



CANINE FOSTER MANUAL

Thank you very much for your
commitment to giving canines
a second chance.
We could not do it without
you!



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Chapter One: Introduction

Welcome aboard!

Welcome to the Ottawa Humane Society's Foster Program. We are grateful that you have decided to donate your time and efforts to help us save more lives! Since the program's inception in 1983, foster volunteers have played a vital role in our organization by helping animals who are not yet ready for adoption due to medical or behavioural reasons.

Animals recuperate faster from illness and injury in a nurturing home environment, and 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 also extremely beneficial for our animals.

Each year, approximately 1,500 animals benefit from the OHS foster program.

Program goal

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

Program 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.

Reasons for foster care:

- Kennel cough
- Too young to be adopted
- In need of recovery from injury outside of the shelter
- Suffering from shelter stress and in need of refuge in a home setting
- Special medical needs
- Pregnant and/or nursing mothers with pups
- Not adjusting well to shelter environment
- In need of socialization, behavioural monitoring and/or modification



The Ottawa Humane Society's mission statement:

To lead Ottawa in building a humane and compassionate community for all animals.



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. We are here to help and answer any questions you have as they arise.

We are supporting hundreds of foster volunteers, so please contact us to make an appointment before you visit the shelter for foster pick-ups, drop-offs, food/supplies, and veterinarian exams. This allows us to gather the supplies needed for your appointment and reserve the time to dedicate to you and your foster animal(s). Email usually generates the fastest response and is our preferred method of communication.

When you need to get in touch with us, who you contact will depend on the reason and time of day. 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, referencing the shelter ID number.

The foster department runs on seasonal schedules. We increase hours during the summer season to provide you with additional support and to accommodate the increase of animals in foster at that time. We will announce all changes in hours via email, in the Volunteer Connections newsletter, and in the foster office well in advance.

How to contact us:

Summer Season (mid-June to mid-November)

Reason	When?	OHS Representative to Contact
General inquiries (seeking advice, reporting concerns/observations)	Mon-Wed: 7:30a.m.-7:30p.m. Thurs-Fri: 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. Sat: 7:30a.m.-3:30p.m. Sun: 11:00a.m.-3:00p.m.	CSR: Foster: 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca
	Thurs: 4:00p.m.-7:30p.m. Fri: 4:00p.m.-7:30p.m. Sat: 3:30p.m.-5:30p.m. Sun: 3:00p.m.-5:30p.m.	Veterinary Technician : 613-725-3166 ext. 229 tech@ottawahumane.ca
Scheduling appointments (animal pick-up/ return, food pick-up, vaccination or FIV/FELV appointments)	Mon-Wed: 7:30a.m.-7:30p.m. Thurs-Fri: 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. Sat: 7:30a.m.-3:30p.m. Sun: 11:00a.m.-3:00p.m.	CSR: Foster 613-725-3166 ext. 255 or foster@ottawahumane.ca
Emergency (animal in distress: having trouble breathing, injured, lethargic, etc...)	Mon-Wed: 7:30a.m.-7:30p.m. Thurs-Fri: 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. Sat: 7:30a.m.-3:30p.m. Sun: 11:00a.m.-3:00p.m.	CSR: Foster: 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca
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	Mon-Fri: 7:30p.m-7:30a.m. Sat: 12:00a.m.-7:30a.m. Sat: 5:30p.m.-12:00a.m. Sun: 12:00a.m.-7:30a.m. Sun: 5:30p.m.-12:00a.m. Mon: 12:00a.m.-7:30a.m.	After-hours line: 613-725-3166x221



Winter Season (mid-November-Mid-June)

Reason	When?	OHS Representative to Contact
General inquiries (seeking advice, reporting concerns/observations)	Mon-Fri: 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. Sat: 7:30a.m.-3:30p.m.	CSR: Foster: 613-725-3166 ext. 255 foster@ottawahumane.ca
	Mon-Fri: 4:00p.m.-7:30p.m. Sat: 3:30p.m.-5:30p.m. Sun: 7:30a.m.-5:30p.m.	Veterinary Technician : 613-725-3166 ext. 229 tech@ottawahumane.ca
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Chapter Two: Key program policies

Foster program agreement:

When you joined the foster volunteer program, you signed the foster program agreement as part of your application package. We have included a copy here for your reference.



Foster Program Agreement

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:

Adoption inquiries:

Remember ... you **may not** adopt your foster animal. If you are interested in adopting another animal, please be sure to visit our Adoption Centre. We have this rule in place for several reasons including:

- **For the foster family:** Being a foster volunteer can be a very emotional experience. Not all animals improve or even survive in the foster home. Foster families become attached and feel that they are the only ones that can care for a particular animal. Bringing the animal back after the foster period can evoke feelings of loss and guilt in the volunteer. Guilt and loss are not a good basis for an adoption decision. To help ease this, the OHS takes the option off the table.
- **For the integrity of the OHS:** The OHS has a list of people that have made specific adoption requests and some have been waiting for extended periods of time. It's unfair to our community and calls our integrity into question to have insiders cut to the front of the line.
- **For resource reasons:** We invest in our volunteers through training and on-going support. Historically, we lost many volunteers after they adopted animals. Losing a foster volunteer has an impact on the program and the number of animals we can rehabilitate. Those that foster once or twice and adopt use up resources that could be better spent on providing care for more animals. By remaining in the foster program, foster volunteers can help many more animals become healthy and adoptable.
- **For the fostered animal:** Our commitment is to place all adoptable animals in not only a home, but the best possible home by finding the best possible match. The selection criteria for volunteering at the OHS are not the same as for adopting. As a result, the foster family may not be the best match for the dog or cat.

If someone meets your foster and is interested in adopting, please refer them to the Adoption Centre for further assistance.

Please remember that volunteers are eligible to adopt (animals other than their foster animal) only after six months of volunteering.

Keeping your foster dog on-leash:

To help keep your foster canine safe, keep him secured on-leash at all times, when out in public. Foster animals are property of the OHS and are not permitted off-leash in public, where they run the risk of contracting a virus or disease, being injured by cars or other animals and/or contributing to overpopulation if they are not sterilized. In addition, please protect against escapes. Dogs will push out screens, escape from balconies, jump out open windows and dig or climb fences if unattended in the yard.

Veterinary care for your foster:

Although you may have an established relationship with your veterinarian, foster volunteers are not permitted to bring their foster animal to their own veterinarian. Foster animals are under the care of the OHS veterinary team, and seeing a different veterinarian does not allow for continuity of care. The OHS has a fully operational veterinary clinic onsite to treat OHS animals.

Transporting foster animals:

Foster animals are among the most vulnerable of animals in a shelter environment. As a result, they may need frequent trips to and from the OHS. Foster volunteers are responsible for transporting their foster animal as needed. Transportation includes visits to the OHS for regular exams, follow-up exams, emergency exams and food/supply pick-ups. All canines must be kept in carriers or contained with a seat belt during transport. We know that regular and ongoing transportation needs are sometimes challenging and appreciate your commitment to your foster animal's welfare!

Bites and scratches:

Many foster animals are in need of medical and/or behavioural intervention. Foster volunteers are required to medicate and socialize with their foster animal. Some animals do not tolerate being medicated very well, and some may not adjust well to their new environment. If a foster animal bites or scratches you resulting in any blood, contact the Customer Service Representative: Foster immediately and file a bite/scratch report with the OHS. Depending on the circumstance, the CSR: Foster will determine how best to proceed. Please thoroughly disinfect the wound and contact your doctor for medical follow-up.

Social media and your foster animal:

We ask that you refrain from posting information and photos of your foster animal on social media (for example: Facebook, Instagram, etc...). Foster animals are not yet ready for adoption. We would prefer to feature animals that are already in need of a permanent home!



Chapter Three: General fostering guidelines

Making the match:

The foster department matches dogs with foster volunteers in the best interest of the dog in need.

- CSR: Foster will call or e-mail you to tell you about canines in need of placement. The dog's respective needs and anticipated length of stay for the duration of their placement will be communicated. In most cases, group emails are sent to our foster volunteers with a list of animals requiring foster.
- CSR: Foster will provide a behavioural profile for each dog, developed by our Coordinator: Canine Services, detailing the dogs' behavioural needs and suggest the best type of home environment. Ensure that you read these profiles thoroughly to determine if the dog is a good match for your home and lifestyle.
- If you agree to accept a foster placement, an appointment will be made for you 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 dog as soon as possible.**
- When you meet with the CSR: Foster, your foster dog's care plan (medication, feeding schedule, rest, etc.) will be reviewed with you and you will receive written care instructions. At this time, the dog will be ready to leave the shelter with the food and medication that we provide.
- If needed, a "meet and greet" with your resident dog can be scheduled with the foster dog to ensure a good fit before taking the foster dog home.

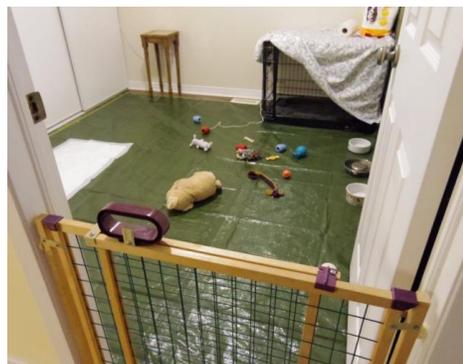
Preparing your home for your foster:

Once you agree to foster a dog, it is time to prepare for his arrival!

Decide where the canine(s) will be kept overnight, and while you are away, and make the environment as safe as possible.

Crate:

- Place the crate in a well-ventilated area, where the family spends a lot of time. This will allow you to easily positively reinforce the dog's behaviour, when the dog chooses to go in his crate (on his own) and can be used during feedings.
- It's best to avoid busy areas, or areas with too much stimulation (like a view to the outdoors), as this could contribute to the dog's excitability.



