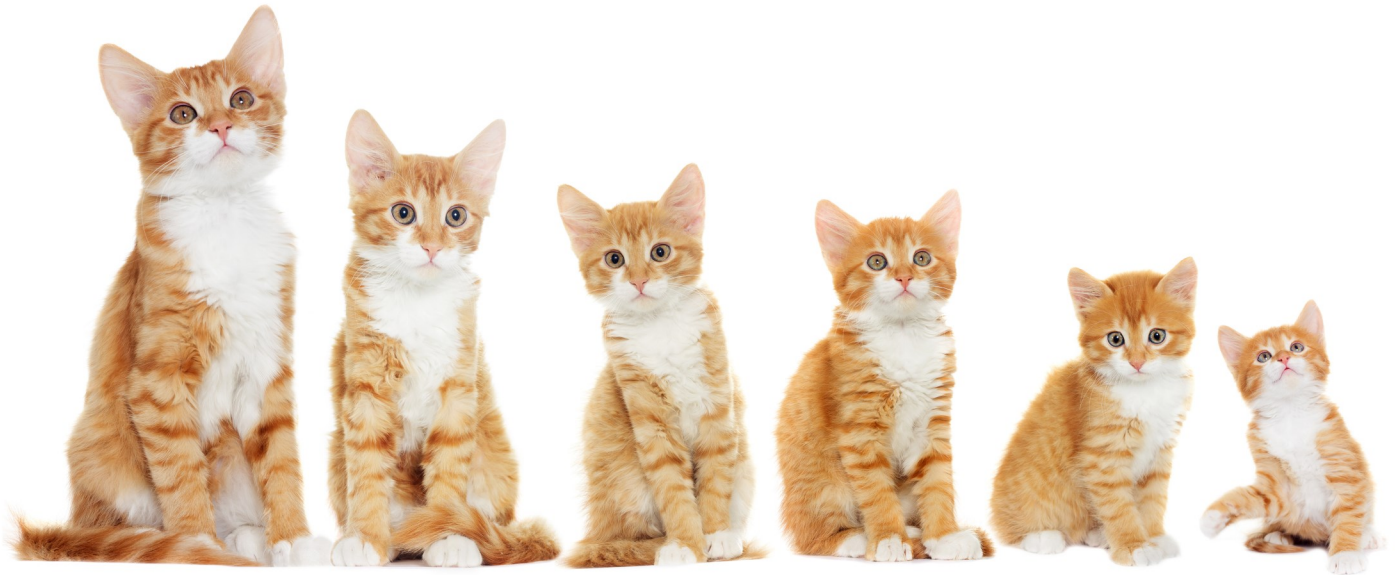


FOSTER MANUAL



OC Animal Care
561 The City Drive South
Orange, CA 92868

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CONTACT INFO & APPOINTMENTS

When you have questions, concerns or any issue related to your fosters please contact the following. It is best to contact all of the staff members so that you can be helped no matter who is in the office. These numbers should be used during business hours 11-5pm.

1. Erica McBride (Foster Program Coordinator) - 714-796- 6427
Erica.mcbride@occr.ocgov.com
2. Jessica Novillo (COT Team Supervisor) - 714-796-6428
jessica.novillo@occr.ocgov.com
3. Tammy Osborn (Adoption Partner Coordinator) - 714-796-6425
tammy.osborn@occr.ocgov.com
4. Kristen Zemke (PEO) - 714-796-6426
Kristen.zemke@occr.ocgov.com

Be sure to copy
in the entire
team so we can
be sure you get
help quickly!

**IF NO ANSWER & EMERGENCY HELP IS NEEDED CALL– 714-796-6451
AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY ONLY - 714-935-7158 (Dispatch)**

All foster animal pick up and drop off is performed through the COT Office. This is the glass door along The City Drive. Park in the small parking lot.



Appointments:

In order to reduce confusion and impromptu visits it is mandatory to set an appointment to bring in fosters for vaccinations, check ups, testing, pick up and return. This allows us to schedule a time with our vet staff and also be sure that there are staff members available to assist you with your foster's needs.

