

Contact Information

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Longmont Humane Society

9595 Nelson Road, Longmont, CO 80501

303-772-1232 x 234

(If no one answers in the Foster Department you can dial "0" and have a department staff paged)

Monday – Sunday 7:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

After Hours:

Andrea Lawless, Foster Care Coordinator - 303-819-1494

After Hours IF you cannot reach Andrea and ONLY in an emergency:

Poison Emergency - 1-800-332-3073 or 303-629-1123

Animal Emergency Center of Longmont - 303-678-8844 - 230 South Main St., Longmont, CO 80501

Please take the copy of your foster agreement with you as this will help with the paperwork and identify you as an LHS foster parent. Emergency Center personnel will also try to contact us before proceeding with any treatment of the foster animal.

Emergency Situations

An emergency situation requires immediate action. An example of an emergency situation would be if a kitten fell off a dresser and broke its leg. General health concerns such as diarrhea, vomiting, not eating or drinking, lethargy, etc. are **NOT** emergency situations and should be discussed with a member of the foster care department during regular shelter hours (7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.). Contact a foster department staff member with any health concerns – **do not wait until it becomes an emergency!**

NON-EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Andrea Lawless

Foster Care Coordinator

303-772-1232 ext. 234

foster@longmonthumane.org

Tracy Rebouche

Assistant Foster Care Coordinator

(same contact information)

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Foster Program Information

The Longmont Humane Society (LHS) Foster Care Program provides temporary homes for animals that are sick, injured, too young, or have behavioral issues that prevent them from being adoptable in their given state. The program has saved hundreds of lives of vulnerable companion animals over the years. It provides a chance at survival for animals that might not otherwise thrive in different circumstances.

Fostering is a huge commitment that requires a large amount of both time and energy. People who choose to foster are preparing the fostered animals for a successful future. By becoming a foster parent you are giving the gift of hope to animals in need. The staff and the animals at LHS can never thank you enough for your commitment to these special animals.

Foster Requirements:

In order to become a Foster Volunteer, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have the consent of all adults living in your household.
- Have the consent of your landlord.
- Have completed the LHS volunteer orientation and a foster care training class.
- Have current vaccinations for all household pets and negative FeLV tests for all cats in your home.
- Have a securely fenced yard to foster dogs.
- Agree to keep foster felines indoors at all times.
- Understand that LHS is not responsible for any damage, injury, or illness to animals or humans caused by a foster animal in your care.
- Understand that LHS remains the legal custodian of the animals; that all fostered animals must be returned to the Shelter at the end of the foster period; and that LHS cannot guarantee placement of all animals.
- Have the facilities (use of spare rooms, etc.) and willingness to **isolate** foster animals from your own animals.

Foster Volunteer Job Description

Objective: To provide a temporary home environment for animals that are not ready to be adopted and to provide care to enable the foster animal(s) to recover, heal, develop, and become adoptable.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide food, shelter, necessary medications, grooming, socialization and care for young, ill, or injured animal(s) in your home.
2. Ensure the safety of the foster animal at all times and isolate the foster animals from your pets as required.
3. Report any health issues to a member of the foster care department and bring animal(s) to shelter for necessary vaccinations or health care follow-up.
4. Return animal(s) to the LHS for adoption after foster care is completed.

Required Training:

1. Completion of a volunteer application and a volunteer orientation.
2. Attendance of a foster care training class.
3. An initial inspection of the area of your home you will be using for fosters. Additional annual inspections may be required.

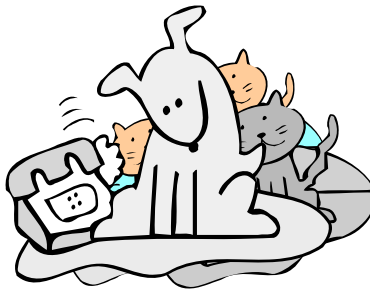
Supervision:

Direct supervision by the Foster Care Coordinator and Assistant Foster Care Coordinator.

Benefits:

- Opportunity to play a life-saving role in animal welfare and give the gift of hope to needy companion animals.
- Increased knowledge of animal behavior and care.
- Personal satisfaction and unconditional love from the foster animals.

