



Potter League
Enriching Lives

FOSTER CARE MANUAL

A GUIDE FOR CATS, KITTENS, DOGS & PUPPIES

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Potter League Animal Care & Adoption Center

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DEAR FOSTER FAMILY,

First and foremost, THANK YOU! You are about to embark on a life-saving adventure that you'll never forget and become a hero to your foster animal! Our foster program exists to give young animals a chance to grow and to give injured, sick, or under-socialized animals an opportunity to heal. Since the program's inception, our foster families have saved thousands of animals. You are very special volunteers and are helping us insure that all animals have a chance at a new home.

Types of Animals That Need Foster Homes

- Puppies or kittens too young to be adopted
- Dogs or cats that need socialization & love
- Injured dogs or cats recovering from surgery
- Sick dogs or cats
- A mother with a litter of kittens or puppies
- Expecting cat & dog mothers
- Small animals with behavioral or health concerns
- Short term fosters

The information in this manual is important for you to have. Please keep this manual handy for quick reference.

Thanks and welcome aboard!

Potter League for Animals Foster Team



GET READY

Animal-Proofing Your House:

Animals are curious creatures, many of whom are capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest spaces. To protect your foster animal in her/his new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, animal-proof your house. The room should adhere to the following guidelines:

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 they haven't jumped into the dryer before you turn it on.
- Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be).
- Secured appliances (toilet lids closed).

Living/Family Room:

- Place dangling wires from lamps, DVD/Blu-ray Players, TVs, stereos, and phones out of reach.
- Keep kid's toys put away.
- Put away knick-knacks until your animal has the coordination and/or understanding not to knock them over.
- Check all those places where your vacuum cleaner doesn't fit, but your animal, especially a small one, does, for dangerous items like string and pins.
- Move house plants – which can be poisonous – out of reach, including hanging plants that can be jumped onto from other nearby surfaces.
- Be careful that you don't close your animal in closets or dresser drawers.
- Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover.
- Put away all sewing and craft notions, especially thread, needles, etc.
- Secure aquariums or cages that house small animals like hamsters or fish to prevent harm by another animal.

Garage:

- 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 to an animal.
- Bang on your car hood to ensure that your animal (usually cat/kitten) or neighbor's cat has not sought the warmth of the engine for a nap.

Bedrooms.

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

GET SET

Fostering a pet is a commitment that will affect your entire household. Discuss your plans for fostering with all individuals that will be interacting with the pet and make sure that everyone is on the same page for this life-saving endeavor. Planning things like where a litter box or whelping box will be, who will be doing the primary care-taking and preparing the home beforehand will make the entire process easier!

Everything you will need to care for you foster will be provided free of charge.

Check below for further tips on how to properly set up your new fosters environment.

Cats

- Indoors only (do not let your foster cat/kitten outdoors).
- A large crate or separate room (bathroom or large closet) is best to start.

Dogs

- Dogs should be kept indoors in a crate when unattended or a separate room/office.
- Dogs should be on a leash at all times when outdoors unless in a private secure fenced in area. Recommended fence height is six feet.
- Foster dog/puppies are not permitted to go to dog parks.
 - Dog parks can be extremely dangerous environments; there are no lifeguards or professionals at a dog park when conflicts arise
 - Not every dog is safe
 - While dogs are social animals, they are individuals and do not like every dog they meet
 - Dogs have a variety of play styles and these play styles can be conflicting and instigate fights

Puppies

- Indoors – kitchen or bathroom. Baby gate or corral provided upon request.
- A relatively warm and quiet indoor space in the home is the ideal place for your foster puppy.
- Remember that the majority of puppies in the foster program are not been house-trained, so choose a space that is easy to clean and disinfect.
- Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and should not be isolated.
- Puppies should be kept in a crate at all time when not under supervision. Crates/pens are provided.
- Outdoors – only if supervised by an adult. Puppies younger than 5 months should NEVER go to off-leash areas because they are not fully vaccinated.
- Puppies should not be exposed to other dogs or places frequented by other dogs due to the risk of diseases such as parvovirus.

Kittens

- Fortunately, kittens don't require a lot of space. In fact, for the first three weeks of life, they're content to sleep in a small carrier all day!
- For more mobile kittens, a small playpen can be set up anywhere—even if you live in a one-bedroom apartment. An ideal space is soft, temperature controlled, sanitizable, and separated from other animals.
- The kitten room should contain everything the kittens will need to eat, drink, eliminate, sleep and play.
- Have at least one bowl for water, one for wet food, and one for dry food. It is best to provide more bowls if you have several kittens so no one has to compete for access to food.
- Put the litter boxes as far away as possible from food, water and bedding.
- Be sure to provide enough boxes so that each kitten has a clean place to eliminate.
- Provide safe, disposable or easily sanitized toys to entertain the kittens when you are not with them, such as ping pong balls and wine corks.
- A scratching post or cardboard scratch pad will be necessary.

CHECKLIST

Remember, the Potter League is happy to supply whatever is needed for our fosters, but if you already have some things at home, be sure to let our Foster Coordinator know exactly what you need! Here are some things you should take stock of before bringing home a foster cat(s) or dog(s)!

Dog/Puppy

- ☐ Crate
- ☐ Bed
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Treats
- ☐ Puppy Pads
- ☐ Bowls
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Leash/Collar/Harness
- ☐ Towels/Bedding

Cat/Kitten

- ☐ Litter box
- ☐ Litter
- ☐ Scoop
- ☐ Treats
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Bowls
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Carrier
- ☐ Bed
- ☐ Scratching Post

GO! ANIMAL CARE GUIDE

Getting Acquainted with your Foster Dog or Puppy

Being in a new environment is stressful for most animals, and a normal reaction may be to hide.

Safe Haven

Allow your foster dog time to adjust to your home while being housed in a “safe haven” such as the crate provided or a separate room. Spending some quiet time sitting in the room with your dog, while offering high value treats such as cheese cubes, may help them adjust, and associate you and the space with good things like yummy treats!

Scared Dogs

Scared dogs may need some time to slowly adapt to you and their new environment. Let them approach you at their pace, and never force them to interact. Offering treats from a distance, or just allowing them to have some quiet time on their own may help with the transition. Scared dogs can dash out the front door in fear, and will be very difficult to recall. Allow the dog to investigate the home, always giving them the option to return to their safe place, such as their crate, or room.

Take It Slow:

Let your foster dog get used to you slowly. Sit in the room and have treats with you. Read a newspaper or a book out loud while you're sitting there so the dog gets to know your voice. Offer treats to your foster dog in moderation. Never stare directly at your dog or stand or loom over your dog as your dog may feel threatened. Lure with treats and gentle encouragement when going outside on leash. Scared dogs may be difficult to recall when out loose in the yard, will keep their distance, and may look for an escape route, it's best to keep them on a leash.

Fear Response

If your dog runs when you enter the room, tries to hide, slinks around the room with his body low to the ground, ears back, tail tucked, or growls or cowers, recognize that these are signs of fear. The dog may escalate to biting if he feels cornered with no escape. If the dog is not responding to slow interaction as described above, contact the Foster Coordinator immediately.

It's All Normal:

Some dogs may need less than a day to adjust; others may need days or weeks to become comfortable enough to explore the entire house without fear. This is normal dog behavior.

Getting Acquainted with your Foster Cat or Kitten

Being in a new environment is stressful for most cats, and a normal reaction may be to hide.

Safe Haven

Allow your foster cat time to adjust to your home while being housed in a “safe haven” such as a roomy crate or a separate room. A spare bathroom is ideal since there aren’t hiding spaces and it is easy to disinfect. Block off small areas where the cat may try to hide and get stuck. Spending some quiet time sitting in the room with your cat may help them adjust.

Scared Cats

Scared cats have been known to hurt themselves by wedging themselves inside air-conditioners, heaters, and radiators; behind ovens or inside ceiling tiles—or by dashing out the front door in fear. It is much safer to keep a frightened new cat safely in one cat-proofed room. Open up your cat carrier and let the cat decide whether she wants to explore or wants to remain in the carrier. Many times a cat will remain in her carrier for hours. Secure the door in the open position and keep the carrier covered so your cat feels secure.

Take It Slow

Let your foster cat get used to you slowly. Sit in the room and have treats with you. Read a newspaper or a book out loud while you’re sitting there so the cat gets to know your voice. Offer treats to your foster cat in moderation. Never stare directly at your cat or stand or loom over your cat as your cat may feel threatened.

When your cat is eating, drinking, using the litter box and moving around the room in a relaxed manner, he may be ready to explore more of the house (after the initial quarantine period).

Take It Slower

However, if your cat runs when you enter the room, hides, only eats or uses the litter box at night, slinks around the room with his body low to the ground, hisses, growls or cowers, these are signs of fear. He’s not ready to come out of confinement yet. Keep your cat confined and contact the volunteer director if there is no progress after one week.

It’s All Normal

Some cats may need less than a day to adjust; others may need days or weeks to become comfortable enough to explore the entire house without fear. This is normal cat behavior.

- **Never try to pull your new foster cat out of hiding. Instead, use toys or treats to encourage her to come out. If your foster cat still won’t come out, let her be.**
- **Cats need time to adjust to their new environment.**
- **To keep your cat or small animal safe and away from outdoor dangers, make sure your foster animal remains indoors at all times.**

DAILY CARE

CATS & KITTENS

Daily Care for Moms with Kittens

Most mothers, even first-timers, can take care of themselves and their offspring quite well. For the most part, you will leave mom and babies alone while observing for any signs of trouble.

Provide a nesting box for nursing mothers so babies can't get out but mom can when she needs some peace and quiet. Only half of the nesting box should have extra warmth added.

TEENY TINIES

The tiniest, most vulnerable kittens require gentle and frequent care.

NEWBORN		1 WEEK		2 WEEKS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• umbilical cord attached, eyes closed, ears folded• can't regulate body temp.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eyes closed, ears folded, no umbilical cord• eyes open at 8-12 days		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eyes completely open, blue color• wobbly on their feet

TEENY WEANIES

As kittens age, you'll help them reach important developmental milestones.

3 WEEKS		4 WEEKS		5 WEEKS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• incisors emerging, ears unfolded• discovering litterbox		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• canines emerging• vision improving; walking confidently		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• premolars emerging• weaning slowly onto wet kitten food

BIG KIDS CLUB

These social, independent, and coordinated kittens are almost ready for adoption.

6 WEEKS		7 WEEKS		8 WEEKS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all milk (deciduous) teeth have emerged• eating confidently		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• transitioning to adult eye color• coordinated and playful		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• once 2 pounds, kittens can be spayed/neutered and placed in their forever home!

Bottle Feeding Kittens

Unweaned kittens or kittens without a mom need to be fed with a bottle and kitten formula, which we will provide to you. Kittens should not be fed cow's milk or milk alternatives.

1. Thoroughly mix the powdered kitten formula with warm water according to the product's instructions. Test the temperature on the inside of your wrist; it should be comfortably warm, made fresh every 1-2 feedings, and free of clumps.
2. Place the formula in one of the bottles provided. Formula should just barely drip out.

3. Hold the kitten in a natural position with the belly facing downward. **Do not hold the kitten like a baby with the belly up, as this could lead to aspiration.**
4. Hold the kitten's head and body steady with your non-dominant hand, placing one finger on the throat to allow you to feel for swallowing. Gently introduce the tip of the nipple into the mouth with the dominant hand.
5. The kitten should roll her tongue like a taco and latch onto the tip of the nipple. Do not flood the mouth with formula; let the kitten drink at her own pace.
6. Allow the kitten to drink until she is full, or until she drinks an acceptable volume based on her weight.

Once you have a good idea of the kitten's age and weight, you will establish a simple care routine. This routine will be repeated every few hours according to the kitten's age, including overnight:

1. Gently stimulate to pee and poop.
2. Bottle feed.
3. Wipe the kitten down to ensure that the face and genitals are clean.
4. Monitor the kitten's weight and take observational notes.
5. Place the kitten back in their warm and safe space.

You'll notice that as the kitten gets older, the amount increases and frequency decreases. Use your judgment to adjust as necessary; for instance, if a kitten is eating less at each feeding, you may want to increase the frequency. Meet the kittens where they are.