FOSTERING AGREEMENTS

1. I will provide the animal with humane care, which includes but is not limited to, food, water, shelter, grooming, training and medication when required.
2. I recognize that the animals remain the property of OC Animal Care while in my possession.
3. I will return the animals to OCAC if I am no longer able to adequately care for the animal or if I will be relocating to a residence outside of Orange County.
4. I understand that I do not have the right or authority to keep the foster animals beyond the return date or to place the animals in a home or in the care of another individual unless I receive written permission from OCAC.
5. I understand and acknowledge that i am responsible for all expenses incurred as a result of fostering the animal. OCAC will provide initial vaccinations and medication for minor existing conditions.
6. I will return the animals to OCAC immediately if the animal requires any medical treatment.
7. I will defend indemnify and hold OCAC harmless from any direct or remote and consequential damages arising out of this foster care arrangement.
8. I understand that I may not bring in outside kittens (found or given to me) and expect them to be added to the OCAC Foster Program. I understand that stray kittens should be surrendered to the shelter so they can be assessed by our veterinary staff who will determine if they meet the guidelines for fostering.
9. I understand that I must immediately disclose to both OCAC and any other rescue that I foster for if any animals that I am fostering for another rescue group are diagnosed or being treated for any contagious illness (parvo, distemper, panleuk, strangles, scabies or ringworm).
10. I understand that a diagnosis of a contagious disease in any of my fosters may make me ineligible to foster animals for a quarantine period of up to one year as deemed by vet staff due to the ability of certain viruses to survive even intense cleaning.
11. I understand that I may not transfer any animal to a rescue group without the permission of the OC AC.
12. I understand that anyone interested in adopting fostered animals (including myself) must go through the standard adoption process.
13. I understand that if my foster animals are returned in unsatisfactory condition (flea infested, unsocial, underweight, etc.) that I may be removed from the foster program.

TYPES OF FOSTER ANIMALS



Nursing Mothers w/
Kittens



Nursing Mothers w/
Puppies



Bottle Feeder
Kittens or Puppies



Injured/Medical
Program Dogs



Weaned
Kittens or Puppies



Ill or Injured
Cats & Kittens

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR FOSTERS

- Your foster animals should be separated from all other animals in your household and kept in a manageably small area where they have access to food, water and litterbox. Common areas are glass doored tubs or showers, bathrooms, spare bedrooms
- Fosters should be confined for at least 1 week of quarantine before being allowed to play with your animals in home, this helps prevent the spread of disease.
- Neonatal animals generally are not able to regulate their body temperature so the area should be secure from a draft or exposure to cold.
- It is a good idea to use an area of your home that is easily cleaned (shower, tub, bathroom). Neonatal animals may have trouble using litter boxes or holding their potty while learning so it is best to have an area that is easy to clean and disinfect.
- Fosters should not be placed anywhere with out door access or no temperature control, for example a garage or porch.
- Foster animals are curious and neonatal animals are still learning to explore. Foster proof your home by hiding all breakable objects, block electrical outlets, and remove toxic plants that your foster might eat. Small toys should be removed as fosters may swallow them. Close toilet lids and block off any areas that small animals could fit in and get stuck or lost in. All food and water should be placed as far away from litter boxes or potty pads as possible.
- All of your own animals in the home should be fully and currently vaccinated before bringing foster animals into the home.



- It is recommended that you check with all household members and or landlord to avoid conflict or potentially not being able to foster for the entire period of time necessary.

CLEANING BETWEEN FOSTERS

Basic Cleaning Procedures

- Remove all bedding/towels/laundry/soft toys and wash on a cleaning cycle with 1 part bleach to 32 parts water.
- Soak all hard toys, bowls, litter box in a 1 to 32 bleach solution for 10 minutes then rinse and dry. You can also use the dishwasher for this.
- Throw away any toy that cannot be sterilized (rope/cardboard/feather toys)

Recommended Cleaning Supplies



Contagious Illness Cleaning Procedures

It is best to manage infectious disease on a daily basis in the foster home. This will help prevent the spread of disease throughout the home and is especially important for fungal disease like ringworm.

- Non porous surfaces should be dry mopped (Swiffer) or vacuumed to gather hairs and then disinfected with a bleach solution or with Accel TB this includes walls countertops floors etc.
- Rugs should be vacuumed twice daily vacuum cleaner bags should be replaced frequently.
- Animal bedding and your protective clothing should be washed separately from other laundry and on high with a quarter cup of bleach per load and dried in a dryer on hot.
- All exposed animals should be tested and monitored for contagious illness.



