

COUNTRYSIDE ANIMAL RESCUE FOSTER PARENT GUIDE

FIRST AND FOREMOST, THANK YOU!

You are helping to provide a more stable and less stressful environment for dogs waiting to be adopted. Foster homes play a crucial role in our mission to save as many dogs as possible. Without your support, our ability to take in new dogs each year is significantly limited.

Furthermore, you assist in making the transition from being adoptable to being adopted smoother, which increases the chances of success for more dogs after they find their forever homes!

While fostering can be a lot of work, it is a rewarding experience. By participating in this program, you are saving lives and helping many types of animals find the families they've been longing for.



Be A Hero !

Foster Parents Rock !

**You are making a
difference.**

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/csrsq>



**COUNTRYSIDE ANIMAL
RESCUE**

3410 Guerneville Rd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-542-5582

www.countrysiderescue.com

Points of Contact

Main point of contact: **foster@countrysiderescue.com**

Nancy Dami - Manager/K9 Coordinator/ Adoption Counselor

707-974-8451 (cell)

707-542-5582 (office)

countrysidenancy@gmail.com

Kim Johnson - Foster Coordinator /Adoption Counselor / Transportation Coordinator

707-230-0132

countrysidekimj@gmail.com

Sandy Burke – Advice Line (Safety tips, decompression & adjusting tips)

707-326-4360

Alyssa Dami - Social Media Coordinator

raedami@gmail.com (Send pictures and stories to this email)

Emergency Contacts

Wikiup Vet Hospital - Regular Vet Appointments

707-573-8252

130 Wikiup Dr. Santa Rosa

Redwood Animal Hospital

707-542-4012

1946 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa

VCA PetCare East

707-579-3900

2425 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa

Frequently Asked Questions

What do foster families need to provide?

Foster families need to provide the following:

- A healthy and safe environment for their foster animals.
- Transportation to and from vet appointments and adoption events.
- Lots of exercise, positive stimulation, and positive reinforcement.

CAR will provide the following:

You are more than welcome to offer to pay for the pet's food and various items.

- Food and food items (bowls, prescription food, etc.)
- Crates and bedding
- Toys
- Leash, collar, and ID tag
- Medical Care

How long will the animal need to be in foster care?

Every animal requires a different length of time, ranging from a couple of days to possibly a year. This is all dependent upon their health and behavioral status. The foster coordinator will be able to give you a better estimate before you bring an animal home.

What do I do with my foster pet if I have to go out of town?

You will need to call the foster coordinator and see if we can place your pet in a temporary foster home; otherwise, we will arrange for the pet to board at the rescue. Please give as much advanced notice as possible.

Do not leave your pet with an unauthorized person or pet sitter.

Can my foster pet play with my personal pets?

There are a few guidelines that we ask foster families to adhere to regarding their personal pets, such as, all your personal pets need to be up to date on their vaccines. Your foster coordinator will speak to you about each foster animal and let you know what the rules for that animal will be.

What if I want to adopt my foster pet?

If you want to adopt your foster pet, you will need to complete the adoption application and follow the full adoption process. Foster families have the first choice on adopting their foster pet.

What if my foster pet is not working out?

You are never required to continue fostering if you feel it is not working out. We will work on moving your foster pet out as soon as possible, but we may not have an immediate alternate foster or space at the rescue, so we ask for your patience.

Please contact your foster coordinator as soon as you feel you may need a replacement foster for your foster pet.

What if my foster animal bites me?

If your foster pet bites you and breaks skin, causing you to bleed, you need to report the bite to the foster coordinator within 24 hours. The teeth, not the nails, must be what broke the skin.

If you are unsure, then report the bite anyway.

