Foster Care Expectations

1. Foster Dog Evaluation Report
   The Foster Dog Evaluation Report (FDER) is a critical device used to match the right dog to the right adoptive family. Ideally, this report should be filled out no later than two weeks after having a foster dog in your care. Depending on the circumstances, it may take a little longer to get an accurate assessment of a dog’s personality, but that is the goal. The evaluation form can be found on BROOD’s website at www.brood-va.org under the heading “Online Forms.” Information provided in this report will be used to write a biography for your foster dog for publication on the BROOD website.

2. Questions to ask in evaluating your foster dog’s personality
   Evaluation is subjective depending on your personal behavioral requirements, but what we are looking for (especially at the 2-week period) is an overall feel for the dog.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<td>Is the dog housebroken?</td>
<td>Is it receptive to basic obedience?</td>
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<td>How does the dog interact with other dogs, children, or cats?</td>
<td>What is your impression of its overall emotional and physical health?</td>
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<td>Does it show any signs of aggression?</td>
<td>Is it destructive?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it suffer separation anxiety?</td>
<td>Is the dog affectionate or distant?</td>
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Keeping a journal of your foster dog’s behavior is an excellent way to record your daily observations and can help you to spot behavioral trends that will assist you in providing an accurate assessment of your foster dog’s personality. The more detailed your evaluations are, the easier it is to match your foster dog to the right family and the better chance for a successful adoption. Most of the time it will take about two weeks for your foster dog to really settle down and find his spot in his new “pack.” After the initial evaluation, you may continue to see changes in your foster dog’s personality as he/she gains more confidence. These should be recorded in your bi-weekly foster report, which you can find online and also in this packet.

3. Escape artists
   Although dogs come into the rescue system through a variety of means, many dogs end up in BROOD’s care because they’ve managed to escape from a home at some point in the past. As a foster family providing shelter to these fugitives, a great deal of emphasis should be placed on the security of their environment. A foster dog should NEVER be left out in the yard unaccompanied, even if you leave your own dogs unattended. No matter how secure you believe your fenced yard to be, a practiced escape artist will find a way to breach his perimeter, and if no one’s home to fetch him back, there’s no telling where that basset nose will take him. By the same token, make sure all doors with outside accessibility are secure and cannot be opened by a charging basset. Brief all family
members that an open door is an invitation to a basset intent on escape. BROOD has lost several dogs who managed to escape from their foster home only to have their life ended under the wheels of a passing motor vehicle.

4. **Other problem behaviors**
   Aside from being escape artists, many dogs come to BROOD also carry emotional and physical baggage stemming from neglect and abuse. Some dogs, especially those rescued from puppy mills, have never lived in a house before and must be taught the basics as though they were puppies. Behavioral problems common to rescued dogs include food and possession aggression, separation anxiety, nuisance barking, house training accidents, destructive chewing or marking of territory, fear aggression, submissive peeing, anxiety, and fear of thunder and other loud noises like fireworks. Some of these behaviors can be corrected through gaining the dog’s trust and obedience training. Your assigned mentor can help you and your foster dog through these difficult situations. However, sometimes it’s necessary to consult a trained behaviorist for assistance. In all cases, love and patience should be your guide. As a foster family, you are directly involved in preparing your foster dog for the loving adoptive family he/she deserves. However, if your family’s safety is at risk, or if you can’t give your foster the care he needs and want him removed from your home, contact your mentor for assistance immediately. Please keep in mind that it may take a few days to make alternate arrangements for your foster.

5. **Photos**
   As important as your foster dog’s evaluation report and biography are to his adoption, nothing compares to the importance of getting his picture on the web site. Statistics show that dogs with photographs and videos on the Internet are adopted quicker than those without. At the same time you submit your foster dog’s evaluation report, please be prepared to submit a photograph and/or video at the same time. Digital images and videos should be e-mailed to Tracy Yee tracyyee@gmail.com.

6. **Veterinary care**
   Most of the dogs that come to BROOD require veterinary care at some point. BROOD has accounts several Veterinary clinics. Ask your local vet if they offer discount rates for rescue dogs. BROOD will reimburse you all vet expenses incurred, however unless you’re using one of the many vets which have direct billing accounts in place, the cost will initially come out of your pocket. All vet care should be conducted with prior approval from Lisa Wallace foster@brood-va.org In the case of an emergency, call Lisa Wallace 757 990 3094. Please make two copies of all vet bills, medical records, etc. Fill out the vet check from located at http://www.brood-va.org/vetbills.htm you can attach pdf documents to this form or you can fax all copies to 866-710 9471. Keep a copy for your records, use a copy to make a packet for your foster’s adopting family.

