

Foster Manual



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Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Welcome to the Ottawa Humane Society's Foster Program	2
Goals, Objectives, and the OHS Mission Statement	2
Contact Information.....	3

Chapter Two: Policies

Foster Program Agreement.....	4
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Chapter Three: General Fostering Guidelines

A. Getting the Call.....	5
B. Preparing Your Home	5
C. Supplies and Emergency Kit	6
D. General Care Guidelines	9
When Your New Foster First Arrives Home	9
Administering Medication	9
Checking Temperature.....	11
E. Returning Your Foster	11
Procedure for Returning Animals for Surgery.....	11
When Your Foster Needs to See Our Veterinarian	12
If Your Foster Animal Dies	12

Chapter Four: Cats

A. General <i>FVRCP</i> Vaccination Schedule for Cats & Kittens in Foster Care ..	13
B. Feeding Guidelines.....	13
C. Common Health Concerns	14
D. Grooming Needs.....	15
E. Reasons for Fostering Cats.....	16
Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)	16
Pregnant or Nursing Cats	18
Orphaned Kittens	20
Overcrowding.....	20

Chapter Five: Dogs

A. General <i>DA2PPV</i> Vaccination Schedule for Dogs & Puppies in Foster Care	21
B. General <i>Bordetella</i> Vaccination Schedule for Dogs & Puppies in Foster Care	21
C. Feeding Guidelines.....	22
D. General Health Problems.....	22
E. House Training Your Foster Dog.....	24
F. Grooming Needs	26
G. Reasons for Fostering Dogs	27
Bordetella (Kennel Cough).....	27
Pregnant or Nursing Dogs	28
Socialization and Kennel Deterioration.....	30
Underweight or Malnourished Dogs.....	30

Chapter Six: Other Health Issues in Cats and Dogs

A. Zoonotic Risks in a Shelter Environment.....	31
B. Other Parasites in Cats and Dogs	33
C. Serious Illnesses in Cats and Dogs	34

Chapter One: Introduction

Welcome to the Ottawa Humane Society's Foster Program.

Welcome aboard! Since the program's inception in 1983, foster volunteers have played a vital role in our organization by aiding in the recovery of animals who may not be ready for adoption for medical or behavioural reasons.

Cats and dogs recuperate from illnesses more rapidly in a nurturing home environment and may have a greater opportunity to be socialized than they do at our shelter. In times of overcrowding or during the summer season, providing temporary respite from our busy shelter environment is extremely beneficial for our animals.

Each year, approximately 1400–1500 animals who come into the OHS benefit from the foster program.

Our Goal:

The goal of the foster program is to provide as many animals as possible with a second chance for a bright future.

Our Objectives:

- To provide nurturing, temporary homes for dogs, cats and small animals requiring short-term convalescence outside the shelter environment;
- To encourage the normal growth and development of very young, otherwise healthy animals;
- To encourage the recovery and rehabilitation of animals not yet ready for adoption;
- To protect animals, especially puppies and kittens, from the risk of disease that may be present in the shelter.

The Ottawa Humane Society's Mission Statement:

To work in and with our community to provide leadership in the humane treatment of all animals, to address the causes of animal suffering, to encourage people to take responsibility for their animal companions and to provide care for animals who are neglected, abused, exploited, stray or homeless.

Contact Information

Fostering should be an enriching and enjoyable experience for you and your family. This manual is designed to guide you through the fostering process, but we are here to help and available to answer any questions as they arise.

We also require you to contact us to make an appointment before you visit the shelter for foster pick-ups, drop-offs, and veterinarian exams.

When you need to get in touch with us, who you contact will depend on the reason and the time. If we are not immediately available to take your call or respond by e-mail, we will get back to you as soon as possible. Please leave a message with detailed information about your foster animal.

How to Contact Us

Reason	When?	Who to Contact
General Inquiries Asking questions or seeking advice, reporting problems, arranging to pick up food, etc.	Mon– Fri 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 pm Saturday 8:00 am – 3:30 pm	Customer Service Representative: Foster 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca
	Mon– Fri 4:00 pm– 7:00 pm Saturday 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm Sunday 8:00 am – 12:00 pm	Veterinary Technician 613-725-3166 ext. 229 technicians@ottawahumane.ca
Emergency Animal is in immediate distress, having trouble breathing, injured, etc.	Mon– Fri 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 pm Saturday 8:00 am – 3:30 pm	Customer Service Representative: Foster 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca
	Mon– Fri 4:00 pm– 7:00 pm Saturday 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm Sunday 8:00 am – 12:00 pm	Veterinary Technician 613-725-3166 ext. 229 technicians@ottawahumane.ca
	Mon– Fri 7:00 pm – 1:00 am* Saturday 6:00 pm – 1:00 am Sunday 12:00 pm – 1:00 am	After-hours Emergency Line 613-725-1532
Pick-Up and Returns To make an appointment to pick-up/return a foster (for surgery, etc.)	Mon–Fri 8:00 am – 7:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am – 6:00 pm <p style="text-align: center;">APPOINTMENTS ARE MANDATORY AND ALWAYS MADE THROUGH FOSTER</p>	Customer Service Representative: Foster 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca

* The OHS is unable to provide support between 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Please monitor your foster carefully and contact us before 1:00 a.m. for advice if you believe a serious health issue is developing with your foster.

Chapter Two: Policies



Foster Program Agreement

The Ottawa Humane Society:

1. Retains all rights and ownership of any animal in the Foster Program. The OHS has the right to recall any fostered animal to the shelter at any time.
2. Does not require prior notice for the repossession of an animal, when a foster volunteer fails to bring the animal back to the OHS as requested.
3. Makes all decisions regarding animals to be placed in foster.
4. Prioritizes placements of OHS animals to foster volunteers based on the needs of the animals, the volunteer's experience and ability.
5. Is not liable for any injury, illness or damage to persons or property, including to owned animals, while an animal is in the foster home.
6. May visit a foster home at any time, providing that the foster volunteer is given prior notice.
7. Provides food and cat litter for foster animals to foster volunteers. The OHS is not responsible for any other foster expenses not agreed upon in advance.

Ottawa Humane Society Foster Volunteers:

1. Agree they will attend a Foster Program Orientation prior to fostering.
2. Agree that only they will provide care for OHS foster animals in their possession and understand that OHS foster animals must not be left under anyone else's care, without authorization from the OHS.
3. Agree that they may not travel with their foster animal nor take their foster animal anywhere that has not been approved by an authorized OHS employee.
4. Agree to have their owned animals spayed or neutered and be up-to-date on vaccines before bringing an OHS foster animal into their home. Canine vaccines include: DHLPP (*Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parvo, Parainfluenza*) *Bordetella* (*kennel cough*) and rabies. Feline vaccines include: FVRCP (*Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Panleukopenia*) and rabies.
5. Agree to isolate OHS foster animals from existing pets in the household.
6. Agree to keep OHS foster dogs on-leash, at all times, when in public. They also agree that dogs with kennel cough must be kept away from other dogs when in public.
7. Agree to contact the OHS for all foster animal care needs and questions and will adhere to the emergency protocols provided in the foster manual.
8. Agree to return OHS foster animals, as soon as they are well and/or upon request by the OHS.
9. Agree to direct all adoption inquiries about their foster animals to the OHS Adoption Centre.
10. Agree they may not adopt their foster animals.

****Please note: failure to adhere to the agreed upon conditions, may result in removal from this program.**

I, the undersigned, understand and agree to the above terms and conditions of the foster program.

Foster Volunteer Signature: _____

Date signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Chapter Three: Preparing for Your Foster

A. Getting the Call

1. **The Customer Service Representative: Foster will call or e-mail you to advise you of an animal that is available for fostering. The animal's needs and the anticipated length of stay required will be communicated.**
2. **If you agree to accept a foster placement, an appointment will be made to arrange to pick up your foster. A prolonged shelter stay may compromise the animal's health and the health of other animals in the shelter, so we ask that you pick up your foster as soon as possible.**
3. **When you meet with the Customer Service Representative: Foster, your foster's care plan (medication, feeding schedule, rest, etc.) will be reviewed. At this time, the animal will be ready to leave the shelter with the food and medication that we provide.**



B. Preparing Your Home

Once you agree to foster an animal, it is time to prepare for its arrival! Although an adult dog will be gradually integrated into your home with your own animal(s) and their routine, animals who will be isolated in their own area (such as a nursing mother cat, a litter of puppies, a single kitten or litter of kittens, and single or paired adult cats) require special consideration.