Depending on the severity of the bite, we suggest that you see a doctor. Animal bites can be infected, and a doctor can provide antibiotics if needed.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR DOG'S BODY LANGUAGE



EXCESSIVE SCRATCHING
Stress



NOSE LICKING
Stress



ABNORMAL PANTING
Fear/anxiety/stress



BROWS FURROWED WITH EARS TO THE SIDE
Fear/anxiety/stress



EXCESSIVE SLEEPINESS OR YAWNING
Fear/anxiety/stress



HYPERVIGILANCE
Fear/anxiety/stress



PACING
Fear/anxiety/stress



COWERING WITH LARGE EYES
Request for space



ERECT/HEIGHTENED POSTURE WITH FORWARD STANCE
Suspicious



ACTIVELY BARKING AT OBJECT WHILE MOVING AWAY OR STAYING AWAY
Threatened



BARKING COMBINED WITH ACTIVE MOVEMENT TOWARD OBJECT
Angry



SHAKING (WHEN NOT WET)
Stress release



HEAD TILTED TO SIDE
Curious



ROLLING OVER ON BACK
Looking for love



WAGGING TAIL/ DOWN ON FRONT LEGS
Ready to play



LOOKING AWAY/ TURNING HEAD
At peace



SNIFFING THE GROUND
At peace



SITTING CALMLY WHILE OFFERING THEIR BACK
At peace



SOFT EARS WITH BLINKING EYES
Relaxed



PLAYFUL BOW
Friendly



LICKING SOMEONE
Polite, friendly

Types of foster:

Traditional Fostering: Typically, these dogs are well adjusted and just need a place to be until adopted. Typical stay is a few weeks.

Behavioral Fostering: These pets need a little more help in learning how to become perfect house guests. Areas of opportunity can range anywhere from just being re-acclimated to living in a home, to fostering a dog who does not like other dogs, to resource guarding or separation anxiety.

Medical fostering: Fostering animals with medical needs. This could be one that needs medication, recovery from surgery, kennel cough, or skin issues requiring baths and medication.

Moms and puppies: Fostering a new family is an amazing experience. The time commitment can be from 6 to 10 weeks, depending on the age of the pups upon arrival. We practice to keep pups with mom until they are at least 8 weeks. You will need a separate area for them to be so they can grow, play, and socialize.

Puppies Only: We often receive puppies that have been taken away from their mom. These puppies need a separate area of their own to grow, play, and socialize until they are adopted.

Taking a foster pet home:

When you agree to foster a pet, be mindful of what you can realistically commit to. Some things to consider include:

Reliable transportation.

The length of time you are available to foster.

The ability to separate your foster pet from resident pets until introductions are appropriate.

Supplies and other expenses. CAR will provide vet care, food, toys, and other supplies as we are able to.

Supplies:

We will provide you with all the medical care and medical supplies needed for your foster pet. We will provide you with a crate, food, and some toys. We cannot guarantee to have everything you need in stock. Remember, any money spent on your foster pet is tax-deductible. Feel free to ask for a donation receipt.

Charlie



Recommended Supply Checklist

Strongly Recommended

- **Food**
- **Food Bowls**
- **Dog Food Storage Bin**
- **Crate**
- **Dog Bed, Towels, Other Linens**
- **Poop Baggies**
- **Toy = Hard & Soft**
- **Animal First Aid Kit**

Not Needed – But May Make Your Life Easier

- **Pee Pads**
- **Baby Gates**
- **Play pen**
- **Dog Brush**
- **Dog Shampoo / Conditioner**
- **Nail Clippers**
- **Ear Cleaner**
- **Potty Pads**
- **Chews – rawhides not recommended**
- **Treats**
- **Kong**

Caring for your Foster Pet: Food and Shelter

Feeding: We recommend feeding twice a day, once in the AM and once in the PM. Dry food should be left down for puppies at all times. Puppies should also get wet food 2 – 3x a day. Please observe puppies to ensure that everyone gets equal opportunity to eat and separate if needed. Please do not feed table scraps, a raw diet, or other unique foods without consulting a CAR counselor. Fresh water should be available at all times.

Grooming: Please keep the pet clean, comfortable, and safe at all times. We recommend Dawn dish soap (the blue one with the duck on the bottle) as a shampoo, especially if you see fleas. Lather and leave on for 5 minutes before rinsing. Rinse well.

Housing:

We recommend keeping foster pets in an area that is isolated from your other pets for 7-14 days until the incubation period for diseases such as kennel cough, parvovirus, ringworm, etc. has passed. We want to minimize risk to your personal pets.

Areas such as bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens with tile floors, etc., work well for housing foster pets. Try to use a space that is easy to sanitize, without carpet or easy access to couches, beds, etc., in case of infectious disease.

