



Foster Care Guidelines

Welcome...and thank you for participating in our Foster Program.

Thank you for considering the lifesaving act of becoming a foster!! Fosters truly are the FRONT LINE for these animals! A foster home is a temporary living situation for animals while they are awaiting placement in a permanent home. Foster families provide shelter, food, care, love, and guidance. The number of animals we can save depends entirely on the number of people who will open their homes and hearts to foster them. For some of these animals, this will be their first experience being treated as a family pet. You are their salvation and you should never underestimate the important role you are playing in their lives! LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue is in constant need of individuals or families who are willing to open their homes and hearts to provide foster care rescued animals. This care not only includes the general maintenance and safety of the foster dog, but we also ask that you assist us in providing basic training and socialization which is crucial for a successful adoption. We will provide you with support and guidance in every way we can, to make your fostering experience a rewarding one.

How far would YOU be willing to go to save the life of an animal? Are YOU the person that will help them through this process.... Somebody has to help them... Is that somebody YOU?

Why Foster?

The only way that we can save animals is with the help of foster homes. Being a foster family has rewards beyond the essential value of helping a pet in need find a new home. For some, it is a chance to have an animal companion without making a lifetime commitment, or to try new companions for an existing pet. Foster Care is critical to our rescue efforts, the more homes we have, the more animals we can save. Becoming a foster family is a very rewarding experience, and can be a lot of fun. There are tears shed when a foster finally finds a home of their own, but knowing you have saved a life and opened up space to save another helps the tears go away.

As a foster parent/family, you are a representative of LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue. We hope you will read this manual with an eye toward continuing to improve our foster program or through sharing ideas and knowledge. Many of you will already know much of this material, but these guidelines are developed and reevaluated periodically to ensure that every aspect of fostering goes as smoothly as possible, both for you and your foster animal. Please feel free to make suggestions that you think may help other foster families.

Again, thank you for participating in our foster program. We hope that you will enjoy teaching your foster animal how to be a loveable, loyal and well-behaved family pet.

Ownership of Foster Animals

All foster animals are the sole property of LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue and shall be returned to LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue upon request, or if the foster parent/family is not able to adequately care for the animal. Should you want to adopt the foster dog yourself, you must contact submit an Adoption Application for approval. Your Application is given preference to any other applications submitted at the time BUT must be approved by the LCAR Adoption Coordinator. You will also be required to pay the Adoption Fee. Until such time, the foster dog is considered available for adoption.

Foster Care Goals

A rescued animal in our Foster Care Program enters your life for a few days or weeks, usually for 4-8 weeks, although some dogs have been in foster care for longer or shorter periods of time (some never leave, the foster family ends up falling in love with and adopting the dog.)

As a foster parent/family, you are responsible for teaching the foster animal as listed below:

- Housebreaking, if necessary
- Walking on a leash, if necessary
- Providing medications, if needed.
- Responding to his/her name assigned by LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue
- Appropriate behavior indoors and outdoors
- Proper interaction with other pets
- Proper play techniques with adults and children

The foster dog's personality will slowly develop and bloom. We will ask that you complete our Foster Dog Questionnaire to get an updated profile of the dog's personality so that we can match him or her with the right adoptive family.

Remember: we are only a phone call away if you have any questions or need advice!

Your Foster Dog and Other Animals

Getting acquainted

Take precautions while you are getting to know the dog's personality, especially when he/she is around other animals and children. Introduce them to one another slowly, always using a leash. Never leave the foster dog alone with cats, small pets, or other dogs during this time.

Introducing the foster to your dogs

- Have the pets meet on neutral territory; for example, introduce them on the sidewalk in front of your house or down the block.
- Keep the foster dog on a short leash close to your side. Bring your dogs out on leashes one at a time.
- Keep the atmosphere calm and do not let your pets rush up to the new dog.
- Observe the reaction of the new dog and of your own dogs.
- Watch for signs of aggression and/or dominance:
 1. Head and tail held high, stiff, and rigid
 2. Maintaining eye contact
 3. Hackles up - raised hairs along the spine from shoulder to tail
 4. Ears pricked
 5. Standing over - paws or head over other dog
 6. Pushing or mounting
 7. Grabbing muzzle of subordinate dog
 8. Growling or snapping teeth
 9. Any other signs you might feel are a threat to either animal

Once they have sniffed and greeted each other, take them around your property and into the house

If all pets are behaving well with each other, you may remove the leashes, but leave the muzzle on and continue to monitor and supervise. Do not leave dogs unattended together until you are 100% confident that they are getting along well.