RECOMMENDED CARE ITEMS

Kittens/Cats

- Separate bowls for food and water, should be hard to tip over.
- Low entry litter box with high sides, (easy for kittens to get in, hard for them to kick litter out!
- Non Clumping Cat Litter (this tends to get stuck between little foster toes).
- Heat Source, neonatal and ill animals have a hard time regulating their body temperature, we recommend either small hand warmers or an animal safe heating pad/ hot water bottle.
- Old towels, blanket or bed.
- A secure sleeping area, cats especially older cats should be provided a hiding area where they can go to feel safe .
- Toys that are easy to sanitize between litters of kittens.
- Small scratching post so that kittens learn to scratch the post not furniture.
- If a secure bathroom area is not available we recommend a pop up kennel that can be used for both kittens and puppies .
- All fosters of kittens and puppies should have a baby scale.



Puppies/Dogs

- Separate bowls for food and water, should be hard to tip over.
- Potty pads or access to outdoors.
- Heat Source, neonatal and ill animals have a hard time regulating their body temperature, we recommend either small hand warmers or an animal safe heating pad.
- Old towels, blanket or bed.
- Toys that are easy to sanitize between litters of puppies
- If a secure bathroom area is not available

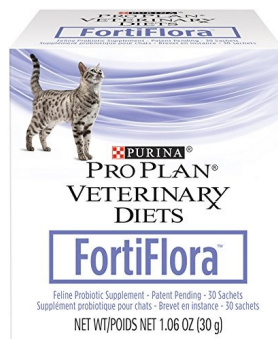
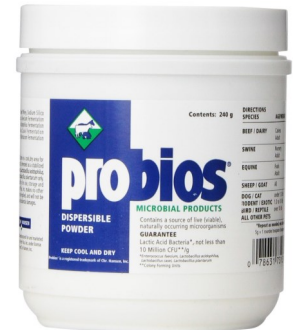
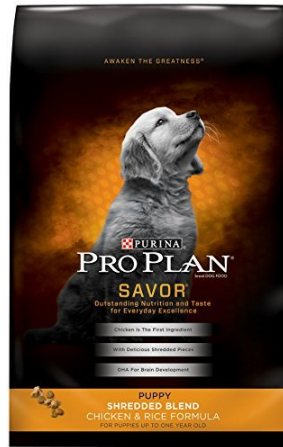
we recommend a pop up kennel that can be used for both kittens and puppies .



RECOMMENDED FOOD/SUPPLEMENTS

Kittens/Cats

- Royal Canin Baby Cat—Dry Food
- Royal Canin Baby Cat/ Purina Pro Plan—Wet Food
- Purina FortiFlora—Food additive to assist with upset stomachs from food changeover or medicine. (Amazon)
- Tomlyn Immune Support L-Lysine Powder - boosts immune system to fight off upper respiratory infection. (Amazon)
- For adult cats any high quality food is suitable. The better quality food the faster animals grow and get well.
- For bottle kittens we recommend KMR.



Puppies/Dogs

- Any high quality All Life Stages or Puppy Food including Science Diet, Purina Pro Plan, Canidae. The better quality food the faster animals grow and get well.
- ProBios—Inexpensive probiotic to help with upset tummies from switching food or antibiotics (Amazon).
- For both puppies and kittens that are underweight or ill we recommend Nutrical as an additive supplement.
- Puppies and Kittens should be fed Ebsilac Milk Replacer

CARING FOR FOSTER ANIMALS

Neonatal animals are very fragile and can lose weight rapidly. You must monitor all foster animals closely to be sure they are taking in enough food for their age and are staying hydrated. To keep track of their health we recommend keeping a journal documenting their weights, eating habits and overall health. You should weigh neonatal animals on a daily basis to be sure they are growing and record the weight in the journal.

Watch for signs of illness that include frequent crying, restlessness, weakness, cold to the touch, diarrhea, dehydration, shallow or labored breathing, paleness, blueness in gum color, lethargy, lack of appetite or vomiting.

Neonatal animals are susceptible to illness so foster animals must be kept indoors, most have not received their full round of vaccinations and as such should not be taken out in public. Do not transport your fosters loose in the car, please use an appropriate animal carrier when transporting any foster animals.

Establishing Good Habits -

Your job as a foster parent is to ready neonatal or ill animals for their forever homes, this means establishing good habits and making sure animals are well socialized before bringing them back to the shelter.

