

# Sinbad Sadie Second Chance Rescue



## Foster Handbook

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## **Welcome to our team of dedicated volunteers!**

We are so glad that you have come to us to foster! Because of our dedicated & caring foster families, our rescue is able to accomplish our mission to help homeless animals every day.

As a “foster-based” rescue organization, we prefer all our dogs live in foster homes as a “family member” while awaiting adoption. Our foster families open their hearts and homes to give these animals a chance at a new life so that others may experience the love, loyalty & companionship that only a cherished family pet can provide. In this Handbook, we'll address some common questions and how-to's that arise during fostering. We want you to have a wonderful and enjoyable foster experience!

## **Who we are?**

Sinbad Sadie Second Chance Rescue is a 501c3 non-profit all volunteer animal rescue working to reduce euthanasia of adoptable animals in South Carolina. At SSSCR we coordinate with area shelters to ease overcrowding and find loving, permanent homes for abandoned, abused and neglected animals.

To realize our mission we follow these guiding principles/ideals:

1. Every animal deserves a fair and thorough evaluation. Destroying an animal due to overpopulation of a certain breed or temporary temperament issues brought about due to the stressful conditions of shelter living or having been abused/neglected is unwarranted and inhumane.
2. Every animal waiting for a permanent home should be treated humanely with adequate opportunities for socialization, house training, and learning basic obedience skills.
3. Animals waiting for their forever homes should be housed in comfortable, homelike settings to ensure successful transition from adoptee to adopted.

## SSSCR Board

Kym Long Wallace – President

Will Russel - Treasurer

Lori Nebel - Secretary

Andrew Shepard – Legal Counsel

Peter Nebel – Board Member

Heidi Kuzniak – Board Member

Angela Gast– Board Member

## Foster Care Objective

The objective of foster care is to get a dog out of the pound/shelter, off the euthanasia list and into a (temporary) loving home, which gives us time to find the perfect forever home. Foster care also gives us a chance to really get to know the personalities of the dogs, and they do all have personalities! It also gives the dog an appropriate environment for learning and growth.

## Why are foster homes needed?

Without foster homes, we wouldn't exist. Unfortunately, there are more dogs in need of rescue than there is space, and a foster home environment is ideal over shelter location.

What animals are in need of foster homes?

-Puppies too young to be adopted

- An abused dog that needs socialization and tender loving care
- An injured dog that has had surgery and needs a safe place to recover
- An abandoned mother with a litter of puppies
- A pregnant dog
- Any animal in a shelter or Animal Control that is overcrowded and there's a chance they'll be put down just to make room (most of our animals fall into this category).

## **Fostering**

Dogs that most often need fostering are medium-to-large, adolescent, untrained dogs, and seniors. They may be overlooked at the shelter because they are too big, unruly or ordinary-looking. Adolescents are past the adorable puppy stage, but still have plenty of puppy energy that needs an outlet. Given time, and some basic training, these dogs that might have been euthanized for lack of space now have a chance at finding permanent, loving homes.

Aside from regular day-to-day care (feeding, grooming, exercise), the responsibilities of a foster home may include basic training (housetraining, walking on leash, sit, down); behavior modification (to correct problems such as jumping, mouthing, barking, destructive chewing); medical care (dispensing medication, taking the dog to SSSCR pre-arranged vet appointments) and of course plenty of playtime and snuggling!

After the dog has been nursed back to health, evaluated and trained, and vetted, the search begins for a forever home. We do post all of our dogs on Petfinder, Adoptapet.com, Facebook, and our website ([www.sinbadsadierescue.org](http://www.sinbadsadierescue.org)). The more people who meet your foster dog and hear the story, the faster they find a home.

Fostering a dog may seem like a formidable task, but it's a very real way to make a difference. Everyone benefits: The foster volunteer gets to spend time with a special dog, and the shelter gains a space for a new dog. The foster dog gets a

break from kennel life and a second chance at becoming a cherished pet. The new owners get a dog that is better adapted to home life, and therefore has a better chance of remaining in the new home permanently.