Introducing the foster dog to your cats

Introduce the Foster animal to your cat indoors with the animal leashed.

- Hold the leash tightly in your hand
- Leave the cat on the floor
- Walk toward the cat slowly

If the dog pulls or lunges, give a sharp pull on the leash and firmly say, "NO!" Correct the dog every time it shows interest in the cat. If you observe any of the following signs, please inform the foster coordinator:

- Teeth snapping
- Ears pricked
- Fixed gaze that cannot be broken
- Trembling or lurching
- Any other signs you may feel are a threat to either animal

Caring for the Foster Animal

Foster parents/family must provide the following for the Foster Animal:

- Good food
- Fresh water daily

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- Love and affection
- Soft comfy dog beds
- Lots of guidance, supervision and training

The foster dog should be kept indoors as a house pet. Some animals have no undercoat or body fat to shield them from extreme temperatures. These animals have generally been kept indoors in temperature controlled kennels, and are unaccustomed to being around people. Being left outdoors may cause behavior problems, or worse, it could be fatal to the foster dog.

Training

Foster Animals are very responsive to no force, positive reinforcement methods of training. You should never hit a Foster Animal. They are very sensitive to voice commands. Foster Animals respond better and learn more quickly though the use of positive reinforcement when they have done something right. They will repeat the action that worked for them. It may be frustrating at times and hard not to punish the dog for his/her wrong actions, but you are better off taking your frustration out on something else as the dog will not be able to associate your anger with the action and will simply learn not to trust you. Please don't hesitate to call for help in this regard! It is important for the hounds to learn appropriate manners and still be outgoing, happy dogs.

Medications

Unless prescribed by a LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue approved veterinarian, do not administer any over the counter or otherwise obtained medications to the foster animal. Most foster animals have a low tolerance to many foreign substances and may have serious side effects. If you know of a natural remedy that you would like to use to help the foster dog in a situation, please contact the foster coordinator before administering the medication. Also know that certain pesticides are lethal to animals. In the case that you need to use one for ticks or other outdoor pests, please contact a representative of LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue. Most of these animals have already been treated for Fleas and Ticks, and any additional treatments could prove harmful to the animal.

Traveling

In order for LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue to place the foster dog in the best "Forever Home" the adoption counselor and foster coordinator need to have access to the dogs at all times. In the event that you are leaving town for any period of time, please contact the foster coordinator at least two weeks prior (or as early as possible) to work out a plan that will best suit you and the dog while you are away.

Swimming Pools

You must take extra precautions in introducing the foster dog to your swimming pool. Do it gently and slowly. You just need to give them the understanding that it is not a solid walking surface. Once they realize that, they will more than likely stay away. However, that is not a reason to leave the dog unattended near the pool. The foster dog can easily walk too close to the pool and be bumped or just slip near the edge and fall in. If the dog is interested in getting in the water, please spend some time making sure that you teach them where the stairs are so they can get out.

Help With the Placement Process

The most rewarding part of fostering a dog is to see the end result. When you have nurtured the dog into becoming a very good house pet and see that it is ready for its "Forever Home," you also get to play a very important role in the placement and adoption process. In order to do this in an efficient manner you may be asked to be available for Meet-n-Greets, talk to prospective families, and drop off or pick up dogs from LAST CHANCE Animal Rescue Adoption Events.

A Few Reminders Now That You Have a Foster Animal in your House

Check to be sure living area is secured and reinforce any loose fence material.
 Contact any utility company that has free access to an area the foster dog may frequent in order to make arrangements and be able to prevent the animal from escaping your secure area. (i.e., pool caretaker, landscapers, meter readers)
 Please keep the foster dog separated from other pets when unsupervised.

Fostering is one of THE MOST IMPORTANT steps in the process of rescue.

Don't ever forget that you have participated in saving the life of an animal!