

# TIPS & PROCEDURES FOR PLACING YOUR DOG INTO THE BEST POSSIBLE HOME

**Prepared for you by The Brittany Foundation**

We are providing you with some tips and procedures that have proven to be successful for us in placing our dogs into responsible, safe, and loving homes. We urge you to be as “picky” as we are to ensure that your dog will remain with its new owner for the dog’s whole life.

**Please read this entire document. If you have any questions, feel free to call us for any clarification.**

We have attached a one-page write-up on ‘Responsible Pet Ownership’. We suggest that you provide the ‘Responsible Pet Ownership’ article to the prospective new owner before they even fill out the application. You can fax it to them or mail a copy. Most people do not think of all the things in the article before getting a dog. This is not meant to ‘turn people off’ to your dog – but instead to provide a ‘reality check’.

## **Step Number One:**

Make sure your dog or the dog you have rescued is in good health. Take it to your veterinarian for a thorough health check. Make sure it is up to date on its vaccinations. If it is rescued, assume that it has not had its shots. Take in a stool sample to rule out any worms or parasites. Make sure the dog is sterilized (spaying for females, neutering for males). If you need financial assistance, please call us. Also, it is very important that the dog’s teeth are clean. Poor oral hygiene leads to kidney and liver disease, not to mention painful conditions for the dog to endure.

## **Step Number Two:**

Use the attached 4-page ‘Adoption Application’ as a guideline to screen prospective new owners. If you are not completely and 100

percent satisfied with each and every answer, then do not place the dog with that applicant.

Also, be completely honest with the new owners about the behaviors of the dog. For example, if the dog is still chewing, tell them. If the dog is not completely housebroken, tell them. (Also you can see on the application how they would housebreak a dog. If they hit the dog, or make it stay outside because it's not housebroken – DO NOT place with those people.) Otherwise, (1) you will get the dog back, or (2) it will have to live its entire life in the backyard which is unacceptable, or (3) worse, they will take it to the pound where it will be **killed**.

We charge people an adoption fee – not to make money but to rescue other dogs and pay for the expenses of the dogs in our care. Even though you are not in the same position, we still recommend you charge a “fee” which could be donated to your favorite humane charity. This will show you the prospective new owner's ability to pay. For example, what if a month after they get your dog, the dog is racing around the yard and slips and breaks its leg. Will they be able to afford the \$300 to \$400 it takes to get the leg repaired? Or will they have it killed or return the dog to you?

Note: If you are in doubt and would like our professional opinion, please tell the applicant you will get back with them once you have checked with us. We will be happy to go over the application with you and point out the things that are right or wrong for the dog. In fact, if you are uncomfortable with calling the person back, we can do it for you.

Review the 4-page Adoption Application and make sure that you keep the additional following points in mind:

√ If they rent, are they allowed to have a dog?

- ✓ If it is a puppy, do not place with people who work 8 hours a day. How will they housebreak it? It cannot be relegated to the outside as a puppy.
- ✓ If they work 8 hours a day and get an adult dog and do not come home at lunchtime, they must have a dog door, so the dog can go in and out. Don't expect the dog to hold it 8 hours or be relegated to outside for 8 hours.
- ✓ The dog must be inside on days when the pool man or gardener or any other workers come to your home. If your dog got out when they came into the yard, do you honestly think they are going to go chasing it until they get it back safely to your yard? NO.
- ✓ Make sure the new owners know how to feed dogs – two times a day and only nutritional people food – like carrots and other veggies or fruits. No chocolate, no onions! EVER.
- ✓ **SPANKING / HITTING IS NEVER EVER ALLOWED !!!!!**
- ✓ Check the dog history. Did they ever lose a dog? Did they ever give a dog away?
- ✓ We don't suggest placing with people under 25 because their lives are so unsure. They may take a dog at age 23 and then meet someone who doesn't like dogs or move to a place that doesn't accept dogs. Too many "ifs".
- ✓ Roommate situations are also "iffy". Too many people coming and going where they dog could get out.
- ✓ Our general rule of thumb is to place dogs with opposite sex dogs. That is, if you have a female, place with a male... and vice versa.

### **Step Number Three:**

If you are 100 percent satisfied with the application, the next step is to go to the physical location of where the dog will be living. We call it the 'housecheck'. Things to look for are:

- ✓ How high are the fences around the backyard – 6 feet or more is best. Any less, we would not place the dog there. Too many chances for the dog to get out.
- ✓ Do they lock their gates? If not, chances are the dog will be let out by work people, or children using the gate to go in and

out, or in roommate situations. (We do not place dogs where gates are not locked at all times.)

- ✓ Look for areas around the fences that the dog could jump on to get over the fence – for example, built in barbecues or wood stacks, etc.
- ✓ Look for unsafe or hazardous areas – for example, a work area in the back yard where there are boards with nails sticking out – a definite NO – very unsafe for the dog.
- ✓ Meet everyone in the family. Notice if children are too rough with the dog or the dog's reaction to the children. If the dog is shy of children, he may nip or bite out of fear. Make sure this is not just a toy for the kids. Is everyone in the family playing with the dog? Or is it just the kids and the mom? The dog WILL pick up on anyone who doesn't want him or her. And behavioral problems will happen and then you will get the dog back or it will be taken to the pound to be killed.

Once again, if you have any concerns, do not leave the dog. But tell the applicant, that you will get back with them with a final decision. If you are really unsure, please call us and if possible, we could make arrangements to do a housecheck with you.

#### **Step Number Four:**

If everything looks acceptable for this dog and you want to place, we strongly recommend that you use the attached 'Adoption Agreement' for the protection of the dog. Have 2 copies available to fill out. One for the new owners and the second copy for you filled out and signed by the new owners. Provide the sterility certificate and shot record with this paperwork as well as any other records you feel are important for them to have. (We would suggest keeping a copy of the records, just in case you get the dog back, but not the records!) Arrange to do follow-up visits so that the dog will not feel abandoned. And so that you can make sure everything is going well with the dog.

Remember, adult dogs only have the mentality of a 4-year-old child. Imagine how a 4-year old child would feel if you took them to a strange new home and just left them!! Pretty scary from their perspective. In fact, we recommend that you do a few visits so that the dog will get comfortable with its new home. It will certainly mean less behavioral problems that the new owners will have to deal with. And less chance of you getting the dog back.

Again, our offer stands to provide you with assistance you may need in this process. Our phone number is **(818) 709-5706**. We wish you the best of luck in placing your dog into a loving new home.

Sincerely,

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