Any concerns that you have about your foster dog's behavior need to be brought to our attention. If there is a problem, contact us immediately. If you are having a behavior problem that you do not know how to fix, please allow us to give you some suggestions before "giving up" on your foster dog!

## **The Basics**

We look for people who are responsible, mature and dependable. We need people who love dogs, have the patience to deal with any situation that may occur, have the willingness to work with us to find these dogs homes, the responsibility to support our adoption process, and the compassion to provide the best possible homes to these dogs.

Fostering takes time, energy and love. Some dogs may only be with you for a few days. Others may be around for months. There's a good chance that you'll become emotionally attached to your foster dog, and that's not a bad thing. It shows that you care! But you do have to be ready to say goodbye when the dog finds his or her forever home. It's not easy, but there are many more lives out there that need your help.

You need to provide basic care: food, water, shelter, grooming, and exercise. Each dog needs a leash, collar, bowl and toys (we can loan these if needed and can get food donated if you need help with this cost). If a dog is sick, you might have to give medications or transport to vet appointments. The cost of vet care is provided by the rescue, and all arrangements must be made by us (once the dog is set up at the vet the foster parent can make appointments at his or her convenience). If you choose to take the dog to a vet without approval, or to your private vet, you will be responsible for the bill. We have made arrangements with vets who will treat our dogs at a reduced fee and using these vets makes it possible to afford to treat as many as possible.

It's important to provide some training. Housetraining is an essential skill for a dog to master. Crate training is useful especially for young, destructive or un-housetrained dogs. Basic manners such as appropriate greeting behavior, walking nicely on a leash and coming when called can make your foster dog more adoptable and help to ensure success in the new home.

By far the most important thing you need to provide is love and attention. Whether your foster came from a loving home or an abusive situation, he will probably be confused and anxious. Spend time cuddling, fetching, playing tug and just hanging out watching TV together. Be patient; it might take him a few days or weeks to really settle in. Every dog is different so every foster story will be different.

### The Foster Care Checklist

- All members of the household must be in agreement about opening the home to a foster dog
- Must agree to a home check upon the request of SSSCR
- Must provide shelter and water at all times
- Must agree to keep all household pets fully vaccinated
- Must agree to provide a nutritious diet to the foster
- Must agree to contact SSSCR for any medical difficulty
- Must agree to immediately report any bites, aggressive incidents or behavioral issues
- Must agree that all foster dogs are the property of SSSCR and must be relinquished upon request
- Must foster a dog until adopted or another foster home is available.

## **Housing your foster dog**

You will have to treat the new dog like a puppy at first. Puppy-proof the house before he/she arrives. If he/she is young or has not been raised in a house, he/she

might be destructive and not housetrained. You should set up a crate for him/her with bedding that can be easily cleaned or thrown away if soiled or chewed (like old towels). If you choose not to use a crate, you should have a small dog-safe room (like a laundry room) for when you cannot watch the dog.

## "Puppy-proof" your home

### Indoor hazards

- Know which plants are toxic and place them out of reach, or replace them with nontoxic plants. Toxic plants commonly found indoors include dieffenbachia, azalea, Calla lily and philodendron.
- Keep all medications in a safe area the puppy cannot access. Do not leave vitamins or other pills out on the kitchen counter or table. A determined chewer can make short work of a plastic container.
- Put trash cans up high or inside cabinets where your dog cannot get into them.
- Keep cleaning supplies in high cupboards or use childproof latches to secure lower cupboards. Remove the dog from the area when you are using liquid or spray cleaners. They can get into the eyes of a curious dog.
- Electrical cords are a danger to puppies who chew on them while playing. Tie up loose electrical cords and keep them out of sight.
- Any type of fire can be dangerous. Screen off fireplaces and wood stoves.
- Cords for drapery and blinds can cause strangulation. Tie up the excess cords or cut the loop in the cord.
- Swallowed clothing may cause a dangerous intestinal blockage. Keep socks, nylons, underwear and other clothing put away. Keep laundry baskets off the floor.
- Keep small objects (coins, jewelry, needles and thread, straight pins, yarn, dental floss, rubber bands, toys, etc.) out of reach. Jewelry and coins are easily swallowed and can contain metals that are toxic.