Follow these guidelines to start your foster experience well:

1. **Decide Where the Animal(s) Will Be Kept:**
 - **Choose a well-ventilated area that is out of the main flow of traffic. A spare bedroom or a lesser-used bathroom (with a window) is a good option. Remember that while the space you provide may seem small compared to what your own animal(s) are used to, even a bathroom will provide the animal with more space than a cage at the shelter.**
 - **The floors in your chosen room should be easy to clean.**
 - **Keep your own animals away from fosters to reduce stress on all animals and to ensure that your own animals remain free of contagious diseases. A separate room and closed door for your foster(s) will be necessary to separate animals requiring isolation.**

2. Gather All Necessary Supplies:

- Essential items such as food bowls, litter and a litter pan with scoop should be gathered prior to the foster's arrival in your home. The foster department will provide some items for you and there are some suggested in the supplies chart on the following pages.

3. Set Up the Litter Pan(s) for Feline Fosters:

- Kittens should have shallow litter pans for easier access. The cardboard cases that pop cans or canned feline food comes in make ideal litter pans because they can be discarded when they are soiled.
- Always use non-clumping litter for kittens under the age of 6 months. Kittens tend to play in their litter and may accidentally ingest it, which will lead to immediate problems in their digestive tract.

4. Provide a Nest for Nursing Animals:

In a quiet corner of your home, a clean, warm, and dry box should be provided for a pregnant or nursing mother cat. The box should be large enough for her to comfortably lie away from her kittens if she chooses, but small enough so the newborns are easy to reach. The sides need to be high enough to prevent the young from wandering, but low enough for the mom to be able to come and go with ease. The box should be lined with newspaper and then piled with clean, dry, soft, removable linens.

5. Set Up the Cage or Crate:

The OHS will provide a crate for canines. The crate serves as a quiet resting place for dogs who, as a species, naturally gravitate towards a den. In addition, you may find a crate helpful when you foster kittens and cats, to keep them confined when they are left alone and at night.

- We recommend that dogs sleep in the crate provided at night and during the day when they are left alone. A crate is an essential tool for housetraining and will prevent destructive behaviours born out of boredom or anxiety while you are away.
- To set up the crate, first line the bottom with newspapers, then set up a comfortable sleeping area with food and water dishes and, for cats and kittens, the litter pan. Since a housetraining routine can be established using the crate, we do not recommend allowing a puppy continuous access to his food and water.
- Crating should never be used as a form of punishment!

C. Supplies and Emergency Kit

We strive to provide foster volunteers with necessary supplies. However volunteers may sometimes be required to purchase items that are not available through the OHS. The chart below indicates what we supply, what you may need to purchase, and the function of each item.

1. Required Items (All Animals):

Item	Function	We Provide	You Provide
Food		✓	
Dishes		✓ As available	✓
Toys	Providing enrichment and socialization exercises	✓ As available	✓ Please check with foster staff for approved toys
Transportation	Transporting animals to/from shelter		✓
Towels, blankets, and newspapers	Creating a bed for all animals and a nest for nursing mothers		✓

2. Additional Items may be Required for Felines:

Item	Function	We Provide	You Provide
Litter pan(s) • Litter & Scoop		✓	
Scratching post	Providing enrichment, exercise, and to protect your furniture		✓
Cans of tuna, jars of baby food such as turkey, chicken, beef	Feeding finicky cats (as required)		✓
Kitten milk Replacer	Nourishing orphaned kittens (as required)	✓	
Hot water bottles	Warming young or ill animals (as required)		✓
Brush and nail clippers	Grooming		✓
Enzymatic stain remover	Removing animal stains effectively		✓
Baby gate or playpen	Securing animals in one area		✓

Rectal thermometer • Vaseline (as lubricant)	Taking the temperature of nursing moms and animals suspected of being ill		✓
Kitchen weigh scale/small food scale	Weighing kittens to ensure they are thriving and to weigh them prior to surgery (as required)		✓
Syringe	To administer medication	✓ As available	

3. Additional Required Items for Canines:

Item	Function	We Provide	You Provide
Leash/Halter	Transporting dogs/puppies to/from shelter and on walks	✓	
Dog treats	For training purposes		✓

4. Other Items that may be Required for Canines:

Item	Function	We Provide	You Provide
Hot water bottles	Warming young or ill animals (as required)		✓
Brush and nail Clippers	Grooming		✓
Enzymatic stain Remover	Removing animal stains effectively		✓
Rectal thermometer • Vaseline (as lubricant)	Taking the temperature of nursing moms and animals suspected of being ill		✓
Baby gate or playpen	Securing animals in one area		✓

5. Suggested Items for a First Aid Kit:

Item	We Provide	You Provide
Tweezers		✓
Needle-nosed pliers		✓
Flashlight/penlight		✓
Cotton swabs/pads	✓	
Ace bandage		✓
Rubber gloves	✓	
Gauze pads	✓	
Hydrogen peroxide (3%)		✓
Scissors (w/rounded edge)		✓

D. General Care Guidelines

1. When Your New Foster Arrives Home:

- **If your foster is a cat**, introduce them to the room/crate and show them where the litter pan is. Provide them with a fresh bowl of water. Give them time to settle in and try not to overwhelm them with too many noises or visitors during the first few days of their stay.
- **If your foster is a dog**, take them out for a 10 or 15 minute walk as soon as possible to help relieve anxiety through exercise. After the walk, walk them around your home on leash to become familiar with the new environment.

The Customer Service Representative: Foster will call or e-mail you for an update. At that time you may discuss non-emergency issues related to the health and behaviour of the animal and help us to determine whether the animal is ready to come back to the shelter. If you have questions at any time, please call us!

2. Administering Medication:

Administering medication to your foster may be necessary. Medications come in many different forms and proper administration is essential for the animal to receive the maximum benefit from the prescribed treatment.

Medications should always be given for the full amount of time prescribed, even if your foster starts to show signs of improvement.

i. Pills and Capsules

- Pills and capsules are administered by mouth.
- When giving pills, tilt the animal's head back with one hand while gently opening its mouth and dropping the pill to the back of its throat with your other hand. Gently hold the animal's mouth closed, with its head pointed straight up, and gently rub the throat in a downward motion or blow on its nose to encourage the swallowing reflex. Follow with 3-5 ml of water with a syringe.
- Pills may also be administered in a small piece of cheese, hotdog, or canned food but this method is usually less effective with cats.

ii. Liquids

- **For cats:** Tilt the head back, open the mouth and slowly dribble the liquid from a syringe or dropper onto the back of the cat's tongue.
- If the cat coughs or sputters, decrease the amount of the head tilt. If the medication is bitter tasting, the cat may foam at the mouth.
- **For dogs:** Liquids may be administered in one of two ways. You can tilt the dog's head back, open its mouth and dribble the liquid onto the back of its tongue with a dropper or syringe. If the dog coughs or sputters, decrease the degree of the head tilt. Otherwise, you may tilt the dog's head back slightly, hook the side of its cheek out to form a pouch and slowly dribble the liquid into the pouch with a syringe or dropper, allowing the dog time to swallow.

iii. Pastes

- **For dogs or cats:** The easiest way to administer a paste is to place the appropriate amount as a ribbon on your finger, open the animal's mouth and smear the paste on the roof of its mouth.
- **For cats,** an alternative method is to place the paste on her front leg so she will lick it off. (Since the dosage isn't always accurate this way, only use this method for medications that don't have to be measured exactly.)

iv. Ointments and Creams

- **Eyes:** To administer ointment, tilt the animal's head back slightly, squeeze a small amount of ointment inside the lower eyelid and close the eye to distribute the ointment evenly over the surface of the eye. When administering drops or ointment to a cat, it may be necessary to have someone assist you by holding the cat, or you may want to wrap the cat securely in a towel or pillowcase.
- **Ears:** Grasp the tip of the ear with one hand and hold the ear flap perpendicular to the head. With the other hand, drop in the prescribed number of drops or amount of ointment. Continue to hold the ear firmly to prevent the head from shaking and massage the base of the ear to work the medication down inside the ear canal. Again, when administering drops or ointment to a cat, you may need assistance or may find it useful to first wrap the cat securely in a towel or pillowcase.