- Be sure to avoid placing the crate near furniture, electrical cords or directly against walls, where the dog could chew or scratch items through the crate.
- Ensure your own animal(s) do not have access to his crate—this is his special and safe place, and is not intended for visitors.
- Do not place the crate in front of a mirror which could cause fear, frustration and stress.

NOTE! We strongly encourage all foster volunteers to crate train their foster dog. This really helps with transitioning the dog into his forever home. If the dog is not settling in the crate please contact the CSR: Foster for alternative options.

If your foster dog cannot be crated, isolate them in a spare room or gated area:

- A spare bedroom or a lesser-used bathroom is the best option.
- If a room is not available, using a baby gate to isolate the dog is a good alternative.
- The floors in your chosen room should be easy to clean—vinyl or tile is recommended.
- It's best to avoid rooms with too much stimulation (like a view to the outdoors), as this could contribute to the dog's excitability.
- Avoid placing the dog in a room with valuable objects or fabrics which could be chewed or destroyed.
- Avoid potted plants in the room.
- Remember to keep your own animals away from fosters to reduce stress while you are away and unable to supervise them.



Gather all necessary supplies:

- Gather essential items, including: food and water bowls, poop bags, toys, dog bed, etc...
- The foster department will provide essential items for your foster placement. Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 of this manual for more information.

Secure your yard:

- Do a walkthrough of your yard to ensure it is safe and secure before letting your foster dog off-leash in your yard. Ensure the fencing is secured (no broken or weak areas), the gate is latched properly and there are no spaces for him to sneak out under the fence. Don't forget to keep an eye on him, to ensure he doesn't have the chance to escape your yard.



NOTE! To ensure security, always monitor off-leash play. Dogs can dig holes to escape fenced in areas, climb over fences, etc... when left alone.

Provide a nest for nursing dogs:

- In a quiet area of your home, a dry, clean and warm bed/crate (den) should be provided for nursing mother dogs. The mother should be given a clean and dry area to care for her puppies, and access to an area where the puppies can eliminate away from bedding. The bedding area can be:
 - A box with sides 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. (A kiddie pool can be used for the bigger dogs)
 - A crate with the door kept open, lined with newspaper and then piled with clean, dry, soft, removable linens.
 - A pen can be used to keep the puppies contained to one area.

TIP: Lining the floor with a water proof tarp or disposable plastic shower curtains where puppies are kept may help with cleaning and prevent permanent damage to the floor.



Supplies and Emergency Kit

The OHS provides foster volunteers with all necessary supplies. The tables below indicate what we supply, what you may need to purchase, and the function of each item. Some items that you may use are common household items, and some volunteers may opt to purchase additional supplies at their expense to facilitate their foster experience.

Table 1—Essential foster supplies:

Item	Function	We provide	You provide
Food	For animal care	✓	
Dishes	For animal care	✓	✓
Poop Bags	For animal care	✓	✓
Leash	For walking	✓	
Walking Device (Easy walk Harness, Halti, Gentle Leader)	For loose-leash walking training	✓	
Toys	For enrichment and socialization	✓ If available, at your request	✓ Please check with foster staff for approved toys
Kongs and food dispensing toys	For enrichment	✓	
Carrier/Crate	To provide a safe environment for transport and when you are away from home	✓	
X-Pen	To provide a safe environment for nursing dogs and their puppies	✓	
Transportation	To transport dog(s) to/from shelter for exams, etc...as needed		✓
Towels, blankets, and newspapers	To create a bed for all animals, and a nest for nursing mothers.		✓
Rectal thermometer and Vaseline (lubricant)	To take the temperature of nursing moms and animals suspected of being ill	✓	
Syringe	To administer medication	✓	
Medication	To aid sick or injured canines	✓ As needed	

Table 2—Suggested foster supplies:

Item	Function	We provide	You provide
Dog Bed	To create a comfortable resting area and a nest for nursing mothers.	✓ If available, at your request	✓
Brush and nail clippers	To groom, as required		✓
Enzymatic stain remover	To remove animal stains effectively		✓
Baby gate	To secure animals in one area	✓ If available, at your request	✓
Cotton swabs/pads	To clean eyes and ears, as directed		✓
Rubber gloves	To protect hands during medication administration, grooming, cleaning, etc...		✓

Table 3—Suggested supplies for an emergency first aid kit:

Item	Function	We provide	You provide
Non-adhesive compression bandage	To provide pressure and coverage to an open wound during transport to OHS		✓
Rubber gloves	To ensure sterility if dealing with an emergency medical issue		✓
Gauze pads	To absorb bodily fluid from an open wound during transport to OHS		✓
Saline solution	To flush out open wound prior to bandaging		✓

General care guidelines:

1. Arrival day:

When you bring your dog home, introduce him first to the room/crate where he will spend most of his time. Provide him with a fresh bowl of water and allow him to gradually explore the home, while supervising him from a distance. Give him some time to settle in and try not to overwhelm him with too many noises or visitors during the first few days of his stay. Although it can be hard to avoid cuddling him when you first bring him home, giving him a bit of time to adjust is in his best interest.

If you have a resident dog, ensure you first introduce them both on leash and outside of the home. It's best to take them for a quick walk around the neighborhood before entering the home. It is very important to pay close attention to your foster dog's interactions with your own dog(s) for the first couple of days to ensure they are being respectful of each other's needs and space.

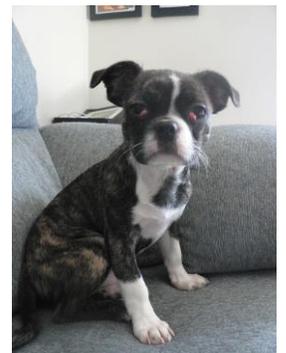
TIP! To ensure the smoothest interaction, remove any potential conflict over high valued items (like your dog's favorite bone or toy).

NOTE! Some common mistakes when introducing a new foster dog to a home with a resident dog:

- **Holding the leash too tensely when introducing the dogs (almost like you are expecting the dogs to have a negative reaction)—they will feel this and may react defensively.**
- **Leaving toys and chews around the house. This can cause resource guarding which can escalate very quickly. Remove all toys and chews before you arrive home with your foster dog.**
- **Feeding your foster dog alongside your resident dog. It's best to feed them separately.**
- **Over-stimulating your foster dog with too many introductions to new people, places or other animals.**

When you bring your dog home and you own other animals, keep them separate for the first few days. When introducing your cat or small animal to your foster dog, ensure your foster dog is on leash. Ideally they should be introduced through a baby gate first to assess the dog's reaction/excitability level. If you are confident your foster dog is safe to interact with your cat or small animal, please ensure you never leave them alone and you are diligently supervising their interactions.

If at any time you feel the foster dog is not a good match for your household, please contact the foster department to book an appointment to return the dog.



2. Daily care:

You are now this dog's best advocate for finding the best possible match in a forever family, once he is ready. Get to know him and let us know what he likes, doesn't like, favourite toys, etc. You can teach your foster dog tricks, through interactive play and positive reinforcement. Please make sure you share this information through a foster history sheet, so we can share this valuable information with potential adopters.

CSR: Foster will call or e-mail you within two weeks of your placement for an update, if they have not heard from you prior to that. At that time you may discuss non-emergency issues related to the health and behaviour of your foster dog and help us to determine whether the dog is ready to come back to the shelter. **If you have questions at any time, please contact us!**

NOTE! If your foster dog becomes suddenly ill or is injured in your care, please contact the OHS immediately.

3. Feeding guidelines:

Dry dog food is the main dietary source. Dogs with dental needs or recovering from illness may be prescribed wet food diets. You will receive food and instructions when you pick-up your foster dog.

NOTE! 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 other animal's foods or any human food.

NOTE! Feeding guidelines are expressed in DAILY amounts to be fed. When feeding your foster dog, divide the amount by the number of feedings the dog is receiving daily.

CSR: Foster will provide you with the proper feeding instructions on your home care instruction sheets, based on your canine's age, weight and dietary needs. Please be sure to follow these instructions.

Feed healthy adult dogs twice daily unless otherwise directed; feed nursing, pregnant and underweight dogs multiple times daily as directed.

4. Administering medication:

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

Medications should always be given for the full amount of time as prescribed, even if your foster dog starts to show signs of improvement. Please follow and complete the treatment chart as instructed. Bring your chart and medications to your vet exams just in case a different course of treatment is prescribed. At the end of your foster placement, return all medication and treatment charts.

i. Pills and capsules:

- Pills and capsules are administered by mouth.
- It's easiest to try giving the pill in a small piece of cheese, hotdog, or canned food first—but you must pay close attention to ensure the dog swallows the pill and does not spit it out!
- If the dog is not treat/food motivated, tilt the dog's head back with one hand, while gently opening his mouth, and drop the pill to the back of his throat with your other hand. Then gently hold the dog's mouth closed, with his head pointed straight up, and gently rub his throat in a downward motion to encourage the swallowing reflex. **Follow with 3-5 ml of water with a syringe.**

ii. Liquids:

- Tilt the head back, open the mouth and slowly dribble the liquid from a syringe or dropper onto the back of the dog's tongue.
- If the dog coughs or sputters, decrease the amount of the head tilt. If the medication is bitter tasting, the dog may foam at the mouth.
- 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:

- The easiest way to administer a paste is to place the appropriate amount as a ribbon on your finger, open the dog's mouth and smear the paste on the roof of his mouth.

iv. Ointments and creams:

- **Eyes:** To administer ointment, tilt the dog'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 dog, it may help to have someone assist you by holding the dog.
- **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 into the ear. Continue to hold the ear firmly to prevent the dog from shaking his head and massage the base of the ear to work the medication down inside the ear canal. Again, when administering drops or ointment to a dog, you may need assistance to hold the dog or keep the dog distracted with treats while administering the treatment.

