

# Happily Ever After – Thanks to You!



♥ Foster a Furry Friend

♥ Part time / Foster-share

♥ Pet Pal – *Big Brother* a pup



Join the fun SPCA volunteers

♥ This love doesn't cost a thing ♥

♥ ♥ ♥ supplies, food & vet provided ♥ ♥ ♥



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Free training ♥ Friendly support ♥ No depressing kennels

[www.CentralCoastSPCA.petfinder.com](http://www.CentralCoastSPCA.petfinder.com)

# Central Coast SPCA

## Saving One Life At A Time

### Foster/ Pet Pal Handbook



Thank you for volunteering as a Foster/Pet Pal. You are helping save the life of an abused, neglected or homeless pet. By placing these pets in foster homes and with Pet Pals, they are better socialized, better trained and more likely to find a wonderful forever home. So thank you again for your kindness and caring.

#### **Getting Started**

You submitted your survey form, attended the “Meet & Greet” get-together and signed your Foster contract. The home check was completed.

Finally a “foster baby” meeting your criteria is rescued, evaluated, taken to the vet, and temperament tested. He (she) may spend a few days with a Foster Coordinator for further evaluation or medical care. At last that phone call that your “foster baby” is ready if you are!

CCSPCA will supply background information, feeding/care instructions, collar, harness, leash, crate, Frontline, training and veterinary care. Toys, blankets and beds are often donated. Most foster homes supply their own food. If needed, CCSPCA will provide the food.

### **Bringing Home “Baby”**

The best time to bring a new pet home is when you have several quiet days you can devote to helping him adjust. Plan to show him the ropes: introduce him to your home, show him where he’ll sleep, establish a walk and potty-break routine, and get him familiar with your family.



“Puppy proof” your home even if you are fostering an adult dog. Some dogs have never had a toy so they will think anything on the floor is “fair game”. Place breakables and valuable items high out of reach. Make trash cans inaccessible. Push items beyond “counter surfing” reach. Double check that your fence is secure and that toxins like antifreeze, lighter fluid, tulip bulbs and chocolate are inaccessible. (See our surprising list in back).

If you are the first foster home the pet is introduced to, you will need to give him a few days to get relaxed with his new environment. As tempting as it is to rush him out to PetsMart and friends' homes, it is best to give a few quiet days to know his foster family and their routine. After a day or two, begin introducing him to new people and places.

If you're the second or third foster home, then by all by all means go "hog wild" with introducing him to the joys of the world!

### **Establish Family Rules & Routines**

Introduce the foster to your routine. Dogs thrive on order and feel secure knowing what is expected of them. Decide ahead of time whether the foster dog is allowed on furniture (never, only with permission, or freely). Decide where the dog will sleep (in a dog bed, crated or in your bed). As the foster home, all these are your choices. Your foster share partner may have different rules at their home but the foster dog will soon understand the rules for each and how they apply.

If you have pets, it is important to keep your routine as regular as possible. A Foster Coordinator may help with the introductions of your pets and the new foster

kid. Remember that you should always feed, pet, leash, etc. your dog/s first – before the foster dog. The foster dog needs to understand that he is loved but that your pet comes first. This will help reduce jealousy and reassure your dog that his position in the family is secure.

### **“Oops” Happens**

Even when the rescue dog is house trained, the upheaval of a new home can cause him to temporarily regress. When he first arrives, immediately show him where to potty and praise/treat him when he goes.

Expect some accidents initially but react calmly without punishing. If you catch the dog “in the act”, say “oh-oh” and take the dog outside to where they should potty. Initially take him outside often. Praise the dog, at least for the first couple of days, when he goes potty outside. (See Positive Training Guide/Housetraining).

### **Waaah – Don’t Leave Me!**

Some rescues suffered trauma and neglect. Even well loved pets, when in a new and



strange environment, can become insecure when alone. Separation anxiety can be mild (barking and whining) to severe (where left alone too long they cause damage or hurt themselves).

With a new foster it is a good idea to do some short practice departures to ascertain the dog's anxiety level when alone. Slowly increase the time that the dog is alone.

