

Foster Guide Book

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Contact Names and Numbers

The Foster Program Coordinator works Sunday through Thursday from 8am to 5pm. Feel free to contact her with questions, concerns, or to schedule Foster animal veterinary check-up for sick animals.

Foster Program Coordinator:

Haley Beavers

Work: 972-744-4480

Cell: 713-876-0069

Email: haley.beavers@cor.gov

The Foster Program Coordinator is also on-call 24/7 for **emergencies** and time sensitive questions at the numbers listed above.

In the event of an emergency during business hours any day of the week, where you cannot contact the Foster Program Coordinator, you can contact the Richardson Animal Shelter.

Richardson Animal Shelter:

972-744-4480

Hours:

Sunday: 12 pm – 5 pm

Monday-Friday: 10 am – 7pm

Saturday: 10 am – 5 pm

Address:

1330 Columbia Drive

Richardson, TX 75081

Thank you for opening your heart and home to one of our shelter's animals. You are giving young, injured, sick, abused and under socialized animals a chance to grow or heal to help them get ready to find permanent homes. Your work not only helps the animal that you will have in your care, but it opens up more room in our shelter to help many more animals.

HOW Foster WORKS

- 1) The Foster Coordinator will periodically post to the Richardson Animal Shelter Foster Group (Facebook) with pictures and descriptions of animals needing foster homes. Included in the post will be the age, quantity (if it is a litter), and any special needs the animal has.
- 2) When you see an animal that would be a good match for your household and lifestyle, you simply respond to the Facebook post letting the Foster Coordinator know. Please include the **date and time that you would like to pick up the animal** and **what supplies you will need**.
- 3) The Foster Coordinator will respond and let you know that an appointment has been made and the staff and supervisor of the shelter are expecting you.
- 4) You will pick up the animal at the shelter where it is staying and any supplies you will need. Staff will give you a printout of the animal's medical information, including when to bring it back for booster vaccinations (every 2 weeks for kittens/puppies).

**If you do not use Facebook, feel free to email or text the Foster Coordinator directly to see what animals need a foster.

Items Our Organization Will Supply:

The number of foster animals our organization is able to support is limited by the annual resources available to the program. Foster caregivers are encouraged to donate supplies for their own foster animals in order to maximize the number of animals fostered by our organization each year. Some supplies are available to give or loan to Foster caregivers who require them in order to foster. The following is a list of supplies recommended for the care of your foster animal. Please let us know if there is anything that you need.

- Food and water bowl
- Dog or Cat Food – provided by the shelter when available.
- Crate (For cats get a large dog crate to accommodate the litter box, bed, and food.)
- Baby gates or exercise pens when available. Supply is limited.
- Bedding (blankets, towels, dog beds, etc.)
- Flea comb/brush if needed
- Toys
- Collar (stays on the dog at all times) & Leash
- Training treats
- Litter box and litter
- Newspaper or Puppy Pads
- Medications

Wish List Items

These are supplies that you may find useful while you are fostering. They are always in demand for the program. Purchasing your own is recommended.

- **Unscented Baby Wipes** – Sometimes called “Natural” or “Hypo-Allergenic” these wipes are best for cleaning the messy bottoms and faces of little puppies or kittens.
- **Puppy Potty Training Pads** – While there are few things that are absolutely certain in life, one thing is that puppies are messy! Potty Pads make cleaning up much easier and help train puppies to “go” in a certain area making them much more adoptable!
- **KMR brand Puppy or Kitten Formula** – Just like with adult dogs, it is important to keep puppies on a consistent diet. This is the brand of formula that we choose to feed our bottle babies. We appreciate donations of any size that this formula is available in! *(Once opened, the formula should be kept in the fridge or freezer!)*
- **Bottle Kits** – Bottles and nipples should not be reused from litter to litter. In the spring and summer these kits are in very high demand! We use both the 2 ounce and 4 ounce bottle kits.
- **Digital Scale** – Puppies and kittens cannot be spayed or neutered until they are at least two pounds and two months of age. A small digital scale is very important for tracking the growth of the little ones!
- **Heating pads or Heating Disks**– Young puppies and kittens cannot regulate their own heat, so it is important to keep them warm.
- **Exercise Pens of Any Size** – Fosters must be able to keep the foster animals safely away from their own personal pets. Crates are great for certain situations, but sometimes are too small. Exercise pens are wonderful for exercise and play time!
- **Enzymatic Cleaners** - such as Simple Solution or Nature’s Miracle – These cleaners are very useful in getting rid of any evidence of accidents from our tiniest of fosters. We love that foster volunteers want to take these animals into their home, but we understand they would like to keep their home fresh and clean.
- **Odoban Disinfectant and Deodorizer** – This cleaner is a great disinfectant and deodorizer for any surface and any mess pets may make in your home.
- **Clumping Cat Litter**

FIXIN' TO FOSTER:

Preparing Your Home for Your Foster Pet

It is important to ensure that your home and Foster room are safe; animals can and will do the most unlikely things.

How to Dog Proof A Room

Walk into the room that you plan to use and confine your foster dog, and ask yourself:

- *Is there room for the crate (dog's safe place)?* A crate is not a place of punishment, but a safe haven for your pet. Be sure to put it in a quiet, low traffic part of the room. Put a bed or blankets in the crate so it's a comfortable place for your pet to rest.
- *Is there quick access to the outside for bathroom breaks?* Potty pads are a good option if this is not possible. They can be placed in the room "just in case."
- *Is there anything that can be chewed, such as drapes, couch, rugs, shoes, etc.?* If there is anything of value within reach of the puppy, move it. Chances are that will be the first thing that they chew on.
- *Are there exposed electrical wires?* Use zip ties or duct tape to make them inaccessible for chewing.
- *Is there anywhere the dog can hide? Will you be able to get the dog out if hidden?* Block off areas where your pet can hide out of your reach. Feeling safe is important, but getting stuck behind furniture is not helpful to you or your pet.
- *Are there coffee tables with objects that can be knocked off by a wagging tail?* Removing knick-knacks and "nice things" from the room is always a good plan.
- *Are there plants in the room?* If so, check the list of toxic plants in this manual. Plants should be kept out of reach from puppies and dogs. Even plants that are non-toxic can make your dog vomit after eating them.
- *How will I clean the floors?* Carpets are hard to keep clean with little ones or messy animals, an ideal space should have hard wood, laminate, tile or concrete flooring. Putting a tarp down is always recommended, regardless of what type of floors you have.
- *Can the dog get into the cabinets or closets?* We keep many poisonous and dangerous items under the sink and valuable items in closets. Out of sight, out of mind does not apply to animals! If there is a way in, they will find it.

