

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BORDER COLLIE RESCUE & ADOPTIONS

ADOPTION FAQ

From Jeanne Clark, President

Thank you for volunteering to foster for Northern California Border Collie Rescue & Adoptions (NCBRCA). 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 adopting out 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, at 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.

How Do I List My Foster Dog on the Website? Take a few days to get to know your dog: how does the dog do with people, other dogs, cats; does the dog like toys; does the dog have good manners and some training; does the dog know any tricks, etc.

When you feel like you have a good idea of the dog's strengths and weaknesses, write a bio for the dog and take photos that will really help, if you can. The more interesting things we can say about the dogs, the faster they seem to get adopted!!! Visitors to our site comment all the time about the great photos of our dogs. We pride ourselves with showing the applicants many views of each dog so they can really see what the dog looks like. If your dog is sociable with other dogs take a few with them prominent so it's clear which dog is being shown, but with the other dogs either at ease with or playing with them. If the dog is having issues, you might want to wait to post the dog, but generally a week should give you a good idea of what the dog is about. If you are unable to photograph your foster dog, we can arrange to have that done. PHOTO TIP: The best photos are taken at dog level.

In your write-up, talk about the dog's good points, what the dog might need to work on in terms of training and socialization, and what kind of home you think the dog would thrive in. For example, if the dog is a real energetic, "high-octane" border collie, you might suggest that this dog is not for a first-time border collie adopter or for a home with children. Stress the positive in your write-up, but you need to mention anything else an adopter needs to know, so the prospective adopter is not taken aback or feels misled after meeting the dog.

Please email photos and write up to Brett at bcbrogan@wavecable.com, so he can post the dog on the website. There are just a few guidelines for photo taking and submission that will make Brett's job easier:

- 1) Please be sure to take some photos with a "portrait" orientation (vertical rectangle configuration) so we have one to fit properly on the Adoption Gallery page.
- 2) No need to crop, resize, or rename photos. Brett will do this to make use of them, so if there is any photo you want to persevere be sure to keep a copy.

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Do I Have to Advertise My Foster Dog Anywhere Else? In addition to being posted on our website, your foster dog will also be posted on our Petfinder site and Facebook page. You shouldn't need to post anywhere else as this traffic should suffice – however, if you are interested in putting up flyers or some other means of getting the word out, please let us know what you would like to do.

How Are Applications Reviewed for My Foster Dog? Once the dog is posted on the website, Jeanne and Janie will review the applications that come in for the dog. Some of them won't be approved at this level for reasons like they don't have fencing; their dogs sleep outside; their dogs ride in the bed of a truck; or they have young children. We will forward all applications with merit to you, and you'll review the applications for the particular dog you have. Not all approved applications will be right for your dog, and you will know that better than anyone. While you have the final say about who adopts your dog, fosters often call us and talk with us about the applications they're considering. We welcome this, so don't be shy, especially if you're on the fence about an application. We want to make sure you know all the information about each applicant before you invite them to meet your dog. This is for your safety as well as your opportunity to view the answers on the application and decide if their family is a good match for your dog.

How Do I Schedule an Appointment for My Foster Dog? When you have an application you like, you can email the person and ask if they would like you to call them. In the call, you'll want to ask more about the information provided in the application: how long the dog will be home alone; what kinds of things the person likes to do with dogs; what a typical day in this home would be like for the dog; how often children are in the home, if you think that might be problematic for the dog, etc. If other applications come in for the dog while you're vetting this one, you can simply email these folks and tell them that you're in the process of reviewing applications. If you and your first choice applicant feel the phone call goes well, you can schedule an adoption appointment at the time and place of your choosing. We also ask that everyone who will be living with the dog come to the appointment. We recommend meeting during the daytime at a place where the dog can be off-leash safely.

