

Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League

---

# Volunteer Handbook



© Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League, inc.

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

Last updated: 04/22

---

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>	Other Forms You Might Need	20
Who is MAGDRL?	1	<b>Conducting a Phone Interview</b>	<b>26</b>
How Do I Start Volunteering?	2	How to Conduct a Phone Interview	26
<b>Evaluating an OTI Dane</b>	<b>4</b>	Introducing MAGDRL: What to say	27
How to schedule and perform an evaluation for an Owner Turn-In Dane	4	How to tell if the family is not a suitable adoption candidate	28
Evaluation dos and don'ts	6	Phone Interview Checklist	31
Why an evaluation should be completed in the owner's home	7	<b>Conducting a Vet Check</b>	<b>32</b>
What to do when things go wrong	8	How to conduct a vet check	32
<b>Evaluating a Shelter Dane</b>	<b>9</b>	What may be a red flag?	32
How to Schedule and Perform a Shelter Evaluation	9	What is a good indicator?	33
Evaluation dos and don'ts	11	Vet Check Checklist	33
What to do when things go wrong	11	<b>Conducting a Home Check</b>	<b>34</b>
Shelters & Behavior	12	What purpose does a home check serve?	34
A Word about Shelters & Rescue Organizations	12	How to conduct a home check	34
Shelter Evaluation Checklist	13	What to address during the home check	36
<b>Transporting a Dane</b>	<b>14</b>	Topics to Discuss	37
Transporting a Rescued Dane	14	Home Check Checklist	39
Transport Checklist	19	<b>Meeting &amp; Greeting at Events</b>	<b>40</b>
Transportation Tips	20	What Is a Meet & Greet?	40
		Attending a Meet & Greet (with or without your Dane)	40

---

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE :  
TABLE OF CONTENTS

M&G etiquette and your Dane	41	Questions about Great Danes	51
M&G Events	42	MAGDRL's Fencing Policy	54
All-Breed Shows & Special Events	43	Basic Behavioral Questions	56
<b>Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>Links to Online Information</b>	<b>58</b>
Questions about Great Dane Rescue	48	MAGDRL-Specific Links	58
Questions about the Adoption Process	50	<b>Fostering for MAGDRL</b>	<b>59</b>
		What Is a Foster Home?	59

---

## Section

# 1

## Introduction

*Welcome to the wonderful world of volunteering for Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League! This section provides a basic overview of MAGDRL as well as a list of what is included in this packet.*

### Who is MAGDRL?

The Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League (MAGDRL), Inc., was organized in 1979 to serve the Mid-Atlantic region. The organization is a D.C. Corporation and has a charitable tax exemption under § 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

MAGDRL is staffed completely by volunteers. Like all humane groups, MAGDRL is in the unique position of helping both humans and pets. In our case, the pets are Great Danes and mixed Dane dogs, and the people are all those who have or want the companionship of this breed or, often, just dogs in general.

### What Do We Do?

#### MAGDRL helps people to:

Determine the right breed of dog for their lifestyle.

Find healthy companionable Danes who fit their circumstances.

Find loving replacement homes for Danes they can no longer keep.

Become knowledgeable about the care and training of their Dane.

Resolve Dane physical/behavioral problems.

Overcome their grief at the loss of their beloved pet.

Stretch their tax dollar by assuming the Dane burden from public shelters.

#### **MAGDRL helps Danes by:**

Providing for the rescue and care of those who have been abandoned, neglected, and/or abused by their previous owners.

Spaying/neutering and providing any medical treatment necessary to return the Dane to good health.

Training/socializing to ensure that the Danes in rescue can adapt to new homes.

Placing rescued Danes with people who will provide secure, loving, and healthy homes.

To do this, MAGDRL screens the applicant and the home, checks references and enters into a legally binding agreement with the adopting family. We require that the rescued Dane be kept inside the house: a member of the family.

### **How Do I Start Volunteering?**

In many areas, you can join a local list group that provides a medium for discussing events, issues, ideas and more. This list is where opportunities for volunteering are posted. For instance, requests to help with phone interviews and home checks may be posted, asking for a volunteer to step forward and help. If you see a post and want to help, please respond by emailing the group or the individual requesting help.

An enjoyable way to get involved slowly is to attend a Meet & Greet with other volunteers, or an event. It is a great way to casually observe how things work and what kind of questions to expect. Appendix A includes a Frequently Asked Questions section along with answers that are appropriate as a representative of MAGDRL. Please sit back and observe for a few events before you jump right in with answers—we want to present a unified front, which means we should all be answering questions with similar answers.

Volunteers are also required to become MAGDRL members. The annual per calendar year volunteer membership dues are \$10 / \$15 per couple. Members will receive a subscription to MAGDRL's newsletter.

Volunteers for an area report to the area coordinator and receive assignments and direction from the coordinator. To help in another area, please contact your area coordinator first and ask to help.

If you have any questions, you can ask your area coordinator. Do not wait for us to ask you to help in a certain area, just jump right in and volunteer!

## Section 1: Introduction

This section provides basic information about MAGDRL and provides an overview of the contents of the Volunteer Packet.

## Section 2: Evaluating an OTI (Owner Turn-In) Dane

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about evaluating a Dane being turned-in by his owners.

## Section 3: Evaluating a Shelter Dane

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about evaluating a Dane at a shelter.

## Section 4: Transporting a Dane

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about transporting a Dane.

## Section 5: Phone Interviews

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about conducting phone interviews for prospective adopters.

## Section 6: Vet Checks and Personal References

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about checking veterinary references and personal references for a prospective adopter.

## Section 7: Home Visits

This section provides a checklist, a how-to section and information about visiting the home of a prospective adopter.

## Section 8: Meet and Greets/Events

This section provides information about starting and conducting meet and greets as well as participating in other public events.

## Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

This section includes the answers to questions we're commonly asked, whether it be during a phone interview, home check or event.

## Appendix B: Links to Online Information

This section provides a list of links to online information.

**Section**

**2**

## Evaluating an OTI Dane

*Evaluating an owner turn-in (OTI) Dane requires you to travel to the owner's home to meet the Dane, complete an evaluation form and submit the information online.*

### How to schedule and perform an evaluation for an Owner Turn-In Dane

1. Schedule the evaluation, confirm the Dane has a current rabies certification before scheduling any evaluation.

For home evaluations, the evaluation should be completed at the home where the dog is staying.

Please make it clear to the owner that an evaluation is required before we can even accept the Dane into our program. You will not be taking the Dane with you when you leave the evaluation. Explain that we will complete everything just as soon as possible and ask that they be patient with our process. We will be actively seeking a foster home to place the Dane if they meet the qualifications to come into rescue. The coordinator will call the owner as soon as all the information has been collected to advise them if the Dane has been accepted into rescue and the time-line for the surrender to MAGDRL.

2. Evaluate the Dane, review the in-depth evaluation form prior to performing an evaluation.

It is best and safest to have company along. Don't go alone to a stranger's home.

You want to evaluate how the Dane reacts to you coming into the home. Do not have them meet you outside with the Dane.

If the Dane is questionable with people coming in, have them put the Dane behind a barrier until the Dane settles. If you are uncomfortable having the barrier removed, end the evaluation.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Bring treats, note how the Dane accepts treats, if at all, and if they demonstrate any commands.

If the Dane is supposedly friendly with other dogs or cats, yet the family has them partitioned off, ask to see them interact together.

If the Dane is supposedly friendly with children, yet the family has them partitioned off, ask to see them interact together.

Have the owner put a slip-proof collar on the Dane and take the Dane for a walk. Best to have the owner remain inside.

You will need another volunteer with you to properly dog test the Dane. Start with both dogs on leash at least 20 feet apart and walk. Try and get close enough to determine if there are possible dog aggression issues or demonstrate good potential to be integrated. Never allow face-to-face meeting at first, and it is not necessary to have dogs completely interact.

If you are uncomfortable doing any of the items on the full evaluation form, do NOT proceed. Skip or discontinue the evaluation altogether.

Try to casually find out more about the dog from the owner: how is he in public? ever walked through neighborhood? Ever exposed to kids? Cats? Other dogs? Of what age? Sex? What's he eating?

3. Explain the basic steps we take when accepting a new Dane into our program:

We evaluate to make sure that the Dane can be safely rehomed and so that we are more aware of any issues or problems the Dane may have. This is an important step in the process, since the more we know about a Dane, the better able we are to place him/her in a family where he/she can happily remain for the rest of their life.

If the Dane is adoptable, we will place in a foster home, where they will live with a family until adopted by the forever home. The foster will expose them to cats, dogs, kids, if possible, to see how they will react. The foster family will teach basic obedience and house manners.



MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Once the Dane is ready for adoption, the Dane will meet potential adopters that are deemed a good fit for the Dane's personality, temperament, and activity level. When matching a Dane with a family, we consider whether the Dane is good with kids, cats, dogs, other pets that the family may have, how energetic the Dane is and how active the family is, how much structure a Dane needs. If the Dane and the family seem to hit it off, the adoption is finalized, and the Dane goes home with his new family. We then offer post-adoption support and advice for the new family.

4. Go over the Surrender and Release form.

Leave the form with them to sign at a later date (most likely when the surrender is to take place or when a foster home is available).

Be very clear, they should not withhold any information regarding the Dane that would lead to an incident in the wrong foster home. This puts the Dane at risk as well as the foster family and the owner will be held liable.

Collect copies of all vet records and any other information pertaining to the Dane, including AKC or bills of sale.

If there are no vet bills or other docs pertaining to the Dane, ask for the vet's contact information so we can have the records released to us. This will be covered by the vet release that they sign on the surrender form.

5. Let them know that we'll be in touch with them as soon as possible to discuss the Dane and possibly to arrange transport.

## Evaluation dos and don'ts

*Don't* take the Dane home with you unless the Coordinator or Foster Team Lead clears you to do so.

**Do** explain the process, and stress that we are all volunteers. We want to help but they need to give us as much time as possible to arrange a safe place for the Dane.

*Don't* let the owner bully you into taking an inappropriate dog home. Refer to the first bullet in this section and repeat as necessary.

**Do** call your coordinator or the Foster Team Lead immediately if you have any questions. If you think the Dane is in physical danger or you are uncomfortable with something, excuse yourself for a minute and call.

### Why an evaluation should be completed in the owner's home

There are several reasons why a home evaluation is the best option when evaluating a Dane:

No matter how knowledgeable the evaluator is about Dane behavior, any dog acts differently in a strange environment than it does in his own. Most of the time, the behavior is better in a strange environment. At home, you can get a good read on the Dane by watching the interaction of the Dane with his family.