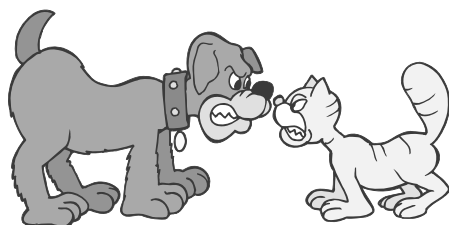
Process for Fostering an Animal



- 1. Placement:** Once an animal has been evaluated for foster care, the animal will be matched with a foster volunteer. As soon as you are available to foster please call the foster department. Even if we do not have any animals to send out to foster at that moment, which will be rare, your foster status will be recorded as available for future animals. The foster department will also contact foster volunteers to ensure quick placement. We ask that you return these calls as soon as possible, *even if you are unable to foster the animal*, as more volunteers may need to be contacted.
- 2. Preparation:** Once you agree to foster an animal or litter, the animal and its paperwork are prepared for pickup. An appointment is made for picking up the animal and all necessary supplies. All animals must leave the shelter in a carrier, or on a leash for dogs.
- 3. Foster Agreement:** When you arrive at LHS, have one of the foster department staff paged at the front desk. Please do not wander into the foster department as the foster staff are often in other areas of the building. You will receive the foster care instructions and the animal(s). If you are unable to foster the animal(s) for the entire time needed, contact the Foster Department as soon as possible so appropriate arrangements can be made. Foster animals must stay in the immediate care of the foster volunteer. Leaving your foster animal in anyone else's care is prohibited, unless it has been approved by the Foster Department.
- 4. Check-ups:** All check-up dates (for vaccines, de-worming, etc.) or spay/neuter dates are on the foster care instruction sheet. You are responsible for calling the Foster Department to set up vaccination, de-worming, or spay/neuter appointments.
- 5. Return:** At the scheduled date, the foster volunteers will return the animal to LHS. You must call the Foster Care Department and arrange a time for returning the animal. LHS reserves the right to reclaim an animal from foster volunteers at any time during the fostering period. Foster volunteers will be informed of the reason(s) why the animal needs to be returned and asked to bring the animal back as soon as possible.

Isolating Foster Animals

1. **For Your Pets:** Fosters may be incubating something that can be transmitted to your own animals. This can be anything from upper respiratory infection (URI), ringworm, mange, fleas, etc. Although we vaccinate all animals for common disease conditions, they may be incubating a disease or be a chronic shedder. Additionally, there are other diseases not covered by the vaccinations that could be transmitted to your pets.
2. **For the Fosters:** Your own animals may have something that, while not appearing to cause a problem for them, could cause disease in a young, ill, or stressed foster animal. Foster cats can catch as well as transmit intestinal parasites by “borrowing” the family litterbox.
3. **Stress:** It can be stressful to animals currently in the household to be continually meeting “new pets”. In the best case scenario, just when everyone is getting along well, the foster animals are returned to the shelter for adoption and your pets have lost their new buddies. When this occurs 7 to 8 times in a calendar year, it can be extremely confusing to your own animals. In the worst case scenario, when there is negative interaction and avoidance behavior between your pets and the foster animals, you can end up with ongoing behavioral problems with both parties.
4. **Attachment:** If you have NOT isolated, and the foster animals have integrated successfully into your household, it is much more difficult to return them to the shelter for adoption (there is always that feeling that maybe THIS ONE is the one to keep!).



Animal Proofing Your Home



Animals are curious creatures, many of whom are capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your foster animal in his or her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, you must animal proof your house!

Kitchens/Bathrooms:

- Use child proof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets.
- Keep medications, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves.
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet .
- Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes inside cabinetry or behind washer/dryer units.
- Make sure no foster animals have jumped into the dryer before you turn it on or into the refrigerator as you're shutting the door.
- Keep toilet lids closed.
- Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be).

Living/Family Room:

- Place dangling wires from lamps, VCRs, TVs, stereos, and phones out of reach.
- Keep children's toys put away.
- Put away knick-knacks until your foster animal has the coordination and/or understanding not to knock them over.
- Block spaces where your vacuum cleaner doesn't fit but a foster kitten could.
- Move house plants - which can be poisonous - out of reach, including hanging plants that can be jumped onto from other nearby surfaces.
- Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover.
- Put away all sewing and craft notions, especially thread.
- Secure aquariums or cages that house small animals like hamsters or fish to keep them safe.
- Minimize the wear and tear on your carpets by topping them with sheets, blankets, or towels - taking care not to leave gaps where curious kittens or might work their way beneath and injure themselves. These coverings can be removed between groups of fosterlings and cleaned in a more aggressive manner and with less cost than can carpeting.

Bedrooms:

- Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings, shoelaces, and buttons can cause major problems).
- Keep any medications, lotions or cosmetics off accessible surfaces.
- Move electrical and phone wires out of reach of chewing.

Garage:

Most garages contain too many dangerous chemicals and unsafe items to be an acceptable foster care site. Foster animals should never be housed in a garage unless discussed with the Foster Department.

- Move all chemicals to high shelves or behind secure doors.
- Clean up all antifreeze from the floor and driveway, as one taste can be lethal.
- Bang on your car hood to ensure that your animal (usually an “escaped” cat or kitten) or a neighbor’s cat has not sought the warmth of the engine for a nap.