How to Cat Proof A Room

Walk into the room that you plan to use and confine your foster cat, and ask yourself:

- *Where will I keep the litter box so that the cat can access it and it will be easy to clean?* Keep the litter box away from the food and water bowls as they don't like to eat and potty in the same place, can you blame them?
- *Is there anything that can be chewed, such as electrical cords or plants? (Check the poisonous plant list later in this manual.)* Cats are curious and will chew on most anything. They can also jump 5 times their height, so putting things up high isn't really an option.
- *Is there anything that can be knocked off and broken, such as knick knacks or dishes?* To guarantee the safety of your treasured items, remove them from the room.
- *Is there anything that can be ruined if it is scratched or climbed on?* Move or cover these items while your foster is in your home.
- *Is there anywhere the cat can hide? Will you be able to get the cat out if hidden?* Blocking off areas where a cat can hide out of your reach will save you and your foster cat a lot of stress in the long run.
- *Is the room peaceful and quiet?* Cats need human companionship, but they also need periods of peace and quiet.
- *How will I clean the floors?* Carpets are hard to keep clean with little ones or messy animals, an ideal space should have hard wood, laminate, tile or concrete flooring. Putting a tarp down is always recommended, regardless of what type of floors you have.
- *Can the cat get into the cabinets or closets?* We keep many poisonous and dangerous items under the sink and valuable items in closets. Out of sight, out of mind does not apply to animals! If there is a way in, they will find it.

Poisonous Household Items

Outside Hazards

- **Antifreeze that contains ethylene glycol** has a sweet taste that attracts animals but is deadly if consumed in even small quantities; one teaspoon can kill a seven-pound cat. Look for antifreeze that contains propylene glycol, which is safe for animals if ingested in small amounts. Ethylene glycol can also be found in common household products like snow globes, so be sure to keep these things out the reach of animals.
- **Cocoa mulch** contains ingredients that can be deadly to pets if ingested. The mulch, sold in garden supply stores, has a chocolate scent that is appetizing to some animals.
- **Chemicals used on lawns and gardens**, such as fertilizer and plant food, can be easily accessible and fatal to a pet allowed in the yard unsupervised.
- **De-icing salts used to melt snow and ice** are paw irritants that can be poisonous if licked off. Paws should be washed and dried as soon as the animal comes in from the snow.
- **Cans and garbage** can pose a danger when cats or smaller dogs attempt to lick food from a disposed can, sometimes getting their head caught inside the can. To be sure this doesn't happen; squeeze the open end of the can closed before disposing.
- **Traps and poisons.** Pest control companies frequently use glue traps, live traps and poisons to kill rodents. Even if you would never use such methods to eliminate rodents, your neighbor might. Dogs and cats can be poisoned if they eat a rodent who has been killed by poison (called secondary poisoning).

Indoor Hazards

- **Cedar and other soft wood shavings**, including pine, emit fumes that may be dangerous to small mammals like hamsters and gerbils.
- **Insect control products, such as the insecticides used in many over-the-counter flea and tick remedies**, may be toxic to companion animals. Prescription flea and tick control products are much safer and more effective. Pet owners should never use any product without first consulting a veterinarian.
- **Human medications such as pain killers** (including aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen), cold medicines, anti-cancer drugs, anti-depressants, vitamins, and diet pills can all be toxic to animals. Keep medication containers and tubes of ointments and creams away from pets that could chew through them, and be vigilant about finding and disposing of any dropped pills.
- **Poisonous household plants** include azalea, dieffenbachia (dumb cane), lilies, mistletoe, and philodendron, among others. A complete list is included at the end of this manual.
- **String, yarn, rubber bands, and even dental floss** are easy to swallow and can cause intestinal blockages or strangulation.
- **Toys with movable parts**—like squeaky toys or stuffed animals with plastic eyes—can pose a choking hazard to animals. Take the same precautions with pets as you would with a small child.

- **Rawhide dog chews** may be contaminated with Salmonella, which can infect pets and humans who come in contact with the chews. These kinds of chews should be offered to a pet only with supervision, as they can pose a choking hazard as well. Only give your pets rawhides made in the USA.
- **Holiday decorations and lights** pose a risk to cats and dogs. Keep these items out of the reach of animals, and if possible, confine your pet to an undecorated area while you are out of the home.

Kitchen Dangers

- **Chocolate** is poisonous to dogs, cats, and ferrets.
- **Alcoholic beverages, Hops (used in home beer brewing)**
- **Apple seeds, Apricot pits, Cherry pits, Grapes, Peach pits, Raisins**
- **Avocados, Onions and Onion Powder,**
- **Candy (particularly chocolate, which is toxic to dogs, cats and ferrets, and any candy containing the sweetener Xylitol)**
- **Coffee (grounds, beans, chocolate covered espresso beans), Tea (caffeine)**
- **Macadamia nuts, Walnuts**
- **Mushroom plants**
- **Mustard seeds**
- **Potato and Tomato leaves and stems (green parts)**
- **Rhubarb leaves**
- **Salt**
- **Yeast dough**
- **Fumes from nonstick cooking surfaces and self-cleaning ovens** can be deadly to birds. Always be cautious when using any pump or aerosol spray around birds.
- **Leftovers such as chicken bones** easily shatter and can choke a cat or dog.

WHILE THEY ARE WITH YOU:

Expectations and Care

Dogs

When you first arrive home with your foster dog or puppy, confine them to a single room such as a kitchen or family room where you spend a large part of your day, as dogs need to spend as much time as possible with you.

Use a baby gate or close doors to block off the entrances to other rooms. By keeping the dog in one room, you're helping prevent "accidents" that may occur because of stress or adjusting to your routine. Use a crate in this room for times when you are away from the house.

Show the dog or puppy where it is acceptable to go potty. If it does use the proper area for going potty be sure to reward heavily. This will help teach the dog what your routine is.

Show your pet where their food and water is. They need their own dishes, away from your pets' so that there is no concern over resource protection from any of the animals. Also, show them what toys they can play with so they will at least have an idea of what is acceptable to chew on.

Be sure to be consistent with training and expectations of behavior. It does not help a dog if you let them jump all over you for attention on the first day because you just want him to feel loved and then later refuse attention for such behavior. Teaching manners properly through positive reinforcement does not make a dog feel unwanted or unloved.

For the Safety and Well-Being of Your foster Pet:

- Place your foster dog indoors in a crate or other secure location.
- Spend as much time as possible with your foster dog.
- Place your foster dog in a room where the temperature is comfortable and the area is dry.
- Keep your foster dog **on a leash at all times** when outdoors unless in your secured, fenced yard. Do not ever leave a foster animal unattended in your yard, even if it is securely fenced.
- Place puppies indoors in a kitchen (you may want baby gates), bathroom, mudroom or laundry room with hard floors.
- Keep your foster animals separated from your own pets during the first days in your home, or for the entire time, if one of them is sick.
- Supervise your foster dog or puppy when they are with your personal pets.
- Ask about the availability of exercise pens and baby gates. We have a limited supply but will supply them when available.

- Keep foster dogs away from strange dogs. Foster dogs should not be put in a position of possibly fighting with a strange dog, reducing their chances for adoption.
- Off leash parks can be dangerous for dogs, particularly those recovering from surgery or illness or under socialized pets. These parks are not a suitable place for outings with your foster animal.
- Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and **must not be isolated from you.**
- Taking puppies with you to visit friends or family is not advised. Puppies are highly susceptible to illness which they can pick up anywhere.

Cats

When you first arrive home with your foster cat or kitten, confine them to a single room where you plan to keep his or her litter box. Provide the cat with food, water and bedding. Adolescent and adult cats normally jump up on high surfaces, so consider how accessible breakable objects are. Some cats chew on exposed wires, so cover them or consider a place where they cannot access them.