It is important to assess the living conditions of the Dane. This cannot be done if you don't go to the Dane's current home.

It is important to assess the way the Dane is treated by all family members, including children. Danes aren't the only ones who may be on their best behavior in a strange location.

It is important to gather as much eyewitness information as possible about the Dane, most of which is available at the home.

How to make yourself the most popular evaluator:

**Always bring small, soft treats with you. Ask the dog to perform the basics for treats.**

## What to do when things go wrong

Rule of thumb: Do not do anything you are uncomfortable with--ever.

### If the dog won't let you near him...

Don't push the issue. Is he leashed? Sometimes that can make a difference. Ask if he can be gated apart from you. Sit quietly; do not make direct eye contact. Notice and report position of ears and tail. Does he settle when off leash, after several minutes? What does owner have to say about behavior?

### If the dog is scared and backing away...

Do **NOT** approach. Never back a dog into a corner. Do not attempt to pet overhand--pet under chin, if at all possible. Sit quietly and let the dog relax and approach you. Do not make direct eye contact. Yawn and turn your head slightly--this indicates that you are not a threat to the dog.

### If the dog is living in unhealthy conditions or an abusive situation...

Continue with the evaluation. Tell them that a possible foster home just opened up this morning and you might be able to do something, but you need to check with your coordinator. Step outside and call your coordinator for direction.

### If the dog behaves aggressively...

Do not continue with the evaluation. Tell the owner that MAGDRL is unable to accept dogs that we cannot safely transport or place. Tell them that the coordinator will call to talk with them further.

**Section**

**3**

## Evaluating a Shelter Dane

*Evaluating a shelter Dane requires you to establish a relationship with the shelter, travel to the shelter to meet the Dane, complete an evaluation form and submit the information online.*

### How to Schedule and Perform a Shelter Evaluation

1. Introduce yourself to the Shelter Manager

Call and make yourself known the Manager. Tell him about your organization and ask if you can schedule a time to evaluate the Dane.

Never demand or be forceful. We need to establish a solid relationship with the shelter and coercion is not the answer.

Be professional and courteous: You represent a large reputable rescue organization.

2. Schedule the evaluation, make sure the Dane has a current rabies certification before you schedule anything. Please discourage the shelter from giving any vaccinations other than rabies. We do not want the Dane to be immunocompromised in an already stressful situation.

It's best to schedule the evaluation for a time other than peak adoption hours for the shelter. Sometimes the shelter will allow you to come in before the shelter opens or after it closes.

3. Check in at the front desk.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Bring the manager/volunteers on duty a copy of the shelter packet. This includes information about how we screen adopters and foster homes, provides samples of our forms, and includes articles about Danes that they may copy and give to adopters.

4. Evaluate the Dane.

Go through the evaluation checklist.

If you are uncomfortable doing any of the items, do NOT proceed. Skip or discontinue the evaluation altogether.

If the Dane is supposedly friendly with other dogs or cats, ask to test him with a large and small dog (on leash) and in the cattery. Most shelters are happy to oblige.

Try to find out as much about the Dane as possible: why was he turned in? Living with kids, cats, dogs? Problems? What was he eating? Any health problems? May we contact the owners to find out more? (Sometimes they will allow us to do this).

5. Explain the basic steps we take when accepting a new Dane into our program:

We evaluate to make sure that the Dane can be safely rehomed and so that we are more aware of any issues or problems the Dane may have. This is an important step in the process, since the more we know about a Dane, the better able we are to place him/her in a family where he/she can happily remain for the rest of his/her life.

If the Dane is adoptable, we will place them in a foster home, where they will live with a family until they are adopted by their forever home. The foster will expose them to cats, dogs, kids, if possible, to see how they will react. The foster family will teach them basic obedience and house manners.

We will then introduce the Dane to an approved family who matches the Dane's needs and energy level. When matching a Dane with a family, we consider whether the Dane is good with kids, cats, dogs, other pets that the family may have, how energetic the Dane is and how active the family is, how much structure a Dane needs. If the Dane and the family seem to hit it off, the adoption is finalized, and the Dane goes home with the new family. We then offer post-adoption support and advice for the new family.

### Shelter Paperwork & Fees

We do not require shelters to sign a Surrender and Release form, but they may require you to sign for the Dane. This is perfectly acceptable.

Do not pay any fees without direction from the chapter coordinator. Typically we do not pay adoption fees to shelters.

6. Collect copies of all vet records and any other information pertaining to the Dane, including AKC or bills of sale.
7. Let them know that we'll be in touch with them as soon as possible to discuss the Dane and possibly to arrange transport. We will work as fast as we can to place the Dane. We just need to figure out our best plan of action.

### Evaluation dos and don'ts

*Don't* take the Dane home with you unless the Coordinator or Foster Team Lead clears you to do so.

*Do* call you coordinator or the Foster Team Lead immediately if you have any questions. If you think the Dane is in physical danger or you are uncomfortable with something, excuse yourself for a minute and call you chapter coordinator.

### How to make yourself popular with strange dogs

Always bring small soft treats with you. Ask the dog to perform the basics for treats.

### What to do when things go wrong

Rule of thumb: Do not do anything you are uncomfortable with--ever.

#### If the Dane will not let you approach ...

Don't push the issue. Are they leashed? Sometimes that can make a difference. Sit quietly; do not make direct eye contact. Notice and report position of ears and tail. Does the Dane settle when off leash, after several minutes?

### If the Dane is scared and backing away...

Do NOT approach. Never back a dog into a corner. Do not attempt to pet the Dane unless the Dane does approach and is looking to be petted. Sit quietly and let the dog relax and approach you. Do not make direct eye contact.

### If the Dane is obviously unhealthy and in terrible condition...

Continue with the evaluation. Tell them that a possible foster home just opened up this morning and you might be able to do something, but you need to check with your coordinator. Step outside and call your coordinator for direction.

### If the Dane behaves aggressively...

Do not continue with the evaluation. Tell the shelter that MAGDRL is unable to accept dogs that we cannot safely transport or place. Tell them that the coordinator will call to talk with them further.

## Shelters & Behavior

It is difficult, if not downright impossible, to get an accurate read on a Dane in a shelter. Between the overwhelming noise and the distractions present, it is difficult to get a Dane focused enough to evaluate properly. We can only ask that you do your best without putting yourself in danger.

For the best evaluation in a shelter situation, ask to take the Dane outside or in a separate room, where distractions are fewer. Most shelters have some place to walk dogs or a visiting room that you can use. Ask if the Dane has been given any medication for anxiety. We cannot accurately evaluate a Dane that has been tranquilized, stop the evaluation and call you chapter coordinator.

## A Word about Shelters & Rescue Organizations

Some shelters do not want to work with rescues. This is unfair to us but true nonetheless. If we act with courtesy and professionalism at all times, make an effort to work with them as well as for the Dane, and make it difficult for them to find fault, we can slowly build a relationship of trust.

Even when we have a good relationship with a shelter, they will sometimes have a policy of trying to place the Dane themselves before calling us. While this is not an ideal scenario, it is one that we face with many shelters. We continue to work with them and can provide support for the Danes they adopt out. Leave information and brochures that they can provide to the adopters with the Dane when adopted (included as a separate packet). Remember that the shelter, too, is doing the best they can with limited resources.

## Shelter Evaluation Checklist

### Prerequisites

You must be a current active volunteer to evaluate a Dane.

Verbal or written approval of Coordinator or Team Lead to evaluate the Dane

### What You'll Need

Evaluation form (available at [http://www.magdrl.org/forms\\_brochures.htm](http://www.magdrl.org/forms_brochures.htm))

It is a good idea to have a business card (can be for your coordinator)

Some treats, A collar, slip or buckle, and a leash

Cell and home phone number for Coordinator or Team Lead

Camera (digital preferred) to take pictures of the Dane

Online form completed within 24 hours of evaluation (link at  
[http://www.magdrl.org/forms\\_brochures.htm](http://www.magdrl.org/forms_brochures.htm))

### What to Ask of the Shelter?

What vaccinations/medical care was provided to the Dane by the shelter?

Try to cat and dog test at the shelter.

If they will spay/neuter the Dane prior to us accepting him, if the Dane is at least 15 months or older.

If they can hold the Dane for a few days while we arrange foster care and transport.

### What to Leave Behind

Children. Do not take children with you when evaluating a Dane.

Other dogs. Do not take dogs when evaluating a Dane in a shelter. You don't want to expose your Dane to any health or physical hazards that may exist.

### Evaluation Tips

Always bring an extra leash and collar, just in case.

Write down mileage for tax purposes. Evaluation expenses are tax-deductible.

Take Dane out on a leash for a walk in a less busy area with room to move. Wait until he/she settles down a bit to begin the evaluation.



## Section

# 4

## Transporting a Dane

*Transporting a Great Dane for MAGDRL consists of signing a release form, keeping the Dane separate from other animals and children, and taking necessary precautions.*

## Transporting a Rescued Dane

### Introduction

Transporters must be aware of, and follow, the Transport checklist.

*A leash & slip-proof collar that will stay with the Dane from the shelter or previous owner to the foster home. Be prepared to leave it with the Dane at the foster home to be picked up later if necessary.*

Secure an *ID tag* on the collar that gives a telephone number to call if the Dane should get away from you. This tag doesn't need to be a MAGDRL tag. It can be yours, the shelters, or any other source with a readily answerable phone.

*A First-Aid kit.* The same as you would use for humans with the addition of a "stomach gas remedy," such as Gas-X or simethicone (the Gas-X thin strips are the best option), should the Dane begin showing signs of Bloat (panting, restlessness, head hanging down).

*A Barrier.* Either secure the Dane in the back of the vehicle with a tether that does not reach the front or use a barrier between the driver and the back of the vehicle. The Dane should always be tethered to prevent escape when a door is opened.

*Dog Treats.* Freeze-dried liver is a universal favorite, but also include some cheese or cooked chicken.

*A Supply of Bottled Water and a Water Dish.*

*Phone Numbers* for all people involved in the transport, in case of delays or other issues.

*The current rabies certificate. If you have a paper copy it goes with the Dane to the next transporter.*

*An old T-Shirt/Sock, well-worn by previous owner (as well as a toy), to go with the Dane to their new home. These can be used as “Common Threads” (no pun intended) to help the Dane adjust to new environments. Place these in the area the Dane will be transported in before you leave the home to assure, they’re in place before the Dane is.*

### **Young Children Should Not Be Part of a Transport**

Arrange to have your children and dog(s) cared for while you are transporting the Dane. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you bring your children or dog(s) along for the transport. Even if they are well-behaved and “dog-wise”, it is a liability, and they add an unnecessary stress factor. The only acceptable companion on a transport is another current active volunteer.