NOTE! If you are experiencing any challenges with medicating your foster dog, contact the foster department immediately. The CSR: Foster will work with you to find the best method for treating your foster dog. Never stop giving medication even if the animal looks better; always finish the full prescription.

5. Checking temperature

The normal temperature range for a dog is 38.3 - 39.2° C (101 - 102° F).

In rare instances, we may ask you to take the temperature of your foster dog if you suspect a fever or to monitor the health of young puppies and their mother. If you are uncomfortable taking your foster's temperature, let the CSR: Foster know and we will be pleased to 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 dog'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.

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

Fosters may be placed into foster care with a pre-existing medical condition or they may develop an illness when in foster care. Our veterinarian performs rounds at 10:30am (most days) or 1:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday and at 10:30 a.m. on Saturdays. We do not have veterinarian exams on Sundays. When we schedule you to bring your foster in on a given day, please 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 face a prolonged wait.



Please outline any health concerns you have about your foster with the CSR: Foster. Foster volunteers may not be present for the veterinary exam of their foster animal(s). As all foster animals are examined back-to-back, this process can vary in duration depending on the number of veterinarian exams needed, and can take anywhere from 1-3 hours. In the summer, this process usually lasts 3 hours. 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.

NOTE! Remember to bring your completed treatment charts and any medication to all vet exams!

In addition to regular veterinary exams, please contact us immediately if you notice the following symptoms in your foster dog, as he may need to see a veterinarian:

- Loss of appetite or weight loss
- Straining to urinate
- Blood in stool (or bleeding from anywhere)

- Fever
- Change in attitude/behavior
- Abnormal twitches, walking abnormally or into objects
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Sneezing or coughing
- Discharge from the eyes or nose
- Hair loss
- Excessive scratching or head shaking
- Straining to defecate/constipation
- Presence of parasites (like worms or fleas)
- Trauma: limping, accidentally dropped or stepped on, etc...
- Difficulty breathing
- Lethargic/unresponsive
- Neurologic symptoms: circling, tremors, walking unsteadily, etc...

7. Grooming needs:

Establish a grooming routine with your foster dog from the beginning. Acclimatizing her to brushing and nail trimming helps her future family and veterinarian 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 in the future. It's very important not to rush this process if you are taking on a foster placement with handling sensitivities.

i. Bathing

You may bathe your foster dog unless otherwise directed. If you feel your foster dog would require a more professional grooming, please notify the foster department, and they will schedule an appointment for grooming, with our volunteer groomer, at the Ottawa Humane Society.

A dog should only be bathed if absolutely necessary. Bathing removes natural oils that protect a dog's skin and coat. When a bath is necessary, first brush and comb out or clip any mats in the dog's coat. Matted fur becomes tighter and more difficult to brush out when wet, so do not comb a wet coat, as you're more apt to tear out the hair and undercoat, causing pain and discomfort.

If your dog needs a bath, place a rubber mat in the bathtub for secure footing and place a steel wool pad 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. Be sure to wash the dog's face with clean water and a sponge—do not spray them directly in the face.

It is very important to rinse all of the soap off your foster dog! Incomplete rinsing leaves behind soap that may irritate the skin and cause scratching, and lead to a duller coat. If possible, let the dog shake himself. He'll do a more efficient job of getting off the excess water. Then, towel dry him. 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). Before taking him outside, ensure he is dried properly.

NOTE! Never bathe a young puppy, a dog that is ill, just had surgery (14 days post-surgery), recently recovered from illness, or a female dog near the end of pregnancy.

ii. 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. If a dog growls or bares teeth while you are brushing him STOP! The dog may not be accustomed to brushing and may require desensitization first by doing short sessions, with lots of treat rewards for positive association.



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 CSR: Foster—they will be pleased to 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 very beneficial for them in the long run—so don't forget to brush them too!

iii. 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 through activity, they need to be trimmed.

If you are uncomfortable with trimming your foster dog's nails, we can either guide you through the process in person 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 be sure to give plenty of praise and treats after each session.



Using only dog nail clippers, 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 dark or black nails. Clipping just the tip of the nail is generally 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. If this happens, immediately apply

pressure over the bleeding nail with a cotton ball/gauze until the bleeding stops. Applying the product “quick stop” or flour or cornstarch to the quick will help to stop the bleeding.

Returning your foster to the OHS:

When it is time to return your foster dog, you may feel a sense of sadness, loss, and even guilt. This is completely normal and is often the most challenging time for a foster volunteer. Your foster has been an integral part of your daily routine and you have given him a second chance at a bright future. The OHS screens all potential adopters and your foster will soon be a cherished pet in a loving, forever home.

By completing a foster history sheet for prospective adopters, you increase the appeal of your foster dog while he waits in the Adoption Centre. The information you provide gives insight into what the adoptive family can expect from their new family member. You may include photos and stories with the foster history sheet to further describe your experience with your foster pooch. This gives adoption staff a better chance to make the best match for the best possible forever home.

CSR: Foster will contact you when your foster animal is ready to be returned and make an appointment for return. Failure to return your foster when requested may result in termination from the foster program.

1. If you cannot keep your foster for the duration of his required placement:

In the best interest of your foster dog, he should remain in one home for the duration of the foster placement. The OHS can't provide interim care for fosters and we ask that you only accept placements that you can commit to. We understand and respect that sometimes things happen that prevent you from maintaining your commitment or that an animal's needs may become greater than originally anticipated. In addition, only OHS foster volunteers are able to provide care for OHS foster animals and volunteers are not permitted to leave their foster with others. Should you not be able to continue to foster for whatever reason, please contact the foster department to make an appointment to return your foster.

2. Procedure for returning animals for surgery:

- Please contact us when your foster reaches his designated weight or finishes his treatment so that we may schedule his surgery.
- When you have been informed of the surgery date, arrange to bring him to the shelter the night before the surgery date.
- He will be sterilized and welcomed into the Adoption Centre the day following his procedure, provided there are no surgical complications.
- Since he will not be going home with you after his surgery, please ensure you bring his walking device (Halti, Easy Walk or Gentle Leader), crate, foster history sheet and photos in when you drop him off for surgery.

3. Procedure for returning for adoption:

In most cases, an appointment for return is made when an animal is finished all treatment and is no longer symptomatic. At this time, the animal is returned and made available for adoption. When you return your foster dog, please ensure all paperwork, including the foster history sheet, accompanies the return as well as their walking device and any other supplies.

In some cases, when an animal has been recovering from an injury or illness and has required regular vet exams to monitor progress, the animal might unexpectedly be medically cleared and deemed ready for adoption. Should this be the case, the foster department will follow up with you to advise you of this positive outcome and work with you to get the foster history sheet completed as soon as possible.

Medical emergencies:

If you think your foster dog is need of immediate medical assistance, please contact the OHS immediately. Please refer to the contact information charts (of this manual) regarding who to contact.

The OHS is unable to provide support between 7:30 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. **Please monitor your foster carefully and contact us before 7:30 p.m. for advice if you believe a serious health issue is developing with your foster.** It's recommended that you always check on the welfare of your foster dog before going to bed.

If your foster animal dies in your care:

Sadly, sometimes an animal does not survive despite our best efforts. Many of our foster animals have unknown histories and may be harbouring an unknown illness or may have an accident in your care. It is impossible to guarantee a positive outcome.

In the unfortunate event that a foster dog dies in your care:

- Wrap the animal in a garbage bag, and then another, to prevent leakage,
- Please contact the foster department immediately via phone or e-mail,
- Bring the animal to the OHS as soon as possible.

Should you experience a negative outcome with one of your fosters, find comfort in knowing that you gave him the best quality of life while he was in your care.

If you lose your foster dog:

If a foster dog escapes your home environment and you cannot catch her:

- Please contact the foster department immediately via phone or e-mail. They will complete a lost report with you and file it with the OHS's lost and found department.
 - Dog's placed in foster homes are microchipped in case they escape and this can be traced by shelters and local veterinary clinics.

- Make fliers that include the lost date, description and any unique markings, a picture and your phone number.

Cleaning between placements:

Any items supplied to you by the OHS should be returned at the end of a placement. Cleaning between placements is an important precaution against the spread of disease. The most common disease organisms are viruses, bacteria, parasites and fungi. Most surfaces (carpet vacuumed, floors mopped), bowls, crate, toys and bedding need to be disinfected.

To disinfect surfaces, remove all organic material and fecal debris and then soak with a mild bleach solution (1 part bleach to 32 parts water) for at least 10 minutes. Wash and then soak food and water bowls in bleach solution for 10 minutes and rinse well. Reusable toys should be cleaned with the bleach solution. Using bleach and hot water wash animal laundry in a separate load from family laundry, to avoid disease transmission.

Table 4: Cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces in foster area

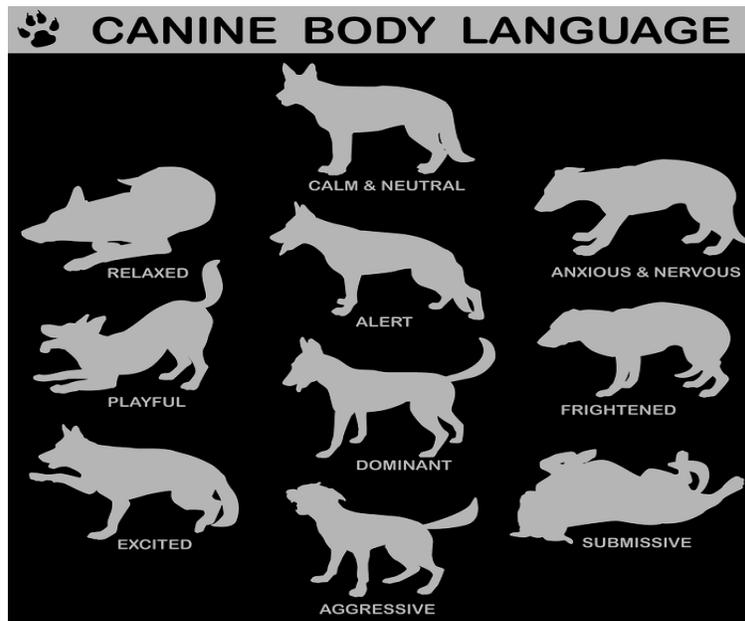
Surface/Object	Procedure	Special Steps
High contact surfaces	Daily cleaning with a detergent and weekly disinfection	Not applicable
Visibly soiled objects/surfaces	Cleaning with a detergent and disinfection	Not applicable
Food bowls	Daily cleaning and weekly disinfection	Not applicable
All regular surfaces	Weekly cleaning and disinfection	Increase frequency to daily or more when infection is present
Laundry	Remove organic material before laundering Use soap and bleach Machine or sunlight to dry	Take caution in moving soiled items to washing machine to prevent environmental contamination and throw away any heavily soiled items.