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

Tips for Tricky Bottle Feeders:

- Make sure the flow is correct. If a nipple is too small or big, the kitten may not get a good latch.
- Make sure the formula is a comfortable temperature and has no clumps.
- Try gently holding the head in place and covering one eye. This helps the kitten focus and provides the comforting feeling of being nuzzled into their mother's belly.
- If a kitten is being fussy, you can try gently wrapping her in a blanket while feeding.
- Don't be discouraged if it takes you a while to become comfortable with bottle feeding—take it slow and remember to be patient with their tiny bodies.

Aspiration occurs when a kitten inhales formula into the lungs, which can lead to respiratory distress, pneumonia, and even death. To prevent aspiration, feed in the proper posture, and never squeeze formula forcefully down a kitten's throat. If aspiration does happen, stop feeding and help the kitten sneeze out the formula. Consult a vet immediately if respiratory symptoms arise.

Young Kitten Care

A kitten's survival depends on getting consistent nutrition and warmth. The mother's colostrum, which is the first milk produced, is vitally important to a newborn's cardiovascular system and defense against disease. Colostrum is rich in antibodies to help protect against various infections, but kittens can only absorb these antibodies and benefit from them for a short period after birth.

So-called "Fading Kitten Syndrome," when a newborn fades and dies despite adequate care, is usually due to either a genetic defect or lack of sufficient colostrum. For this reason, it is very important that newborns nurse as soon as possible after birth. If they do not find a nipple on their own, put their mouth close to one and hold them until they nurse.

Continued healthy nursing behavior is crucial for kitten survival. In order to tell if the kittens are nursing, put on exam gloves and gently pick up each kitten and feel for a round belly full of milk. A flat or concave belly indicates that the kitten may not be nursing. You should perform this check once or twice a day, always wearing your exam gloves.

Also, visually confirm that each kitten is actually latching onto mom. A gram scale works great to log each kitten's weight on your health monitoring sheet (found later in this guide). Healthy kittens should gain a little weight each day.

Daily Care for Kittens Transitioning to Wet Food (3-5 weeks)

Transitioning kittens should be fed "gruel," which is a pudding-like consistency mix of KMR or water and wet kitten food. They should be fed every 4-6 hours. Please notify the Foster Coordinator if you notice kittens not taking to the canned food. You are welcome to experiment with different consistencies but the gruel should be gradually thickened to get them ready for solid food. Leftover gruel should be discarded immediately if not eaten. Canned food that has not been made into gruel yet can be covered and refrigerated for up to 48 hours.

Once kittens have teeth, they could start to chew the nipple on a bottle, which can be very dangerous due to small pieces being ingested. This must be monitored closely.

Fresh water should be provided at all times for transitioning kittens.

To encourage a kitten to eat the gruel, place a small amount on your finger and place it on the kitten's tongue or lips. The goal is that she will eat on her own from a plate or bowl. This transition period can take days to weeks. A variety of wet kitten food is good to feed your kitten, but avoid fish & seafood flavors.

Small litter boxes should be provided at this stage with non-clumping litter. Kittens will eventually learn how to use a litter box on their own but accidents are common for the first few weeks. If they defecate outside, move the feces to the litter box. You can also place kittens inside their litter box after meals.

Daily Care for Kittens Eating on their Own (5-8+ weeks)

Kittens who are eating completely on their own will need to be fed wet food about three times throughout the day.

They should always have dry food and water available.

Don't forget to clean their litter box at least once day (and focus on and enjoy this socialization period!).

Adult Cats

Adult cats are fed twice daily. You will be provided with the appropriate food and instructions.

Adults should be in the habit of using their litter box consistently. The litter box must be scooped daily to ensure that the cat does not avoid it and urinate or defecate elsewhere.

Problem Signs

During the first two weeks, kittens should spend approximately 90% of the time eating and sleeping. If kittens are crying during or after eating, they are usually becoming ill or are not getting adequate milk.

A newborn kitten is very susceptible to infections and can die within 24 hours. It's up to us to recognize the signs in time to save them. If you observe these emergency behaviors, don't delay. Please contact of the Foster Coordinator immediately AND/OR take the kitten to the closest emergency hospital.

EMERGENCY SYMPTOMS:

- Hypothermia/hyperthermia
- Agonal breathing (gasping, open-mouth panting)
- Bleeding
- Refusal to eat for multiple feedings
- Extreme lethargy
- Odd vocalizations (cries of pain)

Grooming and Bathing

Adults

Groom your foster cat regularly (daily if possible) with a soft bristle brush. Brushing is an important part of routine care for pets and an important part of socialization for kittens. If you are comfortable clipping your foster cat's nail, please do so. If not, the Animal Care Center staff can help with this during one of your scheduled visits to the Animal Care Center.

If your foster cat requires bathing as part of the treatment plan, the Animal Care Center staff will discuss this with you as part of the Animal Care Plan. Otherwise, if you feel your foster cat may need bathing, please call and discuss with the Animal Care Center staff prior to bathing.

Kittens

Kittens should be kept clean and will often need bathing since they can be very messy.

Try to spot clean by only rinsing the kitten with warm water where he is dirty, such as his bottom. Make sure to not get a lot of water on his head, especially the eyes, nose and ears. If there is food stuck on his face, use a warm damp cloth.

Kittens cannot be put back into their home until they are completely dry. You can use a blow dryer on the lowest setting after towel drying.

Bathroom Business

Neonatal kittens under 4 weeks old must be stimulated to go to the bathroom. Mama cats will use their tongues to lick the kittens' genitals, stimulating them to urinate or defecate, and to keep them clean.

As a foster parent, you'll need to replicate this behavior with a soft, absorbent material like tissues, toilet paper, or baby wipes. Gently rub the kitten's genitals in a circular motion, continuing to do so until they are completely finished. Kittens should pee at every feeding, but may poop only once or twice a day. Stimulate kittens at every feeding cycle, and make sure you keep the area clean to avoid scalding and bacterial buildup on their sensitive skin.

What Does Healthy Poop Look Like?

Healthy bottle baby poop will be mustard yellow in color, and will change to brown as they wean. Good kitten poop should have a solid form—if it looks the shape of a miniature cat poop, it's a good poop! It sounds gross, but poop is an incredibly important indicator of the health of the kitten, so monitor it closely. The color, form, frequency, & even smell can all be signs of disease, parasites, or other health problems. Please refer to the fecal chart provided and contact the Foster Coordinator if you are concerned!

Litter Training

Around 3 weeks of age, introduce a shallow litter pan with a fragrance-free, non-clumping litter. Place the kitten in the pan frequently to help them remember to use it. It may help to stimulate them over the litter pan while they are learning. Kittens naturally understand the litter box, but it's up to you to make sure it's kitten-safe and easy to access.

Kitten Growth Milestones

Age/Weight	Milestones
Birth/2 – 4 ounces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eyes and ears are closed ▪ Sleeps 90% of the time ▪ Minimal handling
2 – 3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Umbilical cord falls off
4 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begins to purr
10 – 14 days/8 ounces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eyes and ears should be open ▪ Healthy kittens will be round and warm with pink skin and will rarely cry
2 – 3 weeks/12 ounces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baby incisors erupt, can begin to eliminate without help ▪ Will start crawling, standing and playing with littermates ▪ Begin regular handling ▪ Ready for deworming
4 weeks/ 1 pound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baby canine teeth erupt, beginning to walk but do not have great balance, will begin to groom themselves, able to regulate their body temperature ▪ Continue daily handling ▪ Ready for first vaccine ▪ Ready for gruel and may be ready for introduction of dry kitten food
6 weeks/1.5 pounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baby premolars erupt ▪ Running, playing, using the litter box, grooming themselves ▪ Should be eating dry kitten food, supplemented with canned
8 weeks/ 2 pounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ready for surgery and adoption!

DOGS & PUPPIES

Daily Care for Dogs with Puppies

Most mothers, even first-timers, can take care of themselves and their offspring quite well. For the most part, you will leave mom and babies alone while observing for any signs of trouble.

Provide a whelping box for nursing mothers, so babies can't get out, but mom can when she needs some peace and quiet.

Only half of the whelping box should have extra warmth added.

Young Puppy Care

A puppy's survival depends on getting consistent nutrition and warmth. The mother's colostrum, which is the first milk produced, is vitally important to a newborn's cardiovascular system and defense against disease. Colostrum is rich in antibodies to help protect against various infections, but puppies can only absorb these antibodies and benefit from them for a short period after birth.

So-called "Fading Puppy Syndrome," when a newborn fades and dies despite adequate care, is usually due to either a genetic defect or lack of sufficient colostrum. For this reason, it is very important that newborns nurse as soon as possible after birth. If they do not find a nipple on their own, put their mouth close to one and hold them until they nurse.

Continued healthy nursing behavior is crucial for puppy survival. In order to tell if the puppies are nursing, put on exam gloves and gently pick up each puppy and feel for a round belly full of milk. A flat or concave belly indicates that the puppy may not be nursing. You should perform this check once or twice a day, always wearing your exam gloves.

Also, visually confirm that each puppy is actually latching onto mom. A gram scale works great to log each puppy's weight on your health monitoring sheet (found later in this guide). Healthy puppies should gain a little weight each day.

Daily Care for Puppies Transitioning to Wet Food (3-5 weeks)

Transitioning puppies should be fed "gruel," which is a pudding-like consistency mix of canned puppy food and warm water. They should be fed every 4-6 hours. Please notify the Foster Coordinator if you notice the puppies are not taking to the canned food. You are welcome to experiment with different consistencies but the gruel should be gradually thickened to get them ready for solid food. Adding softened kibble can help thicken it up. Leftover gruel should be discarded immediately if not eaten. Canned food that has not been made into gruel yet can be covered and refrigerated for up to 48 hours.

Once puppies have teeth, they could start to chew the nipple on a bottle, which can be very dangerous due to small pieces being ingested. This must be monitored closely.

Fresh water should be provided at all times for transitioning puppies.

To encourage a puppy to eat the gruel, place a small amount on your finger and place it on the puppy's tongue or lips. The goal is that she will eat on her own from a plate or bowl. This transition period can take days to weeks.

Puppy pads or newspaper should be provided at this stage, away from their eating and sleeping area, as they will eventually learn to urinate and defecate away from the areas they eat, sleep and play. You can also place puppies on the puppy pad or newspaper after meals.

Daily Care for Puppies Eating on their Own (5-8+ weeks)

Puppies who are eating completely on their own will need to be fed wet food or softened kibble about four times throughout the day. They should always have water available.

Don't forget to clean their puppy pen or room frequently, since active puppies can be messy.

Puppies at this age can also start going outside. If the weather permits, you can even feed them outside in a secure area, allow playtime, and time to urinate and defecate before bringing them back inside!

Bottle Feeding Puppies

Type of Food

Never give a neonate puppy anything other than their specified formula! (No cow's milk!)

Puppies who are less than three to four weeks old are fed a combination of liquid or powder formula. After a feeding, unused liquid formula can be stored for up to three days in the refrigerator or frozen for future feedings. Frozen formula will last for 6 months.

The powder formula must be mixed for feedings. It is important to closely follow mixing directions: one part powder into two parts warm water (as it can cause diarrhea or constipation if not done correctly). When mixing do not use a blender. Any reconstituted powder formula can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. After that point, it must be discarded.

Feeding Etiquette

- Only use clean nipples and bottles!
- Feed puppies one at a time. Place them on a counter-top and allow them to feed with four paws on the counter and with a level head. This simulates how they would nurse from a mom.
- Do not feed a puppy while she is on her back. This can cause formula to go down the wrong way and end up in the lungs.
- Gently open the puppy's mouth with your finger and place the nipple on the tongue.
- Stroking puppy can help them to eat.
- Pull lightly on the bottle. This promotes strong sucking.
- Tilt the bottle up slightly. This prevents the puppy from inhaling too much air.
- Do not squeeze the bottle to force formula into the puppy's mouth. This can cause formula to move into the lungs.
- After feeding, burp your puppy by gently massaging her back.
- Be sure to stimulate the puppy after or before feeding. Stimulate them with a warm cloth if necessary.
- Fill out the Daily Weight and Feeding Record.

Weaning

Weaning can occur at 4 to 5 weeks and should be conducted gradually. Create a gruel by mixing moistened dry food with water or canned food. Introduce them to solid food by offering warmed can food, mixed with a small amount of water into gruel, in a shallow dish.