By keeping the cat in one small room, except when you can watch him, you're helping prevent "accidents" that may occur because of stress or adjusting to your home.

You may choose to keep your foster cat in a large dog crate containing a litter box, food, water, bedding and toys when you aren't available to watch him or her. Ask the Foster Coordinator if you think this would be useful.

For the Safety and Well-Being of Your Foster Pet:

- Keep your foster cat indoors in a quiet room or other safe location.
- Spend as much time as possible with your foster cat.
- Place your foster cat in a room where the temperature is comfortable, and the area is dry.
- Keep the litter box in an accessible location.
- Keep the litter box clean. We flush the toilet each time we go, cats like a clean place to go too!
- Keep your foster animals separated from your own pets during the first days in your home, or if one of them is sick.
- Supervise your foster cat or kitten when they are with your personal pets.
- Keep your foster cat within the safety of your home; the outdoors is not a safe environment for any cat.
- Kittens should be handled and spend lots of time around humans for socialization purposes and **must not be isolated from you.**

Introducing Your Foster Pet to Your Own Pets

- Keep in mind that due to the medical and/or behavioral condition of some foster animals, it may always be necessary to keep them separate from your own animals.

- If possible, a neutral territory is always the best place for new introductions of animals.
- If introductions are done at your home, take your foster dog to the yard to sniff and eliminate first. Then put the foster dog in its new room and let the resident dog out into the yard to investigate the smells left by the new dog. At that point, introductions can be made outside. This can also work in a room of the house for cats.
- If there are multiple dogs in the house, introductions should be made one-on-one.
- Behave normally. Letting the animals know that you are fine; they are fine; everything is fine!
- Remain alert and make the introductions gradually and calmly.
- Leave leashes on the dogs initially so that you can get immediate control.
- Give your own pets LOTS of love and praise.
- Go slowly with your foster pet as he/she may have been through a stressful surgery, abusive situation or a lot of recent changes.
- Give your foster pet a chance to adjust and begin to build confidence by making your home a sanctuary for him/her to begin healing.
- Remember that some cats may not adjust to other pets easily and may need to remain separated while in your home to allow them to rest and get ready for adoption back at the shelter.
- Hold the leash loosely as you would normally; holding the leash too tensely during introductions can cause dogs to react with defensiveness.
- Do not force foster and family pets to interact. If they choose to avoid each other, allow it.
- Allowing initial interactions where the animals are safely separated can be incredibly helpful. Keeping one pet crated or on opposite sides of a fence can be a great place for an introduction so that each animal feels safe.
- Introduce animals in a large area so they do not feel cramped. This also makes it easier to separate them, if necessary.
- Ask a friend or family member to help out. One person for each animal is a better ratio if it doesn't go well.
- Many small, short meetings which build to longer time together can help relieve stress. You do not need to have everyone together all the time from the first moment your Foster animal comes home.

Feeding Your Foster Pet

Feeding Schedule

Create a consistent schedule for feeding your foster pet. Feed at the same time every day. Create a separate space for your foster animal to eat so that he/she will feel comfortable. If you have other pets at home, **feed your foster pets in a separate room** and close the door - this will help prevent any arguments or worries over food. **Do not feed any "people food."** You do not know what the adoptive family will want to do, so

don't start a habit that they will have to break. By feeding only dog food, you are discouraging begging.

It is not uncommon for animals to be finicky eaters when they are in a new environment. If they do not eat heartily for the first day or so and are otherwise acting healthy, do not fret! Feel free to contact the Foster Coordinator if you are concerned. Sometimes adding water or chicken broth to the food will make it more palatable. Avoid adding too many goodies to their food as we don't want them getting into any habits that will be hard to change later. (You can pamper them, just don't spoil them rotten!) ☺

Amount of food

Feeding will depend on the age and size of your foster dog and the veterinarian's advice. In general feeding will be as follows:

- **Adult Dogs:** dry adult dog food twice a day, once in the morning and once at night.
- **Nursing Mothers with Puppies:** dry puppy food (extra calories), three times a day.
- **Adolescent dogs** (4 months-1 year): dry puppy food, twice a day
- **Weaned puppies** (6-8 weeks-4 months): dry puppy food three to four times a day. Moisten the food with water or puppy formula if needed to get the puppy to eat.
- **Un-weaned puppies** (4-8 weeks): canned food at 4 weeks. Introduce dry puppy food at 5 weeks and gradually change toward mostly dry food week by week 6. At 8 weeks, the puppies should eat straight dry kibble. Puppies of this age need to be fed four times a day.

kitten weight and feeding chart

AGE	WEIGHT	AMOUNT PER FEEDING	SCHEDULE
0-1 week	50-150 grams	2-6 ml	Every 2 hours
1-2 weeks	150-250 grams	6-10 ml	Every 2-3 hours
2-3 weeks	250-350 grams	10-14 ml	Every 3-4 hours
3-4 weeks	350-450 grams	14-18 ml	Every 4-5 hours
4-5 weeks	450-550 grams	18-22 ml	Every 5-6 hours
5-8 weeks	550-850 grams	(weaning; offer ample wet food)	Every 6 hours

Weight of Puppy (pounds)	2-4 Months	4-9 Months	10-12 Months
2	½ cup	3/8	1/3
5	1	7/8	2/3
8	1 ½	1 ¼	1
10	1 ¾	1 ½	1 1/8

20	3	2 ½	2
40	5	4	3 ¼
60	6 2/3	5 ½	4 1/3
80	8 ¼	6 ¾	5 ½
100	9 ¾	8	6 ½
120	11 ¼	9 ¼	7 1/2

Weight of Adult Dog (pounds)	Cups of Dry Food
5	3/8 – 5/8
10	2/3 – 1
20	1 ¼ - 1 2/3
40	2 – 2 2/3
60	2 2/3 – 3 2/3
80	3 1/3 – 4 2/3
100	4 – 5 1/2

Weight of Kitten (pounds)	1-4 Months	4-6 Months	7-12 Months & Mothers
1	¼ cup		
2	3/8	1/3	
3	½	3/8	
4	5/8	½	
5	¾	5/8	½
10		1 1/8	7/8
15			1 1/8

Weight of Cat (pounds)	Cups of Dry Food
5	¼ - 1/3
10	3/8 – 5/8
15	5/8 – 3/4

What to Expect from Your Foster Animal

Allow time for adjustment. It may take some time, though it usually takes about 24 hours for a dog to settle in, sometimes longer. Cat may take a week or more. Watch their behavior closely. On the average, Foster parents have their foster animals for 2-4 weeks. While this amount of time will not be long enough to fully train your foster pet, it will be enough time to give him a good foundation for his new family. Ask the Foster Coordinator before beginning to train your foster animal. Your foster dog may have been traumatized or stressed in a variety of ways before he came to you, so we need to be careful about how he is handled. You'll be teaching him that people are good and can be trusted. You should handle and work with him every day. If he shows any signs of aggression or fear (growling over food or toys, biting, or hiding), contact your Foster Coordinator.