- Be careful about closing doors as you walk through---your puppy may be right behind you and get caught. Many rescue dogs are runners by nature, so please take precautions
- Keep doors and windows closed. Keep screens on windows and sliding glass doors securely fastened and in good repair to keep your puppy from falling through or escaping.
- Many dogs will eat cat feces from the litter box if given the chance. In addition to being a disgusting habit, this can be a health hazard. Cat litter can cause an intestinal obstruction, and any intestinal worms the cat has may be passed on. Put the litter box behind a gate, in a separate room or in a closet with gate access.
- Many human foods can cause problems for pets. Dark chocolate, onions, alcohol and foods high in fat, sugar or salt can be very harmful. Dark chocolate, coffee and tea all contain dangerous components called "xanthines." All chocolate, fudge and other candy should be placed out of reach. Grapes and raisins contain a toxin which can damage kidneys.
- Tobacco products, nicotine gum and patches contain substances that can be toxic or fatal to dogs.
- Bones, plastic food wrap, coffee grounds, meat trimmings all pose a potential hazard. To be safe, put food away immediately, dog-proof your garbage, and do not feed table scraps to your dog. Uncooked meat, fish and poultry can contain disease-causing bacteria such as E. coli, and parasites such as Toxoplasma gondii. These uncooked foods should not be given to your dog.

#### Outside hazards

- Until you get to know your foster dog, do not leave your dog outside unsupervised. To prevent your dog from wandering, you will need to either provide secure fencing that your dog cannot jump over or dig under or maintain a leash walk only policy.
- Provide your dog a separate area of your yard to use as his bathroom area. Use fencing or other means to keep him out of areas where children may play especially sand boxes.



- Some outdoor plants and trees can be toxic to dogs. Common ones include potato (all green parts), morning glory foxglove, lily of the valley and oak (buds and acorns). Many bulb plants such as daffodils are also poisonous. Cocoa bean mulch can be toxic to dogs. Sago palms are also deadly and need to be avoided. Some dogs chew and swallow landscaping stone which can cause dangerous intestinal blockage.
- Make sure all gasoline, oil, lawn fertilizers, insecticides and auto supplies are placed in secure containers out of reach. Be careful with antifreeze and rat poison; both taste good to dogs and can be deadly.
- Pools, ponds and hot tubs should be covered or fenced off until the dog is comfortable with them.
- Fire rings, barbecues and other heat or fire sources pose the potential of causing burns.
- Keep food and garbage in securely closed containers. Coffee grounds can contain harmful amounts of caffeine, and decomposing food may contain toxic molds. Keep compost in a secure bin.
- Walk around your property and look for areas or items that could be a hazard to your dog such as broken glass, exposed nails or sharp objects. Plan how you will restrict your puppy's access to these areas.

## **Housetraining**

It is an undeniable fact that dogs and puppies need to eliminate. The frustrating part is the communication barrier and the lack of understanding about where and when it is appropriate to eliminate. Dogs come to us with the simple motto: "If I have to, then I'll do it." This pertains to eating, sleeping (ever see a pup fall over asleep in mid-play?), activity, exploration AND elimination! Dogs do not understand anything more than that. We are the ones with all the requirements, not them! They'd be just as happy to take care of their needs the way they already know.

The most successful potty training methods consist of four key elements:  
Confinement, Training & Praise, and Timing

## **Confinement**

Puppies (or dogs who don't yet understand) need to be confined in the beginning. The BEST and most effective place to confine is in a crate. At this point don't leave anything on the bottom of the crate (blanket, newspaper etc.) Most dogs do NOT want to eliminate where they live, so the crate needs to be just large enough for dog to turn around and lay down. Anything larger will encourage a dog to eliminate at one end and sleep in the other. For those dogs who will grow quite a bit larger, use a crate that is sized for an adult and partition it to a smaller size using a homemade insert or a crate insert by the crate company.