Supplies

Provided Supplies:

- Wet food
- Dry food
- Kitten/puppy milk replacement
- Non-clumping litter (never use clumping litter for kittens)
- Paper litter boxes
- Medications

Additional Recommended Supplies:

- Carrier (for kittens)
- Crate/Kennel/Baby gate (for puppies)
- Waterproof tarp/Puppy pads
- Thermometer
- Litter pan
- Litter scoop
- Cotton balls
- Scale(s)
- Old blankets/towels
- Squirt bottle
- Newspaper
- Scratching post
- Flannel backed vinyl tablecloth(s)
- Ceramic/weighted bowls
- Stain/odor remover
- Toys -
Good Toys:
Kittens - plastic shower curtain rings, ping pong balls, paper bags, paper towel rolls
Puppies - kongs, tennis balls
Bad Toys: rubber bands, string, plastic bags, feathers, or any stuff toys with removable parts
- Brushes/combs/nail clippers
- Notebook

Purchased Supplies

Any supplies that are purchased for the care of your foster animal are considered donations to Longmont Humane Society and are tax-deductible. Keep any applicable receipts and the Foster Care Coordinator will give you a tax donation form.

Daily Duties

Daily Duties:

- Feed (may be doing 2-3 times per day or more).
- Clean bowls.
- Supply fresh water.
- Clean area where animal urinates and defecates; check for any problems (blood in urine, loose stools, vomit in or near litterbox ...).
- Groom coat.
- Examine paws.
- Check for health issues and call the foster care department if anything is abnormal.
- Look inside mouth at gums and teeth.
- Socialize and play with animal.
- Keep written record of the foster's weight, food intake, and medications given.

As needed duties:

- Weigh animals every other day for very young, once a week for older animals.
- Clean bedding.
- Trim nails.
- Write down all dates that vaccines and dewormer is due on your calendar, check regularly, and make appointments with a member of the foster care department as needed.
- Check your food and litter supplies and call a member of the foster care department when you need more.

Cleaning Procedures



As you set up your foster area, keep in mind the fact that animals are messy, especially kittens and puppies. You will spend a significant part of the foster period just mopping up messes. Obviously, cleanup is quicker, easier and more effective in an area with washable walls and a tile or vinyl floor than in one with flocked wallpaper, thick carpeting, heavy drapes, and upholstered furniture, so choose your foster area carefully. This will protect your companion animals and any future foster animals.

Keeping your foster area clean serves several purposes:

- It minimizes damage to your home
- It keeps foster animals cleaner and more comfortable
- It decreases objectionable odors
- It reduces the spread of disease

Routine Cleaning While Foster Animals are in Residence

Take the foster animals out of the room while cleaning and only use a gentle soap. Do not use any cleaners – the animals can ingest them when they are grooming themselves or off of surfaces. While you have the foster animals, a good thorough soap and water cleaning of your foster area and the items in it will go a long way towards keeping your foster animals healthy and free of disease. For felines, remove solid waste from litterboxes daily. Change litter and wash the litter box with soap and water weekly. If you are dealing with an outbreak of diarrhea consider using disposable cardboard boxes (available at the shelter). Clean food and water dishes daily – if animals are ill, use the dishwasher “sani-cycle” or soak dishes in weak bleach solution after washing and rinse thoroughly. Check bedding in the sleeping area and wash as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Between Groups of Animals

Between groups of foster animals, use bleach as a disinfectant. Be sure to remove all organic matter (hair, excrement, dirt, etc) with warm water before using the bleach disinfectant. Use a solution of **1 part bleach to 30 parts water** (1/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water). Saturate all surfaces and leave for 10 minutes. Then rinse all of the surfaces with water to remove the chemicals. Wash all bedding and toys in hot water, and consider using bleach in the wash cycle. Anything that can not be washed or disinfected cannot be used for future foster animals.

Kitten and Puppy Development

A great amount of time and effort is required to properly socialize kittens and puppies between the ages of 4 to 12 weeks. Daily socialization sessions are important in shaping the animal's future personality and emotional growth. Combine simple play with handling exercises. This familiarizes a kitten/puppy to having its paws touched (front and back), mouth opened, and ears touched. Combining this with regular grooming sessions and body massages helps prevent skin sensitivity or aversion to touch. Acquaint kittens/puppies to different sights, sounds, and textures.

Neonates

Neonatal kittens/puppies should be pink, firm, and plump. The ears and eyes are closed. Healthy kittens/puppies will curl their bodies inward. Temperature: 96-97°F

1 to 2 weeks

The eyes and ears open at approximately 11-15 days. The kittens/puppies can use their front legs to stand and walk shakily. At this stage handling sessions should be very short (1-2 minutes) and great care must be taken. Gently rub the animal's coat, toes, ears, and muzzle. Temperature: 100°F

2 to 3 weeks

Vision is poor but continues to develop until 3 to 4 weeks of age. The ears should be open. If the eyes are still closed but look sticky, GENTLY wipe them with a damp cotton ball to ease their opening. NEVER pull the eyelids apart. If the eyelids have not opened call the foster care department. Kittens/puppies should be crawling and their legs can now support their body weight. They are able to maintain their own body temperature. The deciduous incisors erupt followed by the canines. Increase the amount of handling time to 5 minutes and start to including clipping the nails when necessary. Temperature: 100.5 to 102.5°F (normal temperature to remain for the rest of kittenhood or puppyhood)

3 to 4 weeks

By 3 weeks kittens/puppies can walk fairly steady, can sit, and control their toes. Their vision and hearing are normal. They will start to investigate their environment and toys can be added at this time. Kittens/puppies are experiencing a large amount of sensory stimulation so it is important not to frighten the animals. A frightening experience at this age could make a life-long impression.

