



SAN FRANCISCO SAMOYED RESCUE, INC.

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"Bridging the Gap Between Homelessness and a Loving Family"

Fostering FAQ

What is fostering?

When you foster a rescue dog, you take that dog into your home as if it were a part of your family. The dog lives with you until a new permanent home is located for the dog. This could be a matter of days, weeks, or even months.

Why is fostering so important?

Fostering a dog in a family environment helps in a number of ways. It gives SFSR, through the foster family's experience, a better idea of the personality and needs of a particular dog. This makes it easier for us to make a proper fit between each individual dog and its new family. It is often difficult to tell in a shelter or kennel environment what the dog's true personality is.

If a dog has behavior issues (not house-trained, suffering from separation anxiety, etc.), being in a foster home provides the opportunity to work with the dog, increasing the chances of the dog being adopted rather than euthanized. (Please note that we do not take in aggressive dogs.)

Shelters and kennels are also breeding grounds for many diseases, such as kennel cough. Having a dog in a home environment reduces the chances of such illnesses. Also, the dog gets more individual attention, so if a problem did arise, it's more likely to be caught early.

Many private and city/county shelters are starting up fostering programs because it increases the number of dogs they can rescue, and they have recognized the advantages of keeping dogs in foster homes.

What do I need to foster a dog?

Compassion, patience, and a sense of humor. Rescued dogs often have behavior issues because they weren't properly trained in their previous homes. Some dig, some bark, some aren't house-trained, etc. They can often be very needy and may cling to you everywhere you go in the house. These are learned behaviors that can usually be unlearned with work, time, and patience.

If you rent your home, you should have your landlord's permission to have a dog living with you, even on a temporary basis. An SFSR representative would also do a home check to make sure your home is "Sammy-proofed". This helps reduce potential damage to your home and injury to the dog.

The foster Samoyed **MUST** be allowed inside your home. Samoyeds were bred to want to be with humans and it is a strong genetic trait. Depriving a Samoyed of human companionship can make the dog neurotic and destructive. The foster dog should also have a place in your home that is his own—a corner, a crate, etc. Some place where he can feel safe and can escape to if he wants.

What equipment do I need to foster?

If needed, SFSR will provide the following: leash, collar, food & water bowls. If you have a dog crate, that can be very handy, although it is not necessary. Crates can be especially useful when the dog first arrives in your home, until you can determine if the dog is house-trained, a chewer, ok with your other animals, etc.

Your foster dog would also need some sort of bed. This could be a store-bought dog bed, or it could be a pile of some old towels and blankets in some area of the house.

Do I need previous experience to foster for SFSR?

No, you do not need prior fostering experience. General experience with dogs is preferable, but not required. SFSR would work with you to make sure your fosters were appropriate to your level of experience. And we are always available to assist you should problems arise that you aren't sure how to handle. You are never left alone to foster without support. We're only a phone call away.

What am I financially responsible for and what will SFSR reimburse?

Most foster homes cover the cost of food and incidentals (collar, leash, food bowl, water bowl, treats, etc.) for the dog in their care. However, if this is an issue that would prevent you from fostering, SFSR would help with the costs. SFSR will reimburse any medical expenses. (Note that our foster homes have a spending limit of \$100.00. For expenses over \$100.00, you must contact an SFSR officer for approval *before* you accrue the expense.)

What if I have other pets?

SFSR would try to evaluate the dog you would be fostering to determine if it is compatible with other animals in your home. However, as a precaution, it is best to crate a new dog in your home, or at least limit its access of the home, until you are sure of its behavior with your other animals and family members. If you know that one of your pets has a particular issue, such as not getting along with male dogs, or not liking puppies, etc., we would work with you to select a foster dog that fit your environment.

How long will it take for a foster dog to get adopted?

This can vary from days, to weeks, to months. If you foster, you should be prepared for the dog to be with you for any length of time.

If you, as a foster, can assist with promoting the dog you are caring for, this will help immeasurably in locating a new home. Attending adoption fairs, posting the dog on the web, and spreading the word about the dog with friends, neighbors, and co-workers are all helpful. Of course, SFSR will also be doing what we can--organizing adoption fairs, posting the dog on our web site, etc.

What if something comes up and I can no longer foster the dog I've taken in?

It's understandable that unforeseen events might occur, making it impossible for you to continue caring for a dog you've agreed to foster. However, moving a dog around from place to place is detrimental to the well-being of the dog. When you decide to foster, you should be in a position to make the commitment wholeheartedly and with no foreseeable interruptions until the dog finds a new home. But if something unavoidable comes up, SFSR will work with you to resolve the issue.

What if I get attached to my foster dog?

It is not uncommon to become attached to a dog you are fostering and to have trouble giving up the dog. It seems to make people feel better to know that releasing the dog to a new, loving home enables them to again take in and give a chance at life to another dog. And the foster home can participate in the home check and selection of the new home for the dog.

Of course, if you absolutely cannot see yourself giving up the dog and can accommodate her in your home, you may want to consider adopting her. Foster homes always have first option to adopt the dog they are fostering.

How do I get started in fostering?

Contact Beverley Andolora at rescue@sfsr.org or 408-993-0877. You will be asked to fill out a fostering application, which will provide us with information to help us determine the right dog for you to foster.