Children and Your Foster Pet

Children under 12 years old should NOT be left alone and unsupervised with a foster pet. Do not allow children to behave with the foster pet in a manner you would not want the child to behave with a younger sibling. Teach children to leave a foster alone when he is eating, chewing, sleeping, or any time he is in his crate. Allow your foster pet to have its space. Observe its behavior and if it is moving away from a child or animal, allow it to be alone. If its space is not respected, it may feel threatened.

Positive Potty Training

Be patient with your foster animal. Even housetrained adult animals will make mistakes - especially if they've been at the shelter for a long time and have been going to the bathroom in their kennel. Be sure to take it out every 15 minutes when it first gets home and reward for good potty habits so that it can learn your routine and what is acceptable. You can make trips out less frequent as the pet continues to do the right thing, but be careful of making too large of leaps in time. **Set your foster pet up for success so you both can be happier!**

If there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some animals may "mark" out their territory. This action should be re-directed immediately by bringing the dog outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer on the areas where the foster dog "marked" to increase the odds that he will not smell that area again.

You can begin to houstrain a puppy as soon as they can walk well. Even if you bring home an adult dog that is house trained, you will want to follow these guidelines for the first couple of weeks or days as necessary, as the dog adjusts to its new situation and to your schedule.

Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate. It could be the backyard, side yard, or newspaper. When you have determined where he should do his business, take him to the same place every time, and tell him to "go potty." Take him out when he wakes up, after he eats or drinks, after a play session, or at least every two hours.

Puppies should go out every hour. Stand with him for 5 minutes. If he eliminates, praise him. If he doesn't go in five minutes, take him back inside, place him in his crate, and try every 15 minutes until he goes. After he has urinated and defecated you can allow him to play.

Supervise the puppy closely while you're inside. If he starts to go, scoop him up quickly and take him to the approved spot. Keeping him confined to the room that you are in with gates, doors or leashing him to you will keep him from going in a quiet area of the house without your knowledge.

Praise when he finishes. If he goes in the house while you're not paying attention don't correct him, but remember that puppies have to be watched when they are loose in the house. Make sure you learn what he does before he relieves himself so that you can get him outside in time. Most dogs sniff the floor and either walk quickly or go in a circle just before they relieve themselves. If you see your foster dog doing this, quickly take him outside! Clean it up and go back to your schedule. Use an odor neutralizer to get rid of the smell.

Never put the dog's face in his mess, or yell at him after the fact. He won't understand you, and you will be teaching him to fear you. A common result is that the dog or puppy will find a hidden place in the house to relieve themselves, such as in the dining room or guest bedroom.

Housetraining Cats

Most cats prefer to relieve themselves in a litter box, but they may not remember where it is if they are given too much freedom too soon or if your house is large and he is on the opposite end when the urge hits. For the first couple of weeks or days in your home, a foster cat or kitten should be enclosed in a small room where his litter box is any time you are not watching him. This room should also contain bedding, toys, food and water on the opposite side of the room from the litter box.

Some cats will not use a litter box that is soiled, even a little bit, so it is important to scoop the litter box every day or twice a day, and completely clean it once a week. If a cat was used to going outside before he came to our organization, he may not want to use a litter box, but many of these cats will use the litter box if you sprinkle grass clippings or leaves from your yard over the top of the litter. Use yard scraps that have not been exposed to lawn chemicals! **Do not allow a foster cat to go outside!** Talk with the Foster Coordinator if you have problems with the cat not using the litter box even if confined.

Quality Time with Your Foster Pet

Lots of human contact is important for recovering, sick, injured or neglected animals. Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies and kittens.

Attention/Playtime is a reward for your foster pet. Be sure to give your foster pet several minutes of playtime periodically through the day. If you have a shy or fearful animal, do not throw toys toward him or her, because he may think you are throwing things at him and become more fearful. When giving a dog a toy or treat, try to have him sit before giving it to him. That way he has to work to get the toy or treat - making the toy a reward.

If you're fostering puppies or kittens, **make sure they have lots of new experiences**, so that they are well socialized and will be adaptable as an adult. Since it's best not to take puppies out in public until they are fully vaccinated, bring new experiences to them. Have friends over and invite children over to play. Always supervise playtime with children and dogs closely! Take your foster puppy in car rides (crate them for safety) to get used to the car and not just going to the Vet. Keep in mind that puppies need to go to the bathroom frequently so be sure they eliminate before you go on a car ride, and keep the ride brief, since they will have to go again soon.

Off-leash Areas – NO OFF-LEASH PARKS

All foster dogs are required to be on leash at all times, and keeping a dog leashed in a dog park is risky. **DO NOT bring puppies to any park.** Puppies are not yet fully vaccinated and can easily pick up a virus, particularly the Parvo virus, through contact with feces and urine in areas where other dogs congregate.

How to Make Your Foster Pet More Adoptable

Our homeless animals benefit greatly from the exercise (exception of any medical condition), basic training, special love, and any attention you give them. Providing them with basic training and manners will increase their adoptability. Shy animals will benefit from your patience, a consistent routine and slowly exposing them to new people to build their confidence. Puppies and kittens need a lot of love, attention, and hand holding from humans to develop properly and feel secure. Puppies and kittens need socialization with other dogs or cats in your household. Read the handout on basic training for more tips on how to help your foster pet!

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL ISSUES

If you have any questions regarding your foster animal, **contact the Foster Program Coordinator**. They are on call all day every day and will get back to you as soon as possible. In case of an emergency **during business hours** and you cannot reach the Foster Program Coordinator, you can contact the Richardson Animal Shelter.

- **972-744-4480**

The Foster Program Coordinator gathers the needed information from the Foster volunteer regarding the health issues and schedules an appointment (if necessary) at one of our partner clinics.

Even if your foster animals appear healthy when you pick them up from the shelter, they may be incubating a disease. **It is very important that your companion animals of the same species be current on all vaccines for their own protection and well-being.** You may wish to discuss the fact that you are fostering with your veterinarian. Due to the increased chance of exposure to animals with diseases, your veterinarian might recommend vaccines that are not routinely given.

Signs and Symptoms of Pain and Illness

The best way to monitor your foster pet's health is to **know what is normal and report what is not. Veterinarians will always ask about food and water intake, energy level, and for a fecal sample.**

The foster parent should keep an accurate and detailed account of their animal's symptoms to help the veterinarian correctly diagnose and effectively treat the dog's or cat's illness or condition. Most illnesses are detected through a combination of various signs and symptoms:

Sneezing and or coughing	Green mucus from the nose or eyes
Squinting or crusting over of eyes	Gagging
Wheezing	Tiring easily
Vomiting	Diarrhea
Straining to urinate or defecate	Bleeding from any part of the body
Twitching abnormally	Loss or decrease of appetite
Change in attitude or behavior	Lethargic or depressed
Breathing heavily	Rectal temperature over 102.5 degrees

If your foster animal develops severe or bloody diarrhea, severe vomiting or is very lethargic, contact the Foster Coordinator immediately.