Kittens should be able to successfully use the litter box and be fully potty trained before going to their new homes.

Puppies should be crate trained and know how to use potty pads before going to their new home or should be house trained.

Poor habits like play biting, growling, tussling, or destructive behaviors should not be encouraged.

Climbing or scratching furniture and people, or being destructive should be discouraged.

Positive reinforcement is the only discipline that should be used. Foster animals do not understand punishment, try to redirect the inappropriate behavior into a better behavior, i.e. stop a chewing puppy from chewing the wall by giving it a toy.

Socializing & Handling

When your foster animals have been fully vaccinated or you are able to welcome people in your home you should do your best to socialize your foster animals in the following ways.

- Meeting new people, men women and children alike.
- Take the animals to new environments within the home, they do not have to live in different areas but get them used to normal house sounds in different rooms.
- Exposure to new noises, letting foster animals hear the sound of the vacuum or radio so they won't be scared in a new home.
- Teach the animals to not be scared of their carrier, use the carrier as their hiding hole or play object so they are not fearful of being in the carrier for transport.
- Touch the ears paws tummy tail and face gently to make the foster animal easier to handle in future vet visits.

FOSTER ANIMAL ILLNESSES

Animals do a good job of hiding when they don't feel well so telling if your foster animal is getting ill requires diligent monitoring and measuring of their weight. Younger animals tend to sleep more than older animals. .

Signs of Illness

Eye Discharge—It is normal to have a tiny bit of discharge when an animal wakes but any swelling yellow or green discharge, or if the animal is having trouble opening its eyes is abnormal.

Sneezing/Nasal Discharge—Occasional sneezing is normal in animals when they get into dust etc. If the sneezing is frequent and nose discharge is clear they likely have a virus. If the discharge has color the kitten may need antibiotics for a bacterial infection. Congested animals should be monitored closely as it may compromise their ability to eat and drink normally.

Loss of Appetite— Neonatal animals should never go more than 4 hours without eating as their blood sugar can drop rapidly. You may need to force feed a kitten that is struggling. Congested animals cant smell their food and may refuse to eat.

Lethargy—Activity level of fosters does depend on age and if they are recovering from an injury. Sick animals may have low energy and just want to sit and be warm in your lap. If an animal seems hard to wake up or slow to move it may be sick.

Dehydration—Dehydration is a common problem in neonatal animals. Dehydration occurs rapidly if an animal has diarrhea and it may need to receive sub cutaneous fluids to help it along. You can pinch the skin around the animal's scruff or head and pull gently upwards. If the skin does not flatten out and recover quickly the animal may be dehydrated.

Vomiting— If a foster animal has thrown up more than one time in a day it should be checked by veterinary staff.

Pain or Strain While Urinating – If an animal has not urinated in more than 24 hours or seems to be in pain, trying to urinate frequently or is unable to urinate it can become an emergency situation very quickly. Animals should be urinating at least twice per day.

Diarrhea— Soft stools are normal for the first few days going home due to stress, however if an animal has watery diarrhea or the diarrhea does not resolve the animal should see the vet.

Frequent Ear Scratching—Animals that scratch their ears often may have ear mites. These can be easily treated but can be contagious to other animals in your home. If the animal is scratching the ears and has black gritty discharge it should be seen by our vet.

Hair Loss— Hair loss can indicate several different issues in animals. It can be an indication of either demodetic or sarcoptic mange (scabies) which can be treated. It can also be an indication of ringworm or other skin irritations and while not an emergency the animal should be brought to shelter veterinarians for assessment.

Worms— Many foster animals have itchy bottoms that they will drag after going potty, they may even poop out live worms or worm egg casings. Animals may have a bloated belly, itchy bottom or be pooping out worms.

WHAT IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

Medical emergencies mean that your animal should be brought to the shelter immediately. Every effort should be made to email and or call a staff member to warn them you are coming so we can prepare our vet staff for the arrival of your foster animal.

Serious Kitten Ailments -

Fading Kitten Syndrome - Symptoms include unwillingness to eat, dehydration, lethargy, weight loss, coldness to touch and difficulty with breathing or labored breathing.

Panleukopenia (Feline Distemper/Panleuk) - Symptoms include unwillingness to eat, vomited, diarrhea with mucous "snotty" texture or blood in the stool.