If you are fostering a litter of puppies, keeping them in a playpen, whelping box, or children's pool may help limit the amount of cleanup required. This type of enclosure will also allow you to make observations while providing plenty of room for mom and her litter.

Important things to Remember: The foster area must be sterilized between groups to minimize the risk of your new foster pets getting sick. Use 10% bleach/water solution.

If you have fostered pets that break with ringworm or parvovirus, and the pets have not been in an isolated, bleachable space since the time of arrival, you will be unable to foster for 3 months or as determined by our foster team.

- Dogs and puppies should be housed indoors.
- When taken outside, dogs must be leashed at all times unless in a fenced-in yard.
- Never leave foster dogs outside unsupervised.
- Please **do not** take your foster dog to a dog park or any place where dogs are off-leash, as we do not want to put our dogs in a position in which they may get into a fight or be exposed to disease.
- Underage, not fully vaccinated pets must be kept in your home/yard and off of any public surfaces as they are not fully protected.
- Adult dogs should be kept in a crate while unsupervised or while you are out of the home. Please ask for a crate at pickup if you do not have one available.



SOCIALIZING

One of the most important parts of your job as a foster is to show your foster pet(s) that humans are kind and loving, and that the world isn't such a scary place.

Some pets will adjust quickly to you and their new environment, but others will take plenty of time and patience. Allow your foster to acclimate to the new surroundings, and give them plenty of love. An outgoing, affectionate puppy can be cuddled and played with freely, while the less social animals will need some encouragement. Socializing fearful puppies in a timely manner is especially important, as if they are not well socialized during their critical developmental stages, they may develop aberrant social behavior later in life.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- If your puppies are fearful and run away from you when you approach, try sitting on the floor near them and let them come to you. This is a lot less intimidating to them. Looking away and not holding eye contact can also calm them and make them less afraid of you.
- Discourage puppies from mouthing or biting your hands by distracting them with an appropriate toy. This will make them much more adoptable. Never engage in hand play with pets.
- Be patient with scared adult animals. They will need more time to adjust. Be calm, talk quietly, move slowly, and sit low. The more approachable you are, the more likely a scared animal is to come out of its shell.
- Mentor dogs that can model appropriate behavior can be an amazing asset to fearful or shy dogs. This can be a well-behaved foster dog or a resident dog that can take them on and show them the way.
- Use appropriate equipment for managing fearful adults. A martingale collar with a drag line or long leash attached to it at all times will aid you in controlling the dog's movements and recovering them from hiding spots. A harness with a front attachment for a leash is also recommended.
- Make sure that your environment for a scared adult dog doesn't allow them places to hide. Make their world small at first until they have gained some confidence before you allow them access to a wider space in your home. Many fearful dogs are flight risks as well; we recommend leash walking only to avoid an escape.
- Help socialize puppies by exposing them to the sights and sounds of a normal household, including vacuuming, items dropping, introduction to people of all shapes and sizes, differently textured floors and thresholds, the great outdoors (in a contained safe space), children, and other pets.

Health and Disease

Check up appointments and vaccinations

Upon intake, your foster was given their initial round of vaccines and other treatments depending on their age and condition. Your Volunteer Coordinator will schedule their booster appointment 3-4 weeks from their intake date and every 3-4 weeks thereafter until they are adopted or have completed their vaccine series.

Your Volunteer Coordinator will be in touch with you to schedule this in advance.

Your foster will receive the following treatments and vaccines, dependent on their age:

0-4 weeks:

- De-wormer (Pyrantel) every 2 weeks

4 weeks - 4 months

- De-wormer
- DAPPv vaccines every 3-4 weeks
- Bordetella vaccine (this is a yearly vaccine)

4 months+

- The above treatments and vaccines
- Plus a Rabies vaccine

The DAPPv shot vaccinates for Canine Distemper, Adenovirus (a hepatitis virus), Parvovirus, and Parainfluenza (a flu virus).

Pyrantel is for worms.

You might see these pass in the stool after treatment - they will look like spaghetti.

Bordetella is for Bordetella aka: Kennel Cough

Signs of Illness

We do our best to ensure that medical concerns are addressed prior to a pet leaving for foster. Please make sure to give all doses of medications.