What Do I Need to Do To Prepare for the Adoption Appointment? Before the appointment, print out and complete the adoption agreement, and make two copies (available in the Foster section of the website). The original copy with the attached veterinary records will go to the adopter, one stays in your records, and the copy of the agreement and records will go to our rescue secretary. Be sure to bathe the dog and brush the dog's coat before the appointment, as often the dog will go home that same day—if the potential adopters and you feel like this is a good match—so we'd like the dog to look and feel its best. People will often ask what they should bring to the appointment. We recommend: a leash, a crate for the dog to ride home in, water (if the drive will be long), treats, any other dogs that live in the home, and their checkbook.

What If the Applicant Visits My Dog and Wants to Adopt? Once you meet with an applicant and you feel comfortable adopting your dog to them, you can proceed. Be sure to go over the contract with the adopters; don't simply have them read it. Because we are a high heartworm area, make sure they know about heartworm, its prevention, and the costs of treatment, medically and financially. Even if the dog is moving to the Bay Area, it should still be on heartworm preventative for at least six months because it has lived in our area. Be sure to tell the adopter that if the adoption doesn't work out, we want the dog back; we

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are the dog's back-up until it breathes its last breath. Encourage the adopter to keep the NCBCR tag on the dog's collar. Tell them you'll check in to see how things are going.

IMPORTANT: Do not let anyone take your dog without having signed the Adoption Agreement and made payment. The Adoption Agreement transfers ownership from us to them and releases us from liability.

What If the Applicant Doesn't Have the Adoption Fee at the Time of Adoption? They will have to wait to adopt the dog although there are probably ATM's nearby and in the very near future we will set a PayPal account for on-line payment (we do not anticipate ever taking credit cards). Sometimes people think they must first visit the dog and then adopt them at another meeting as is the custom with some rescues. When they find out they can adopt the dog at the first meeting, they may not have the adoption fee with them. To avoid this, when you are making arrangements for the meeting, you can inform the applicants that if they meet your dog and everyone agrees that this is a good match, they will be able to adopt the dog at that time. We have had applicants take dogs without paying the adoption fee and we never received payment. We are a non-profit organization, and we depend on the adoption fees to pay our vet bills and expenses. Many times we have spent more money on a dog than we receive from their adoption fee. I think some adopters feel that we should be giving our dogs to good homes for free (if they could only see our vet bills and then they would realize why we charge an adoption fee).

What If an Applicant Wants to Take the Dog for a Trial Visit to Their Home? This is definitely not allowed!!!! The Adoption Agreement gives every applicant a minimum of two weeks to decide if this dog will work for them. We will take the dog back and return their adoption fee within those two weeks, no problem. If a dog is taken without an official adoption in place, we are still liable for the actions of that dog!! Usually when applicants ask about trying out the dog, they don't realize that we have the two-week trial period in our contract. Once they are told about the trial period, they usually agree to the terms of the contract and sign. Note: We do not promote it, but Jeanne can authorize extension of the two-week period if it appears the adopter is trying to make things work, but needs some additional time. This can easily occur around the start of school, for example.

What If I Don't Feel Comfortable Adopting to an Applicant After They've Met with the Dog? I'm sure many of our foster providers have run into this situation. The applicants look good on paper but after meeting with them, they either don't interact well with the dog or we just don't have a good feeling about them. You should go with your feelings in this case. Even though they have an approved application, if you don't think they'll be a good match for your foster dog, you are not required to adopt to them. Generally you will have more than one inquiry for your dog, so you can explain to the applicant that you would like to interview all the applicants before deciding.

What If the Adopter Asks Me If the Adoption Fee is Tax Deductible? Adopters may ask if the money they're giving us (for adoption fees, donations, dog sponsorships, etc.) is tax deductible. The response is simply **"we can't give advice on tax matters."** If an adopter seems put off with this response to the point of possibly not adopting the dog, then please call me, and I can speak with the adopter. This has not been an issue, but we want to be careful in what we say about this; we're not tax experts! It isn't our role to say what is and isn't a tax deduction for them.

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After the Adoption. One of our long-term fosters has a pizza party with her own dogs the night a foster dog goes home. Sometimes it's harder than other times to have a dog leave. Find some way to celebrate the dog's new life and to celebrate the huge part you played in making that new life possible. And then call or email to say: I'm ready for another dog!

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