Common Illnesses and Medical Conditions

- **URI**- Upper Respiratory Infection can infect dogs and cats. Cats cannot give URI to dogs, nor can dogs give it to cats, but it can be spread within the same species. Symptoms include sneezing, coughing, discharge from the nose or eyes, lethargy, loss of appetite and elevated temperature.
- **Diarrhea**- Generally, feces should be brown and formed. Diarrhea can be a symptom of many different illnesses and parasites. Diarrhea can also be caused by overfeeding, especially in puppies. If your foster animal develops diarrhea, you will need to bring a sample of the most normal part of the stool into the Animal Care Center so that the necessary diagnostic tests can be run. Feed a bland diet of cooked white rice and boiled chicken (3 parts rice to 1 part meat) until the diarrhea subsides.
- **Dehydration**- Animals with diarrhea can quickly become dehydrated. To check for dehydration, pull up gently on the skin at the scruff of the neck. If it bounces back quickly when you let go, hydration is fine. If it does not go back or goes back slowly, your foster animal is dehydrated and needs medical attention quickly.
- **Fleas**- Fleas can affect dogs and cats. A foster animal with fleas will be given a general flea treatment called Capstar or a flea bath depending on the severity of the fleas and the age of the animal. **Do not use any over the counter flea treatments.** If you notice fleas within a week of having the animal in your home, call the Foster Program Coordinator. Although we do try to prevent fleas, we recommend that all of your personal pets be on a flea preventative such as Frontline or Advantage.
- **Worms**- Your foster will be treated for worms before coming to your home. If you detect worms in your foster's stool, contact the Foster Program Coordinator to make arrangements for treatment. If possible, get a picture of the worms or a stool sample, so the Foster Coordinator can identify the parasite. Tapeworms resemble a grain of rice, and roundworms resemble spaghetti.

Other Signs that Your Foster May Be Sick

- Ears: discharge, debris, odor, scratching, crusted tips, twitching or shaking.
- Eyes: redness, swelling or discharge.
- Nose: runny, thickened or colored discharge, crusty.
- Coughing, sneezing, vomiting or gagging.
- Shortness of breath, irregular breathing or prolonged/heavy panting
- Evidence of parasites in the stool, strange color, blood in the stool, or lack of a bowel movement (constipation).
- Loss of appetite or not drinking as much water as normally would.
- Weight Loss.
- Strange color of urine, small amount of urine, straining, dribbling, or not going as frequently as normal.
- Bad odor coming from mouth, ears, or skin.
- Hair loss, wounds, tumors, dander or change of the skin's color.
- Biting of the skin, parasites, scratching or licking the skin frequently.

If any of these symptoms occur over a prolonged period of time, please call the Foster Coordinator at 972-744-4480. It is incredibly importance to keep watch over your foster's health patterns and keep an accurate, detailed health record for the veterinarian's convenience.

Dog Temperature, Respiratory, and Heart Rate

A newborn puppy will have a temperature of 94-97° F which will eventually reach the normal adult body temperature of 101-102.5° F at the age of 4 weeks old. Take care when trying to take your dog or puppies temperature as the thermometer can easily be broken off in the canine's rectum. Also any form of excitement can cause the temperature to rise by 2-3° when the dog is actually in normal health. If your dog's temperature reaches 105° or above OR 96° or below please take him/her to the emergency vet immediately!

To take a dog's temperature, a digital thermometer should be coated in a lubricant (such as petroleum jelly) and inserted into the dog's anus. Insert the thermometer about one inch, but do not force it! Once the thermometer beeps, remove and clean the thermometer with alcohol.

Symptoms of **fever** in dogs:

- Panting
- Shivering
- Decreased energy
- Loss of appetite
- Red eyes
- Warm ears
- Coughing
- Vomiting

Symptoms of **heat stress** in dogs:

- Excessive panting
- Drooling
- Dark red gums
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of consciousness or mental dullness
- Uncoordinated movement
- Collapse

Immediate Care you can give a dog with Heat Stress/Heat Stroke:

- Bring dog to a cooler environment (preferably somewhere air-conditioned)
- Offer **cool** water (*NOT ICE WATER*)
- Soak the dog in **cool** water (*NOT ICE WATER*)
- If you have alcohol, pour it on the dog's paw pads
- Put the dog in front of a fan
- Take their rectal temperature every few minutes
- Once the dog's temperature drops to 103°F, remove the fan and stop applying water.

An adult dog will have a respiratory rate of 15-20 breaths per minute (depending on such variables as size and weight) and a heart rate of 80-120 beats per minute. You can feel for your dog's heartbeat by placing your hand on his/her lower ribcage just behind the elbow. Don't be alarmed if the heartbeat seems irregular compared to a human's heartbeat, it is irregular in many dogs. Have your vet check it out and get used to how it feels when it is normal.

Pain in Dogs

Dogs that are in pain will likely indicate that they are suffering by giving you clues as to where the area of discomfort is. For instance, a dog that has abdominal pain will continually glance toward their belly, bite or lick the area, and will not want to leave his bed. The dog may stand hunched-over or take the 'prayer position' which is when a dog gets down on its forelegs with the hind legs still standing, because of the pain in her abdomen area.

Dogs can't tell you that they are hurting or cry real tears, but a dog may vocalize their pain in a different way. A dog that is hurt suddenly (such as being stepped on) will cry out or whimper in pain. This also happens when an external injury or internal injury (such as an organ) is touched. Whining or vocalization that is unprovoked may be caused from an internal injury as well. Some breeds of dogs (such as the American Pit Bull Terrier) have a higher pain threshold and need to be watched more closely for signs of pain. Breeds with a high pain tolerance are more likely to endure the pain without vocalization.

Another clue to pain is a change in temperament. A dog that is in pain may show signs of aggression. Please take note of this before concluding that a dog has become vicious and let your veterinarian know so that the correct treatment can be administered. Also animals in general have days when they are just in a bad mood for no obvious reason. Take note of days of times that these mood swings occur as well as any events that might have triggered them.

Cat Temperature, Respiratory, and Heart Rate

A kitten between the ages of 2-3 weeks old will have a normal body temperature ranging between 97-100° F. 4-week-old kittens will have a normal body temperature range of 99-101° F. The normal body temperature range for cats <4 weeks is between 100.5-102.5° F. If your cat's temperature reaches 103° F or above, contact the Foster Coordinator. A fever higher than 106° F can cause organ damage.

To take a cat's temperature, a digital thermometer should be coated in a lubricant (such as petroleum jelly) and inserted into the cat's anus. Insert the thermometer about one inch, but do not force it! Once the thermometer beeps, remove and clean the thermometer with alcohol.

Symptoms of **fever** in cats:

- Loss of appetite
- Depression
- Lack of energy or activity
- Decreased drinking
- Hiding
- Decreased grooming
- Shivering or rapid breathing

Cats have an average respiratory rate of 20-30 breaths per minute. To evaluate your cat's breathing, they need to be in a resting state (not having just run around or exercised!). Their heart rate is typically 160-180 beats per minute.

Pain in Cats

Cats often disguise their pain so that it's difficult to tell they are feeling bad until they are very sick. Therefore, it is especially important to keep an eye on Foster cats' behavior. Cats that don't feel well may do one or more of the following:

- Hide or Sleep even more than usual
- Be irritable and avoid being touched
- Move around, unable to get comfortable
- Growl, hiss, swat or try to escape when you touch them or try to hold them.
- Stop eating
- Sit hunched up
- Stop grooming

If you suspect your foster cat or kitten is in pain, contact the Foster Coordinator for advice.