## **Training & Praise**

When teaching a dog where to eliminate, ALWAYS use a leash. Leashes keep your dog close where you can supervise and control what happens. Puppies are easily distracted. A blowing leaf, stick, another animal---all can take a puppy's mind off the matter at hand. If you are near the puppy (or dog) with the leash in hand, a gentle tug will redirect away from the curiosity. Leashes are also good to help teach an AREA to eliminate.

Teach words for elimination. This way when the dog understands what the words mean, he will understand WHAT you want as well as WHEN you want it to happen. It can be ANY word or phrase you want to use consistently (such as "hurry up", "do your business", let's go", "piddle" etc.). Remember when you choose your word or phrase that you will be repeating it A LOT! As you take the dog outside, start to teach the word "OUTSIDE." "Let's go OUTSIDE!" "Do you have to go "OUTSIDE?" In time the dog will learn that OUTSIDE is associated with elimination. Eventually you will be able to ask "Do you have to go OUTSIDE?" and get a response like barking, running to the door or tail wagging. Verbal praise needs to happen during the act, not after!

## **Timing**

Dogs earn freedom by eliminating appropriately. The best time for a dog to be out of his crate is AFTER eliminating outside. This free time will still need to be

supervised, so any inclination toward inappropriate elimination can be immediately addressed. Baby gates are great for limiting a puppy's area of freedom. The BEST rule of thumb is to ANTICIPATE the need!

As a general rule, the length of time a puppy can be left confined in his crate without going outside is roughly equal to his age in months:

2 months old = 2 hours of confinement without a potty break

3 months old = 3 hours of confinement without a potty break

4 months old = 4 hours of confinement without a potty break etc. - up to about 6 - 8 months of age.

## **Chewing**

Are you having a problem with your foster constantly chewing? Make sure you're always supervising the dog when he's not crated. Dogs have a need to chew things. They use their mouths to explore the world like a child uses hands, and if they're bored or frustrated it will intensify the chewing. Make sure you provide appropriate chew toys (such as a Kong). If you catch your dog chewing on something inappropriate, correct the behavior and offer something they CAN chew. Many chewing problems are from boredom and can be corrected with exercise and stimulation.

## **Barking**

Dogs bark for many different reasons. Some reasons might be:

**Boredom:** Provide exercise and mental stimulation. Try "find it" games or food-dispensing toys.

**Loneliness:** Keep the dog around you when possible.

**Separation anxiety:** Gradually teach the dog to tolerate being alone starting with short periods of time. Also, when you are home, help the dog be comfortable being alone by not always allowing him or her to be in the room with you.

**To get attention:** Ignore. Reward quiet behavior.

**Stress:** Refocus the dog with obedience commands (sit, down etc.) offer a mental activity.

**Guarding:** Confine the dog to a quiet area away from windows or doors. Correct unwanted behavior.

## **Leash Manners**

Don't allow dogs to pull ahead or drag behind. Keep the leash LOOSE. When your dog pulls it tight, stop and/or guide him to change direction. You are teaching that pulling will slow rather than increase his progress. With consistent practice you will establish clear signals between you and your dog. He will understand that a tight leash is not a normal condition; it is a signal to stop or turn. Remember, you are the pack leader so do not let the dog drag you around on the leash.

## **Health and Wellness**

Your own dogs and your foster dog should be vaccinated for rabies, distemper, parvo and other common diseases as recommended by your vet. The bordatella (kennel cough) vaccine is also highly recommended. Your foster will have the bordatella vaccine.

## **Help! My foster dog is sick! How do I know if it's an emergency?**

Here are some ailments that could possibly affect foster dogs, what to watch for and when/how to let us know:

**Kennel Cough** (Upper Respiratory Infection) - Kennel Cough is like a head cold for dogs and is extremely common for dogs coming from a shelter. It can infect

dogs of any age and be caused by a bacteria or a virus. This is an illness that results in a constant, dry, hacking cough that can be compared to a "goose honk."