These ailments can kill a small kitten in a matter of hours and should be addressed by vet staff as quickly as possible once noticed.

Serious Puppy Ailments -

Parvovirus—Symptoms include lethargy, fever, severe diarrhea and vomiting with mucoid (snotty) texture or bloody.

Giardia—Intestinal parasite that causes vomiting and diarrhea with a pungent odor.

Kennel Cough—discharge from eyes and nose, dry hacking cough and decrease in appetite.

Fever -

If an animal feels hot to the touch fosters should take the temperature of the animal. A fever should be addressed by Vet Staff.

Cats 100.5-102.5 Dogs 100.2-103.8

Reasons for Emergency Visits -

- Not breathing or labored breathing, breathing with chest sounds.
- Symptoms of Fading Kitten or Panleuk
- Signs of severe dehydration including but not limited to, dry gums, weakness vomited, not urinating, skin tenting (skin wont recover when pulled up at scruff).
- Abnormal lethargy or an inability to stand up and move on it's own.
- Unconscious or unable to wake animal.
- Cold to the touch.
- Limping or obviously broken bones.
- Any trauma that has occurred even if animal is acting okay, includes accidentally being hit or bumped, dropped, stepped on, pinched in door, grabbed by another animal or any other injury.
- A large wound or bleeding that wont stop with continued pressure, pussy wounds etc.
- Loss of appetite for more than 12 hours.

Any medical emergency should be addressed the same day that it occurs, do not wait to notify staff that one of your foster animals has a medical emergency! It is better to be safe than sorry so please do not hesitate to call or email us to answer questions!

FOSTER ANIMAL ILLNESSES



Kitten with URI



Scabies

Copyright © Washington State University



Ringworm



Cat with URI



Earmites



Dehydrated Malnourished

CARE TIPS FOR ILL FOSTERS

URI-

Vicks Vaporizer—Steam can help decongest sick animals and provide relief, or steam in bathroom.

Little Remedies— Baby safe nasal decongestant for congestion.

Saline Wipes— Great for wiping dirty faces and wiping eyes.

Aromatic/Smelly Food— Since the cat may be congested you may need to find a very smelly food to encourage a sick animal to eat.

L-Lysine— An amino acid that boosts the immune system to fight viruses.



Diarrhea/Loose Stools-

Pumpkin— The fiber in pumpkin can be beneficial to both cats and dogs, adding a small amount to wet food for cats or a few tablespoons to a dog's diet can help.

Probiotics— Probios is a great option for dogs and Fortiflora for cats. Probiotics can help buffer the animal's digestive system from antibiotics, stress, or food changeover.

Gatorade— If you have an animal that is dehydrated in dire circumstances you can offer small amounts of Gatorade to replace the electrolytes and help rehydrate an ill animal.



Loss of Appetite-

Extra Aromatic Food—trying different foods, flavors, or textures may help stimulate appetite.

Nutrical— High calorie supplement to boost hunger and provide nutrition.

Care tips should only be used once the animal has been seen by OC Animal Care vet staff and they are already in treatment. These methods should be used **with** medications from the vet not in place of them.

FOSTER CARETAKER SKILL SET

How to Medicate a Cat -

Liquid Medicine— <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUx-FrcjZWo>

Pills & Capsules— <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5ZSlw6nLTQ>

How to Force Feed a Cat/Kitten-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECPS4PFgRqg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRWqJ8IJOUQ>

Infant Animal Care-

Bottle Feed Puppies- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMruBKVuFHU>

Bottle Feed Kittens- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtDxMauwply>

How to Stimulate Urination & Defecation-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KExOXnZHt50>

How to Litter Box Train a Kitten-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkPzDCf91ng>

How to Wean Infant Animals-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22_kn_8gNWI

Basics of All Foster Skills

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwOReiRqsw0>

How to Apply Eye Ointment

Dogs— <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvuR50nx8hs>

Cats— <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUVM7BgnZHI>

Ringworm-

How to Lime Sulfur Dip A Cat-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGol_nmL4rQ

How to Take Rectal Temperature-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nb9I9Fak01E>

Normal Temperature for Cats: 100.5-102.5

Normal Temperature for Dogs: 100.2-103.8

How to Trim Claws

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7KcGivV0_-l

FOSTERING BOTTLE FEEDERS

Bottle feeding neonatal animals requires round the clock commitment. Because neonatal animals are fragile it is your job to monitor their health and keep a journal of their progress. Bottle fed animals get sick easily as they do not have the benefit of their mother's immunity passed through milk. As rewarding as neonatal animals is there is always the chance that the animals are not strong enough to survive, have unseen birth defects or may succumb to an unforeseen illness.

