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**Group Leader:**

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**D4D Website:** [www.dogs4diabetics.com](http://www.dogs4diabetics.com)

**WELCOME TO DOGS4DIABETICS FOSTER CARE!**

Fostering a D4D dog is a really fun way to become involved with Dogs4Diabetics and to make a difference in the life of a diabetic! Fostering a dog, like other volunteer jobs, is a labor of love, and there is no reward greater than seeing a dog you have fostered become a working diabetic alert dog. Fosters are paid in doggy kisses and have the pride and satisfaction of knowing they've had a profound impact on someone else's life.

Our foster care group meets for training meetings on **Thursdays from 6:30pm-8:00pm** at the Dogs4Diabetics training center in Concord. We do not meet on the 1st Thursday of the month, as we have a client support class on every 1st Thursday of the month.

**BECOMING A FOSTER CARE PROVIDER**

Foster care providers must be non-smokers and live in a non-smoking environment due to the fact that smoke will greatly reduce a dog's ability to smell. Additionally, foster care families must be non-diabetic due to the potential for confusing the dog during the multiple phases of training involved over the 4 to 6 month training period. In our program, the dogs are introduced to their diabetic handlers only after achieving a consistent and measured high level of performance in their scent discrimination and alerting in the training environment.

No prior dog training experience is necessary to become a foster care provider or dog-sitter, although it is helpful if you have owned a dog previously. We ask that prospective group members attend at least six consecutive meetings (more if handling skills need to be developed), after which you will receive an application packet. Next, a home visit will be scheduled. During the home visit, the safety and appropriateness of the home and yard/fence are evaluated. The commitment to the D4D program of everyone who may be responsible for care of the dog is discussed. The entire family must be present at the home visit because fostering a D4D dog is often a family project. The home visit is also a great time to discuss any questions about your particular situation. A home visit not only assures D4D that the dog will have a safe environment, but also familiarizes our staff with your individual situation or set up and helps them with any future problem solving. Once the home visit and application process is complete, a foster care manual will be given to the prospective fosters. All prospective fosters will read the entire manual and ask any questions they may have regarding the information contained in the manual. Once the manual has been read, you will be asked to do a "trial" dog sit before receiving your own foster dog. Active fosters will take a dog for a week, bringing the dog into the training center and picking them up each day. Dog sitters or weekend fosters will take a dog for a weekend. After completing this step, your trial dog sit will be discussed with your foster care leader and/or program director. Once this is complete, you will be eligible to receive one of our dogs!

## **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Fosters are required to attend 80% of training meetings and socialization outings. We have one socialization outing per month.
2. Dog sitters, and all other people who handle D4D dogs as part of their volunteer involvement, are required to attend a minimum of 80% of training meetings. Attendance at socialization outings for dog sitters is encouraged, and may be required if the leaders feel it is necessary to increase the dog sitter's dog handling abilities.