TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE PROGRAM 1
RULES AND REGULATIONS 2
GETTING PREPARED 3
CHECKLIST 4
CONTACT INFO 5
INTRO TO OTHER PETS 6
BODY LANGUAGE 7
WRITING BIOS/TAKING PHOTOS 8
SOCIALIZATION 9
PREGNANT/NURSING 10
PUPPIES 11
TRAINING TIPS 12
FIELD TRIPS 13
FAQ 14
THANK YOU 15
The Program:

Thank you for your interest in becoming part of the Northeast Animal Shelter Foster Family! Foster homes help us to rescue more dogs, as well as provide information to adopters.

Fostering can be a wonderful experience for you and your family. You can feel great knowing that you have made a positive and life-changing difference in a shelter dog's life!

There are several options available in our foster care program:

*WE ARE HERE TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT WHAT OPTIONS WORK FOR YOU AND HOW TO GET STARTED!

**Field Trips:** A few hours at a time. Excursions and Outings during shelter hours for our dogs to get out to see the world.

**Weekend Getaway/Sleepovers:**
(1-2 days) Help give a dog a break from the shelter for a few days! Many of our dogs would love to spend time with you while the shelter is closed to the public!

**Space:** (3-7 days) There are times when we have an overwhelming amount of dogs who need our help. By fostering, you are helping us to save even more lives.

**Orphans/Pregnant/Nursing:** (approx. 3 months) Fostering for dogs near labor, nursing, or puppies in need of bottle feeding.

**Socialization:** (2-3 weeks)
Occasionally we have puppies, teens and adults that need some extra time working on socialization or other skills before they are ready for adoption!

**Medical Cases:** (1-2 weeks) Some of our dogs need a bit of time to recover either after surgeries or with medical conditions. A home setting promotes faster healing.

**Behavioral:** For some dogs, a shelter is a stressful place and they are looking for a chance to open up in a practice home. Some pets require more life skills or simply someone to really care and help them adjust to their life changes!

That could be you! Don't worry, our behavior team is here to assist you.
All pets in foster care belong to Northeast Animal Shelter and are subject to applicable policies, rules, and restrictions. NEAS will be as accurate as possible when providing information about the medical and behavioral health of pets seeking foster placement, but cannot guarantee the medical or behavioral health of any pets.

If injury or illness occurs to you or your pets(s) from contact with a foster pet, NEAS would be responsible for the medical care and expenses of the foster animal only. In some cases you may be asked to keep your pet separate from the foster pet for a period of time.

1. Foster care providers are expected to follow and abide by all guidelines and protocols regarding proper care and handling of foster pets, including giving them food, access to water at all times, health care and provide for their behavioral needs as directed. Foster pets must be kept in climate controlled homes with temperatures between 60 and 80 degrees.
2. Dogs should not be kept outside during extreme temperatures. Please pay attention to salt and icy conditions in winter, and high asphalt temperatures while walking dogs in the summer.
3. Dogs and puppies should never be left unattended outdoors. High traffic areas such as dog parks, pet stores should be avoided.
4. When outdoors, foster dogs should be kept on leash or in a securely fenced-in yard. Some dogs can jump, climb over, or dig under fences, especially dogs under socialized or considered a flight risk, so please be cautious when foster pups are outside.
5. You are prohibited from taking dogs to off-leash dog parks or other off-leash areas. Dogs must be on leash, under your control, at all times. Flex leads are not allowed.
6. If a foster care provider refuses to return a foster pet for any reason per request of NEAS, or has improperly transferred the pet to another individual or entity, the foster care provider will be permanently removed from the program and NEAS may initiate appropriate legal action in order to secure the return of the pet.
7. Do not give foster animals medication and supplements unless prescribed by NEAS Veterinary staff or alternate care arrangements have been made and approved by the foster care coordinator.
8. Foster care providers must notify the foster care coordinator immediately if a foster animal bites a person or animal, seems to be having a serious medical issue, or becomes loose or lost.
9. Children under the age of 18 should not be left unsupervised with any foster animals.
10. NEAS uses a positive reinforcement based approach to all training and behavior needs- our behavior team is here to assist you with any issues. Any behavioral aids or training devices such as choke chains, shock collars need to be directly approved by the director of behavior before being used.
11. While we want foster families to be involved in advocating and the adoption of the dogs, any vacations, parties, or large groups of more than 7 people to see the dog, need to be approved by the Foster Care Coordinator.
Fostering a pet is a commitment that will affect your entire household. Discuss your plans for fostering with all individuals that will be interacting with the pet and make sure that everyone is on the same page for this life-saving endeavor. Planning things like where a crate will be, who will be doing the primary care-taking and preparing the home before hand will make the entire process easier!