Infant Animal Care-

Bottle Feed Puppies- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMruBKVuFHU>

Bottle Feed Kittens- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itDxMauwplY>

How to Stimulate Urination & Defecation-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KExOXnZHt50>

How to Litter Box Train a Kitten-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkPzDCf91ng>

How to Wean Infant Animals-
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22_kn_8gNWI

Basic Feeding Schedule-

Week 1: Every 2-3 Hours , 3-5ccs of milk.

Week 2: Every 3 Hours, 5-8ccs of milk

Week 3: Every 4 Hours, 13-20ccs of milk.

Week 4: WEANING BEGINS Leave soft food gruel out all day. Bottle feed every 8 hours 15-20ccs of milk.

Week 5-8: Solid food.

Potential Problems with Bottle Feeders-

Aspiration— if liquid comes from the animals nose or it begins coughing the animal may have inhaled some fluid into their lungs. This may cause the animal to get aspiration pneumonia and require a veterinary visit. It is a dangerous illness that must be addressed ASAP.

Signs of Illness—Frequent crying, restlessness, weakness, coldness, diarrhea, dehydration, shallow or labored breathing, congestion, pale/blue gums, losing weight.

Hypothermia— Neonatal animals cannot regulate their body temperature until 4-5 weeks of age. They will need a heating pad to maintain warmth much like they would lay near their mother to stay warm.

Foster Parent Goals

- Bottle feed animals until weaning.
- Wean animals onto solid food.
- Teach animals to use litter box/potty pads/ crate training.
- Socialize and handle animals often.
- Help animals reach goal weight for adoption and spay/neuter surgery.

Due to the inherent weakness of bottle fed animals that have not received important immunity from the milk of their mother these animals carry a mortality rate of 20-40%. While this is very difficult to accept it is a part of nature as some animals are not born strong enough to survive.

FOSTERING WEANED ANIMALS

Weaned animals are those that have already started eating solid foods and are simply too small to get spay/neuter surgery for adoption. These animals require less attention than bottle fed animals but should still be monitored closely to be sure they are gaining weight and growing properly.

Potential Problems with Weaned Fosters-

Illness- There are a variety of illnesses that a young animal can have, they have usually not received their full vaccinations.

Injury – Young animals can be very playful and brave, they may jump off of things and potentially injure themselves.

Getting Lost– Small foster animals especially kittens are quick and can easily dart out of doors. If a foster animal gets lost please contact the COT team and notify them , as well as notify them when the animal is found.

Slow Weight Gain– Some fosters struggle to put on weight and may require longer than usual period of time to grow to an adoptable size.

Illness Requiring Long Term Treatment– Sometimes animals require several weeks of treatment. Ringworm can take several weeks to be cured as well as scabies and ear mites. These foster animals may require several weeks of treatment beyond them reaching adoptable/ surgery weight.

Tips for Weaned Fosters

Hissy/Scared Kittens- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKvzA1ywEHE>

Puppies (Once Fully Vaccinated)– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Z1IUA3aJ14>

Crate Training Puppies-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W058M4Qdyc>

Litter Box Training Kittens-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZlj8VMPiHl>

Foster Parent Goals

- Provide food water and care until the animal reaches adoption/surgery weight.
- Socialize animals with good play habits.
- Kittens should be litter box trained and puppies should be learning potty training.
- Monitor for or treat any illness that the animal may get.
- Teach animals to accept nail trimming and grooming/handling.



FOSTERING MOTHERS WITH LITTERS

Mother animals are usually great caretakers of their babies and are much easier to foster than bottle fed orphans since the mother does most of the work. Mother animals need a calm environment so that they can be stress free and take care of their infants. Mother animals must be isolated from any other animals in the house as they may act very aggressively to protect their young. You should prepare your home for their arrival before picking them up so they can go into a peaceful environment.

