

**THE IOWA GREYHOUND PARK  
GREYHOUND ADOPTION PROGRAM**



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**OPEN YOUR HEART  
AND YOUR HOME**

**ADOPT A GREYHOUND**

## **VERY IMPORTANT**

Adopting a greyhound should not be considered a rental to be returned at the first inconvenience. Please think adoption through thoroughly and then think about it again. Please read the following realities of adopting a greyhound. Also, please understand that just by filling out and turning in this application does not automatically mean approval for adoption. Approval or denial of your application is all based on the best interest of our greyhounds.

**“What if the dog doesn’t work out in our home?”** We shudder when an adopting family asks about returning a greyhound before it has moved into their home and life. Adoption means to **PERMANENTLY** accept the new pet into one’s life which includes in sickness and in health, good times and bad, and through all the changes of life. Of course, The Iowa Greyhound Park Adoption Program **WILL** take back any dog it places for any reason. Having said this, we would like you to consider a few things before you adopt.

If you are thinking of adopting a retired racer realize that you are considering a dog that has had nothing asked of it except to run fast!

New adopters are encouraged to and should take their dogs to a basic canine and obedience class. Doing so helps owner-dog communication, builds confidence, and aids in bonding.

Behavior problems are often cited as reasons for returns. In most cases simple training techniques can be employed to change most troublesome behaviors. It’s true that most people give up on a good dog too soon because they are not willing to make the effort to work through a trying situation.

Be warned that living with a dog can get bumpy from time to time. A dog is capable of doing things, usually the wrong things, when you least expect it. **A growl, snap, or bite can occur with ANY dog and one incident should not be ground for divorce.** In many cases of a bite, there can be extenuating circumstances that provoked the dog to react the way it did. It does **NOT** mean the dog is aggressive. Likewise, an occasional housebreaking incident should be expected. Like you, your dog’s body is subject to fluctuations that may mean an isolated instance of house soiling. In the case of any strange or different behavior by your dog, we ask that you call us. We can help get you and your dog back on track.

**It’s going to take some time for your dog to learn your routine.** Bonding does not happen overnight. As you introduce your dog to your family routines and he becomes comfortable, he/she will learn to trust you. Relationships take time to develop, so you will have to be patient.

**How are your finances?** Vet visits are something else to keep in mind. Besides the yearly exams and vaccinations, your dog may experience sickness and injury which can require a visit to your Vet Emergency Clinic. Are you going to be able to get your dog to a Vet when your dog needs to go? **Long term plans need to be examined.** Are you planning on getting married? Are there children (or more children) in your future? Are you planning on moving? Dogs have been returned for all of these reasons. Your canine member of the family **IS** a member of your family. He cannot speak for himself and in most cases is the most disposable member of the family.

**People who give us back their dogs for the above reasons, feel that they've made an "honorable" decision.** They don't see that when they've driven off, the ex-family member watches the door, listens for the sound of a car on the driveway and mourns for the family that has abandoned them.

**If it doesn't seem like the right time, WAIT!** There will **ALWAYS** be a dog available for you. Wait for that time when the dog can be a loved and cherished member of the family.

Please think about what you have just read. You're now ready to take the first step in making the decision on adopting or not adopting a greyhound.

**Remember that a greyhound isn't for everyone....**

But if there's a thoughtful, considerate, would-be adopter out there, we'll help you with the rough spots and make sure that the newest member of your family will make you love him. We also suggest if you have small children to really think before getting any pet. We here at The Iowa Greyhound Park Adoption Program do not generally adopt to anyone that has children under the age of 5 years old, because before this age your child doesn't have reasoning skills and it is hard for them to comprehend why they can't do what they want to do to their new pet.

Thank you for considering the adoption of a retired racing greyhound as a pet. Hopefully you'll join a growing list of people who report back that their adopted friend is one of the nicest and most affectionate pets that they have ever met.

Attached is the adoption application form. **PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE!** The next several pages of information may answer most of your questions and are necessary to prepare you for the greyhound adoption process. If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call and ask.