Behavior Changes

Behavior changes that are not associated with a change in the household atmosphere, such as jealousy over a new pet or child or adjusting to a new home and environment may be an indication of an illness. Signs of behavioral changes may be:

- Depression (decreased or ceased activity)
- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Sleepiness
- Trembling
- Falling/Stumbling

If your foster pet shows any of these signs, it needs to be kept under close watch for a few hours, or even a few days, until positive signs develop or it has returned to normal. Do not try to exercise the animal or put him in any situation that may cause stress. Our veterinarians will want you to keep track of when the symptoms first appeared, if they are getting better or worse, and whether the symptoms are intermittent, continuous, or increasing in frequency. Put your Observation Log to use and track any changes to show the vet.

The Scoop on Poop

Ideal poop should be:








- Firm, but moist.
- Not runny, watery or hard/crumbly.
- Brown colored
- Log-shaped


Adult cats should defecate about 1-2 times a day.

Adult dogs should defecate between 1-5 times a day depending on how many meals they eat.

While a kitten and puppies should urinate every few hours, they may defecate anywhere from 1-6 times a day.

Fecal Scoring System

			
<p>Score 1 – Very hard and dry; requires much effort to expel from body; no residue left on ground when picked up. Often expelled as individual pellets.</p>	<p>Score 2 – Firm, but not hard; should be pliable; segmented appearance; little or no residue left on ground when picked up.</p>	<p>Score 3 – Log-like; little or no segmentation visible; moist surface; leaves residue, but holds form when picked up.</p>	
			
<p>Score 4 – Very moist (soggy); distinct log shape visible; leaves residue and loses form when picked up.</p>	<p>Score 5 – Very moist but has distinct shape; present in piles rather than as distinct logs; leaves residue and loses form when picked up.</p>	<p>Score 6 – Has texture, but no defined shape; occurs as piles or as spots; leaves residue when picked up.</p>	<p>Score 7 – Watery, no texture, flat; occurs as puddles.</p>

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Diarrhea in Dogs and Cats

Diarrhea is defined as unformed or loose stools, usually occurring in large amounts and/or more frequent than normal. Diarrhea can occur for many reasons including:

- **Parasites**- intestinal parasites such as roundworms and hookworms are common, and typically treated with a standard dewormer. However, some parasites may require a stool sample to be examined by the Foster Coordinator.
- **Bacterial infections**- Diarrhea can also be due to bacterial imbalances of infections of the gut. Probiotics such as Fortiflora (spinkled on the pet's food) can help improve gut health.
- **Viruses**- Sudden onset of liquid diarrhea (especially when combined with vomiting, blood in the stool, and fever) can be a sign of panleukopenia/parvovirus, a highly contagious, acute virus.
- **Food issues**- sudden changes in the pet's diet can cause diarrhea. Premature weaning of bottle babies onto wet food can also cause diarrhea, as the body may not be ready to absorb the new proteins and complex nutrients found in meat. Do not feed your cat/kitten any cow's milk or dairy products!

Supportive Care for Diarrhea

Dehydration happens quickly when animals (especially kittens) exhibit diarrhea. You can combat dehydration by providing an electrolyte solution (such as Pedialyte) instead of water. If bottle feeding kittens, you can use unflavored Pedialyte instead of water when mixing their formula. For more extreme cases, subcutaneous fluids may need to be administered by the shelter staff. You may also be instructed to start the foster animal on a probiotic (such as Fortiflora) to support gut health.

Never give human medication to your foster pet! Many over-the-counter medications that work well for people are toxic to pets.

A bland diet of plain-cooked white rice and boiled chicken can also help your foster's stomach feel better. Canned plain pumpkin (not pie filling!) can also be added to their food to help soothe their stomach and remove excess water in their digestive tract.

Constipation in dogs/cats

If your foster goes 24 hours without pooping, don't panic- but do keep an eye on them and focus on trying to get them to poop. If they haven't pooped in <48 hours, they will most likely need to see a veterinarian. If the animal has signs of discomfort such as straining, bloating, crying when they defecate, lethargy or abdominal distension, veterinary care should be sought.

Supportive Care for Constipation

Make sure your foster has access to fresh water, and you can offer electrolyte supplements like Pedialyte. You can offer canned food or try adding broth or Pedialyte to their dry food to moisten it. Canned plain pumpkin (not pie filling!) is high in fiber and moisture and can also be added to their food. Exercise can also help by getting the gut moving!

Baby Kittens and Puppies Can't Poop on Their Own

It is important to understand that neonatal kittens and puppies (those less than 4 weeks old) may not be able to physically poop or urinate without assistance. They require stimulation, by gently rubbing their genitals in a circular motion with a soft

tissue or baby wipe. This stimulation signals the baby's body to push and encourages them to urinate and defecate. Puppies and kittens should be stimulated at each feeding to use the bathroom. Avoid harsh products like paper towels which can irritate their skin.

Hold the kitten/puppy steady with one hand, and gently rub the genital region in a circular motion with your soft tissue. Some people prefer to sit the puppy/kitten upright while others prefer to turn them on their back (belly-up) to stimulate them.

Urine should be a clear/light yellow color and should occur at every feeding. Puppies/Kittens should defecate at least 1-2 times a day and will have a yellow to light-brown colored stool (due to the formula).

After the puppy/kitten has gone to the bathroom, wipe their bottoms down with a wet cloth or baby wipe to keep them clean. They have sensitive skin and are susceptible to urine scalding if urine is allowed to remain on their skin.

Administering Medication

Administering Pills to Cats

If the pill can be given with food, try hiding it in a piece of food. A small amount of butter, tuna, cream cheese, liverwurst, canned food or semi-moist food like Pounce is often used. This method rarely works with cats. If your cat will not take the pill in food or cannot have food with the medication:

Have the pill out and in a convenient place.

Bring the cat to the place you will give the pill, while talking to him or her in a happy, light voice.

Ask to be shown how to correctly —scruff a cat.

Burrito Wrap:

Sometimes it is helpful to wrap the cat in a blanket or a large towel so just his or her head is sticking out.

1. Place the cat between your knees or at eye level on a table.
2. Hold the pill between your thumb and index finger of your dominant hand.
3. Using your other hand, gently but firmly grasp the cat's head from above with your thumb on one side and your finger on the other.
4. Tilt the cat's head back so he or she is looking at the ceiling. The cat's lower jaw will automatically drop a bit.
5. Place one of your free fingers from the hand holding the pill between the lower canine teeth (long front teeth) and push down.
6. Quickly place the pill as far back in the cat's mouth as possible, making sure it is over the hump of the tongue. Do not place your hand too far into the cat's mouth because it might gag.
7. Close the cat's mouth. Hold it closed, lower his or her head to a normal position and gently rub or blow on the cat's nose to stimulate swallowing.
8. You can use a syringe to squirt some water into their mouth after you've given the pill to encourage the swallowing.
9. Talk softly to and stroke the cat or give another type of treat.