NOTE: Please ask the Foster Customer Service Representative for tips if you are having difficulty giving medication. Never stop giving medication even if the animal looks better; always finish the full prescription.

3. Checking Temperature

Species	Normal Temperature Range
Cat	37.78 - 39.17° C (100 - 102.5° F)
Dog	38.33 - 39.17° C (101 - 102.5° F)

In rare instances, we may ask you to take the temperature of your foster if you suspect a fever or to monitor the health of young animals and their mother. If you are uncomfortable with taking your foster's temperature, we will do it at the shelter.

We recommend using a digital thermometer, since it provides a clearer reading and is more durable than a glass thermometer.

To take your foster's temperature:

1. Lubricate the end of a rectal thermometer with petroleum jelly.
2. Insert the thermometer into the animal's rectum and wait for the thermometer to beep.
3. Use a tissue to clean off the end of the thermometer and read the temperature displayed.

Contact us immediately if your foster's temperature is over 40°C (104° F).

E. Returning your Foster

When it is time to return your foster, you may feel a sense of sadness, loss, and even guilt. Often this is the most challenging time for a foster volunteer. Rest assured, we screen all potential adopters rigorously and your foster will soon be a cherished pet in a loving home.

By filling out a foster history sheet for prospective adopters, you increase the appeal of the animal while she waits in the Adoption Centre, because this information provides insight into what the adoptive family can expect from its new family member. You may include photos and stories with the foster history sheet to further describe your experience with your foster. This gives adoption staff a better chance to match the animal to the best possible forever home.

You must make an appointment to return your foster, once they no longer require fostering or when it is time for them to have surgery. In addition, during his stay at your home, your foster may need to see our staff veterinarian to address medical issues.

1. Procedure for Returning Animals for Surgery

If you are fostering puppies or kittens, an appointment will be made with our clinic for their surgery once they are physically mature enough to be sterilized. For kittens, both females and males must weigh at least 1 kg to be spayed or neutered. For dogs, a healthy 8-week old puppy would be considered a candidate for surgery.

- i. Please contact us when your foster reaches his designated weight so that we may schedule the surgery.
- ii. When you have been informed of the surgery date, arrange to bring the animal(s) to the shelter the night before the surgery date.
- iii. The animal will be spayed or neutered and welcomed into the Adoption Centre the day following its procedure.
- iv. Since the animal will not be going home with you after its surgery, please ensure you bring its foster history sheets and photos in with it.
- v. If you are fostering the mother as well, we will ask you to keep her at home for an additional week or two in order for her mammary glands to dry up. At that time, her spay surgery will be booked.

2. When Your Foster Needs to See Our Veterinarian

Our veterinarian performs rounds at 1:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday and at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday and meets with fosters first. When we schedule you to bring your foster in on a given day, it is very important for you to be punctual. Animals are seen on a first-come, first-served basis (except in the case of an emergency), and if you are late you may have to wait for the veterinarian to finish seeing animals who are housed in the shelter.

Please outline any health concerns you have regarding your foster with the Customer Service Representative: Foster. Foster volunteers are not present for the exam of their foster animal(s). We ask that you wait in the lobby until the examination is complete or indicate that you will return later in the day to pick up your foster.

Foster animals may only be seen by our OHS veterinarians and staff. DO NOT bring your foster to another veterinarian.

3. If Your Foster Animal Dies

While foster homes provide temporary shelter, comfort and security for animals that are waiting for their permanent homes, there may be times when an animal does not survive despite all the appropriate measures taken. Many of our foster animals come from unknown histories and environments, so it is very difficult for us to ensure that they will always be healthy. A cat that appears healthy at the time of rescue could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later.

In the unfortunate event that a foster animal dies in your home:

- Wrap the animal in a plastic bag or place it in a small box
- Please contact the Foster Department immediately via phone or e-mail
- Bring the animal to the OHS as soon as possible

Chapter Four: Cats

A. General *FVRCP* Vaccination Schedule for Cats and Kittens in Foster Care:

	Initial Vaccine	Initial Booster	Secondary Boosters
Kittens	Upon entry to OHS (or once 4 weeks old)	4 weeks after initial vaccine	Every 4 weeks, after initial booster, until 20 weeks of age
Cats	Upon entry to OHS (if over 6 months)	2 weeks after initial vaccine	Not required

Please do not forget booster appointments!

B. Feeding Guidelines:

Although many people rely on dry cat food as a staple for their cats' diets, many veterinarians now agree that canned cat food is a must for developing strong bones and muscles and can defend against many potential conditions caused or contributed to by an all-dry cat food diet. Sick cats may eat only wet food. While dry food is convenient, doesn't spoil and is enjoyed by cats, it should be presented to your foster as a side option and not as the only option.

Please follow the feeding guidelines that we provide for your foster. Each brand of food has its own guidelines, although we recommend you stick to Iams while you have your foster.

Be careful not to overfeed, as doing so may cause gastrointestinal upset. Also, please refrain from feeding your foster anything other than the prescribed diet, such as milk or any other human food.

Feeding Guidelines for IAMS Cat Food:

Kittens:

Weight of kitten	1-4 months dry cups per day	5-6 months dry cups per day	7-8 months dry cups per day	9-12 months dry cups per day
0.5 kg	1/4 cup			
1 kg	1/2 cup	1/4 cup		
2 kg	1 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/3 cup
3 kg	1 2/3 cups	3/4 cup	2/3 cup	1/2 cup
4 kg	2 1/4 cups	1 cup	3/4 cup	2/3 cup
5 kg		1 1/3 cups	1 cup	3/4 cup
5.5 kg			1 1/4 cups	1 cup

- * Kitten 6-12 weeks can be fed up to four times per day
- * Kittens 3-6 months can be fed three times per day
- * Kittens and cats over 6 months can be fed twice per day, unless otherwise advised

Adult Cats:

Weight of cat	1-4 months dry cups per day
2 kg	1/4 - 1/3 cup
4 kg	1/2 - 2/3 cup
5.5 kg	3/4 - 1 cup
3 kg	1 2/3 cups
7 kg	1-1 1/3 cups
10 kg	1 1/3 - 2 cups

C. Common Health Concerns:

We try to diagnose any health concerns in animals before they are sent to a foster home, but some conditions may only become apparent later. The following chart outlines some of the most common symptoms we see in our animals, their possible causes, and what you can do about them.

Symptom	Possible Cause	What To Do
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear discharge 	Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.	Monitor the eyes. If discharge is excessive or progresses to a yellow or green colour, please contact us. If you see clear discharge, it is a viral infection therefore no treatment is required.
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green or yellow discharge 	Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.	Gently wipe eyes with a warm, damp cloth and contact us for a vet appointment. If you see yellow or green discharge, it is most likely a bacterial infection and should be treated.
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third eyelid exposed 	Cats have a third eyelid, called a nictitating membrane, which is usually hidden. Its function is to remove dust or other irritants from the eye.	If you can see this membrane for more than 24 hours, please contact us.

<p>Vomiting</p>	<p>A common occurrence in felines for a variety of reasons, including hairballs.</p>	<p>Remove all food for 4 to 5 hours.</p> <p>If vomiting stops, give a very small amount of food 4 to 5 times a day. Return to regular feeding if no more vomiting occurs.</p> <p>If vomiting persists, remove food and contact us for advice.</p>
<p>Diarrhea</p>	<p>Diarrhea is one of the most common ailments affecting animals and it has many causes. Cow's milk often causes diarrhea in cats and kittens. Other causes of diarrhea include stress, allergy to food, parasites, improper absorption of food or change in food, and some diseases.</p> <p>Diarrhea can also be caused by the stress of the move to your home.</p>	<p>Kittens cannot wait for treatment as they become dehydrated very quickly. Contact us as soon as you notice diarrhea.</p> <p>Fecal analysis can rule out parasites as the cause of diarrhea. Please contact us to discuss.</p>
<p>Sneezing and/or Nasal Discharge</p>	<p>Sneezing and nasal discharge are commonly found in cats who are suffering from an upper respiratory infection.</p> <p>Sneezing is typically in "fits"</p>	<p>Monitor sneezing and contact us if sneezing fits increase or worsen.</p> <p>Nasal discharge: contact us if discharge is yellow or green.</p>

D. Grooming Needs

It is a good idea to establish a grooming routine with your foster cat. Acclimatizing her to brushing and nail trimming will allow her future family and veterinarian an easier time with handling her. Opening her mouth for inspection and manipulating her ears and paws may make it much easier for her to be groomed and examined by a veterinarian.