Potential Problems with Mother Animals-

Maternal Neglect– Some animals do not have good maternal instincts (especially young mothers). Mothers may neglect single babies due to birth defects or may ignore the babies due to stress and lack of instinct. Sometimes it is best to confine the mother and babies to a crate. Neonates should be monitored that they are getting enough to eat.

Maternal Aggression– Some mother animals are very protective of their babies. It is best to not introduce any mother animal to animals in your home so that she can feel safe with her kittens.

Maternal Aggression Towards People– Just like mother animals should not meet the animals in your home due to risk of aggression they may become very protective or defensive to you as well. The mother may try to bite or defend her babies from visitors. It is always best to give the mother as much alone time with her babies as possible.



Preparing the Home

- For cats the litter box should be far from her nest where the kittens are, mother dogs should be taken outside to potty.
- A box that contains the kittens or puppies so they cannot crawl away, but is large enough for the mother to lay down fully and nurse the babies.
- Animals should be placed in their room and left alone for several hours to settle in before members of your household interact with them. This will help the mothers feel more secure.
- Unless their blankets get badly soiled it is good to leave their bedding with the mother since it smells like her and her babies and is more comforting to them.

Foster Parent Goals

- Provide a safe quiet place for mothers to raise their litter.
- Assist mother animals with weaning of young.
- Return mother animal for adoption once her infants are weaned.
- Continue raising offspring to adoption/ surgery weight and socialize as you would a weaned animal.

FOSTERING MEDICAL PROGRAM PETS

Potential Needs

Broken Limbs— Animals may have splinted limbs, or surgically placed pins. These animals will need to return the shelter weekly for splint changes and or check ups. These checkups are coordinated by our Staff Specialist Tammy Osborn who runs the Medical Pets Program. Fosters should have the ability to confine fosters to a small area to be sure they heal well.

Contagious Illness— Animals in the medical program may need to be quarantined away from your pets due to a skin issue or upper-respiratory illness. Fosters should be prepared to keep their animals separated from fosters if needed.

Neurologic Animals— Some animals may suffer head injuries and require a place to recover for several weeks to see if they regain normal function. These animals may require additional time commitment to the animal's rehabilitation and care.

Requirements of Fosters

- Ability to bring in foster animals potentially on a weekly basis for splint changes, or medical check ups with on or off site veterinary staff.
- Ability to provide additional or more extensive care than the average foster, potentially assisting with rehabilitation or therapy.
- Ability to provide an environment that the animal will be safe in during its recovery .



Foster Parent Goals

- Provide a safe quiet place for animals to recover from injury.
- Assist animals with rehabilitation from injury including therapy.
- Socialize and care for animal so it is prepared for adoption.
- Return animal as needed for medical check ups and veterinary appointments.

WHEN ARE ANIMALS READY TO RETURN?

Mothers with Babies— Mother animals can be returned once their babies are weaned completely at around six weeks of age. Once the babies have reached a weight of 2lbs (or for puppies when the vet deems they are large enough) they are able to be returned for adoption as well.

Neonatal Puppies or Kittens— Neonatal puppies and kittens must weigh 2lbs or more to be returned for adoption. Some puppies are very petite even at 2lbs and it may be recommended that they be given a couple more weeks to mature in the foster home before being returned for their spay/neuter surgeries.

Adult Ill Animals— Animals that are of adult size that are being fostered until they recover from illness may be returned once they have finished any medication prescribed by our veterinary staff and they have been cleared by shelter staff to be made available for adoption.

Medical Program Pets— Medical program pets may require long term treatment and or multiple surgeries and extended care. These animals may be returned for adoption once the veterinary staff have cleared them of any injury or illness and the animal is deemed healthy enough for adoption to the public.

HOW CAN I RESERVE A FOSTER FOR ADOPTION?

1. Notify the volunteer/foster program coordinator that you have an adopter for your foster or that you plan to adopt your foster animal.
2. When you bring the animal in to be returned the foster coordinator or COT staff will place an adoption hold on your foster animal for you or whomever you have found to adopt your foster.
3. You or whomever is adopting your foster will then go to the OC Animal Care front office and bring the Animal ID Number of your foster animal. They will pay for the animal while our staff perform the final veterinary check.
4. if necessary the animal will then stay for surgery as normal and you will be notified by our customer service staff when your animal is available for pickup.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much time do I need to spend with the animals?

As much time as you can! The more time you spend with your foster animals the more socialized they will be with people. The amount of time required for feeding will vary with the age of the animal.

