

Finding Homes For Foster dogs

7/26/12

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.

We 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. Occasionally we have placed a dog with someone's friend or relative but this is not the normal practice and we should resist the temptation to bypass the waiting list unless there is a good reason.

PROCEDURES

- 1) 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.*

- 2) When a dog comes in for fostering, he goes to the foster home to have the medical taken care of and then for evaluation.
- 3) If the dog came in with behavior issues reported, particularly biting, nipping or aggression of any sort, we want that dog to be seen in at least 2 foster homes before placement.
- 4) If there are no medical issues or real behavior issues, after a month*, 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 decides what is needed, often discussing this on the email list.
- 5) The foster home looks at the applicant list which is on line on the Yahoo list archives area and picks the home they think best fits the dog. If the foster home would like assistance, they can contact the coordinator to help them. Once a home is found, they place a call to that applicant to discuss the dog.
 - a. It is often a good idea to leave them with the impression that you are talking to other homes as this gives you an easier way to turn them down if you are not comfortable with them.
 - b. If they do not answer and you leave a message, tell them they have 24 hours to call back so that you aren't "on hold" for a week waiting for them when they may be out of town or just not bothering to call back because they are no longer interested.

- 6) If the foster home and applicant are interested in proceeding, the foster home must make arrangements to
 - a. Have a home check done (post the need to the list)
 - b. Have the applicant meet the dog
- 7) If all goes well and the adoption is to proceed, the foster home must prepare the paperwork (contracts) and make sure the package is ready to go (see Adopter's checklist). Then make arrangements for the adopter to come to get the dog.
 - a. Make sure they know that they will not leave with the dog unless they have provided a crate in the car for the dog to ride in. No sitting in laps and no riding in the front seat.