We do not recommend that you bathe any cat in your care since cats do a very fine job of keeping their own coats clean. In rare instances, you may use a damp towel to wet the fur of your cat. There are also dry shampoo products available on the market if your foster cat's coat requires freshening.

1. Brushing

We encourage you to brush your foster cat not only to help establish a regular grooming routine, but to minimize any aversion the cat may have to handling.

Cats are most effectively brushed with a slicker brush, but the Foster Customer Service Representative can advise you on the best kind of brush for your particular foster's coat.

If your foster shows an aversion to being brushed, start with only a minute or two a day of grooming and reward her tolerance with treats and affection. If she exhibits signs of aggression when you try to brush her, please refrain from attempting to do so. Always leave the removal of mats up to us, and never use scissors to trim a cat's fur.

2. Nail Trimming

If you are at all uncomfortable with trimming your foster's nails, we can either guide you through the process in person initially or do it for you. If you feel comfortable doing it yourself, please follow the guidelines below and trim the nails on a weekly basis using nail clippers specifically designed for cats.

Before trimming your foster cat's nails, it's a good idea to get her used to having her paws handled and squeezed. Begin by gently petting her legs while giving her a treat. Gradually increase the pressure so that petting becomes squeezing, which you'll need to do later when you extend the claw to clip the nail.

Apply a small amount of pressure to the cat's paw, with your thumb on top of the paw and your index finger under the pad, until the claws are extended. You should be able to see the quick (pink blood vessel inside the nail). Try not to cut into the quick of the nail as it will be painful and likely bleed. If you accidentally cut the quick, apply pressure over the bleeding nail with a cotton ball for a couple of minutes until the bleeding stops. Flour or cornstarch also help to stop the bleeding.

E. Reasons for Fostering Cats

1. Feline Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)

URI is a contagious respiratory disease affecting domestic cats. It can be caused by several viruses and microorganisms which primarily affect the eyes, nose, and throat. It manifests itself similar to a common cold in humans. Transmission of the disease occurs mainly from direct contact with the virus (found on fur, clothes, blankets, etc.) and rarely through aerosol droplets formed from a sneeze or cough.

One of the most common reasons for fostering is to treat cats suffering from URI. When given a quiet room to sleep in along with a healthy diet and plenty of TLC, cats recover from their infection more quickly than they do at our shelter, although more vulnerable animals, such as young kittens or malnourished, stressed cats, are at risk of succumbing to the illness. URI can, in some cats, cause serious disease such as pneumonia. Also, sick cats may not eat or drink adequate amounts and can become severely dehydrated. In such cases, hospitalization and fluid supplementation may be needed.

The average length of fostering a cat with URI is 2 to 4 weeks depending on the individual cat's recovery time. It is important for you to contact us if the cat develops green nasal or ocular discharge, wet cough, or if it loses its appetite, as this may indicate a secondary bacterial infection and require other treatment. Sometimes in young kittens, pneumonia can result from what started

as an upper respiratory infection. Occasionally antibiotics are required as viral infections can become complicated by secondary bacterial invaders.

Symptoms of URI:

- Lethargy
- Intermittent sneezing and/or sneezing attacks
- Persistent fever
- Dry cough
- Drooling
- Clear nasal discharge
- Watery eyes; eyelids may paste shut in kittens
- Congestion – open-mouth breathing and wheezing that causes lack of appetite
- Sensitivity to light

Tips on Care:

- **Lower stress levels.** Provide the cat with a warm and well-ventilated room where she can rest quietly.
- **Monitor food intake.** Cats with URI may not be interested in eating due to their overall feeling of malaise and congestion, which hinders their sense of smell. However, their recovery relies on nourishment, so they should be encouraged to eat. Adding a bit of warm water to canned food to form a paste may entice the cat to eat. If that does not work, try feeding “stinky food” such as canned tuna, salmon, or gravy-based cat food. In some cases, hand-feeding is required in several small intervals throughout the day.
- **If antibiotics are prescribed, follow the directions on the label and always be sure to complete the cycle of medication, even if your fosterling appears fully recovered.**
- **Clean your foster’s face.** Use a cotton ball or gauze pad dampened with warm water to clean encrustations around the nose and eyes. Always use a new gauze pad or cotton ball for each eye.
- **Help ease her breathing.** Your foster’s sinuses may become increasingly congested as the URI progresses. Adding a humidifier or vapourizer to her room or bringing her into the bathroom and closing the door while you take a hot shower may help.
- **Remember that as long as the cat continues to eat and doesn’t vomit or have diarrhea, your foster is likely on the mend!**



Cat with URI

When Should You Contact the Shelter?

With rest and good care, many cats will recover from mild URI in one or two weeks. Sometimes cats need additional help. If your cat has any of the following signs, contact the OHS:

- Not eating for more than 24 hours
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose or eyes (our veterinarian may prescribe antibiotics at this point)
- Difficulty breathing, especially panting or breathing through an open mouth
- Depressed or unresponsive cat; a slight decrease in activity is expected but contact the OHS if the cat is much less active than usual
- Vomiting or diarrhea lasts more than 24 hours
- Little or no improvement after a week of home care

2. Pregnant or Nursing Cats

Throughout the year, but particularly in the spring, many cats arrive at our shelter that are either pregnant or nursing. We try to place these cats in a foster home as soon as possible. A shelter environment can create stress that may lead to health problems for mother cats and, in addition, kittens are susceptible to catching upper respiratory disease in the shelter.

Fostering a pregnant or nursing cat can last anywhere from 4 to 10 weeks, depending on the kittens' ages. A pregnant cat would require at least 10 weeks of care, from the time she gives birth, to the time she is ready to be spayed and be placed up for adoption. The Foster Service Representative will always provide you with a rough estimate of how long an animal will require fostering.

Most mother cats will seek their own nesting area in the last week or so of pregnancy. If you wish to help her, expect her to require soft bedding, an area with minimal human traffic and separation from other pets in the home. Please check out this helpful video on feline births, http://www.marvistavet.com/html/body_giving_birth_to_kittens.html

Tips on Care:

- **Create a nest.** In a quiet corner of your home, a clean, warm, and dry box should be provided for a pregnant or nursing mother cat. The box should be large enough for her to comfortably lie away from her kittens if she chooses, but small enough so the newborns are easy to reach. The sides need to be high enough to prevent the young from wandering, but low enough for the mom to be able to come and go with ease. The box should be lined with newspaper and then piled with clean, dry, soft, removable linens.
- **Make sure the mother cat is eating.** We will provide you with a growth/lactation diet that should be fed to the mother cat throughout her gestation and lactation periods. Because milk production requires energy, the mom's food and water supply should be increased 2 to 4 times her normal intake. Food and fresh water should always be made available to her.
- **Observe the mother cat.** Once the kittens are born, watch to see that they are all moving and breathing. Ensure that the mother cat is being attentive to their needs by allowing them to feed and stimulating them to urinate and defecate. You may hear the mother's interaction with her kittens in the form of a "brpp" or "chirp" noise as she calls to them and reassuringly nuzzles them. Please allow the mother cat the majority of her day to be quiet and stress-free while she cares for her newborns. Please keep in mind that the mother may show strong

protective reaction at this time. This instinctive reaction is facilitated by her hormonal state and the physical presence of her young. This phenomenon is quite common, in particular with cats who are having their first litter. Within a few days, her protectiveness should wane somewhat and she will allow you a closer inspection of her kittens.

