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## **Puppy Raiser Program Hits National Milestone With Arrival of Frosty and Fiona in Massachusetts**

**CENTRAL POINT, OR** – While there have been numerous challenges for Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) throughout the pandemic, the growth and expansion of the puppy raiser program has been encouraging to watch.

DBL has quickly moved from surviving to thriving during COVID19, recognizing quickly that few suitable dogs are coming from the shelters, and more resources need to and have been put towards growing the breeding program and acquiring purpose-bred dogs, from private groups and partnering Assistance Dog organizations across the country.

In late July, Frosty and Fiona, two Labrador puppies from Pepper's recent litter, made their way across country to DBL's Northeast Campus in Falmouth, MA. These two puppies unknowingly are helping DBL to kick off its puppy raiser program in the northeast region, truly making the program national, with nearly 30 raisers on-the-ground from coast to coast.

"We are very excited for our new Northeast Campus in Massachusetts as it provides us with an opportunity to grow our Puppy Program among other things," stated Puppy Program Coordinator, Hannah Crane. "As our organization continues to expand, our need for puppy raisers drastically increases so we can continue to meet the needs of those we serve. The more puppies that are raised means more lives we can change."

At 8-weeks old the puppies are paired with volunteer raisers and placed in private homes for the next 12-months. During this period, raisers attend basic obedience classes with their puppies. They also go on public outings to expose the puppies to a multitude of different environments. After the year of raising and training, the puppies are ready to return to Dogs for Better Lives to begin their professional training and next step towards becoming an Assistance Dog. Currently, DBL trains Assistance Dogs in three programs; [Hearing](#), [Autism](#), and [Facility](#).

"We're thrilled to see the Puppy Raiser program continue to grow, with Frosty and Fiona's arrival in Massachusetts," stated Vice President of Operations, Trish Welch. "Despite numerous challenges throughout the pandemic, the breeding and puppy raiser programs have thrived. This is truly a testament to staff, volunteers, and numerous partners we work with in Oregon and across the country."

Currently, volunteer breeder caretakers and puppy raisers are needed in Oregon, Washington, California, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. To learn more about Dogs for Better Lives, puppy raiser program, and other ways to get involved, visit <https://dogsforbetterlives.org/get-involved/>



*Dogs for Better Lives is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focusing on the training and placing of Hearing Assistance Dogs, Program Assistance Dogs, and Autism Assistance Dogs. Accredited by [Assistance Dogs International \(ADI\)](#) and recognized by [Charity Navigator](#) as a 4-star nonprofit, Dogs for the Deaf has been rescuing dogs, bettering lives, and providing assistance dogs since 1977.*

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