Pets that come fr

om a shelter environment have been exposed to many germs, do not have an established vaccine history, and their immune systems may be suppressed due to shelter stress. Therefore, it is not uncommon for a pet to become sick shortly after arriving in a foster home.

Please watch for the following symptoms:

Dogs / Pups under 9 months of age:

- Diarrhea lasting longer than 1 day
- Vomiting and diarrhea for > 6 hours
- Vomiting more than once/hour
- Not eating for more than 12-24 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than 12 hours, or lethargy with fever
- Sneezing, coughing, goopy eyes
- Areas of crusty skin or hair loss
- Lameness paired with discomfort or pain

Adult Dogs:

- Not drinking for more than 24 hours
- Diarrhea that lasts longer than 1-2 days
- Vomiting more than 2-3 times/hour
- Not eating for > 72 hours
- Lethargy and fever for more than a day, or lethargy with fever
- Sneezing, coughing, goopy eyes
- Lameness paired with discomfort or pain.

If you notice any of these symptoms, please contact your Volunteer Coordinator for guidance and/or an appointment to be examined by our local veterinarian. **Remember that CAR provides approved care at no cost to you, but if you go to an outside vet clinic without prior approval, you will have to pay for the visit and will not be reimbursed.**

General and Emergency Care

Most common ailments and illnesses can be handled in-house with guidance from our veterinarian partners. Contact your Case Manager if you have concerns about illness or emergencies.

Once a foster is in your care, you are responsible for transporting him or her to CAR or an approved veterinarian for necessary and scheduled medical care. Always use a secure carrier, designed specifically for companion animals, when transporting puppies, and ensure dogs are on leash.

Emergencies that may need after-hours attention include continuous diarrhea coupled with lethargy, continuous vomiting, bleeding, any trauma such as being hit by a car, dropped, stepped on, seizures, and difficulty breathing. If your pet is exhibiting any of these symptoms, get in touch with us immediately!

Emergency care must be approved PRIOR to the vet visit. See emergency contacts for numbers to call.

Cleaning Between Foster Groups

The joy of letting go of one foster pet is knowing you soon will be able to take in another that may not otherwise be able to find a place to grow in such a loving environment. Please consider the following guidelines when transitioning between groups.

Once your foster pet has left, it is time to clean and prepare for your next foster pet.

- You will need to remove all bedding, and wash it in hot water with bleach added. Follow your machine's guidelines for adding bleach to the wash load.
- You will also need to clean any non-porous supplies (kongs, toys, etc.). Empty all contents, and wash with hot soapy water. Rinse well and then fill with hot water, add one cup of bleach and let it sit for at least 10 minutes. Rinse and dry well.
- For food and water dishes, you can run them through the dishwasher, and they will be cleaned for your next pet.
If you have carpeted floors, you will need to vacuum well and spot clean any areas that need it. If you have a carpet cleaner, you should use it between pets.
If you do not have carpet, sweep and mop the floor. Once the floor is dry, mop again with a bleach water solution (1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water) and let it sit for ten minutes. Afterwards, you will want to rinse with clear water and then let it dry.
- You will need to wipe down all surfaces with a bleach water solution or Clorox Cleanup. You should also wipe the walls down. You do not have to do all of the wall, but at least the bottom 3 feet of the area your pet was in.
- If you have a bed in the room, change the covering on it. If you have a chair or couch in the room, you will need to vacuum it and spot clean if needed.

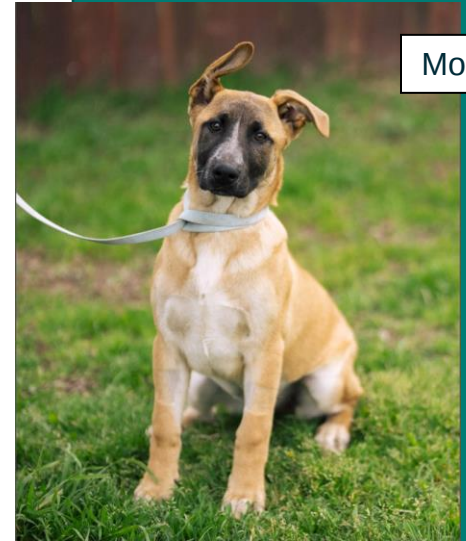
Ideally, your foster room will be void of anything covered in material like a chair or couch unless it is covered with a plastic sheet designed to protect it.

