

Fostering Tips

Tips for AFTER you Bring Your Foster Dog Home

Read the Packet

Every foster dog comes with a packet of information. The packet will have vet certificates, health information, preventative information, and sometimes helpful letters from the previous owner. Read through all the information carefully and ask your Coordinator if you have any questions. Please do not register the microchip unless you decide to adopt your foster. This information is strictly for the adopter.

Re-Naming Your Foster

It is always best to use the foster dog's name given to them by BFDR. However, if you decide to nickname the foster something other than the name it arrived with, be sure you ALWAYS use the Dog's given BFDR name when filling out foster forms, communicating with a vet, Coordinator, or adopter about the dog. This will help eliminate a lot of confusion and mixing up of dogs during communications.

Keep your Coordinator Updated

Most of our Coordinators have full-time jobs and are managing multiple dogs including yours. Keep your Coordinator regularly updated with cute pictures and videos and anything the dog may be doing differently from when it arrived. If you post on social media, tag your Coordinator so they can see the post.

Training & Manners

One very important job of the foster is to improve the dog's adoptability. This can be done very simply by improving manners with basic training. Many adopters LOVE dogs who have learned good basic manners and cute tricks. Work on the basics such as Sit, Down, Stay, Off, Leave it, etc. Whether you have a fenced yard or not, work on leash walking skills. It helps make the dog more adoptable and walks outside of your yard are also healthy for the dog.

No Retractable Leashes EVER.

Martingale Collars

Each BFDR foster dog leaves the kennel with a Martingale Collar and name tag. The Martingale collar consists of a length of material with a metal ring at each end. A separate loop of material passes through the two rings. The leash attaches to a ring on this loop. When your dog tries to back out of the martingale, the collar tightens around their neck. If the collar is properly adjusted, it will tighten just to the size of your dog's neck and won't choke them. Always be sure you have attached the leash to the correct loop before taking them out of your home.

Always leave the martingale collar and tag on your foster, however we recommend you remove it for safety whenever the dog is in the crate. You may ADD your own harness or collar, but do not remove the BFDR collar.

Feeding Your Foster

Your foster may have gastric upset for the first week or two following arrival to your home. They may not even eat for the first few days after arrival. Don't panic. This is totally normal. If your foster doesn't eat past a week, contact your Coordinator.

Best practice is to feed your foster in their crate, separated from all other pets in the home. NEVER free feed your foster dog along with other resident dogs. This is a recipe for disaster and fights. All dogs should be fed, then bowls come up before integrating dogs again. If your foster is not in a crate, then at a minimum, feed them in separate rooms.

Potty Training

If your foster is coming straight from the kennel, we do not know if the dog is potty trained. We may be able to tell you if the dog keeps their kennel clean, which may be an indicator, however it is not a guarantee. Additionally, when a dog is moved, many dogs may have a relapse on potty training when they may have once been fine. Also, some dogs have never lived in a home, so patience and proper training is the name of the game. To help them with this skill, keep the dog on a leash at all times and in your sight. Take them out to potty every hour or every few hours until they get used to the routine of your home and where they are supposed to potty. Point to the same spot in your yard and say something like, "Go Potty." Use the same place and the same command every time. If you can't supervise your foster, put them in a crate or room confinement in a spot where you don't mind if they have an accident. The more you watch them and work on potty training, the more successful they will be in their new home as well. Never chastise your foster for having an accident in the house.

Medical Care for Foster Dogs

If you believe your dog needs medical care, contact your Coordinator immediately. You will be asked to contact your area vet(s) to get quotes for the care needed. You should ask if they offer special rescue rates. Send the quote(s) to your Coordinator and wait for approval before scheduling a visit. If you do not follow this procedure, you may not be reimbursed for any charges incurred. If there is a life-threatening emergency, do not wait. Take them to a vet immediately.

Preventative Medications

All foster packets come with a sheet with preventatives listed and the last date administered. Make note of this date and create a reminder of when to give the next set of preventatives when they are due. Do not alter this date as our dogs must be kept on the schedule BFDR sets for them. Keep a written record of all administered flea & tick and heart worm preventatives and any other medications. You may add additional dates to the sheet provided in the foster packet.

Vacation Coverage

If you need vacation coverage for your foster dog, please contact your Coordinator. ALL vacation fosters MUST be approved by BFDR. Do not allow your foster dog to stay with anyone except you without permission from your Coordinator

Leashes

All foster dogs must be either in a fenced yard or on a leash at all times. Do not ever allow your dog off leash outside of a fenced yard, even if you think he/she would be fine without one.

Southern Fosters:

- We understand that sometimes a foster is not a good fit for your home. Please do not drop your foster dog back at the kennel without contacting Nicole Butler first. We have extremely limited space at the kennel and your assistance managing that is greatly appreciated.