

POLICY
Finding Homes For Foster dogs

This is in regard to finding homes for our foster dogs. I want to make sure all of our foster homes understand our procedures. First, a person must fill out an application to adopt. We get the application, check it out, check references, make sure there are no children under the age of ten in the household* and put it on file. We send a lot of information to the applicant so that they can review it and understand what to expect if they do adopt. From there, there is usually quite a long wait. This is because we have many more applicants than we have dogs available.

**We also check to be sure there are no visiting grandchildren, or other children, under the age of ten. If children do visit, the owners must understand that they must FULLY SUPERVISE while the dog and children are together. And they must be ready to COMMIT to crating the dog while children are present at any time they cannot be fully supervised or if the dog appears not be able to handle the children's activities even when supervised.*

When a dog comes in for fostering, he goes to the foster home to have the medical taken care of and then for evaluation. If there are no medical issues or real behavior issues, after a couple of weeks, we generally have a pretty good idea of what the dog is like and can decide what type of home to look for. The foster home talks to me about what the particular dog seems to need and I go through our existing applications to see if we have a home that might fit. If it is the "usual" dog, we generally have several homes to pick from. Occasionally we have a dog that is harder to place because of particular needs. Rarely, we find a situation where we don't actually have an appropriate home and have to start looking at other avenues of finding a home for that dog. Usually this is a dog with a behavior problem...one that is not aggressive to the point that we need to put them down but is more "borderline". Rarely it might be one with a health issue but we do have several applicants who are willing to take a dog with health issues.

If you are fostering a dog and someone expresses an interest in that dog, it is okay to have them meet the dog and get to know that dog as an example of the breed. But please be sure they understand that there is a waiting list for dogs and that most of the time, they will not get the dog they are meeting. If they feel they are interested, they should fill out an application and get on the waiting list. However, they need to understand that it is likely that we have one or more potential homes for the dog already and it is only fair that we use our waiting list as the first resource. If they get their application in and it turns out that we happen to not have an appropriate home for the dog on our waiting list, then they would certainly be considered.

I hope this makes sense to everyone so that people are not meeting foster dogs and anticipating that they will likely have a chance to adopt the particular dog they are meeting. We sure want to encourage them to apply but the application is for a "generic" Westie as opposed to a particular one.