



Getting Creative with Critter Care

Post-adoption Support for Dogs with Separation Anxiety

Welcoming home a new canine companion can be heartwarming and overwhelming in equal measure. When welcoming home a dog with separation anxiety, those first weeks together also come with needing to figure out how to best meet the dog's special care needs alongside those of the rest of the family.

What is Critter Care?

A package of post-adoption supports sent home with newly adoptive families to set them and their dog up for maximum success.

There are countless ways shelters and rescues can offer post-adoption support to adoptive families of dogs with separation anxiety to help minimize the overwhelm for everyone (and dog), many of which are low-cost and no-cost options. Among those is to send these families home upon adoption with some Critter Care – a package of resources with the right information and support to help them set up those special care needs.

Critter Care Considerations

Shelter and rescue organizations vary dramatically from large to small, heavily funded to no funding, and considerable staff to volunteer only. The good news is you can customize your Critter Care package to meet your organizational capacity. We know that families often need support, especially early on, with three care needs: managing alone time, training, and veterinary/medication needs. We suggest including at least one resource related to each of these need areas in your post-adoption Critter Care package and have included a few ideas for consideration below. Please know this list is not exhaustive and that Critter Care supports are only limited by our creativity – the potential resources for inclusion are endless!



Resources to Support with Managing Absences

- Provide business cards/contact information for local pet sitters, daycares, and dog walkers
- Offer a list of foster families willing to help cover absences
- Include a couple of hours of pet-sitting support from a shelter volunteer
- Share the following blog posts: [Crowdsourcing Alone-time Alternatives](#) and [Problem-Solving the Puzzle of Alone Time Management](#).



Resources to Support with Training Needs

- Refer them to a [Certified Separation Anxiety Trainer](#)
- Share [Mission POSSIBLE](#) and your shelter/rescue discount code. *Please reach out using this form if you don't have a discount code and would like us to set one up for you:* [Contact Form](#).
- Compile a behavior modification “handbook” – digital or hardcopy – to help them understand and begin the training process. Consider selecting among the free materials below:
 - PDFs: [Understanding Separation Anxiety](#), [Treating Separation Anxiety Myths](#), [How to Help a Dog Overcome Separation Anxiety](#)
 - Blog posts: [FAQs Unpacked: Providing Answers and Dispelling Myths](#), [The Separation Anxiety Top 10 List](#), [Promissory Note and Practical Practices for Pet Parents](#), [Getting the Right Information First](#)



Resources to Support with Veterinary/Medication Needs

- Offer a free evaluation with either a shelter or local veterinarian
- Send them home with a few-week supply of any medications the dog is currently on
- Share this directory of veterinary behaviorists: [American College of Veterinary Behaviorists](#)