For additional tips on disinfection protocols, please visit this website: <http://aspcapro.org/routine-practices-prevent-infection-foster-homes>



Chapter Four: Canine body language

Body language is often the best indication of how a dog is feeling and allows you to predict how he is going to behave. To keep yourself safe when working with canines, analyze their actions (behaviour) and body language (posture, facial expressions, tail positions, etc...), approach and react accordingly. When interpreting dog body language, start from the head and move to the tail.



Displacement behaviour

Dogs exhibit displacement behaviours when feeling uncomfortable. These behaviours are often a gesture to appease the situation. Signs include:

- excessive sniffing (of air, floor, walls, items);
- scratching (when not itchy);
- lip licking (when no food items are present);
- yawning and sleepiness (when not tired);
- excessive self grooming;
- averting eye contact.



These appeasement gestures allow for dogs to:

- avoid stressful stimuli,
- negotiate space (theirs in particular),
- calm others (dogs, humans, other species).

If you notice your foster dog exhibiting displacement behaviour, it is best to determine the stressor causing him discomfort and remove him from the stressor/situation/environment.

Fearful behaviour

If a dog has not been socialized properly, he may be more fearful and take more time to adjust to new situations, people, animals and other stimuli than a well socialized dog. Even some well socialized dogs can present as fearful when they are introduced to new people, places, stimuli or other animals. It is very important to pay close attention to your foster dog, especially in new situations, as fear and discomfort can escalate to aggression.

Signs of fear include:

- tense body,
- trembling,
- avoiding eye contact or whale eye (where the white of the eye is highly visible),
- ears low or sideways,
- excessive lip licking,
- avoidance,
- yawning,
- rapid panting,
- head low,
- tail low (can be tucked between legs, only tip is wagging) or upturned (if curly-tailed)),
- hiding behind people and/or objects,
- looking for an escape route,
- barking and retreating,
- rolling over (submissively).



Arousal behaviour

Some dogs have higher arousal levels compared to other dogs—meaning they are easily excited and have difficulty calming down. Excitement can increase in new situations or escalate when meeting or playing with an arousal trigger. For example: a dog may become very excited (over aroused) when interacting with a new dog (arousal trigger). If a dog is constantly in a state of excitation, this over arousal can lead to uncontrollable behaviour and sometimes trigger aggression. It is very important to pay close attention to your foster dog, to ensure they do not get too excited.



Signs of excitement include:

- stiff/tense body,
- fixated eyes and do not deviate,
- ears forward,
- mouth closed,
- head up,
- high, stiff tail (may or may not be wagging or slow, planned tail wag),
- hard mouthing (putting mouth on body during play),
- mounting,
- teeth chattering,
- tugging on a leash or clothing,
- piloerection (hair raised on back).

Aggressive behaviour

Dogs can be aggressive if they have not been socialized properly. Aggression can also be triggered by specific stimuli. For example: some dogs are well behaved and very friendly with people, but have not been well socialized with dogs and can become aggressive in the presence of another dog. Aggression often escalates, so it is very important to pay close attention to your foster dog to ensure they do not demonstrate aggressive behaviours. If at any point in time your foster dog displays aggression, it is best to remove him from the trigger—if you can do so safely, or leave him and get yourself to safety.

Signs of aggression include:

- tense/stiff body,
- eyes fixated,
- piloerection (hair raised down back),
- aggressive barking,
- lunging (on or off the leash)
- showing teeth,
- growling,
- snarling,
- snapping,
- biting.





Although we often think of aggression primarily exhibited by large dogs, small dogs can be aggressive too; so it's important to pay attention to all behaviours, at all times.

The Ottawa Humane Society temperament tests all dogs before going to foster. If a dog presents a behavioural issue—such as interdog aggression—the foster department will communicate all known behavioural issues prior to placement into a foster home.

Chapter Five: Behavioural needs

Dogs come to the OHS from a variety of backgrounds. Some are admitted with known behavioural issues, while others have issues that only become apparent during their stay. To combat undesirable behaviours, appropriate behaviour intervention must be implemented to modify a dog's behaviour. Behaviour intervention helps modify a dog's negative (unwanted) reaction to certain stimuli, ultimately increasing the dogs' adoptability and decreasing the likelihood of future relinquishment.

The OHS uses only current, humane methods of training for behaviour modification, including:

- Positive reinforcement (providing a reward to increase the frequency of a behaviour)
- Limited "Negative" reinforcement (removing human contact to diminish the manifestation of a behaviour)
- Clicker training
- Desensitization with treats and toys
- Counter conditioning (redirection) with treats and toys

OHS will NOT use training techniques that are negative, forceful in nature or based on old-dominant theories. Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs that are not currently fearful. People often believe their dog makes the connection to discipline because he runs and hides or "looks guilty." However, dogs display submissive postures like cowering, running away or hiding when they feel threatened—a dog doesn't know what he's done wrong; he only knows that you are upset. Punishment after the fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may provoke other undesirable behaviors.



Many of the behaviors that people find problematic in dogs – such as barking, whining, digging, chewing, scavenging and hunting other animals – are really just normal dog behaviors. The easiest way to coexist with a canine companion is to provide more appropriate outlets for their natural behaviors.

Observe your foster dog carefully, and try to find activities that suit his needs and interests. Keeping him physically and mentally stimulated will minimize unwanted behaviours. Dogs that are placed into foster care for behavioural intervention will come with specific instructions to modify the unwanted behaviour which will increase his adoptability. If you feel your foster dog requires more attention, exercise or training than you can provide, contact the CSR: Foster.

Canine basic training guide

For the most successful canine foster experience, please follow these guidelines to teach your foster dog to be the best canine citizen he can be!

1. Housetraining:

Housetraining requires patience and plenty of commitment. The more consistent you are in following the same routine, the faster your foster dog will learn acceptable behavior.

Even housetrained, adult dogs will make mistakes, especially if they've been at the shelter for a while—they may be used to marking in their kennel. Be patient and don't give up; it may take several weeks to housetrain your foster, and with some of the smaller breeds, it might take even longer. During this process, remember—your efforts will truly be appreciated by your foster's adoptive family who will be relieved to bring a housetrained dog into their home!

Here are some tips to help establish proper elimination behaviours:

- **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. Dogs should be given more opportunity to eliminate when they first arrive at your home, until you've established a proper routine. Stand with him for 5 minutes; if he doesn't go within 5 minutes, take him back inside and then try every 15 minutes until he goes. Puppies should go out every 45 minutes until you learn their pattern. Try staying outside with the dog while he eliminates, as it can encourage him to focus on the task at hand as some dogs may feel anxious when alone in the yard.

Praise your foster every time he eliminates outdoors! Remember to do so immediately after elimination, not after he comes back inside the house. This step is critical—you are rewarding your dog for eliminating outdoors, not for returning to the house.

Pick an outdoor spot near the door, and always take your dog to that spot using a leash. If you clean up an accident in the house, take the soiled paper towels and leave them in the established elimination spot. The smell will help your dog recognize the area as the place he is supposed to eliminate.

Put your dog on a regular feeding schedule to make housetraining easier, as feeding your dog at the same time each day will make it more likely that he'll eliminate at consistent times too.

- **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, and watch for signs that he needs to eliminate (ex. sniffing around or circling). When you see these signs, immediately take him outside to his elimination area. If he eliminates, praise, and reward him with a treat.
- **Confinement:** When you're unable to watch your dog at all times, he should be confined to an area to keep him safe, but 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 where you confine your foster pooch, all interactions with this confined space must be 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.

- **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 do something to interrupt him (like clapping). Immediately take him to his outdoor bathroom spot, praise him, and give him a treat if he finishes eliminating there.
- **Clean up:** 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.

NOTE! If you notice your foster dog is not house trained, despite your best efforts, please indicate these findings on his history sheet. Contact the foster department immediately for additional tips and tricks if the behaviour is not resolving or causing nuisance.

2. Crating:

Crates provide a safe and secure space for dogs. They also minimize destructive chewing, barking and housetraining mistakes. Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old (plus one). For example, a 4-month-old pup should not be crated longer than 5 hours.

The length of time an adult dog can be crated depends on different factors. If your foster dog was left outside, he has never been required to “hold it” for any period of time, so learning proper elimination behaviours will take more time. Older dogs, and dogs with some medical conditions, may only be able to physically “hold it” for short periods of time. Lengthy exercise should be given before and after any long periods in the crate, and good chew toys should be in the crate at all times.

Crates should never be used as a means of punishment! Crates should be thought of as dog playrooms, just like child playrooms, with games and toys. It should be a place your foster dog likes to be, where he feels safe and secure.

