

DOG DAYS ADOPTION EVENTS



We Can't Wait to Meet You!

The Adoption Event

Best Independent Charity



CT Department of Corrections
Partner: The Red Dog Project



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- Our events are usually from noon to 3:00PM. We know it can be difficult but we require that all members of the household be present to meet the dog before adoption. Yes, sadly, we've seen dogs adopted out and returned because one member of the family "didn't like them".
- **WHAT TO BRING:** Bring an **ID tag** with your phone number on it with you when you pick up your dog so that he has an extra measure of safety for the ride home and the first few uneasy days. Also bring a **6ft leash** (or you may buy ours for \$10) and a **martingale collar and harness** (or you may buy ours). Please keep in mind: **ALL SHELTER DOGS ARE FLIGHT RISKS** in the first few weeks of going to their new home. Using a harness instead of a collar will make sure your dog doesn't slip her collar and run if she's frightened by something new.
- Our dogs are either micro-chipped already or we will give you a chip to have your vet use. **Be sure to register your contact information with the chip's company!** This is a great help if your dog is lost.
- Most of the dogs in the Red Dog Project are fed Tractor Supply Company brand "4 Health" – Turkey and Sweet Potato – a grain free, high quality kibble. You may purchase this ahead of time to feed your dog or to transition to a food you choose. Usually we will have you a small amount of the food to take home.

Before You Bring Your Dog Home

- **DEFINE YOUR DOG'S SPACE:** Determine where your dog will be spending most of his/her time. Because he will be under a lot of stress with the change of environment (from shelter or foster home to your house), he may forget any housebreaking he's learned so be prepared.
- **SET UP A CRATE:** We **STRONGLY** urge you to crate your dog so be sure to have a crate set-up and ready to go for when you bring your new dog home. We recommend a cover over the crate and a used pillow from your bed as the crate bedding or a blanket used in the foster home. Also, be sure to check out this article from Petfinder on the dos and don'ts of [crate training your dog](#).

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- **DOG PROOF YOUR HOUSE:** Dog-proof the area where your pooch will spend most of his time during the first few months. This may mean taping loose electrical cords to baseboards; storing household chemicals on high shelves; removing plants, rugs, and breakables; setting up the crate, and installing baby gates.
- **GROOMING AND BATHING:** We STRONGLY urge you to NOT groom or bath your dog for the first couple of weeks that he's home. Grooming is stressful for dogs and he/she has been groomed after leaving the shelter so if you can wait a couple of weeks it's so much more helpful for your dog.
- **FEEDING:** Please buy the dog food used by the shelter or foster if they don't provide it for you. You should gradually introduce new food to your dog's diet so she doesn't get stomach upset. Most of our rescues will send a small bag of the current diet dog food for adopters to use in transition.

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First Day

- Once home, before going inside, take him to his toileting area immediately and spend a good amount of time with him so he will get used to the area and relieve himself. Introduce him to your entire yard and give him a chance to really sniff around. Then a nice long walk before going inside. Even if your dog does relieve himself during this time, be prepared for accidents. Coming into a new home with new people, new smells and new sounds will throw even the most housebroken dog off-track, so be ready just in case.
- Make sure your children or your guests children know how to approach your dog without overwhelming him. Go here for more on [introducing dogs and children](#).
- Shelter dogs are often bewildered when meeting their new adopter and it will take time for them to not feel fearful or afraid – please don't invite lots of people to see your new dog as she may be too shy the first few days. Give him time to acclimate to your home and family before introducing him to strangers. One week to meet all of the family members and learn the routine is so helpful.
- Training your dog will start the first moment you have him. Take time to create a vocabulary list everyone will use when giving your dog directions. This will help prevent confusion and help your dog learn his commands more quickly. Red Dog Project dogs will come with a list of commands used in the prison setting.
- If you plan on crate training your dog, leave the crate open so that he can go in whenever he feels like it in case he gets overwhelmed. Remember it's good practice to remove your dog's collar before putting her in the crate – the collar and get hooked on the crate and easily twist and choke the dog.

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- From there, start your schedule of feeding, toileting and play/exercise. From Day One, your dog will need family time and brief periods of solitary confinement. Don't give in and comfort him if he whines when left alone. Instead, give him attention for good behavior, such as chewing on a toy or resting quietly (Source: [Preparing Your Home For A New Dog](#)).
- For the first few days, remain calm and quiet around your dog, limiting too much excitement (such as the dog park or neighborhood children). Not only will this allow your dog to settle in easier, it will give you more one-on-one time to get to know him and his likes/dislikes.
- For shelter dogs objects like leashes, hands, rolled up newspapers and magazines, feet, chairs and sticks are just some of the pieces of "training equipment" that may have been used on this dog. Words like "come here" and "lie down" may bring forth a reaction other than the one you expect. Or maybe he led a sheltered life and was never socialized to children or sidewalk activity. This dog may be the product of a never-ending series of scrambled communications and unreal expectations that will require patience on your part.

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Following Weeks:

- People often say they don't see their dog's true personality until several weeks after adoption. Your dog will be a bit uneasy at first as he gets to know you. Be patient and understanding while also keeping to the schedule you intend to maintain for feeding, walks, etc. This schedule will show your dog what is expected of him as well as what he can expect from you.
- After discussing it with your veterinarian to ensure your dog has all the necessary vaccines, you may wish to take your dog to group training classes or the dog park. Pay close attention to your dog's body language to be sure he's having a good time — and is not fearful or a dog park bully. If you're unsure of what signs to watch for, check out this video on [Dog Parks and Good Play vs. Bad Play](#).
- To have a long and happy life together with your dog, stick to the original schedule you created, ensuring your dog always has the food, potty time and attention he needs. You'll be bonded in no time! For more information on creating a feeding schedule for your dog visit [How Often Should You Feed Your Dog?](#)
- If you encounter behavior issues you are unfamiliar with, please ask us for a trainer recommendation. Select a trainer who uses positive-reinforcement techniques to help you and your dog overcome these behavior obstacles. Visit [Dog Training and Behavior](#) for more information on reward-based training.