

Foster Placement Policy

Purpose

To ensure every dog is placed in a safe, stable, and supportive foster home that aligns with Fresh Start Rescue's mission and standards of care. This policy outlines the criteria, expectations, and procedures for all foster placements.

1. Foster Eligibility Criteria

Foster applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- **Age:** Must be 21 or older. Applicants aged 18–20 may be considered on a case-by-case basis if they demonstrate stable housing, financial independence, and strong references.
- **Housing:** Must have landlord approval if renting; no breed or size restrictions that would jeopardize placement.
- **Environment:** Must provide a safe, clean, and secure home environment suitable for the dog's needs.
- **Pets in the home:** Resident pets must be spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and well cared for.
- **Availability:** Must be able to provide daily care, supervision, and transportation to vet appointments or adoption events.
- **Commitment:** Must agree to follow Fresh Start Rescue's care guidelines, training philosophy, and communication expectations.

2. Foster Application & Screening Process

Fresh Start Rescue uses a structured, conversation-based screening process to ensure safe and appropriate placements.

- Application submission through the rescue's online form.
- Reference checks including veterinary and personal references.
- Interview to discuss experience, lifestyle, expectations, and dog preferences.
- Home check (virtual or in-person) to confirm safety and readiness.
- Approval and addition to the active foster roster.

Approval does not guarantee immediate placement; matches are based on the needs of each individual dog.

3. Foster Placement Process

Once approved, foster homes are matched with dogs based on compatibility, experience, and capacity.

- Dog profile review including behavior notes, medical history, and known needs.
- Placement conversation to confirm readiness and answer questions.
- Supply distribution (crate, food, leash, etc.) as available.
- Arrival and decompression guidance provided to support a smooth transition.
- Ongoing communication with the Foster Coordinator throughout the placement.

Fosters must notify the rescue immediately of any concerns, behavior changes, or safety issues.

4. Foster Responsibilities

Fosters agree to:

- Provide daily care, feeding, exercise, and enrichment.
- Follow decompression and training guidelines provided by the rescue.
- Maintain a safe environment (no off-leash unless in a secure, fenced area).
- Transport the dog to vet appointments, meet-and-greets, or adoption events.
- Communicate updates, photos, and behavior observations regularly.
- Use only positive-reinforcement training methods.
- Never transfer the dog to another person without rescue approval.
- Notify the rescue immediately if they can no longer foster.

Fosters are not financially responsible for approved veterinary care.

5. Rescue Responsibilities

Fresh Start Rescue will:

- Provide all necessary veterinary care through approved veterinary partners.
- Supply crates, food, and basic supplies as available.
- Offer behavior and training support.
- Maintain regular communication and check-ins.

- Handle all adoption screening, meet-and-greets, and placement decisions.
- Ensure fosters have a clear point of contact for questions or concerns.

6. Safety & Risk Management

To protect the foster, the dog, and the rescue:

- Dogs with known aggression or bite history will not be placed in foster homes without explicit discussion and specialized support.
- Fosters must follow all safety protocols, including secure handling and proper introductions.
- Any bite, escape, or incident must be reported immediately.
- The rescue reserves the right to remove a dog from a foster home if safety concerns arise.

7. Foster-to-Adopt Option

Approved fosters may request to adopt their foster dog. The standard adoption screening process applies, but fosters are given priority consideration when appropriate.

8. Policy Review

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

Approved: 07-22-2026