

“First Contact” – Position Description

The *First Contact* person position(s) in rescue may be any SENC Club Member in good standing. The responsibilities include taking all initial calls and emails regarding a Newfoundland dog that is in need of being rescued and seeing it through to completion. The initial contact may also be from people inquiring about adopting a dog, or questions about caring for a Newfoundland dog or puppy. The *First Contact* needs to know how to respond to each situation in order to provide appropriate help or direction. (Non-Rescue related procedures follow the “New Rescue” Guidelines below.)

Examples of typical calls or emails that may be received:

- ❖ Someone states they found a Newfoundland dog in a shelter;
- ❖ Someone has been watching a neighbors dog and is concerned about it's health and well being and is reporting it to be rescued;
- ❖ An owner makes the decision they can no longer keep their pet dog;
- ❖ Someone makes an inquiry about adopting a dog;
- ❖ Someone has questions about caring for a new puppy;
- ❖ Some has questions about a specific health concern.

A *First Contact* is responsible for picking up the Newfoundland dog needing rescue and making arrangements to get it to a veterinarian or to a foster home. When they are unable to perform these duties themselves, they will seek assistance from other SENC members that can assist in these functions. In this case, the First Contact will stay in contact with the SENC member assisting until the dog safely reaches the veterinarian or foster home.

A *First Contact* person must be knowledgeable about the breed to ask appropriate questions to validate if the dog fits the description of a pure-bred Newfoundland, and be able to pre-screen the call to determine if there are any emergency concerns relating to the health and well-being the dog.

The *First Contact* Person will be faced with determining if the Newfoundland is in an emergency or non-emergency situation:

- ❖ **Emergency Situations** – A dog is in a kill shelter and may be in danger or lined-up for euthanasia, was found roaming, tied to a tree in extreme heat or cold, extremely malnourished or has serious medical issues and the owner is turning in the dog or someone has found this dog in a life-threatening condition.
 - ❖ **Kill Shelters** – will euthanize a dog within 3-5 days. Dogs are placed on a list and scheduled to be euthanized.
 - ❖ **Non-Kill Shelters** – will not euthanize a dog unless a dog is very ill. They also attempt to find adoptive families for these dogs.
- ❖ **Non-emergency Situations** – An owner is choosing to relinquish ownership of their dog possibly due to financial difficulties, job loss, moving, divorce, death, just cannot keep the dog any longer, etc.

"New Rescue" Guidelines

"First Contact" – Position Description ...Continued ...

- ❖ **Identify yourself as being with the Southeastern Newfoundland Club's Rescue Committee and provide your name and position, and ask them their name.**

- ❖ **Information to Ask:**
 1. Get address and phone number of dog's location.
 2. Get address and phone number, if possible, of person reporting the dog.
 3. Try to get as much information as possible about the dog and why it needs to go into rescue. Ask if they saw the dog and if it's a pure-bred Newfoundland, markings, etc.
 4. Shelters - If you are calling a Shelter, ask:
 - If it is a "**Kill**" shelter, or, if they euthanize dogs.
 - If YES – it is a "**Kill**" shelter, ask where the Newfoundland is on the list for being euthanized and when the dog is scheduled.
 - Normally a Kill Shelter is strict and may euthanize within 3 days. Other shelters could be 3-5 days.
 - If NO – it is not a Kill shelter, find out the cost/procedure to pick up/adopt the dog from the no-kill shelter. Ask the shelter to waive the adoption fee.
 - Visit Shelter to identify the dog as a pure-bred Newfoundland, if possible.
 - If dog is not a Newfoundland, thank shelter and explain why SENC Rescue cannot take mixed dogs due to limited funds being available.
 5. Ask questions to validate if the dog is a pure-bred Newfoundland
 - Refer to Newfoundland Breed Standard, Pg. 19
 - Is a photo available to email or, if not, when the *First Contact* gets there, take a picture and email it to the rescue committee for additional input.
 - Photo positions that are helpful in determining dog's breed: face shot, side shot, standing next to you to demonstrate height. If it is determined it is not a pure bred after it has been picked up, contact another pure bred organization that it may belong to. If it is a Newfoundland mix, contact Cindy Weiman, a member of SENC who works with Newfoundland mixes. Refer to "*Rescue Partners for SENC*" – page 26 for Cindy. Look on the internet for other purebred rescue groups, i.e.: Leonberger, Golden Retriever, etc. Start with each dogs' National Club and go from there.
 6. Ask questions and make observations to determine the health and well-being of the dog. Examples:
 - Runny nose, weeping eyes, ears red or hot, skin and coat condition, any limping, current on vaccinations (that they know of), spayed or neutered, skittish of strangers, overall temperament.
 7. Ask and document the following information:
 - Name of the person you are speaking to (and position if at a shelter)
 - Address
 - Phone number (alternate if also available)
 - Times they are available for SENC to pick up the Newfoundland
 - Ask for any directions they can provide that will help you get to the location. (Separate from preparing your own directions from the internet.)