- **Call the Customer Service Representative: Foster to report the birth.** When you call us to report how many kittens were born and how the litter and mom are doing, you may also want to take this opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you might have.
- **Weigh and observe the kittens.** Once the kittens are born, you should weigh them and record their weight every 2 days to ensure that they are gaining well. They should be warm and have pink noses and tongues. Their bellies should be slightly rounded. The kittens' eyes should open at 10 to 14 days old; please let us know if their eyes are not open by day 14. As the kittens become mobile, they will increasingly approach their mother and initiate suckling. Toward the end of the second month, the kittens become almost wholly responsible for initiating suckling and the mother cat may actively impede their efforts by blocking access to her nipples or by removing herself from their proximity. The increasing role of the kitten in initiating suckling helps develop the kittens' sensor and motor abilities.
- **Feed the kittens.** For the first 4 weeks of life, the kittens need only their mother's milk. Even if they are still nursing after that time, you can start feeding the kittens a warm slurry of canned kitten food and water when they reach 4 weeks of age. Feeding them kitten food makes a good supplement to mother's milk and helps the kittens gradually adjust to a time when they will be fully weaned. Initially it may be necessary to smear a little slurry on the kitten's noses to initiate feeding. Please change the amount and consistency of food gradually to prevent digestive upset.
- **Encourage the kittens to wean.** The mother will usually begin to wean her kittens at 6 to 8 weeks of age. If the mother seems reluctant to wean her kittens, separate the mother from her litter a few times a day for a couple of hours to ensure that they are learning to eat on their own. Once kittens are weaned, it's very important to ensure that they all continue to eat. Kittens must eat canned food 3 to 4 times a day. If one kitten is not eating, offer her food separate from her littermates and observe her closely. Call us if any kitten has not eaten in 24 hours.
- **Socialize the kittens.** A kitten's environment should be mentally stimulating to promote healthy development. Encourage kittens to explore their living quarters, meet new people (including gentle children), and play with different objects such as paper bags, wads of crumpled paper, plastic balls, and large bells. Exposing kittens to ordinary household appliances such as the vacuum cleaner and blender helps to encourage a comfortable, laissez-faire attitude toward these otherwise startling noises. Comforting kittens who show fear to new things only encourages them to be fearful. Instead, praise kittens for their curiosity or for brave reactions and ignore fearful ones.
- **Teach your kittens how to be good cats.** Aside from socialization, one of the best things you can do for kittens between the ages of 4 to 12 weeks is to teach them appropriate manners, especially with regard to proper play behaviour, scratching, and reliable litter box use. We also encourage you to use positive reinforcement techniques on a daily basis to gradually get them used to having their paws, mouths, and ears manipulated. This will help them adjust to restraint and later cope more readily with grooming exercises and trips to their veterinarian.

3. Orphaned Kittens

Orphaned kittens are young kittens who come to the shelter without a mother. Under the age of 3 to 4 weeks, these kittens are unable to eat on their own and must be nursed. If the kittens are over the age of 3 to 4 weeks, they can eat on their own and are sent to a foster home without a nursing mother.

With weight scale, please weigh the kittens every couple of days to ensure weight gain. If the kitten is losing weight or not gaining, please call the Customer Service Representative: Foster for advice. Please follow the general care guidelines in the pregnant or nursing cat section above for advice on raising kittens.



4. Overcrowding

Overcrowding can be an issue at our shelter. During times of extreme overcrowding, we may call upon foster volunteers to take home a healthy cat until a cage is available in the Adoption Centre to accommodate them. Fostering cats during a period of overcrowding can last anywhere from 2 to 4 weeks.

Chapter Five: Dogs

A. General *DA2PP* Vaccination Schedule for Dogs and Puppies in Foster Care:

	Initial Vaccine	First Vaccine	Second Vaccine	Third Vaccines
Puppies (4-24 weeks old)	Upon entry to OHS (or once 4 weeks old)	4 weeks after initial vaccine	4 weeks after first vaccine	4 weeks after second vaccine (and every 4 weeks until 24 weeks of age)
Dogs (over 6 months)	Upon entry to OHS	2 weeks after initial vaccine	Not required	Not required

It is extremely important to come in for booster appointments to ensure puppies and dogs have proper immunity when returned to the shelter.

B. General *Bordetella* Vaccination Schedule for Dogs and Puppies in Foster Care:

	First Vaccine	Second Vaccine
Puppies (4-24 weeks old)	Intranasal vaccine, upon entry to OHS (or once 4 weeks old)	Injectable vaccine, 2 weeks after first vaccine OR once 8 weeks old, whichever occurs later
Dogs (over 6 months)	Intranasal vaccine, upon entry to OHS	Injectable vaccine, 2 weeks after first vaccine



C. Feeding Guidelines

Feeding Guidelines for Iams Dog Food:

Puppies:

Weight of puppy	Dry cups per day 6-11 weeks	Dry cups per day 3-4 months	Dry cups per day 5-7 months	Dry cups per day 8-12 months
1.5 kg	¾-1 cup	¾-1 cup	½-¾ cup	¼ -1/2 cup
2.5 kg	1 ¼- 1 ½ cups	1 ¼- 1 ½ cups	¾-1 cup	¼ -1/2 cup
4.5 kg	2 ¼ -2 ½ cups	2 ¼ -2 ½ cups	1 ¼- 1 ½ cups	1-1¼ cups
7 kg	3 ¼ -3 ½ cups		1 ¾-2 cups	1-1¼ cups
9 kg		3 ½ -3 ¾ cups	2 ¼ -2 ½ cups	1 ¼- 1 ½ cups
14 kg		4 ¾-5 cups	3 -3 ¼ cups	1 ½ -1 ¾ cups
18 kg			3 ½ -3 ¾ cups	2-2 ¼ cups
23 kg			4 ¼ -4 ½ cups	2 ¼ -2 ½ cups

- * Puppies under four months of age, feed three times per day, mornings, afternoons and evenings
- * Puppies and dogs after four months of age, feed only in the mornings and evenings, or as prescribed

Adult Dogs:

Weight of dog	Dry cups per day
1.5 kg	¼ -1/2 cup
3.5 kg	½-¾ cup
9 kg	1-1¼ cups
14 kg	1 ¼- 1 ½ cups
18 kg	1 ½ -1 ¾ cups
23 kg	1 ¾-2 ¼ cups

D. General Health Problems:

We endeavour to diagnose any health concerns in animals before they are sent to a foster home, but some conditions may only become apparent once the animal has settled into your home. The following chart outlines some of the most common symptoms we see in our animals, their possible causes, and what you can do about them.

Symptom	Possible Cause	What To Do
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear discharge 	<p>Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.</p>	<p>Monitor the eyes and contact us if the condition worsens (see below).</p> <p>If you see clear discharge, it is a viral infection and requires no treatment.</p>
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green or yellow discharge 	<p>Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.</p>	<p>Contact us to set up a vet appointment.</p> <p>If you see yellow or green discharge, it is a bacterial infection and should be treated.</p>
Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third eyelid exposed 	<p>Dogs have a third eyelid called a nictitating membrane, which is usually hidden. Its function is to remove dust or other irritants from the eye.</p>	<p>If you can see this membrane for more than 24 hours, please contact us.</p>
Ears	<p>Dogs, particularly those with floppy ears, can harbour infection in their ears.</p>	<p>If you notice the dog scratching at his ears, shaking his head, odor or discharge coming from his ears, or inflamed flaps, please contact us.</p>
Vomiting	<p>A common occurrence in canines for a variety of reasons.</p>	<p>Remove all food for 6 to 12 hours depending on age.</p> <p>If vomiting stops, give a very small amount of food 4 to 5 times a day. Return to regular feeding if no more vomiting occurs.</p> <p>If vomiting persists, remove food and contact us for advice.</p>

<p>Diarrhea</p>	<p>Diarrhea is one of the most common ailments affecting animals and it has many causes. Some causes of diarrhea include stress, allergy to food, parasites, improper absorption of food or change in food, and some diseases.</p> <p>The stress of moving to your home can also cause diarrhea.</p>	<p>Puppies cannot wait for treatment as they become dehydrated very quickly. Contact us as soon as you notice diarrhea.</p> <p>Fecal analysis can rule out parasites as the cause of diarrhea. Please contact us to discuss.</p>
<p>Sneezing and/or Nasal Discharge</p>	<p>Sneezing and nasal discharge are commonly found in dogs who are suffering from an upper respiratory infection.</p> <p>Sneezing is typically in “fits”</p>	<p>Monitor sneezing and contact us if sneezing fits increase or worsen.</p> <p>Nasal discharge: contact us for a vet appointment if discharge is yellow or green.</p>

E. Housetraining Your Foster Dog

Contrary to popular belief, housetraining a puppy or dog takes far more than a few stacks of old newspapers—it calls for vigilance, patience, and plenty of commitment. The more consistent you are in following the basic housetraining procedures, the faster your dog will learn acceptable behavior. It may take several weeks to housetrain your foster, and with some of the smaller breeds, it might take even longer. Your determination will be appreciated by the adoptive family who will be relieved to bring a housetrained dog into their home. A housetrained dog is much more appealing to a potential adopter than one who isn't!

