



PROJECT SECOND CHANCE FOSTER GUIDELINES

WELCOMING YOUR FOSTER

Welcome to the Project Second Chance foster team! Without fosters like you, our rescues would not get a second chance to find their forever family. Because we are preparing rescues for their forever homes, we ask that you review and follow the guidelines below to help get your foster ready for a successful placement.

SUPPLIES

As a foster, you will need several supplies. Please let us know if you need help getting any of these items:

- Food and water bowls
- Crate (wire only/no dividers) will be provided
- Padding for inside of crate
- Blanket or towel for over the crate
- Fromm Puppy Gold or Adult Gold Dry Food will be provided (unless you would like to donate a bag)
- Toys and treats - no rawhides, nylabones, plastic chews, or food products made outside of the U.S. should be given to your foster. Please only provide high quality treats with whole ingredients –no milk bone, pedigree, purina., or other highly processed products. The rule of thumb – if you can buy it at Wal Mart, Target, PetSmart, PetCo or the grocery store, it is probably poor quality. We strive to provide the highest quality food and treats to our pups.
- Collar, leash, and ID tag will be provided*
- If an ADOPT ME leash or collar is provided, please only use for adoption events. They may be gently cleaned using dishwasher soap and warm water to keep them looking new.

* All PSC issued supplies must be returned at time of terminating foster status. Please keep them safe as foster supplies are expensive for our rescue.

PREPARING YOUR HOME

A safe environment will help to keep your foster safe as well as protect your belongings. Even the most well-behaved puppy or dog will want to explore his or her new surroundings. Anything on the floor should be considered fair game so please be sure to put away socks, shoes, purses, kids' toys, etc. Breakable items should be removed for the time being; some dogs' tails can unintentionally clear off a coffee table in a matter of seconds. Keep electrical cords out of reach and harm's way. Keep cleaning products out of reach or in a secure cabinet. Secure trash cans or put them in a locked cabinet. For outdoor safety, cigarette butts should be out of reach as nicotine poisoning can be fatal. Some plants or mushrooms found in yards, when eaten, can also be hazardous to your dog's health. And of course, remember certain foods are poisonous to dogs, such as chocolate, nuts,, avocados, garlic, onions, raisins, nutmeg, so please do not feed your puppy or rescue human food without permission.

WHEN THE FOSTER ARRIVES

Keep in mind that the foster needs some down time to get acclimated to its new environment. When the foster gets to your house, gradual amounts of food and water should be given to avoid stomach upset. Since flying can be stressful, some fosters get upset stomachs from transport. Mild diarrhea is common. Some fosters may choose to not eat until they feel more comfortable. Please let us know if this persists.

If nausea, vomiting, or severe diarrhea occur, please contact Tara, our executive director, immediately at 216.346.697 via call or text.

The first 24 hours should include:

- Quiet time with the family
- Crate time with a comfortable blanket
- Small amounts of food and water (break regular meal into 2 to 3 servings)
- Snuggle time
- Don't force interaction, let the foster adjust and come to you after quiet crate time

Most fosters will need three days to "decompress" and acclimate to their new environment. Please be patient and understanding with your foster. But please also let us know if you observe recurring issues such as consistent crying, whining, or other issues acclimating.

Our rescues have been living with families prior to arrival and have no known behavioral issues. If you notice anything concern, please let our team know.

CRATE TRAINING

We require crate training for all fosters. We understand that it may difficult, especially if this is the first time for you. Some adult dogs will come already crate trained, but most puppies will have to be taught. Although they cry and whine, please train them to love their crate. Encourage them by first keeping the door open and inviting them in with a treat. Make sure to give praise when they walk into their crate. Start slowly keeping them in for short periods of

time, always praising them for their good behavior. Night time cuddling is okay, but they should be taught to sleep in the crate for bedtime.