Plan to have plenty of time to get acquainted with the Dane at the place he/she is currently being kept (home, shelter, vet’s office – wherever). This can be as short as half an hour or as long as two hours – however long it takes to establish an initial comfort with the Dane. Remember, the Dane, not you, determines the amount of time needed.

### **Meeting the Dane to be transported**

Before you even meet the Dane, take a few minutes to talk to the caregiver he/she is most familiar with IN THE DANE’S SIGHT/HEARING. Anyone accompanying you should also be in on this discussion.

Have that caretaker place the slip-proof collar on the Dane. This collar is to remain on the Dane until the transport is complete and the Dane is safely inside the fosters home.

Have the caretaker remove him/her from the crate/run/room (wherever the Dane is being housed which he/she might feel attached to as his/her territory).

Have the caretaker bring the Dane to a more neutral, roomy space to meet him/her but DO NOT make the first advance to the Dane. Let him/her come to you. Use treats or your voice alone to affect this. Don’t be surprised if the Dane doesn’t take the treat. This is a sign of stress. You will just have to work harder (by voice and posture) to gain the Dane’s initial trust.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Once you and the caretaker think the Dane is fairly comfortable with you, take him/her for a walk around the facility if possible. If it is not possible, stay a while and talk to the Dane. When he/she seems comfortable enough, gently pet him/her. Above all, let the Dane be your guide, and don't rush him/her.

Once the Dane is comfortable with you, introduce him/her to your companion using the above procedures.

Check with the caretaker to determine when the Dane last defecated/urinated. If he/she defecated then he/she is usually fine for the journey. However, try to get the Dane to urinate before beginning the journey. Sometimes it is very difficult to get bitches to urinate on lead; they can usually hold it for hours. Give him/her the chance to urinate every time you stop for a while.

Offer the Dane a drink of water before he/she gets in the vehicle.

Have the caretaker put the Dane into the vehicle for you, if you are using a crate, take the leash off and keep it handy to get to in the front seat. Occasionally, a Dane is afraid of riding. It is best for the person that knows him/her best to find this out and persuade the Dane to get in. If a Dane is afraid of the crate you are using, leave it and pick it up on your return trip.

### Transporting the Dane

Once the Dane enters your car, you have become his/her caretaker. The responsibility for this Dane is now entirely yours. You can expect the Dane to be anxious, as we would be given a change in environment over which we have no control. Your **most important** job is to gain the Dane's acceptance. A car ride, given the close proximity of occupants, is a great opportunity to bond with the Dane – providing you ensure the Dane's security. To do this:

Make sure that you (and a companion if available) speak quietly, in "happy" non-shrill voices to each other and the Dane

If you use a radio/cassette/CD player, make sure the music is soft and soothing. Classical music – without marches – and soft rock stations are ideal. Loud, raucous music – particularly with heavy bass – is not.

Make sure the windows, if open, are high enough to prevent the Dane from putting his/her head out. Flying objects, including insects, can be extremely injurious to eyes, nose and ears. Additionally, Danes in the bonding process may become protective of the car. This way they can bark at passers-by but can't bite.

If you have to stop to let the Dane out for any reason, pull off the main road onto a quiet side street with little or no traffic. Make sure the leash is on his/her collar BEFORE you let that Dane out. Those that aren't traffic-wise may panic at the sound of passing vehicles and bolt.

If you have to stop to let one of yourselves out, be sure to park in a shaded area during the spring and fall. Remember that even these times of year, even though the temperature is pleasantly cool outside, the sun is still strong and can make the car unbearably hot inside. Do not leave the Dane alone unattended in the car.

### Transferring a Dane Mid-Journey

Use the same precautions that were taken when the Dane entered the first vehicle. Allow the second (and third etc.) to take some time to let the Dane become familiar with them before putting them into the vehicle.

#### **A Note to Transporters:**

Make sure that all toys/"common threads" are placed in the next transporters vehicle before the Dane. Hopefully, these will induce the Dane to, more willingly, get into a strange place.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, the additional transporters must take deliberate care to control both his/her body language and tone of voice in transferring the Dane. Because, as you know, dogs are keenly aware of these human behaviors, it is imperative that all transporters are relaxed and use a "happy" voice when encouraging a Dane into the new vehicle

### The End of the Journey

This is not a function of dropping the Dane off and running. It is the transfer of responsibility from you to the new home, be it foster, kennel, adopter or vet hospital. Therefore, to the extent possible, follow the rules for *Meeting the Dane to be Transported*. The Dane will be happier and so will you.

#### A Note to the Foster and Adopting Homes

Hopefully, you're familiar with the above rules for *Meeting the Dane to be Transported*. They're applicable to you too. There is an optimum order of introducing dogs into a new family, while the transporter is still there. Many of you know it, but for those that don't, here it is:

1. Select one adult to initially greet the Dane (usually the one that will have primary care of him/her). Have the transporter bring the Dane to the new family member. Let them take the leash. The leash should remain on the Dane for at least the first 24 hours.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

2. If there are other adults in the home, allow them to meet the Dane one-by-one. If there are older children (i.e.: over the age of puberty which dogs will accept as adults) introduce them one at a time using the same procedure. Then bring the Dane in and let him/her “sniff out the joint.” When he/she has explored, it’s time to introduce him/her to the existing family dog(s).
3. There are several good techniques for doing this but all essentially should be outdoors, in a neutral area. The Dane should be walked by one family member, or the transporter and a family member should walk the resident dog(s) one at a time. Walk at a safe distance and gradually decrease the distance allowing them to get close enough to smell butts once both dogs are relaxed.
4. When the dogs have settled down, now it is time to introduce the kids, using the same procedure as 1 and 2 above. If you have cats, make sure they have plenty of places to hide. The cats are going to determine when, where and how they greet the Dane – not the Dane.
5. Above all, for the first few days, don’t crowd the Dane. He/she is going to need time to settle in, so give him/her plenty of space to explore and let him/her do it, providing of course that he/she doesn’t inadvertently break a household rule which he/she must abide by, such as not getting on the furniture or into the trash. Use positive correction to let him/her immediately (yet gently and firmly) know that this behavior is a no-no. Although it is hard, don’t go to the Dane – call him/her and let the Dane come to you. If he/she doesn’t want to, don’t force it. The Dane will come, eagerly, as soon as he/she gets all the strange smells, sounds, rooms, furniture, household routines – and people – in a manageable order.

## Transport Checklist

### Prerequisites

The transporter must be a current active volunteer

An evaluation of the dog

A current rabies certification

### What You'll Need to Bring

A tether (not nylon) or crate to safely confine the Dane during transport

Some treats

A non-slip collar, and a leash

Patience

Cell and home phone numbers of everyone involved in the transport and appropriate chapter coordinator(s).

Surrender & Release form (just in case) (available at [http://www.magdrl.org/forms\\_brochures.htm](http://www.magdrl.org/forms_brochures.htm))

### **IMPORTANT**

Regardless of the evaluation previously completed on this Dane, if you are uncomfortable with the dog or feel in any way unable to handle the dog, do NOT complete the transport. Call your coordinator to discuss the next step.

### What You'll Need to Collect

Any forms required (ALL VET RECORDS and other docs about Dane, including proof of rabies)

MAGDRL MUST have a signed Surrender & Release form, or the Dane is not legally ours. The release form must be signed at the time of the surrender by both the surrendering owner and the MAGDRL representative doing the surrender.

### What to Expect

A scared and confused Dane

Changes to the schedule, delays

### What to Leave Behind

Children. It is against MAGDRL policy to bring children on a transport.

Do not take other dogs.

### Transportation Tips

Do not force a scared and shaking Dane into or out of the car. Coax him out using treats. Do not reach for a Dane who is backed into a corner—again, coax the Dane out into the open.

Always bring an extra leash and collar, just in case.

Write down mileage for tax purposes. Transportation expenses are tax-deductible.

Consider buying a bottle of Bach's Rescue Remedy for transports. It is a flower essence that "takes the edge off" some dogs and helps them to cope better with the chaos. Four drops on the tongue or in the water supply and the Dane is good to go. RR can be found at most health food stores.

### Other Forms You Might Need

Evaluating a Shelter or OTI Dane, Sections 3 and 4.

## MAGDRL Transport Checklist

Detailed transport guidelines are provided in Section 4 in the MAGDRL Volunteer Handbook here: [http://www.magdrl.org/forms/magdrl\\_volunteer\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.magdrl.org/forms/magdrl_volunteer_handbook.pdf) . This document provides a brief checklist of hints, tips, and reminders for MAGDRL transport volunteers.

### General Reminders:

\_\_\_ 1. For insurance reasons, only MAGDRL members whose membership is current may volunteer for a transport leg. A non-MAGDRL member may not ride along to assist our volunteer.

\_\_\_ 2. Children under the age of 21 YO may not participate in a MAGDRL Dane transport.

\_\_\_ 3. When you map out your pickup/drop-off points, if possible choose safe and known meeting places. If the exchange area is unknown, use Google Maps or MapQuest to identify a business parking lot, hotel parking lot, shopping center parking lot, or well-lit community park.

\_\_\_ 4. Transports are generally for single dogs, pairs turned in together, or puppies. Unless the transported Danes have previously lived together, MAGDRL will not transport more than one Dane at a time. In cases where a multi-Dane transport is being set up, the Transport Coordinator will confirm the situation to ensure that the transport will proceed safely.

### Pre-transport Checklist:

\_\_\_ 1. Take your cell phone with you. Set up a group text with all transporters to communicate during the transport. Include the appropriate chapter coordinators in the group text.

\_\_\_ 2. Ask your pick-up/drop off transport teammates for their tag number and description of the vehicle they plan to drive.



MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

\_\_\_ 3. Make sure your vehicle is in good condition, has working climate control, and is capable of making the round-trip drive.

\_\_\_ 4. Bring your GPS system if you have one.

\_\_\_ 5. Bring a folded tarp or other waterproof sheet. These can either be placed on the floor of your vehicle with blankets or towels on top, or if they get sick they can be used to cover your vehicle's floor so the dog doesn't have to lie in it.

\_\_\_ 6. For the safety of all, the best transport vehicle setup is to have a barrier between the driver and the orphan. If that is not feasible, anchor (bungee, zip-ties, tie-downs, etc.) an x-pen or crate section between the front passenger seat and the transport compartment.