Begin by placing puppy to the side of the plate, he or she should start to eat, it may take a few tries for puppies to understand. If they are not interested, wait a few hours and then try again. After they have accepted the gruel, gradually thicken it by adding less water. Begin to also offer dry food on a free feeding basis.

If the mother is present she will usually begin weaning the puppies by discouraging them from nursing; however, some dogs will allow the nursing until the puppies are old enough for spay/neuter surgery. Some nursing activity is the canine equivalent of thumbsucking, that is, for comfort only. Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all of the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure the puppies are eating food and gaining weight.

Amount of Food

Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding. Feed puppies until they are full but not bloated.

Cleaning Equipment

Keeping the puppies' nursing bottles and supplies clean is vital as this will prevent diarrhea, vomiting, or infection. Cleaning the bottles and nursing nipples is quite easy. Using hot, soapy water clean the bottle with a bottle brush. If you do not have a bottle brush you may wash the bottle and nursing nipple in the dishwasher. You may place them in the silverware rack or in a dishwasher basket.

Additional Feeding Considerations

The digestive systems of puppies are fragile. Do not offer puppies treats. Only feed them the food provided by the Foster Coordinator.

If puppies are fighting over food, start to feed them separately. Contact the Foster Coordinator for support.

Never take food away from a puppy that is growling. Simply remove the other puppies and wait for the food bowl to be unattended.

Mom and Her Puppies

In some cases, moms are fostered together with her litter. There are a few things to keep in mind for this type of foster situation. Moms require a calm setting that has privacy and minimal activity. Stress can cause moms to stop taking care of their puppies.

Bringing Mom Home

You will need a separate space for a mom with her litter. When you first bring them home, leave them alone in their new space. The separate area may be referred to as a whelping box or nesting area. Mom will need some time, up to a few days, to adjust to her new space. Be sure to offer mom fresh food, water and a clean nesting area.

For the first few weeks, mom will do everything necessary to take care of her puppies. Puppies start nursing very soon after birth.

Mom will also groom her puppies. It's best to leave the mom alone for the first two weeks except to feed and to go outside for potty breaks.

Possible Issues with Mom Dogs

Maternal neglect – In some cases, about 8% of the time, puppies die from poor maternal care. There are a few causes of this. Some dogs lack maternal instincts and, in other cases, it is nature's way of handling sick or weak puppies. Environmental stress is an important factor, which is why it is important to create a calm environment for mom and the litter. Foster parents should watch for signs of maternal neglect. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice the mom avoids feeding and grooming her puppies and ignores their cries.

Maternal Aggression – As mom protects her puppies, it is common for her to be aggressive towards humans or other animals.

Do not try to introduce your household pets to your foster mom as this adds too much stress to the environment. If aggression becomes severe, call the Foster Coordinator.

Adult Dogs

Adult dogs are fed twice daily. You will be provided with the appropriate food and instructions. Adults may or may not be house-trained. Be sure to take them outside after eating, drinking, playing or sleeping.

Reward them for going outside with treats and praise. If an accident happens in the house, do not scold the dog.

Simply ignore, clean up, and take the dog outside. Be sure to give a reward every time the dog goes outside, so that he will very quickly associate the outdoor bathroom with good things. Supervise the dog while in the house and watch for telltale signs such as circling or sniffing. House-training usually takes a week or two, although you may have some accidents as you work out a scheduled routine.

Problem Signs

If you notice any health changes with the puppies or the mother, or an adult dog please contact our Foster Coordinator. It's up to us to recognize the signs. If you observe these emergency behaviors, don't delay. Please contact the Foster Coordinator immediately AND/OR take the puppy or adult dog to the closest emergency hospital.

EMERGENCY SYMPTOMS:

- Severe lethargy/non-responsive Coughing *Blood in stool
- Lose Stool
- Lack of appetite
- Eye Discharge or Discharge from the nose and/or sneezing
- Vomiting excessively (3-4 times) or excessive diarrhea
- A temperature over 103F or less than 98F
- Trouble Breathing
- Seizures
- Evidence of severe pain: restlessness, vocalizing, panting
- Major wounds requiring suture
- Not urinating x 24 hours or more

Example of Neonate Puppy Daily Weight and Feeding Record

Name/ID	Puppy 1	Puppy 2	Puppy 3	Puppy 4	Puppy 5	Puppy 6	Puppy 7	Puppy 8
Date								
Weight								
Attitude								
FEEDING 1								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								
FEEDING 2								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								
FEEDING 3								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								
FEEDING 4								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								
FEEDING 5								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								
FEEDING 6								
Milk volume								
Stool/urine								

Notes:

Grooming and Bathing

Adults

Groom your foster dog regularly (daily if possible) with a soft bristle brush. Brushing is an important part of routine care for dogs. The Animal Care Center staff can help with positive association to nail trimming during one of your scheduled visits to the Animal Care Center.

If your foster dog requires bathing as part of the treatment plan, the Animal Care staff will discuss this with you as part of the Animal Care Plan. Otherwise, if you feel your foster dog may need bathing, please call and discuss with the Animal Care Center staff prior to bathing.

Puppies

Puppies should be kept clean and will often need bathing since they can be very messy. Try to spot clean by only rinsing the puppy with warm water where he is dirty, such as his bottom. Make sure to not get a lot of water on his head, especially the eyes, nose and ears.

If there is food stuck on his face, use a warm, damp cloth.

Puppies cannot be put back into their home until they are completely dry. You can use a blow dryer on the lowest setting after towel drying.

As with adults, grooming and brushing is an important part of routine care for your puppies and can also be an important part of their socialization.

Keep the Puppies Clean

A mother dog works hard to keep her puppies clean. She will constantly be grooming them thoroughly to remove any sticky messes they may get into, such as food or feces. Grooming them also stimulates circulation and the digestive system. A daily grooming session gives you the chance to closely monitor each puppy and gets them familiarized with being handled. If the neonate is not very dirty you can use a flea comb to get rid of dust and dried feces in the fur. You can also use a warm, damp wash cloth to clean them a bit more thoroughly. Use short strokes to mimic a mother's tongue. Be sure to dry the puppy well when done so that they don't get chilled.

As the puppies get older, from 4-5 weeks of age, they can be allowed to roam a larger area of your house, but they should still be closely supervised and kept in a secured area when not confined to their nursing area. Remember these puppies are still very vulnerable to infections, such as canine parvovirus infection, and should be separated from other pets if possible, and only be allowed to interact with fully vaccinated, healthy dogs.

Puppy Growth Milestones

Weeks	Feeding	Development
0–1	Bottle feed ½ tablespoon of formula every 2-3 hours, overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. If there is a Mom dog, make sure that all puppies are nursing. Puppies can nurse from Mom for up to 45 minutes at a time. A lot of crying or activity could indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply.	At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep about 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Puppies should be kept in a warm environment as chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies.
1–2	Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until puppies' bellies are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours.	Healthy puppies should be round and warm. When you pick up a puppy they should wiggle energetically and healthy puppies seldom cry. The puppy's ear canal should open between 5 and 8 days. Eyes will open between 8 and 14 days.
2–3	Bottle feed formula every 3-4 hours, until their bellies are full but not bloated.	Puppies begin to crawl around and should be almost standing. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails and paws before their teeth come in. They should be teething at this period.
3–4	Bottle feed formula every 4 hours until the puppies are full but not bloated. Puppies may start to lap from a bowl.	Puppies begin to see well and their eyes begin to look and function like adult dog eyes. Puppies will start cleaning themselves. If they have a mother, she will continue to do most of the serious cleaning. At three weeks, puppies are in their canine socialization period. If they have siblings allow them to play at will.
4–5	Bottle feed as needed to keep puppies from crying with hunger. Puppies usually can drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks. Weaning should be done gradually.	Begin housebreaking at four weeks of age. This can be done by using training pad or taking the puppy to an outside secure fenced in area of your home. After each feeding, place the puppy on the pad/outside for him or her to go the bathroom. Be patient! He or she may not remember to do this every time.
5–6	Feed gruel 4 times a day. Thicken the gruel gradually by reducing the amount of water mixed with it. Introduce dry food and water. If you are fostering a litter with their mother, continue weaning. For reluctant eaters, try mixing puppy formula into the gruel.	At about 5 weeks, puppies can start to roam around the room, under supervision. The strongest, most curious puppy will figure out how to get out of the nest and the others will quickly follow. Be sure to allow the puppies to have different types of toys around so they may explore and become familiar with a variety of surfaces and textures.
6–7	By this age, puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed the puppies at least three meals a day. Puppies may not eat much at a single sitting, they usually like to eat a frequent intervals throughout the day.	By this time, you will have "mini-dogs". They are able to wash themselves and play games with each other and you. Some puppies may be food possessive, you may need to use a second dish and leave plenty of food out. Do not use adverse or punishing correction techniques. Be sure to take the puppies to their pads or outside after feeding, during play sessions, and after naps. These are the usual time that puppies need to eliminate.
7–8	Offer dry food 3-4 times a day. Leave a bowl of water down for them to drink at will. Do not feed the puppies table scraps.	Continue playing and socializing with the puppies. You can even begin training such as sit, down, roll over and come when called.
8+	Offer dry food 3 times a day. Leave down a bowl of water for them to drink at will.	Ready for surgery and adoption!

DAILY CLEANING

Providing a clean, sanitary living space dedicated to just your foster animal is a highly important part of caring for your foster pet and lowering the risk of the transmission of zoonotic and infectious disease.

Five key practices to control disease transmission include:

- Practicing good hand hygiene before and after handling animals or objects in the foster area
- Cleaning and disinfecting items in the foster area using the appropriate products
- Ensuring surfaces that are easy to clean and disinfect (vinyl or tile floor, not carpet if possible)
- Stocking the area with animal care supplies that are dedicated to the area and easy to disinfect
- Keeping human traffic to a minimum

There are some quick and easy steps you will need to take daily to ensure your home and your foster pet remain healthy and happy:

- Wash your hands before and after each interaction with your foster pet
- Wear disposable gloves while cleaning or scooping litter boxes
- Scoop out litter boxes at least daily
- Wash food and water bowls daily
- Remove any organic materials (feces, urine, fur, food) from bedding, floor, furniture etc.
- Wipe up any organic material using spray bottle of Prevail® and paper towel
- Wash and thoroughly dry bedding if soiled
- Clean litter boxes and scoop when soiled
- Pick up feces outside immediately
- Consider wearing a smock or other protective wear to avoid direct contact with your clothing that comes in contact with other animals

Cleaning vs. Disinfecting

Cleaning removes dirt, grease or visible debris from surfaces typically through the use of soap, detergent, or degreaser. Cleaning does not remove harmful organisms. Cleaning of the animal housing area, as described above should be undertaken daily.

Disinfecting removes harmful organisms through a chemical agent.

Disinfectants do not always remove dirt or grease. Disinfecting is usually done only after a surface is thoroughly cleaned.

A thorough cleaning, followed by disinfection is required of all supplies and the animal housing area between foster animals and/or any time an animal has been ill or any type of health concern has been identified.

DEEP CLEANING

Sanitizing Your Home Between Foster Animals

In order to prevent disease and parasite infestations in your home, thoroughly clean areas where the foster animal has stayed. The “break” period between foster assignments is a good time to do this.

- 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.

SOCIALIZATION

Cats & Kittens

You can help set your foster pet up for success through regular handling and play. The more comfortable they are interacting with people, the more social and attractive they will be to potential adopters. One or two play times daily, toy play, gentle handling and brushing are all wonderful ways to socialize while interacting with your foster pet. The Animal Care Center can provide pet specific suggestions for socializing fosters (e.g. kittens and puppies)

The degree and nature of human contact a given cat prefers depends on its socialization to people and involves genetics, early rearing conditions, life experiences and personal preference. Providing opportunities for interaction with people gives cats and kittens the opportunity to become better socialized and increases their chances of being adopted.

Kitten Socialization

The ideal time for socializing kittens is from two to seven weeks of age. As soon as their eyes and ears are opening, socialization opportunities begin. Socialization after this age range is still possible, but becomes more difficult.

Attempting socialization after 12 to 14 weeks of age will have more limited success.

Socialization is critical for young kittens, and they will need multiple short socialization sessions on a daily basis, as well as playtime and enrichment to help them learn to enjoy being around people.