By following the procedures outlined below, you can minimize house soiling incidents:

1. Establish a Routine

Take your foster outside frequently — at least every 2 hours — and immediately after he wakes up from a nap, before playing, and after eating or drinking.

Praise your foster every time he eliminates outdoors — you can even give him a very special treat reserved for this moment — but remember to do so immediately after elimination, not after he comes back inside the house. This step is vital, because rewarding your dog for eliminating outdoors is the only way he'll know what's expected and rewarding the dog for returning to the house is not the goal.

Pick an outdoor bathroom spot near the door, and always take your dog to that spot using a leash. Take him out for a longer walk or some playtime only after he has eliminated. If you clean up an accident in the house, take the soiled rags or paper towels and leave them in the bathroom spot. The smell will help your dog recognize the area as the place he is supposed to eliminate. While your dog is eliminating, use a word or phrase, such as “go potty,” that you can eventually use before he eliminates to remind him what to do.

Put your dog on a regular feeding schedule to make housetraining easier. Depending on their age, puppies usually need to be fed 3 or 4 times a day. Feeding your dog at the same times each day will make it more likely that he'll eliminate at consistent times as well, and that makes housetraining easier for both of you.

2. Keep Your Eyes Open

Don't give your dog an opportunity to soil in the house; keep an eye on him whenever he's indoors. You can tether him to you with a 6-foot leash, or use baby gates to keep him in the room where you are. Watch for signs that he needs to eliminate, like sniffing around or circling. When you see these signs, immediately grab the leash and take him outside to his bathroom spot. If he eliminates, praise, and reward him with a treat.

3. Confinement

When you're unable to watch your dog at all times, he should be confined to an area to keep him safe and small enough that he won't want to eliminate there. The space should be large enough for the dog to stand up straight, turn around and lie down comfortably in a stretched-out position. You can use a portion of a bathroom or laundry room, blocked off with baby gates, or you may want to use a crate, to train your foster dog. Ensure that regardless of how you choose to confine your foster pooch, all interactions with this confined space must be positive—treats are a great tool for making things positive! Also remember, this confined space is never intended as a place to leave your foster dog and ignore him, but rather a tool to help the dog develop structure and learn the routine of a home environment.

If your foster puppy has spent approximately 7 or 8 hours in confinement, you'll need to take him directly to his bathroom spot as soon as you let him out, and praise him when he eliminates.

For more information on crate training tips, just ask the Customer Service Representative: Foster.

4. Oops!

Expect your dog to have a few accidents in the house — it's a normal part of housetraining. Here's what to do when it happens:

When you catch him in the act of eliminating in the house, do something to interrupt him, like make a startling noise. Immediately take him to his bathroom spot, praise him, and give him a treat if he finishes eliminating there.

Don't punish your dog for eliminating in the house. If you find a soiled area, it's too late to administer a correction. Just clean it up. Rubbing your dog's nose in it, taking him to the spot and scolding him, or any other punishment will only make him afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence. In fact, punishment will often do more harm than good.

Cleaning the soiled area with an enzymatic cleaner designed specifically for animal messes is very important because dogs are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces.

It's extremely important that you use the supervision and confinement procedures outlined above to prevent the number of accidents. If you allow your puppy to eliminate frequently in the house, he'll get confused about where he's supposed to eliminate, which will prolong the housetraining process.

F. Grooming Needs

It is a good idea to establish a grooming routine with your foster dog. This includes everything from brushing to bathing to helping him become accustomed to handling. Opening his mouth for inspection and manipulating his ears and paws will make it much easier for him to be groomed and examined by a veterinarian. If your dog exhibits any kind of aggressive behaviour when you try to groom him, please contact us and do not attempt to groom him further.

1. Bathing

How often should a dog be bathed? Common sense provides the best answer: only when it's needed. Bathing removes natural oils that protect a dog's skin and give the coat a healthy gloss. Only bathe your foster dog when he's dirty or has a strong odour. If a dog is brushed and tended to regularly he can remain clean and sweet-smelling and require only an occasional bath.

When a bath is necessary, first brush and comb out any snarls in the dog's coat. Don't try to comb a wet coat since it's not only harder to do, but you're more apt to tear out the hair and undercoat. Matted fur becomes tighter and more irritated when wet which makes it difficult to brush out.

Place a rubber mat in the bathtub for secure footing and steel wool over the drain to prevent clogging. Place a cotton plug in both of the dog's ears to prevent water from entering them. Wet the dog with lukewarm water (use a sprayer if available), shampoo, and thoroughly rinse. Wash the dog's face with clean water and a sponge.

It is very important to rinse well. Incomplete rinsing leaves soap that not only dulls the coat but may irritate the skin and cause scratching. If possible, let the dog shake himself. He'll do a more efficient job of getting off the excess water. Then, towel him dry. You can also use a hairdryer (on a warm setting) to speed up the process. Keep him out of drafts and indoors for 2 to 3 hours after his bath, longer if the weather is cold. Ensure dog is dried properly.

Never bathe a very young puppy, a dog that is ill or has just had surgery or recently recovered from illness, or a female dog near the end of pregnancy.

Dogs under 6 months of age and older dogs require special care when bathing. Both are more susceptible to respiratory infections and to getting chilled. If bathing is necessary, be especially careful to keep the young or old dog warm and protected from drafts for 3 to 4 hours after the bath.

2. Brushing

Spending a few minutes a day brushing your foster dog's coat can make a tremendous improvement to his appearance and overall well-being. Furthermore, brushing helps to prevent matting and increases the length of time that a dog can go between baths.

Fur comes in a variety of lengths and types and there are appropriate brushes specifically designed for each type. Please discuss brushing your foster dog with the Customer Service Representative: Foster so she can advise you on the proper style of brush. While you may think that young puppies do not have enough of a coat to make brushing necessary, helping them become accustomed to the procedure will be worth the effort in the long run.



3. Nail Trimming

Dog's nails are made of keratin (solid protein-like substance) encased in a cuticle (hard sheath). Beneath the cuticle is the quick (pink portion of the nail which contains blood vessels and nerves). Nails grow continuously and when they're not worn down naturally by activity, they need to be trimmed.

If you are uncomfortable with trimming your foster's nails, we can either guide you through the process in person initially or do it for you. If you feel comfortable doing it yourself, please follow the guidelines below and trim the nails on a weekly basis using nail clippers specifically designed for dogs. If your foster resists having his nails trimmed, start by trimming the nails on only one paw a day and dole out plenty of praise after each session.

Using only clippers made especially for dog's nails, first lift up the dog's paw and take turns holding each knuckle between your thumb and finger. Observe where the quick is located. This may be difficult or impossible to see on a dark or black nails. Usually, clipping the tip of the nail is sufficient. If you can't see the quick, cut the nail just in front of where it starts to curve downward. If you accidentally cut the quick, the dog will feel pain and the nail will bleed. Apply pressure over the bleeding nail with a cotton ball for a couple of minutes until the bleeding stops or apply styptic powder to the tip of the nail. In place of styptic powder, flour or cornstarch can also work to stop the bleeding.

G. Reasons for Fostering Dogs

1. Bordetella (Kennel Cough)

Kennel cough is the most prevalent upper respiratory illness affecting dogs. It is a highly contagious airborne virus with an incubation period of about 7 days. Puppies, senior dogs, and dogs with a poor body condition are most susceptible to the virus, but all dogs who enter our shelter have a relatively high chance of contracting kennel cough if they have not been vaccinated against the virus. Therefore, your own dog(s) must be vaccinated against bordetella at least 10 days prior to your taking any foster dog home.

