

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE & ADOPTIONS

FOSTERING FAQ

From Jeanne Clark, President

Thank you for volunteering to foster for Northern California Border Collie Rescue & Adoptions (NCBCRA. Without you, we couldn't take in dogs and help them to find their forever homes. You truly are the backbone and heart of our rescue.

Here are some guidelines for fostering a dog through our rescue. Some of our long-term foster folks have suggested things we can share with you that will be helpful. We hope these FAQ will make your foster experience easier and more enjoyable—for both you and your foster dog. If you do not see the answer to your questions in this section or wish further understanding, please do not hesitate to email me bellestarrgang@gmail.com with your question. We can then update the FAQ for the next foster's benefit.

Thank you so much for all your help and I look forward to working with you.

ID Tags. Every foster dog is assigned a NCBCRA rescue tag. If you need a rescue tag, contact Marnie at info@norcalbcrescue.org. Please attach the tag to the dog's collar at the first opportunity in case the dog wants to do a runner right away! This is not uncommon for a new dog, particularly one that has been living rough already and has some confidence in its ability to survive on its own, or a dog that is fearful. Also, please email Marnie at with the ID Tag # number right away. P.S.: This ID # needs to be noted on the Adoption Agreement (Adoption Agreement PDF file can be found on the Foster page of the website at norcalbcrescue.org/foster.html).

Quarantine. Your dog will be coming from another foster home after a 7-day quarantine, or directly from a shelter. We quarantine the dogs for 7 days to make sure the dog isn't percolating something like kennel cough that your dogs could catch. Dogs can come down with kennel cough even if they have been vaccinated against it because there are multiple strains. If your new foster dog has been quarantined, there shouldn't be risk of exposure. If your new dog is coming to you directly from a shelter, then your quarantining of the dog is essential to protect your own dogs. Keep the new dog crated in an area away from your dogs; avoid riding your foster in a vehicle with the new dog; and potty your foster dog in an area away from your dogs for 7 days. As long as you don't see signs of illness during this 7-day period, you can comfortably introduce the foster to your own dogs.

Crate-training. Learning to relax and rest in a crate is an important skill for a dog, especially a herding dog that need to develop an "off switch," i.e., self-regulation. While dogs that haven't been exposed to crate-training often express a range of resistances to it, most come around and often quickly. These same dogs will often seek out their crates when they get used to them. Most adopters want their dogs to be crate-trained, so they can safely travel with their dogs; know their dogs won't feel added stress when boarded, especially for veterinary procedures; take their dog to dog sporting events like agility trials or flyball tournaments; and leave their dogs unsupervised without the dog getting hurt or in trouble. Even when adopters initially express that they don't believe in crating a dog, we talk with them about its values, trying not to be too pushy.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE & ADOPTIONS FOSTERING FAQ

If you need help in crate-training your foster dog, please let one of us know and we'll guide you through the process. Email Jeanne at bellestarrgang@gmail.com or Janie at jkbrogan@wavecable.com. We also have a copy of trainer extraordinaire Susan Garrett's DVD Crate Games, which is helpful and really fun; you're welcome to check it out by contacting Jeanne. And we have several links to training resources on the Foster section of our website.

Socializing. While we don't expect you to train your foster dog—that's the adopter's job—it's important to socialize the dog, or at least find out if the dog has social challenges the dog might need to work through. We've been surprised from time to time that a dog we thought was ready-to-go in all situations turned out to have some sensitivities. And we want to help our dogs with these things, so their adoptions can be happy and forever. Please invite people to come by and meet your new foster—men and women, and preferably people who are dog-savvy. Take your foster out in the world and see how the dog reacts to people and other dogs. If you notice behaviors that you think will make it difficult for the dog to be adopted, please consult with Jeanne or Janie, and we'll see if we can help you sort things out. If we can't, we have access to a trainer/behaviorist, who can often give us good suggestions. The trainer also has contacts in other communities in the North State and can recommend trainers the adopter can work with.

We often see fearfulness in undersocialized dogs. Our job is to help build confidence, not dependency, to help a fearful dog remember how to be a dog. Babying the dog often increases dependency, especially in these herding breeds. Sometimes building confidence is simply a matter of teaching the dog to play, or helping the dog to calm down by getting more exercise. Sometimes, all it takes to turn around a nervous border collie is to have the dog around confident, well-balanced border collies. That's a beautiful thing to see!

Medical Needs. Sometimes a foster dog will get injured playing or rough-housing, or sometimes they will start showing symptoms like loss of appetite, depression, vomiting, coughing, etc. In a situation like this, contact Jeanne or Janie and we'll decide together how to proceed, especially whether the dog needs to be seen by a vet, and if so, where to take the dog for consultation and treatment. We are gathering a list of vets in the various communities where we have fosters. We'll have that list handy when you call. We also have medications that we routinely use with the dogs and that we can send you, if needed.

NCBCR cannot reimburse veterinary expenses that are not approved by Jeanne or Janie, so make sure to check in with us first.

What If the Dog I'm Fostering Does Fit with My Family? We don't want a foster dog to disrupt your household. If they just don't fit in with your family members or animals, we will remove the dog and find another foster home for the dog as quick as we can. With that said, please do not hesitate to let us know how things are going with your dog so we don't get into an emergency situation where we need to remove the dog ASAP.

What If I Fall in Love with My Foster Dog and Want to Keep Him/Her? Well of course! We all have experienced this situation while fostering. It's only natural to become emotionally involved with the dogs in our care. One of the best parts of fostering is getting to see so many different personalities in the dogs and learning to spot the dogs that are truly outstanding. We feel if a foster provider wants to keep one of their rescues, they should be

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE & ADOPTIONS FOSTERING FAQ

able to do so. We do ask our new foster providers to help our rescue by fostering for at least six months before they choose to adopt one of their foster dogs. When you do adopt one of your foster dogs, we ask that you cover the medical expenses we have provided for the dog to that point. There are cases when a new foster provider will want to adopt their dog before the end of the six month fostering period. In these cases, we will adopt the dog to them as a normal adoption with the current adoption fees.

What If Someone Wants to Relinquish a Dog to Rescue? When you become involved in rescue, you'll be surprised at how many dogs seem to become available to you. Friends or neighbors may have dogs they want to relinquish, or they hear of a border collie that needs help. If this should happen, please contact your foster coordinator to see if we have room for the dog. If you take a dog without getting approval first, the dog may have to become your responsibility. We will help you as much as we can but if there are no foster homes available, the dog will have to stay with you. If you do get approval to take a dog for our rescue, please print out an owner release form. You can find the forms in the Foster web section.

That darned dog chewed my chair! There's a chance a foster dog will cause damage to your personal property, be it a piece of furniture, landscaping, or your favorite shoes. A dog might even bust up a crate to get out. Your experience with dogs can minimize the risk, but we've all had some type of damage occur when fostering. Let me know if you're having any problems of this nature, so perhaps one of us can help. That said, **NCBCR doesn't pay or reimburse fosters for repair or replacement of damaged personal property caused by one of our foster dogs. You're assuming this risk in accepting a foster dog into your home.**

How Long Will a Foster Dog Stay with Me Before Getting Adopted? There is no way of knowing for sure how long a dog will stay with you. We've had dogs adopted from their foster home in one day and we've had other dogs stay for over a year. Generally the dogs get adopted within the first month; it really depends on the age and personality of the dog. When a dog doesn't get adopted right away, changing their bio and photos sometimes helps.

Thank you again for all of your efforts. Please call or email if you have any questions. JC