Liquid Medication to Cats

1. Start with the burrito wrap: wrapping the cat's body and legs tightly in a towel leaving only its head sticking out.
2. Insert the dropper between the cheek and teeth while tilting the chin upward.
3. Slowly dispense the medication, remembering not to give it faster than the cat can swallow. The quicker you do this, the more cooperative the cat will be.

Refrigerated medication **MUST** be kept in the refrigerator.

Administering Pills to Dogs

If the medication can be given with food; the easiest way to give pills is to hide it in a piece of food. A small amount of butter, peanut butter, cream cheese, canned food or liverwurst is often used.

If the dog will not take the pill in food or cannot have food with the medication:

1. Have the pill out and in a convenient place.
2. Calmly approach the dog using a happy voice.
3. Sometimes putting the dog on a surface off the floor is best, but this requires assistance.
4. Squeeze behind the upper canine teeth and tilt the animal's head back so he or she is looking at the ceiling. His or her jaw will automatically drop a bit.
5. Place one of the fingers from the hand holding the pill between the lower canine teeth (long front teeth) and push down.
6. Quickly place the pill as far back as possible inside the dog's mouth being sure to get it over the hump in the tongue. Do not place your hand in the dog's mouth too far because it might gag.
7. Close the dog's mouth and hold it closed while you gently blow or rub his or her nose. This will stimulate swallowing.
8. You can use a syringe to squirt some water into their mouth after you've given the pill to encourage the swallowing.

Liquid Medication to Dogs-

1. Insert the dropper between the upper and lower teeth in the back and tilt the chin upward.
2. Slowly administer the medication while being careful not to go faster than the dog can swallow.

Always remember to praise the dog and even offer a treat after the medication. This will make administering medication easier in the future.

Applying Eye Drops and Ointments-

1. Before administering eye medication, be sure the eye is clear of discharge. You can use warm water on a cotton ball to gently clean around the eyes.
2. Use your thumb and forefinger to open the eyelid.
3. With your other hand, place 1-2 drops (as directed) or a small amount of ointment on the eye or the pink tissue around the eye.

The foster animal will blink and the medication will cover the entire eye. When applying medication to the eye, try to avoid the animal's direct line of vision when approaching and **avoid touching the eye with the container of medication.**

Follow Up Exams and Rechecks

Kittens and puppies will get their first round of vaccinations at four weeks of age.

Kittens and puppies must weigh 2 lbs. to be sterilized.

Some exams will need to be scheduled with a veterinarian or at a clinic (animals who are sick or just recovering from an illness, surgical recuperations, etc.) **You must call the Foster Program Coordinator during weekdays to schedule veterinary exams.**

It is critical that you keep any appointment you make. Please be prepared with the following information when you bring your foster animal to the vet clinic.

- Is the animal eating regularly?
 - Is the animal drinking regularly?
 - Any diarrhea?
 - Activity level?
 - Date of last medications given?
 - When were the last signs of illness observed?
 - **A fecal sample is always appreciated!**
- All veterinary care for your foster animal must be pre-approved by shelter staff and be done by one of our partner veterinarians. **Our organization will not reimburse you for any unapproved veterinary visits.**

Any illness contracted by owned animals is the responsibility of the foster parent and their own personal veterinarian. It is the shelter's recommendation to keep owned animals separated from foster animals to avoid contamination of owned pets.

Weekly Pet Health Checklist

Detecting potential health problems before they become serious can save your pet unnecessary suffering and save you great worry and expense. Once a week, see whether you can answer true to all of the statements in this list.

If a statement is not true, call the Foster Coordinator as soon as possible.

My Pet...

Is acting normally and is in good spirits.
Doesn't tire easily from moderate exercise
Has a normal appetite
Has not lost or gained much weight
Has not vomited
Produces normal stools
Produces normal urine
Doesn't drag bottom or chew tail excessively
Has a full coat with no missing hair or mats
Doesn't scratch, lick or chew excessively
Has healthy skin with no dry flakes, greasy feel, or bad odor
Doesn't have fleas or ticks

Doesn't have any lumps or bumps on body
Has clean ears with no debris or odor
Doesn't shake head or scratch at ears excessively
Has bright eyes that are free of matter
Has normal hearing and reacts as usual to environment
Moves and walks without stiffness or pain
Has healthy feet and short nails
Breathes without straining or coughing
Has normal thirst and drinks plenty of water
Urinate without straining
Has a moist nose that's free of discharge
Has pink gums with no redness
Doesn't sneeze more than 2-3 times a day

All pet owners and Foster Volunteers should be constantly aware of any changes in their pets' health.

Using this checklist **EVERY WEEK** will help ensure that your pet's basic health is being monitored, and alert you to any "out of the ordinary" conditions.

This information is for general guidance only. Should you have any concerns on any health issue relating to your foster pet, you should contact the Foster Coordinator as soon as possible.

Foster Coordinator • Office 972-744-4480 • Cell 713-876-0069

IT'S SO HARD TO SAY GOOD-BYE:

Returning Your Foster Pet

When Do Puppies and Kittens return to the Shelter?

If you're fostering puppies or kittens, you can return them to the shelter when they are eating freely on their own and weigh 2 pounds or more, with occasional exceptions for very small breeds. This is at about 8 weeks of age. If your pup is old enough but developmentally slow, under socialized, or undernourished, you may keep the pup for a while longer (please keep the Foster Coordinator updated). Keep in mind that puppies and kittens between 2-4 months of age are highly sought after by prospective families who visit the shelter.

What Happens if My Foster Animal Needs Foster Care Again After I Return Them?

If the shelter or veterinarian determine that the animal needs foster care again after it has been returned from foster, you will be contacted personally and offered the option to foster the same animal again.

What Happens if My Foster Animal Needs to Be Euthanized After Returning to the Shelter?

The Richardson Animal Shelter management carefully assesses each animal before making the decision to euthanize. Our decisions are based on the animal's quality of life now and in the future considering his situation, chances of recovery, and other indicators of suffering or wellbeing. The decision to euthanize is never made lightly. Once we have made the decision to euthanize an animal it is no longer available for adoption to staff, volunteers (including fosters) or the public.

The Foster Coordinator will contact you as soon as possible to let you know that the decision has been made and offer any support that they can.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Your Home

In order to prevent disease and parasite infestations in your home; thoroughly clean areas where the foster animal has stayed.

- Wash bedding in hot water, detergent and **bleach**.
- Discard non-washable surface toys.
- Disinfect all washable surfaces with a mild bleach and water solution (bleach/water ratio of 1:32 or 4oz of bleach per gallon of water is recommended). Bleach solutions should be prepared as needed, because they lose their strength after 24 hours. Bleach is inactive in the presence of organic matter so clean up dirt, hair, feces, etc. **before** using bleach to disinfect. **Bleach solution must stay in contact with the surface being sanitized for at least 10 minutes to be effective.**
- Vacuum all carpeted areas.
- Soak toys in bleach water for 20 minutes and scrub and bleach crates, carriers, scoops, food bowls and litter boxes.
- Clean any urine or feces soiled areas with an enzyme cleaner immediately to avoid residual odor (Nature's Miracle Stain and Odor Remover works well).
- Regularly clean up all waste in the yard to decrease the risk of spreading disease.