- Keep the kittens confined to a large dog crate in a quiet room for the first few days to make sure they are eating well & adjusting to the new environment
- Provide them with a carrier without its door, or a cardboard box inside the dog crate and cover the crate with a sheet so they feel more secure
- The crate should be in a secure, cat-proof room where kittens cannot run away and hide once you start letting them out of the crate
- Once they are eating well and comfortable, and after the initial 14-day quarantine, allow them to explore this catproofed area when supervised; keep them confined when not supervised

Make sure to use every meal time as a socialization event:

- Offer kittens food and sit with them while they eat. Eventually work toward putting the food on your finger and having them eat it from there
- Once they are comfortable with this, slowly bring the food closer to you so that they have to climb on your lap to get the food
- Progress to petting them while they eat, starting with their face and shoulders
- Eventually work on handling more and more and then finally, picking up
- Find out how to socialize with food at <http://aspcapro.org/kittenfood>

Short socialization sessions (3-5 minutes) several times a day are better than one or two long sessions. Once the kittens become social with you, have friends or family interact with them too, so that they learn to be social with everyone:

- Work on getting them used to household noises and voices by slowly introducing them (i.e. talking in a normal voice, laughing, opening cabinets, etc.)
- Always pair food or playtime with your presence, whether or not you are touching/interacting with them
- Give them safe objects to explore, such as paper bags and cardboard boxes
- Allow them to walk on different surfaces and explore when supervised
- Do not allow them to play with your hands or feet. This will encourage play biting which will continue and be painful once they get older

Engaging Your Foster Cat

Here are some ways to engage with cats in your care:

- Gently talking to the cat
- Holding
- Petting
- Lap sitting
- Grooming
- Play

The cat must be allowed to approach and choose the level of physical contact it desires. Caretakers should be careful not to force an interaction on a cat.

The degree and nature of human contact a given cat prefers depends on its socialization to people and involves genetics, early rearing conditions, life experiences and personal preference.

Signs that indicate that the cat welcomes interaction include:

- Slow or affiliative blinking
- Purring
- Head butting against a person's hand or body
- Staying in close physical proximity
- Rubbing or pushing against a person
- Rolling around to the side and back in a relaxed manner

Quiet Socialization Time

Cats require routines that also include quiet time, and socialization with people. Most cats usually enjoy spending time with you, and welcome the opportunity to curl up on a warm lap:

- You can sit quietly, offer affection, and talk quietly. This can work especially well for shy or fearful cats
- Bring a book and start reading; let the cat choose to come to you. The cat may even help turn the pages
- While you read aloud, the cat will find the sound of your voice comforting and will learn social skills that will help the cat get adopted
- The key is your presence, quiet interaction with occasional petting, and a possible treat

Interactive Playtime

Playing with people can provide social interaction an opportunity for more physical activity. It can also contribute to the cat's socialization. Whether done within an enclosure, or in a play room, interactive play can entice most cats. Items such as fishing poles, feather wands, retrievable items or laser pointers that allow the cat to engage in predatory behavior (eg. chase, pounce, capture) are generally favored by cats.

Non-hazardous toys can be left in the room for cats to play with on their own. Toys that provide movement are considered best. Balls are excellent for this purpose, as they can be propelled by the cat and offer the predatory opportunities noted earlier.

As with all forms of enrichment, ensure each cat has access to one or more toys during the course of the day.

Avoid toys with small or ingestible parts; toys with strings or other materials that a cat might ingest should be removed after play.

Kitten Socialization Checklist

You can use this, or something like it, to check off experiences your cat has. Try to provide most (80%) of these each week or so. This list is not exhaustive, you can add your own to the column at the bottom. The handling should be daily.

	Action	Kitten's Reaction
Handling	Checking the ears	
	Examining mouth and gums	
	Opening eyelids	
	Squeezing the feet	
	Handling & trimming toenails	
	Pinching skin	
	Poking the skin with a capped pen	
	Touching and squeezing the nose	
	Poking the nose with a capped pen	
	Cradling kitten in your arms on their back	
	Holding them in your lap	
	Holding kitten on its back while giving a belly rub	
	Hugging your kitten	
	Pulling the collar	
	Grabbing by other part of body	
	Wiping body with a towel	
	Putting on a harness	

	Action	Kitten's Reaction
People	Women	
	Men	
	People of many ethnicities	
	Children standing as well as playing	
	Toddlers (walking & squealing)	
	Infants (crawling)	
	People running by	
Cats	Friendly adult cats	
	Friendly kittens who play well	
Other Animal	Dogs	
	Any type of pets you may have	
Vet Hospital Prep	Crate	
	Car Rides	
	Metal Surfaces (vet hospital scales, exam tables)	
	Vet Clinic	
Scary Sounds*	Thunder	
	Fireworks	
	Babies & Kids	
	Alarms	
	Dogs Barking	
	Doorbell Ringing	
	Traffic (like downtown in a city)	
	Jack Hammers	
	Vacuum Cleaner	
	Sirens	

* If you do not have the ability to expose the kitten to these sounds frequently enough or at a level where she can have a positive experience, use sound YouTube.

Dogs & Puppies

You can help set your foster dog or puppy up for success through regular handling and play. The more comfortable they are interacting with people, the more social and attractive they will be to potential adopters. One or two play times daily, toy play, gentle handling and brushing are all wonderful ways to socialize while interacting with your foster pet. The Animal Care Center can provide suggestions for socializing foster dogs and puppies.

The degree and nature of human contact each individual dog prefers depends on its socialization to people and involves genetics, early rearing conditions, life experiences and personal preference. Providing opportunities for interaction with people gives dogs and puppies the opportunity to become better socialized and increases their chances of being adopted.

Social interaction includes interactions between the dog and a person, the dog with another dog, or a dog with other dogs in a playgroup.

Puppy Socialization

To ensure that puppies in your care are friendly and well-adjusted:

- Socialize the puppy with both people and other animals
- Introduce the puppy to a wide range of events, environments and situations

All animals, including dogs, have a window of opportunity at the start of their lives during which they learn to accept things around them so they are not afraid of them later in life.

In puppies, this window of opportunity closes at about 12-14 weeks of age. Most things that are encountered during this time will be tolerated, or even enjoyed.

After the window closes, unfamiliar people, objects and experiences are approached with caution, and the puppy may become fearful. In fact, the most common cause of fear and aggression is lack of socialization.

In a foster care home, it is crucial to take advantage of this window of opportunity to offer the puppy plenty of novel experiences and interactions with people. Keep these interactions short and frequent so as not to tire out the puppy.

Include the following in your daily care, accompanied with food rewards, and praise:

Gentle Handling

- Touching head, ears, mouth, neck area, tail, paws and legs
- Grooming for one minute with a soft brush
- Placing and removing a collar and lead
- Restraining gently for a few seconds, releasing if puppy struggles
- Using food rewards and praise to positively reinforce the puppy's acceptance of the handling

Puppy Socialization Checklist

You can use this, or something like it, to check off experiences your cat has. Try to provide most (80%) of these each week or so. This list is not exhaustive, you can add your own to the column at the bottom. The handling should be daily.

	Action	Puppy's Reaction
Handling	Checking the ears	
	Examining mouth and gums	
	Opening eyelids	
	Squeezing the feet	
	Handling & trimming toenails	
	Pinching skin	
	Poking the skin with a capped pen	
	Touching and squeezing the nose	
	Poking the nose with a capped pen	
	Cradling kitten in your arms on their back	
	Holding puppy upside down	
	Holding them in your lap	
	Holding puppy on its back while giving a belly rub	
	Hugging your puppy	
	Pulling the collar	
	Grabbing puppy by other part of body	
	Wiping body with a towel	
	Putting on a head halter	
	Putting on a harness	
People	Women	
	People of many ethnicities	
	Tall men	
	Men with deep voices	
	Men with beards	
	Elderly	
	People wearing hats, helmets	
	People wearing boots	
	People wearing hoodies	
	People wearing backpacks	
	People wearing sunglasses	
	People with canes, walking sticks or walkers	
	Teenagers	
	Children standing as well as playing	
	Toddlers (walking and squealing)	
	Infants (crawling)	
	People running by	

	Action	Puppy's Reaction
Dogs	Dogs who play well	
	A dog who will reprimand puppies with appropriate force and restraint for getting into his personal space	
	With puppies who play well & do not get overly aroused	
Other Animal	Cats	
	Horses and livestock	
	Any type of pets you may have	
Vet Hospital	Crate	
	Car Rides	
	Metal Surfaces (vet hospital scales, exam tables)	
	Vet Clinic	
New surfaces	Concrete	
	Slippery floors (hardwood, linoleum or marble)	
	Metal surfaces (manhole covers, ramps)	
	Wobbly surfaces (balance ball, a board on top of a book, a wobble board)	
	Stairs	
	Wet grass	
	Mud	
	Ice, frost, or snow if you will live in such areas	
	Carpet	
	Irregular surfaces (gravel, stones, pebbles)	
Scary Sounds*	Thunder	
	Fireworks	
	Babies & Kids	
	Alarms	
	Dogs Barking	
	Doorbell Ringing	
	Traffic (like downtown in a city)	
	Jack Hammers	
	Vacuum Cleaner	
	Sirens	
	Blender	
	Lawnmowers and chainsaws	
	Motorcycles	

	Action	Puppy's Reaction
Objects with wheels	Skateboards	
	Rollerblades	
	Garbage cans outside	
	Shopping carts	
	Baby strollers	
	Wheel chairs	
	Bikes	
	Cars	
	Buses	
	Motorcycles	
Man-made objects	Pots and pans	
	Blankets or rugs being shaken	
	Brooms	
	Balloons	
	Umbrellas	
	Bags blowing in the wind	
	Sidewalk signs	
	Garbage cans in the house	
	Garbage cans outside	
	Plastic bags blowing the wind	
	Large plastic garbage bags	
	Metal pans or other metal surfaces	
	Metal-pens	
Experiences	Suburban neighborhood	
	Residential city streets	
	High-traffic city street (downtown)	
	Shopping Mall parking lot	
	Pet Store	
	Inside Buildings	
	Dog-friendly locations (brewery, cafe, etc.)	
Objects to play with under supervision	Nylon bones	
	Strong toys (kongs)	
	Hard biscuits	
	Ice cubes	
	Teeter-totters or other wobbly agility equipment	
Objects to chew under supervision	Cardboard box	
	Toy buckets	
	Treat ball	
	Large stuffed toy	
	Empty plastic bottle	

* If you do not have the ability to expose the kitten to these sounds frequently enough or at a level where she can have a positive experience, use sound YouTube.

Engaging Your Foster Dog

Here are some ways to engage with dogs in your care:

The dog must be allowed to approach and choose the level of physical contact it desires. Caretakers should be careful not to force an interaction on a dog.

The degree and nature of human contact a given dog prefers depends on its socialization to people and involves genetics, early rearing conditions, life experiences and personal preference. We want to ensure a positive experience in each type of interaction.

Signs that indicate that the dog welcomes interaction include:

- Eyes squinty or almond shaped
- Body loose and wiggly
- Play bow
- Tail neutral (parallel to spine) to low (below spine)
- Play mouthing or play biting
- Grooming behaviors such as nibbling or play flea-biting
- Long, sweeping tail wag
- Head butting against a person's hand or body
- Staying in close physical proximity

Quiet Socialization Time

Dogs require routines that also include quiet time, and socialization with people. Most dogs usually enjoy spending time with you, and welcome the opportunity to curl up near you:

- You can sit quietly, offer affection, and talk quietly. This can work especially well for shy or fearful dogs
- Bring a book and treats, start reading; let the dog choose to come to you to solicit petting, and offer treats
- While you read aloud, the dog will find the sound of your voice comforting and will learn social skills that will help the dog get adopted
- The key is your presence, quiet interaction with occasional petting, and a possible treat

Interactive Playtime

Playing with people can provide social interaction and an opportunity for more physical activity. It can also contribute to the dog's socialization. Whether done within an enclosure, or in a play room, interactive play can entice most dogs. Use items such as fetch toys, squeaky toys, or laser pointers to allow the dog to engage in play behavior (eg. chase, retrieve, chew).