\_\_\_ 7. Bring spare Dane-size collars or choke chains. NOTE: They may be needed until the Dane reaches its destination. Put your name on them if you want them returned to you.

\_\_\_ 8. Bring spare leashes including at least one sturdy 6 ft leash for tethering the orphan inside the vehicle.) Some transporters leave leashes securely tethered inside their vehicle to make it easy to just clip a leash to the orphan's collar hook. NOTE: They may be needed until the Dane reaches its destination. Put your name on them if you want them returned to you.

\_\_\_ 9. Bring a water dish and fresh water

\_\_\_ 10. Take an emergency first aid kit.

\_\_\_ 11. If you have Rescue Remedy, it's a good idea to bring it to use with highly stressed dogs.

\_\_\_ 12. Bring a medium sized crate if transporting puppies.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

\_\_\_ 13. Take along towels or rags for cleanup. Bring plastic grocery bags to put soiled rags into if needed.

\_\_\_ 14. Music soothes the savage beast! Playing classical or relaxation music will help keep the transported dog calm during its journey.

\_\_\_ 15. Bring treats (to get their attention! )

**Transport start to finish:**

\_\_\_ 1. If the orphan appears aggressive, growls or lunges at you, stop the transport. Contact the the appropriate Chapter Coordinator and ask for a decision on how to proceed. In all cases, the safety of our volunteers is more important than finishing the transport.

\_\_\_ 2. A current rabies certificate must be provided. If the transported Dane is over 5 MO and does not have a rabies certificate (or a written veterinary waiver), you MUST refuse to transport the Dane. Make sure all paperwork is placed in a spill proof container – plastic grocery bag, Ziploc bag, etc.

\_\_\_ 3. Make sure to get a few days' worth of the Dane's current food; if not available, obtain the brand/formula for the foster home.

\_\_\_ 4. Get any medications that the Dane is on so they can be transported with the dog to its foster home.

\_\_\_ 5. It's a good idea to bring something that smells like where the Dane is coming from – rag, towel, toy, etc. to help them settle in their foster home on arrival.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

\_\_\_ 6. The transporter should make sure they have secure non-slip collar and leash on the Dane(s) being handed off to them.

\_\_\_ 7. Make sure the transported Dane has on a MAGDRL tag that will stay with the dog until it reaches its destination. Talk to the chapter coordinator to obtain a MAGDRL tag in time for the transport.

\_\_\_ 8. Always tether the transported Dane's leash to a permanent fixture inside your vehicle - floor latch, seatbelt latch, etc. Give them enough slack to lie down but not enough for them to become tangled in the leash or to reach the driver.

\_\_\_ 9. If you arrive at your meet-up place to find that it is not well-lit, has heavy foot traffic or is in a bad area, wait for your transport teammate to arrive and ask them to follow you to a safer area before transferring the Dane.

\_\_\_ 10. Never open the door of the vehicle without first having the Dane's leash in hand --- even if the Dane was left tethered. It's not uncommon for them to chew the leash during transport.

\_\_\_ 11. Each transporter must make sure to hand off paperwork, food, meds, etc. with the dog at the next exchange point.

\_\_\_ 12. Make sure to give transported dogs water and a potty break every 2 -3 hours.

\_\_\_ 13. Never, ever turn your back on an unleashed Dane in your vehicle if a door is open. Have your hands on the leash at all times whenever a vehicle door is open. Do not grab the dog's collar since some dogs react badly to being held by the collar.

\_\_\_ 14. If the Dane is unwilling to exit the vehicle, do not force them. They are likely stressed, so try these suggestions:

Keep your voice light and friendly, and try luring them out with food or treats;

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

- If you see them getting more stressed, go away for a few minutes, then come back and try again;
- Try moving the vehicle to a different location with more/less light, more green space, less foot traffic, etc;
- If available, ask someone of the opposite gender to try coaxing them out;
- If there are two people available, have one hold the leash tight and the other should gently slide the bedding out of the vehicle with the dog on it (stop if the dog gets upset!)

\_\_\_ 15. If a transported Dane has a medical emergency, contact the appropriate Chapter Coordinator.

\_\_\_ 16. Above all, proceed with caution. Volunteer safety is our first priority, so never put yourself

in harm's way. Contact the appropriate Chapter Coordinator if the Dane shows aggressive behavior with the transporter, if severe weather is encountered or there are safety concerns during the transport.

**Transport end:**

\_\_\_ 1. As each transporter finishes their leg, they should text the group so they can alert others on the transport team if necessary. This helps with timing, reporting traffic conditions, and identifying problems during their leg (coughing, diarrhea, unusual behavior, barking, etc.)

\_\_\_ 2. When you get home, as a safety measure it's a good idea to disrobe and shower before you touch your own dogs.

\_\_\_ 3. If there were symptoms of transmittable disease (runny nose, coughing, sneezing), use disinfectant to spray/wipe down the inside of the vehicle used in the transport.

**And on behalf of MAGDRL and the orphans in our care, THANKS for ALL YOU DO!**

**Section**

**5**

## Conducting a Phone Interview

*Phone interviews are an important part of the application process and often provide insight into whether the applicant will be a good home for one of our Danes.*

### How to Conduct a Phone Interview

1. Go to [www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures](http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures) and open the Phone Interview form.
2. Call the applicant.

If they do not answer, leave a message with your contact information. If they do not call back, the phone screener can attempt to reach them 3X, if they do not call back, archive the applicant. You can also try emailing or texting the potential adopter.

If the caller is a minor, tell them that they cannot legally sign an adoption agreement. Ask to speak with the adult in the home.

If the caller appears hesitant to answer your questions, explain why you are asking the questions: "We try to place the Danes into backgrounds they are familiar with. May we ask you a few questions?"

3. Start the conversation out slowly by asking questions such as whether they've been to the website, if they've reviewed the adoption procedures, etc.
4. Explain our purpose to the applicant:

Provide info about the breed to the public

Help owners resolve any problems they have

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Most Important – find homes for Danes that have been given up or abandoned. If they want to know why Danes are given up or abandoned, tell them the stated reasons may be numerous (moving, divorce, child has allergies, etc.) but bottom line is that the dog no longer fits into their lifestyle.

5. Explain our adoption procedure to the applicant:

Phone Interview

Application

Vet Check

Home Check

Timeframe from start to approval is 2-4 weeks.

6. Ask whether the applicant has any questions about the info you just provided or about the process in general.
7. Go through the telephone questionnaire, asking as many questions as possible before talking about our rescue and procedures.

Ask leading questions. Don't lead the caller into the right answer; allow them to tell you what's really going on.

Ask about fencing right up front. Explain our fencing policy and, if applicable, the things required for an exception.

8. Once completed, submit the phone interview. This will become part of the applicant's permanent record.

### Introducing MAGDRL: What to say

We have been in existence for over 40 years. We are strictly a volunteer group, and we are a 501(3)c non-profit. We don't have a facility of our own, all of our Danes are housed in foster homes or temporary private kennels. We find out about Danes looking for homes in several ways: (1) we have a working relationship with a shelter and they call us when a Dane is available at their shelter. (2) Owners have heard of us or find out about us on the web and call to turn in a Dane for a variety of reasons. If we accept a Dane into our adoption program, we typically place him in a foster home, which gives us the opportunity to evaluate the dog's behavior, correct any medical problems we find and spay/neuter.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

If there are no foster homes available, we will place the Dane in a temporary kennel, until a foster home is available.

We've found that it is best for the adopting family and the Dane if the Dane is placed in an environment that fits their personality and the adopter's lifestyle. This is why we ask callers to complete a short questionnaire giving us an idea of their lifestyle – the kind of information you've given me. We do a home visit and reference checks. Once approved the matchmaker will then work with you to find a Dane that best fits into your family and home environment. Once a Dane is matched to you, you will have an opportunity to interview the foster home to ask questions about the Dane and they in turn can ask you questions to determine that the Dane is a good match for you. If all parties approve then you will then make arrangements to meet the Dane with all family members including both 2 and 4 legged individuals. All family members must meet the Dane before adoption. Only the applicant can determine if he/she likes the Dane. We don't want you to be swayed by a pretty face and end up wanting a Dane who won't fit your lifestyle.

Once a Dane is identified for adoption, all family members have met the Dane, and the foster home feels the Dane is a good fit for them, adoption make take place. The applicant will be required to complete and adoption contract at the time they will be taking their new family member home. The adoption contract is legally binding and the adopter will agree they will keep the Dane as a companion house Dane, and if they have to give the Dane up, they will return the Dane to the League. This is a tax-deductible donation. If the Dane has not been spayed or neutered at time of placement (unusual), we do require it. There is a \$150 deposit that will be refunded if written proof is submitted within 30 days to verify the sterilizing has been done. Do you have any questions/problems with this procedure?

If the caller has questions/problems, answer them. If they haven't already filled out an application, ask if they would like us to email them one.

**Important**

Please refer to **Appendix A** for a list of **Frequently Asked Questions** and Answers. Many of the questions you'll be asked during a phone interview are answered in the Appendix.

### How to tell if the family is not a suitable adoption candidate

If at any point during the conversation you feel the caller is not a suitable Dane owner, you can dissuade them from adopting – usually because they:

### Applicant wants an outdoor dog

Danes do not do well in extremes of local temperature. They have short, sparse hair and no subcutaneous fat layer; therefore, they are prone to heat prostration in the summer and exposure in the winter. In addition, all of our Danes must be placed as housedogs. If they are interested in an outdoor Dane, they will not be allowed to adopt from MAGDRL.

### Applicant plans to keep the dog in a separate area with only limited contact with the family

Danes are very dependent on people. They are typically soft-tempered and can become destructive and/or fearful if kept away from people. Our dogs must be kept as part of family.

### Applicant wants a guard (protection) dog

MADRL Danes are to be placed as a family companion. Danes as a rule do not make good guard dogs.

### Applicant is adopting a Dane for teenage or younger children

These children will supposedly have primary care of dog. Kids are forgetful and unreliable, and chances are the parents don't want the responsibility.

### Applicant has no fence, refuses to fence, and doesn't qualify for an exception to our fencing policy

If an applicant has no fencing they can apply for a fencing exception. If they are unable to fence, they can adopt a dog 2 years or older. If they refuse to fence, they can adopt a Dane 5 years or older. You must reinforce to anyone without a fence that the Dane must be on leash in an unfenced area at all times.