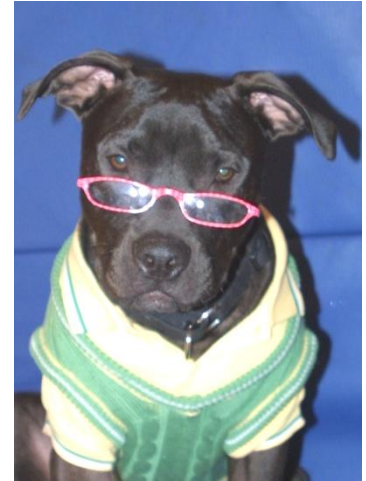
Never crate a dog with separation anxiety. Crating a dog may work fine with a secure, well adjusted dog but can be horribly traumatic for a dog suffering from separation anxiety. Gating off a room is a better option.

It may help is give the dog a chew toy, a Kong stuffed with treats, turn on the radio or TV, and provide exercise prior to leaving him alone. Some vets recommend dog-appeasing pheromones to help decrease anxiety (at most pet stores). Request a Pet Pal to spend time with your foster.

Remember to unplug any electrical chords when not supervising a puppy or dog with separation anxiety.

## Good Stuff Is Earned

CCSPCA uses only positive behavioral training methods as recommended by Cummings Veterinary School of Medicine at Tufts University and Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. We DO NOT use out-dated, ineffective punishment based training.



Review the CCSPCA Positive Training Guide and contact our in-house trainer to assist you with any behavior or training issues. Good training takes kind, patient and consistent guidance. Remember that it is easiest to correct behavior early – so don't wait to call.

**Leash Training** is often done incorrectly. Too many trainers are teaching out-dated, ineffective and harmful methods of leash training – choke chains, prong collars and the “jerk or snap method”. (See Positive Training Guide/Leash Training).

Veterinary experts recommend that dogs be walked by a harness as it does not cause pressure on the spine or damage the trachea. CCSPCA recommends the Gentle Leader Easy Walk Harness as this is a gentle and effective way to teach a dog not to pull.

Punishment based equipment – prong collars, choke chains and shock collars- are strictly prohibited.

### **Manners For Mutts**

Even though the foster dog loves your dog/s, they should not be left alone unsupervised.



Your foster pet must be harnessed and leashed when out in public. Although we temperament test our rescues, it is not a guarantee that a dog will like all other dogs. Before introducing the foster to another dog, ask the owner if their dog is friendly and if it is ok that they meet. If male, make sure their dog is neutered.

Do not introduce the foster dog to an unneutered male or unspayed female. Dogs are highly in tune to scents. Unneutered males can “smell aggressive” even if they are friendly. Even the scent of an unneutered male on a female dog can cause aggressive behavior.

Although we highly encourage socialization for the foster dog with other friendly dogs, it is not recommended that foster dogs be taken to dog parks.

Too often there are unneutered or aggressive dogs present with inattentive owners. In crowded situations dogs may engage in aggressive pack behavior.

Socialize your foster with friends, new locations, other homes and outings. When at an outdoor café, bring a blanket so that he learns where he is to lay calmly.

When going for car rides, make sure that the windows are not rolled down so far that he might accidentally (or intentionally) fall out. Initially leave him for only short periods of time (5 minutes or less) and make sure that you have parked somewhere shaded, safe with windows slightly open.