4 to 5 weeks

Kittens/puppies are walking normally and starting to climb. They become more playful and social. The deciduous premolars erupt. Continue to handle and socialize more and more.

5 to 8 weeks

By 5 weeks kittens/puppies should have all of their deciduous teeth. They are playing with toys and continue to become more and more playful. It is important to introduce the animals to as many different people as possible and have them handle the kittens/puppies gently. Supervised visits with other animals is also important. These visits should be calm and pleasant, otherwise it could traumatize the kitten/puppy. Expose the animals to mild

sounds and different areas/surfaces. Introduce them to a carrier and treat the kitten/puppy when it is in the carrier.

8 weeks plus

Kittens'/puppies' teeth change from milk teeth to adult teeth at about 3½ months.

Kittens: The kitten is almost fully developed at this stage, needing only experience. Female kittens become sexually mature between 4 to 12 months of age. Male kittens become sexually mature around 7 to 10 months. Begin to introduce the kitten to louder noises such as a vacuum cleaner, dishwasher, and/or washing machine. Only praise a kitten for positive reactions. Do not force it to approach a scary situation.

Puppies: The puppy is almost fully developed at this stage, needing only experience and training. Female and male puppies become sexually mature between 5 to 12 months of age. It is important to separate littermates at 10 weeks of age to promote bonding with people. Introduce the puppy to a crate and begin crate training. Introduce the puppy to the car either in a crate or on the floor. Begin to introduce the puppy to louder noises such as a vacuum cleaner, dishwasher, and/or washing machine. Play retrieving games, and hide and seek. Practice training techniques and leash walks with the puppy.

Juvenile Kittens and Puppies

One of the most common needs for foster care is for animals that come into the shelter too young to be placed directly into the adoption area. Kittens/puppies must be at least eight weeks of age and kittens must weigh 2 pounds to be eligible for placement. Being able to go into a foster home enables these animals to mature, to become socialized, and to begin their vaccination series. In most cases, young kittens/puppies are spayed or neutered while in foster care and, therefore, fully recover from the procedure before being placed for adoption. Young animals are usually placed into foster care with their littermates, but occasionally we will separate large litters or have a single orphan animal that needs care.

Facilities Needed

An easy to clean area separated from your own companion animals, yet not totally isolated from normal activities is ideal. Examples would be a bathroom, spare bedroom, heated laundry room, or basement area with finished walls. For kittens/puppies under 4 weeks of age, an enclosed shower stall or a bathtub lined with towels is safe and easily disinfected. If young kittens/puppies are having trouble climbing into a regular litter pan, try starting out with a shoebox lid, a shallow cardboard box, or metal 9" x 13" baking pan. Kittens need to be kept indoors throughout their foster period and in carriers when traveling to and from the shelter. Puppies **must** be supervised whenever they are outside and travel in carriers or on leash. Puppies cannot visit public areas (such as dog parks) or come into contact with other dogs.

Food

For kittens 3 to 5 weeks old provide a "slurry" of 1 part canned food to 2 parts warm water or kitten milk replacement formula. The same for puppies only with a puppy milk replacement formula. Serve the food at body temperature (98 to 100°F). Offer this mixture 3 to 4 times a day. Remove the slurry after about 15 minutes and discard. If a kitten/puppy is not eating call the foster care department immediately for alternatives and solutions. **NEVER** give cow's milk.

Health

Healthy kittens/puppies have moist gums, elastic skin, and clear, colorless urine. Dry gums, loss of skin elasticity, or yellow colored urine indicated dehydration. With any foster less than 3 months of age, it is important to pay attention to their weight. Kittens should gain **1 to 1 ½ ounces** every other day. Kitchen or postage scales work well for monitoring the weight of these little ones. Puppies should gain **¼ to one full pound** weekly depending on the breed. It is highly recommended to record weight, feeding schedule, amount of food eaten at each feeding, urine, feces, and any other important information. **If the kittens/puppies are not gaining weight and/or are not eating well - please notify the Foster Department immediately.**

Fading Kitten Syndrome

A “fading” kitten is one that appears healthy at birth but fails to survive beyond 12 weeks of age. Death usually occurs because of one of the following reasons: congenital defects, low birth weight, nutritional diseases from inadequate diet fed to the mother, infectious diseases, lack of antibodies from the mother, severe parasites, etc. Unfortunately, kitten death due to “fading” is not uncommon. Usually the circumstances are unavoidable. Remember it is not your fault! By being a foster parent you are giving an animal every opportunity to survive.

