

FOSTERING and DOG-SITTING with New Rattitude

New Rattitude offers a “dog-sitting” option as an alternative to formal fostering, so that people for whom fostering would be difficult can still help New Rattitude by caring for dogs with minimal commitment. The primary difference between foster parents and dog-sitters is NOT in the length of time they would be caring for the dog, but rather in the person’s level of responsibility and on-going commitment. The distinction between these two roles is as follow:

- **INTERVIEW:** Both foster parents and dog-sitters go through a screening process that includes an interview. However, since dog-sitters only provide care for any particular dog on a short-term basis, and that dog will always be the responsibility of an approved New Rattitude foster parent who is fully responsible for all aspects of the dog’s care, the interview for a dog-sitter is less extensive.
- **HOME VISIT:** Both dog-sitters and foster parents provide physical care for the dogs, so both require a Home Visit to establish the safety and security of the physical property.
- **FOSTER PARENT TRAINING:** All prospective foster parents, even those who only intend to foster on a short-term “temp” basis, go through foster parent training (approx. 1-2 hours by phone and computer simultaneously) to learn our policies, procedures, structure, and expectations. Dog-sitters do not go through foster parent training.
- **COMMITMENT:** Prospective foster parents submit a Foster Parent Commitment form to acknowledge their foster parent expectations and responsibilities. Dog-sitters do not submit a Commitment form.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Foster parents select the dog they wish to foster and are then responsible for all aspects of the dog’s care throughout the time the dog is in their custody. This includes ensuring that the dog is vetted, transported, and promoted according to New Rattitude policies. Dog-sitters are responsible only for the physical care and safety of the dog; they are not authorized to seek vet care, incur expenses, get reimbursed for expenses, submit a profile, or handle any of the other admin responsibilities. Foster parents cannot expect or authorize dog-sitters to take on admin tasks for which they have not been trained and approved. Because dog-sitters are not able to handle a dog’s administrative or medical needs, it is often not feasible for New Rattitude to use dog-sitters who are not located in close proximity to a New Rattitude foster parent.
- **RESOURCE ACCESS:** Foster parents have full access to a restricted area of our website that offers a wide range of resources, reports, forms, and records. Foster parents are also eligible for various programs, such as dog training classes. Dog-sitters do not have access to the foster parent-specific area of our website nor are they eligible for these programs.
- **LENGTH OF TIME COMMITMENT:** The need for a “temp” placement for a dog may be in the transition between shelter and foster home, between foster homes, or between foster home and adoptive home, or it may be while the foster parent is away on a trip. It will usually be between 1 and 14 days. The length of the temp period for any particular dog should be determined before the foster parent or dog-sitter is asked for a commitment to help. For foster parents, there is no particular minimum or maximum time for such a temping situation; whatever timing is worked out between the temping foster parent and the destination foster parent is fine. For dog-sitters, the length of the dog’s stay depends on the dog’s status. In cases of a new dog that has not yet landed in an approved foster home so is not yet up-to-date with vetting and other administration, dog-sitting is limited to no more than 2 days. Dogs that have already been in a New Rattitude foster home and are up-to-date administratively may stay with a dog-sitter for up to 2 weeks, or in certain circumstances sometimes even longer.

SUMMARY

	<u>Foster Parent</u>		<u>Dog-sitter</u>
Requires Interview:	Yes, comprehensive		Yes, general
Requires Home Visit:	Yes		Yes
Requires foster parent training:	Yes		No
Submits Foster Parent Commitment:	Yes		No
Care commitment*:	<u>“Destination”</u>	<u>Temp</u>	Short-term temp only
Length of Time:	Until adoption	Variable	Generally 1-14 days
Gets to select/name the dog:	Yes	No	No
Takes dog to veterinarian:	Yes	Maybe	No
Is eligible for expense reimbursement:	Yes	Yes	No
Handles admin (e.g. uploading dog’s shelter paperwork)	Yes	Maybe	No
Submits dog’s web profile:	Yes	Maybe	No
Communicates with applicants:	Yes	Seldom	No
Responsible for dog’s training:	Yes	Maybe	No
Has access to NR on-line resources:	Yes	Yes	No
Is eligible for programs**:	Yes	Yes	No

*For foster parents, determined by the foster parent on a dog-by-dog basis.

**Training reimbursement, boarding reimbursement, food stipends, BMod, Behavioral Aid loans, etc.