**The 411 On 911**

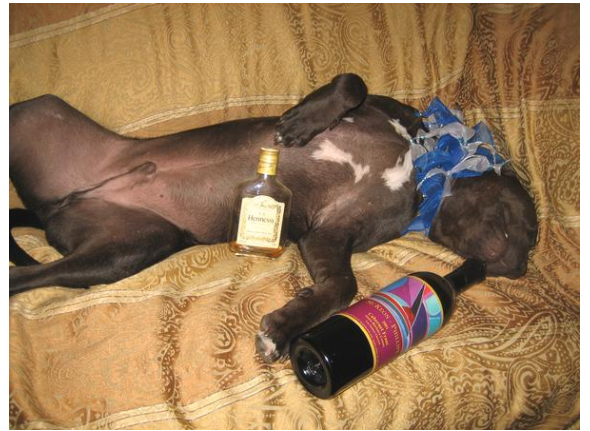
If your foster pet is showing any signs of illness, lethargy, limping, occasionally vomiting, loose stools or any other minor ailment, **you will be given an emergency phone number to call.** Be sure to tell your foster share buddy of any suspected problems or symptoms. Do not administer any medical treatment, until you have consulted with your foster coordinator, and they will schedule an appointment with the appropriate vet.

**In case of a medical emergency, (severe diarrhea, excessive vomiting, seizures, potential poisoning, accident or trauma) you will be given a 24-hr number and they will coordinate immediate veterinary treatment.**

**Prior authorization is needed for you to be reimbursed for veterinary expenses.**

### No Brewski For Bowser

You would be surprised at what can be toxic to dogs. Chocolate, caffeine, alcohol, pain medication, flower bulbs, macadamia nuts, grapes, raisins, onions, garlic, and Xylitol (the sugar-free substance found in gums and candies) are a few examples. A larger list of toxic substances and plants is provided in the back of this handbook. For a complete list, go to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control website at [www.asPCA.org](http://www.asPCA.org) .



### Pet Poisoning

Don't panic. Rapid response is important, but panicking can interfere with the process of helping your pet.

Take 30 to 60 seconds to collect any material involved. This may be of great benefit to the vet to determine what poison/poisons are involved. Be sure to take the product's container with you to the vet. Also, collect in a sealable plastic bag any material the pet may have vomited or chewed.

If you witness the pet consuming material that you suspect might be toxic, **call your emergency contact**, even if you do not notice any adverse effects. Sometimes, even if poisoned, an animal may appear normal for several hours or for days after the incident.

Your Foster Coordinator may have you call the Animal Poison Control Center - (888) 426-4435 – or you may be requested to take the pet immediately to a designated vet.

Be ready with the following information:

- the species, breed, age, sex, and weight
- the animal's symptoms
- information regarding the exposure, including the agent (if known), the amount of the agent involved and the time elapsed since the time of exposure.

*Have the product container/packaging available for reference.*

## **2 and 4 Legged Guests**

A Foster Coordinator may arrange a visit to check the progress of your foster pet. You also may be contacted when coordinating a visit with a potential adoptee. Adoptee visits are usually done at the home of the Foster Coordinator but can be done in your home if you prefer.

Finding Fido? In case of adoption or veterinary appointments, be sure to inform your Foster Coordinator if you swap your pet with your foster share partner.

If an unexpected emergency arises, first contact your foster share buddy to see if they are available. If your foster buddy is unavailable, contact your Foster Coordinator. Do not leave your pet with anyone who is not a CCSPCA foster as they must complete the CCSPCA foster contract and be approved prior.

## **Part Time Pet = Full Time Fun**

Foster share is fun! It's great to have a buddy to share funny (and perhaps not so funny) pet stories with. A foster buddy provides the pet with confidence to handle new experiences and people. It gives you more freedom.

You and your foster buddy will want to let each other know of any problems, concerns, training, and

routines. We have found that good communication results in incredible success in training and adoptability of the foster. So be sure to swap phone #s, email addresses and wacky pet stories.



### **My Achy Breaky Heart**

What a joy knowing you saved a life and helped a deserving pet get his forever home. But what about the heart break? By sharing your “baby” with another foster home, it helps adjust to the idea of giving him over to another person that you trust.

If you want (it is your choice), you can be involved in the adoption interview process and even the home check. You have important input for his new family. Often the forever family will stay in touch, sending photos, cards and even inviting the foster family over for get-togethers or play-dates. Fostering and Pet Pal is a great way to make new friends.