Dog to Dog Introductions

There may be situations when you need to introduce your foster dog to another dog - ie, walks in the neighborhood, hiking in a park, or even to your resident dog. It's important to understand that not all dogs will be best friends, and some dogs just aren't very social at all.

Safety should always be your primary concern, though accidents can happen and we cannot always prevent them. Always work within your comfort zone. If you are uncomfortable about any given situation, seek the guidance of your Foster Coordinator or someone with more experience to help you through the situation.

1. In order for two dogs to greet, the dogs must be relatively calm. If either dog is excited and pulling, wait to bring them close to each other. We recommend a "parallel walk" where the dogs can see each other from a distance until everyone is calm.
2. Once everyone is calm and has good focus, have the dogs greet each other so their noses and rear ends are together so they can smell each other. The entire process should not take more than three seconds. After three seconds, mark the pleasant encounter by saying "yes" (or whatever your mark happens to be) and offering a treat away from the other dog. You will be able to extend the time that your foster interacts with that dog with every encounter. Initial brief introductions are always better than extended ones.
3. If the dogs appear to get along, arrange a play date in a neutral location to eliminate the risk of one dog guarding a familiar territory. ALWAYS supervise the play with two people present and keep drag lines/leashes on both dogs. Do not drop the leashes until you are comfortable with the nature of the play. If it begins to escalate, step on the leashes and create space between them to give them a break.



Moka

We highly recommend beginning with a managed household.

CREATE SEPARATE SPACES FOR YOUR FOSTER AWAY FROM RESIDENT PETS.

THE GOAL OF FOSTERING IS TO PROVIDE A SAFE, TEMPORARY HOME FOR A PET IN NEED - NOT TO GIVE YOUR DOG A BFF FOR A FEW WEEKS.

FOSTER DOGS MAY NEED DECOMPRESSION TIME AND MAY NOT LIKE OTHER DOGS OR CATS.

PROTECT THEM AND YOUR OWN ANIMALS BY GIVING THEM SEPARATE SPACES AND TIME SPENT WITH YOU.

IF THEY GET ALONG WELL AFTER A PERIOD OF DECOMPRESSION AND A PROPER INTRODUCTION, WONDERFUL! MAKE SURE YOU SUPERVISE PLAY AND NEVER LEAVE YOUR FOSTER UNATTENDED WITH YOUR RESIDENT ANIMALS.

Decompression

When fostering a rescued dog, it's a happy time for you and a relief for the dog. You've taken them away from a loud, scary place, and you're excited about a new (even if temporary) family member! This new situation is exciting for everyone, with new interactions and adventures to come.

But WAIT! Before you show off your new foster to your family, friends, and resident pets, please give the new dog time to relax for a while. The last thing you should do at this point is to rush them into a new interaction that could get them in trouble if they aren't ready for it.

Decompression can easily take 3-5 days, depending on the length of stay in a shelter and their prior history, known or unknown. Dogs that have been in a shelter for an especially long time need to decompress and get themselves back into a calm state of mind, away from the worry and stress of the typical shelter environment.

Keep your new foster in a crate or their own space during decompression time, and always when you're not home. Create a routine that involves walks and playtime, followed by resting in a crate with a filled Kong or chew toy to get the dog's mind working.

It can take days for the true personality of the dog to resurface, and until they feel comfortable and safe with you and their new environment, it is best to keep their world small. When you feel they are gaining confidence and are back to being themselves, you can begin the slow introduction to your own dogs by going on walks together outside the home. Once this is successful, you can graduate to socializing in the backyard, and then to time spent together inside the home. Make sure that YOU are comfortable with the interaction before you progress to this step - dogs can sense when you are uncomfortable, and your resident pets may infer that they need to protect you against the newcomer.

Time - Space -- Understanding

Decompression Checklist for Foster Dogs

When a dog suffers from kennel stress, it can take from several minutes to 48+ hours for that pet's anxiety to return to normal levels. It takes time to build trust, and trust is the basis for obedience. The more a dog trusts their foster, the more likely that s/he will learn and follow the rules. In some cases, the buildup of shelter stress can make a dog difficult to tire out. This will improve with time, but there are several things you can do to make the process go smoothly.



