



Intake-to-Placement: Virtual Meet-and-Greets

Guide developed as part of the Competitive Pet Placement Project

What Are Virtual Meet-and-Greets?

A virtual meet is a remote video call where potential adopters can interact with a pet through a screen, ask questions, and learn more about the pet's behavior, personality, and care needs. Virtual meets are highly encouraged because they increase accessibility to meet pets eligible for foster or adoption without traveling to a specific shelter location and offer the chance for adopters to see the pet in a more relaxed, home environment. Adopting from a foster home in-person isn't always easy and it can be difficult to align schedules, delaying when the foster and adopter can meet and potentially resulting in an adopter choosing to pursue a pet elsewhere. Virtual meet-and-greets reduce barriers and increase the ability to meet a pet quickly and, in the case of foster, a home environment showcases a pet in the best, most realistic light.

How Organizations Can Begin Implementing a Virtual Meet and Greet Process


1. Identify where the organization may benefit from integrated virtual meet-and-greets
 - a. Adoption from foster
 - b. Foster-to-foster transfers
 - c. Foster from on-site pets
 - d. Adoption from on-site pets
 - e. Increased visibility for specific populations of pets, such as long-stays
2. Identify who will conduct the meet and greets
 - a. On-site
 - i. Staff and/or Volunteer Matchmakers
 - ii. Pet care teams
 - iii. Behavior teams
 - b. Foster parents
3. Identify technology needs
 - a. Computer or phone with internet access and/or cell service
 - b. [Appointment scheduling platform](#)
 - i. Creating a process to formally schedule appointments can improve the flow of completing virtual meet and greets and ensuring staff and volunteer assignments are in alignment with demand and capacity.
 - c. Virtual meeting platform - *May vary by who is conducting the M&G*
 - i. [Google Meet](#)
 - ii. [Zoom](#)
 - iii. [Facebook Messenger](#)
 - iv. [FaceTime](#)
4. Develop an organizational protocol for virtual meet-and-greet practices
 - a. [Sample Virtual Meet-and-Greet Protocol](#)
5. Develop a protocol for how to conduct virtual meet and greets for pets in foster.
 - a. Consider [these technology tips](#).
 - b. [Virtual foster meets process](#)



c. [Virtual foster meets tip sheet](#)

Tips for Virtual Foster Meets

Follow these steps to ensure your foster pet's virtual meet is a paw-sitive success!



Step 1: Ensure your phone or computer has a strong and stable signal. *TIP!* Connect to Wi-Fi when possible and check that your device is fully charged. Test your microphone, speakers, and camera, and run all program updates. Avoid hosting virtual meets in cars—with the exception of ones that involve you and your foster pet doing some epic carpool karaoke.

Step 2: Choose a location that is in a familiar setting with good lighting and low background noise. *TIP!* Prepare the location beforehand with your foster pet's favorite toys and treats. For pups who are easily distracted, consider a treat, puzzle, or stuffed KONG to keep them occupied while you gush about how friggin' awesome they are.

Step 3: Keep your set-up and surroundings simple, and avoid going overboard with fancy virtual backgrounds or filters. *TIP!* If your foster pet allows, accessorize with a cute collar or outfit to make a memorable first date impression.

Lead with the positives!
Respond with positive descriptions when speaking about your foster pet's history, behavior, and temperament. Think of it as the do's and don'ts of making a great first date impression—start light and keep it bright while everyone gets better acquainted!



d. [Sample: Create a Foster FAQ](#)

6. Train relevant staff, volunteers, and foster caregivers
 - a. Host a Q&A for the staff and volunteers that may be asked to participate
 - b. Consider the implementation of [regular foster communications](#) encouraging the use of this new process.
 - c. For fosters who are learning how to conduct virtual meetings, offer for an experienced staff member or volunteer to attend the call for support
7. Determine a method for tracking the success rate of virtual meet-and-greets
 - a. Example: Record how many virtual meetings result in an adoption or foster placement as compared to the total number of meetings conducted
8. Develop a process for completing a virtual adoption to include signing digital paperwork
 - a. Digital solutions: [DocuSign](#), [HelloSign](#), [PandaDoc](#), [AdobeSign](#).
9. Consider the various [communication channels](#) that should share the new or improved virtual meet-and-greet process and how to participate.



Supporting Resources

- [Meet-and-Greet Experiences that May Impact Dog and Cat Adoption](#) - ASPCApro
- [12 Technology Tips for Virtual Meet-and-Greets](#) - ASPCApro
- [Remote Adoption/Foster Protocol](#) - American Pets Alive
- [Virtual Adoption Resources](#) - ASPCApro
- [How to Run a Virtual Adoption Event](#) - ASPCApro
- [Conversation-based Adoptions](#) - ASPCApro
- [ASPCA Los Angeles Virtual Meet and Greet Example Video](#) - ASPCApro