Symptoms of Kennel Cough include:

- Retching
- Gagging
- A harsh, dry and persistent cough (especially in the morning and evening)
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Nasal discharge
- Congestion

Tips on Care:

- **Allow the dog plenty of time to rest.** A dog with kennel cough needs to have their stress levels reduced and be given the opportunity for ample relaxation in a warm, dry, and well-ventilated environment.
- **Isolate.** While fresh air is a key ingredient to aiding in the recovery of kennel cough, be sure to keep your foster away from other dogs in public for at least 10 to fourteen days so that you don't spread the infection. Short walks with your ailing foster are encouraged, but don't allow nose-to-nose contact with other dogs.
- **Medicate.** If antibiotics are prescribed, follow the directions on the label and always be sure to complete the cycle of medication (even if your foster appears fully recovered). Please see Chapter 3 on Administering Medication.
- **Help ease his breathing.** Your foster's sinuses may become increasingly congested as the kennel cough progresses. Adding a humidifier or vapourizer to his room or bringing him into the bathroom and closing the door while you take a hot shower may help.

2. Pregnant or Nursing Dogs

Throughout the year, but particularly in the spring, dogs arrive at our shelter who are either pregnant or nursing. We place these dogs in a foster home as soon as possible. A shelter environment can create stress that may lead to health problems for mother dogs and, in addition, puppies are most susceptible to catching kennel cough and other illnesses in the shelter.

Fostering a pregnant or nursing dog can last anywhere from 4 to 12 weeks, depending on the puppies ages. A pregnant dog may require at least 12 weeks of foster care, from the time the puppies are born, to the time she is ready to be spayed and placed up for adoption. The Customer Service Representative: Foster will always provide you with a rough estimate of how long an animal may require fostering.



Over 98% of dogs deliver their puppies without assistance or complications! Please check out this helpful video on canine births, http://marvistavet.com/html/body_giving_birth_to_puppies.html

Tips on Care:

- **Create a nest.** In a quiet corner of your home, a clean, warm, and dry box should be provided for a pregnant or nursing mother. The box should be large enough for the nursing mom to comfortably lie away from her puppies if she chooses, but small enough so the newborns are easy to reach. The sides need to be high enough to prevent the young from wandering, but low enough for the mom to be able to come and go with ease. The box should be lined with newspaper and then piled with clean, dry, soft, removable linens. The bottom portion of a plastic flight kennel or shipping crate works well as a nesting box and is easy to disinfect.
- **Make sure the mother dog is eating.** We will provide you with a growth/lactation diet that should be fed to the mother throughout her gestation and lactation periods. Because milk production requires energy, the mom's food and water supply should be increased 2 to 4 times her normal intake. Food and fresh water should always be made available to her.
- **Observe the mother dog.** Once the puppies are born, watch to see that they are all moving and breathing. Ensure that the mother is being attentive to their needs by allowing them to feed and stimulating them to urinate and defecate. While puppies are a pleasure to watch, you must allow the mother the majority of her day to be quiet and stress-free while she cares for her newborns. Please keep in mind that the mother may show strong protective reaction at this time. This instinctive reaction is facilitated by her hormonal state and the physical presence of her young. This phenomenon is quite common, in particular with dogs who are having their first litter. Within a few days, her protectiveness should wane somewhat and she will allow you a closer inspection of her puppies.
- **Call the Customer Service Representative: Foster to report the birth.** When you call us to report how many puppies were born and how the litter and mom are doing, you may also want to take this opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you might have.
- **Weigh and observe the puppies.** Once the puppies are born, you should record their weight every couple of days to ensure that they are thriving. They should be warm and have pink noses and tongues. Their bellies should be slightly rounded. Their eyes will open at 10 to 14 days; please contact us if their eyes are not open by day 14. As puppies become more mobile, they increasingly approach their mother and initiate suckling. Toward the end of the second month, the puppies become almost wholly responsible for initiating suckling, and the mother may actively impede their efforts by blocking access to her nipples or by removing herself from their proximity. The increasing role of the puppy in initiating suckling helps develop the puppies' sensor and motor abilities.
- **Feed the puppies.** For the first 4 weeks of life, the puppies need only their mother's milk. Even if they are still nursing after that time, you can start feeding them a warm slurry of canned puppy food and water when they reach 4 weeks of age. Feeding them canned puppy food makes a good supplement to mother's milk and helps them gradually adjust to a time when they will be fully weaned. Initially it may be necessary to smear a little slurry on their noses to initiate feeding. Please change the amounts and consistency of food gradually to prevent digestive upset.
- **Encourage the puppies to wean.** The mother will usually begin to wean her young when they reach 6 to 8 weeks of age. If the mother seems reluctant to wean her puppies, separate the mother from her litter a few times a day for a couple of hours to ensure that the puppies are learning to eat on their own. Once they are weaned, it's very important to ensure that they all continue to eat. Puppies must eat canned food 3 to 4 times a day. If one puppy is not eating, offer her food separate from her littermates and observe her closely. Call us if any puppy has

not eaten in 24 hours.

- **Socialize the puppies.** A puppy's environment should be mentally stimulating to encourage healthy development. Encourage puppies to explore their living quarters, meet all kinds of new people (including gentle children), and play with a variety of new objects including large cardboard boxes, clean empty plastic bottles, old tennis balls and squeaky rubber toys. Exposing the puppies to ordinary household appliances such as the vacuum cleaner and blender helps to encourage a comfortable, laissez-faire attitude towards these otherwise startling noises. Comforting puppies who show fear to new things only encourages them to be fearful. Instead, praise them for their curiosity or brave reactions and ignore fearful ones. Please do not bring your puppy to the dog park!
- **Teach puppies how to be good dogs.** Aside from socialization, one of the best things you can do for young puppies is to teach them appropriate manners, especially with regard to proper play behaviour, manners, and housetraining. We also encourage you to use positive reinforcement techniques on a daily basis to gradually get them used to having their paws, mouths, and ears manipulated. This will help them adjust to restraint and later cope more readily with grooming exercises and trips to their veterinarian.

3. Socialization and Kennel Deterioration

Dogs who have not been exposed to different people or types of situations in their lives or whose mental health has deteriorated due to a prolonged stay in our shelter may require the help of a foster volunteer. In both cases, we would seek out experienced dog owners who can apply their understanding of positive reinforcement techniques to rehabilitation. Animals who are being fostered for these reasons require an abundance of exposure to new people, places, and things to aid in their recovery. Dogs who are being fostered for kennel deterioration will continue to be available for adoption while they are in their foster home, and their photo will remain on our website. If a prospective adopter wants to meet the dog, we will make an appointment for you to bring your fosterling to the shelter where the two can meet. A dog who is fostered for socialization will return to the shelter and go up for adoption once acceptable progress has been made in his behaviour.

4. Underweight or Malnourished Dogs

When a dog arrives at our shelter who is emaciated or malnourished, we seek out a foster volunteer who can take the animal home and monitor his food intake and weight gain until he is thriving once again. It is very important to record the animal's weight to ensure that weight gain is consistent, and we will provide the foster volunteer with a nutritious canine diet that will encourage weight gain. We recommend that you provide the dog with gentle exercise in moderation to help strengthen muscles.

Fostering an emaciated dog can last from 3 to 6 weeks, depending on the severity of his condition.

Chapter Six: Other Health Issues in Cats and Dogs

We endeavour to diagnose any health concerns in animals prior to them being sent to a foster home, but some conditions may only become apparent once the animal has settled in. Unexpected conditions can range from common parasites to severe viral infections. Please contact us if you have any questions whatsoever about your foster's health or behaviour.

A. Zoonotic Risks in a Shelter Environment

A zoonosis (plural zoonoses) is a disease or infection that can be spread from an animal to a human.

All animals, like people, are capable of harbouring many different diseases. Sometimes they get sick from these diseases, but sometimes they can be carrying disease agents without actually becoming ill. Some of these diseases, which we call zoonoses, can be passed to people and could potentially make us sick. It is important to be aware of risks so that we know how to protect ourselves from being infected with a zoonosis. As you will learn by reading below, animals in a shelter environment are often more likely to be carrying these diseases than the pets we have in our homes. Because these zoonotic diseases can be spread in many different ways, there are some important yet simple precautions that need to be taken to protect ourselves.

How are Zoonoses Spread?

Zoonotic diseases can be spread by direct contact with the infected animal or their body fluids, by touching an object (called a fomite) that has previously been in contact with the infected animal, by inhaling aerosolized disease particles, by ingesting the infectious agent (by touching your mouth/food with a dirty hand), or by coming in contact with an intermediate animal that spreads the disease, such as a flea.