If an animal does pass away you must bring in the animal to the shelter for examination.

Mothers and Babies

We receive many nursing mothers with babies. Foster homes are needed to provide a safe warm environment where the mother can raise her young. Although the mother is caring for the babies, foster volunteers must closely monitor the progress of the litter and the health of the mother. They also provide socialization for the kittens/puppies and attention for the mother.

Feeding

Because milk production requires energy, nursing mothers require 3 to 4 feedings of wet food a day in order to make enough milk for their babies. Provide clean water at all times.

Facilities

A clean, warm, dry, quiet, out of the way area should be provided for the mother to raise her young. A nesting box is essential for her and her babies. The box should be big enough for the mother to comfortably lie away from the litter if she chooses but small enough so the kittens can reach her. The sides of the box need to be high enough to prevent the babies from wandering but low enough for the mother to be able to come and go with ease. Line the box with towels and/or blankets. Wash the materials frequently and examine them for any holes or frayed edges (throw away if there are any). Do not place any loose bedding (such as hay or shavings) in the box as they could be inhaled and obstruct breathing. The temperature in the room should be between 85-95 degrees F. If using a heating pad or electric blanket, place it underneath the nesting box and be sure it does not become too hot. Remember that the young cannot maintain their own body heat until they are 3 weeks old.

Weaning

Weaning should be a gradual process. The mother should take care of the weaning process herself but you will want to be sure you are supplying enough food for the nursing mother and weaning babies. Begin introducing the "slurry" mixture (1 part canned food to 2 parts warm water or milk replacement) when the kittens are 3 weeks of age. At 5 weeks the kittens/puppies should be reducing their intake of mother's milk. Once they are consistently eating the gruel gradually decrease the amount of liquid until it is just canned food. **NEVER** give cow's milk.

Drying Up

The mother's milk supply needs to be "dried up" otherwise the cat's mammary glands can become swollen and infected. To dry up the mother, withhold food for 24 hours and then add it back slowly each day. Follow the drying up schedule on the next page.

Drying Up Schedule

NO WET FOOD

Please feed dry food as follows:

Date:	Food Ration:
	No Food
	1/8 ration
	1/4 ration
	1/3 ration
	1/2 ration
	2/3 ration
	Full ration + WET OK
Always supply fresh, clean water	

Fostering Under Socialized Kittens

Under socialized, neglected, and frightened feral kittens may be the most challenging shelter animals to foster. They need specialized care and handling in order to qualify for the adoption program. These kittens may have never been inside a house or car, may not be litter trained, and may have never before experienced kindness from a human. Under socialized animals must be closely monitored to reduce the chance of escape or destructive behavior. They frequently require fostering for at least a month while they acquire the social skills that will make them treasured lifelong companions for a lucky family.

A quiet, confined environment is best for these kittens. A small space such as a playpen, dog crate, or small bathroom works best. If they are confined to a room, make sure to block off hiding spaces so you can access the kittens without having to chase them and cause additional stress. Give the kittens a safe place such as a tipped over box with a towel inside. Fearful kittens need a lot of handling – at least 3 times a day.

These kittens are very frightened and may hiss and “spit” at people. The more ferocious the kitten acts the more scared it is. Remember that in the eyes of these kittens you are a predator. The kitten may think it is fighting for its life and bite or scratch in defense.

Do not attempt handling when the kitten first arrives. The kitten needs to learn that their foster home is a safe environment. Visit with them frequently, move slowly around them, and talk to them. After two days place a small towel over the kitten, and pick it up in the towel. Gently pet the kitten, but be careful not to give the kitten the opportunity to bite. Let go of the kitten if it becomes aggressive. Give a treat after handling or feed it a meal afterwards. Playing with the kitten is a great way to break the ice. Do not stare directly at the kitten as this is a threatening behavior. Have different members of the family or friends play with the kitten (under these same guidelines) to prevent the kitten from bonding to just one person and still distrusting people in general.

Some will never respond to human attention no matter what is done and are not adoptable. These animals are either put into our barn cat program or humanely euthanized. The foster department staff is always available to discuss any policies with you.

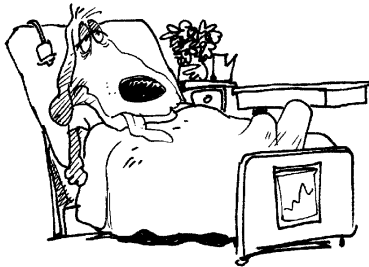
Fostering Injured or Surgery Recovery Animals

LHS also receives animals in need of extensive medical treatment. Our shelter veterinarian treats animals suffering from injuries as a result of being hit by a car, attacked by another animal, abuse, neglect, accidents, etc. The foster care period for an animal recovering from surgery may vary from a few days to weeks, depending on the severity of the injuries and treatment involved. These animals may require daily medications or special diets as well as regular vet check ups at the shelter. Many animals need complete “bed rest” in order to fully heal, and others will require some sort of rehabilitation exercise or physical therapy to regain strength or range of motion.

