

## FIGZ Poodles Puppy Selection and Placement Policy

We place on temperament first, above color and sex. It is about finding the right home/family for the puppy. Since we breed primarily for service and therapy dog temperaments, after 3 weeks of evaluations and the completion of the Volhard and Avid Dog tests at 7 weeks of age, we select the service dogs from the litter. The remaining dogs are placed in pet homes, first come, first pick, from the temperaments that match the family.

The temperaments right for the families are determined by the information provided by the families via the application and phone interview. For this reason no home/family will be approved nor any puppy reserved until we have a completed application. (Just like obtaining a car, house, boat, loan, credit card, etc.). The questions asked on the application may seem silly or pointless but again are very important to determine which puppy should go where.

Matching a puppy to a family has multiple variables. NEVER are one of those variables the family's race, color, religion, sex, sexual preference, gender identity, familial/marital status, or national origin. Some examples of Family/Puppy placement are: If one puppy tested out shy and showed separation anxiety tendencies, this puppy should be placed with a work-from-home family, or a family with a limited number of hours away from the puppy, as this puppy could get stressed causing it health issues or destructive behaviors. If one puppy is showing strong dominance with its litter mates, this puppy is best placed in a home without small children as the puppy may try to overpower and possibly be aggressive with the young children. A puppy with a high drive and high energy level would do better with a more active family, hiker/runner, or who would do performance sports with the puppy, whereas a puppy with lower drive and energy would do much better with a family that spends more time relaxing, goes on long road trips or would leave the puppy home during work hours.

We have found that most families use our temperament assessment as a guideline to limit their puppy selections down to a few puppies, then pick from those few, based on personality. At about 5 weeks of age their personalities start to show. We can have a variety of personalities within the same litter. There will be the more dominant/pushy one, the goof-ball, the serious worker, the lazy couch potato, and the one that acts like a cat. We encourage our approved families to visit the puppies during the Puppy Party around 6 weeks of age. This is a great time to start getting a feel of what they will be like and which ones stand out to the family.

Additionally puppies go through 2 fear periods when they are young, then again as they mature. The first one, and the strongest one, at about 5 weeks of age, could alter their personality and behaviors for life. While we have seen these changes in personality and behavior happen to the puppies, we have also noted that the temperament of the puppies seems to stay relatively unchanged once set in, at about 7 weeks, through adulthood. For these reasons, we have families wait to select their puppy until the puppies are approximately 7 weeks of age, and after the completion of the Volhard test.

Puppies will go to their new homes around 8 weeks of age. We have found that at 8 weeks of age the puppy is looking to bond with someone, therefore, puppies cannot be held for an extended period of time. It is critical for their social development that they depart within a reasonable timeframe and join their forever family. There may be a time when a puppy from the litter may not have been selected due to family emergencies or the last puppy available not matching the family's need/want. In these cases, we will turn to our waitlist to see, of those who match the temperament, are any of them ready for a puppy now. We also list the puppy on Good Dog's website and social media pages. Again, our goal is to match the puppy to the right family, not simply sell a dog. No deposits are taken on the puppy until the application has been approved and we have confirmed the puppy is a match to the family. Then we will, as before, use a first-come approach for families selecting the puppy. All other approved applicants are given the choice to be added to the waitlist to establish picking order for following litters.