- Prepare needed supplies in order to mentally engage your foster dog. You may want to use food-filled frozen Kongs, puzzle toys, etc.
- When you first get your foster dog, take a walk in your yard until your foster dog appears to relax.
- When you enter the home, ensure that any family members who are meeting the dog for the first time are seated, and let the dog come to them for attention.
- Keep your foster dog separated from your own pets until your foster is comfortable in his/her new environment and you have time to do a proper introduction.
- If your foster is unable to settle down, channel their energy into a task such as fetch, puzzle toys, or any game that engages their brain until they are able to relax.
- Do only essential meet-and-greets for the first 48 hours to a week, depending on the dog's comfort level.

What Does it Mean?

Dog's Behavior	What it Means
Excessive scratching (when pests or coat issues are not the cause)	Stress
Nose licking	Stress
Slight or major cowering	Fear/anxiety
Licking of lips (when no food is present)	Fear/anxiety/stress
Panting (when not hot or thirsty)	Fear/anxiety/stress
Brows furrowed with ears to the side	Fear/anxiety/stress
Slow-motion movements/walking slow	Fear/anxiety/stress
Sleepiness or yawning outside of normal periods of being tired	Fear/anxiety/stress
Hyper-vigilance/quickly looking in multiple directions	Fear/anxiety/stress
Sudden avoidance of food	Fear/anxiety/stress
Actively moving away from object/turning and walking away	Fear/anxiety/stress
Pacing	Fear/anxiety/stress
Cowering with large/whale eyes	Request for space

Dog's Behavior	What it Means
Straight/heightened posture	On alert
Straight/heightened posture with forward stance	Suspicious
Actively barking at object while moving away or staying away	Threatened
Barking combined with active movement toward object	Angry
Shaking (when not wet)	Stress release
Scrunched body position	Attention-seeking
Head tilted to one side	Curious
Sitting patiently while staring	Wanting something
Down on all fours, eyes alert, calm gaze	Hungry/ready to be fed or wanting interaction
Rolling over on back	Looking for love
Wagging tail	Ready (perhaps in response to play), happy
Down on front legs	Ready (perhaps in response to play)
Curved body	Polite/friendly

Dog's Behavior	What it Means
Licking someone	Polite/friendly
Looking away/turning head	At peace
Sniffing the ground	At peace
Sitting calmly while offering their back	At peace
Soft ears with blinking eyes	Relaxed
Stretching or paws up	Friendly/greeting
Playful bow	Friendly
Relaxed body with light eyes and “smile”	Friendly

Adoption From Foster Care

- Puppies are available for adoption after 8 weeks of age if they are healthy.
- Puppies under 4 months old must be double vaccinated prior to the time of adoption, and have been in care for at least 2 weeks.
- We **rarely** adopt sibling puppies together. This is due to the risk of littermate syndrome. For more information on this, search online or check out <https://thebark.com/content/dont-take-two-littermates>
- Foster caregivers get first choice on adopting, and are given the opportunity to "network" their fosters among friends, family, and coworkers before they are placed online for public applications. If at any point they are returned to CAR or transferred to another caregiver, the original caregiver will no longer have "first dibs".
- Foster parents who wish to adopt their foster pet are required to pay the adoption fee.

MEET & GREETES

Helping find an adopter for your foster pet is a tremendous help for the CAR team and allows you to see and play a role in the entirety of their journey from intake to forever home. If meet and greets aren't your thing, that is totally fine. Pets without adopters will go to one of our adoption events to look for a new home. They are also posted on our social media pages.

- Pets must be at least 7 weeks old and in care for at least 7 days before meeting prospective adopters. If you have networked your pet and found an adopter on your own, have them fill out an application online at **www.countrysiderescue.com** and give the name of the confirmed adopter to your case manager as soon as possible.
- If you are not interested in networking your pet or do not have an adopter in your network but are willing to conduct meet and greets, please let your CM know. We will make your pet live on our website and collect applications..
- Meet and greets can be done at your home or at CAR. Once you have a confirmed adopter, please communicate with your CM. Remember that CAR is a low-barrier organization and to approach each meet and greet with an open mind. The important part is to find an appropriate match for your foster pet's personality and needs.

Thank You, for helping Save Lives of Homeless Animals !