Are Some People at a Greater Risk of Becoming Ill from a Zoonosis than Others?

Yes. Although anyone can become infected if exposed to a zoonotic disease agent, those who have weakened or suppressed immune systems are at a greater risk and can develop a more severe clinical illness. This includes, for example, those undergoing chemotherapy, infected with HIV, taking medication after receiving a blood transfusion or organ transplant, or being treated for an autoimmune disease. The elderly and very young are also at an increased risk.

What are the Factors in Sheltered Animals that Increase the Risk of Zoonotic Disease?

Although once in our care we do everything we can to make and keep these animals healthy, animals come to our shelter with many different backgrounds, usually unknown. They often have not had appropriate vaccinations or vet care, and they can be infested with parasites such as fleas and worms. Many have been living outdoors, hunting or scavenging, and may have come into contact with or ingested various disease agents. Furthermore, they may be frightened, disoriented, or poorly socialized, which can lead to aggressive behaviour and an increased risk of bite or scratch wounds.

What are Some Examples of Zoonoses?

- **Cat Scratch Fever:** This disease is caused by a bacterium that is spread from one cat to another by fleas. Infected cats rarely become ill, but they can spread the disease to humans through bites and scratches. In people with a healthy immune system it may cause a fever

and other flu-like symptoms, but in immunocompromised individuals, it can cause a serious illness affecting their skin, internal organs, and nervous system.

- **Ringworm:** Ringworm is a skin infection caused by a fungus, not a worm. In people, it causes a classic round, itchy red lesion. It can be contracted by touching an infected animal or the hair they have shed in the environment. Some people are more susceptible to infection than others, but in general, those with a weaker immune system are at a greatest risk.
- **Toxoplasmosis:** This is caused by a microscopic single-celled organism called *Toxoplasma gondii* that can be found in cat feces. It can cause flu-like symptoms if ingested and is especially harmful to pregnant women as it can cross the placenta and damage the fetus, even leading to miscarriage. It is safe to be in contact with cats and have them in your home during pregnancy, but we do recommend that somebody else clean the litter box.
- **Intestinal Roundworms:** Cats and dogs are commonly infected with intestinal parasites, especially if they have not seen a vet for de-worming medication (all foster are de-wormed before being sent to a foster home). These worms can be spread to people by ingesting eggs from surfaces contaminated by infected feces. In people, the worm larva can become lost and end up in the lungs, liver, heart, eye, or central nervous system, and cause various clinical signs, ranging in severity from mild to life-threatening.
- **Leptospirosis:** This is a bacterial infection that affects dogs as well as many wild animals. It is spread to people through the urine of infected animals. It will often cause flu-like symptoms, but in more at-risk individuals it can become a life-threatening illness affecting the kidneys, liver, brain, heart and lungs.
- **Rabies:** Although very rare in Canada, rabies is a fatal, untreatable disease. Pre- and post-exposure vaccines are available, however, to prevent disease. It is a virus that can infect any mammal and is spread in the saliva of the infected animal through bite wounds. The pre-exposure vaccine is recommended for individuals who may be at a higher risk of exposure.

What Can We Do to Prevent Zoonotic Infections?

The good news is that most zoonoses can be prevented by taking simple precautionary actions. What the Ottawa Humane Society does to reduce zoonotic risk:

- Treats the animals for common parasites (intestinal worms, fleas)
- Performs a full health exam of each animal upon arrival at the shelter
- Isolates clinically infectious animals
- Follows a strict sanitation protocol
- Provides training and education for volunteers
- Reduces the risk of bite and scratch wounds by temperament-testing animals, identifying possible aggressive animals with warning cards on their cage/run, and trimming nails
- Follows proper health and safety protocol in the event of a bite or scratch
- Limits the amount of exposure that volunteers have to animals of unknown temperament or background

What You Can Do to Protect Yourself from Zoonoses:

- **WASH YOUR HANDS!!!** – after touching each animal and before leaving the shelter or touching your face.
- Alcohol-based hand gels or disposable gloves can also be used.
- Do not eat or drink while working in animal areas.
- Talk to your doctor to identify your personal risk factors.
- Follow all policy & procedures provided to you.

What You Can Do to Protect Your Family at Home:

- Ensure that your pets are up to date on their routine vaccinations.
- Ensure that all members of your family wash their hands after handling a foster animal.
- If you are fostering animals in your home, be sure to pick up dog feces immediately and clean the litter box daily.

B. Other Parasites in Cats and Dogs

Parasite	Description and Symptoms	Treatment
Ear Mites	<p>Ear mites are highly contagious tiny, white parasites that live on the surface of the ear canal producing a flaky, dark brown, and sometimes waxy discharge in the ear canal.</p> <p>Infected animals will shake their heads and scratch or rub their ears.</p>	<p>Application of a topical miticide and routine ear cleaning.</p> <p>Please contact us if you notice the animal shaking its head or scratching its ears excessively.</p>
Fleas	<p>Fleas are the most common external parasite that is found on the skin of cats and dogs.</p> <p>An adult flea is a dark brown insect that can be seen on the animal's skin along with their eggs and flea feces (black specks).</p>	<p>All cats and dogs are given a flea treatment soon after their arrival at the shelter.</p> <p>Please contact us if you notice excessive scratching.</p>
Lice	<p>Lice are off-white and approximately 1/10" long. Their irritation causes infected animals to scratch excessively. Lice are host-specific and do not transmit to people or animals of a different species.</p>	<p>Treatment requires routine shampooing.</p> <p>Please contact us if you notice excessive scratching.</p>

Ticks	Most common to dogs, ticks are small rounded arachnids that attach to one spot and do not move. Once they insert their head under the skin, they begin engorging themselves on the blood of the host.	Please do not try to remove the tick yourself. If you see a tick on your foster, please contact us.
Tapeworm	Tapeworms have flat, white, rice-like bodies that are approximately 1.5 inches long. They rarely produce well-defined symptoms but, in the cases of a heavy infestation of a malnourished animal, symptoms may include dullness, irritability, increased appetite, dry and harsh coat, or mild diarrhea.	De-worming with oral medication. Please contact us if you notice worms around the animal's anal region, or in stool or vomit.

C. Serious Illnesses in Cats and Dogs

We never knowingly foster animals who are suffering from canine parvovirus or feline panleukopenia. However, if you suspect your foster is suffering from these illnesses, please call us immediately and do not attempt to treat the animal at home.

Illness	Symptoms	Transmission
Canine Parvovirus (Parvo):	Severe depression, total loss of appetite, variable temperature, vomiting, bloody/watery diarrhea and dehydration. It may cause sudden death in young puppies due to heart muscle infection.	Parvo is highly contagious. It is transmitted by direct and indirect contact with excrement from an infected animal. The virus is highly resistant and can withstand extreme temperatures.
Feline Panleukopenia (Distemper or "Panleuk")	After an incubation period of about 2 to 9 days, the first signs appear as a high fever, severe depression, severe dehydration, glossy eyes, vomiting and diarrhea. At first, vomit and diarrhea appear as a clear fluid; later is it yellow and tinged with bile. Typically, the cat will lie with its head hanging over the edge of its water dish, not moving except to lap water.	The panleukopenia virus is spread by contact with urine, feces, saliva or vomit of an infected cat.

Feline Leukemia (FeLV)	Loss of appetite, slow but progressive weight loss, poor coat condition, enlarged lymph nodes, persistent fever, pale gums and other mucus membranes, inflammation of the gums and mouth, infections of the skin, urinary bladder and upper respiratory tract, persistent diarrhea, seizures, behaviour changes and other neurological disorders, a variety of eye conditions	Spread from infected mother to kittens or shed from saliva and nasal secretions, also in urine, feces and milk from infected cats; can also occur in cat to cat transfer during mutual grooming or a bite wound.
Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)	May appear normal for years but eventually leads to immune deficiency and can cause severe illness in those with weakened immune systems. Symptoms can include poor coat condition, persistent fever, loss of appetite, inflammation of the gums or mouth, recurrent skin or bladder infections, behaviour changes and other neurological disorders, a variety of eye conditions	Transmission through bite wounds, on rare occasions spread from infected mother to kittens.

**Thank you very much for your commitment to the animals
at the Ottawa Humane Society!**