Crating tips:

- Give a Kong stuffed with some of his daily food ration as a reward for being in the crate. Food dispensing toys and Kongs can be provided by the CSR: Foster;
- If the dog does not settle at night, try moving the crate inside your room, and then gradually moving it out every night until eventually it is in a separate room;
- Feed the dog inside the crate, while the door is open, to make a positive association;



- Place a tarp under the crate;
- Restrict access to other pets and children;
- Turn on soft music and dim lights to create a calming environment.

3. Walks:

Walks should be at least twice daily. Most foster dogs will need at least two, 30+ minute walks a day, to release energy. If your foster dog is an adolescent, you may need to step up the activity level to include regular runs, hikes, or brisk walks. Your foster dog must remain on-leash at all times when in public, to keep him safe. When you pick him up, you will be provided with a collar, leash and walking device for your dog. Do not use any other devices (ex. choke chains, pinch collar, flexi leads, etc...) when walking your foster dog. The walking device (Easy Walk harness, Halti or Gentle Leader) will accompany your foster dog, to reduce pulling and to establish good leash manners. CSR: Foster will show you how to properly fit and use these devices when you pick up the dog.



When you are out with your dog you should always have treats to reward your dog for good behaviors. Walks should include both quiet and busy areas to help him adapt to urban living environments, which will increase his adoptability.

4. Appropriate play:

Gentle and positive human contact is important for dogs to be well socialized. Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies. Be sure to give your foster dog lots of playtime and affection throughout the day.

Be sure to pay close attention to your foster dog around children. Teach children to leave a dog alone when he is eating, chewing and sleeping and to avoid taking their toys or other prized possessions.

Do not play tug of war or wrestle with your foster dog. If you have a shy or fearful dog, do not throw a toy toward the dog, because he may think you are throwing things at him (making him more fearful).

When giving the dog a toy or treat, have him sit before giving it to him. That way he has to work to get the toy or treat, making it a positive reward.



5. Food and possession:

Food is a really great tool to build a positive relationship with your foster dog. Feel free to set some of his daily food rations aside for training purposes or for a food dispensing toy. To keep yourself safe, always exert caution around dogs in possession of food items.

If your dog is possessive of food and/or high value items please follow additional information on food guarding (found on pages 44-47).

6. Chewing:

Destructive chewing is a phase that most puppies go through. It usually starts around three months and can last until the dog is one year old. During this time, the dog's adult teeth are coming in and chewing helps to relieve the pain of incoming teeth. Adult dogs may also have problems with chewing, but for different reasons. Adult dogs usually chew on inappropriate things because they are anxious or bored, or because they have never been taught what is appropriate to chew on.

The best solution for destructive chewing is to direct your foster dog to something that is acceptable to chew on. Ensure you have a variety of chew toys available at all times. If you catch the dog chewing on something inappropriate, tell the dog "NO" in a firm (not angry) voice, redirect with the appropriate toy and take the other item away. To minimize destructive chewing when you are away, ensure the dog is confined to a crate. It is also important to make sure that your foster dog gets plenty of exercise. A tired dog wants to sleep, not chew!

7. Barking

Dogs bark to communicate, so they bark for different reasons—to alarm, for attention, out of excitement, out of fear, etc... Your response to your foster dogs barking should vary depending on the reason:

- If a dog is barking or whining in his crate, ignore it. He should never be let out when he's barking or whining or he will learn that this is how he tells you that he wants out. Wait for him to stop barking, settle and then release him.
- If you have a dog that tends to bark for attention or when excited, ignore him when he's barking and only give him attention when he is being quiet. If he always gets attention when he is quiet there will be no need to vocalize for attention.
- If he is afraid and barks out of fear, remove him from the fearful stimulus and capture his attention by waving a treat away from that fearful stimulus and give him a treat to reduce fear and redirect his attention.
- Barking during play with you should result in the game ending. When he is quiet, you can start up the game again.
- Keep a dog busy so that he won't concentrate on barking—try giving him a toy to distract him.



8. Unruly behaviours (jumping or mouthing):

Overly intrusive dogs—jumpy and mouthy—are generally less appealing to adopters, when compared to calm and polite pooches. To help teach your foster dog proper manners, never let your foster dog jump up on people. If he jumps on you, turn away from him and ignore him. When he settles and has all paws on the ground, praise him and give him treats. To help establish better manners, you may use the leash and step on it to prevent him from jumping and allow you to wait him out and reward him once he stops.

Do not encourage rough play with your foster dog, like wrestling, as this will often encourage mouthing. If the dog starts to mouth at any time during his stay, communicate that this behaviour is not appreciated with a firm “Ouch” and stop play and/or remove yourself from the situation. If the mouthing is during play you can attempt to redirect his mouth to a toy by moving it briskly around or squeaking it. If he is too aroused leave the room or the area where he is and do not return until he is settled.

Behavioural issues remedied in foster care:

Fear

Dogs are fearful due to a lack of socialization or from suffering a negative experience. A fearful dog is not going to overcome his fears overnight and may take several weeks to achieve progress. Foster volunteers are needed to help fearful dogs, as foster homes are quieter and more predictable than the shelter environment. A fearful dog can quickly become aggressive if they feel vulnerable and threatened. It is important to take things slowly and closely monitor a fearful dog’s progress and adjustment into your home environment.

We will also provide specialized training to you when taking on a canine with global fear/fear aggression.



Tips for approaching a fearful dog:

- Avoid direct eye contact;
- Avoid walking directly at the dog—approaching a dog head on can be perceived as a threat. Try a side-step approach or turn slightly away during your greeting;
- Crouch down to make yourself smaller and less intimidating;
- Let the dog come to you;
- Touch the dog on his chest or chin and avoid petting him on the top of his head, as this can be perceived as threatening;
- Use a low tone of voice;
- Remove excess clothing/accessories (hats, cane, dangling necklace, baggy clothing, hoods), as these can sometimes be triggers;
- If the dog demonstrates any aggressive behaviour STOP your approach! Remove yourself if the aggression continues.

NOTE! Remember to contact the foster department if your foster dog demonstrates aggression. We will provide you with additional support to keep you and your foster dog safe.

Steps to take to help a dog with fear:

1. Identify triggers:

The OHS behaviour department will have identified your foster dog's fear triggers prior to you taking him home. The best way to help him at first is to take things very slowly and to avoid the fearful stimulus. Before encountering a new environment, person or object, analyze the environment to determine if any of his fear triggers are present, so you can react accordingly.

2. Desensitize:

Once your foster is comfortable with you, you can help him get over his fear by slowly exposing him to the fearful stimulus, while offering him various treats, to help him make a positive association with the fearful stimulus.

Training tips:

- Start small and slowly increase the exposure to the scary stimulus.
 - Proceed to a potentially scarier stimulus only once the dog is comfortable and able to relax.
- If the dog does not take treats, try different ones or find out how he wants to be positively rewarded and use that technique during training (for example: verbal praise, toys, etc...).
- Remember to use treats in moderation and monitor for diarrhea, and stop using that treat if it upsets the dog's stomach.
- If the dog won't take the highest valued treat or respond to positive reward, you need to give him more time before introducing the scary stimulus.
- Get friends and family to help you create scenarios where you have control rather than complete strangers—this allows you to control “fearful” situations for your foster dog.
- Always give the dog the option to leave or move away if he is uncomfortable.
- Take small, incremental steps and keep training sessions short (2-10 minutes).
- If a dog becomes too overwhelmed and unresponsive, stop training immediately and occupy the dog's mind by engaging in a different activity that he enjoys.
- Do not use immersion training (immersing the dog in the things he is afraid of until he gets comfortable), as this is not a positive training technique and may only create more problems
- Don't expect to see immediate results—desensitizing takes time!
- Never force a dog to touch or be touched by something or someone he is afraid of as this could elicit an aggressive response.



- Never get frustrated or raise your voice with your foster dog—training needs to be positive at all times!
- The behaviour department will provide specific instructions about the dog’s needs.

3. Redirect focus:

Once a dog has been desensitized, or if you have a dog that is just a little apprehensive, you can help him redirect his attention in the presence of the fearful stimulus, which can alleviate stress. This can be done with food or play.

Training tips:

- During the first week, keep stimulation to a minimum.
- Find a quiet route to walk or run your foster dog to establish a familiar routine—he will feel more in control and less fearful if he can expect what is coming up next.
- For the first 7-14 days, don’t introduce your foster dog to people you meet on your walk. Your foster dog needs time to understand his new routine and surroundings—introducing new people will change this routine and make him feel less in control.
- During the first week you should try to spend quality one-on-one time with your new foster dog, and allow him to slowly adjust to his new surroundings—don’t invite a lot of people over to your home.
- Do not introduce your foster dog to other dogs (other than your own resident dog)—you don’t know how he will behave yet!
- Ensure a behavior such as “sit”, is fully trained and a positive experience before using it to redirect in a fearful situation.
- Give your dog a lot of rest between training sessions—this will allow his stress hormones to settle, allowing him to be physically able to make a positive association with fearful stimulus. Too much ongoing exposure will lead to resistance and more fear.
- Do not use your “go to” distraction in extreme situations as this could remove the value of your reward/distraction. Accidents happen, unpredictable events happen. It’s best to simply remove him from the situation if you are not prepared to train him at that time or the situation is too much to get over.

Separation anxiety

Dogs can suffer from some separation anxiety when left alone, and this behaviour is pretty common. The severity of separation anxiety is what can be challenging for owners. Separation anxiety can vary from a simple behavioural reaction (ex. pacing or whining) to a much more intensive reaction (ex. destructive behavior). Reasons for separation anxiety also vary from dog to dog—a dog may have separation anxiety because he is very dependent on human interaction or because he is reacting to a history of abandonment. Separation anxiety is frequently triggered by a long period of constant interaction, followed by an abrupt separation. The most common scenario: a dog that spends twenty four hours a day with their family over the weekend and then suddenly when Monday rolls around, he is left alone for 8 - 10 hours. Separation anxiety can develop following boarding or re-homing situations, so this behavioural reaction can be more common in dogs admitted to the shelter.