Facilities Needed

An easily accessed, easy to clean area, separated from your own companion animals. Some injured animals may recover more quickly in a quiet, secluded area of your home. Others might thrive being closer to the hustle and bustle of daily activity. Cats need to be kept indoors during the foster stay and in carriers while traveling.

Fostering Ill Animals



Shelter animals are frequently exposed to diseases that are contagious to other animals. These illnesses can affect animals of all ages and can include upper respiratory infection, mites (skin and ear), intestinal parasites, distemper, etc. The immune system of the infected animal may be compromised due to these illnesses and it’s important to place that animal in a secure, safe environment in order to recover fully. While fostering ill animals, it is likely that a foster parent will administer daily medication, provide a special diet, and ensure that the animal receives regular check ups at the shelter. Make sure the foster animal is kept in an easy to clean area that is completely isolated from your companion animals.

Troubleshooting

Litter Training

When a kitten is about 4 weeks of age, it will begin to explore the litter and eventually eliminate in it. Kittens do NOT have to be taught by their mother or by humans to eliminate in the litter. This behavior is instinctive. Do NOT take a kitten and move its paws back and forth in the litter. This may actually be an unpleasant experience for the kitten and may initiate negative associations with the box.

Location

Most people want to put the litter box in an out of the way place to minimize odor and loose particles. This may be undesirable to the cat. Do not put the litter box by something noisy like a furnace or washing machine. If you place the litter box in a closet, be sure the door is wedged open so the cat can get in and out. Some cats like to scratch the surface around the litter box and may find a cold cement floor unappealing.

Litter

Never use clumping litter for kittens younger than 12 weeks. It is important to scoop out feces daily, no matter how much litter you put in the box. Cats do not like litter than is more than 2 inches deep. Change the litter twice a week. Do not clean the box with strong smelling cleaners as this could cause the cat to avoid using the litter box. Washing it with soap and water should be sufficient.

Biting and Fighting

Biting

Kittens/puppies are naturally playful and need to release this energy. Having littermates helps with this but they still need regular interactive time with toys. Kittens/puppies may nip and bite during play or while being petted. To prevent biting, make sure the animal is getting enough play time; three times a day is ideal. Never encourage a kitten/puppy to play with fingers or toes. If the animal is about to “play” with your finger or toe, divert its attention with a toy so it is distracted from attacking you. Be gentle when petting the kitten/puppy and gradually increase its tolerance for handling by routinely touching the paws, tail, and belly. Stop petting the animal if s/he shows any signs of irritation such as nipping, tail swishing, growling/meowing, etc. If the kitten/puppy does bite you do not punish it with a nose tap, hit, swat, etc. Instead correct the animal by withdrawing, saying NO, clapping your hands, and blowing on its face. Calmly leave the room if the kitten/puppy does not stop biting.

Bite Incident

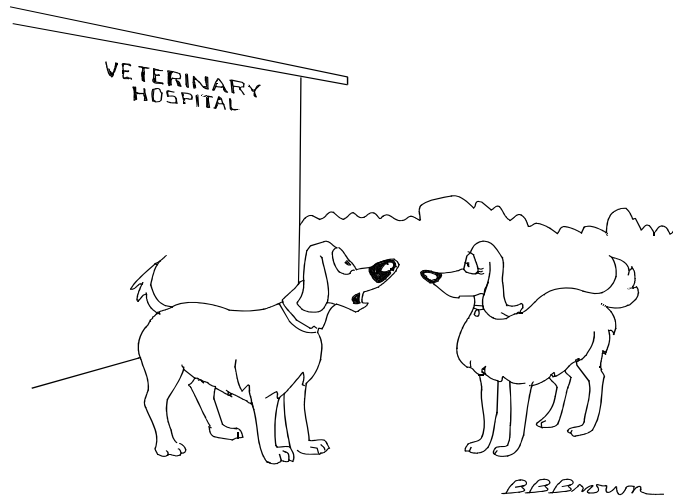
If a bite breaks the skin, clean and flush the wound immediately. All bites that break the skin MUST be reported to a member of the foster care department. Colorado law requires any dog or cat bites that break the skin to be reported to the Department of Health and the animal must be put on a 10 day quarantine period for rabies. If you are no longer comfortable fostering the animal it may be returned to the shelter. Do not withhold information about a

bite in fear that the animal will be euthanized - just because an animal bites does not necessarily disqualify it from being adoptable.

Fighting

Kittens/puppies play quite roughly with each other - including wrestling, kicking, and biting. This behavior is normal and, unless they are hurting each other, the play is harmless. To decrease the amount of fighting, increase the amount of human playtime with the animals. Interrupt fighting by clapping your hands or saying NO. Fighting becomes a problem when a kitten/puppy becomes wounded, it affects the appetite of one or more of the animals, and when an animal becomes stressed or fearful. Separating the kittens/puppies for brief periods of time may help. For any questions call the Foster Care Department.

