



PUPPY FOSTER CARER SCHEME

APPLICATION KIT

Thank you for your interest in the Customs and Border Protection Puppy Foster Carer Scheme.

Please read through this application kit carefully. If after reading it, you wish to apply to be a volunteer foster carer, please complete and return the application form supplied.

You must meet the following criteria to be considered:

- have a safe and secure yard at least 10m by 5m
- be able to walk the dog at least once a day
- have a car to transport the pup if required
- willing to socialise the pup with at least one or two outings each week to local schools, playgrounds, shopping centres or other busy areas.



All people living in the Melbourne area are encouraged to apply regardless of their background or living circumstances (married with children or living on their own). People with dogs of their own are also welcome to apply.

About the Customs and Border Protection Detector Dog Program

The Customs and Border Protection Detector Dog Program is recognised as a world-leader in the training and breeding of detector dogs. Customs and Border Protection breeds and trains Labradors to detect narcotics, and firearms and explosives.

Detector dogs are an integral part of Customs and Border Protection's fight against the illegal importation and exportation of illegal drugs and other prohibited items. While technological advances help Customs and Border Protection to detect drugs and explosives at the border, detector dogs play an important role in helping to screen large amounts of people, cargo, mail and baggage, quickly.

What is the Customs and Border Protection Puppy Foster Carer Scheme?

Pups bred by Customs and Border Protection are placed in a home from the age of about eight weeks until about 12 months of age, when they are returned to Customs and Border Protection for training.

Customs and Border Protection will look after all food and veterinary costs associated with raising the pup. As a foster carer, you will take care of the pup and ensure it is regularly walked and socialised so that it is suitable for training.

Why be a Customs and Border Protection Volunteer Puppy Foster Carer?

Looking after a pup should be an enjoyable and personally rewarding experience for individuals and the entire family. By following the advice given by Customs and Border Protection officers throughout the 12 months, you will maximise your pup's chances of being a suitable candidate for detector dog training.

As a voluntary foster carer, you will be playing an important part in helping to keep the community safe.

How do I become a Customs and Border Protection puppy foster carer?

1. Complete and submit an application.
2. Receive advice from Customs and Border Protection that you are being considered.
3. Arrange a time with Customs and Border Protection for a home inspection to access your suitability.
4. Attend a puppy foster carer talk.
5. Arrange a time for the pup to be dropped off or picked up.

What is the role of the foster carer?

Foster carers are vital to nurture the healthy growth of the pup and provide the socialisation required for their future working life.

Why and how often do Customs and Border Protection visit?

Your Customs and Border Protection contact officer will assist in the development of the pup's temperament, retrieval and hunting skills and will be out to visit once a month at a pre-arranged time. They will need access to the yard if you are not home.

The Customs and Border Protection officer will perform development exercises with the pup to enhance their desire to retrieve and hunt. These exercises are done away from the home in various environments.

During these visits, Customs and Border Protection officer will offers suggestions on ways to improve any problem areas.

On these visits food/equipment required will be delivered. It is also a good opportunity to discuss any concerns or questions.

How long do I keep the pup for?

Generally pups are cared for by a foster family for up to 12 months.

What happens to the pup after it returns to Customs and Border Protection?

At the age of about 12 months, pups are returned to Customs and Border Protection where they are put through further tests to determine their suitability for a future career as a detector dog. Suitable dogs will undergo a 13-week training course with a handler to train the dog to detect target odours.

CARING FOR THE PUP

How do I prepare my home?

Pups are around eight weeks of age when they are given to foster carers. Before the initial visit by Customs and Border Protection, you should ensure that a small pup cannot escape from the yard and have standard fences all round.

It is important that no poisons are used in your yard. Items of this nature must be put out of the pup's reach prior to them arriving at your home.

Are food and veterinary bills paid by Customs and Border Protection?

Yes. Customs and Border Protection will supply a lead, collar, food and feed bowl. All medications and veterinary services are provided.

Where does the pup sleep?

The pups must sleep outside in a dry place. If you do not have an area that is under cover where the pup can sleep (such as a veranda), you will need to supply a kennel.

Can I bring my pup inside?

Customs and Border Protection pups should be outdoors for the majority of the time. However, as part of their socialisation it is necessary that the pup is able to go indoors for the occasional visit.

What if I have other animals?

If you have other animals, early introductions will need to be supervised.

What should I expect?

As the puppy is young it will rely heavily on you for correct feeding and care. Some pups will be vocal at times for the first night or two while others will be fine left on their own at bedtime.

Speak to your neighbours to let them know you are expecting a pup. This way if the puppy is a little noisy initially, they may be a little more tolerant.

Some pups can also be destructive and most chew things, especially when they are teething. To help prevent this, make sure the puppy has toys of its own that it can play with and chew on.

What happens if I need to go away for holidays?

All Customs and Border Protection pups are boarded in the Customs and Border Protection kennels when foster families are away. You will need to transport the pup to and from the kennel.

SOCIALISATION

As a volunteer foster carer, you will provide essential environmental conditioning to develop the pup into a well balanced confident adult who is suitable for detection training as well as ensure the pup is healthy and happy.

Why should I socialise my puppy?

Detector dogs work in many areas and may search luggage on moving conveyor belts, work on vessels, search engine rooms, freight sheds and search hundreds of people in busy airports. In order for them to feel comfortable in these environments it is vital they be well socialised and accustomed to different noises, surfaces and people.

This can be achieved by exposing the puppy to as many different and challenging environments as possible.

How do I socialise my pup?

There is a large range of areas that you can take your Customs and Border Protection pup. This includes shopping centres, train stations and crossings, schools, busy intersections, playground equipment, local sporting events, and different types of stairs and surfaces.

Pups should become accustomed to travelling in cars, slippery floors, confined spaces, vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, and loud noises. The greater the exposure to a wide variety of things, people and other animals, the better equipped your pup will be.

What about children?

The pup should be allowed to regularly play with children to familiarise them with the quick and unpredictable movements children often make. A dog that has not been well socialised with children from a young age is often nervous around them in later life.



Customs and Border Protection Foster Care Program

Date:		Name:			
Address:					
Phone:	(H)	(M)	(W)		
Email:					
No. of adults (over 18 yrs):					
No. of children and ages:					
Do you have any other dogs?		(Y/N)			
Breed/s:		Sex/s: Neutered/Spade: (Y/N)		Age/s:	
Any other animals? If so number and type?					
Do you have any previous dog (or other animal) handling experience?					
Do you have a car in which the pup may travel? (Y/N)					
Customs visit your pup each month and require access to your backyard while you may not be home. Is there access via a gate/garage? (Y/N)					
Is your property securely fenced? Min. height requirement is 5ft. (Y/N)		Size of backyard:			
Do you have a pool/spa? (Y/N)					
Customs pups are energetic and can be destructive. Is this a problem? (Y/N)					
Are you willing to have the pup indoors for short visits? (Y/N)					
Labradors can weigh up to 35kgs. Does this pose a problem when walking? (Y/N)					
Pups require exercise daily as well as socialisation 2 or 3 times a week. Is this a problem? (Y/N)					
This program can involve fostering a pup for up to 15 months. Are you able to commit for this time? (Y/N)					
Are you planning any trips that may be longer than 1 month? (Y/N)					
Older dogs involved in the program are also looking for a foster home. Is this something you would be interested in? (Y/N)					
Why do you wish to become a carer for a Customs and Border Protection puppy?					