Signs of separation anxiety:

- Destructive behavior
- Excessive drooling (identified by finding the dog's fur soaked when you return home)
- Scratching at exits
- Chewing exits
- Excessive vocalization (whining, barking, howling)
- Urinating and defecating (in a normally house trained dog)
- Trembling and shaking
- Exaggerated welcome ritual when you get home (frantic screaming, jumping, urination)
- Restlessness (not willing to lay down)
- Self mutilation (pulling their hair out or excessive licking to cause wounds)
- Loss of appetite (will not eat or chew on bone until their owners return)
- Escape attempts that cause injury (bending crate bars, smashing through windows)



NOTE! If the dog exhibits these behaviours while you are present, it is likely not separation anxiety.

Severity of separation:

1. Mild:

Most dogs will demonstrate some form of anxiety when left alone, but this will not cause them any damage or harm. A common example includes a dog barking or whining when left alone, but does eventually stop.

Training tips:

- Don't make a big deal when you greet or leave the dog.
- Make your departure unpredictable, so he can't anticipate your departure and develop pre-departure anxiety. For example: pick up your keys, walk around and put them down again—this way he won't associate you picking up your keys as a sign of your departure.
- Test his degree of separation—start out by leaving the dog alone in your home for short intervals to assess his behavioural response. If he does bark, for example, do not return home until his behavioural reaction to your departure has ceased—if you re-enter the home during this time, you may negatively reinforce his behaviour.
- Gradually leave the dog for longer periods of time.
- Crate the dog or isolate him to a room when you are away to avoid minor damage (to your property and/or himself), and give the dog an activity to keep him occupied while you are away (like a stuffed Kong).
- Be patient and give him time—it can take a dog 2-4 weeks to settle into a new routine. Once comfortable and secure, his signs of anxiety will usually go away.

- Give him plenty of exercise—a tired dog is less likely to engage in behaviors associated with anxiety or boredom if he’s tuckered out! If the weather makes it difficult to exercise, workout his mind instead through activities including: treasure hunt, obedience training and hide-and-seek.

2. Advanced:

Some dogs will demonstrate significant signs of anxiety when left alone. Dogs with advanced separation anxiety appear distressed or panicked when left alone. An example of this level is a dog that barks or whines immediately when left alone and barks for several hours/will not stop barking until the person returns. These dogs often chew or destroy items when left alone.

Advanced cases of separation anxiety lack the ability to cope when left alone—they have not developed a coping mechanism to relieve their stress which often manifests into undesirable behaviours for the owner. These dogs do not understand that their behaviours are undesirable, as the behaviour makes them feel better, so punishment will never stop these behaviours. You may not be able to rid these dogs entirely of their anxiety, but with your help, they can often be managed and develop ways to cope with their anxiety.

Training tips:

- Follow all previous tips provided for mild cases of separation anxiety.
- Avoid rushing or forcing the dog into the crate, as this may add to or worsen their anxiety. Help ease their stress by feeding them in their crate, with the door open, while you are home—once comfortable, close the door for short periods of time.
- Help the dog learn to be independent. Teach him to “love” a new spot in the house, for example a dog bed—tell him to go to it and stay on it. To help start this training process, stand near the bed and whenever the dog steps foot on the bed, reward him. Once the dog is on the bed, try moving one step away—if he stays, reward again. If he moves off the bed, ignore and wait until he returns to the bed—reward. This process can be slow, but with time and practice, you will be able to move around the room with the dog staying on the bed, and eventually you may even get to leave the room for short periods of time.
- Try using a food dispensing puzzle to help him gain independence—it will help him learn he can work at something on his own. Start off by being present when you give him the puzzle and allow him to finish. The next time stand while he eats, try moving a few steps away, if he stops chewing or working at the toy, stop moving and wait till he re-engages with the toy. Practice this activity daily, moving further away each time (by feeding him one of his meals in a puzzle).



NOTE! If you try all of these training tips and do not notice an improvement in your foster dog’s anxiety level, please contact the foster department for help.

3. Severe:

Dogs that demonstrate severe signs of anxiety when left alone are distressed and will do whatever they can to help reduce their anxiety. Dogs with severe separation anxiety may chew through doors or destroy crates to get out of their confined space, and often end up hurting themselves in the process. These dogs may pant, drool and tremble the entire time you are away, and never rest. Severe separation anxiety is often caused by a chemical imbalance in their brains, whereby they cannot physically relieve their own anxiety. These dogs require medical intervention and medication to change their deeply ingrained, physical reaction to departure.

Training tips:

- These dogs require medical assistance to alleviate their distress.
- They should not be left alone, as every event will increase their anxiety. These dogs require someone to be home at all times, and may require boarding during any departure.
- These dogs cannot be crated safely. They cannot be crated until their medication is working well.
- These dogs are not placed into foster care and are typically not treatable in a foster home, as they require months and years of training, management and medication to obtain results. As a foster home is only temporary, placing them into foster care is counterproductive to their success—their issues typically worsen when the dog is returned.
- If you believe your foster dog is suffering from severe separation anxiety please contact the CSR: Foster immediately.

Puppies:

Dogs are considered to be puppies and are still learning important skills until they are 1 year old. Their crucial socialization period occurs between 1 and 4 months of age, meaning they must be introduced and exposed to as many new people, places and things as possible, so they develop confidence to be able face future situations and stimuli without fear. An under socialized puppy is the number one cause of aggression in an adult dog. Ideally, puppies should stay with their littermates for 8 to 12 weeks. When this doesn't happen, puppies often don't develop appropriate social skills (like learning how to send and receive appropriate signals). While the socialization stage is important, a dog's mind remains receptive to new experiences and lessons taught throughout his first year, which allow him to learn the proper skills to live with humans and other dogs.



Puppies can also experience a fearful stage. This typically occurs at 6 to 8 months of age, but may vary from breed to breed. This stage is where a puppy is making a developmental leap—

developing fight or flight. These basic survival skills can cause quite a problem in the home if not handled properly. During this stage, a puppy will be sensitive to traumatic situations, so it's important to avoid exposing a puppy to extreme situations that could cause a high fear response (including but not limited to: thunder storms, loud parties, dog fight, etc...). At this stage in their development, exposure to traumatic stimuli could result in significant trauma that will take a long time (or a lifetime) to undo. These situations are sometime out of our control, but should be avoided as much as possible. If socialization is done properly, this stage will be easily overcome.

Training tips:

- Don't be afraid! A puppy's environment should be mentally stimulating to encourage healthy development. Here are things puppies should be exposed to before the age of 1:
 - 100 people (including: different physical sizes, different ages, different ethnicities, etc...)
 - Walker/wheelchair
 - A variety of toys
 - Household appliances (vacuum cleaner, blender, broom, umbrella)
 - New places
 - Other dogs (on-leash, fully vaccinated, healthy and friendly only)
 - Snow plow, snow blower, lawn mower
 - Garbage truck, school/city buses
 - Cyclist, skateboarder, roller-blader



NOTE! Praise puppies for their curiosity and ignore fearful responses—comforting puppies that show fear only encourages them to be fearful.

- Teach them to tolerate manipulation. Work with them daily, using positive reinforcement techniques. Teaching them tolerance will help them develop appropriate behavioural responses when visiting the vet, having their nails trimmed, going in the car, etc. Be sure to handle these body parts every day:
 - Feet (all of them, each toe included);
 - Ears (both of them);
 - Mouth (open it and look quickly inside, touch their teeth);
 - Tail;
 - Pick them up gently and hold them briefly in the air (cradle arms under their belly).

NOTE! During these desensitizing sessions, also teach them what is unacceptable—like squirming, barking, nipping; always wait until he stops fidgeting and squirming before releasing him from restraint.

- **Bite inhibition.** One of the best things you can do for a young pup is to teach them appropriate play behaviour. Puppy biting is a normal, natural and essential puppy behavior. Puppy biting allows dogs to learn and develop bite inhibition and soft mouth. Mouthing is natural and they need to do it to learn when it's too hard and becomes painful. When a dog is hurt, threatened or feels vulnerable, their natural reaction is to snap, lunge or bite; so if a dog does not have well established bite inhibition, he is likely to cause more damage.

Puppies learn proper bite inhibition by playing with other dogs, so it's important for their development to have exposure to other canine friends (including their littermates). Even if your puppy has a couple of canine friends at home, you will still need to teach your puppy to inhibit bites towards people. Even if the puppy is friendly and mouths gently, by five months of age he should not be permitted to place his mouthparts on anyone. To teach your puppy proper bite inhibition:

- Let your puppy know his bites hurt—a simple "ouch!" is usually sufficient; then take a short break before resuming play.
 - If your puppy does not respond to your “ouch!” give him a time out—leave the playing space completely and ignore him. Give him a minute or two to reflect and to learn the association—his painful bite means no more playtime with his favourite friend!
 - When the puppy has developed softer play, you can teach them to never put their mouth on you. To do this you simply say “ouch!” and follow the above steps each time his mouth makes contact—eventually he will learn that you are very sensitive and any mouthing will result in no playtime.
- **Teach them not to guard!** Guarding is a natural survival skill in the dog world, but frowned upon from human cohabitants. To help your pup from becoming overly protective:
 - Hand feed—this helps your pup to associate human hands as positive distributors.
 - Make meal time positive, not threatening! Use the food bowl and place a few kibbles inside, while the puppy eats, add a few more kibbles, and continue this process for their entire meal.
 - Approach the bowl with your hand (without kibble) near/around the bowl and when the puppy acknowledges your hand, add more kibble from the other hand—this will help them feel comfortable with hands near their bowl.
 - Help him learn patience—have him sit and wait (only for a second or two) prior to feeding him.
 - Teach him object exchange—ask him to “give” his toy to you during play and present him with a toy or treat in exchange. This teaches the puppy to happily give up his toys, without panic, as another fun reward will take its place.