Danes should not be chained. Dogs become defensive on chains and could cause the dogs – any breeds – to become fear biters, in addition to the potential for accidental strangulation.

**Applicant cannot afford to fence** - If an applicant can't afford to fence, can she/he afford a Dane, with all of the associated health and food costs?

### Applicant doesn't want to spay/neuter (or wants to breed dogs).

All our dogs must be spayed/neutered. The only exception made is when the surgery would jeopardize the life of the dog because of age/health. Additionally, spay/neuter does **not** change the basic temperament of a dog if performed after sexual maturity and would, in fact, prolong the life of a dog because it reduces the risk of sex-organ illness – cancers, enlarged prostates, mammary gland infections, etc.

### Applicant thinks Danes are status symbols or show how "macho" they are

Danes are soft tempered and simply cannot take heavy handling (could result in foot chewing, bloat and torsion). Status symbol seekers are not concerned with the best interest of the Dane.



### Past dog history is poor (dogs lost, stolen, hit by car, given away, etc.)

This is a “judgment call” on your part. If the history is moderate or reasonable (e.g., had to move, gave dog to friends whom caller can name and know dog’s current status. In this case, ask caller to list the person to whom he gave the dog as reference on application. Another example: dog got out of yard, caller spent much time and effort to locate and can tell the interviewer what they did to find dog).

Quiz them closely on what they’d do now to prevent the same thing from happening to their adopted Dane. Explain that MAGDRL does check vet references to make sure those current pets are well cared for. If their history is very bad (e.g., had several dogs – with no good reasons for dogs demise or give-up), tell the caller frankly that their history is so bad that we cannot adopt to them. Call your Coordinator, explain the issue and ask that the family be placed on our DNA list.

### Applicant cannot afford to care for a Dane

Sometimes it is clear that an applicant cannot afford the care and maintenance of a great Dane, no matter how much they would like to or how much they would love the dog. Ask how much the applicant expects to spend on a Dane each month, what they suppose the cost of regular heartworm/flea and tick meds are, what they expect annual vet bills to total. Talk to them about how much it costs to feed and care for a Dane. It’s a good idea to give them some idea of the monthly, ask them what they would do if the Dane needed emergency surgery costing \$5000.00 or more.

## Phone Interview Checklist

### Prerequisites

A good grasp of the answers to the questions listed in Appendix A.

### What You'll Need

Copy of the phone interview questionnaire (available at <http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures>)

As much information as is available about the person you are interviewing

### Interviewing Tips

Ask open-ended, not leading questions: What type of fence do you have, not is your yard fenced. Where will the dog stay, not will the dog be a house dog, etc.).

Listen closely for contradictions. For example, caller tells you their yard is fenced, but previously said last dog was chained; caller agrees to spay Dane, but last dog wasn't because they bred her; caller says they are home during the day, but no one is ever home when you call during the day.

Give caller time to talk. It is not necessary to ask questions in the specific order given--it is best to work questions into conversation at appropriate intervals.

Keep control of the conversation—some callers will talk for hours if you give them a chance. Steer the conversation toward the topics you want to cover.

## Section

# 6

## Conducting a Vet Check

*The vet check is a good indicator in determining how well an applicant will care for a Dane. It requires a phone call to the vet office and the submittal of an online form with results to the Coordinator.*

### How to conduct a vet check

Goto [www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures](http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures) click Vet Check so you can easily enter the answers and complete the questionnaire.

Call the Veterinary Practice and introduce yourself as a MAGDRL volunteer inquiring on the vet history of an applicants current and previous pets. Send the Coordinator an email with the results of the call.

### What may be a red flag?

animals on the vet record that were not on the application

no annual exam

no heartworm test, this should include a 4DX snap test

Dogs hit by cars, dogs in dog fights, untimely death, especially if there's a pattern. Accidents happen but if an owner has had 2 dogs die by car, there's obviously a danger in the environment and we most likely wouldn't place a Dane there

Vet has no record of family

## What is a good indicator?

vet techs know family by name and by name of dog

they have nursed a dog through cancer or stuck by him through a debilitating disease

## Vet Check Checklist

### Prerequisites

The name and phone number of the veterinary office they use for their pets.

### What You'll Need

Vet check form (available at <http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures.htm>)

Applicant's vet information and pet history

### Vet Check Tips

If the vet has no record of the applicant, check by address or phone number. Sometimes data changes.

If the last pet died more than 2 years ago, chances are the vet records have been deleted. If there are no vet records available because of the time period since the last pet then the applicant must provide two written personal references.

## Section

# 7

## Conducting a Home Check

*The home check is another important step in the approval process. It requires you to travel to the applicant's home, talk to them about Danes, inspect the home for hazards to the Dane and to the family's valuables and, most importantly, observe how the family interacts with your Dane.*

### What purpose does a home check serve?

1. It gives MAGDRL volunteers a chance to verify that the home is a safe one for one of our Danes.
2. It gives us the opportunity to “feel out” exactly what the applicant expects Dane ownership to be like, especially if they have never before shared their lives with one of these Gentle Giants.
3. IT gives the adopter the opportunity to see what it would be like to have a dog the size of a Great Dane in their home.
4. It establishes a rapport between a MAGDRL volunteer and the Potential Adopters.

### How to conduct a home check

1. Call the applicant to schedule a home check.

Make sure everyone in the family, including children, will be present at the visit. Make sure they have signed the liability waver before you bring the Dane into the home.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

During the initial contact, explain that during the home check, you will bring your Dane so that they can see how big a Dane is in their house and advise them that you will be reviewing anywhere in the house where the Dane will go. If they'd like, they can prepare a list of questions and be prepared to discuss any concerns they may have—you can review those during the visit.

2. Travel to the home to conduct the home check, Dane in tow.

It is best if more than one volunteer visits the home so that we get a more robust take on the home. Sometimes this is not possible and a lone volunteer must conduct the visit. Always be safe. If you are uncomfortable, contact your coordinator and discuss your concerns.

3. Introduce your Dane to the pets in the home.

The meeting should be on lead outside and walking your Dane and the new dogs in together. Introduce slowly.

Do not put your Dane at risk. If you are uncomfortable with the existing dogs, ask the family to crate, gate and separate their dog from your Dane.

This is a good time to explain how to introduce new dogs into a pack and talk about integrating slowly.

Read the Introductions during the home check section for tips on introducing your Dane to other pets and people at the home.

4. Introduce your Dane to the family.

It is certainly easiest to tell how the entire family is going to react to a Dane if you allow your Dane to be their self. Let them lean on them, drink and slobber on them, sit on them, wag that tail on their coffee table, do what Danes do best.

5. Conduct the home check using the Home Check form. Address the issues in the What to address during the home check section.

6. Fill out the online home check results form within 24-48 hours of conducting the home check.

Please be objective in all comments and share any concerns with specific information in the comments section at the end of the form. Then click submit.

## What to address during the home check

### Point out hazards

Be professional and matter of fact about potential hazards. Explain about the glass coffee tables, the exposed wires, the breakables at tail level. This is an excellent opportunity to discuss what kinds of behavior to expect of Danes, talk about bouncy vs. calm Danes, and explain the destruction they can cause if not integrated into the family and kept occupied. In addition, it is easy for the family to see what the Dane can reach and what may pose a hazard to the Dane and to their valuables. Encourage crate training for the protection of their home and the safety of the Dane, at least for the first few months.

### Talk about health issues

The home visit is also a good time to discuss some of the health issues that are prevalent in Danes: cardiac problems; bone diseases such as Panosteitis, OCD and HOD; BLOAT; hip dysplasia and arthritis. Explain that a bigger dog means a bigger vet bill. Talk about the relatively short lifespan of the Dane: 7-11 yrs on average. Ask them if they've researched the breed. If they haven't, we can provide them with Internet links and book recommendations. They should be aware of what it means to be a Dane owner. Refer them to our website for brochures.

Also discuss the need to find a vet who is familiar with Danes and big dogs. If a Dane bloats, it is important that their vet is experienced and can address it quickly and efficiently. It is a life/death situation, and the family must have the utmost confidence in their chosen vet. They also need to identify the closest emergency vet hospital.

### Talk about feeding

Discuss the need to feed high-quality kibble (dry dog food). You can mention that puppies should not EVER be fed puppy food, regardless of what their vet may recommend. Proper protein levels for a growing Dane are between 22-25% with a phosphorus to calcium ratio of 1:1. Explain that quality kibble may cost more upfront but that the Dane uses more of it and, therefore, eats less of it. Cost evens out and the Dane is better for it.

You can suggest elevated feeding and the pros and cons, there are studies that state elevated feeding contributes to bloat but they may want to use raised feeders for the comfort of the Dane. An inexpensive alternative to raised feeding bowls is the use of large plastic storage bins. Cut 1-2 holes in the top and drop the stainless steel bowls in for a nice feeder. Also, plant stands are a decent alternative for elevated feeders. Stainless steel bowls should be used instead of plastic as the stainless steel does not retain any bacteria.

### Talk about crating/gating

Crating or gating a Dane in a safe, confined area is an important training tool. If they adopt a Dane who becomes anxious when left alone or is destructive when bored, they MUST be willing to crate or safely confine the Dane in a small area such as a kitchen. Crating/gating provides boundaries that can sooth a

Dane and render him unable to cause havoc in the house when alone. People use playpens to safely confine babies who would otherwise wander and possibly get into dangerous situations: consider the crate a playpen for a dog.

### Talk about vacation

Where will the family keep the Dane while they vacation? Danes do not do well in kennels for long periods of time. They also may not do well left alone in the house with occasional visits by neighbors. They are, ultimately people-oriented and may become anxious if left alone for too long. Best option is to hire a pet sitter to stay overnight or find a family member or friend willing to watch the Dane for them.

### Discuss the type of Dane they are interested in

What kind of Dane is the family interested in adopting? See if that meshes with the kind of Dane YOU think will fit their lifestyle. Sometimes people want a puppy or a bouncy 2 yr old because they're cute and young. But maybe they have a 10 yr old grumpy shihtzu or are very sedentary and quiet people--it's not really going to work well. We won't stress out other animals in the house and the family will not (regardless of what they think they'll do) totally change their lifestyle just to accommodate their desire for a young Dane.

### Most importantly

Keep pushing the fact that they need to KNOW about Danes. It's a great breed but Danes potentially may have health issues and they need to be aware of good and bad.

## Topics to Discuss

The home check is the time to talk about Dane behavior and to honestly discuss issues that may arise. Consider this an educational experience for the potential adopter. Depending on the home, you may want to take note of and discuss the consequences of some of the items listed in this section.

