Foster Home Handbook: Safety & Responsibilities

FOSTER FAMILIES

Your role

Provide a safe, stable home; follow the dog-specific care plan; observe accurately; communicate promptly; and help the dog gain confidence. This handbook supplements—not replaces—the executed foster agreement.

Safe confinement when unattended

A secure crate, dog-proofed room, or properly secured exercise pen is acceptable if suited to the dog's size, mobility, medical condition, and behavior. Never use confinement as punishment or force a dog through panic. Keep children out of the dog's safe space. Separate resident pets when unsupervised unless GNR approves a specific plan.

First days

Limit visitors, dog parks, pet stores, busy events, and unplanned introductions. Use secure equipment and a predictable routine. Do not assume a dog's behavior in the shelter predicts their behavior at home.

Other pets

Start with separation. Introduce dogs gradually, ideally with two adult handlers and parallel walks when suitable. Feed separately; remove high-value items; never leave newly introduced pets unsupervised. Keep cats and small pets safely separated until an individualized plan supports progress.

Children

An adult must actively supervise every interaction. No hugging, climbing, chasing, cornering, disturbing sleep, reaching into a crate, or approaching food/chews. If supervision lapses, separate physically.

Humane handling

Use reward-based training. Do not hit, intimidate, alpha-roll, punish growling, or use pain-based training tools. Respect avoidance and requests for space. Report resource guarding, bites, escalating fear, or distress promptly.

Escape prevention

Use well-fitted leash and harness/collar as directed; double-check doors and gates. No off-leash activity in unsecured spaces. Do not leave dogs unattended in yards. Follow dog-specific flight-risk precautions.

Medical care

Give only prescribed or GNR-approved medications exactly as directed. Never change doses or give human medicines without veterinary authorization. Observe eating, drinking, toileting, activity, wounds, and pain. For emergencies, seek immediate veterinary help and notify GNR according to the care plan.

Communication

Document behavior factually without assigning labels unsupported by observations. Never promise a dog is safe with cats, children, or dogs without approved evidence. Notify GNR promptly of injury, bites, escape, illness, or placement concerns.

Custody and outings

Do not transfer the dog to another caregiver, board, travel, or arrange introductions or adoption meetings outside GNR's approved process. Consult your foster agreement for specific permissions.

GNR contacts and policy details

Official contact channels: _____

After-hours emergency instructions: _____

Veterinary approval and spending limits: _____

Reporting deadlines: _____

Transport permissions: _____

Foster agreement references: _____

Insert official contact channels, after-hours emergency instructions, veterinary approval/spending limits, reporting deadlines, transport permissions, and foster agreement references before issuing as binding policy.

operating standards

GNR's default reporting, veterinary, custody, isolation, and emergency standards are detailed in the companion Foster Operations Policy. This handbook and the policy should be provided together. No medical emergency should be delayed while awaiting financial approval.