If it is simply “luuuuuuv”, you can always apply to adopt your foster cuddle bug 😊

## **A Poison Safe Home**

### **Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Pet**

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocado
- Chocolate (all forms)
- Coffee (all forms)
- Fatty foods
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Yeast dough
- Garlic
- Products sweetened with xylitol
- Salt
- Onions, onion powder
- Raisins and grapes

### **Warm Weather Hazards**

- Animal toxins—toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions
- Blue-green algae in ponds
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles Fertilizers
- Flea products
- Outdoor plants and plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Fly baits containing methomyl
- Slug and snail baits containing metaldehyde

### **Medication**

Human medications that can be lethal to pets, even in small doses, include:

- Pain killers
- Cold medicines
- Anti-cancer drugs
- Antidepressants
- Vitamins
- Diet Pills

### **Common Household Hazards**

#### **Cold Weather Hazards**

- Antifreeze
- Liquid potpourri
- Rat and mouse bait
- Fabric softener sheets
- Toilet bowl cleaners
- Mothballs
- Electrical cords – Batteries

**Hazardous Plants – Partial List**  
**Complete list at [www.aspca.org](http://www.aspca.org)**

**\* Indicates potentially fatal**

**A**

- [Aloe](#)
- Almond\*
- [Andromeda Japonica](#)\*
- Anthurium\*
- [Avocado](#)\*
- [Azalea](#) \*

**B**

- Begonia\*
- Bleeding Heart\*

**C**

- [Caladium](#)\*
- [Calla Lily](#)\*
- [Castor Bean](#)\*
- [Cycads](#)\*
- [Cyclamen](#)\*

**D**

- Dracaena (various varieties)
- Dieffenbachia (various)

**E**

- Elderberry\*

**F**

- [Foxglove](#)\*
- Fern (various varieties)

**G**

- Garlic \*

**H**

- [Heavenly Bamboo](#)\*
- Hemp\*
- [Hydrangea](#)\*

**I**

- Ivy (various varieties)

**J**

- Jack-in-the-Pulpit\*
- Jimson Weed\*

**K**

- [Kalanchoe](#)\*

**L**

- Lantana\*
- [Lily of the Valley](#)\*
- Lily (various varieties)\*

**M**

- [Macadamia Nut](#)\*
- [Marijuana](#)\*
- [Mistletoe "American"](#)  
(berries)\*
- Milkweed\*
- Monkshood\*
- [Morning Glory](#)\*

**O**

- [Oleander](#)\*
- [Onion](#)\*

**P**

- Peach\*
- Pencil Cactus/Plant\*
- Philodendron (various varieties)
- [Precatory Bean](#)\*

**R**

- [Rhododendron](#) \*

**S**

- [Sago Palm](#)\*

**T**

- Tomato (leaves and stem)

**Y**

- [Yew](#) (aka [Japanese Yew](#))\*

# Central Coast SPCA Pet Foster Application

Please list husband and wife names, if applicable.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Other adults in household (list full name and occupation for each) \_\_\_\_\_

Number and ages of children \_\_\_\_\_

Pets in household (list age, sex and breed for each) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to foster a kitten, cat, puppy or dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the age or sex of the animal make a difference to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any prior experience you have taking care of animals: \_\_\_\_\_

Who will feed, exercise and train the cat/dog? \_\_\_\_\_ Who will socialize the cat/dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Where will the cat/dog sleep at night? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours will the cat/dog be alone each day? \_\_\_\_\_ Where will it spend this time? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will take care of the cat/dog in your absence (vacations, emergencies)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a veterinarian? Phone and address?  
(CC SPCA will pay for any necessary medical treatment.) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live in an apartment, condo, single family house, acreage, other? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you rent? If so, do you have written permission to have a cat/dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord's name, address and phone? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your yard and fence. (Pool? Fenced or unfenced?) \_\_\_\_\_

May we visit your home before and during your foster care? \_\_\_\_\_

Does anyone in your home have allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

How long are you willing to foster a cat/dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your household supportive of fostering? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments and Questions \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***By signing and submitting this form, I understand that sending this application does not automatically entitle me to be a foster. I understand that this application is just a beginning step in the interview process.***

**CCSPCA, Inc.**

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