1. Discuss what kinds of dogs are appropriate- small or large, young or old, high or low energy.
2. Do you envision a playful energetic dog will make a great playmate for your dog?
3. Do you think a puppy would pester an older dog?
4. How long are you gone during the day and do you have enough time?
5. Do you have small children that will interact with the dog?
6. Are you planning any vacations, get aways, parties or other commitments during the time you may take a foster dog?

**DOG-PROOF A ROOM!**

Walk into the space in which you plan to confine your foster dog and ask yourself:
- Is there room for the dog’s crate/belongings?
- Is there quick access to outside for bathroom breaks?
- Is there anything special that can be chewed on?
- Are there exposed electrical wires?
- Are there any coffee tables where a happy tail or paw can knock something over? Do you keep food on your counters that the dog can knock down?
- Are there any plants in the space? Consult a toxic plant manual.
CHECKLIST

REMEMBER, NORTHEAST ANIMAL SHELTER IS HAPPY TO SUPPLY WHATEVER IS NEEDED FOR OUR FOSTERS, BUT IF YOU ALREADY HAVE SOME THINGS AT HOME, BE SURE TO LET YOUR FOSTER COORDINATOR KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED! HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD TAKE STOCK OF BEFORE BRINGING HOME A FOSTER DOG!

- Crate
- Bed
- Toys
- Treats
- Puppy Pads

- Bowls
- Food
- Leash/Collar/Harness
- Towels/Bedding
You’re Ready!

As an approved foster parent, you will receive emails from the Foster Care Coordinator providing a brief description of dogs needing foster homes. When you see a pet that may be a good match for your household and lifestyle, simply contact the Foster Care Coordinator and the process will begin!

The Foster Care Coordinator will contact you to provide more information and set up a time for you, your family (and your dog if applicable) to meet. We will provide you with the necessary supplies for fostering and support you through the entire process. We are always available to address any questions or concerns.

Elizabeth Booth
Foster Care Coordinator
foster@neas.org
(978-745-9888) Extension 327
Emergency Number: 425-314-3653

Dot Baisly
Director of Behavior
dot.b@neas.org

Jenna Bradley
Adoptions Manager
Northeast Animal Shelter
(978-745-9888) Priority Extension- 91
Northeast Animal Shelter does not guarantee the disposition of any pet. For this reason, if there are resident dogs in the home, we always encourage you to bring your pet in to meet any foster dog. We may require it depending on the dog. Meet N' Greets are a great indicator of how living together can go, but are never 100% guaranteed. Be prepared to separate any pets in the home, and please contact the Foster Care Coordinator with any issues.

**Dog to Dog Introductions:**

- Introduce your resident dog and foster dog in a large, non-threatening space; outside in the yard or out for a walk.
- Remove any high-value items such as rawhides, bones, chews and any toys your resident dog or foster dog may be possessive of.
- Feed pets separately to avoid squabbles over food.
- Never leave the dogs alone together. Separate by rooms or crating if you cannot be present.
- Keep the leash on the foster dog. Should a situation come up, you then have the ability to regain control without having to grab the collar.
- Be sure to give all dogs individual attention.

**Dog to Cat Introductions:**

- Never leave the foster dog alone with your cat.
- Provide places for your cat to hide and jump onto in each room of the house.
- Have a "dog-free" zone in the house so the cat can relax- this should contain the food and litter box.
- Make sure the foster dog does not have access to the cats food and litter box.
- Leave the leash on your foster dog in order to prevent chasing or roughhousing.
- Allow time for your cat to adjust. Cats are environmentally sensitive and get stressed easy. Try to keep interactions between the two calm.
BODY LANGUAGE
The guide to knowing what they're feeling!

Frightened
The dog's tail is tucked, back is hunched and they are cowering.

Relaxed
The dog is relaxed and loose. He is focused on you, but not hyper attentive.

Threatened
The dog is displaying her teeth and making direct eye contact- she is warning you away.

Play Bow
This dog is trying to incite you or another dog to play by getting low and putting his butt up in the air!

Alert
This dog is listening to you- whether waiting for a command, or for a snack!

Nervous
Lip-licking is a sign of stress- Evaluate if the dog has just eaten, or if this is a sign of nerves.

Needs Space
The "Whale Eyes" - whites visible is a look that says "stay back"! This is a warning that the dog is uncomfortable.

Friendly
This dog has soft eyes, neutral ears, a fluid relaxed body and movement

Anxious
This dog is yawning- but not from being tired! Dogs are known for yawning in times of stress.
Tips for Taking Great Photos

The picture is the first thing a person sees on our website! If the pet has a poor photo, visitors may move on without reading a dog's description! If you want to give your foster dog the best chance possible, taking large, clear, high resolution photos will surely help!