Fetch can be an enticing game for any dog, and a great way for a foster caregiver to connect with the dog. Everyone seems to love a good game of fetch with a dog! An easy and fun way to teach a dog to play fetch is to use the two-toy fetch method, trading one toy for the other on each retrieve.

As with all forms of enrichment, also ensure that the dog has access to one or more toys during the course of the day. Avoid toys with small or ingestible parts. Toys with strings, squeakers, or other materials that a dog might ingest should be removed after play.

Allow the dog to spend some time on his own, engaging in a variety of self entertaining toys or puzzle feeders.

Self-Entertainment

Safe chew toys include:

- Newspaper or paper towel/toilet paper tubes for ripping and shredding
- Boomer Balls®, which are large, tough, plastic balls that are difficult to destroy
- Herding dogs often enjoy rolling and chasing the balls in the Animal Care Center's outdoor enclosure
- Holes can be drilled into the Boomer Ball®, transforming it into a kibble-dispensing device that keeps food motivated dogs occupied
- Heavy-duty rubber toys such as a KONG®. For an added challenge, suspend a KONG® by a rope from the top of the dog's kennel
- Nylabones®
- Tug-a-Jug™
- Large, rolled-up rawhides
- Fresh, crunchy fruits and vegetables, such as apples, large carrots, and cucumbers
- Empty cereal boxes: these can act as kibble-dispensing devices and also provide the ripping and tearing that some dogs enjoy. Nest three to four boxes, pouring kibble inside the boxes, closing the tops and placing kibble in between each layer of boxes. Remember to remove the plastic pouch from the cereal box first!

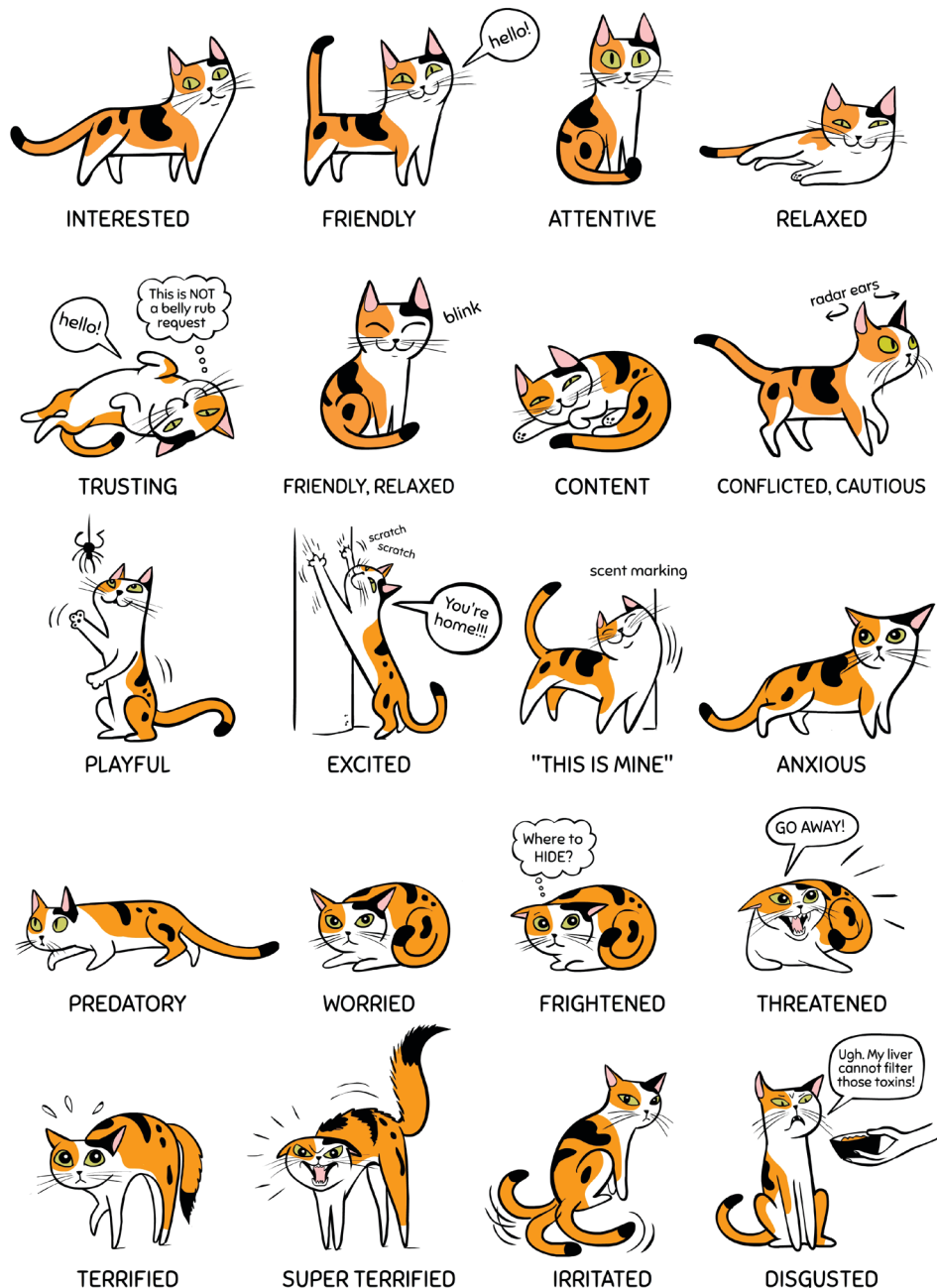
BEHAVIOR

Understanding Feline Behavior

The ability to read feline body language will help you understand what the cat is communicating, and then implement the proper intervention such as enrichment, socialization, or modification.

Understanding what cats are communicating through their body language is essential for cat caregivers:

- It enables them to more accurately “read” the cats and understand their emotions and motivations for their actions and behaviors
- It helps them respond more accurately to behavior issues like aggression



Training

Cats and kittens love to learn. Knowing that their actions will earn them a reward gives them a sense of control over their environment. Training your foster cat or kitten provides mental and physical stimulation, facilitates positive associations with humans, and can build confidence in shy or fearful cats.

Good Bathroom Habits

To help your foster cat maintain a lasting habit of using their box, follow these guidelines:

- Litterbox rule of thumb: To avoid common litterbox problems, you should provide one more litterbox than number of cats in the HH:
1 cat = 2 litterboxes; 2 cats = 3 litterboxes; 3 cats = 4 litterboxes.... you get the picture!
- Litterboxes should not all be in the same area and should be scooped daily and kept clean.
- Litterboxes should not be in an area where cat could be 'trapped/cornered' by another cat or dog. They should have an escape route (cats do not like to feel trapped or bombarded when in a vulnerable situation).
- Covered litterboxes to cats may feel like porta-potties to humans. Many cats will avoid them for that reason and because they cannot see 'who' is coming/stalking/waiting for them outside box. If you must use a covered box, be sure you have uncovered boxes available.
- Unscented, clay clumping litter is usually the holy grail for a cat's litterbox preference. Scented may smell nicer to us, but can be quite irritating to sensitive cat noses.
- Cat missing the litterbox? Seek help immediately. Rule out medical problems first by calling your veterinarian and getting your cat checked.

Litter box accidents are often a result of stress, including stress from transition into a new environment. Be patient, and monitor your foster kitty and let our Foster Coordinator know if your foster cat is having litterbox issues.

Understanding Canine Behavior

The ability to read canine body language will help you understand what the dog is communicating, and then implement the proper intervention, such as enrichment, socialization, or modification.

Understanding what dogs are communicating through their body language is essential for dog caregivers:

- It enables them to more accurately “read” the dog and understand their emotions and motivations for their actions and behaviors
- It helps them respond more accurately to behavior issues like aggression

Body language is made up of a dog’s body postures, facial expressions, and the position and carriage of certain body parts, like ears, tail and mouth position and movement. Knowing the basic postures and what they mean can help dog caregivers deal with problems more effectively and enjoy their dog’s company more fully because they can understand canine communication.



Getting To Know The World

Puppies are little sponges when it comes to learning about the world – what’s good, what’s scary, and what is food! This is the most important time in a dog’s life for developing into a confident and polite canine companion. PLFA supports guidelines from the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior on puppy socialization which are that puppy socialization should begin as early as possible and owners should not wait until after a puppy is fully vaccinated. Proper socialization involves positive exposure to as many new people, places, dogs, and things as possible. To prevent disease, owners should take advantage of puppy-safe environments like trainer-run puppy classes and socials.

Puppy Mouthing

When puppies play with each other, they use their mouths. Therefore, puppies usually want to bite or “mouth” hands during play or when being petted. Because puppies are highly motivated to exhibit this type of behavior, attempts to suppress it or stop it are unlikely to be successful unless you give your puppy an alternative behavior. The goals of working with this normal puppy behavior are to redirect your puppy’s desire to put something in their mouth onto acceptable chews or toys and to teach them to be gentle when a hand is in their mouth.

Acceptable use of teeth is rewarded with treats, attention, affection, or whatever your dog likes. Unacceptable use of teeth results in redirection (chew on this in your crate for a while) or removal of opportunity (biting makes people walk away from you).

Make sure that you have plenty of chew toys on hand—bully sticks, Nylabones, frozen stuffed Kong products, or even old washcloths soaked in low-sodium chicken broth and frozen are all great treats. Supervise your puppy when they are enjoying their toys.

Use consequences instead of punishment. Punishing your dog can create the very problems you’re trying to solve. Physical or verbal punishment can provoke aggression in any dog, particularly in one that is aroused or overexcited.

Avoid any methods involving force and intimidation, such as alpha-rolling, scruffing, muzzle-grabbing, and leash jerks. These do not teach the dog what he should do, and could lead to serious behavior problems. Focus on removing the things your dog likes as a consequence for mouthy behavior. When your dog starts to chew something inappropriate, calmly redirect him to a proper toy. Praise him for chewing the correct items.

“Paw-sitive” Start

Training is a great way to bond with your new canine, learn to communicate in a way they understand, and instill good manners right from the start. Positive reinforcement training methods are ideal for training your new canine because they teach the dog in a way that promotes a strong bond with you and won’t create fear in the process of training.

Training allows you and your dog to form a common language which will help you bond and live happily together.

A great place to start is by rewarding your dog for looking at you and giving you their attention. If you can get your dog’s attention, you can ask for other behaviors. You can also pair this with teaching your dog their name. Say your dog’s name and then immediately give them a yummy treat. Very soon they’ll be looking to you as soon as you say their name!

Housetraining

Housetrained means that a dog can remain inside the house for a reasonable amount of time (about eight hours) without eliminating in it.

To teach your foster dog WHERE to eliminate takes only a couple of weeks. But for a young dog or puppy to actually BE RELIABLE requires that the dog be mature enough physically to hold off eliminating until the appropriate time, or until they can motor themselves to the “outhouse.”

Many people crate train their dog, which we do encourage, for the simple reason that the dog can do no wrong while they are in their crate. Your foster dog can't piddle on the rug, harass the mailman, chew on the furniture, get into the trash, or eat your children's hamster. They learn to relax and go to sleep while you are away. For an older dog with bad potty habits, or one who has never been housebroken, you can expect to spend about six to eight weeks (following a strict housebreaking plan), before a new behavior pattern is established.

For young dogs, a good rule of thumb to remember is that your dog is able to hold elimination for as many hours as he is in months of age. If your foster dog is two-months-old, they can hold it for up to two hours maximum during the day if they are not active. If your puppy is active, they will have to go out more often. At night, most dogs can generally go longer. Most puppies by the time they are twelve weeks of age can sleep the entire night through without having to go out. For full-grown dogs with no physical or separation anxiety problems, they should be able to go an eight-hour day without a problem, once you have put them on a regular schedule.