The first few nights in the crate can also be stressful. Please consider putting the crate by you to bring comfort. We can provide you with a heartbeat teddy bear to share with them at bedtime for comfort. Usually, rescues adjust in a few days, but we are happy to assist with transition issues. As a general rule, do not yell at or correct dogs for crying in their crate. Please try to let them self soothe. If that does not work, please provide comfort and try again after letting them out with playtime. An exhausted rescue sleeps better!

If your foster is not under your direct supervision or if you are not home, the foster must be in their crate. Other than overnight, puppies shouldn't be left in the crate for more than 3 hours at a time and adult fosters for 4 hours. **NEVER USE THE CRATE AS PUNISHMENT.**

HOUSEBREAKING

Patience, a strict schedule, good cleaning methods, and supervision are the keys to a reliably housebroken dog. Even if you are fostering an adult dog that was previously housebroken, the new scents and odors from other pets in your home may stimulate some initial urine marking. They may also have "bathroom" signals, such as circling or whining, and you should take note that they may be trying to tell you they need to go out. With puppies, you should always assume that you are starting from scratch. Take them outside several times during the day (every 3 hours for younger puppies), preferably on the same schedule every day. If you have a dog walker at a specific time during the week, try to accommodate the pup by taking them out at that time on weekends as well. Praise your foster when he goes outdoors. You can give him a treat immediately after he is finished. Do not wait until after returning indoors, as this is vital for the foster to remember the correlation between going outside to do his "business" and receiving praise and/or a treat.

We do ask that you refrain from paper training unless directed for young puppies. Although it may seem convenient to use pee pads, most dogs do not differentiate between a pee pad and a rug if these are used later in life.

TRAINING TIPS

If, and only if, you catch your foster chewing on something, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise, offer him an acceptable chew toy instead, and praise him lavishly when he takes the toy in his mouth. Try to establish a feeding schedule, giving them food twice a day at the same time. This will also help you gauge their bathroom breaks. If you have other pets and they are used to having food in their bowl 24-hours a day, putting them on the same schedule will make feeding time much less stressful. When playing with toys or giving treats, make sure to supervise all dogs, as they may get defensive and guard their territory or belongings. We suggest putting toys and bones away to avoid issues.

If you will be introducing your foster dog to a cat, keep the dog on a leash for the first few meetings in case he feels the need to chase! Never force the cat into proximity with the dog.

This can lead to a high-stress situation for all involved. Also keep the cat litter box away from the dog. If the dog has access to the litter box, it can be stressful for the cat, and the dog may eat the cat feces and litter and get very sick. Puppies under 16 weeks should be separated from the cat and litter box to avoid illness.

Never use any forms of negative training. We have found that by encouraging positive behavior instead of reprimanding/punishing the dog, you will have a more rewarding and successful relationship with your foster.

PLAYTIME WITH PUPPY

Keep in mind that a puppy under 16 weeks of age and not fully vaccinated does not have a fully developed immune system. **As a rule, your foster puppy should not mingle with any other puppies except those authorized by PSC. Adult dogs, if fully vaccinated are safer playmates, but interaction should also be restricted to known dogs that are members of your household. Strange dogs may not be fully vaccinated or may be carrying viruses that your foster puppy is not immune against.**

Parvo and Distemper are horrible diseases that can be fatal to puppies. We do not know what immunities the fosters have acquired since most of the dogs have been abandoned by their mothers or are no longer building immunity through the mother's milk. So be careful with them and limit exposure to people and dogs. Ask people to sanitize their hands before handling.

Do not take your foster to a dog park or pet stores because they are still susceptible to diseases that can be transmitted on contact within a short period of time while on the ground. Other respiratory illnesses are easily transmitted as well from coughing and sneezing.

We request that you keep your rescue at home and discuss any social outings before taking your rescue with the PSC team. Permission will vary on age and vaccines to date.

VET VISITS

Each rescue will have vet appointments for checkups and vaccines. We will alert you to those scheduled and assist with transport if you are unable to help.

