



## **FOSTER CONTRACT**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This Foster Agreement (hereinafter “the Contract”) is made on the date listed above by and between One Dane at a Time (hereinafter “ODAAT”) and Foster residing at the address listed below. This agreement is valid for any current or future animals (hereinafter “Dog”) in Foster’s care on behalf of ODAAT. The parties hereby agree to the following:

### **1. CARE OF PET**

- a. Foster shall accept and consider the Dog as a household companion, not as an outside pet, and will provide the Dog with a safe environment, humane treatment, and provide proper food, fresh water, shelter, and exercise. Foster agrees this Dog will not be abused in any manner. The Dog will not be chained at any time, nor will it be permitted off the property of the Foster unless accompanied by a mature individual. The Dog shall not be used in any aspect of animal fighting. The Dog shall not be the subject of or subjected to any biological, chemical, psychological, or other experiment.
- b. The Dog shall be allowed to sleep indoors and protected from the elements or adverse conditions. The Dog shall not be housed or kept outside or in a yard. The Dog shall not be allowed to roam free or unsupervised outside.
- c. Foster shall immediately notify ODAAT if the Dog is lost or stolen, and shall make every reasonable effort to recover the Dog.
- d. Foster shall not give up or sell the Dog to another person, relative, friend, or any other individual, or any rescue group, humane association, shelter, or adoption center unless pre-approved by ODAAT.
- e. Foster shall not under any circumstances give up or sell the Dog for any medical or experimental laboratory or any organization.
- f. Foster shall not alter the Dog’s appearance in any way, shape or form (ex: cropping, docking, etc).
- g. Foster permits ODAAT to visit at reasonable convenient times to check on the well-being of the Dog.

### **2. VET APPOINTMENTS**

- a. Foster is assigned a Foster Coordinator and must schedule vet appointments through him or her. Foster is responsible for transporting animal to and from appointments.

- b. Foster is not to seek medical attention for the Dog without prior approval and appointment made by ODAAT, unless it is a life threatening emergency. Failing to do this will result in the Foster incurring the cost of the vet visit.
- c. If the Dog is not spayed or neutered at the time this contract is signed, Foster must arrange, through the Foster Coordinator, to have the Dog spayed or neutered with an ODAAT-approved veterinary partner. Foster shall not breed the Dog.
- d. Foster shall immediately notify Foster Coordinator in the event of the Dog's injury, illness, or death during the foster care period.

### **3. FOOD AND SUPPLIES**

- a. Foster should notify their foster coordinator about supplies or food needed and it will be provided to Foster at no cost.
- b. If Foster voluntarily chooses to purchase something with his or her own money, Foster should save the receipt as these expenses are tax deductible. Purchases made voluntarily by Foster are not reimbursed by ODAAT.

### **4. TWO-WEEK SHUT DOWN PERIOD**

- a. Foster shall allow a reasonable amount of time for the Dog to adjust to new surroundings. For the safety of Foster's household and other resident pets, Foster is required to place Dog into a two-week shutdown period. Dog must be crated and separated from all other animals in the household for two weeks. Slow introductions are required for each Dog and this in turn will create a more balanced transition period for the Dog. If this is not followed, ODAAT reserves the right to relinquish Dog from Foster's home and relieve Foster of their duties.

### **5. EVENTS AND PROMOTION**

- a. ODAAT markets pets available for adoption through various methods including Petfinder and events. Foster is responsible for assisting in marketing the Dog through word of mouth, by bringing him or her to events, by posting the Dog online, and by providing photos and a good description of the Dog for marketing.

### **6. FOSTER PERIOD**

- a. Foster understands the commitment he or she is making by agreeing to foster the Dog and that there is no definitive time period. Foster understands it may take weeks or possibly longer for the Dog to be adopted.
- b. If Foster can no longer care for the Dog, Foster shall notify ODAAT and make every effort to find a suitable foster or adoptive home for the Dog. ODAAT will do everything possible to place the Dog accordingly. However, the Foster understands that it may take time to find the Dog a sufficient home for its needs.
- c. Foster understands that during the foster period, ODAAT has ownership of the Dog.
- d. ODAAT may recover the Dog from Foster at any time during the foster period.

### **7. ADOPTION**

- a. If Foster decides to permanently adopt the Dog, Foster shall notify Foster Coordinator and upon approval, shall follow established adoption procedures including signing an Adoption Contract and paying the Dog's adoption fee.
- b. If Foster finds a permanent/adoptive home for the Dog, Foster shall notify ODAAT and upon approval, shall

follow established adoption procedures.

**8. RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

- a. ODAAT makes no guarantees and/or promises regarding the Dog's disposition, temperament, and/or future health and personality.
- b. Foster agrees to foster the Dog at Foster's own risk, and indemnify and release ODAAT, its founder, board of directors, and volunteers of any and all liability arising from damages to person(s) or property caused by the Dog.
- c. In the event the Foster does not comply with the terms of this Contract, at the reasonable discretion of ODAAT, ODAAT may recover the Dog. Promptly upon demand by ODAAT, the Foster shall relinquish the Dog to ODAAT.

The Foster hereby acknowledges that they have read the entirety of this Contract supplied by ODAAT.

Foster:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ODAAT:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **2 WEEK SHUT DOWN PERIOD: "Give 'em a break!"**

### **Tips for Introducing Your Foster or Adopted Dog into Your Home**

The secret to being successful when fostering or adopting a rescue dog is giving the new dog time to adjust to you, your family, the home, and other pets in the new environment -- before introducing him to new people, taking him out on any big adventures, etc.