Sometimes the dogs cough up clear to yellow "foamy" phlegm. This is often confused with vomiting but follows a round of coughing. Please inform us ASAP if your foster dog begins to cough a dry, hacking cough so we can begin antibiotics if it is determined that bacteria are the cause. It could take more than one round of antibiotics for the illness to be cured. A couple of the causes of kennel cough (e.g. Bordetella) can be vaccinated against but not all can. Because of this, it is possible for your pets to come down with kennel cough after another dog has had the illness. If this occurs, let us know so we can help you!

**Parvovirus** - If you have a foster dog that is under the age of 8 months old, and especially if he/she is only 8-20 weeks old, contact us ASAP if you notice signs of parvo. While it is common for dogs to have some diarrhea when they suddenly change food, it is not common for them to have diarrhea and vomiting at the same time. If you notice that your foster dog has a decreased appetite, is not drinking water, is vomiting, has extremely foul smelling diarrhea (parvo has a distinct smell) and is lethargic, please call us ASAP.

**Worms and Other Parasites** - Unfortunately dogs can pick up parasites anywhere! We suggest you check your foster for fleas. Dogs coming from the shelter will be given a capstar to kill any fleas so plan on giving the dog a bath upon arrival. Worms are extremely common parasites. SSSCR deworms all dogs at least once. If you are fostering a puppy, and especially if you are fostering a litter of puppies, they will likely need deworming more than once. The most common sign of worms is diarrhea and sometimes worms are visible. For puppies under 8 months of age, let us know if they have diarrhea for 24 hours. For dogs over 8 months of age, let us know if they have diarrhea for 72 hours. In order to prevent other dogs from getting the worms, clean up the feces immediately. The worms or their eggs can enter the soil if allowed to sit.

**Emergencies** - We understand that it may sometimes be difficult to gauge what is an emergency since the dogs cannot talk to you. If your foster dog has any of the signs below, please contact SSSCR IMMEDIATELY.

\* Dark, BLACK diarrhea (potentially with mucous) - Suggests GI bleeding.

- \* Difficulty breathing and/or blue gums - Suggests the dog is truly struggling to get oxygen.
- \* Deep cut or puncture wound - From either a fight or accident.
- \* Broken limb.

IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE EMAIL US AT  
[KYM.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:KYM.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM) [HEIDI.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HEIDI.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM)  
[HEATHER.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HEATHER.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM)  
[LISA.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:LISA.SINBAD.SADIE@GMAIL.COM) OR CALL/TEXT THE RESCUE PHONE  
(843) 973-0555

These facilities provide after hours emergency vet care. Please call for authorization before taking your foster to one of these facilities for emergency care.

Charleston Veterinary Referral Center 3484 Shelby Ray Court Charleston, SC 29414 843-614-VETS (8387)

Veterinary Emergency Care 3163 West Montague Avenue North Charleston, SC 29418 (843) 744-3372

Mt. Pleasant Animal Emergency Clinic 930 Pine Hollow Road Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464 (843) 216-7554

## **Common Questions About Fostering**

### **HOW MUCH TIME & EFFORT IS NEEDED TO FOSTER AN ANIMAL?**

It depends on the animal you foster. Puppies are more work than adults and involve more intensive care, time and energy...although adult dogs generally stay in foster care longer than puppies. Many of our dogs take an average of 1-2 months to place, but some can take a year or more to find their perfect match. Since adult pit bulls can take longer to place than other breeds, we look for foster homes that are patient, stable and realistic about what they're getting into.

### **CAN I FOSTER A DOG IF I HAVE DOGS ALREADY?**

We actually prefer that you have pets at home ~ well socialized, of course. We also require your dogs to be up-to-date with vaccinations. Please keep in mind that the foster dog may have an unknown vaccination history so it is important that your

own dog(s) are vaccinated. We have numerous foster families that have other dogs and have no problems with repeatedly taking foster dogs because their own dogs are vaccinated. Your dog will most likely play a big part in helping the foster dog acclimate to life as a house pet.

## **WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF ME AS A FOSTER HOME?**

Many rescued dogs have had zero training before they land in the shelters, so it's up to the foster home to teach good house manners so their foster can be adopted. We find that other dogs also help teach the foster dog manners. This is no small project and includes house training, socializing and enforcing basic obedience skills. By making the foster a part of your family during his time with you, you'll help him transition seamlessly into his forever home once that perfect match is made. You'll never be alone with this work however, we will be there supporting you and working to help you along the way.