### **Please note:**

These are things to discuss only—they may or may not affect the outcome of the home evaluation. The fact that a home has white carpets or a lot of exposed glassware does not mean they'll be denied. It does mean that you need to explain about Dane tails and happy wags, about muddy paw prints, and more.

### Is it a Dane-friendly Environment?

Talk about the hazards to a Dane and to their possessions.



MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Exposed wires

Kid's toys (they'll become Dane toys)

Expensive china or glassware at tail or nose level or precariously perched

Crate in a safe place

White carpets

Really nice furniture

Cleaning or auto supplies within Dane reach

How well cared for other animals are

Fence in decent shape, (you must walk the fence line and check for any possible escape areas.  
Check gates for security.)

Potential destruction of a beautifully landscaped yard.

Expectations of people--do they expect an "Angel Dane"? Slobber? Extreme shedding?

### Kids

How they interact with other animals/children

If they listen to parents

Inappropriate behavior of children with dog. Throwing things at the dog, pulling hard on ears and tail, running at the dog, running toward quarreling dogs: these are all serious issues. Please note them in detail on the home check form itself.

### Feeding

Premium quality kibble is important

Raised feeding bowls—although one recent study suggested that raised bowls do not have a positive effect on bloat, eating/drinking at chest level may be more comfortable

If more than one dog, separate feeding may be a good idea

## Home Check Checklist

### Prerequisites

Phone Interview Complete

Application complete and with Coordinator

Vet and Reference check complete

### What You'll Need

A Dane, only exception is if the family already has one, however its good to see how that Dane will react to another Dane coming into their home.

A copy of the home check form (available at <http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures.htm>)

All family members present, all pets present

### Home Check Tips

Bring your Dane

Pair up with another volunteer

Bring lots of information: prepare to educate.

Would you trust these people to care for your dog if you were going away on vacation?

Do they claim their current dog lives indoors, yet there is no fur anywhere, and a doghouse or dog run with a well-worn path secluded in the backyard?

If you point out potential problems/hazards, is the family open to education, or do they take offense to what you say?

Please bring up any concerns that you have to your Coordinator--your input is important!

## Section

# 8

## Meeting & Greeting at Events

*MAGDRL volunteers often hold Meet & Greets (M&Gs) at local pet supply stores and other venues. In addition, there are some larger events that we participate in, such as Pet Expos and as vendors at dog shows. M&Gs consist of representing MAGDRL to the public, educating them about our organization and Great Danes, being available as a resource to Dane and dog owners, as necessary, and having literature and possibly merchandise available for potential adopters and customers.*

### What Is a Meet & Greet?

A meet & greet is an event where we meet and greet the public and, while we are at it, tell them all about Danes and rescue. It's a chance to socialize your Dane, do something for rescue, and enjoy the company of fellow Dane lovers. Only the most bombproof personally owned Danes should be attending meet and greets.

At the M&G, we set up a table. We have literature about MAGDRL to hand out, business cards with local contact name, and usually some great merchandise available for a small donation. We answer questions about what our group does, why Danes are in need of rescue.

### Attending a Meet & Greet (with or without your Dane)

M&Gs are usually announced several weeks ahead of time or are on a set schedule at certain locations. Check the Events link on the main web site to find out what's in your area, or check with your local website, if that's available.

To attend a M&G, just bring yourself and a bombproof Dane. If you don't have a Dane, you're still welcome to come out and enjoy yourself. In some areas, you'll need to check with the person running the event and let them know that you'll be coming.

Unfortunately, due to insurance rules, foster dogs are not allowed at repeating events. This means that they will not be allowed at most M&G's. But, they are allowed to be at a one time event, such as a dog walk. If you have a foster dog, and are not sure if they are allowed at the event you plan on attending, please contact the volunteer running the event.

### Who has the merchandise?

MAGDRL has quite a variety of merchandise available, both through events such as M&Gs and on the web. We have found that small items such as drink cozies and chip clips tend to be more popular at the pet supply stores, while T-shirts and other Dane specific items are more popular at breed shows. For M&Gs, a small stock of goodie bags and smaller items should suffice.

If you would like to be a Meet and Greet coordinator, please speak to your chapter coordinator about obtaining a meet and greet kit to set up your own events.

### What to do with donations

When the event is finished, provide a donation total to your chapter coordinator and send a check with an income-expense to the treasurer and copy the chapter coordinator.

### M&G etiquette and your Dane

Please consider that you and, most especially, your Dane are MAGDRL ambassadors to the public. MAGDRL representatives are expected to represent the organization. This means that we don't ever be argumentative with people about ear cropping, about animal experimentation, about controversial topics that may be near and dear to our hearts. We are out to socialize our dogs, educate the public as gently as possible, and be receptive.

For Danes, etiquette is equally important. A barky, hyper dog reflects badly on Danes everywhere. An aggressive dog gives the impression that this type of behavior is common to the breed. Your dog may be a love bug at home but if they exhibit undesirable behavior when in public, a M&G is NOT the place for her.

Here are some things to think about when you're considering whether your Dane is a good M&G candidate:

Does the Dane meet male or female, large or small dogs well?

Can the Dane handle the stress of being petted and spoiled and screamed at and tugged and pulled on by complete strangers? If your Dane is afraid of children, loud noises or lots of activity, leave them at home.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Is your Dane well-mannered and ready for a public forum? If you can't control your Dane and are dragged by them, you should first invest in a proper training collar and then invest in some basic training.

Is your Dane getting older and crankier? It happens to the best of us. Danes who used to be able to handle the stress of a M&G may get cranky as they get older. Maybe they'd be happier at home, curled up on the couch.

Does your Dane enjoy meeting people or is it stressful? If it's stressful, please consider the personality of your Dane before subjecting them to an event they are not going to enjoy just because you want to be there. It is fine to attend an event by yourself, we can always use extra hands to help out.

## M&G Events

These are typically held at a pet supply store or any location that does NOT sell dogs or cats.

### **Interested in setting up a M&G in your area?**

Contact your Coordinator or the M&G Coordinator in your area. They'll walk you through the things you'll need to do to set up an event. We do ask that you attend several M&Gs before striking out on your own.

## All-Breed Shows & Special Events

We have a few (very few) large kits with different items and more merchandise than we typically use at a regular M&G. These mega kits are used at All-Breed Shows, or we can sometimes combine several M&G kits together for large events such as breed shows or Pet Expos. It is rare that we sell merchandise because we must collect tax for any items sold. Mostly we offer goodie bags prepared with pet toys and pet items or various items for a small to moderate donation.

For the larger events, it is best to set up a schedule of volunteers prior to the event. The events may span a single or multiple days and usually require (or at least it's ideal) more than one volunteer per shift.

For Breed shows, we typically do NOT bring our own dogs. Better specimens of the breed itself are on the show grounds AND we are at the show to sell, not to educate (at least, that's not our primary purpose).

For Pet Expos and other similar events, we DO bring Danes. These are even more stressful to a Dane than a regular M&G. The Dane must be bombproof to attend these events. We are available to educate at these events.

# 8

## Fostering a Great Dane

### The First Week

- Keep things quiet at home the first week you bring your orphan in. Do not allow a lot of visitors to “come meet the new orphan”. Let him/her settle in and get comfortable with you and your family.
- Do integrations slowly if at all possible with other canines in the home.
- Some Danes may need decompression, keep them separated in their own area to give them a chance to acclimate to your home.
- A crate is strongly recommended, contact your CC if you need one.
- Do not post pictures and updates of your foster on facebook, twitter etc until they have been posted on our website and shared with your MAGDRL family on our yahoo group lists. It is not your orphan, but MAGDRL’s and our volunteers have the right to hear about them thru MAGDRL channels first.
- The MAGDRL tag must remain on the orphan at all times, if you do not have a tag for your orphan, one will be sent to you by the tag administrator, discuss with your foster coordinator if you need one. You can also make a tag for all fosters that you may have, with your personal information, in addition to the MAGDRL tag.
- Send your CC pictures and bio of your foster Dane to be posted on the website. This should include:
  - A brief description (qualities and positive points of the orphan)
  - Likes
  - Dislikes
  - Energy level of the Dane
  - Temperament
  - House Trained
  - Crate Trained
  - Commands known
  - Issues/behavioral/medical

- Other dogs/cats
- Children / ages of children

### **Vetting**

***Discuss ALL Veterinary appointments and procedures with the Chapter Coordinator BEFORE bringing your foster Dane to the vet.***

- Check with your CC to discuss vets in your area who will discount for us, you may ask your own vet if they will provide a discount for MAGDRL orphans and get approval to use them from your CC
- Have the Foster Spayed or Neutered (if not already done)
  - Discount Certificates can be purchased at <http://friendsofanimals.org/programs/spay-neuter/index.html> and used at participating vets.
  - Please discuss all vet appointments with your CC and all vet procedures with your CC before the vet performs them. You will not be reimbursed for these expenses without prior approval. If you have an emergency and you cannot reach your CC, contact a MAGDRL board member for approval.
- Keep a record of Rabies & Distemper Vaccines (need documentation) and their due dates.
- Heartworm Test/4DX should be performed yearly.
- Fecal test for parasites
- Send copies of ALL vet records from previous owner, shelter and your vet visits to the Foster/Chapter Coordinator
- Obtain a copy of the itemized invoice at each office visit and send it with a completed Income/Expense Form to your CC for signature. Even if the vet will account bill, you still need to obtain a copy of the invoice and send it with the I/E form for CC approval. Keep copies of any vet records to give to the adopter at the time your orphan is adopted.
- Emergency Vetting -
  - Contact your Chapter Coordinator before you bring your orphan to the vet's office. If the vet wants to do ANYTHING you did not discuss with the Coordinator, please call from the vet's office. No procedures or tests can be done on a MAGDRL Dane without Coordinator approval.



## **Matching**

Your CC will contact you with any potential families that seem to match your foster Dane. You will be given the opportunity to review the information and let the CC know if the family is a potentially good home for the orphan. The CC will then give the potential home your contact information and the potential adopter will reach out to you if they are interested in your orphan. You should interview them on the phone making sure they seem like a good home for your orphan before scheduling a visit to meet your orphan. Everyone in the adoptive family (both 2 legged and 4 legged canine members) needs to visit and meet the Dane, this can be accomplished with more than one visit.

