



# COMPAWTIBILITY MATCH PROGRAM

ENHANCING FOSTER &  
ADOPTER RESOURCES



**PEDIGREE  
FOUNDATION®**



**RUFF START  
RESCUE**

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# COMPAWTIBILITY MATCH QUIZ

The ComPAWtibility Match Quiz quickly allows people interested in adopting from our foster-based rescue the opportunity to search for their potential new furry family member in a fun and interactive way. It's essentially a filtration of available animals using fun, positive, and friendly language.

Questions for the quiz were developed by a team of marketing and program department members. When creating questions, we thought about the following:

- What are the most commonly asked questions by potential adopters about the animal they're searching for?
- What information is able to be pulled from our animal database?
- What information is currently updated in our animal database and what information would need to be added to our intake process?

We wanted to keep the quiz short and our goal was to keep it to 10 questions or less. We ended up with 6 questions, so we have room to add questions in the future based on feedback from users.

Visit [www.ruffstartrescue.org/dog-survey](http://www.ruffstartrescue.org/dog-survey) to take the quiz yourself!



# COMPAWTIBILITY MATCH QUIZ

The questions that are in the quiz include:

1. My ideal dog's athleticism is: (links to energy levels)
2. I'd like my dog to enjoy the company of: (ok with dogs, cats, kids)
3. My dog's ideal coat length would be: (coat length)
4. I'd like the maturity level of my dog to be: (general age)
5. I prefer a dog that: (potty trained, crate trained, obedience level, etc)
6. I'd like my future doggo to be: (male/female)

All questions also have a "no preference" option as well.

At the end of the quiz, results are provided with a percentage match for each dog. Potential adopters are then able to view the dog's picture and read their bio. There is also a direct link to our adoption application.

*\*Specific platforms/databases used for our ComPAWtibility Match Quiz include WordPress for our website and Rescue Groups for our animal database. If you would like a copy of our API/coding for this quiz, please email [info@ruffstartrescue.org](mailto:info@ruffstartrescue.org). While this will give your organization a head-start on implementing your own quiz, you will likely need to engage developers to ensure proper functionality.*



## Matchmaker Program

# FOSTER & ADOPTER CONNECTIONS

In addition to the ComPAWtibility Match Quiz, we wanted to go a step further in helping potential adopters find their new dog. Instead of having a transactional experience, we wanted adopters to have a relationship with the rescue. We achieved this through our Matchmaker Program.

The program is run by our Application Manager & Matchmaker, a full-time position that processes adoption applications and matches potential adopters with dogs looking for their forever homes.

To make the Matchmaker's job as easy as possible, we created a dynamic animal list in our animal database that the matchmaker can reference at any time. This list is editable, so can accommodate when new parameters need to be added. For example, if an adopter is looking for a short-haired dog under 20lbs, the matchmaker can easily update the list to show animals that match that criteria.

**WE  
WANT**

*adopters to have a  
relationship with the  
rescue*

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The Matchmaker keeps track of families that miss out on adopting a dog (this can happen for various reasons, ranging from the foster picking a different adopter to it not being the best fit) in a spreadsheet. When new dogs come into rescue, the Matchmaker is able to see these animals before they are listed on our website and can reach out to families on their matchmaking roster with the dogs' information to see if it might be a good fit.

# MATCHMAKER SUCCESS STORIES

## **Meet Meri**

Meri was a very shy girl who had several adoptions fall through. Through our Matchmaker Program, Meri was matched to an adopter looking for a calm and gentle small dog to care for.



## **Meet Jolene**

A very difficult to place senior pup, Jolene had been in rescue for four months with minimal interest. Her eventual adopter had been looking for an older companion for a while. Once she started working with our Matchmaker, she absolutely fell in love with Jolene and they're doing great!

## *Virtual Home Visits*

# FOSTER & ADOPTER CONNECTIONS

As part of Ruff Start Rescue's adoption process, select potential adopters have a home visit completed by a staff member or volunteer prior to adoption finalization.

