Foster Dog Evaluation Sheet

First night home. Watch your foster dog and note behaviors that occur. Are they licking their lips, tense sniffing the floor a lot and avoiding eye contact?

These are all cues that your dog needs to decompress. Allow them to come to you. Don’t push towards them. Or try to corner them as this may make them fearful and cause them to bite out of fear. Keep treats handy so that you can toss a treat occasionally if they look towards you or relax for a bit.

Sometimes if a dog has had a really hard start to his or her life it will be harder for them to be trusting or to do certain things. Some dogs will need a fenced yard only because they are too scared to walk on the leash even with training. Others may never get truly comfortable with strangers but may get used to the people that are in their lives a lot. These are all important things to note for when you are looking for the perfect new home for your foster dog.

Some dogs are shy or withdrawn by nature and it will take them much longer to feel like they can trust you. It is okay to let them go at their own pace and open up as they become more comfortable. Let them come to you as much as possible as opposed to pushing into their space. Dogs that are naturally shy will need more time to get used to new things or people in their lives. They may need to see it from further away before they are comfortable enough to get closer or to sniff or touch the new person or thing. It is okay to take your cues from the dog as far as what they are comfortable with. Let them go at their pace and try to take time to introduce new things or people slowly over many smaller visits rather than one meet and greet. They will let you know when they are comfortable enough to go to the next step and letting them have time to get adjusted to new experiences will help make the next experience even easier. One way to help a dog that is having a rough time is to have an easy going dog that is not too pushy but is friendly and playful. A dog that is okay with many of the things that shy, scared dogs find super scary can help them realize that new people and things aren’t as bad as they think and assist them in getting more comfortable in new areas.

It is totally normal for a dog that experiences a move or a change in their environment or schedule to experience something we in rescue call backsliding. This is an event where you will see old behaviors that have previously disappeared reappearing for a short time. Things like skittish, scared behavior, not wanting to walk on a leash, hiding, growling, or even acting aggressive. This is the dog's way of letting you know they are dealing with more change than they can handle at that time. It is totally okay to leave the dog in their own space and just give them quiet and time alone to process what is going on. Dogs just like people can get overwhelmed and scared when new things happen or they have to move from one foster to another. Be very patient and let them have time to just be for a bit. If they want to stay in their crate that’s fine. Give them time and let them come to you. Once they are ready they will let you know.

As you are learning more about your dog things to note for adoption time.

* Is your foster pup comfortable around people or does it take time for them to get used to new people or experiences. If they are more reserved it may work better for them to meet their adopter several times so that they get to know them before the big step of going home with them.
* How do they do on a leash.? Do they know any of the common commands Come, Sit, Stay, Down, Heel, Off and Leave it.

If your pup doesn’t know these things they may be things you can work on with your foster pup while they are transitioning in your home. Dogs that are herding breeds love to be active and be mentally busy so playing games and training new things is something they will love to do.

* How is your dog with other dogs, cats, and new people? Noting anything you see here might help with finding them the perfect home. If they feel cats are something that is a toy they can chase and catch they wouldn’t do well in a home with little animals.
* Do you have kids and if so how does your foster interact with kids? Is he gentle or does he jump and knock them over? Even a happy dog can hurt a child if they are too rough.

Other items to consider. Always feed your dog in a crate or in a separate room from other pets and children. Many dogs feel uncomfortable having others around when they are eating. Often they have gone without food and are worried they will lose their meal. Keeping kids and other pets away will make them feel safer and help them to relax more fully.

Always crate your foster during times when you are away until you are sure they are safe in the home without being restricted. It is in their best interest to have them in a crate with a chewy like a Kong filled with frozen dog food while you are stepping out so they will associate it with something happy rather than something bad.

If you have any questions please message one of us at the Foster Chat or directly and we can help you troubleshoot and figure out a way to help you.

Medical Information: Your foster needs to be up to date on vaccinations and have a negative HW and tick borne illness test. They should also always be on prevention monthly. We use Nexgard or Heartgard but there are others that your vet may recommend. Please take the time to review their medical records and make sure they are up to date and that all their medical needs have been taken care of. ASF does not adopt out dogs before they have all of their medical information up to date and are healthy. They should be given:

* Rabies vaccination
* Distemper
* Kennel Cough
* 4DX test for heartworm lyme ehrlichia and anaplasmosis
* Prevention for both heartworm and flea and ticks.

Checklist for Skills Learned by your Foster dog

Can your dog...

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes | No | Sometimes |
| Sit on Command |  |  |  |
| Down |  |  |  |
| Stay |  |  |  |
| Leave it |  |  |  |
| Go In Crate |  |  |  |
| Drop it |  |  |  |
| Come when called |  |  |  |
| Heel |  |  |  |
| Fetch |  |  |  |

Can you…

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Touch your dogs | Yes | No | Sometimes |
| Toes for clipping nails |  |  |  |
| legs |  |  |  |
| hindquarters |  |  |  |
| neck |  |  |  |
| collar |  |  |  |
| head |  |  |  |
| muzzle |  |  |  |
| Put leash and collar off and on |  |  |  |
| Brush your dog |  |  |  |

How does your dog do with...

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Very afraid/  aggressive | A little scared | No worries |
| cats |  |  |  |
| dogs |  |  |  |
| New people |  |  |  |
| cars |  |  |  |
| streets |  |  |  |
| Strange objects...lawn tractors etc |  |  |  |
| New places things |  |  |  |
| People with hats on |  |  |  |
| People with sunglasses |  |  |  |
| People with hoodies/beards |  |  |  |
| Knocking at the door |  |  |  |