

## Overview of Foster Family Responsibilities

The Rescue Coordinator must guide selected fosterers through the fostering process. The Coordinator should keep in contact to ensure the fosterers know what is expected of them and have what they and the Tibbie needs. Here's an overview of the foster family's responsibilities.

- **Daily Care**—Fosterers provide clean, comfortable, climate-controlled indoor housing with ample affection and daily socialization, training, play and fresh-air exercise.
- **Grooming**—Fosterers make sure the Tibbie is clean and brushed, mats removed, nails trimmed and free of parasites.
- **Veterinary Care**—Fosterers schedule any needed veterinary care, including emergency care, for the foster Tibbie. Depending on any prior veterinary records the Rescue Coordinator is able to obtain, care may include health certificates, vaccinations, heartworm test, de-worming, spay/neuter, dentals and other services that the Veterinary Protocol calls for.
- **Evaluation**—Fosterers test and evaluate the Tibbie's temperament and behavior. Examples of tests include exposure to children, cats and other dogs (large and small if possible). Determine the Tibbie's energy level, degree of housetraining, knowledge of commands, crate-training, and acceptance of the lead.

While the Tibbie is in foster care, the Rescue Coordinator may determine that the Tibbie is unadoptable. This may be due to diagnosis of an incurable or untreatable condition (e.g., brucellosis, metastasized cancer) or other reason (e.g., irreversible temperament issue that poses a risk to people). In this sad situation, the Rescue Coordinator will ask the fosterer to arrange for humane euthanasia.

## Foster Home Preparedness

The Rescue Coordinator will let the fosterers know what supplies they'll probably need for the Tibbie depending on what will come with him (e.g., collar, harness). She will also let the fosterer know about any food or medication requirements. If the Tibbie is a surrender, the Coordinator will

encourage the former owners to donate any medications (e.g., heartworm preventative) and the Tibbie's possessions (e.g., bed, toys) to help ease the transition. Before picking up the Tibbie, fosterers should make sure they have everything ready at home.

## Settling In

The first order of business is to help the foster Tibbie settle down. Please remember that he will be stressed. His world is already turned upside down and shaken. If he came into rescue as a surrender, from his perspective, he's been taken away from the only home and owner he's ever known and shuttled from place to place. If he came into rescue from a shelter, he's probably traumatized. He doesn't understand what's happening. Even though Tibbies are resilient, fosterers should...



*Fosters are often sweet seniors.*

- Keep the environment as quiet and stress-free as possible. It's tempting to introduce your charge to everyone, but it's better to avoid strange people and animals getting in his face. Show him to his space and potty place, but let him explore and adjust at his own pace. Let him approach you rather than forcing yourself on him. Give him a refuge he can call his own.
- Make allowances for lapses in housetraining. We're never sure how well-housetrained foster Tibbies are, but the stress may cause lapses even if they're normally good. Be patient. Get him on a schedule of meal and potty times. Take him out often. Be consistent. Give positive reinforcement—praise and tiny treats—for doing the right thing.
- Go easy on the amount of food and treats. The sudden change in food may cause some droopy poopy.
- Groom the Tibbie or have him groomed professionally. If he is in bad condition (e.g., severe matting), a professional groomer is a good idea. Try to preserve the coat, if possible.

Fosterers who cannot continue with the foster for any reason should notify the Rescue Coordinator right away.

## Veterinary Care

The next order of business will be to arrange veterinary care for the foster Tibbie as soon as possible....

- Quarantine the Tibbie from other dogs in the household for 14 days or until a vet has confirmed that the Tibbie has no communicable disease,
- The Rescue Coordinator will send the foster home veterinary records, if any, she has been able to obtain. Consult the Veterinary Protocol later in this Handbook—that's what we are required to have done unless prior veterinary records show the dog doesn't need a given procedure (e.g., already up to date on vaccinations).

Before the initial vet visit...

- The Rescue Coordinator will provide the fosterer with a checklist of services the Tibbie needs based on the Veterinary Protocol and any prior vet records obtained (e.g., vaccinations).
- The Coordinator may ask for suggestions of veterinary practices in the area that are likely to give a rescue discount. (The Trust requires us to try to get a discount.) He/she will obtain estimate(s) for those services from one or more veterinary practice(s) in the area. The Coordinator may ask for the fosterer's help in obtaining the estimates. After obtaining the estimate(s), the Coordinator will select a veterinarian, provide any credentials the practice requires to set up an account for TSCA Rescue, make payment arrangements and update the Trust. The fosterer must wait for the go-ahead to schedule the initial veterinarian appointment.

At the initial vet visit, the fosterer should...

- Take the checklist and any prior vet records the Coordinator sent even if the Coordinator has already sent the records to the vet electronically.
- Ask questions about the dog's health.
- Schedule any later procedures, such as a spay/neuter. The Veterinary Protocol requires us to schedule all procedures that require anesthesia to be done at the same time.
- Let the Coordinator know the outcome of the visit and the schedule for future procedures.

When additional services and/or costs are identified, the fosterer should let the Coordinator know immediately since she must report these to the Trust for pre-approval. Do not assume procedures will be approved; wait for the green light from the Coordinator.

After the vet visits, send (or arrange for the vet office to send) all the health records accrued to the Rescue Coordinator, preferably electronically, so that she can share them with the adoptive home.

## Expenses

Fosterers often “donate” the cost of the day-to-day out-of-pocket expenses they incur for their foster Tibbie (e.g., food) by **not** requesting reimbursement from the Trust. However, if the fosterer wishes to be reimbursed, the fosterer must advise the Coordinator in advance of the estimated expense, and the Coordinator will relay this to the Trust for pre-approval. Such expenses may include, for example, the purchase of a crate, harness and lead, bed, gas/tolls for transport to/from appointments and so on. Some fosterers also opt to pay the veterinary bills and later request reimbursement from the Trust.

The fosterer should keep receipts for all out-of-pocket expenses for which they intend to seek reimbursement from the Trust. To request reimbursement, the fosterer submits an *Expense Reimbursement Request*, along with receipts, to the Trust Treasurer at the address on the form.

Any item for which the fosterer is reimbursed belongs to the Trust and goes with the Tibbie when he/she is adopted.

## Ready for Adoption

The Rescue Coordinator depends on the foster family to get to know their foster Tibbie and to let her know when the Tibbie is ready for adoption. The fosterer's observations and advice will be invaluable to helping the Coordinator find the best possible forever home and also to helping the Tibbie and his adoptive family adjust to the forever home.

The Coordinator will ask the fosterer to evaluate the foster Tibbie's temperament and behavior and to recommend the best type of home for him. The fosterer may also be asked to prepare notes on the Tibbie's behavior or special needs to be sent to the adopter as part of the adoption packet.

Fosterers may apply to adopt their foster Tibbie by submitting a [Prospective Adopter Questionnaire](#) (if one is not already on file) to the Coordinator. The fosterer should let the Coordinator know as soon as possible that he/she wishes to adopt the foster Tibbie and, in all cases, **before** the Coordinator releases the Alert on the Tibbie's availability.



*Happy foster Tibbie*