Spay or Neuter Surgery



"Let me put it this way, Hazel. I'm no longer gender-specific."

All animals that are adoptable must be spayed or neutered. Specifically for kittens, the best situation after surgery is to return to the foster home for a recovery period.

Eligibility:

- healthy (no upper respiratory infection)
- received its first round of vaccines 2 weeks prior to surgery
- at least 8 weeks old
- kittens must weigh over 2 pounds

Kittens require 5 days to recover from surgery, female cats take 7 days, and male cats 5 days. Dogs and puppies are usually ready for the adoption floor the day after their surgery and often remain at the shelter once they have been dropped off for their procedure. All suture material used in these procedures is absorbable and does not need to be removed. After the animal has recovered from surgery call the Foster Department to schedule a time for the animal to return to the adoption floor.

The night before surgery, kittens and puppies 3 months of age and under should have access to their normal food and water. They can have a small breakfast with water the day of surgery. However, ALL food should be removed by 7:00 am. Adult animals should not have food or water after 9:00 pm the night before surgery. The animals will need to be brought to our clinic (located at the northeast corner of the building in the back) between 8 and 8:30 am. Cats/kittens need to be in a carrier, and dogs/puppies in a kennel or on a leash. They can be picked up from the clinic between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. that afternoon.

Health Issues

All animals at the shelter are evaluated for age, health, and temperament before being placed in a foster home. There are no guarantees that the animal will not get sick later on so isolation from your companion animals is crucial.

Many of the diseases that we deal with in a shelter environment have an incubation period. Your foster animal may have been infected with a disease before it came to the shelter and or before going to foster, but will not show symptoms until after you have brought it home. Below are some symptoms to look for.

Symptoms

Call IMMEDIATELY for the following symptoms (if it's after hours call an emergency number) :

- Vomiting blood
- Labored breathing
- Unconsciousness, seizures, uneven pupil dilation, or fainting

Other Symptoms - call during regular operating hours:

- **Vomiting** - more than 3 times
- **Dehydration** - To check for dehydration lift the skin between the animal's shoulders and drop back into place. If the skin drops back slowly or bunches up the animal is dehydrated.
- **Diarrhea** - Although common with young animals, if left unchecked it can lead to death. Get a sample of the diarrhea and call a member of the foster care department so a fecal can be run.
- **Fever**
- **Lethargy** or other behavior changes for more than 1 day
- **Weight loss** in animal eating normally, and failure to gain in young animal
- **Loss of appetite** for more than 2 days in adult animals, or for more than 2 feedings in very young animals
- **Trouble eating or mouth pain**
- **Excessive drinking** for more than 3 days in adult animals or for more than 3 feedings in very young animals
- **Increased urination, difficult urination, or inability to urinate** - Watch for sudden accidents in house, straining, bloody urine.

- **Sneezing** with or without nasal discharge for more than 1 day
- **Eye problems** - squinting, redness, swelling, or discharge
- **Ear problems** - ear rubbing, head shaking, scratching at ears, or ear discharge
- **Coughing** for more than 1 day
- **Limping**
- **Hair loss** with or without scabs, scales, crusts, scratching

Call the foster department to discuss any symptoms that your foster animal has during the shelter's operating hours of 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Do NOT wait until it becomes a crisis. When you call with health-related questions, we will need to know the animal's temperature, if it is vomiting, has diarrhea, is active or listless, and whether or not it is eating and drinking. Depending on the symptoms your foster is experiencing, we will set up an appointment with the shelter veterinarian or advise you as to what other course of action is appropriate. Occasionally, we will have you drop your foster off at the shelter in the morning so that our vet may observe/treat it throughout the course of the day. Any vet appointments with outside clinics **MUST** be made by shelter staff. Do not call about symptoms after hours unless it is an emergency (such as a broken bone).



General Care

Checking the Temperature

The normal temperature for cats is from **100 to 102.5°F**.

The normal temperature for dogs is from **101 to 102.5°F**.

You will need a rectal thermometer to take the temperature. Digital thermometers are best, as there is little chance of breakage occurring while the thermometer is in use. Use petroleum jelly to lubricate the end of the thermometer. Place the tip of the thermometer into the rectum of the animal and leave until the digital model beeps. If the animal is being uncooperative, consider enlisting the help of another person to distract and/or restrain it while the thermometer is in place.

Contact LHS staff immediately if the temperature is over 103.5°F.

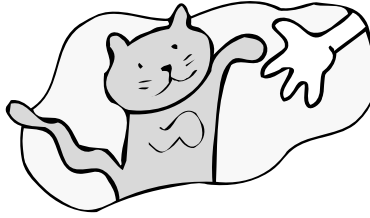
Nail Trimming

Get the animal accustomed to having its paws handled. Gently pet the legs and paws while giving it a treat and make the experience as pleasant as possible.