Basic Rules for Housetraining Your Foster Dog or Puppy

1. **Accidents will happen**, but your main goal is to prevent them as much as possible. Be prepared to clean up any accidents with an enzymatic cleaner. Enzymatic cleaners are specially designed to for urine and feces stains. It's very important to thoroughly clean any area where an accident occurs so the smell is gone, otherwise, your foster dog or puppy may return to the same spot to do his business.
2. **Confine your pet.** Confinement can technically be any place where you do not care if your dog makes a mistake. It is preferably someplace that is safe (meaning he can't get into trouble by chewing up things like the carpet or electrical wires), is inside your house, and is small enough so he tries to hold eliminating until you let him out. Dogs have a natural instinct not to soil near them or in the place where they sleep. That's why crate training is so successful as a housetraining aid. Some examples of confinement are: a crate just big enough for him to lie down and turn around in, a blocked off portion of the kitchen or another room, again just big enough to turn around and lay down, or a small bathroom.
3. **Put your foster dog on a regular schedule.** That means their meals, water, play, walking, and training times stay the same, even on the weekends! Your foster dog does not have an internal calendar telling him “It's Saturday, time to sleep late!” But they do have an internal clock that is accurate up to 30 seconds within a 24-hour period! All they know is for the past five days you have been getting up at 6:00 AM to take care of them! See the sample schedules at the end of this section. Once your dog is reliable, you can start to vary the scheduled times slightly until you are back on “your” time.
4. **Go with your foster dog when you take them out.** Rewarding your dog when they go to the bathroom outside is an extremely effective way to potty train. Use extra yummy treats and praise when they go so they know that is where they are supposed to go to the bathroom. This also allows you to know if they didn't go so they don't get access to the whole house in case they have an accident (remember confinement).

5. **Watch for signs that your foster dog needs to go.** Intense sniffing and circling can be an indicator your dog needs to go to the bathroom. Learn your foster dog's signs and then take them out to go potty.
6. **If you catch your foster dog going potty inside,** clap your hands or make a noise to interrupt them and then take them outside. Be careful not to scare your foster dog when you catch them as they can become nervous to potty in front of you. It becomes more difficult to potty train your dog if they won't go to the bathroom in front of you.
7. **Do NOT punish your foster puppy or dog for having an accident.** Punishing your foster dog after they have already had an accident, creates fear in your dog and doesn't create a correlation between the punishment and the accident. Your foster dog will associate the punishment with whatever they were doing right before the punishment. Also, punishing while they are having an accident doesn't work either. Your foster dog may think that just going to the bathroom is what made you mad and hide from you when he needs to go.

Potty Training Schedule Examples

SAMPLE HOUSE TRAINING SCHEDULES WHEN OWNER IS AT HOME ALL DAY

SCHEDULE #1 (General timetable for three to six-month-old puppies eating three meals a day.)

7:00 - AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
7:10-7:30 AM	Free period, under supervision
7:30 AM	Food and water
8:00 AM	Go out. Short play/training period
8:15 AM	Free period, under supervision
12:00 PM	Go out, food and water. Short play/training period
12:30 PM	Go out, short play/training period
12:45 PM	Free period, under supervision
1:15 PM	Confine
5:00 PM	Walk/play/training period
6:15 PM	Confine
8:00 PM	Last food and water for day – then take up
8:15 PM	Go out; short play/training period
8:30 PM	Free period, under supervision
9:00 PM	Confine
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Confine Overnight

SCHEDULE #2 (General timetable for six to 12-month-old puppies eating two meals a day.)

7:00 AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
7:15-8 AM	Free period, under supervision
8:00 AM	Food and water
8:30 AM	Go out, short play/training period
8:45 AM	Free period, under supervision
9:30 AM	Confine
12:30 PM	Go out, short play/training period
12:45 PM	Food and water
1:00 PM	Free period in kitchen
1:45 PM	Confine
6:00 PM	Walk/play/training period
6:30 PM	Last food and water for day – then take up
6:45 PM	Go out; free period in house, under supervision
8:30 PM	Free period, under supervision
7:30 PM	Confine
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Confine Overnight

SCHEDULE #3 (General timetable for housetrained adult dogs eating two meals a day)

7:00 AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
8:00 AM	Food & water (unlimited supply of water for the day)
8:30 AM	Go out, short play/training period
12:30 PM	Go out, short play/training period
5:30 PM	Food
6:00 PM	Go out/play/walk/training period
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Bedtime. Remove water over night

WHEN OWNER IS WORKING DURING THE DAY

SCHEDULE #1 (General timetable for three to six-month-old puppies eating three meals a day.)

7:00 - AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
7:10-7:30 AM	Free period, under supervision
7:30 AM	Food and water
8:00 AM	Playtime & potty break. Confine when owner leaves for the day. Take up water & leave safe toys/chews
11:00 AM	Water/Play time/potty break. Re-confine when owner leaves again
3:00 PM	Water/Training period/potty break. Re-confine when owner leaves again
6:00 PM	Go out, short play/training period
6:15-6:30 PM	Free period, under supervision
6:30 PM	Food/water
7:00 PM	Walk/play/training period
7:15 PM	Confine
9:00 PM	Food and water/ Last water for the day
9:30 PM	Go out; short play/training period
9:45 PM	Free period, under supervision
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Confine Overnight

SCHEDULE #2 (General timetable for six to 12-month-old puppies eating two meals a day.)

7:00 AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
7:10-7:30 AM	Free period, under supervision
7:30 AM	Food and water
8:00 AM	Playtime & potty break. Confine when owner leaves for the day. Leave ice cubes in bowl & leave safe toys/chews.
2:00 PM	Water/Training period/potty break. Re-confine if owner leaves again
6:00 PM	Walk/play/training period
6:15-7:00 PM	Free period, under supervision
7:00 PM	Food/water
7:30 PM	Go out. Short play/training period
7:45-8:30 PM	Free period, under supervision
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Confine Overnight

SCHEDULE #3 (General timetable for housetrained adult dogs eating two meals a day)

7:00 AM	Wake up/walk/potty break
7:30 AM	Food and water (unlimited supply of water for the day)
8:00 AM	Go out, short play/training period. Confine when owner leaves for the day.
6:00 PM	Go out, short play/training period
7:00 PM	Food
7:30 PM	Potty break/playtime
11:00 PM	Last potty break. Bedtime. Remove water over night

Crate Training

House training and crate training go hand in hand. A crate can be a great tool to use for your puppy, but it can also be misused. The crate should be big enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and stretch out; we will make sure you go home with the correct size, but your puppy may grow. Please let us know if you need a larger crate.

Your foster puppy/dog should have a short term confinement area, such as the crate, and a long term confinement area, such as an x-pen or baby gated section of the house or room.

If you are beginning to crate train, feed your puppy in the crate, provide stuffed chew toys only in the crate, and/or play crate games to build a positive association with the crate. Keep sessions short and fun, and have your puppy in the crate for short periods of time when you are home.

Never use a crate as a form of punishment for your foster puppy or dog.

The training process

Crate training can take days or weeks, depending on your dog's age, temperament and past experiences. It's important to keep two things in mind while crate training: The crate should always be associated with something pleasant and training should take place in a series of small steps. Don't go too fast.

Step 1: Introduce your dog to the crate

Place the crate in an area of your house where the family spends a lot of time, such as the family room. Put a soft blanket or bed in the crate. Take the door off or keep it propped open and let the dog explore the crate at their leisure. Some dogs will be naturally curious and start sleeping in the crate right away. If yours isn't one of them:

- Bring them over to the crate and talk to them in a happy tone of voice. Make sure the crate door is open and secured so that it won't hit your dog and frighten them.
- Encourage your dog to enter the crate by dropping some small food treats nearby, then just inside the door, and finally, all the way inside the crate. If they refuse to go all the way in at first, that's OK; don't force them to enter.
- Continue tossing treats into the crate until your dog will walk calmly all the way into the crate to get the food. If they aren't interested in treats, try tossing a favorite toy in the crate. This step may take a few minutes or as long as several days.

Step 2: Feed your dog meals in the crate

After introducing your dog to the crate, begin feeding them their regular meals near the crate. This will create a pleasant association with the crate.

- If your dog is readily entering the crate when you begin Step 2, place the food dish or interactive puzzle toy stuffed with food all the way at the back of the crate.
- If they remain reluctant to enter, put the dish only as far inside as they will readily go without becoming fearful or anxious. Each time you feed them, place the dish a little further back in the crate.
- Once your dog is standing comfortably in the crate to eat their meal, you can close the door while they're eating. The first time you do this, open the door as soon as they finish their meal. With each successive feeding, leave the door closed a few minutes longer, until they're staying in the crate for 10 minutes or so after eating.
- If they begin to whine to be let out, you may have increased the length of time too quickly. Next time, try leaving them in the crate for a shorter time period.

Step 3: Practice with longer crating periods

After your dog is eating their regular meals in the crate with no sign of fear or anxiety, you can confine them there for short periods of time while you're home.

- Call them over to the crate and give them a treat.
- Give them a voice cue to enter, such as "crate." Encourage them by pointing to the inside of the crate with a treat in your hand.
- After your dog enters the crate, praise them, give them the treat and close the door.
- Sit quietly near the crate for five to 10 minutes and then go into another room for a few minutes. Return, sit quietly again for a short time and then let them out.
- Repeat this process several times a day, gradually increasing the length of time you leave them in the crate and the length of time you're out of sight.
- Once your dog will stay quietly in the crate for about 30 minutes with you mostly out of sight, you can begin leaving them crated when you're gone for short time periods and/or letting them sleep there at night. This may take several days or weeks.

Step 4, Part A: Crate your dog when you leave

After your dog can spend about 30 minutes in the crate without becoming anxious or afraid, you can begin leaving them crated for short periods when you leave the house.

- Put them in the crate using your regular command and a treat. You might also want to leave them with a few safe toys in the crate.
- Vary the moment during your "getting ready to leave" routine that you put your dog in the crate. Although they shouldn't be crated for a long time before you leave, you can crate them anywhere from five to 20 minutes prior to leaving.
- Don't make your departures emotional and prolonged—they should be matter-of-fact. Praise your dog briefly, give them a treat for entering the crate and then leave quietly.

When you return home, don't reward your dog for excited behavior by responding to them in an enthusiastic way. Keep arrivals low-key to avoid increasing their anxiety over when you will return. Continue to crate your dog for short periods from time to time when you're home so they don't associate crating with being left alone.

Step 4, Part B: Crate your dog at night

Put your dog in the crate using your regular command and a treat. Initially, it may be a good idea to put the crate in your bedroom or nearby in a hallway, especially if you have a puppy. Puppies often need to go outside to eliminate during the night and you'll want to be able to hear your puppy when they whine to be let outside. Older dogs should also initially be kept nearby so they don't associate the crate with social isolation.

Once your dog is sleeping comfortably through the night with the crate near you, you can begin to gradually move it to the location you prefer, although time spent with your dog—even sleep time—is a chance to strengthen the bond between you and your pet.

Potential Problems

Too Much Time In The Crate

A crate isn't a magical solution. If not used correctly, a dog can feel trapped and frustrated. For example, if your foster dog is crated all day while you're at work and then crated again all night, they are spending too much time in too small a space. Other arrangements should be made to accommodate their physical and emotional needs.

Also, remember that puppies under 6 months of age shouldn't stay in a crate for more than three or four hours at a time. They can't control their bladders and bowels for longer periods.

Whining

If your foster dog whines or cries while in the crate at night, it may be difficult to decide whether they are whining to be let out of the crate, or whether they need to be let outside to eliminate. If you followed the training procedures outlined above, your foster dog hasn't been rewarded for whining in the past by being released from his crate. Try to ignore the whining. If your foster dog is just testing you, he'll probably stop whining soon. Yelling at them or pounding on the crate will only make things worse.

If the whining continues after you've ignored him for several minutes, use the phrase they associate with going outside to eliminate. If they respond and become excited, take them outside. This should be a trip with a purpose, not play time. If you're convinced that your foster dog doesn't need to eliminate, the best response is to ignore them until they stop whining. Do not give in, otherwise you'll teach your dog to whine loud and long to get what they want. If you've progressed gradually through the training steps and haven't done too much too fast, you will be less likely to encounter this problem. If the problem becomes unmanageable, you may need to start the crate training process over again.

Separation Anxiety

Attempting to use the crate as a remedy for separation anxiety will not solve the problem. A crate may prevent your foster dog from being destructive, but they may injure themselves in an attempt to escape from the crate. Separation anxiety problems can only be resolved with counter-conditioning and desensitization procedures (see our handout, "Separation Anxiety" in our Behavior Resources Section on the website at www.potterleague.org).

Introducing your foster animal to resident animals

The Potter League does not guarantee the disposition of any pet. For this reason, if there are resident pets in the home, we always encourage you to introduce the animal slowly, if at all. If you are having the foster pet for a short time, consider if the two animals need to interact. Be prepared to separate any pets in the home, and please contact the Foster Coordinator with any issues.