Since Ruff Start Rescue adopts to homes all across Minnesota, it was taxing our home visit volunteers to physically visit all potential adoptive homes requiring a home visit. In response to this issue, we launched virtual home visits.

These virtual home visits are far less intrusive than traditional visits, can be completed much more quickly (moving the adoption process along faster), yet still give the foster family



peace of mind that the home that they're sending their foster dog to is suitable for the animal.

During the process we also found that potential adopters also appreciated the virtual home visit option.

*Note: It's worth mentioning that we moved to virtual home visits six months prior to COVID and it has served us so well that we don't anticipate doing in-person visits except on very rare occasions.*





*Internal Phone &  
Text Message Systems*

# FOSTER & ADOPTER CONNECTIONS

## **Multi-Line Phone System**

Ruff Start Rescue introduced a multi-line phone system to our general office operations. We did this with the goal of increasing resources for past and future adopters, fosters, and members of the public.

This would also allow easier access to staff without staff using their own phones, allowing them to keep their personal number private.

In addition to general questions, we created an emergency on-call line for our fosters to use after-hours and on weekends when there are vetting emergencies.

## **Text Message System**

In addition to a multi-line phone system, Ruff Start Rescue also implemented a texting system.

Using the SimpleTexting marketing platform, we are able to upload foster phone numbers and schedule and send mass text messages. This is especially useful when we have an urgent placement need or an important update to our foster process.

The texting system is also used for fosters coming to our on-site veterinary suite, so when needed, we can do contactless vetting appointments. Fosters simply text the vetting line that they arrived and our vetting team gets the dog from the vehicle.



