



## **FOSTER HANDBOOK**

Thank you for agreeing to foster/trial a dog for Pup Culture Rescue. Foster homes like yours allow us to rescue more dogs and we appreciate your generosity by opening your home to a rescued dog.

By providing a foster home, you're providing a stable, loving environment for a dog that has been neglected and abandoned. You're also providing some much-needed socialization and basic training that will make our dogs more appealing for adoption and better overall members of their adoptive families and society.

### **General Guidelines**

Please read & review the following important guidelines:

Prior to fostering, all Foster Homes must sign an agreement as well as agree to a home check.

All Foster Homes agree to accept primary responsibility for providing lodging and care of their foster dog until a permanent adoptive family is found.

Pup Culture Rescue will provide your Foster dog's food and necessary medical care.

Medical care will be provided only via a Pup Culture Rescue representative. If you think your Foster Dog needs any medical care, including vet visits or over-the-counter medications, please contact your Foster Coordinator before acting. The vet's office we use depends on the particular needs of that dog.

Foster Homes are not required to foster any dog that they do not wish to foster. However, there may not be an immediate alternate foster home for your dog. We will work on moving your foster dog out as soon as possible, but ask for your understanding as we work on it. We need at least 72 hours notice if the dog needs alternate placement. The foster is still responsible for keeping the foster dog separated and safe (if necessary) until alternative arrangements have been made.

Your own dogs must be current with their vaccinations and be spayed/neutered, prior to receiving your foster dog. We also recommend that you vaccinate your resident dogs with the Bordetella vaccination to prevent kennel cough, a common illness with shelter dogs. Although kennel cough is like a common cold that resolves easily in most dogs, there are always higher risks with some dogs who may not have a strong immune system. This is a Pup Culture Rescue recommendation.

Pup Culture Rescue is not responsible for any veterinary bills for resident dogs. The Foster Home assumes responsibility for any veterinary bills that result from resident dogs becoming ill due to exposure with a foster dog or any altercations with a Pup Culture Rescue foster dog.

Pup Culture Rescue is also NOT responsible for vet care that is a result of handler error. We are very limited in our finances so if a foster handler somehow has an “accident” (ie: falls, loses control of the dog and the dog gets injured as a result OR permitting foster dog to interact with new dogs that result in an altercation OR any result of our rules being broken), then the foster family is responsible for getting the foster dog to the nearest vet and covering the costs associated with the health care. We do our best to support our fosters in every way, however we cannot be liable for mistakes or accidents that happen regularly without regard for our policies and procedures. Please follow our guidelines and precautions in order to minimize these accidents. Pup Culture Rescue will, however, cover the expenses of truly legitimate, unforeseen medical emergencies that are not a result of our Foster Rules being broken.

If you want to take your foster dog with you on a trip, even just for a weekend, you MUST notify Pup Culture Rescue beforehand and obtain approval. Foster dogs legally belong to Pup Culture Rescue and we are liable for them, so it is imperative that you consult with your foster coordinator anytime you want to do anything out of the ordinary with your foster dog. Our Foster dogs and our foster families are a reflection of our rescue, so please be mindful of your decisions and actions.

Do not leave your dog with anyone else without prior approval from Pup Culture Rescue. Anytime a foster dog is left we MUST have a signed release of liability. This is a MUST.

### **Getting To Know Your Foster Dog**

The animals that Pup Culture Rescue takes in all have a past that we may not know much about. We cannot guarantee their behavior or triggers. It takes a dog weeks,

sometimes months, to fully decompress into a home. Please use caution when handling your foster/trial animal.

Below is a limited list of precautions to take of when handling your foster dog:

- DO NOT crawl into their crate or allow another animal or child to play in the crate.
- DO NOT play tug a war with your foster dog.
- DO NOT place your face, or allow a child to place their face in your foster dog's personal space. This means no smothering or kissing the animal.
- DO NOT attempt to take a bone or food bowl away from the animal when it is chewing or eating.
- DO NOT grab your foster dog by the collar.
- DO NOT shove, push or force the foster dog into their crate.
- DO NOT leave the foster dog unattended in your vehicle.
- DO NOT let the foster dog roam in your car. Always tie the leash to the headrest or place the animal in a crate while driving.

