By Jeff Molitor

BEYOND THE SHELTER / TAKE-HOME RECAP

Shelter Dog Terms Cheat Sheet



THE SHORT ANSWER

Foster-to-adopt means an adopter takes a shelter dog home as a foster before the adoption becomes final. Some foster-to-adopt programs work as a trial run, while others cover a dog still waiting on surgery or treatment. Foster-to-adopt rules differ by shelter, so adopters should ask how long the placement lasts and who pays for care.

FOUR THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Foster-to-adopt comes 2 ways: a trial run at home, or a wait on surgery or treatment after you're approved.
2. Stray hold: time for an owner to reclaim a found dog, usually 3 to 5 days. Owner surrenders skip it.
3. Behavior notes: check who wrote each note and when. Kennel stress can make a calm dog look wild.
4. Medical hold is a pause, not a red flag. Altered means spayed or neutered. A microchip only works with your current number.

YOUR NEXT STEP

If a word on the card confuses you, ask staff to explain it before you sign.

Read the full article and sources:

https://letthembedog.com/blog/shelter-dog-terms

Independent volunteer resource. Not veterinary advice. Contact your vet for health concerns.