

## **COCKER SPANIEL RESOURCES, INC. FOSTER CARE GUIDELINES**

**30-0366029**

Foster care is the most effective way to fully evaluate the rescued cocker, to bring the dog back to health, to teach some basic house manners, and experience obedience training with basic commands and/or with formal obedience classes.

Foster families will have an orientation concerning cocker issues regarding health, grooming, and general characteristics of cocker spaniel behaviors. i.e. stubbornness. Foster families familiar with cocker spaniel issues due to previous experience will be exempt from this orientation. Experienced cocker foster families will receive an updated flyer “what to expect from a rescued cocker from.....”(commercial breeding facility, abuse case rescue, life as a stray, and/or a disposable commodity.) All foster families shall receive a revised Foster Care Handbook.

Cockers bond very quickly to new family situations especially if this is their first positive experience with a truly loving family, to disrupt this family after 6 weeks can be very hard on cockers, making the chances they will bond to yet another family tougher and tougher. Our job is to minimize the disruption in their family lives.

After about a month (4 weeks) in foster care, it is the foster family’s responsibility to fully evaluate the dog for placement. The dog’s level of protectiveness, aggression, socialization, and obedience training should be fully described so that the proper home can be found, permanent retirement home placement with trained individuals to care for the cocker or euthanasia.

Fostering a young rescued cocker is a remarkably rewarding experience. Many of these puppies and gangly teenagers are fun, goofy and yes annoying as all get out at first - but a month of loving, safe family interactions and firm obedience training can transform them into attractive, responsive dogs. These youngsters need to learn to understand their place in the “pack order”.

Fostering a senior rescued cocker is also a remarkably rewarding experience. Most of these seniors have had little social interaction, they need to be taught how to have fun, maybe even how to play, and walk on a leash. Many of the young adult to senior commercial breeder cockers rescued have never felt grass beneath their feet, had a loving hand pet them, or know humans can be wonderful.

Foster homes do not have ownership of the dog; the rescue organization Cocker Spaniel Resources, Inc. is the legal owner. The foster home will be involved in the screening and placing cockers in adoptive homes. Initial contact for adoption will be to the organization after the application has been completed, a copy of the application will be sent to the foster parent to contact the prospective adoptive family to answer questions and get a general feel for the match of the dog to the family and their lifestyle. A foster home representative and Director of Placement will make the final adoption decisions together.