

Doberman Assistance, Rescue & Education (DAR&E)

Typical Volunteer Tasks

DAR&E is a volunteer-driven group that communicates requests for help and organizes activities by general email to the group at large. There are many different types of volunteer activities that need to be fulfilled, but volunteers get to select which ones they want to help out with. This way, each volunteer can engage in activities they like and devote as much time as they are able to contribute to the dogs without overstepping themselves. Here are some usual volunteer tasks...

Fostering: All of our dogs spend a minimum of 10 days in foster care before they are available for adoption. It allows foster parents to get to know the dog and see if there are any issues that need to be addressed with the adopters. This knowledge helps foster parents find the best match of all the currently approved adopters for that dog. We can never have too many foster homes! There is also a Foster Home Orientation Program that helps new foster volunteers learn DAR&E's policies and procedures before they actually begin fostering. If you are interested but hesitant, please talk to us about it!

Transports: This is an ongoing job; DAR&E frequently needs to pick up dogs from shelters and take them to veterinarians who work with us. Later, that same dog will need to get to a waiting foster home. Occasionally, we need someone to meet an owner who is turning a dog in to DAR&E. If you're volunteering to get to know the dogs and help them one-on-one (but are unable to foster), this is a great way to go! It gives you hands-on time with the rescued dogs and the more transporting volunteers we have, the better DAR&E can strategically plan how to rescue more dogs who are truly in need.

Homevisits: Once individuals who wish to adopt complete their Adoption Application, a DAR&E volunteer takes on the task of contacting the adopter for more information and visiting their home. The home visit volunteer uses a document to guide them with what information is desired (fence, kids, other pets current and past, adopter's experience level, and much more). They will also call to check vet and personal references for the applicant. Finally, the home visitor fills out a report form that helps DAR&E match up a foster dog with a forever home. Most volunteers choose to do home visits that are within a reasonable drive from their home.

NOTE: We always encourage newer volunteers to tag along on one or two home visits with a more experienced volunteer in order to learn technique and become comfortable with asking and answering difficult questions and evaluating homes.

Fundraising: Contrary to public perception, adoption fees do not begin to cover the cost of the basic vet care, spay/neuters, and boarding costs incurred in the rescue process. When a special needs dog requires our help, the costs increase exponentially. This means our fundraising efforts are very important. We have a committee of volunteers that spearhead these efforts (and anyone who wants to can join this committee). Most volunteers do get involved in some aspect of fundraising along the way. Without fundraising, we could not bring in the next dog, or the next. It is vital if we want to continue rehabilitating and rehoming dogs. The Fundraising committee is always open to new ideas and people who are willing to help put those ideas into action.

Events: Many events are fundraising events...dog washes, bake sales, car washes, and such. Other events spread the word out about what DAR&E does, give us opportunities to educate the public, and sometimes find new volunteers or adopters...these are local dog events like dog walks, dog shows, etc. Events are one of the most rewarding ways to spend a weekend day because you find yourself talking constantly about your favorite breed of dog (Dobermans!) to a wide variety of people. Folks love to share their own personal dog & Dober-stories as well as ask questions about a breed they may never have considered adopting before. Education is a part of DAR&E's name for this purpose; we can't "change" people's minds about the breed – we can only give them new information to digest! The best part? The socializing your dogs get to do!

Hospice Care Fostering: This falls into the category of fostering, but Hospice Care dogs potentially stay with the foster & DAR&E for the rest of their life. Typically, they are special needs dogs unadoptable due to health reasons. These dogs are special in many ways and they are the ones we tend to hold dearest to our hearts. If you feel you can't foster because you would fall in love with every dog, please consider this as an option instead and give one dog the benefit of your affection for the remainder of their life.

Call-Back Volunteers: These volunteers call the adopters at various intervals *after* they've adopted a dog. We've found that if we keep in close contact with the adopter and they have an issue, we can help them learn early on how to resolve it which avoids having things escalate to the point that the dog is returned. The goal of these volunteers is to check in on the dogs' welfare, be a contact for the adopters and connect them with whatever resources DAR&E can offer to help their dog integrate well into their home.

These are the most common activities needed on a daily basis to keep rehoming dogs, but often there are email posts asking for volunteers to help with other types of tasks. If you are interested in participating in any of these, or if you are interested in helping us organize these activities, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator and we will get you involved!