Cat to Cat Introductions:

- Never leave your cat alone with the foster cat.
- Never expect your foster cat to share the same litter box as an resident cat.
- As your foster cat should be confined to one room, it is a good idea to put something in the room that smells like the existing pets.
- Allow them to smell each other under the door. Provide treats while this is occurring.
- Swap blankets and feeding bowls.
- Use a baby gate for a slow introduction where the two cats can see each other/feed on opposite side.
- Never attempt to physically place the cats near each other. This can result in scratches and stress.

Cat to Dog Introductions:

- Never leave the foster cat alone with your dog.
- Provide places for your cat to hide and jump onto in each room of the house.
- Have a “dog-free” zone in the house so the cat can relax- this should contain the food, litter box, and water.
- Make sure the dog does not have access to the foster cats food, and litter box.
- Leave the leash on your dog in order to prevent chasing or roughhousing.
- Allow time for your foster cat to adjust. Cats are environmentally sensitive. Try to keep interactions between the two calm.

Dog to Dog Introductions:

- Introduce your resident dog and foster dog in a large, non-threatening space; outside in the yard or out for a walk.
- Remove any high-value items such as rawhides, bones, chews and any toys your resident dog or foster dog may be possessive of.
- Feed pets separately to avoid squabbles over food.
- Never leave the dogs alone together. Separate by rooms or crating if you cannot be present.
- Keep the leash on the foster dog. Should a situation come up, you then have the ability to regain control without having to grab the collar.
- Be sure to give all dogs individual attention.

VETERINARY CARE

Your foster pet will need to visit the Animal Care Center at certain points during their stay with you for routine medical care, weigh-ins and vaccinations.

They may also need to visit the ACC in if they show any signs of illness. Generally these appointments will take anywhere from 15-30 minutes. You will be required to transport your foster pet to and from these appointments. If you are unable to make a scheduled appointment please contact the Foster Coordinator as soon as possible in order to re-schedule.

All veterinary care provided to your foster pet must be approved by the Foster Coordinator. You will be provided with contact information.

Please do not take your foster pet to see a veterinarian without approval from the Foster Coordinator. In case of an emergency, in an effort to save time, the Foster Coordinator may have you attend the appointment while they communicate with the hospital remotely.

If you notice any changes in your foster pet's health or behavior or have any concerns regarding the care of your foster pet during regular business hours, please notify the Foster Coordinator as soon as possible.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, the Foster Coordinator will contact the veterinarian on-call as to how to manage each particular case and, should after-hours treatment be needed, the Foster Coordinator will instruct the foster parent or family on the appropriate steps to take.

Potter League for Animals has a policy that we will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by the Potter League veterinary staff.

If your foster pet is in distress and needs medical attention outside of Animal Care Center business hours, please do not hesitate to call the emergency number provided. The following chart will help you to determine whether or not you should call the emergency contact number.

Examples of Emergency Situations (Call the Emergency Numbers Provided)

- Very high or low body temperature
- Very pale, blue or gray gums
- Trauma – eg. hit by car, dropped, consistent limping, stepped on, unconscious
- Open mouth breathing, erratic, gasping
- Sneezing or coughing blood
- Seizures or neurologic symptoms
- Severe bleeding (includes bleeding in urine or stool)
- Not eating or drinking
- Continuous vomiting and dehydration
- Liquid diarrhea
- Lethargic
- Uncharacteristic/abnormal behavior
- Straining to urinate/not urinating more than 24 hours
- Failure to defecate more than 2 days
- Unable to stand or walk

Examples of Non- Emergencies (Call the Animal Care Center in the Morning)

- If your foster pet has vomited once or has diarrhea once but is still active, eating and drinking
- Decrease in appetite
- Coughing or sneezing without blood or airway blockage
- Clear, yellow, or green discharge from the eyes or nose
- Weakness
- Visible parasites

Safety:

Realizing some foster pets have had little experience in a home, please do not put yourself in a compromising situation. Practice safe animal handling and disease control.

In the unlikely event that you are bitten by a foster pet (a bite that breaks the skin), please follow these steps.

1. Clean and flush the wound immediately with soap and water.
2. Report the incident to the Animal Care & Adoption Center liaison, immediately. A bite report will need to be completed.
3. See your doctor & follow their instructions.

It is critical that all bites be reported as Rhode Island State law requires any dog or cat that bites and breaks the skin to be placed on a 10 day bite quarantine.

Routine Veterinary Care

Routine veterinary care is provided by the veterinarian at Potter League for Animals during normal business hours. The Foster Coordinator will work directly with the shelter veterinarian to manage the health and well-being of each foster pet or litter. After-hours, the Foster Coordinator will take calls when emergencies arise.

Kittens

You will work closely with our Foster Coordinator to schedule the following medical treatments:

- FVRCP vaccine keeps kittens safe from common feline viruses, and can be given at 4 weeks of age, and boosted in 2 week intervals.
- Dewormer will protect the kitten from common internal parasites, and should be dosed to the kitten's weight and given at 2, 4, 6 and 8 weeks of age.
- Spay/Neuter surgery should occur around 8 weeks of age and/or at 2 pounds.
- Rabies vaccine is given at 12 weeks of age.

Cats

- FVRCP vaccine keeps kittens safe from common feline viruses, and can be given at 4 weeks of age, and boosted in 2 week intervals.
- Dewormer will protect the kitten from common internal parasites, and should be dosed to the kitten's weight and given at 2, 4, 6 and 8 weeks of age.
- Spay/Neuter surgery should occur around 8 weeks of age and/or at 2 pounds.
- Rabies vaccine is given at 12 weeks of age.

Puppies

- FVRCP vaccine keeps kittens safe from common feline viruses, and can be given at 4 weeks of age, and boosted in 2 week intervals.
- Dewormer will protect the kitten from common internal parasites, and should be dosed to the kitten's weight and given at 2, 4, 6 and 8 weeks of age.
- Spay/Neuter surgery should occur around 8 weeks of age and/or at 2 pounds.
- Rabies vaccine is given at 12 weeks of age.

Dogs

- FVRCP vaccine keeps kittens safe from common feline viruses, and can be given at 4 weeks of age, and boosted in 2 week intervals.
- Dewormer will protect the kitten from common internal parasites, and should be dosed to the kitten's weight and given at 2, 4, 6 and 8 weeks of age.
- Spay/Neuter surgery should occur around 8 weeks of age and/or at 2 pounds.
- Rabies vaccine is given at 12 weeks of age.

Scheduling Rechecks

Foster animal(s) may be required to return to the shelter every two weeks for vaccinations, deworming and general exams. You will receive reminders via a phone call.

Recheck times are as followed: Monday-Friday from 10 am-4 pm.

If for any reason you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment please contact the Foster Coordinator to reschedule.

Maintaining Foster Health

Diarrhea

There are three types of stool: normal, soft and diarrhea. Normal stool is firm and has a definite shape. Soft stool is not firm but still has some shape. Diarrhea is liquid, with or without color to it. Diarrhea is common and can be caused by parasites, viruses, bacteria, food changes, stress, overfeeding and other issues.

Diarrhea must be monitored as it can lead to dehydration. If the foster is active, mild diarrhea that occurs for 24 hours is not a concern. Feed the foster less at a time but more often. If the diarrhea is severe, lasts more than 3-4 feedings or contains blood/ parasites, call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

Parasites

Fosters are dewormed upon intake and at every recheck. Parasites are commonly found in the stool of puppies and kittens. Tapeworms may look like grains of rice. Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be seen in the litter box or in vomit. If you notice worms, call the








Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

Vomiting

Vomiting is not serious unless it happens continuously or accompanied with diarrhea. It can lead to dehydration. If vomiting occurs 2-3 times in a row, call the Foster Coordinator right away.

Eye Discharge

It is normal for animals to have little pieces of crust in their eyes after waking up. If you see continuous yellow or green discharge, swollen or closed eyes call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck. You can use a warm, damp towel to wipe the affected eye(s).

Score	Specimen Example	Characteristics
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very hard and dry ▪ Often expelled as individual pellets ▪ Requires much effort to expel from body ▪ Leaves no residue on ground when picked up
2	IDEAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firm but not hard, pliable ▪ Segmented in appearance ▪ Little or no residue on ground when picked up
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Log shaped, moist surface ▪ Little or no visible segmentation ▪ Leaves residue on ground, but holds form when picked up
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very moist and soggy ▪ Log shaped ▪ Leaves residue on ground and loses form when picked up
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very moist but has a distinct shape ▪ Present in piles rather than logs ▪ Leaves residue on ground and loses form when picked up
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has texture but no defined shape ▪ Presents as piles or spots ▪ Leaves residue on ground when picked up
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watery ▪ No texture ▪ Presents in flat puddles



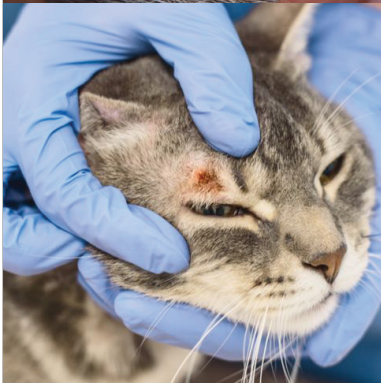
Ear Mites

Ear mites are parasites that live in the ear canal. You may notice a bald spot behind their ears due to continuous scratching. They may also violently shake their head. The ears may smell bad and you may see brown discharge that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are contagious to other animals and need to be treated. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice any these symptoms.



Fleas

Animals that have fleas will scratch themselves often. Topical and oral flea prevention are given to fosters over 4 weeks of age. Flea prevention for puppies under 4 weeks includes daily brushings with the flea comb and daily bedding changes. If you still notice signs of fleas, you can wash the puppy in a small amount of Dawn® dish soap followed by using a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. Be sure to thoroughly dry him/her following a bath. Baths should not be given more than once every 1-2 weeks. If you still notice signs of fleas, call Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.



Ringworm

Ringworm is a contagious fungus that can spread to other animals and humans. A sign of ringworm is thinning hair or patches of hair loss. Ringworm is difficult to remove from your house. To help with prevention and spreading maintain cleaning protocols and a good hand washing routine. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice any hair loss.



Mange

Mange is caused by parasites that infect the skin of animals. Some forms of mange are contagious to other animals and humans. The symptoms include itching, hair loss and sores. If you notice these symptoms, call the Foster Coordinator for treatment.

Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URI)

URIs are common and are caused by contagious viruses and bacteria. Signs to look for:

- Sneezing and discharge from eyes/nose
- Congested breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Dehydration

If you notice any of these signs, please contact the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

Parvovirus

Parvovirus is a deadly and contagious virus that attacks a dog's gastrointestinal tract. Once parvovirus is present in an environment it is difficult to remove. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated feces.

Signs to look for:

- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Fever
- Low body temperature
- Vomiting
- Severe diarrhea with or without blood

If you notice any of these signs, immediately contact the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

Distemper

Distemper is a highly contagious and fatal disease that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated saliva, blood, or urine.

Signs to look for:

- Severe Upper Respiratory Infection or Pneumonia
- Lethargy
- Neurological signs such as seizure activity, convulsions, and partial or complete paralysis.

Fading Puppies/Kittens

Occasionally, a kitten or puppy that appeared healthy will suddenly stop thriving. They will stop growing, socializing and crawling. They will begin to lose weight and may cry continuously. When this happens, they fade quickly and, even with medical intervention, may not survive 48 hours.

There is not understood cause for this condition. Occasionally, kittens and puppies die in foster care. If this should occur contact the Foster Coordinator for information concerning the disposition of remains.

THE FINISH LINE

Returning Your Foster Animal

Scheduled returns:

Once your foster pet is ready to return to the Animal Care Center, the Foster Coordinator will work with you to schedule a return date and time. Appointments are scheduled during regular Animal Care Center operating hours. The staff will do their best to accommodate your schedule. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact the Foster Coordinator in advance to reschedule. It is very important that the ACC staff are prepared for foster returns so they can provide appropriate, comfortable housing for all the animals in their care.

During a scheduled visit, the Foster Coordinator or recheck staff will let you know when a pet or litter is ready to be returned for surgery. When they are scheduled, you will drop the pet in on the morning of the scheduled surgery.