BROOD wants to make sure all of its dogs are current with veterinary care. Your BROOD dog should arrive with veterinary paperwork that includes records of the following: 1. Rabies certificate and tag (within past three years); 2. Distemper/Parvo series (within past three years); 3. Bordetella (Kennel Cough) within past six months; 4. Leptospirosis; 5. Heartworm/Lyme/Ehrlichia test and results within the past year; 6. Fecal flotation and results within the past six months. If your foster dog is missing any shot records, please contact Lisa Wallace foster@brood-va.org.
7. **General care**
   While in your care your foster dog should be treated like a member of your family. He should be given adequate food, fresh water, grooming and exercise on a daily/regular basis. Particular attention should be paid to your foster basset’s ears and nails for grooming purposes. You are also responsible for giving your foster dog any needed medications when they are due (usually just heartworm preventive and flea/tick treatment).

8. **Out of town**
   In the event you will be out of town or unable to foster your dog for a brief time and need a temporary foster, notify Lisa Wallace foster@brood-va.org for assistance. If you are going on vacation and taking the foster, we must know where the dog will be and have a contact number for you.

9. **Adopting your foster**
   Adopting your foster hound is highly discouraged as doing so most times will close a home to future fosters. Still, there are those dogs that just steal your heart from the beginning and you know it was just meant to be. Because this happens all too frequently, BROOD has been forced to implement some guidelines on the adoption of dogs by their foster families. Please understand that there will be occasions when a dog will come to you as a foster with a family already waiting to adopt. In these cases, you will not be permitted to adopt the dog unless the adoptive family changes its mind. Your main job as a foster home in these situations is to evaluate the dog's personality so we can ensure the dog and family are a good fit. However, if a dog comes to you without any firm interest by an adoptive family, and you decide you want to adopt the dog, you must make it known to BROOD within the initial two week evaluation period or as soon as possible thereafter. Once an adoptive family has expressed a sincere interest in adopting your foster dog is not the time to decide you want to keep the dog yourself. This puts BROOD in an awkward position and makes the organization look unprofessional to prospective adopters. Please bear in mind that adopting your foster does not mean you cannot continue to foster. Most of our volunteers and foster homes have a number of dogs and cats in their household.

10. **Adopter visits**
    At your convenience, BROOD approved adopters will visit your foster dog in your home. These visits are to be supervised and you are to note your feelings about the people and their interaction with the dog. A BROOD adoption coordinator will notify you in advance to set up a visit. Sometimes the adopter is just visiting to meet the dog; other times the adopter comes with the intent to adopt and take the dog home with him. If it’s just a visit, the foster should contact the adoption coordinator via email or phone and let her know how the visit went. If the visit is with intent to adopt, the adoption coordinator should mail or email instructions, adoption contracts and other paperwork to the foster to facilitate the adoption. The foster is to follow the instructions, have the papers signed and collect a check for the amount shown to the coordinator. You should also have a packet with the dog’s medical information and any pertinent information. It’s also nice to include a small baggie with enough dry food to feed the dog for a few days. This gives the adopter a chance to change the dog’s food gradually.
11. Foster homes, the backbone to all rescue efforts
   One of the hardest things you as a foster home must face is saying good-bye to your charge when she’s adopted. In fact, this is the step where we lose most of our foster homes because they become what we call “foster failures” by adopting their charges themselves. While this practice can be rewarding to the foster home and the dog in question, it’s very frustrating to our overall goal of saving dogs at risk. Foster homes are the backbone to our rescue efforts. Without them, we have to make the difficult decision of turning a dog in need away because we just don’t have the space or funds to take him in. As an adopter, you can help one, maybe two dogs, but as a successful foster family you can assist untold numbers of dogs needing your help and love. There is nothing more rewarding than to take a shy, withdrawn dog into your home and with love and patience help him to heal physically and emotionally. To watch this same dog bloom into a happy, healthy, outgoing dog is nothing short of a miracle. Then to send him on his way to a loving and caring adoptive family, your work with him complete, is your just reward. Yes, it’s painful and difficult to invest so much time and love into this dog only to let him go in the end, but waiting in the wings is another broken soul who needs your love and attention just as much – maybe even more.