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"New Rescue" Guidelines

"First Contact" – Position Description ...Continued ...

- If a Shelter (*including Kill Shelters*):
 - Name of shelter
 - Name of person in charge – good to know in case needed.
 - Hours of operation they are available for SENC to come by and pick up the Newfoundland

Note: Pick up dog ASAP when it's in a shelter!

❖ **Information to Provide the person you are speaking with:**

1. Your name
2. Provide your phone number(s) – both cell phone and home so you can be contacted immediately if anything comes up, or the dog is in danger or lined-up for euthanasia.
3. Advise them SENC will pick up the dog ASAP and that you will call them back within "x" minutes with the details. (Use your best judgment on the time to commit and be sure to call them back within that time.)

❖ **Communicate to Foster & Rescue Chairperson that a "New Rescue" may be coming into Rescue.**
(Do not Foster in any home where there is a pregnant bitch.)

❖ **Begin arrangements to pick up the Newfoundland dog from the shelter or owner and take it to a veterinarian hospital or foster home:**

1. **Things you need to bring with you:**

- **Owner Relinquishment Form**, along with a writing instrument. The form needs to be completed and signed at the time the dog is picked up. This form justifies that SENC did not merely take the dog but that the dog was turned over to SENC without force by the shelter or owner.
- **Veterinary Treatment Protocol Form**
- **Transport form** – if you will be meeting another transporter in order to get the dog to a veterinarian or foster home
- **SENC ID Badge**
- **Leash & Collar**
- **Crate**
- **Camera**, to take pictures if uncertain it's a purebred Newfoundland
- **Do not feed or give water** to the dog until a veterinarian has examined it.

2. **Helpful Tips you may want to consider:**

- If a shelter dog, take a spare set of clothes to change into before going back into your car or home afterward to prevent carrying parasites or disease (wear clothes that can be disinfected or bleached.)
 - Keep a spray bottle in vehicle with 2 parts water/1 part bleach mix – spray bottoms of shoes after leaving shelter before you get in your car. Spritz what you touch and wipe with rag.
 - Plastic line car to help prevent mange mites, fleas, etc from getting in car carpet. Spray Lysol.
- Carry spare rags for wiping
- Carry bacterial spray or flea spray.
- Plastic Tarp / bungee cords.

"New Rescue" Guidelines -

"First Contact – Position Description ...Continued ...

If *First Contact* is unable to pick up the Newfoundland, use the SENC Membership List to contact another rescue volunteer in the area of the shelter or home that can pick up the dog if you are unable to get there yourself.

- ❖ **Rescue Volunteer assisting with pick-up or transportation** – Once a Rescue Volunteer is located, exchange cell phone numbers in order to keep in contact with the Volunteer during the rescue process.
 1. Advise Rescue Volunteer to bring with them the following items:
 - **Owner Relinquishment Form**, along with a writing instrument. The form needs to be completed and signed (obtaining a signature is mandatory);
 - **Veterinary Treatment Protocol Form**
 - **Transport form** – if they will be meeting another transporter in order to get the dog to a veterinarian or foster home
 - **SENC ID Badge**
 - **Leash & Collar**
 - **Crate**
 - **Camera**, to take pictures if uncertain it's a purebred Newfoundland
 2. Advise them NOT to feed or give water to the dog until a veterinarian has examined it.
 3. Advise them about **Helpful Tips** listed above.

- ❖ **Call and Confirm the Estimated Time of Arrival – contact the owner or shelter person in charge – document who you speak to:**
 1. Inform owner/shelter of the name of the person who will pick up the dog
 2. Inform owner/shelter of the estimated time the rescue volunteer will arrive
 3. Re-provide your phone number in case they need to get in contact with you again.
 4. Re-state SENC Rescue's intention to pick up this dog.
 5. Conduct follow-up calls to the owner/shelter person you spoke to and the SENC Rescue Volunteer until you receive confirmation the dog was picked up safely.

- ❖ **Picking Up the Dog – what you must do:**
 1. Introduce yourself and ask to see the dog to confirm it is a purebred Newfoundland. Once you are comfortable it is a Newfoundland form, proceed to next step.
 2. Owner Relinquishment Form – Must be completed by shelter/owner at the time the dog is picked up. This form justifies that SENC has legal authority and care responsibility for the dog and that the dog was relinquished to the SENC freely.
 - In most cases, you will ask the questions from the form, complete it in the conversation, and ask the owner/shelter to sign and date.
 3. Ask for any veterinarian records that may be available
 4. Ask for any AKC or Pedigree papers that may be available
 5. Ask if they have a collar and leash you can use to take the dog
 6. Ask if the dog has a favorite toy or blanket you can take to keep with the dog.

