

Return Policy

Purpose

To ensure the safe, responsible, and timely return of any animal adopted from or fostered through Fresh Start Rescue. This policy outlines the procedures, expectations, and responsibilities for both adopters and fosters when a return is necessary.

1. Adopter Returns

Adopters may return an animal to Fresh Start Rescue under the following conditions:

1.1 Return Requirement

- All animals adopted from Fresh Start Rescue must be returned to the Rescue if the adopter can no longer keep them.
- Rehoming, selling, giving away, or transferring the animal to any third party is strictly prohibited.

1.2 Return Process

- Adopters must notify the Rescue as soon as they determine they cannot keep the animal.
- The Rescue will coordinate a return time, typically within 72 hours, depending on foster availability and safety considerations.
- Emergency situations may require an immediate return.

1.3 Return Reasons

Common reasons may include:

- Lifestyle changes
- Housing restrictions
- Behavioral challenges
- Family or health changes

The Rescue does not require justification, but information shared helps support future placement.

1.4 Fees

- Adoption fees are non-refundable.
- No additional fees are charged for returning an animal.

1.5 Safety and Documentation

- Adopters must return all Rescue-owned supplies, medical records, and equipment.
- The animal must be safely contained during transport.

2. Foster Returns

Fosters may request to return a dog when circumstances change or when safety concerns arise.

2.1 Return Requirement

- Fosters must return the animal upon request from the Rescue.
- Fosters may not transfer the dog to another person, foster, or adopter.

2.2 Return Process

- Fosters must notify the Rescue immediately if they can no longer foster.
- The Rescue will arrange a transfer to another approved foster or temporary boarding.
- Fosters must continue to provide safe care until the Rescue coordinates the handoff.

2.3 Safety-Related Returns

If a foster experiences:

- aggression
- bites
- escape attempts
- severe anxiety
- household safety concerns

They must notify the Rescue immediately so the dog can be moved safely.

2.4 Emergency Removal

The Rescue may remove a dog from a foster home at any time if:

- safety concerns arise
- the foster violates Rescue policies
- the dog requires a different environment

Fosters must comply with removal requests within 24 hours.

3. Prohibited Actions

For both adopters and fosters:

- Rehoming, selling, giving away, or transferring the animal is prohibited.
- Failure to return the animal upon request may result in legal action, including recovery of the animal and associated costs.

4. Rescue Responsibilities

Fresh Start Rescue will:

- Coordinate returns promptly and safely
- Provide clear instructions for transport and handoff
- Ensure the animal is placed in an appropriate foster home or care setting
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism throughout the process

5. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect best practices, legal requirements, and organizational growth.

Approved: 07-22-2026