Veterinarians use the following guidelines to determine when the foster animal is ready to be returned for surgery:

- Are the puppies/kittens old enough or did they gain enough weight for surgery?
- Are they successfully weaned from their mother?
- Have they been successfully socialized?
- Is your foster healthy and recovered fully from the illness or injury?
- Is there room on the adoption floor?

The Day of Surgery

- Adult dogs and cats – no breakfast but may have water
- Kittens/puppies – Feed a small breakfast (1-2 tablespoons of canned food) and offer water
- All pets should receive fresh water at all times, even the morning of surgery.
- Drop off time for surgery is 8am.

Additionally, when the fostered animal is brought back to the Potter League, the animal is given a health and behavioral check-up before it goes into the adoption area. Any information you can provide about the animal's personality and habits is very helpful. A Personality Profile will be provided to you for this purpose. You are under no obligation to find homes for the animals in your care.

When you return your foster animal, you will have the opportunity to share your foster parent experience with the Coordinator.

Unexpected Returns:

We understand that emergencies or unforeseen changes happen and that there are times when foster animals will need to return to the ACC unexpectedly. If you are in the midst of fostering an animal and for any reason are unable to continue care for that animal, please contact the Animal Care Center as soon as possible and arrangements will be made to return the animal to the Animal Care Center. In the case of an emergency, please call the emergency number provided. We also request that you do not leave your foster animal with a third party. Any alternate care arrangements will be made by the Animal Care Center staff.

Adopting a Foster Animal

The purpose of the foster care is to provide temporary housing for animals in loving homes until they can be returned to the Animal Care Center and placed for adoption. There are times when a foster volunteer develops a special bond with a foster animal and considers adoption of dog, cat, puppy or kitten you have had in your home. We know how easy it is to fall in love with the animals you have helped, and the Potter League tries to accommodate this adoption. Selfishly, we do not want to lose you as a foster parent as there are many animals who need loving foster homes.

However, if you do choose to keep the adult, we will arrange to have the dog or cat spayed or neutered at our expense. If you choose to keep **one** kitten or puppy, you will get the 'pick of the litter'. Initial vaccines, medical care, and sterilization will be provided at the Animal Care & Adoption Center. For puppies or kittens, the foster parent will need to pay the regular adoption fee and for adults 1 year or older, the adoption fee is 50% off. We will consider fee waived adoptions on a case by case basis for certain cases. Foster parents may only adopt two animals each over a two year period.

We must insist that you or any friend/family member refrain from posting or sharing any pictures of your foster pet(s) to any form of social media, websites or any other rescue or adoption site as this causes confusion and misunderstandings.

If you, a friend or a family member is interested in adopting your foster pet, please have them contact one of our Adoption Counselors at 401.846.8276 or info@PotterLeague.org.

Please do not promise those interested that they will be able to adopt this animal, as the Potter League does have an adoption process that must be followed. We maintain a waiting list for certain types of animals, especially kittens and puppies.

Saying Goodbye:

Foster parents need to understand that returning their foster animal to the Potter League can be a very emotional time, even under the best of circumstances. When polled, foster parents overwhelmingly said their least favorite part of the foster program was returning the animal and losing contact with him or her. We understand this feeling (many of us are foster parents). Do not hesitate to speak of your feelings. Try to seek out any of the staff and let them know how you are feeling. You are not alone.

Know that every effort will be made to place your foster animal in the ideal home. Feel free to call us to find out the status of the animal. We cannot give you the names of the people who adopt your foster animal, however we will try our best to answer questions you may have about the adopters.

Remember, as foster parents, you have given a very special gift to the animal you cared for and loved – a second chance to live the life she/he was meant to live.

Preparing for Your Next Foster Animal

We hope you enjoyed your experience as a foster parent providing special care for a Potter League foster pet! Please return any supplies provided by the Animal Care Center.

A thorough cleaning, followed by disinfection is required of all supplies and the animal housing area between foster animals.

Let the Foster Coordinator know that you are ready and waiting for your next foster pet!

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE SAVED A LIFE!

GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS

All pets in foster care belong to Potter League for Animals (PLFA) and are subject to applicable policies, rules, and restrictions. PLFA will be as accurate as possible when providing information about the medical and behavioral health of pets seeking foster placement, but cannot guarantee the medical or behavioral health of any pets.

If injury or illness occurs to you or your pet(s) from contact with a foster pet, PLFA would be responsible for the medical care and expenses of the foster animal only. In some cases you may be asked to keep your pet separate from the foster pet for a period of time.

1. Foster care providers are expected to follow and abide by all guidelines and protocols regarding proper care and handling of foster pets, including giving them food, access to water at all times, health care and provide for their behavioral needs as directed. Foster pets must be kept in climate controlled homes with temperatures between 60 and 80 degrees.
2. Cats and Kittens must be in an enclosed carrier while outside. Foster cats will not be allowed loose outside. If a resident cat goes outside, the foster cat cannot have any contact with the resident cat to avoid the spread of possible illnesses and infections.
3. Cats aren't be allowed on leashes or harnesses.
4. Dogs should be not kept outside during extreme temperatures. Please pay attention to salt and icy conditions in winter, and high asphalt temperatures while walking dogs in the summer.
5. Dogs and puppies should never be left unattended outdoors. High traffic areas such as dog parks, pet stores should be avoided.
6. When outdoors, foster dogs should be kept on leash or in a securely fenced in yard. Some dogs can jump, climb over, or dig under fences, especially under-socialized dogs under are considered a flight risk, so please be cautious when foster pups are outside.
7. You are prohibited from taking dogs to off leash dog parks or other off leash areas. Dogs must be on leash, under your control, at all times.
8. Flex leads or retractable leashes are not allowed.
9. If a foster care provider refuses to return a foster pet for any reason at the request of PLFA, or has improperly transferred the custody of the pet to another individual or entity, the foster care provider will be permanently removed from the program and PLFA may initiate appropriate legal action in order to secure the return of the pet.
10. Do not give foster animals medication and supplements unless prescribed by PLFA Veterinary staff or alternate care arrangements have been made and approved by the Foster Coordinator. Do not, for any reason, stop medication unless directed to do so by a PLFA representative.
11. Foster care providers must notify the Foster Coordinator immediately if a foster animal bites a person or animal, seems to be having a serious medical issue, or becomes loose or lost.
12. Children under the age of 18 are not to be left unsupervised with any foster animals.
13. PLFA employs a positive reinforcement approach for all training and behavior needs- our behavior team is here to assist you. Any behavioral aids or training devices need to be directly approved by the Behavior Services Manager before being utilized.
14. While we want foster families to be involved in advocating and the adoption of the dogs, any vacations, parties, or large groups of more than 7 people to see the foster animal, need to be approved by the Foster Coordinator.

FAQs

Q: Is it hard to give the foster animal back?

A: It can be. Think of fostering like babysitting. You know going into it that you can't keep the children you are caring for. Fostering is no different. You can rest easy knowing that you've been a monumental part of their life and they will find a wonderful new home!

Q: Help! My foster is nervous.

A: Allow time for adjustment. It normally takes 3 days or longer for a dog or cat to settle. This can show in nervous pacing, barking, crying for dogs and nervous pacing, hiding, and fractious behavior for cats and can make the process feel overwhelming at times. Being patience can allow a dog or cat time to settle and adjust into their environment. If this behavior persists, reach out to the Foster Coordinator!

Q: How long does each animal stay in foster care?

A: Each situation is different. Our foster needs range from a day or two, or until the pet is adopted which can take several weeks.

Q: What if my foster pet becomes sick?

A: The Potter League covers the animal's medical bills. The pet must be seen by our veterinarian. Emergency care must be approved by a PLFA representative. If you have any concern about your foster animal, please contact your Foster Coordinator before taking the animal to the vet.

Q: Can i adopt my foster?

A: Yes, if you decide this is your forever friend, we encourage you to adopt. Let the Foster Coordinator know at the earliest time to avoid us posting the pet for adoption.

Q: My friend/coworker/neighbor wants to adopt my foster! Is this allowed?

A: Yes. Please have them contact the Foster Coordinator to start the adoption process. Please note no guarantees are made.

Other questions? Contact the Foster Coordinator!

RESOURCES

No question is a silly question! Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Animal Care & Adoption Center Main Phone Line: 401-846-8276

Animal Care & Adoption Center Administrative Line: 401-846-0592 (M-F 9:00am -5:30pm)

Animal Care & Adoption Center Operating Hours:

Sunday	10am – 5pm
Monday	10am – 5pm
Tuesday	10am – 7pm
Wednesday	10am – 7pm
Thursday	10am – 5pm
Friday	10am – 5pm
Saturday	10am – 5pm

Animal Care Staff Hours: 8am – 4:30pm

Foster Contacts

Nikole Meabe

Foster Care Coordinator/Senior Animal Care Associate

401.846.8276 ext. 108

NikoleM@potterleague.org

Alisha Brzozowy

Behavior Services Lead

401.846.8276 ext. 129

abrzozowy@potterleague.org

Nick Pappas

Animal Care Center Manager

401-846-8276 ext. 104

npappas@potterleague.org

Brittnie Coray

Lead Animal Care Associate

401-846-8276 ext. 109

brittniec@potterleague.org

24 Emergency Veterinary Hospitals

Only to be used when our veterinarian is unavailable or directed by staff.

Ocean State Veterinary Specialists

1480 South County Trail

East Greenwich, RI

401-886-6787

Bay State Veterinary Emergency Services

76 Baptist Street

Swansea, MA

508-379-1233

Tufts Veterinary Emergency Services

525 South St

Walpole, MA 02081

(508) 668-5454

If the Animal Gets Loose or Lost?:

In the unlikely event that the animal(s) in foster care becomes lost, please be sure to:

1. Call the Animal Care & Adoption Center immediately at 401-846-8276. If it is after hours, call a staff person at home.
2. Call your local Animal Control Officer and give him/her a description of the animal.

Bristol Animal Control – (401) 253-4834

Burrville Animal Control – (401) 568-9480

Charlestown Animal Control – (401) 364-1211

Coventry Animal Control – (401) 822-9106

Cranston Animal Control – (401) 461-8700

Cumberland Animal Control – (401) 333-2745

East Providence Animal Control – (401) 435-7676

Exeter Animal Control – (401) 294-2754

Gloucester Animal Control – (401) 568-3885

Hopkinton Animal Control – (401) 377-7785

Lincoln Animal Control – (401) 333-0950

Middletown Animal Control – (401) 846-1104

Newport Animal Control – (401) 847-1212

North Kingstown Animal Control – (401) 295-3311

North Providence Animal Control – (401) 233-1492

North Smithfield Animal Control – (401) 766-0377

Pawtucket Animal Control – (401) 722-4243v

Portsmouth Animal Control – (401) 683-0300

Providence Animal Control – (401) 243-6040

Tiverton Animal Control – (401) 816-4467

Scituate Animal Control – (401) 647-7200

Smithfield Animal Control – (401) 233-1055

South Kingstown Animal Control – (401) 789-5515

Warren Animal Control – (401) 245-4569

Warwick Animal Control – (401) 468-4377

Westerly Animal Control – (401) 348-2558

West Warwick Animal Control – (401) 822-9250

Woonsocket Animal Control – (401) 766-6571

The animal in foster care should always wear the collar and tag provided by the Potter League. If the collar and/or tag is lost or misplaced at any time, please call the Animal Care & Adoption Center for a replacement. All foster pets are microchipped, except young puppies and kittens.

Outside Veterinary Clinics/Hospitals we routinely work with:

Portsmouth Veterinary Clinic
944 East Main Rd, Portsmouth
401-683-0803

Mt. Hope Animal Hospital
645 Bristol Ferry Rd, Portsmouth
401-683-3743

Newport Animal Hospital & satellite clinics (Newport, Jamestown)
333 Valley Rd, Middletown
401-849-3400

Sakonnet Veterinary Hospital
1230 Main Rd., Tiverton
401-624-6624



Potter League
Enriching Lives

Animal Care & Adoption Center

87 Oliphant Lane
Middletown, RI 02842

T: 401.846.8276

F: 401.846.0681

info@potterleague.org

Spay & Neuter Clinic

235 Elm Street
Warwick, RI 02888

T: 401.369.7297

F: 401.369.7295

clinic@potterleague.org

www.PotterLeague.org