### **Getting along**

Never leave your resident dogs and foster dog unsupervised together. They are still getting to know one another, and will need correction on appropriate behavior toward each other, which means supervision. If you are leaving the house, then crate or separate the dogs.

Feed the dogs separately. Your foster dog should be fed in his crate, as this is a safe place for him to eat and will make his crate a more desirable location. This reduces stress for everyone. Food aggression between dogs is very common. Please do not take it upon yourself to work through these issues without the guidance of Pup Culture Rescue.

### **Working With Your Foster Dog**

While your foster dog is living with you, you can provide some basic training along with lots of tender loving care. No formal training regime is needed for most foster dogs, but if you can work on the following, it will make your foster dog much more "adoptable." If there are particular issues that need to be addressed, Pup Culture Rescue will provide any training and oversight necessary.

While socialization is an important aspect of fostering a dog, it must be done carefully and safely. Dog parks and dog beaches are not allowed. There are too many risk factors involved. If you are unsure how to properly and safely socialize your foster dog, please contact your foster coordinator for guidance. When working on behavioral issues

(like food aggression/resource guarding) please always put your own safety first. Do not intervene if you feel unsafe doing so, and contact your foster coordinator for guidance and next steps.

Food aggression with other dogs is a fairly common trait; however food aggression towards people is not acceptable. If your foster dog is growling when you are near his food, you need to work on correcting this behavior.

Hand-feed the dog, so that it's clear the food is yours, and you are the giver of food. Then, when feeding with a bowl, approach and drop higher value goodies into the bowl. Initially, with a dog that is worried you will take his food, you should drop the treats from a standing height and walk away. When the dog is no longer dreading your approach to the food and is, in fact, now anticipating your approach as meaning even BETTER stuff is coming his way, you can work your way down to dropping the goodies at increasingly shorter distances and having him pause in eating to sit and get a treat from you, then return to his meal. Please do not take food away from a resource-guarding dog, as you will only increase his thought that you are, indeed, going to take it away. With a non-food aggressive dog, these are still good tips, along with trading chewies for a higher value item, then giving them back. Another good reason to crate your foster dog, as you can use that place as a safe place to give treats, chews, and toys.

House training (potty training) is definitely desirable for both you and the future adopter. The best way to house train is to use a crate, and to be vigilant about taking the dog outside regularly, including after naps and meals. If a dog is particularly stubborn about house training, keep them on a leash in the house; this will prevent them from wandering off to hide to go potty.

Crate Training is a great way not only to potty train, but also to establish general house manners since the dog will not be roaming free in the house unless he/she is being supervised. So, no chewing on couch cushions, counter-surfing, or garbage can diving if the available to you.

Sitting is relatively easy to teach and pays big dividends. A dog that sits for his/her leash and food learns impulse control and that the way to what they desire is good manners. It also helps to get an overly excited dog under control.

“Watch-Me’s” are an important skill to help our foster dogs cope with different situations. We choose to use food as lures. Take your hand with the treat in it, pass it by the dog's nose so he can smell it and take the treat to your forehead between your eyes (of course, the dog's eyes should be following that treat!). Use the treat like a refrigerator

magnet from his nose to your forehead. Make sure he's been able to smell the treat. As soon as his eyes meet yours, treat him (within the count of 2). Remember you need to give him the treat within the count of 2 seconds. You should only need to do this a couple of times before the dog gets that looking in your eye is what gets him the treat. At this point, we fade the food lure altogether and use the food as a distraction. Hold the treat out from your body. The dog will stare intently at the treat and may offer behaviors (like sits or downs) to earn the reward. Wait patiently; as the dog will eventually flick a glance at your face to try to figure out what, exactly, you want. INSTANTLY, reward the glance with a marker word (like YES). Once the dog is consistently looking to you for the treat, you can begin to add duration (ask for a longer look) this is a fun game to play with toys too!

Jumping up is a common problem with our foster dogs—they are so happy to have someone to love! But, it's best if they are taught not to do this, since it can knock people over or just be rude. The best prevention is to see it coming and tell them to stop and sit. Once they have this down, they can be invited “up” for a visit, but only with an invitation.