Can I foster animals if I have a full time job?

Sometimes! While a person with a full time job can't be a foster for bottle fed puppies or kittens they can still help with animals that do not require constant feeding.

Will I need to give medicine to the foster animals?

It is very common for animals that go into foster to require medication at some point during their stay at your home.

Can I let my foster animals play with my personal pets?

Neonatal animals are susceptible to illness and can carry illnesses that may make your pet sick as well as succumb to something your pet has carried in from a walk. We do require all animals to be quarantined for one week before being allowed to play with personal animals in the home. If for any reason one of your own pets becomes ill while fostering for OC Animal Care we are not able to provide medical treatment for your owned pets.

Who will take care of my foster animals if I have to go out of town?

We do ask that our fosters not take on any animals unless they have at least 4 weeks clear in their schedule where they will not be travelling. While we can accommodate emergencies OC Animal Care prefers to have animals stay with one foster for their entire stay.

What if I know someone who is interested in adopting my foster?

Notify the foster program coordinator before bringing the animal in for adoption. The foster program coordinator will put the animal on hold for you or a friend so that they can come in and pay for the animal at the same time it is being dropped off. The same applies if the foster wishes to adopt their own foster animal.

Is it hard to say goodbye to my foster animals?

Saying goodbye can be a difficult part of fostering, but remember that there are always more animals that need to be fostered. If all fosters kept their animals the program would not be nearly as successful at saving lives. Consider a going away party!

Why do I need to schedule an appointment to bring my fosters in?

Our staff members cover a variety of different positions and generally have many meetings going on as well as volunteer program management etc. We require all fosters to make an appointment before bringing their animals in so that we can be sure to be able to help you. Fosters should not go to other staff members for help with their foster program animals.

What happens if a foster animal gets too sick?

Unfortunately due to the fragility of foster animals there is the chance that they may get sick, die or be euthanized due to illness or irremediable suffering. Our veterinary staff do their absolute best to provide quality care to prevent this from happening.

What if my fosters are found to have panleuk, parvo or ringworm?

Because of the nature of these viruses and fungus you may not be able to foster for up to one year to eliminate the chances of the virus or fungus being spread to any other foster animal you may take home. Staff will determine length of quarantine.

What if my fosters are in poor condition when I return them?

Kittens should be returned in excellent health, animals that are flea infested, dirty, have urine scalding or are have deteriorated in condition from when they left the shelter may be grounds for removal from the foster program.

HOW CAN I HELP MY FOSTER GET ADOPTED?

Saying goodbye to an animal you have fostered can be very hard! Some of the best ways that you can assist your fosters in their search for adoption is to be sure that they are well socialized, friendly and potty trained. Animals that have outgoing and playful personalities are the most quickly adopted. You investing hours in socializing these animals is what makes them most successful in their new homes.



Take cute photos of your foster animals and email them to the foster coordinator and COT team so that we can feature them on our social media! Photos should be in landscape format so they can be used on the animals kennel card. Great photos attract adopters via our social media and our website!

Videos are a great way to promote your foster animals. Videos should be sent to the COT team before you return your fosters for adoption so that we can post it on our social media. Here are some example videos.

<https://youtu.be/JL2yWfGtGPs>

<https://youtu.be/SLeaKTlzlD8>

Create a cute feature page to be hung on their kennel, tell potential adopters about your foster animal's personality, show photos of your foster animal growing up. By telling potential adopters about your foster animal you help them make an informed decision that will hopefully help your foster find the perfect forever home.

	<p><i>Dale Earnhardt Jr.</i></p>	<p>Dale Earnhardt, Jr. is adorable, inside and out! Cutest face and personality to match. He loves to play and loves to curl up in your lap and sleep. He'd be happy in any situation, family or single owner, anyone who will love him up. He's already very interested in the computer and I think he already knows more about it than I do. Maybe he can be taught to pay the bills! He has \$40 off his adoption fee too!</p>
<p>Tom Selleck (check out his moustache!) is super playful, curious and sweet. He is in constant explore mode and has no fear! He loves to pull and tug on strings until he wins the battle. Tom has beautiful thick fur and the mustache just makes him more distinguished and cute. He has a reduced adoption fee of \$40, and already is litter box and house trained like his brother! He is ready for his forever home!</p>		<p><i>Tom Selleck</i></p>