



## 7 STEPS TO ADOPTION

Dear Adopter -

We are so appreciative of you and all families who choose to adopt, rather than shop, for their next fur baby. Now that you've decided to adopt one of our sweet fur babies, you may be asking yourself, "**What comes next?**"... Below is a 7-step guide to our adoption protocols which should answer all of your questions and help take you through our adoption process:

🐾  
🐾 **STEP 1: APPLICATION.** So you've fallen in LUV with one of our precious pups. Who can blame you? We DO have the cutest pups around, if we say so ourselves - (*guess we just did!* 😊) If you haven't already done so, you will next submit an Adoption Application, either through the petfinder link, via facebook or at our website [www.mustluvdogs.org](http://www.mustluvdogs.org). This is a short, no obligation, application to help us decide if our pup will be a good fit for your home and family.

🐾  
🐾 **STEP 2: REVIEW & APPROVAL.** Once you hit the "submit" button, our little internet elves receive said application and our amazing Due Diligence Coordinator begins processing it. She may check out your social media, call your vet/personal references, look through that magical google camera to see your backyard fence, and even call your sister's aunt's cousin to ask what you were like in the 3rd grade. Just kidding! LOL 😊 All jokes aside, we are ONLY interested in anything pertaining to your pet ownership and vet history, as well as your home setup as it relates to owning a pup (i.e. fence, apartment dog areas, etc.). We take privacy seriously and only those few officers who are involved in making application decisions will see your application. After all information has been collected, our Director and Due Diligence Coordinator will discuss the application. We then give the foster parent a basic outline of the applicant's family structure and home situation, including existing pets, and get their input before we make a final decision. We look for 3 main factors in making the decision: 1. Applicant's pet ownership & vet history; 2. Home setup (i.e. fence, dog parks, etc.) 3. Family makeup (i.e. children's ages, other pets, etc.). Note: Lack of vet history or other deficits don't necessarily mean a denial. We understand that everyone has to start somewhere. However, please remember that it is our job to be the voice of the pup and despite the fact that we truly hate to disappoint humans, we will ALWAYS make the decision that we feel is best for the dog's safety & well being, at our sole discretion.



**STEP 3: CONTACT & MEET AND GREET.** If all goes well, you will be contacted with the great news! You're gonna have a baby!!!! Don't panic, obviously we are talking "fur-baby". After approval, you'll hear from either the pup's foster parent OR one of our MLD officers to arrange a meet-n-greet between you, your family, the pup, and any other furbabies currently in your home, if desired. We like to keep this in a neutral location so everyone will be at ease. Many times, we meet at the PetSense pet store in Zachary, OR in the case of meeting other fur babies, we may prefer to meet at one of the local dog parks. This allows the pups to run and play so that we can all see the interaction between the pup and your other fur-family members. In a perfect world, we'd love to set up a few playdates to give the pup time to adjust and know you a bit better before sending them off to a new, unfamiliar home. Practically speaking however, as an all volunteer organization, it is sometimes simply not feasible to do this. We always ask the foster family to bring the pups' favorite blankie and chew toy, as well as a ziploc of their current food and any medications they may need, **JUST IN CASE** things go amazingly well at the meet-n-greet! **MOST** of the time, if all parties agree that it seems to be a good fit, we will allow you to take the pup home directly from this meet-n-greet. However, please remember that some of our pups are more skittish or anxious due to their backgrounds. Depending on their personalities and reaction, we can't promise they will go home with you that first day. Some of our pups need to do a few playdates before sending them home for a sleepover. Please don't promise the kiddos a pajama party with smores for that day until we know for sure!



**STEP 4: TAKE YOUR NEW PUP HOME!** IF you are allowed to take your sweet fur-baby home for the very first time, please make sure to have a safe, quiet place for your new pup to retreat when he needs to withdraw (i.e. kennel, laundry room, etc.). Think of this area as the pup's own "room" in your home. (*TIP: A great tip for the beginning is to cover a kennel with a blanket and leave the door open, allowing the pup to come and go into it, at will. Spraying a lavender scent in it will also create a very calming sensation that the pup may begin to associate with quiet. Many pet stores sell lavender spray specifically for dogs.*) Please understand that these changes are a lot for your new little buddy to process. Pups are no different than we are, in that respect. Most pups will settle in nicely and become that beloved family member and loyal friend you've always dreamed of; however, please give them time to adjust. Remember the "rule of threes". Studies show that it takes an adopted dog, **♥3 days to relax, ♥3 weeks to adjust to new routines & ♥ 3 months to begin to feel at home.** Please be patient with your new pup if they don't immediately behave as you thought they would. We can't expect them to be as excited as we are. They are frightened, in an unfamiliar place, and with unfamiliar faces. Remember that most of our pups were previously abandoned or dumped by a human. It may take time for them to trust that you have their best interests at heart. If you patiently, slowly and consistently show your love and kindness, they will be your best friend in no time! If they snarl or bark at you in the beginning, it is simply their defensive behavior. It's best just to turn your back and ignore the bad behavior altogether at the beginning. Leave the room and let

them out or get into their kennel. After a while, you could get a squeaky toy or ball and begin quietly playing with it within hearing distance of the pup. Chances are, the pup's curiosity will get the better of him, which may lead to them finding you to join in on the play. Also, keep setting out their food and water in an area that the pup can get to. They won't go hungry! Let patience rule the day! Soon this behavior will be a forgotten memory.