- Make him work for it! Teach him to work for rewards (foods, toys, play, attention, etc...). This helps establish boundaries and respect (similar to teaching a child).
- If the puppy is showing signs of food or object guarding, contact the foster department for more support!
- Teach him to be independent. Helping your puppy learn to develop coping mechanisms when left alone is important to his long term health and wellbeing. A dog is a highly social animal and therefore requires preparation for spending some of his time in isolation. Before leaving him alone for longer periods, teach him how to occupy himself properly (when left alone)—give him chew toys, treats, etc...to teach him to enjoy his own company without becoming stressed.
- Teach him the basics. We encourage you to teach your foster puppy basic obedience commands using positive reinforcement techniques. Investing in training at a young age will help develop proper dog behaviors.
- Help him establish proper elimination behaviours! (See pages 30-31 for information on house training).

We know puppies need a high level of investment, but with your help, you will provide them with all of the necessary tools they need to become the best canine citizens they can be!

Handling sensitivity:

Not all dogs admitted to the OHS have been socialized properly. Some dogs may have little to no experience with having their body parts (feet, mouth, muzzle, etc...) handled when they were pups, and this can cause sensitivity to handling. People will often live with their dog never knowing that he is sensitive to a particular body part being touched until the dog requires treatment. This happens commonly at the shelter. Some dogs in foster care will have identified handling sensitivity and will need your help to overcome their insecurities. Others may not demonstrate any issues while in shelter, but may present in your home. To keep yourself safe, it is important to know how to identify sensitivity, know how to respond, and how to help relieve it, as improper handling can quickly escalate and illicit an aggressive response (if a dog continues to feel threatened).

Signs of handling sensitivity can include:

- Running away/attempting to hide in the presence of treatment,
- Trembling when touching a certain body part,
- Pulling limbs away,
- Hard eyeing (glaring) at you and/or your hands,
- Mouthing or nipping the hand that is manipulating them,
- Rolling on their back when you touch them,



- Yelping, screaming or barking when touched,
- “Head whipping” (quick jerk of the head) to look at what you are doing/trying to get away from you,
- Growling or baring teeth,
- Snapping or biting.

If your foster dog is sensitive to being handled, their issues will be identified prior to placement into your home. You should use desensitization techniques (see pages 35-36 for more information) to help them overcome their fear. If your foster dog requires any medication on the body part(s) to which they sensitive to being handled, be sure to practice desensitization before, during and after their treatments and make all interactions positive—if the dog only gets handled when receiving treatment, he will begin to make a negative association with the treatment. **We will also provide specialized training to you when taking on a canine with severe handling sensitivities.**

Training tips:

- Use special/high value treats that are only used for desensitization training,
- Start small—if the dog doesn’t like his ears cleaned, start by petting his ears and giving him a treat, once comfortable move to looking into his ears (again, using treats)—once comfortable with the handling, then attempt to clean and follow up with treats.
- Desensitize the dog to treatment tools (i.e. bottle, syringe, etc...) by presenting it, letting him approach and following with reward.
- Ensure the environment is quiet and controlled.
- Do not allow children to handle or treat a foster dog.
- Allow the dog to get away from you if he feels vulnerable and try again at a later time—forcing the handling will generally break trust and set you back in your training successes.
- If the dog growls or bares teeth STOP immediately and try again later.

NOTE! If the dog snaps or attempts to bite and you are unable to safely treat or interact with your foster dog, contact the foster department. In some situations, the dog’s reaction could be caused by a pain response or the treatment may need to be given by our medical team.

Food guarding:

Food guarding is a natural behaviour for any animal seeking to protect food resources in order to survive. As dogs coexist with humans, it can become a safety issue to guard food and high valued items from people. Although we are not truly a threat, as we do not want to eat their food, they do not always know this, and may become aggressive if they perceive you as a threat. We need your help to positively work with your foster dog to help him learn to tolerate human presence around food/high value items (like their food bowl or bones). Food guarding can present differently from dog-to-dog and there are different severities of guarding. Most dogs will demonstrate some level of stubbornness or reluctance to give up their prized possessions, but do not act dangerously or harm someone who they perceive as a threat. Food or possession guarding can escalate quickly into an aggressive behavioural reaction, so it is very important to pay close attention to your foster dog and know how to identify and react to their warning signals.



Signs of food guarding:

- Ears pulled back (during your approach),
- Whale eye (head turned away but the eyes are swiveled back towards you with the whites showing) OR hard eye (staring at you and not moving or blinking),
- Lips slightly pulled,
- Standing over the bowl or bone with an arched back,
- Feet planted or may appear to be curled around the object they're guarding,
- Body blocking (using their body to create a barrier between you and the object),
- Picking up the object and moving away with it/attempting to hide it from you,
- Stiffening or freezing when you approach,
- Teeth baring or growling,
- Snapping and biting when you touch the object they are guarding.

You can help your foster dog to become more tolerant and less defensive with his food/high valued items through exercises. To keep yourself safe during these exercises, remember: do not practice these exercises at every meal (maybe only once/day), never forcefully remove anything from the dog (let them offer it to you), and ensure the environment is free of children. Exercises include:

1. Hand feeding:

Hand feeding creates a positive association with your foster dog—this teaches the dog to associate your hand as the food source. Try to also encourage basic manners before offering the food—like asking for a sit. This will also teach the dog that food is not free and must be earned.

2. Teach him to like people in his presence during mealtime:

Start off by giving half of his meal in his bowl and while he eats, walk up and drop more kibble (the other half of his meal) on the floor. If the dog shows no interest in the dropped kibble, try a few smelly treats to get him engaged. Repeat this process for a few meals, until the dog looks up at you when you approach in anticipation of a treat. Once he is engaged, try moving closer to the bowl, and dropping the treat in the bowl (instead of the floor), forcing you closer to him. If the dog comes to you for the treats when you approach, immediately reward him. Let him resume eating before offering him another treat.



3. Teach him patience:

Teach your foster dog to “sit” before getting his bowl of food. To teach him to sit by:

- Allowing him to smell the training treat.
- Holding the treat directly in front of his nose.
- Slowly moving the treat up and over his head towards his hind end; continue to move the treat backwards until he sits.
- Rewarding him (with the treat) as soon as he sits.
- Repeating above steps, in order, until he sits at least three times in a row.
- Giving him his food bowl once he’s sat.

Once you’ve established this routine, teach him to “wait” before you release him to start eating. Establishing this routine will teach your canine companion that you control when he can eat his food. This is important especially if you find yourself in a situation where he finds something on the floor, as he’ll look to you for direction before he can eat it. This exercise helps to relieve excitement around feeding, which can contribute to food guarding.

4. Teach him to object exchange:

Teach the dog that it is ok to give up a high value item, because he will get a different reward of equal or greater value in its place. Do this by showing the dog an object and offering it to him, to replace an object that he is already engaged with. When he disengages and redirects to your offering—reward him, and take his object. Once he’s done, give it back to him and repeat. Continue to practice this exercise until the dog gives up the item almost immediately after you show him the treat. The trick is to offer him something he will prefer in exchange for what he is already engaged with. Remember, once you get to very high valued objects, you may need to use the same type of object to make an exchange (like offering a bone for a bone). With toys, you

can simply use another toy for exchange. Object exchange is very important for when a dog steals something or has something in his mouth that he shouldn't; this method allows you to retrieve the item while minimizing an aggressive response.

5. Teach him to “drop it”:

Teaching your dog to drop what's in his mouth keeps you safe if he ever gets into something he shouldn't. Start with throwing a toy, when the dog returns to you with the toy say “drop it”. As soon as the dog “drops it” REWARD! If the dog does not let go of the toy, take a treat out and waive it in front of his nose and wait him out. As soon as the dog drops the toy, REWARD! This exercise is much easier if you have taught him object exchange first. Continue to practice this exercise as through experience, he'll learn that items are not just taken away when he drops them, he gets something in return.

Training tips:

- When the food bowl is empty, pick it up and put it away (controlling access to food makes it easier to manage).
- If you need to move the dog while he is engaged with an object, don't physically pick him up or push him—get his attention with your voice instead. If this doesn't work, toss a delicious treat (like cheese) away from the dog and then remove the object.
- If the dog is quite stubborn and reluctant to leave the food bowl or item, allow the dog to wear a lightweight leash in the house during training in case you need to move him away from something.
- If you do give the dog a rawhide or high valued item, give it to him in a very specific area, like his crate.
- STOP what you are doing if the dog ever displays any aggression, but do not go away. Remain still and wait for the dog to return to his item, and then leave. If you remove yourself immediately when the dog aggresses, he will learn that aggressing will get you to go away.
- Feed the dog in a food dispensing toy to slow them down when eating (available through the foster department).
- Advise all visitors that if something falls on the ground or the dog steals something, to come and seek your attention—stress the importance of not attempting to remove items themselves.
- Don't touch, pet or disturb your dog when eating from the food bowl, chewing on a toy or sleeping.
- Avoid giving delicious, very high valued bones or any item unless you are working on exchange or they dog is in a secure location like their crate or room.
- Be patient—if the dog reacts aggressively, it's only because he was not desensitized properly.



- Avoid letting the dog have access to privileged areas which could escalate guarding (like the couch, bed or in your lap). You may allow him access to these areas ONLY on two conditions: you invited him up and he must respond when you tell him to get off.
- If your dog steals something, don't chase or reprimand.
- Do not leave food or chews around the house.
- Never feed dogs side-by-side, and try to keep them in separate rooms while they eat. Avoid having two dogs in the kitchen area where a lot of food could fall and elicit a fight over the food.

Chapter Six: Medical protocols and conditions

General vaccination and de-worming protocols

Vaccination:

The OHS vaccinates all canines, over the ages of 4 weeks, with unknown vaccine histories upon intake per the schedule below.