The PSC team usually handles all vet visits, but if you are in position to take your foster dog to the vet while the dog is under 16 weeks of age, out of abundance for caution, please hold them and do not let them have contact with other dogs in the waiting room.

PLAYTIME/LEASHES

Your foster dog must be on leash at all times unless playing in the house or a fenced in yard. They must always be under supervision. Do not take them around any unspayed or unneutered dogs. Do not assume all dogs get along and take caution when introducing your foster to other dogs.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROMOTION

We encourage you to promote your foster and PSC on social media, but we also ask that you help us maintain the brand integrity of our online presence. The easiest way to do this is to share our official PSC posts and stories. Please help us create this official content by sending us updates on and high-quality photos of your foster. (We recommend using portrait mode in front of a simple background.) Please exercise discretion and good judgment in sharing personal content about your foster on social media. You should never make announcements or share major updates that have not already been shared on PSC's social media. This includes updates on your foster's health status, adoption status, or any name change. If you'd like us to review content before you post, we'd be happy to do that.

If someone asks about adopting your foster – whether online or in person – please feel free to talk about your foster but do not make any broad, sweeping statements about him, or any kind of assurances or promises. Instead, if you think the person would make a good adopter, please ask them to fill out an adoption application online. We value your input in the adoption process and would very much like to get your impression of the applicant.

MEDICAL AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

Please contact a member of PSC if you believe your foster needs urgent medical attention. Coughing is never normal for a young puppy, so please do not hesitate to tell us.

If you believe your rescue is facing a life-threatening emergency, you are authorized to take them to one of our recommended emergency veterinary centers (VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital, VCA Southpaws, Leesburg Life Center, Hope Center, Regional Vet Referral Center) and must contact us enroute (Tara at 216.346.6973) to authorize and coordinate treatment and payment for expenses as well as to send health records.

If you lose your foster dog – or if your foster dog is stolen – please contact us immediately so that we can have the best chance of finding him: (Tara at 216.346.6973).

TRANSPORT

We kindly ask that you transport your foster to adoption events. If you cannot transport the dog to an event, please contact a PSC volunteer so that we can arrange to pick up your foster for the event. We would also love your help at adoption events, if you are available and willing. Talking about your foster and showing pictures of your dog is helpful in getting them adopted. If your foster is scheduled for an individual meet-and-greet with a potential adopter, one of our adoption coordinators will reach out to you to for scheduling and details. You are not required to attend the meet-and-greet, but we always appreciate your help in transporting your foster.

Rescue meet and greets are generally held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. Our coordinator will reach out to you in advance to schedule.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR FOSTER DOG IN A CAR.

FOSTER CARE

As a foster for PSC, you are not authorized to place your foster dog under the care of another individual without express permission from PSC. This includes overnight visits, boarding, etc. Dog walkers are acceptable, if approved in advance. If you cannot foster any longer, please provide 24-hour advance notice so that we can make arrangements.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS

Please note that we disqualify any potential fosters who:

- (1) have or intend to use an invisible fence on their property,
- (2) use negative training techniques, including but not limited to physical correction, spray bottles, noise horns, prong or shock collars,
- (3) use retractable leashes, stakes, or tie-ups,
- (4) leave their dog unattended for more than 6 hours without a dogwalker,
- (5) use a dog door that is unmonitored when away from home, or
- (6) do not have a plan for adequate exercise and activity for the rescue;
- (7) will not abide by our policies to keep our rescues safe.

FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOUR FOSTER

Please let us know if you are interested in keeping your foster and we can discuss adoption. The Adoption Fee for all of our dogs is \$500. Please be aware that if a family has already been approved for adoption, we will not be able to honor your request.

HAVE FUN

Fostering a dog can end up being one of the best experiences of your life. It may be difficult to watch your foster head to their forever home, but you will find comfort in knowing that the dog will be living the rest of their life in a safe and loving home — as it was meant to be.

THANK YOU FOR FOSTERING!!