**STEP 5: ADOPTION CONTRACT & ADOPTION FEE.** After a few days, we will reach out to see how things are going. If things are going well, and the pup is a good fit, you will next receive a text message from "**Shelter Luv**". This is our software group. (NOTE: If you have text "tabs" on your cell phone, it may pop up in the unfamiliar caller section.) Once you open the text from Shelter Luv on your mobile phone (or other electronic device), there will be a link which opens the \*Adoption Contract, as well as payment processing for the Adoption Fee. *\*(Please read over the Adoption Contract prior to signing it. It's a standard rescue contract and you can find a short list of main ideas below.)* If you have any questions on this process, please let us know. Once you have reviewed all of the information, you will be able to sign the contract directly on the screen of your electronic device, as well as process your adoption fee payment.



**STEP 6: POST ADOPTION & MICROCHIP.** Once you complete the contract and payment, we will automatically receive notification that the adoption is complete. We will then email you copies of the adoption contract, payment receipt, as well as a separate email containing your post-adoption packet, which includes all medical records, microchip number, spay/neuter voucher (if applicable) among other things. Your pups' microchip number and further microchip information will be included in your post-adoption email packet. Also, you will soon receive a separate email from the microchip company, "**Found Animals**" transferring the microchip ownership to you. Please follow the directions from Found Animals in order to accept the transfer. *(Note: If you don't receive the email from Found Animals within 2-3 days of contract, please check your spam folder. If it's not there, please let us know via email to: [mustluvadogs.org@gmail.com](mailto:mustluvadogs.org@gmail.com))*



**STEP 7: LUV YOUR PUP!** LUV your new furbaby & don't forget to share photos with us as OFTEN AS POSSIBLE! *(You can text them to: 225-252-3029 OR email them to us at: [mustluvadogs.org@gmail.com](mailto:mustluvadogs.org@gmail.com))* We LUV to get random photos of our former MLD pups in the days, months or even years following adoption. We sometimes post them on our social media pages since we have lots of folks who follow our pups and enjoy getting updates on them. As you can imagine, rescue can be a hard thing and we often see very sad things. Nothing makes us smile more during a sad day, when unexpectedly, we receive some updated photos from a former MLD pup! It really brightens our day and is a good reminder of why we do this very important work. So, there is NO SUCH THING as over-sharing where our former rescue babies are concerned so PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH!

THANK YOU again for adopting, rather than shopping!

Cindy Shotwell, Founder/Director

**Must Luv Dogs Rescue**

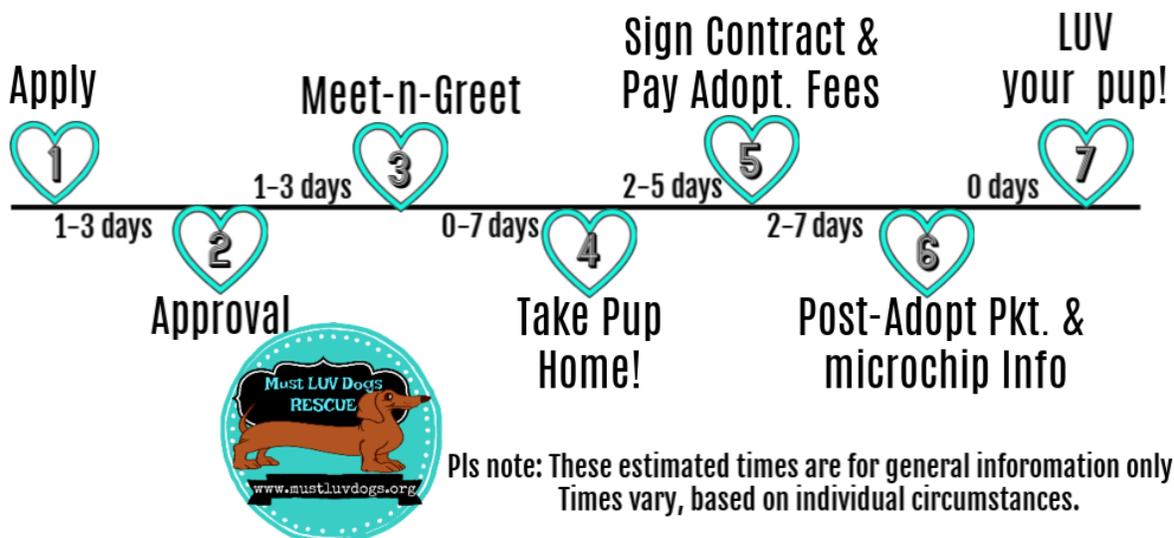
a 501(c)3 non-profit rescue organization

[www.mustluvdogs.org](http://www.mustluvdogs.org)

\*Adoption Contract. Please read the contract in completion. It's a pretty standard rescue contract. In addition to others, please be aware of the following specific agreements contained in this contract:

- ♥The pup will live inside of your home and be treated as a part of your family.
- ♥The pup will NEVER be left outside at night or during the day if nobody is at home. Adopter acknowledging that many dogs are stolen from private homeowner yards while owners are not home.
- ♥You agree to keep the pups vaccines and monthly heartworm prevention up-to-date for the rest of the pup's life.
- ♥You agree that if for any reason whatsoever, for the rest of the pup's life, you are no longer able to care for the pup, you are obligated to contact MLD Rescue, and agree to give us thirty (30) days to find another approved family for the pup, or take the pup back into our foster care program.

**7 STEPS TO ADOPTION TIMELINE**



Pls note: These estimated times are for general information only. Times vary, based on individual circumstances.