Please read the materials enclosed, and then fill out the entire Adoption Application and return it to The Iowa Greyhound Park Adoption Program. We also suggest that you research the breed, greyhounds are a pretty unique dog, from their upbringing from birth to retirement. We suggest reading one of the following books; Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies by Lee Livingood, Adopting the Racing Greyhound by Cynthia Brannigan, or Living with a Greyhound by Cynthia Brannigan, and Child Proofing Your Dog by Brian Kilcommons – a must for families with children who are 8 or younger. Another good book to read is Born to Run from Competitor to Companion by Ryan Reed. There are also some good websites to check out such as [www.greyhoundfacts.org](http://www.greyhoundfacts.org), [www.allaboutgreyhounds.com](http://www.allaboutgreyhounds.com), [www.greytarticles.wordpress.com](http://www.greytarticles.wordpress.com), and [www.greythealth.com](http://www.greythealth.com).

All of the greyhounds placed from The Iowa Greyhound Park Adoption Program receive a variety of services before being released as pets. Each dog receives a complete physical examination, fecal exam, deworming, heartworm exam, vaccinations will be given if vaccinations are ready to expire, and is spayed/neutered.

A fee of \$235 is charged at the time of adoption to reimburse the veterinarian's costs. The adopting family, with the understanding that this fee is non-refundable should the new pet not work out. In the event that the pet does not work out in your household, we ask only that you return the greyhound. The greyhound will be kept at the adoption kennel until another home can be found.

The following information was compiled in order to make the transition of bringing a retired racing greyhound into your home much easier for you, your family members, other pets, and of course your greyhound.

### **The History of Greyhounds**

It has been believed that greyhounds had come from Middle Eastern countries, that they are a desert breed, but DNA tell us that the history of the greyhound is more likely to have a Celtic background. The greyhound more than likely emerged from Eurasia and were brought to Western Europe by the Celts.

From the beginning, the greyhound was held in high regard throughout Europe. However, greyhound racing did not begin until much later in the majestic breed's history.

Greyhound track racing, as we know it today, began with Owen Patrick Smith's invention of a mechanical lure around 1912, which made racing around circular tracks possible. The first circular track opened in 1919 in Emeryville, California. Thus began the greyhound racing industry in America.

Because of their loving nature, greyhounds are the pets of choice for an increasing number of people. Throughout history and today, greyhounds have been pets to a number of prominent people including Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, President Rutherford B. Hayes, General George Custer, President John Tyler, author J.K. Rowling, rock singer Trent Reznor, and country singer Hunter Hayes, just to name a few.

### **Greyhounds as Pets- Common Questions**

#### **What had the life of a racing greyhound been like?**

Greyhounds spend most of their lives in the company of other dogs. When they are born the average litter size is about 6 pups. Young greyhounds are given a lot of attention and handled as much as possible. As they approach their first birthday, their training begins and they're to chase a lure, eventually progressing to a racetrack. Track life is very routine – Feeding in the morning, turnouts in the exercise pens to relieve themselves, and retiring between turnouts, exercising, and racing in individual kennel crates. To get a detailed description of a day in a kennel, you can go to [www.greyhoundinfo.org/?page\\_id=985](http://www.greyhoundinfo.org/?page_id=985). Greyhounds race every three to seven days and most racing kennels have about 60 dogs. Most greyhounds have seen very little of the everyday world including stairs, mirrors, glossy floors such as tile or wood, and cats, and have seldom, if ever, ridden in a car. The transition to living in a home requires some time.

#### **What kind of pets do retired racing greyhounds make?**

Greyhounds are affectionate, friendly dogs that thrive on attention and human companionship and make terrific pets. Raised with their littermates, where they competed for affection, greyhounds love becoming the center of attention as household pets. Greyhounds do not usually make good watchdogs. Their friendly nature is not very threatening.

#### **What should I expect if I adopt a greyhound?**

Expect a gentle, loving pet that, with a little time and patience will be a great addition to your family. Because everything is new to the greyhound, expect him/her to be somewhat confused and very curious. House manners have to be learned, but greyhounds are very intelligent dogs and learn quickly.

#### **What sort of medical care will my greyhound need?**

The best medical care is preventive in nature. Your dog will need to be checked periodically for worms. Your dog should also be checked annually for heartworm and placed on a heartworm preventative medication. Your greyhound's vaccinations will be current at the time of adoption. You will have to have

them updated when they expire. Be sure your vet is familiar with the problems greyhounds have with anesthesia and if your dog's teeth have a buildup of tartar, consider having them cleaned. Greyhounds are particularly sensitive to the chemical in flea collars, for this reason, the only flea medication that should be used is sprays or powders containing **pyrethrin**. Also one spot flea medication such as Frontline or Advantage can be used. As with any pet, regular veterinary check-ups are recommended.

