# Boomer's Best Buddies Rescue
# Foster Care Guidelines

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Thank you for choosing to foster with us! Fostering is a rewarding experience for the entire family. It teaches children to love and care for a pet with the intention of finding a loving home. Many lessons can be learned from that. For foster parents, the satisfaction can be saving an animal from a dire situation and being the link that brings that pet to a new owner.
- Upon application approval, fosters can choose which type of pet(s) they would like to foster. We in turn will try and match the right pet for you.
- We can provide a crate, bowls, supplies, etc., if needed. All medical expenses are also paid by Boomer's Best Buddies Rescue, **as long as they are pre-approved.**

## BEFORE YOU FOSTER – DOGS

- It is extremely important that you make sure that all of your own pets are up to date on their annual shots and have had the appropriate vaccines (e.g., kennel cough). Your pets should all be protected with flea/tick and heartworm prevention. We cannot be responsible if your pet gets sick due to a foster animal being sick. That is why it's imperative you protect your pets with preventative medicines.

Prepare your home for your new foster dog by:

- Getting the crate, bowls, and supplies ready.
- Setting aside space in your home for the dog and the crate that allows the dog a quiet place to decompress.

## BEFORE YOU FOSTER – CATS

Prepare your home for your new foster cat by:

- Having a litter box, litter, bowls, etc.
- Setting aside a room in your home for the cat. Please make sure the cat or cats are set up in a room and not allowed access to the entire house to give a slow transition.

## BEFORE YOU FOSTER – SMALL ANIMALS AND BIRDS

Prepare your home for your new foster pet by:

- Having the appropriate enclosure and supplies.
- Setting aside space in your home for the animal.
- If you are fostering an animal that is sensitive to drafts, cold or hot weather be sure the temperature where the pet will be staying is regulated.

## WHEN YOUR FOSTER PET ARRIVES

- You will be provided information on what medical requirements are needed, other expectations such as sending photos and videos regularly, and contact information of various Boomer's Best Buddies volunteers.
- Introducing a foster dog: Introductions should be carefully planned out. You know your dog and what is best when your dog meets other dogs. Feel free to discuss options beforehand with one of our experienced dog foster parents or the director. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR DOG AND YOUR FOSTER ALONE TOGETHER.** The foster dog should be crated or kept in a separate room unless directly supervised.
- Introducing a foster cat: Introduce the new cat to the other pets in your home **very slowly.** This may take days or even a couple weeks. Keep the new cat in a separate room, isolated from other animals, for at least a day. Depending on the cat and whether you have the space, it may be best to keep the cat separated for the entire stay at your home. Cats require time to adjust and acclimate to their new environment. If possible, let them check each other out by smelling each other under the door, or provide another means of limited contact, such as a baby gate. If after many attempts the introductions are going well, you may try supervised introductions in the same room. **Don't expect cats to become fast friends.** The best you can and should hope for is cats coexisting without disagreements.

- Introducing small animals: Many times our small animals are nervous upon transitioning to a new environment. Please provide a quiet space as they get settled and keep interaction to a minimum on the first day. Use food to establish a positive relationship, hand feeding the animal as much as possible. Keep other pets away from the foster animals initially. Slowly introduce to any pets while they are in their cage.

## TRAINING AND BEHAVIOR FOR DOGS

- Call our director, Jen Kanaitis, with questions about behavior or training.
- Treat your foster dog as if they are not housebroken. Keep an eye on them at all times in the house. If necessary, keep them leashed in the house or in a crate when not directly with you. Create a regular schedule for trips outside. Puppies can hold between outside breaks for approximately one hour for each month of their age. So, a four-month-old puppy can hold it for four hours **during the day**. Overnight, they can usually hold it longer. All foster dogs should be in a crate overnight initially.
- The more you understand about training dogs and correcting behavioral problems, the smoother things will go for you and your new foster dog. We use a positive approach for behavior modification, with treats, toys, and attention as rewards.
- Many of the dogs we get are under-socialized and may have some behaviors we need to teach. It is essential that we socialize dogs as much as possible, though this should be done slowly as the animal adjusts to you and your home. Always use extreme caution and go very slowly when introducing your foster dog to new people and

situations. Avoid introductions to anyone outside of the home for at least the first few days. **If you are not sure if you should do something, don't do it.**

- **Never** leave your dog tied/tethered outside for any amount of time.
- **Never** leave your dog alone in a fenced yard longer than 15 minutes. Only do this after you are certain they will not jump the fence or dig underneath.
- **Never let your foster dog off leash in an unfenced area!**
- Never leave your foster dog in a car alone.

