blood on the floor and walls we suggest checking the tail. The tail will need to be cleaned and bandaged until you are able to get the foster dog to a vet. This is NOT an emergency and can be managed for a couple of days.

- Use the crate to keep the dog quiet and the bandaged tail still
- Contact GCGA to tell us about the tail and for advice

## **Multiple Animal & Pack Behavior**

- More than one dog is a pack.
- Pack mentality is an instinctive natural behavior. You must be present and aware of this to avoid accidents and/or injuries.
- Use the muzzle for any multiple dog situations.
- Use the muzzle on all greyhounds when they are running or playing together in the fenced back yard.
- Supervise all multiple dog situations.
  - Outside in the yard
  - Playing with toys
  - Biscuits and treats

Food, Treats, Bones, Toys and Space can be the cause for a disagreement between two or more dogs in a pack setting. It can also be cause for a disagreement between a foster dog and a human. This should never happen, contact GCGA immediately.

Remember each member of the household is part of the pack. Be sure everyone remains above the foster dog in order to remain higher in the pecking order.



## PREP FOR PLACEMENT

### Communication

- Contact GCGA within the first 24hrs to provide a status report.
- During the fostering period continue to keep in contact with GCGA to provide any updates or changes taking place.
- GCGA is here for support for any questions or incidents. A complete listing of GCGA contact names and numbers is located in the “Contact-Resources” tab at the back of this manual.

### **Info Needed:**

GCGA is looking for accurate observations of the foster dog. Please share all information regarding the dog’s personality and habits. This will enable us to find a good match with our available applicants. We will also need to know the status of each of the following:

- Crating and housebreaking
- Eating and stool
- Interaction with other dogs, other pets and people
- Overall behaviors and personality
- Anything else you feel is important
- This information is imperative for a successful placement.
- Contact GCGA if the dog chooses to isolate himself from his “human” pack.

### Transfer of Foster Dog

Please complete **BOTH** the fostering forms that you will be given when you receive your foster dog.

### **Foster Dog Information – GCGA File Copy:**

- This form is for GCGA’s records. Please note all observations.

**Placement Introduction Form:**

- This form will be given to the adopting family. It will provide the adopting family with useful and clear information that will help with the transition from foster dog to family pet.

**Transferring the Foster Dog to Its New Home:**

- Be courteous by sending the foster dog with its ears clean, nails trimmed and coat clean.
- Any questions, accidents or problems concerning the foster dog should be directed to GCGA.
- Any last minute observations or incidents should be noted on the Placement Introduction Form.

**Farewell Foster Dog:**

One of the hardest parts of fostering is doing what is best for the dog. Your job as foster parent is one of educator and evaluator. We can recommend and give you helpful hints but this is learned by hands-on and behavior modifier experience. Each ex-racer coming through your home will build your confidence and expertise. You are doing a valuable service for GCGA and your foster dog. We thank you for your time and commitment.

Foster homes should remember that the foster dog does not belong to them. The ex-racers you foster will go on to loving homes.

You have our sincere gratitude for volunteering your home and your time to help a greyhound get acclimated to “retirement.” This program works because of your hard work.

# THANK YOU!

## CONTACTS – RESOURCES

Lisa Dail	<a href="mailto:greyhoundgirl74@gmail.com">greyhoundgirl74@gmail.com</a>	727-741-5876
Joanne Wuelfing	<a href="mailto:joanne.wuelfing@gmail.com">joanne.wuelfing@gmail.com</a>	941-376-0305

### Our Vet Partners

**Animal Health Care Clinic, 2118 Drew Street, Clearwater, Florida 33765, 727-446-5501**

**Sun n Surf Animal Hospital 1507 Gulf Blvd Indian Rocks Beach FL 33785  
727-595-8188**

**Gulf Coast Veterinary Services, 6178 Gunn Highway, Tampa, FL 33625,  
813-746-3979**

**Animal Hospital of Dunedin, 1355 Pinehurst Road, Dunedin, Florida 34698,  
727-733-9351**

**Marano Animal Hospital, 363 Jacaranda Blvd, Venice, FL 34292, 941-480-0055**