### **What about feeding?**

Your greyhound needs to eat a quality dry dog food. That is a dog food that doesn't have corn in the first three ingredients. A greyhound will generally eat between four and six cups of food a day. Gradually your greyhound will slow down on its eating and may begin to gain weight. Be aware that your greyhound should not gain too much weight, because it is hard on their joints and may cause health problems later on down the road. We suggest that a healthy weight for your greyhound is generally about 5% to 10% over its racing weight depending on how big your greyhound is. The smaller the greyhound the less it should gain. Treat your dog with a thick beef marrow bone or biscuits. Remember that if you give your dog a bone, it is best that he/she keeps it in their crate. A limited amount of table scraps or water from cooked vegetables also can be added to your greyhound's food. A special treat might be a large, soft marshmallow.

### **Why are greyhounds so streamlined?**

Greyhounds are like any other competitive athlete. During their racing career, they eat heartily (up to two pounds of meat per day plus dry kibble, vitamins and minerals, and pasta or rice), but burn off excess weight when they run. As a pet, they eat much less, just four to six cups of dry food a day.

### **How old are retired greyhounds?**

The retired racers are between 16 months and five years old.

### **What is their life expectancy?**

These pure bred athletes enjoy many years of good health. With proper care, they have a life expectancy of 12 to 15 years.

## **Before You Bring Your New Pet Home**

Before the big day, you'll need to make a few preparations.

1. You will need to purchase a Martingale collar or a Premier collar and a six foot leather or nylon leash with a strong clasp and a ID tag that has the dog's name on it and your contact information to bring with you to the Adoption Center when you pick up your greyhound. You can order premier collars and leashes online at [www.premier.com](http://www.premier.com). Martingale collars can be ordered from a variety of websites such as Esty, Ebay, Amazon, I suggest [www.crazycollars.com](http://www.crazycollars.com). Also a tag collar is recommended but not required.
2. Purchase an extra-large wired crate for your dog. This is where he/she will sleep and stay when you are unable to be home or keep an eye on him/her. This is usually only temporary and your greyhound may not want to stay in it after they are used to the house.

3. Purchase other supplies such as food and water dishes, grooming brush, toothbrush, dog bed, and play toys.
4. Contact your Adoption Center for recommendations on the type of food to have on hand and stop by your local pet store to purchase food.
5. Unless your trip is longer than 4 hours, you will not need to bring water or stop to walk your dog.

### **Bringing Your New Pet Home**

Bringing home a new pet is an exciting and rewarding experience. For the greyhound adjusting to the life of a pet from that of a racer may take some time. This could take a few days to a week. The following are a few suggestions to make transition easier.

1. Once you get your dog home, you should first offer your greyhound a chance to relieve itself. Walk your dog back and forth in a small area until it does so.
2. Allow the dog to explore its new home at its own speed, but always under your supervision. It will be much easier to establish good habits early than correct bad ones later.
3. Although your dog is used to living indoors, everything is new to him in your home. As he sniffs his way through the house you can offer words of encouragement or discouragement.
4. The patterns you set in the first few days are the ones you will live with the rest of your pet's life. If you do not want your pet on the furniture, do not break down at 3:00am and cuddle with him on the couch.
5. Verbal commands are generally enough to train your greyhound. He/she will know by the tone of your voice what is acceptable and what is not.
6. These will be a very stressful few days for your greyhound. It is best to keep things quiet and delay the welcome home party for a week or two.
7. It is not unusual for a new pet to refuse to eat for a day or two. He will probably drink more water than normal and consequently need to go out more often. Also, he will need more rest than normal.
8. Don't be surprised if your new pet expects you to share your banana as you slice it for your cereal. Your greyhound may have eaten bananas, apricots, peaches, pumpkin, applesauce, spinach and even vanilla ice cream on a limited level as a racer.
9. Don't **ever** feed your dog chocolate. Chocolate contains ingredients that can speed your dog's heart rate, cause allergic reaction, and be fatal.
10. Don't feed your dog "people shaped" treats like miniature hot dogs or bacon. These usually contain lots of dye and sugar. Stick to the basics of good quality Milk Bones and biscuits.
11. Don't feed your dog from the table. This will only encourage bad habit that will be hard to break.
12. Don't leave alluring items on the kitchen counters. Greyhounds are curious by nature and may sample items left on the counter.

13. Don't be alarmed at your greyhound gulping down his/her meal. Greyhounds generally "bolt" their food without much, if any chewing.

The change of diet and the excitement of his new home may cause diarrhea. Should this occur give your dog two teaspoons of Kaopectate every hour for four hours or until the diarrhea has stopped. If it continues for more than a day, consult your veterinarian.