## FEEDING YOUR FOSTER ANIMAL

- Please feed your foster pet separate from other pets in the home to avoid conflict.
- Please feed your foster pet only their food twice a day, unless otherwise noted. Puppies under six-months-old should eat three times per day. We will provide you with food unless you prefer to use your own.
- Please do not give a foster dog rawhides. We will provide appropriate treats and bones.

## ADOPTIONS

- Foster parents need to be available to bring the pet for meet and greets or adoption events. On occasion, if you cannot transport, we can make arrangements to pick up the animal. Please share your thoughts with us when you get to know your foster pet on what the best location will be to meet prospective adopters.

## VET VISITS

All vet visits must be **pre-approved & scheduled** by Jen Kanaitis, director. Any vet visits made without approval **will not be reimbursed**.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

- **The best way to avoid an expensive emergency vet visit is observe your foster pet carefully and catch any illnesses before they become serious.** Look for signs such as lethargy, loose stools, vomiting, sneezing, and coughing.
- At the first sign of an illness, **contact Jen Kanaitis**. Also, to avoid your foster pet getting injured, never let them outside off leash in an unfenced area, and be very cautious when introducing them to animals outside of the home.

## THE ADOPTIVE FAMILY

- Rest assured, we will always choose a new family very carefully.
- Prospective adoptive families will first be screened by having them fill out an application and go through the adoption process before setting up a time for them to meet the pet.
- Only applicants that are pre-screened and approved will meet the pet.

- When a possible adopter looks like a good fit, we will contact you and have you set up a time for the new family to meet the foster pet. It could be at an adoption event, pet store, or a place everyone chooses that is convenient and makes sense.
- We want your input. You know your foster pet better than anyone else.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Please keep in regular contact with us. Contact Jen Kanaitis regularly and let her know how the animal is doing. **We recommend at least three updates per week along with photos. The best way to send pictures and updates to Jen is via text to her cell phone 860-305-0603.**
- Keep litter boxes clean by scooping them out daily.
- Have a spot in your home you can use to separate your foster pet from other pets if it becomes necessary.
- If you agree to foster an animal, we rely on you to commit to fostering them until they are adopted. If you are no longer able to foster, please give us as much notice as possible to allow us to find another suitable foster.
- Please notify us at least two weeks in advance of any trip you are planning, and tell us what you would like to do with the pet while you are away. All care of the foster pet outside of the contracted foster family must be approved in advance.
- Make sure you have our phone number with you at all times as well as the number of a couple of other volunteers in case of an emergency.
- **If you have a child under 16, please do not let them walk the dog outside a fenced area. Only the foster parents should do that.**
- Do not leave the care of your foster pet to someone outside of the family, unless you get prior consent.
- Foster parenting is rewarding, but also a lot of work. The pet will need time to adjust to your home. They may be stressed on arrival and take sometimes a few weeks to settle in. They may have accidents in your home initially until they are reminded where to go. They may chew things up and grab things off the counter as well. Your best assurance that won't happen is if you crate them or leave them in a "childproof" room while you are away.

## IF YOU DECIDE TO ADOPT YOUR FOSTER PET

- *Should you decide you'd like to adopt your foster pet, please let us know as soon as a decision is made.* It is very hard on the people who fill out an application to go through the whole process only to be told the animal is no longer available.
- Adoption of the pet must be approved by the adoption coordinator.

- The first step in adopting your foster pet is to fill out an application. Afterwards, you must read and sign an adoption contract and pay the adoption donation.

AND FINALLY

- Give your foster pet tons of love and attention. They have been through so much. Sometimes all they need is to know someone loves them.

Thanks so much for fostering with Boomer's Best Buddies Rescue. We could not help animals without you!!