Felines: Apply pressure to the cats paw with your thumb on top of the paw and your index finger under the paw until the claws extend. Look for the quick or pink portion of the nail. Do NOT cut the quick as it will bleed and be painful for the cat. Cut off the curved tips of the nails weekly. If you are uncomfortable trimming a foster animal's nails call the foster care department to schedule a time for the animal to have its nails trimmed.

Canines: Gently squeeze the toe between your thumb and finger to extend the nail. Observe where the quick is located. The quick is the blood supply of the nail. If you cannot see the quick, cut the nail just in front of where it starts to curve downward. If you accidentally cut the quick, the dog will bleed and feel pain. Apply pressure to the nail with a cotton ball until the bleeding stops. If you are uncomfortable trimming the nails contact a member of the Foster Department.

Return and Adoption



When the fostered animal is brought back to LHS, the animal is given a health and behavioral evaluation before it is available for adoption. Foster parents are encouraged to provide a write-up about the animal for display on the animal's kennel. The write-up can be clever (but always honest) and should contain information about the animal's personality and behavior.

Adoption Process

Each adoption from LHS entails a questionnaire and evaluation process to ensure that the animal's needs will be met by the potential adoptive family. When a person is interested in a fostered animal, they contact an animal welfare counselor and/or a kennel tech. These staff members have been trained to do a thorough screening that includes landlord consent. All family members must meet the animal prior to adoption. Potential adopters are also told about the importance of diet, exercise, obedience classes and how to best introduce the new animal to other animals already in the home. We stress that it is best to keep cats indoors and not to have cats declawed. If foster parents feel the animal needs a certain type of environment, such as a six-foot fence for dogs, we encourage them to provide this information to the Foster Department. Animal welfare counselors do everything within their abilities to find the animal a loving, responsible, lifelong home.

When the animal is adopted, an adoption contract is signed and the adoption fee is paid. Handouts are given relating to common problems, supplies the animal may need or enjoy, obedience classes, etc. If problems do occur, new adopters are encouraged to call us so we may help them work on the problem area. Animals that have not been sterilized while in foster are spayed or neutered before going to their new home.

If a fostered animal needs to come out of adoptions for awhile (i.e., develops upper respiratory disease or kennel cough), the original foster parents may be contacted first to see if they would be willing to foster the animal again.

Sometimes foster parents know of people who might want to adopt their foster animal. Foster parents need to let these interested people know that they must go through the adoption process at LHS. Interested people can come in and fill out the adoption application. The animal welfare counselors will then be able to approve or deny the people based on LHS criteria for adoption purposes. Foster volunteers cannot tell these interested people that they will get an animal without the animal coming back to LHS and without the interested people completing the adoption process. Because of the nature of the foster program, we also cannot guarantee that every animal sent out on foster is going to qualify for adoption.

If the foster volunteers, themselves, want to adopt their foster animal, the standard adoption process and fees apply. They will need to fill out the adoption application and have it approved by the animal welfare counselor. When their foster animal has been returned and cleared for adoption, they will then be able to adopt the animal.

Returning Foster Animals

Foster volunteers need to understand that returning their foster animal to LHS can be a very emotional time, even under the best of circumstances. When polled recently, foster volunteers overwhelmingly said their least favorite part of the foster program was returning the animal and not knowing if the animal was adopted and to whom.

Everyone at LHS understands the mixed feelings foster parents have when returning their animal(s) to the shelter. Many staff members are also foster parents and have experienced these same emotions. Do not hesitate to speak of your feelings. **You are never alone.**

Every effort will be made to place your foster animal in the ideal home. You are always welcome to call LHS to find out the status of the animal. Privacy laws prohibit the shelter from disclosing the names of foster animals' adopters. However, the foster department staff will gladly give you any general information that the adopters have provided on their adoption profile.

Foster volunteers give the animals they care for the best gift anyone could give - the beginning to a happy life in a loving home!



Thank you Foster Volunteers !!!

Foster Follow-Up Questionnaire

Dear Foster Volunteer,

It is our goal to make your fostering experience as smooth and enjoyable as possible. In order to help us help you, please take a few minutes to fill out the following questionnaire at the end of your current foster period. Please give the questionnaire to the foster care coordinator. Thank you for your time and your invaluable efforts on behalf of our beloved animal friends.

Foster parent: _____ Telephone: _____

Foster period: _____ to _____

What type of animal(s) did you foster? _____

What did you feed your foster animal(s)? _____

If you administered a medication, what type was it and how often/long was the treatment? _____

Did you experience any difficulty with the health or behavior of your foster animal(s)? _____

If so, please describe the problem and any solutions you may have found: _____

Are you ready to foster again? _____ Do you need a break? _____

If so, for how long? _____

If you are not willing to foster animals again, please let us know why you have made this decision: _____

Please write down any questions for us or any ideas about how we may better help you as a foster parent: _____

Use back side, if needed.