### **Training Your Greyhound**

One of the main reasons greyhounds make such wonderful pets is that they are easily trainable. Retired racers believe that people are all knowing and all powerful, making you the natural choice to set the ground rules. Keeping your dog under this illusion will make things easy for the greyhound.

### **Greyhounds and Other Pets**

One basic philosophy will describe the way to handle this situation: You are in charge and they are not! When introducing your greyhound to other animals follow these simple rules:

#### **Dogs**

1. Introducing them on neutral ground. This means having each dog on a leash and allowing him or her to meet in an area you other pet does not "own" such as down the block from your house.
2. After the initial sniffing, you should walk the dogs together for a short period of time and then bring them into the house together. This is almost like having your other dog act as a host to the new greyhound.
3. Any sign of growling should be met with a quick jerk of the leash and a sharp "NO"!
4. Although greyhounds are used to sharing attention, your dog may feel jealous and need a little extra attention.
5. The dogs should be fed separately.
6. Until you are confident that both dogs are comfortable with the new arrangement, you should not let the out in the yard together.

### **Home Alone**

Up until now, your greyhound has led a very different life than that of a house pet. Even the most simple, common things in our everyday life can be foreign to a greyhound and a little intimidating. A little patience and a lot of love will help you and your new pet make the adjustment. When leaving your greyhound home alone remember.

1. One of the hardest things for your greyhound to adjust will be loneliness. This dog has lived its entire life with either littermates or kennel mates and people coming and going most of the day.
2. Never leave your dog outdoors, particularly in the winter. With their short hair, greyhounds are very susceptible to the cold.

3. Never tie your greyhound outside on a rope, chain, or “runner”, as greyhounds are not used to being tied to something stationary. That can get tangled up and injure themselves or will pull, wiggle, or chew their way out. They also could forget that they are tied, take off running at their blazing speed and snap their neck when they hit the end of the line.
4. A big asset in this adjustment period is the crate. This crate provides security your dog needs as well as protecting both the dog and your house from each other. Your pet is used to having its own crate in the kennel, a nice old bone, and a warm comfortable place with a blanket in which to nap the day away. Using the crate is not cruel; it provides a sense of security that your dog needs. The crate should be placed in a quiet spot where there are no windows to offer visual distractions. A radio or TV will provide soothing noises. The first few days you should use an old washable blanket or something familiar. A favorite bone can be placed in it and the door left open.
5. At mealtime, place your dog and its food in the crate. This will reinforce the idea that this is his very own spot.
6. Before you leave your dog for an extended period of time, you should practice leaving for short time intervals and then build up. The first time, command him with “kennel up” or “go to bed”. You can toss a small dog biscuit in the crate if you like. If the dog barks, place one hand on his collar and one on his rump and shove. Close the door and tell him how good he is. About a minute later, open the crate door and praise him again. The next time (even a few minutes later) repeat the process, but this time leave the room. Plan to hide for several minutes then let him out. This teaches him that you will always come home. If your greyhound acts up when crated, stomp into the room and tell him he’s terrible then stomp out again. You can even smack the top of the crate if you like – hamming it up! After a few minutes of quiet, praise him enthusiastically again. Keep repeating this crate game extending to longer periods of time. It’s a good idea to put your coat on and go outdoors as if to go to work and then listen to protest from the porch. If there is a problem repeat your stomping routine.

You may not get to see the silly side of your greyhound for a while. He will probably not feel like letting his puppy personality out until he feels quite secure. When you see the classic bottoms up, front end down pose bouncing in front of you, you’ll know it’s time to play.

### **Indoors and Outdoors**

Indoors and going outdoors to relieve himself. Adjusting to his new lifestyle is relatively easy. Tips to follow include:

1. Develop a schedule and stick as closely to it as you can.
2. The basics to keep in mind are:
  - a. Out first thing in the morning.
  - b. Out after meals