Leash walking is challenging to teach. Many of our dogs have never been on a leash and have no idea how to behave. If you're ambitious, you can work on “heel”, but even “easy” is fine. “Easy” is when the dog isn't necessarily healing at your side, but they are also not dragging you down the street. This takes time to learn and patience on your part. A nervous dog may not be pulling but be reluctant to walk or trying to get away from you and the leash. The goal then is to get the dog to relax and walk confidently with you. We can give you some pointers on either of these cases.

### **Cat Introductions**

There may be dogs that we highly recommend not be introduced to cats. And there may be dogs that we are unsure of how they are with cats. Which is the most common case in dogs that come into our rescue.

First, make sure that your cat has his/her own sanctuary— preferably a room where the foster dog will not be allowed to go. If you can keep the cat's food & litter box in this room, and keep the door closed, then the dog & cat can sniff each other under the door for a few days before meeting face to face. This will make things go a lot smoother, as they will most likely feel they have already “met.” Supervise the dog's behavior even at the door, reinforce playful, curious behavior and correct any aggression or obsession.

When introducing the dog & cat for the first time, put the dog in his crate & just allow the cat to walk by if he/she wants to. Here, you're looking to evaluate both the dog & the cat. Is the cat fearful or curious? Is the dog happy/playful or chomping at the bit to play? All cat introductions must be handled by a licensed trainer.

After introductions have occurred, keep in mind the following tips:

- Never leave the cat & foster dog unsupervised, even if it looks like they get along great. A playful dog can still unintentionally harm a cat.
- Make sure your cat has places to jump up to in each room or hide under where the dog can't get him/her.
- Playful chasing is normal, but always remind the foster dog to play nice/slow down/not run.
- Don't allow the dog to stare down the cat. The dog should know that he/she is not allowed to obsess on the cat.
- The cat may swipe at the dog or hiss in order to correct. This is usually a great help in ensuring the dog knows his/her place. But, keep an eye on all interactions to ensure the cat doesn't injure the dog as well.
- With all your resident pets, allow the animals to accept one another on their own time. Never push them toward each other or force interaction. Many animals become companions and playmates, while others simply tolerate each other.

### **Dogs & Children**

At no time leave a child and foster dog unsupervised. If you are unable to directly supervise your foster dog and children the foster dog needs to be safely in their crate. Children must learn proper handling and discipline, and dogs must learn self-control so that they do not play too rough. Children must be supervised and taught that dogs are beings, not dolls or toys to dress-up or handle constantly. Teach children not to tease or rile up the dog unnecessarily. This includes chasing around the house, which can scare a dog, who may snap if cornered or frightened.

Young children are not to ever walk foster dogs, even if the dog is easy to walk, the child cannot really handle any encounters with other dogs or cats that are bound to happen. Only adults are to handle the foster dog, at all times.

Children should not play unsupervised with foster dogs. For puppies, teach proper handling (pick up by the body, not the limbs), and limit interaction. Children need to be taught that a puppy's mouthing is not biting, and that the puppy is not trying to hurt them. Children often react to a dog's bad behavior by hitting the dog, which is unacceptable

### **Medical Treatment**

Prior to any medical procedure being done, you must contact the Foster Coordinator to get approval. Failure to get prior approval will mean that you forego reimbursement for any basic medical treatment. In addition, even if you are willing to cover vet expenses, we prefer to have the dogs seen by our vets so that the dogs get consistent care and have all of their records centralized.

If the dog is sick, injured, needs to be spayed/neutered, or needs a doctor's visit for immunization, your foster coordinator will make the appropriate arrangements at a time that is convenient for you. If you need help transporting the dog to the vet, please let us know. We will do our best to make arrangements, though it is a foster's responsibility to take their foster dog to the medical appointments. We don't want the dog to be afraid of someone new when they are in a stressful environment and a visit to the vet can be extremely uncomfortable.

Thank you for fostering with Pup Culture Rescue. Fostering saves lives and thanks to you we just saved another. Welcome to the Pup "Cult" !