

NZFRS Breeders Ethics

See also:

[Rat Housing Standards](#)

[Rescue Ethics](#)

Fostering litters document

Checklist for mandatory breeding and adoption requirements of rats for all approved NZFRS breeders.

To pass an interview, all boxes must be ticked OR for minor breaches, where there are no immediate welfare concerns, the breeder must provide evidence of plans to immediately rectify aspects which don't fit the criteria. Where a pass is given on the grounds of the improvements being underway, this will be recorded and must be satisfied by the following inspection.

Failure to pass inspection will result in suspension or loss of approved breeder status.

Housing:

- ☐ Breeders meet all requirements set out in the [Rat Housing Standards](#) checklist

Parents:

- ☐ Male rats must be at least 18 months of age when paired. This rule can be amended on a one-off basis with approval at a general or special general meeting.
- ☐ Female rats must be at least 6 months of age when paired. This rule can be amended on a one-off basis with approval at a general or special general meeting.
- ☐ Planned pairings must only involve rats of good health and temperament
- ☐ Breeding plans must be discussed in the breeders chat or added to the planned litter doc prior to pairing. It is mandatory that new breeders discuss all pairings with their mentor.

Raising litters:

- ☐ Nursing mothers (up to 21 days) are kept in a quiet cage or tub with no wire floor. Mothers are not kept with intact males during the final week of pregnancy or while feeding. (For a nursing mother and litter (up to weaning at about 21 days), the floor area should be a minimum of 1,000cm².)
- ☐ Baby rats over weaning age have appropriate space to play and interact. (For juvenile rats (from weaning to about 50 days), the floor area should be a minimum of 1,500cm²)
- ☐ Baby rats should be separated into same sex groups before they reach 5.5 weeks of age
- ☐ It is recommended that baby rats are kept with an adult or adults of the same sex after weaning

Registering litters:

- ☐ All planned litters must be registered via the NZFRS website before they reach 10 weeks of age
- ☐ Breeders will endeavor to keep information on litters they have breed up to date

Adoption:

- ☐ Breeders will strive to find the best homes for litters they have bred. This includes, as a minimum
 - ☐ Checking potential adopters housing (ask for a photo)
 - ☐ Sending babies to pet homes with a 'pet only' contract
 - ☐ Sending babies to breeding homes with a 'breeding' contract and only adopt to other registered breeders
- ☐ Babies will be no younger than 8 weeks old when they go to their new homes, except in exceptional circumstances.
- ☐ Breeders will strive to provide ongoing support to all past adopters. This includes, as a minimum
 - ☐ Providing basic information including parents, sex, and date of birth at the time of adoption
 - ☐ Taking back or finding suitable homes for any rats that their adopters can no longer keep

Relationships:

- ☐ Breeders will be professional in all public facing settings as well as when communicating with other members of the society (this includes on personal rattery accounts/pages, rat groups, chats, messages, calls, and emails, and in person)
- ☐ Breeders will endeavor to reply to emails and messages in a timely fashion
- ☐ Breeders will endeavor to improve the standing of the society and do nothing to bring it in to disrepute