- c. Out after naps
  - d. Out before you leave
  - e. Out before bed
3. It is important that you supervise your pet, especially at first. This gives you the opportunity to praise your dog for doing the right thing and also to keep an eye on him.
  4. Greyhounds are used to going out in the yard with a human around. If you just shove your pet out the door, he'll spend more time worrying about where you are rather than what he is supposed to be doing.
  5. If he doesn't go when you expect him to during the first few days, you should make an extra effort to keep him close to you so that you can prevent a mistake.
  6. If you're busy, you should crate him.
  7. If he looks antsy, he goes out again.
  8. It is important to differentiate bathroom walks and exercise walks. The scheduled bathroom walks should be in a restricted area where the dog is taken to do his duty. You should walk back and forth in this area or stand in one spot and let the dog walk around you. Do not distract him with talk. When he goes, praise him.
  9. Cold weather presents a problem for this breed. A warm-up blanket (coat) made for greyhounds is an excellent idea for walking or jogging in the winter. Check your dog's feet for snow packing, which can split webs or ice cuts. It's also a good idea to swish the dog's feet in lukewarm water to rinse off salt and other ice melters after you walk.
  10. Each dog is individual with different activity levels. Generally, younger dogs enjoy a higher level of activity than older dogs. If your dog has a medical problem that would indicate a restricted activity program, the adoption staff will advise you of those conditions.
  11. Most greyhound pets can be kept happy and healthy with a ten-minute walk daily. Although romping and running in a large fenced area is fun, it is not essential.
  12. One note of caution – exercising your dog off the leash in an area that is not entirely fenced in is asking for disaster to happen. The greyhound has been bred to scan the horizon and run after anything that moves. Something as small as a paper cup blowing across the street from the park could mean your dog's death. Once your pet is focused in on the moving object, he no longer hears you; he is running on pure instinct.
  13. Most greyhounds walk very well on a leash. If your pet starts to pull or freezes as he sees something in the horizon, a "pop" or "snap" of the leash to quickly jerk the collar and give the command "heel", "let's go", or something similar.

### **Veterinary Care**

Greyhounds are a very healthy breed with none of the inherited problems commonly found in other large breeds.

Prior to your adoption, your dog was spayed or neutered, checked for parasites and heartworms, his teeth were cleaned, and vaccinations were updated. The health sheet from the Adoption Center will give you the exact date of this care and you may need to get a rabies vaccination within a year after adoption. Please take the information that was given to you to your veterinarian so that your new greyhound's file can be established. The following are a few simple things you'll want to do to help your greyhound lead a long and healthy life"

1. Heartworm prevention will be one of the most important things you can do for your greyhound. We recommend one of the monthly chewable preventative tablets.
2. No living creature would enjoy being pounced on while sleeping. Call the dog's name before starting at any sleeping dog.
3. If the dog is sleeping he needs the rest. When he's ready to play, he'll let you know.
4. A greyhound needs a place of his own to rest undisturbed. A crate is an excellent choice.
5. Small children often want to express their affection for the pet greyhound by hugging or clinging to the dog. Teach your child that this can be "scary" for the dog and encourage gentle stroking of the neck and shoulders or brushing instead.
6. Tails are private things, not play things.
7. It is important to reinforce to your dog the idea that children are part of the "human coaching team", not littermates. Even though a child may be eye level, your dog must respond accordingly. For this reason, we strongly recommend that your greyhound does not share your child's bedroom.
8. Outdoor games with your greyhound should be closely supervised, especially initially and until both child and dog are fully trained.
9. Instead of running and jumping with your new pet, have your child join you as you stand in place and happily encourage your dog to come to you, with each person taking a turn. This provides exercise for the dog and reminds him that all people are in control – large or small.
10. The main rule to keep in mind concerning children and dogs is easy- SAFETY FIRST. This applies to both the dog and kids. Do not leave young children and dogs alone together. If you cannot supervise, crate your dog.

## **GREYHOUND ADOPTION APPLICATION**

1899 Greyhound Park Rd.

Dubuque, Iowa 52001

(563) 231-3100

Adoption Coordinator: Corey Morris at Ext. 103

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (work) \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_

Where are you employed: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why do you want a greyhound as a pet? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have an age, color, or sex preference? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have other pets? If so, what kind? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many people in your household? \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long are you away from home daily? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where do you live? City ( )          Suburban ( )          Rural Area ( )
7. Do you have a fenced in yard? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, describe: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are you willing to take your greyhound outside to relieve himself at least four times a day?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you aware of the importance of keeping your greyhound on a leash when not in a fenced area? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Greyhounds must be an inside pet and cannot live outside. Do you agree to keep your greyhound as an inside pet? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Will you keep your greyhound on a heartworm preventative? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Are you willing to accept immediate and full responsibility for the ownership of your greyhound, including all health care costs, necessary burdens and responsibility of owning a pet?  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. Are you willing to use a dog crate for your greyhound? \_\_\_\_\_

Any Questions:

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_