“Taking Dog to Veterinarian or Foster Home” Guidelines -
“First Contact – Position Description ...Continued ...

❖ **Taking the Dog to the Veterinarian or Foster Home after the pick-up is done:**

1. **Make an assessment of the dog’s health** to determine if it requires immediate Veterinarian Care of, if it is healthy enough to go directly to a foster home. When in doubt, always go to a Veterinarian Office. If dog is picked up after most veterinarian offices are closed, go to the Emergency Veterinarian Clinic.
 - If dog is in great health and does not need veterinary assistance, the dog will go directly to a foster home (only if veterinary records have been provided.)

If Veterinarian Care is Required – Take the dog to the closest Veterinarian Office/Hospital (preferably a club vet if available and convenient.) If it is after hours and in bad health, go to the Emergency Veterinarian Clinic.

1. Explain you are bringing in a dog you rescued on behalf of the Southeastern Newfoundland Club and that you need the dog’s health checked.
2. Provide the **Veterinary Treatment Protocol form** to the veterinarian for authorization of treatment protocol.
 - Any treatment or care outside the scope of the “Veterinary Treatment Protocol” form must be discussed with and cleared by the Rescue Chair prior to treatments.
3. **Fees & Payment** - Do not agree to cost of treatment without an estimate or without prior approval of Rescue Chairperson.
 - Instruct veterinarian to call the Rescue Chairperson to obtain SENC Rescue’s credit card number to bill the charges to.
 - Rescue Chairperson will provide veterinarian office the credit card number and report it to SENC treasurer.
4. **Medical Records** - If they were available on the dog and the paperwork shows proof of vaccinations and they are current, then instruct veterinarian to just de-worm and conduct heartworm test along with a basic health exam (i.e., listen to heart, get weight, stool, check for ear infection, skin and coat condition, etc.)
 - Share records with veterinarian but make certain you get them back!
5. **Micro chipped?** – Scan dog to verify whether or not the dog is micro-chipped. If not, have dog micro chipped.
6. **Length of Stay in Hospital** – The dog may stay at the Veterinary Hospital for approximately 2-3 days for observation if necessary.
7. **Obtain a copy of the billing receipt.**
 - Mail all veterinarian receipts to SENC Rescue Chairperson for approval to:
 - Provide reimbursement to First Contact or Rescue Volunteer – if expenses were personally incurred on behalf of SENC Rescue;
 - Match up to the Credit Card statement for proper audit trail of expenses.

Note: If *Rescue Volunteer* has performed this duty, inform *First Contact* person about the statistics of the “New Rescue” dog.

"Taking Dog to Veterinarian or Foster Home" Guidelines -

"First Contact – Position Description ...Continued ...

❖ **Call Foster Family and Rescue Chairperson with status of dog's details and estimated date of arrival to Foster Family Care.**

1. Make arrangements to deliver dog to Foster Family Care.

❖ **Complete Paperwork Process:**

1. Collect all hard copies of the paperwork and send to the Rescue Chairperson.
 - Contents include originals of:
 - Owner Relinquish Form
 - Veterinarian Records
 - Transportation Form (if required)
 - AKC papers, if available
 - Pedigree, if available
 - Originals of all bills/receipts that SENC will be responsible for payment.
2. After dog has been adopted, *Adoption Committee Person* will need to call *Administrative* person to provide name of Adoption Family.
3. Micro chip paperwork must be filled out with the corresponding information:
 - Rescue Chair's address, SENC as first owner, Adoptive family as second owner.

Other Situations (Not a New-Rescue)

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❖ **When first contacted, if call is not about a Newfoundland dog needing rescue:**

1. **Adoption Inquiries** – Refer adoptive queries to SENC website to obtain the Adoptive Form, or mail hard copy of Adoptive Form
2. **Caring for a Newfoundland Questions** – Refer person to NCA's website or send information from the Reference materials; i.e., housebreaking a puppy, chocolate poisoning, Pano, etc.
3. **Health Related Questions** – Unless you are a veterinarian, always refer them to their veterinarian for medical direction. This eliminates any liability exposure to SENC and assures the dog receives the best care from a knowledgeable person.

This information has been compiled by the Southeastern Newfoundland Club, as part of their comprehensive rescue program. We are grateful for their generosity in sharing all of their hard work.- NCA 2006