

H.755 FAQ

An Act relative to the importation of animals for rescue, shelter, foster, adoption or remote sale

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H755>

- 1. What is H.755?** H.755 is a bill that was introduced to the MA legislature by two State Representatives, with the support of many animal rescue groups. This bill would change the current laws surrounding the import of rescue animals into the Commonwealth.
- 2. What's wrong with the current laws?** Well, for starters, there aren't any actual laws. In 2005, the MA Department of Agriculture (MDAR) issued an emergency order requiring that dogs coming from another state be quarantined upon arrival in MA. This was a reaction to an increase in cases of heartworm in the Northeast, believed to be caused by the influx of rescue dogs after Hurricane Katrina. An additional order was added in 2014 to prevent rescues from showcasing dogs for adoption in any business classified as a "pet store" (stores, daycares, groomers, etc.) unless the dog had been quarantined in that facility for the 48 hours prior to the event.
- 3. What is the current process when a dog comes to MA, and how will that change if this bill is passed?** Before leaving the origin state, the dog must obtain a health certificate after a vet and fecal exam. Upon arrival in MA, the dog must spend 48 hours in a quarantine facility. If the dog is deemed healthy at the end of the 48 hours, he can go to a foster home. If H.755 passes, we will have the option of the 48-hour QT in a facility or holding the dog in a foster home for 5 days before being adopted.
- 4. What are the benefits to Last Hope K9 if H4279 passes?** In 2018, LHK9 spent over \$150k a year on quarantine. This includes the normal 48-hour hold, as well as any time a dog is kept in QT for a medical reason or because he doesn't have a foster. This amount of money would allow LHK9 to do so much more to save dogs. In addition, we would be able to hold events in retail stores and doggie daycares again.
- 5. Quarantine sounds like a good idea, why would we want to stop doing it?** For several reasons. First, all of our dogs have already had a physical and fecal exam in Arkansas; there is likely not much that has changed in a couple days. Second, 48 hours really isn't enough time for any illness to truly present itself. Third, dogs are only separated by partitions, meaning they could likely catch something airborne while there. On top of all of that, quarantine is very expensive, and we are at the mercy of the vet's decision. For example, if someone at QT hears a dog cough, even once, the dog will need to stay until the vet feels the dog is well enough to leave.
- 6. I have resident dogs; if my foster isn't quarantined, how do I know my foster is healthy and won't get them sick?** In 2018, less than 10% of our dogs were held in quarantine for a medical reason. While most dogs were held due to fecal parasites, there isn't much need for concern about spreading these to fosters and residents. Fecal parasites in QT are detected by looking at a stool sample in a microscope, and therefore the test is susceptible to human error. In addition, the presence of parasites in samples are often due to the shedding of dead parasites following deworming in AR and are not indicative of anything actually contagious. Resident dogs are often healthier and less susceptible to disease than our fosters, given that they have lived in clean, stable conditions longer.
- 7. Doesn't this make the foster homes a quarantine?** In a way, yes. Just like we do now, LHK9 will continue to rely on our fosters to notify the rescue of any potential health problems with their foster dogs, and the rescue will provide the proper medications and vet care as needed.
- 8. What's the next step?** LHK9 encourages our fosters and volunteers to support this bill. If you have any questions regarding the bill, or what you can do to support it, please join our advocacy group or reach out to Eileen Wagner, Kristin Weekley or Sam MacKinnon.

Visit <https://www.lasthopek9.org/support-h755/> to see an example of a letter to your legislator in support of H.755.