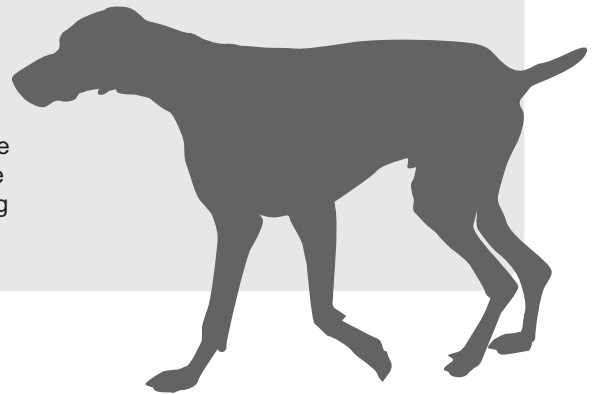


program for fearful behavior



Congratulations! **You have adopted a new family member.**

As your adoption counselor discussed with you, your dog displayed significant fearful behavior, especially around humans, while in the shelter. **What does this mean?** It means that your dog may be more likely to exhibit fearful behavior around new people, places, and things. While we conducted a successful behavior modification program with the dog while he was with us, we suggest that you continue this work with the dog when you take him home. Fearful behavior is both treatable and manageable. We suggest you follow the plan below, beginning the moment your dog comes into your home.



the plan:

- **Be aware of your body language at all times with your dog.** Keep a sideways stance to your dog and avoid eye contact as a frontal stance and eye contact can increase his fearful responses. Be sure new people coming to your home are aware of their own body posture. Remember that a forward posture can communicate aggression to your dog and increase his fear.
- **Ignore all of your dog's fearful behavior.** By trying to help him through his fear by petting and talking to him, you'd actually be rewarding the behavior and increasing the likelihood of him repeating the behavior again in the future.
- **Keep tasty treats around your home, especially for the first few weeks living with your new friend.** You will want to give him treats when he approaches you, other family members, or decides to explore different rooms or items in your home. It is important for him to learn that something good happens when he chooses to explore novel people or things.
- **When strangers come to your home, give them tasty treats to give to the dog if he chooses to come over to sniff them.** If the dog chooses to not approach new people, he should be ignored.
- **If your dog is dog-friendly, arrange for him to go for walks with other dogs who will give him an added level of confidence on the street.**

If you are unable to do the preceding exercises, we suggest you choose another dog to adopt. While we cannot 100 percent predict the future, research does show that dogs who display fearful behavior in the shelter are more likely to display the same behaviors in the home. We want you and your dog to create a strong bond early-on post-adoption and for your dog to have the opportunity to be able to work through his issues. Please take the time to ask yourself if you are ready to take on a bit of a project.