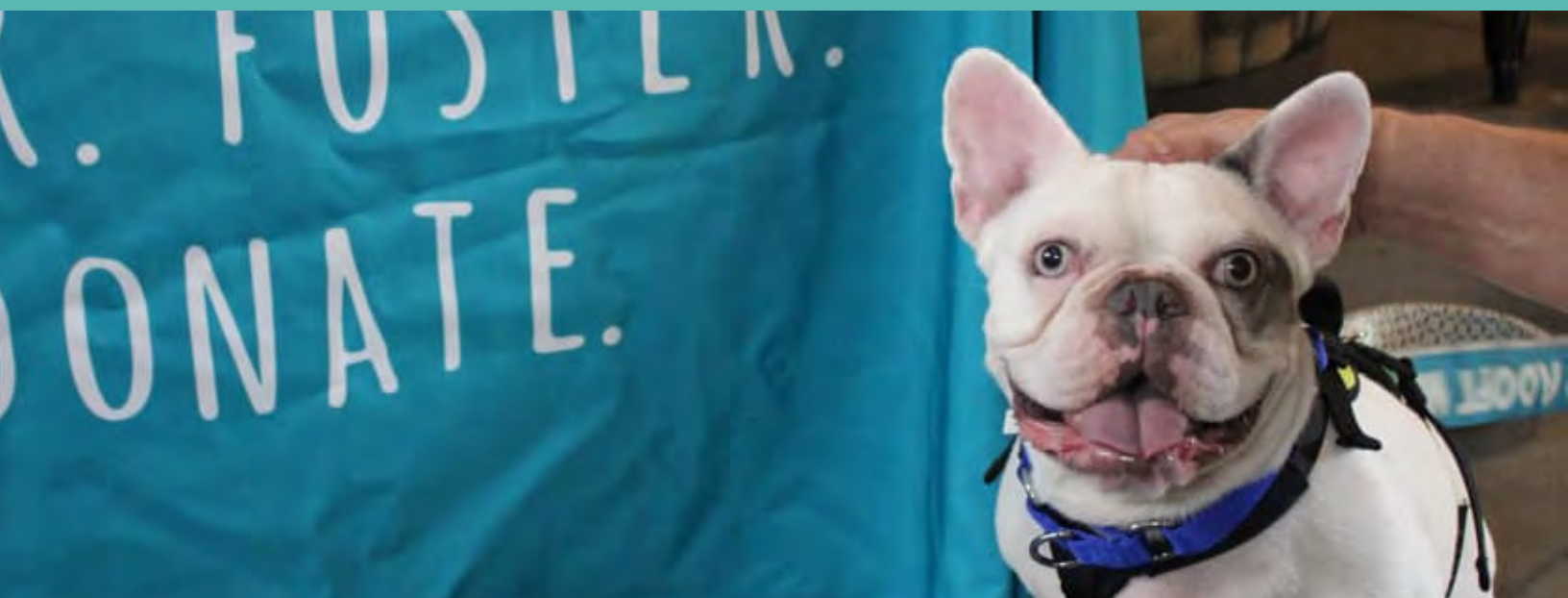
# VIRTUAL ADOPTION EVENTS

As another means to reach potential adopters outside of in-person adoption events, we launched virtual adoption events. This allowed us to showcase dogs that couldn't attend traditional adoption events due to location, behavioral issues, dog or child reactivity, or extreme shyness.

These 'events' were simply pre-recorded and highly produced 'ads' for specific dogs.

We launched our virtual adoption events by selecting specific dogs that needed a little bit of a 'boost' and collected videos and photos from their fosters. If able, the foster brought the dog to our office so our videographer could get additional photos and videos to use in the virtual adoption 'event'. You can see an example [here](#).

However, we found that these videos had very low interaction and engagement, so we switched from highly produced videos to doing Facebook live videos of the dogs with their fosters. These live videos performed extremely well, had lots of engagement, and led to adoption applications!



# POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT

To continue the relationship with adopters once they officially adopted their new furry family member, we implemented an email welcome series for all of our adopters.

Templates were created in our email marketing platform (Constant Contact) by our Creative Coordinator (part-time staff position). The content of the emails was developed by a collaborative team including members from the programs, development, and marketing departments.

We were able to automate this email process within the email platform, so once an adopter's email was added to the welcome series distribution list, they would receive milestone emails at the following intervals (click the hyperlinks to see our current email welcome series):

- [1 month](#)
  - Resources like the 3-3-3 rule and a list of partner trainers
  - Links to our adopter resources page on our website
  - Reminder that they can always reach out to our Adoption Follow-Up Coordinator with any issues, questions, or concerns



- [3 months](#)
  - Suggests recent adopters check out our upcoming event schedule
  - Reminder to join our closed/private Adopter Facebook Group “Ruff Start Rescue Reunions”
  - Asks them to submit a review to Great Nonprofits
- [6 months](#)
  - Encourages adopters share their story with the Ruff Start staff
  - Soft donation ask
- [1 year](#)
  - Reminds adopters to join our closed/private adopters-only Facebook group
  - Suggests using specific hashtags when sharing about their adopt-a-versary on social media



*Veterinary Support  
for Adopters*

# POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT

Post-adoption, we sometimes have animals experience a medical issue that wasn't evident while in foster care. When this happens, we want to ensure that the adopter isn't financially alone when it comes to the care of their recently adopted pet. We would rather provide a small veterinary grant to the adopter than have the adopter return/surrender the animal back to the rescue. Let's keep people and their pets together!

Through the Pedigree DOGS RULE grant, we have been able to award mini-grants, up to \$500, to those who adopted within the past six months and discover that their dog has some kind of illness. Adopters reach out to the rescue to let us know about their dog's illness and let us know which veterinary clinic or hospital that the animal is receiving treatment. Ruff Start then sends a check for the amount of the treatment, up to \$500, directly to the clinic or hospital.



**Thank you to the Pedigree  
Foundation for their generous  
support of our ComPAWtibility  
Match Program!**



Ruff Start Rescue is a 501(c)3 foster-based animal rescue that's dedicated to saving the lives of animals in need. We improve animal welfare in communities through adoption, education, and providing resources for people and pets.