1. Take a lot of digital pictures. If you don't have a digital camera or camera phone, you can contact the Foster Coordinator to see if a photo shoot can be arranged.
2. Pictures taken outside in natural light are much better than those taken inside or with a flash. Lighting is important in capturing a dog's detail and coloring.
3. Use treats, toys or make strange noises to make your foster dog face the camera and capture a full-face image. It is also helpful to make the dog sit first, then capture their attention.

Tips for Writing Great Bios!

Accentuate the positive and let potential adopters know why they should consider your foster dog

You will improve your dog's chances at finding their forever home with just a few key strokes! Send in notes and bios about your foster dog to the Foster Care Coordinator so they can add them to the pet's record and their website profile!

Tell potential adopters what you know about your foster dog. Do they like rope toys or fetch? Are they house trained or still working on it? Love other pets in the home, or need to be the one and only? Be honest, but positive when describing your foster pup. It is always helpful to highlight why someone would want to bring the dog into their home.

Help get your foster a forever home!

When fostering a dog for N.E.A.S., you can be that pet's advocate! Clear notes, and great photographs really help us advertise and promote your foster dog!
Dog Socialization

It may be that you end up with a foster puppy or dog who is in their critical socialization window, or you may be fostering an older dog who may not have had the best socialization when younger. Please let us know if you experience any behavioral issues with your foster. Our Behavior Team is here to help you. Here is some basic information you may find helpful.

Signs of Stress:
Many people are aware of some of the signs of stress in a dog, but there are many other more subtle signs that will help you communicate with your new foster dog.

Commonly Known Signs of Stress:
- Tucked tail
- Cowering
- Shaking
- Growling

Less Commonly Known Signs of Stress:
- Urine Marking
- Shedding
- Licking lips and/or nose
- Yawning when not tired
- Panting
- Pinned ears
- Refusal of food

Avoidance Behaviors:
- Turning head away
- Looking away
- Excessive sniffing
- Inattention/aloofness
- Licking

Watch Out, You’ve Gone Too Far Signs
- Freezing
- Freezing in combination with “whale eye” when the dog looks at you out of the corner of it's eye and you can see the whites of the eye.
- Growling in combination with freezing and/or whale eye.

When experiencing these signs, please allow the dog to make the first moves and allow time for them to adjust.
Pregnant/Nursing

How to set up a room for expecting mothers:
It is important for the mother to have a safe, separate, quiet, calm room for her to give birth and relax in the days leading up to birth. A “whelping box” could be a box with a side cut out and made comfy, an airline crate missing the top, or a kiddie pool. Let us know if you need help making the mom her own peaceful oasis!

What To Expect When Your Expecting:

Signs of Labor
When your momma starts to do any of these things, she may be near labor!
- restless pacing
  - panting
- loss of appetite
- scrabbling in her bed
- frequent urination
- vaginal discharge

Signs of Distress
*If your foster displays these signs, please contact the shelter*
- resting or restless for more than 2 hours after a baby is delivered and you think there may be more babies on the way
- Foul smelling odor or excessive bloody vaginal discharge
  - The new mother is excessively tired or vomiting

Emergency Medical Numbers
Priority Shelter Line- 978-745-9888X91
Clinic Extension-999-999-999X99
Clinic Manager (for emergencies)- 999-999-9999

Pregnancy Duration: Dogs: 58-69 Days

Feeling overwhelmed and need more information? Reach out to the Foster Coordinator!
Puppies, Puppies, Puppies!

**Nipping:** Is a common behavior, but not one we want to encourage! If the puppy is nipping, please redirect with a toy to show them the correct way to play with their humans! This skill will help them adjust into their new homes!

**Socializing:** Is a very important part of raising puppies! At appropriate ages they will need to be exposed to certain stimuli. Please see additional handouts for specific guidelines. It important to make sure the puppies are receiving enough play time and being handled often!

**Limit Exposure:** Since the puppies are not fully vaccinated, it is important to avoid dog parks, pet stores, at other spaces that may house illnesses.

**Chewing:** Is a necessary behavior with puppies. Provide puppies with lots of appropriate choices to chew on (No real bones, antlers or rawhide) and replace anything you find him chewing on with a safe choice. Puppies do chew and need this activity.

**Adoring Public:** We understand wanting to show off your new foster puppies! They're cute and sweet! We do ask that fosters avoid showing them off or posting them on social media until they are six weeks old due to viability and for requests for adoption. Double check when taking new fosters home!

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A Common Puppy Schedule:

6:00 Am- Outside bathroom break  
7:00 am- Breakfast  
7:30- Bathroom Break  
8:00 Play time  
9:00 Bathroom Break  
9-12- Rest Time  
12- Bathroom Break then lunch  
12:30- Bathroom Break  
1:00 Playtime  
2-4:00 Rest Time  
4:00 Bathroom Break  
5:00 Dinner  
5:30 Bathroom Break  
6-7:00 Rest Time  
7-9:00 Playtime  
9:00 Bathroom Break  
9:30 Bedtime
Training Tips!