While we realize every dog is unique and every dog adjusts differently, for the most part we recommend what we call the "Two-Week Shut Down." Why The Two-Week Shut Down? The Two Week Shut Down is a time familiar to a dog's mind -- it mimics the whelping box when first born, when the puppy's eyes are not open and it relies totally on the mother's ability to take care of it. By smelling, sensing, and listening, the puppy starts his journey into the new scary world. New adult dogs come into our home the same way -- "A journey into a new and scary world." By giving the dog a "time out" the dog can learn its new world, its new people, and begin to relax and blossom under the care of the new caregiver.

While we all want to run out with our new dog and show everyone our new pet, we forget that even an adult dog is now back to a puppy-like mind; all is new. The voices speak a new language, cars might be new, leashes and handling might be new. Even petting and acceptance of a pet is stressful on a new dog. "Who are you? Where did you come from? Where am I going? What is expected of me?" The dog thinks! Just like a newborn baby, we wouldn't rush out and pass the baby from person to person. We set up a stable and safe environment. Our new dogs are just like that. We also give the rescue dog a bit of time to heal, mentally, and physically, in a safe and comfortable zone.

When new dogs are stressed out and not given that calm environment and period of adjustment, the only way they know how to get their point across is to act out or "misbehave." The dog may growl or become nippy out of confusion or fear. What is expected of me? Where am I allowed?

**How the Two Week Shutdown works:** For the first two weeks, a dog takes in their new environment. By pushing a dog too fast and throwing too much at the dog, we look like we are not the leaders and the dog can feel it MUST defend itself. We coo, coddle, drag the dog from home to home, from person to person, and the dog has NO idea who WE are. To the dog, you are a stranger. This is the time for the dog to be in a calm atmosphere, getting to see YOU, meet YOU, hear and take in the new sounds and smells of your home.

- Crate the dog in a separate room or limit it to one separate room.
- Leashing is an option. This also teaches the new safe zone when the dog is around you and other humans in the home. You can leash the dog to your belt or under a piece of furniture. This also stops the dog from reacting if you have to get him off of something like the couch. You are not reaching in and grabbing onto him, just tug gently on the leash, say "come" and there you go. No conflict!
- No intense obedience training should be done for the first two weeks -- just fun exercise. Maybe throw some toys for fun. Leash the dog if you don't have a fence outside. Use lunge lines if you have too big a yard. If you have a large enough yard, do not leave the yard with the dog. If you do not have a yard, taking the dog on a walk while leashed is acceptable. No car rides, no other dogs, (unless crated beside them), no pet stores. (The exception to this is of course if the dog needs to go to the veterinarian.)
- Exercise is a must. All dogs need to burn off energy. Do fun toss-the-ball games in your yard or on a lunge line if no fence. Remember to just have fun. Let the dog run and explore in the yard.
- TEACH the dog by doing the shutdown, that YOU are the one to look to, that you are now here for the dog! He can trust in you and look to you as its new leader. Then on walks you will see the dog look to you when he sees something, to see what your reaction is, lessening his mind about having to defend or control the

environment. He has YOU. The dog now can relax and enjoy the walk more.

- Once exercise/yard time is finished put the dog back in his/her crate. Let it absorb, think, and rest. If the dog goes to his crate on his own, he is telling you "I need a time out." Allow him this time. By having the dog out for long periods of time we are forcing the dog to keep accepting all new things. By putting the dog away we are asking him to accept a few things, then go think and absorb. When we get him out later, we introduce a few more things, so it does not overload the dog.
- No new buddies! Do not introduce the dog to other pets for these two weeks. They can be side by side in the crates if you cannot totally separate, not nose to nose for that can feel defensive. The reason it is important not to introduce the new dog to other dog(s) in the home is because some dogs will bond instantly with the other dog(s). This can lead to some other issues, as the dog will look to the other dog(s) for guidance and not YOU!
- Ignore Bad behavior. Ignore crying and/or barking. If you run to the dog each time they bark, whine, or cry, you are teaching the dog that doing those things gets your attention. The dog must learn to be secure when you are not there. Use the leash to correct jumping, exploring counters, etc.
- Praise good behavior gently. For example, the dog is sitting nicely next to you. Touch or softly pet the dog "good boy/girl." Let them know you appreciate GOOD behavior. This makes naughty behavior not so fun if you ignore THAT, but praise the good!

Literally in two weeks you will see a change in the dog and begin to see its honest and true personality. They will be well behaved and literally shut down themselves these first few weeks. Once the shut down time is over, they relax and the true personality begins to shine through! So, please, if nothing else for your new dog, give it the time to LEARN YOU as you are learning who they are! This method works on shy dogs, confident dogs, abuse cases, dogs who were previously chained, rowdy dogs, all temperaments! They will look to you for guidance. You will gain their trust and show them, calmly and fairly, what this new world is like. They will relax and feel safe. There is no need to force the point that we are its leader. Slow easy guidance, patience, showing them what we want them to do in a new home is the best way to help the new dog adjust. We instill that we are worthy to the dog to be its leader! So please for the sake of your new dog, slow down – WAY down. Give them a chance to show you who they can really be!

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** The "Two Week Shutdown" was created by Stacie Sparks and revamped by Bella-Reed Pit Bull Rescue.