When the family comes to meet the Dane it is a good idea to separate your other animals so they are only meeting the orphan. They should meet the orphan first before any other introductions are done with the other dogs. Observe interaction with the potential adopters and the orphan. When ready, bring them to meet the other dogs, if applicable. Do not let the dogs meet face-to-face immediately. Take them for a short walk and let them acclimate to each other before getting close enough to sniff each other's butts. If at any time there appears to be aggression, do not let the dogs engage. It is your responsibility in the matching chain process to send your orphan to an appropriate home. If you do not feel comfortable allowing the family to adopt, contact your CC and explain your concerns.

## **Adoption Time**

What you need:

- Adoption Contract
- Training Addendum (if necessary) (required for dogs under 1 year, children under 8 years old, or coordinator/foster home discretion if the dog requires it). Discuss this with your Foster Coordinator.
- Vetting Addendum (if necessary) required for pups that are adopted out pre-alter or dogs that require follow-up vet care.
- A bio of the orphan detailing everything you have learned about them while in your care, what you are feeding and what their typical schedule with you has been, have the adopter initial the MAGDRL copy.
- Copies of all Vet paperwork
  - Rabies vaccine certificate required. No dog is to be transported without proof of Rabies vaccine traveling WITH the Dane.
  - any previous owners information blacked out (for privacy)

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

- Copies of Contract and Addendums as well as vet paperwork go home with the adopter.
- Original copies of Contract and Addendums with payment go to Chapter Coordinator. All copies should be signed by the adopter.
- Note: If the Dane is microchipped, give the microchip transfer paperwork to the adopter and ask them to register MAGDRL as the second contact.
- AKC paperwork is never transferred to an adopter, that paperwork remains in MAGDRL.

## Appendix

# A

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*This section contains a list of frequently asked questions and some standard answers. While it is not an exhaustive list, it is a good place to start for phone interviews, Meet & Greets, and interviews.*

### Questions about Great Dane Rescue

**(Q) Who is the Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League and what do you do?**

(A) The Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League (MAGDRL) is committed to helping abandoned, neglected and/or abused animals find loving homes. We spay/neuter, provide necessary medical treatment and train/socialize the Danes in our care to ensure adaptability in their new homes. We work hard to also educate the public and potential owners about caring for this wonderful breed through various community efforts.

**(Q) Where are you located?**

(A) MAGDRL operates in 7 states, from Northern VA to NY and the DC area. For the most part, the Danes in our care are located in foster homes throughout these states

**(Q) I don't have a fence and don't want to put one up. Why won't you adopt to me?**

(A) Please refer to the section that deals with our fence policy. We require a fence unless there is a legal or physical barrier to providing a fence. There are fencing exceptions if you qualify.

**(Q) Where do you get your Danes?**

(A) Most of the Danes that come in the rescue are surrendered by their previous owners for a variety of reasons. We also work closely with local shelters and SPCAs to place unwanted Danes.

**(Q) Why do owners surrender their Danes?**

(A) One of the most common reasons for surrendering a Dane is size and lack of training/socialization: owners often claim that they didn't realize how big the dog would be when full-grown. Another reason can be that other members of the family are opposed to keeping the dog or there are extenuating circumstances such as divorce or financial difficulties. Sometimes if the owner didn't train the dog, they may complain that the dog is destructive or uncontrollable.

**(Q) Where are the dogs kept before being adopted?**

(A) Most of the dogs are kept in foster homes while waiting to be adopted. Foster homes are responsible for caring for, socializing, and teaching basic house manners and commands to the Danes in their care.

**(Q) How do I adopt a Dane from your rescue?**

(A) First, we urge you to research the breed. Once you've decided that a Dane will fit your lifestyle, you can call your local adoption coordinator and start the application process. Please note that we require a fenced yard (electronic fencing not acceptable). Please see the fencing policy if you are unable to fence due to extenuating circumstances.

A volunteer will conduct an initial interview on the phone to assess your needs and make sure your expectations meet a Dane's temperament. We will then send you a written application for you to fill out and return. Next, we will review references to make sure your current animals are well cared for. Finally, a volunteer will visit your home with a Dane to give you the opportunity to see what it's like having a Dane in your home. Provided all goes well, we will then help match you with a Dane appropriate for your family and lifestyle. You can always access [www.magdrl.org](http://www.magdrl.org) to view Danes that are currently available for adoption and read their bios. All members of the family need to travel to the foster home to initially meet the Dane before adopting.

**(Q) What are the costs involved?**

(A) The rescue covers the initial medical costs of the Dane, including spaying/neutering, vaccinations, and any additional medical attention required. All dogs are spayed and neutered before going to their adoptive homes, there are very few rare exceptions to this. Current costs to adopt are listed on the website.

**(Q) How can I help the rescue?**

(A) There are many ways to help the rescue. We accept donations and sponsorships for our Danes. We are always in need of volunteers and foster homes for the Danes. Please check [www.magdrl.org](http://www.magdrl.org) to find out more ways to help the Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League.

## Questions about the Adoption Process

[\(Q\) Why do you do home visits and what do they consist of?](#)

(A) Although most callers are honest we have to guard against the few that aren't. The home visit not only verifies the callers live where they say they live, it enables the applicant to gain more info about the breed, discuss how best to introduce the dog into the family, and, since our home visitors will bring a Dane with them, will give the household members an opportunity to see what it is like to live with a Giant breed.

[\(Q\) What kind of references do you require?](#)

(A) Veterinarians (if you have one) and neighbors or friend that knows/knew your current/previous dogs.

[\(Q\) We want a puppy](#)

(A) We rarely have very young puppies in the rescue program. Our dogs are usually 10 months and older. We may not refer directly to breeders, but do refer to the regional representative for the Great Dane Club of America, who in turn can refer them to breeders in the area as well as provide info on how to buy a pup and evaluate the breeders.

[\(Q\) Even though I don't have a fence, I'm a great owner. Why are you being unreasonable about fencing? I live in the country and the Dane can run through acres of land](#)

(A) See description of MAGDRL's Fencing policy.

[\(Q\) How long does the process take?](#)

(A) 3-4 weeks from start to finish, possibly more depending on the applicant's requirements and the Danes available for adoption.

[\(Q\) I don't know if I can wait that long—can't we hurry up the process? I'm a great dog owner](#)

(A) No. We always strive to complete the process as quickly as possible. However, we are all volunteers who work in rescue among our other activities. Is there some reason why you are in a hurry? Adopting a Dane should never be an impulsive decision, this gives the applicant lots of time to be sure this is what they really want.

[\(Q\) But I'm a great home. I want <Insert Dane of the Month>. I'm willing to save him. Why are you being difficult?](#)

(A) We're not being difficult, our Danes are safe and in loving foster homes they do not need to be placed immediately. We have a procedure and will accommodate your requests as much as possible. In addition, we are all volunteers. We are happy that you are interested in rescuing a MAGDRL orphan. Please bear with us as we complete the adoption process.

**(Q) But I'm a great home. I want <Insert Dane of the Month>. Why can't I adopt him?**

(A) Once your application is approved you will have the opportunity to speak your chapter coordinator and discuss the Danes that are available to you. Please do not make a decision about the Dane you want based on a picture. We consider all of the factors involved in your lifestyle and expect you to read the write-ups and also pay attention to whether a Dane will fit into your way of life and the foster home must also agree that the Dane would work for you.

**(Q) How long does the adoption process take?**

(A) The application process typically takes 3-4 weeks. Finding the best Dane for your household could take longer.

**(Q) What's with the policy against same-sex adoptions? I have a female and really want another.**

(A) Over the years, MAGDRL has found that same-sex adoptions tend to have a greater risk of male-male or female-female aggression. While this does not occur in all same-sex pairings, we do our best to minimize conflict.

**(Q) Why is the Adoption Fee so high? I'm rescuing a second-hand dog. You should be giving the dog away for free.**

(A) MAGDRL is a charitable organization that covers all medical costs required by the Dane. This includes spay/neuter, vaccinations, routine medical care and monthly preventatives. When added together, MAGDRL often incurs more than \$1000 for each Dane we take in, sometimes several thousand if the Dane requires more extensive medical treatment. If you cannot afford the adoption, you probably cannot afford to own a Dane.

**(Q) I want to adopt a specific Dane. Will you hold him for me?**

(A) We cannot hold a specific Dane while an application is being approved. At times, there may be a waiting list for the more popular Danes. Danes are available to approved adopters only and on a first contact, best fit basis. We will encourage you to review the list of available Danes when the adoption process is almost complete or once you've been approved.

## Questions about Great Danes

**(Q) Are Danes good Guard dogs?**

(A) No Danes are not good guard dogs.

**(Q) What differentiates Great Danes from other breeds?**

(A) Their size and personality are what appeals to Dane owners the most. These gentle giants are loving members of the family who want nothing more than to be by your side. They can be goofy, regal, silly or serious--most of all, they are Danes!

**(Q) How much does a Great Dane eat? Are they expensive to keep?**

(A) Depending on the age of the dog, an adult Great Dane consumes approximately 4-8 cups of quality dry food daily, this can vary depending on size, age and activity. It is imperative that the food be high quality, with a moderate amount of protein (no more than 25%)—this can be costly but is vital to the health of a Dane. Other costs to consider are veterinary costs (big dogs cost big money at the vet), purchase of a colossal crate, and other necessities that may cost more for big dogs.

**(Q) Are Great Danes high-maintenance dogs?**

(A) There's very little grooming involved in maintaining that beautiful Dane coat. A Great Dane's energy level consists of brief spurts of energy between long periods of sleep. Generally, adult Danes are calm dogs, but Dane puppies/adolescents can be a handful. It's very important to keep in mind that Great Danes undergo rapid growth spurts. They can easily injure themselves during these periods of times so controlled exercise is a must.

**(Q) What kinds of health problems can Danes experience?**

(A) Unfortunately, because of their size, Great Danes are not a long-lived breed. Hereditary health problems can include Wobbler's Syndrome, heart problems, other bone-related diseases, and various forms of cancer. One of the most serious health risks for a Dane is Bloat (gastric dilation volvulus, or GVD), where the stomach becomes dilated due to an abnormal accumulation of gas or air and typically twists. If not caught in time, this condition can lead to a quick death. Although the reasons for bloat are unknown, Dane owners can try to prevent it by waiting one hour after meals to exercise. Minimizing stress will also help in the prevention of bloat. Stress can be brought on in many ways, is the Dane left outside for long periods of time? Is the Dane crated or separated from the family too much? Is the Dane welcome to live as a family member in the home?