We ask that our foster families make the foster animal available for adoption events. You don't need to be present at the event, but you will need to help us arrange getting the animal there and back (AND NOTIFY US IN ADVANCE SO THAT WE CAN BE SURE TO HAVE ENOUGH VOLUNTEERS AT THE EVENT TO CHAPERONE YOUR DOG). If you would like to be involved in the adoption process, we'd love to include you. We also ask that our foster families commit to fostering the animal until it is adopted, unless other arrangements have been discussed in advance.

## **WHO PAYS FOR THE DOG'S CARE?**

SSSCR will cover all the veterinary expenses. All of the SSSCR dogs are altered, dewormed, and vaccinated while in their foster homes, and we do need fosters who are able and willing to work with scheduling! However, we completely understand that a vast majority of our fosters work, so transportation to appointments can be arranged

## **CAN I FOSTER SHORT-TERM?**

Sure! We always need relief fosters who can care for our animals when their foster families go out of town, have surgery or just need a little break. We love foster families, no matter if you foster once or continuously.

## **WOULD I HAVE TO REVIEW ADOPTION APPLICATIONS OR SPEAK TO POTENTIAL ADOPTERS?**

Not unless you would like to be part of the adoption process. We believe our foster families know their fosters best, so we will ask you to provide personality information about your foster for their online bio, or possibly to answer specific questions. If your schedule allows, we ask that you attend adoption events so you, the person who knows the dog best, can talk to potential adopters. We understand, however, that busy schedules do not always allow fosters to stay at adoption events.

## **HOW WILL I EVER LET GO ONCE I GET ATTACHED?**

If you get really attached to your foster and you can't imagine your life without them, you do have the option of adopting him or her. Most foster families are happy to see their fosters finally go 'home' though. There's no greater joy than knowing you saved a life, then seeing that deserving dog finally get his or her very own person. Many of our foster homes LOVE the feeling of placing their dog so much they immediately call and ask for another! Reminding ourselves of the millions of dogs that die every year in shelters helps to "let go" of foster dogs so another one can be saved. We like to remind ourselves about the following saying when we are having a hard time giving a dog up:

On the fence about fostering because it will be too hard to give them up?

I would rather cry watching them leave our home to live a life of

happiness and joy in a loving home than cry because no

one stepped up to help them and they died alone,

frightened and sad in the shelter.



## **WHAT IF I CAN'T KEEP MY FOSTER DOG?**

If you are having problems with your foster dog, please contact us. It might be something that we can help you fix. We do work with a local trainer that can help too. Since we do not have a facility, if you cannot continue to foster the dog we request you give us some notice so we can make other arrangements. We understand, however, that emergencies do arise and notice is not always possible.

## **IS IT POSSIBLE TO WORK FULL-TIME OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AND STILL FOSTER?**

Absolutely! Many of our adopters work full time, so the 9-5 routine helps prepare the dog for such a lifestyle. If you do work full time however, it's important that you make sure you have enough time and energy to give the dog the attention and exercise it needs when you are home. It is also important to note that puppies under 8 months old cannot be expected to hold their bladders and bowels during an 8 hour work day and will need someone to attend to them at least every 4 hours.

## **WHAT OTHER WAYS I CAN HELP?**

- Make sure to keep us updated and send in new pictures whenever possible!! The more information we have about a dog, the better chance of placing the dog in an appropriate forever home.
- Help at adoption events or community events. Almost every weekend, we are at some adoption event. We are generally at Pet supplies plus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday every month and at Petland on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. We are usually at third Thursday in Downtown Summerville and attend numerous other community events throughout the year. We would love to have your help at these events!
- Share, volunteer and attend our fundraising events. We cannot maintain this rescue without our fundraisers and need the support of our fosters at these events.
- Checkout our Facebook page and rescue website for the most updated information.

- Share our dogs through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter! The more exposure they get, the better the chance of adoption.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT**