Quarantine Periods:

Sometimes an animal is sent into a home before evidence of a serious disease has manifested. Quarantine periods are used to allow infectious diseases to die off in the environment. This protects future foster animals from being infected with the virus or disease. Specific quarantine periods are as follows:

Feline Leukemia/FIV	3 days
Sarcoptic Mange	1 week
FIP or Canine Distemper	3 weeks
Ringworm	3 months
Panleukopenia or Parvovirus	8 months

If a foster animal is infected with one of the above illnesses, the foster parent will not be allowed to bring another foster into the home for the designated quarantine period.

Once you have returned your foster pet, you may not be able to take another foster animal home right away. There are a few reasons why taking breaks between foster animals is beneficial. It can help avoid foster "burn out." It allows fosters time to deep clean their foster areas at home and ensures that if your previous foster pet comes down with illness that you can care for it again.

Nine Ways to Become a Successful Foster Parent

1. Divide your time between your foster animal and your own animal and give each lots of attention and affection.

The animal you are fostering likely has special needs that require time and energy. The animal may have lived a difficult life before coming to your home; your love and attention will help to heal the animal's physical and psychological wounds.

2. Learn as much as you can about pet care.

Before you bring your foster animal home, learn as much as you can about caring for that animal. Read about feeding, grooming, and training. Study the warning signs that may indicate the animal needs veterinary attention.

3. Make your home pet-friendly.

Before you bring your foster animal home, make sure you "pet proof" your home. For example, remove poisonous plants and protect furnishings. Keep that animal's room warm and comfortable. Also, take steps to prevent the animal from escaping.

4. Keep your pets up to date on their vaccinations.

All your personal pets should be current on the vaccinations and flea/tick medication. Dogs should also be current on their monthly heartworm prevention!

5. Keep foster animals away from your own pets.

A foster pet may come into your home harboring contagious diseases. Even though your pets are vaccinated against many diseases, it's a good idea to keep the foster animal away from your pets as an added precaution.

6. Recognize your limits.

Fostering requires a great deal of time and energy – both emotional and physical. Don't overextend yourself by fostering animals too frequently; you may burn yourself out.

7. Return the animal to the shelter on time.

The shelter depends on you to make its program work. Be sure to return the animal to the shelter at the scheduled time. **If you or a friend/relative wants to adopt the animal you are fostering, that person must go through the shelter's adoption process – not yours.**

8. Understand that some foster animals will not survive.

Many animals that arrive at the shelter come from unknown backgrounds. Despite your best efforts, the animal you foster may develop a severe illness that cannot be treated. Do the best you can to help the animal but accept the fact that you cannot save them all.

9. Enjoy being a Foster parent!

Although fostering takes a great deal of time and commitment, it can be an incredibly rewarding experience. You are temporarily providing a needy animal with a loving home and helping that animal become more suitable for adoption into a responsible lifelong home.

RICHARDSON ANIMAL SHELTER FOSTER CARE PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City & Zip Code: _____

Telephone #: _____

Email Address: _____

Are you 18 years old or older? Yes or No

Please circle your living situation:

Renting Own your home Living with parents/homeowner

If renting, are there pet restrictions? If yes, what are they? _____

Are all members of the household agreeable to fostering? _____

Current Pets:

Type of pet	Age	Sex (spayed/neutered)	How long owned?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Circle what methods of communication you are comfortable with:

Phone (call) Phone (call/text) E-mail Facebook Messenger

Animals you would be interested in fostering:

(Please check all you would be willing to foster)

Adult Dogs Puppies Bottle Baby Puppies Pregnant or Nursing Dogs

Adult Cats Kittens Bottle Baby Kittens Pregnant or Nursing Cats

Sick or Injured Animals Long-term Hospice Care

Exotics (guinea pigs, rabbits, reptiles, birds, rats, etc.)

How many hours per day will the foster animal be left alone? _____

Where will the foster animal be kept while alone? _____

Are you able to keep your current pets separate from foster animals? _____

Are your personal pets current on their vaccinations? _____

Do you have access to reliable transportation? _____

If you are interested in fostering dogs/puppies, what type of yard/fence do you have?

How did you hear about the foster care program? _____

Please use this space below to share your history/experience with animals or fostering.

If you don't have any experience, tell us why you are interested in fostering!

FOSTER PARENT CONTRACT

For and in consideration of the use of the City of Richardson Animal Shelter Facilities of my participation in the City of Richardson Animal Shelter Foster Program and any instruction of training provided therein, the undersigned participant, parent or legal guardian for and on behalf of themselves and the above named participant, their heirs, executors, and assigns (collectively referred to as the "Undersigned") do hereby release, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Richardson, Texas it's officers, agents, employees, third party representatives and invitees (collectively referred to as the "Richardson") from any and all claims, damages, causes of action of any kind whatsoever, statutory or otherwise, personal injury including death, property damage and lawsuits and judgments, including court costs, expenses and attorney fees, and all other expenses resulting that the Undersigned has, or might have, known, or unknown, now existing or that might arise hereafter, directly or indirectly, from the Undersigned's participation in the City of Richardson Animal Shelter Foster Program, including but not limited to planning, organization and instruction by any Animal Shelter personnel, and other activities associated with Animal Shelter operations, including any error, omission, carelessness, negligent or intentional act by the Undersigned in connection therewith.

The Undersigned understands that the participation in the City of Richardson Animal Shelter Foster Program shall be under the direction and control of the Animal Shelter personnel and agree to strictly comply with all Animal Shelter rules, directives and regulations written or otherwise including any personal direction from the Animal Shelter personnel during any time the Undersigned is on or within the Animal Shelter or other City of Richardson Facilities. The Undersigned agrees to assume any and all risk associated with participation in the City of Richardson Animal Shelter Foster Program and an instruction or direction connected therewith.

The Richardson Animal Shelter (RAS) supplies a foster care program for animals that are not immediately adoptable. I understand fully that this animal(s) is/are temporarily in my care and belong exclusively to the RAS. I further understand that the purpose of this foster relationship is solely to provide care for this/these animal(s). Any determination made about this animal(s) must be approved by a designated RAS representative within the organization. I understand that when the animal(s) is ready to be available for adoption, I will bring it back to the RAS for placement (all animals fostered by foster parents are the property of the RAS and will remain so until adopted). Any and all placements will be made through the RAS and are subject to the same guidelines as any other adoption, and all fees apply. Foster parents are encouraged to assist in the placement process of their foster animal(s). If you have any questions, please contact the Resource Coordinator at (972) 744-4480. Foster parents understand that the RAS cannot guarantee placement of all foster animals. Foster animals that are not placed may be euthanized due to health or behavior. The RAS will make every attempt to re-foster an animal if additional care is needed.

I have attended or will attend the foster care orientation, and have read and understand the Foster Care Program guidelines and agree to the policies and procedures of the RAS while I have a foster animal in my care.

NOT FOLLOWING THE POLICIES OR PROCEDURES MAY RESULT IN DISCONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE RAS FOSTER CARE PROGRAM.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print full name _____