**(Q) What is the cost incurred by rescue for each Dane?**

(A) The majority of the dogs that are accepted in rescue are often in need of basic vet care that their previous owners did not provide. There are exceptions, of course, but most Danes coming into rescue incur costs similar to this breakdown (costs in the year 2021):

Office visit	\$72
Fecal Check	\$42
Rabies Vaccine	\$25
DHLPP Vaccine	\$38
Heartworm Test/4DX	\$65
Heartworm Preventative	\$18/month
Spay/Neuter	\$600-800
Gastropexy	\$1500-2500
Total:	\$2500- 3800

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

\*Costs do not include food, collar, leash, toys, and other basic needs of dogs, not to mention the time invested in each foster.

\*\* This total can increase significantly if the dog has additional health problems or is severely neglected.

[\(Q\) How much does a full grown great Dane weigh? How tall is a Dane?](#)

(A) A female great Dane typically weighs between 100-140; a male, between 120-170. Females are typically between 28 and 34 inches at the shoulder; males are between 30-38 inches. We see a wide variety of height and weight in the Danes in rescue.

[\(Q\) How much exercise does a Dane require?](#)

(A) A Dane does not require much exercise but does require daily exercise in some form. Younger Danes typically have more energy than older Danes. A few walks around the block each day should suffice for an adult Dane. They also should have access to an area where they can do their zoomies and exhaust their short energy bursts.

[\(Q\) Does a Dane require a large yard for running?](#)

(A) Most Danes do not require a lot of room to run and play, and many do very well in a home with a small yard and attentive owners. There are always exceptions, but Danes generally do not require a lot of yard space.

[\(Q\) What colors do they come in?](#)

(A) AKC accepted colors are: fawn, brindle, blue, black, harlequin, merlequin, and mantle. Danes also come in other, no less beautiful colors such as: white (typically deaf), and fawnequin.

[\(Q\) Do you get puppies? Aren't puppies more trainable?](#)

(A) We don't often have young puppies available, although occasionally we will get one or two in rescue. We do have many adolescent Danes available who have not reached full adulthood.

Adolescent and adult Danes can bond with a new owner just as readily as puppies can, sometimes even more so. Rescue Danes are often called velcro dogs because they tend to stick like glue to their owners. Also, adolescent and adult Danes come potty trained and usually crate trained--and any problems or issue they may have are already out in the open and being worked on in foster care. Puppies are cute but they can be quite a handful!

[\(Q\) How long do Danes live?](#)

(A) On average, Danes live between 8-10 years. We know of Danes who've lived to 11-12 years of age, which is a good sign for the breed.



**(Q) If I adopt a Dane whose ears aren't cropped, can I get them cropped?**

(A) No, for two reasons: (1) MAGDRL does not allow cosmetic surgery such as ear cropping on Danes adopted through MAGDRL. (2) ear cropping should occur before a Dane is 9 weeks of age, if at all. It cannot and should not be attempted later, since training the ears requires training the cartilage as it's growing. Training cropped ears to stand can take months to accomplish, and it may not ever be completely successful if not done correctly.

**(Q) Do Danes drool?**

(A) Most Danes drool. Dane mixes may drool less, it depends on the specific Dane and the shape of that Dane's lower lip.

**(Q) Do Danes shed?**

(A) All dogs shed to some extent but Danes do not generally shed a lot. A daily or weekly brushing should keep shed under control. It all depends on the thickness of the undercoat, a thick undercoat will shed more.

## MAGDRL's Fencing Policy

If an adoption applicant is unable to provide a satisfactory fenced area for a Great Dane, in most cases MAGDRL cannot proceed with the application. MAGDRL will not compromise on its obligation to ensure a safe environment for the Great Danes we place. However, applicants may petition for a rare exception to the fencing requirement if they believe they are exemplary pet owners and have extenuating circumstances.

### **Important**

There is a difference between being unable to fence and being unwilling to fence. We limit the available Danes to Danes 5 or older to people who are unwilling to fence and will adopt a Dane 2 years or older to those who are unable to fence.

If this is the case, their application must include a detailed letter describing their circumstances, lifestyle, previous dog ownership and how they plan on safely exercising and managing their Great Dane without chaining or allowing off lead. In addition, a letter of recommendation from their veterinarian regarding the care and well-being of their current or previously owned dog(s) must accompany their adoption application. Without these two letters, their exception request will not be considered.

This petition process requires additional processing time. If their exception request is accepted for consideration, it will be forwarded to their MAGDRL adoption coordinator, and a home visit will be

conducted. After the home visit is complete, they will be notified of the status of their adoption application.

### Why Invisible Fencing Is Not an Option

If a caller says he/she has an invisible fence or asks our opinion on invisible fencing advise him/her of the following:

Invisible fencing does not prevent other dogs or animals from coming into the yard and fighting with your Dane – a fact that vets can attest to because they’ve had to “patch up” dogs that have been attacked while in their own yards.

While invisible fencing uses radio – not electrical collars, the cautions needed to protect your dog during, and even more importantly preceding, electrical disturbances namely thunderstorms are pretty much the same. You must remove the collars, as well as bringing the dog indoors, for the same reason you are advised not to use the telephone during a thunderstorm – the dog can get zapped!

Invisible fencing is absolutely no deterrent to dog-nappers who are known to steal dogs from owners’ yards while the owners are inside their homes.

Even more importantly, nowadays, is that invisible fencing puts no observable barrier between the dog who knows the boundaries and visitors/strangers who can’t see them. Because of all the scare stories about dogs attacking people, more and more people are becoming leery of anything larger than a Cocker Spaniel. Additionally, people are becoming more and more likely to sue homeowners over dogs frightening them – and collecting -- usually because insurance companies find it cheaper to pay off a claim than to fight it in court. The result of this action is that the homeowner could well lose their insurance.

Obviously, because of the above reasons, we do not recommend invisible fencing – particularly not where such fencing allows the dog to get into the front yard since the chance of passersby and strangers coming to your door are obviously much greater.

The only time invisible fencing is approved is when it is used in addition to traditional fencing to prevent a Dane who may go over a traditional fence.

## Basic Behavioral Questions

**(Q) My dog pulls me all over the place. What can I do?**

(A) Buy a training collar that works for you, such as the gentle leader or a halti, you may want to try a front-clipping harness. Use it. If you decide to buy a halti, please double tether the leash to both the halti and the dog's regular collar. Also consider attending a basic obedience class to teach your dog some manners and to bond more closely with your Dane. Classes are fun!

**(Q) My dog jumps on people when they first come over. What can I do?**

(A) Give your dog treats for sitting and greeting. Ask people to turn away and ignore jumping, while rewarding the dog as soon as the dog's butt hits the floor or 4 paws are on the floor. Be consistent: don't allow it for some friends and discourage it with others. Also consider attending a basic obedience class to teach your dog some manners and to bond more closely with your dog. Classes are fun!

**(Q) My dog has free run of the house but I come home and everything is destroyed. Why is he being so spiteful?**

(A) Your dog is not being spiteful, they are anxious or bored and have too much freedom. Purchase an appropriately sized crate and crate train them or gate them off in a small portion of the house, with no access to the things that they destroy. The easiest way to avoid problems is to remove the potential for them. Crate training is not evil, nor is it cruel. You wouldn't allow a toddler to have free access to everything unsupervised—don't allow your dog.

**(Q) My unneutered male dog pees all over the house. What can I do?**

(A) This may be related to marking. Neutering can solve this problem. If any dog is peeing excessively, urinalysis should be done to rule out urinary tract infection.

**(Q) My dog pees right in front of me when I bend over to pet her. Why is she being spiteful?**

(A) This is called submissive urination. This is inherent canine behavior and they are showing you that they are submissive to you, and it is a defense mechanism. First, do NOT scold in any way when they pee. Clean it up. Try to establish a trusting bond between you and the dog. This may take time but can be accomplished by using gentle training methods, becoming a "treat machine", and being consistent. You may want to consult a behaviorist to help you with this problem since any training method MUST be gentle, non-threatening, and devoid of punishment.

**(Q) My dog does <Insert Problem of the month>. What can I do?**

(A) No matter what the situation, it's possible that the following answers may help:

Invest in a training session with your Dane. Training can be positive and fun. Training can give your Dane something to do and you something to ask of your Dane. Look for a class that uses positive methods. Local pet supply chains usually hold decent classes. No leash popping, jerking, etc. Treat-based training is successful and fun.

MID-ATLANTIC GREAT DANE RESCUE LEAGUE:  
INTRODUCTION

Practice Nothing in Life Is Free. Your Dane needs structure and a strong (not angry or overbearing) leader. Work with your Dane to establish a loving, trusting relationship. Do not allow them freedom they haven't earned. Make your Dane sit before you feed them, before you put the leash on to go out, before you let them join you on the sofa, etc. Structure and routine are very important to a lot of dogs—use these tools to shape a wonderful companion.

Read *The Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson. It is one of the best dog books on the market.

# B

## Links to Online Information

*On the following page, we've compiled a list of links to online information that maybe helpful to you. These links are also included on the CD-ROM as hot links or online as part of the volunteer website for your convenience.*

### MAGDRL-Specific Links

**Volunteer Resource Page:** <http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures/>

**Online forms:** <http://www.magdrl.org/forms-brochures/>

**Main Site:** [www.magdrl.org](http://www.magdrl.org)

**Local Chapter sites:**[www.magdrl-nj.com](http://www.magdrl-nj.com)

[www.nydanerescue.com](http://www.nydanerescue.com)

[www.padanerescue.com](http://www.padanerescue.com)

[www.va-magdrl.org](http://www.va-magdrl.org)

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

# C

## Fostering for MAGDRL

### What Is a Foster Home?

MAGDRL is looking for caring, responsible Great Dane lovers to join our foster team by opening their homes and their hearts to a rescued Great Dane. These Gentle Giants do not kennel well and our foster system allows volunteers to provide our orphans with a home environment in order to evaluate their habits and behaviors. Since volunteers get to know each foster dog "up close and personal," they offer a potential adopter more information about the dog, which in turn helps MAGDRL make a better match between the dog and their adoptive family.

Foster parents should be able to make a commitment to spend time with the foster dog and give all the exercise, love, and attention the dog needs -- however long it stays with them.

Foster homes are responsible for the daily care of the foster Great Dane including feeding, exercising, medicating (as necessary), socializing, brushing and grooming, reinforcing basic obedience commands, observing and evaluating general behavior and temperament. And of course, providing love and security to a special orphan at a difficult time in his or her life when they have lost their former family and home.

**PLEASE contact your coordinator and let her know if you are interested in fostering for us.**