Crate Training:

When used properly, the crate can be a helpful tool for house training, as well as a place your dog likes to hang out in! A crate should always be large enough for the dog to stand and turn around and to sit up without hitting their head.

Crate Do's: Make the crate a positive place. You may need to leave treats to lead the dog into the crate. Leave the door open while home, but whenever puppies or un-house trained dogs cannot be supervised, they should be in the crate to help avoid accidents and messes.

Crate Don't's: Don't force the dog into the crate or use the crate as a punishment tool. You should never leave puppies in the crate for more than 3 hours, and adults no more than 6 hours.

Jumping:

Jumping up on people is an inappropriate greeting behavior and should not be encouraged. By working on this in a foster home, this will help the puppy or dog learn manners that will help them get adopted! If your foster dog is jumping up, ignore them, stand still, fold your arms and look away. Once your dog has all four feet on the floor, acknowledge and praise them. You may need days of practicing this for you to see a change.

Mouthing:

Dogs often play with their mouths! If your dog is nipping, have a toy handy to show them that they should chew on that and not you. Do not scold or yell. Most pups have no clue what the word "No" means! If your foster dog is playing too roughly, take breaks and stop playtime until they settle down.

Always feel welcome to reach out to the Foster Care Coordinator with any concerns or for more tips and tricks!
Field Trips

*Please note that in order to take a dog on a field trip, you must be approved by our Behavior Team and been handling NEAS dogs for more than 60 Hours.

**Process:**

If you are interested in taking a specific dog on a field trip, please contact the Foster Care Coordinator to verify that the dog is available and review the dogs behavior needs. Dogs are available for field trips during regular shelter hours 10-7 M-F and 10-5 S-S.

*Please don't forget to fill out a field trip agreement and grab an Adopt Me vest or bandana to draw attention to the lucky pup during your outing!

**Situations**

**If a Dog Bite Occurs:** Call 911 if the situation calls for it. Obtain the name, address, telephone number of the person(s)/animal(s) involved. Contact the Shelter and ask to speak to a Director, Manager, or Supervisor. When you return, check in to make sure a bite report has been filled out.

**If Someone is Interested in Adopting:** Only speak to what you have observed about the dog. Refrain from making any promises. Explain they should follow up by calling the Shelter to speak with an Adoption Counselor!

**If the NEAS Dog Runs Away:** Refrain from chasing or calling after the dog. Note exact location of where the dog ran and call the shelter immediately.

**Rules for Field Trips Include:**

1. Dogs must remain on leash at all time.
2. Don't Initiate Dog-to-Dog interactions, and keep a reasonable distance away from the to avoid it.
3. Always bring water, waste bags, and a copy of the dog's rabies certificate.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q. IS IT HARD TO GIVE THE FOSTER DOG BACK?
A. It can be. Think of fostering like babysitting. You know going into it that you can’t keep the children you are caring for. Fostering is no different! You can rest easy knowing that you’ve been a monumental part of their life and they will find a wonderful new home!

Q. HELP! MY FOSTER IS NERVOUS!
A. Allow time for adjustment. It normally takes 3 days or longer for a dog to settle. This can show in nervous pacing, barking, crying and can make the process feel overwhelming at times. Being patience can allow a dog time to settle and adjust into their environment. If this behavior persists, reach out to the Foster Care Coordinator!

Q. HOW LONG DOES EACH ANIMAL STAY IN FOSTER CARE?
A. Each situation is different! Our foster needs range from a day or two, or until the pet is adopted which can take several weeks!

Q. WHAT IF MY FOSTER PET BECOMES SICK?
A. Northeast Animal Shelter covers the dog’s medical bills. The pet must be seen by our veterinarian. Emergency care must be approved by a NEAS representative. If you have any concern about your foster dog, please contact your foster coordinator before taking the animal to the vet.

Q. CAN I ADOPT MY FOSTER?
A. Yes, if you decide this is your forever friend, we encourage you to adopt! Let the Foster Care Coordinator know at the earliest time to avoid us posting the pet for adoption.

Q. MY FRIEND/ COWORKER/ NEIGHBOR WANTS TO ADOPT MY FOSTER! IS THIS ALLOWED?
A. Yes. Please have them contact the Foster Care Coordinator to start the adoption process. Please note no guarantees are made.
CONGRATULATIONS

YOU DID IT!

Your foster dog has been adopted! You've found them a wonderful new home! The staff at Northeast Animal Shelter greatly appreciate your time, energy and dedication. You are helping to save lives.

Please let us know if there's anything we can do to make fostering easier and more rewarding. On behalf of all the pets and staff, we thank you!