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Taking Your New Foster Dog Home

Congratulations on caring for your new foster dog. We have prepared this list to help you and your new foster dog adjust to living together. Please remember that you, your family, and your home, are all very new to your foster dog; allowing your foster dog the time to adjust is imperative if you hope to achieve a happy experience for both of you. This list was made as a guideline for you to follow – if any questions should arise that are not covered by this list, please feel free to contact us at Shetland Sheepdog Placement Services of New Jersey. Please remember that it is crucial that you contact us immediately at the slightest hint of a problem. The most effective way to alleviate a potentially serious situation is to address the issue at its earliest onset. The dog's adjustment to your home should get a little better each day. Call us immediately if any problem arises that gets worse instead of better. An inappropriate behavior should not be repeated...remember to ask for our help.

- ◆ Introduce your new foster dog to the resident dog on neutral territory. Do not have a group of people standing around...just you and your new foster dog, and another person and your present dog. Talk calmly and don't attempt to hurry the introduction.
- ◆ Go for a walk together (one person for each dog) and make sure that each person is focusing on the dog that they are handling. Take treats and reward appropriate behavior. DO NOT make verbal or physical corrections for inappropriate behavior, and make sure that you do not pull back on the dog's leash.
- ◆ When you feel comfortable enough to go into your home with both dogs do so naturally – do not anticipate any problem.
- ◆ Bring your foster dog into your home and leave him/her to explore at his/her own pace. Do not show your foster dog around, your foster dog will investigate the home when s/he feels comfortable doing so.
- ◆ Until you feel comfortable, keep the dog's leashes on in the house. This can be helpful if you need to separate them for a short "time out".
- ◆ Do not feed the dogs together. Each dog should have their own dish and each dish should be placed on opposite ends of the room when they eat. Do not allow the dogs to investigate the other dog's food dish. Once the meal is over, pick up the dishes. Never feed the dogs without supervision. Crating your new foster dog when they eat is recommended.
- ◆ Do not leave the dogs alone together until you are completely comfortable with their acceptance of each other. Use a crate and be safe.



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- ◆ Do not allow either dog to mount the other in the beginning. Mounting is not sexual – it can be caused by nervousness, dominance, or can simply be play behavior. Divert the behavior by calling the dogs to you, ask them to sit in an upbeat tone of voice, and then give them a treat. Do not yell at the dogs or attempt to separate them by grabbing the dog's collar. This could trigger an altercation.
- ◆ Do not have guests come to the home to meet the new foster dog.
- ◆ Do not grab at, push, or pull your foster dog.
- ◆ Do not grab your foster dog's collar.
- ◆ Keep your home calm and quiet.
- ◆ If you have children, do not allow them to bring their friends to the house until the dog is adjusted.
- ◆ Never leave a child alone with your foster dog.
- ◆ When taking your foster dog for a walk, do not grab at the dog's collar. Talk to your foster dog, and remain calm. Asking him/her to sit in an upbeat tone of voice before attaching the leash is recommended.
- ◆ Set a routine for feeding and for outside time with your foster dog and stick to it.
- ◆ Do not shake your finger, hand or any object at your foster dog.
- ◆ Do not corner your foster dog – always give him/her an escape route.
- ◆ Do not yell at anyone in the house, including and especially the foster dog.
- ◆ If your foster dog is going to sleep with you, talk to him/her when you are getting into bed.
- ◆ If you get up during the night, talk to the foster dog – announce yourself. Your foster dog can startle easily during these first few days. It is a good idea to leave a light on in the house so if you get up during the night, your foster dog can more quickly identify you.
- ◆ Do not rough-house play with your foster dog.
- ◆ Keep a running dialog going with your foster dog whenever possible. The more your foster dog hears your voice, the more your foster dog will look forward to hearing it. Always talk to your foster dog in a pleasant tone of voice.
- ◆ If your foster dog gets overly excited during play, stop the playing. Allow your foster dog to calm down and re-group.
- ◆ Shelties can make lots of noise during play, growling and barking being only part of the noise. Listen to your foster dog. You will know his/her 'play' noises and his/her 'alert' noises. Learn to know the difference.
- ◆ Never challenge your foster dog. If your foster dog growls at you, remain calm, look away and turn



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your back on your foster dog....then call us IMMEDIATELY!

- ◆ Leave your foster dog alone when s/he is eating. Do not stand over him/her; do not attempt to put anything into his/her bowl. Do not attempt to pick up his/her dish while s/he is still next to it.
- ◆ Feed your foster dog in a low traffic area to avoid having people walking around when your foster dog is eating.
- ◆ Your new foster dog is under a great deal of stress. Stress causes dogs to drink more water and urinate more frequently. Remember to take your new dog outside many times throughout the day. Accidents are to be expected, so do NOT correct your dog if they relieve themselves in the house. CALL US IF YOUR FOSTER DOG HAS MORE THAN ONE ACCIDENT.
- ◆ Do not attempt to take a toy away from your new foster dog. Allow the dog to bring it to you and always trade for something better.
- ◆ Young children should never be allowed to walk your foster dog. Another dog, squirrel, cat or car backfire can spook your foster dog, and your child could lose control of the lead.
- ◆ Call Shetland Sheepdog Placement Services of New Jersey IMMEDIATELY if your foster dog should ever get lost. We have many contacts in the dog community and can help relocate your foster dog.
- ◆ Do not take your new foster dog into crowded areas – i.e., malls, parks or stores.
- ◆ Do not take your new foster dog to a dog park.
- ◆ Always leave identification on your foster dog. A toll free NBR tag will be provided.
- ◆ Never leave your foster dog outside unattended.
- ◆ Never leave your home unless your foster dog is inside the house and safe.
- ◆ Never tether your foster dog and leave him/her unattended.
- ◆ Never leave anything on your foster dog's neck, including a collar, when your foster dog is in their crate – a collar can get caught on something and choke the dog.
- ◆ Never put two dogs in the same crate.
- ◆ Your new foster dog will be looking to you for guidance. A calm and easy introduction to your family will make your new foster dog feel welcome and unafraid.
- ◆ Talk calmly and confidently to your new foster dog, using his/her name whenever possible.
- ◆ NEVER use any type of aversive training collars on your dog such as a choke, prong, or electric shock. Should your dog pull on the leash give us a call and we will give you some positive tips
- ◆ Always divert undesirable behavior in a positive manner. A useful tool is to condition your dog/s to come to you when you shake a plastic food container filled with yummy bite-sized treats (no bigger



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than the size of a piece of kibble). As soon as you observe inappropriate behavior, shake the container (dog/s come running to you), ask the dog/s to sit, praise with your words, and give a flavorful treat. REMEMBER, you must first teach the dog/s to come to you when they hear the sound of shaking treats. You cannot expect to get their attention when they are over-stimulated unless they are conditioned to respond to the sound when things are calm.