		Initial vaccine	Initial booster	Secondary boosters
DA2PP	Puppies (4 weeks-20 weeks old)	Upon entry to OHS (or once 4 weeks old)	2weeks after initial vaccine	Every 2 weeks, after initial booster, until 20 weeks of age and then a final booster given 4 weeks later (@24 weeks old)
	Dogs	Upon entry to OHS	2 weeks after initial vaccine	Not required
Bordetella	Puppies (4 weeks-20 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	Not required
	Dogs	Intranasal vaccine, upon entry to OHS	Injectable vaccine, 2 weeks after first vaccine	Not required

Your foster dog's vaccine requirements will be written on their home care instruction sheets provided to you at the time of placement.

CSR: Foster will contact you to make an appointment for boosters, as needed.

De-worming: All canines are treated for parasites (de-wormer) according to their weight and age at the shelter. We may ask you to administer de-wormer to your foster. Dogs are given 1 ml of Strongid de-wormer per every10 kg.



Common medical conditions of fostered canines:

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 chance of contracting kennel cough if they have not been vaccinated against the virus. Therefore, your own resident dog(s) must be vaccinated against bordetella at least 10 days prior to your taking any foster dog home, to minimize the risk of contraction.

The average length of fostering a dog with kennel cough is 3 to 5 weeks, depending on the dog's recovery time. It is important that you contact us if the dog develops green nasal or ocular discharge, wet cough, or seems to be eating less, as this may indicate a secondary bacterial infection and will require other treatment.

Symptoms of kennel cough are:

- Retching/gagging
- 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 public dogs for at least ten 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).
- **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.

Pregnant or nursing dogs:

Throughout the year, but particularly in the spring, dogs arrive at our shelter who are either pregnant or nursing. These cases are of high priority and we try to 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 puppies, which are more 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. CSR: Foster will always provide you with a rough estimate of how long an animal may require fostering.

Pregnancy:

During her last week of pregnancy, a mother dog may not have a large appetite because the puppies are crowding her organs. Feed her several small meals daily, rather than one or two larger meals—this will help her get the nutrition she needs to prepare for her big day! Try leaving dry dog food and water out at all times. If the mother dog will not eat the food provided, try mixing it with a small amount of moist dog food.

Prepare a nesting box; place it in a dry, warm, relatively dark, draft-free place, out of the way. Lead the mother dog to the box. If she does not want to stay in it, do not insist, but encourage her by petting her and giving her little food treats.

Labour:

Over 98% of dogs deliver their puppies without assistance or complications—so let nature take its course! To better prepare yourself, please review these helpful videos on canine births: <http://www.marvistavet.com/birth-of-puppies.pml>

Before the delivery, the mother dog may become very irritable and restless. She will search for a place to have her puppies, so encourage her to rest in her designated nesting box. She may choose another location to give birth, so it may be helpful to place the box in a room without any hiding places. Let her have the puppies outside of her nest box if she chooses. When delivery is complete, you may move the mother and the puppies into the box. Some mother dogs may become protective of their new litters. Talk to her in a gentle, calm voice during this time. If she is still protective, ensure the environment is safe and warm for the puppies, and leave her alone until she is less anxious.

Some mother dogs may want you to stay with them and will follow you if you leave. You will probably have to spend some time soothing this kind of mother. After the birth of the first couple of puppies, she will be very busy and not as fixated or dependent on your presence. Other dogs

will try to get away and hide when in labour—give this mother the space she needs to feel comfortable, but check up on her regularly.

There are three stages of canine labor:

During the first stage, which may take up to 12 hours, the mother may breathe rhythmically. She may become very active, dig at the floor, cry loudly and appear to be straining while defecating.

In the second stage, the water bag breaks and straw-coloured fluid is passed. Delivery will begin a few minutes later. The mother dog will lick the newborn puppies clean and bite through the umbilical cord. She is bonding with her puppies during this process and learning to recognize them as her own. It is very important that you do not disturb her during this critical bonding phase. It may appear as though she is too rough, but she is actually stimulating breathing and increasing blood circulation in the puppies.



In the final stage, the placenta follows a few minutes after delivery. The mother will probably eat some or all of the placenta.

Postpartum:

Puppies are born anywhere from 15-30 minutes apart, so most deliveries take 2-6 hours (depending on the number of puppies). The average litter is 4 to 5 puppies. The mother dog is probably finished giving birth if she seems calm and happy, although there have been some cases in which a dog resumed delivery sometime later. If a puppy is not born within 2 hours and the mother is continually straining or appears to be in distress, you should contact the OHS immediately.

Tips on care:

- **Create a nest.**
- **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 CSR: Foster to report the births.** 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.
- **Feed the puppies.** For the first 4 weeks of life, the puppies need only their mother’s milk. When they reach 4 weeks of age, even if they are still nursing, you can start feeding them warm slurry of canned puppy food and water. Feeding them canned puppy food makes a good supplement to mother’s milk and helps them gradually adjust to the 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.

Table 5: Puppy growth, physical development and needs for successful health and wellbeing

THE FIRST 8 WEEKS OF LIFE	Development	Needs
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies’ ear canals open when they are between 13 and 17 days old. • Puppies’ weight will vary according to their breed, but should be gaining about 1 to 1.5 grams per day for each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nursing mother dog cannot be overfed. Food requirements can increase up to three times the normal amount. Leave food out for the mother dog at ALL times. • Floor temperature of the nest box should be between 96 and 100 degrees, keep them warm. • Try to watch the puppies nurse at least once a day. Make sure every puppy is nursing and there is not too much

	<p>pound of anticipated adult weight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and nurse from their mother the other 10%. 	<p>manoeuvring for position—a great deal of activity and crying could indicate a problem with milk flow or quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies should be handled as little as possible (by humans).
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1.5 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight from this point forward. • Puppies' eyes will open when they are between 10 and 14 days old. • All newborn puppies have blue eyes and initially no pupils can be distinguished. The eye color is a solid, dark blue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature of the nest box should now be 90-95 degrees. • Puppies should start getting handled gently and pet once a day.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies should now be spending only 60-70% of their time sleeping. • Puppies are generally able to stand around day 15, and usually crawl by day 21 • Puppies' teeth will begin to cut. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor temperature of the nest box should now be 85-90 degrees. • Mother dog will begin to spend more time out of the nest. • Puppies will begin to play with each other, learn to sit, and will start trying to touch objects with their paws. • Start to increase the amount of handling the puppies receive and exposing them to soft sounds. • Avoid exposing them to anything frightening.
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult eye color will begin to appear. • The puppies will begin to develop complete sound and sight orientation. • Puppies will begin to clean themselves, although their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning. • Puppies will begin eliminating on their own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor temperature of the nest box should be 75-80 degrees from this point forward. • Puppies can begin to eat from a shallow saucer and should be weaned gradually from their mother's milk; mother dog will usually begin to discourage her puppies from nursing. • Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be receiving all the nutrition they need. Make sure they are eating and gaining weight. • Potty training starts (using a pee pad or news paper designate an area and encourage them to go to this area instead of covering the whole area).
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male puppies' testicles will become visible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies should be very active and be able to get out of the nest. • Weaning and house-training should continue.
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppies should have complete visual abilities now. • They will imitate their mother, play with toys, and explore the world around them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the weaning process by thickening the food and begin to introduce solid food. • Start manipulating each foot, ear and tail daily. • Start exposing puppies to slightly louder sounds, more movement, and strange objects.
Week 7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing sessions should be brief and infrequent, if they take place at all. • Puppies should now eat undiluted puppy food. • Continue to encourage the puppies to eat dry food. • Teach puppies to sit and down with short sessions of luring. • Continue handling desensitization.
Week 8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House-training should continue. • They can now go outside (if not too cold) in a clean area, free of public dog access. • Desensitize puppies to nail trimming.

Underweight or malnourished dogs:

When a dog arrives at our shelter that is emaciated or malnourished, we seek out a foster volunteer who can take the dog home to monitor his food intake and weight gain until he is thriving. It is very important to record the dog's weight to ensure that weight gain is consistent. 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.

Tips on care:

- **Feed the dog several small meals daily.** An emaciated dog will often try to gobble up as much food as he can (due to the lack of access to food in the past). Eating large amounts of food in short periods of time can bring on other medical problems including: vomiting, diarrhea or bloat. Dogs in this condition should be fed the amount of food advised by the CSR: Foster, divided into 5-6 smaller meals throughout the day.
- **Slow them down.** You can slow down their consumption by hand feeding or spreading the food out on the floor. Food dispensing toys may also help (Kong Wobble, stuffed Kong or puzzles) to keep them busy while they eat and teach them to self-pace. Ensure you are always supervising them when they are working with food dispensing toys, as they may get frustrated with the object if they cannot figure out how to get the food out, or if there is no more food left inside.
- **Prevent counter surfing.** These dogs may be more prone to scavenge for food, and will need all human food to be put away in a secure location, at all times. Leaving food on counters or tables may result in them eating something that is not good for them. It's very important that you ensure your trash is also tucked away. You can use elastic bands to tie handles together to prevent a dog that has figured out how to open the cupboards.

Pre or post-dental:

Dental work is resource intensive and may result in a longer wait time than routine surgeries for the animal in need. We place dogs in need of dental work into foster care to get the dog outside of the shelter while they wait for their dental procedures—this minimizes their stress and avoids kennel deterioration. When we place dental cases, we ask the volunteer to take the dog home while they await their dental surgery and remain available to provide care post-surgery, should the dog need to return to foster care. When a dog undergoes dental procedures (cleaning or extraction) they often require special care post-op to ensure proper healing.



Following extractions dogs require strict restrictions in order to prevent the suture (surgically placed stitch) from coming out. Any dog recovering from dental extraction should be fed only wet food and soft treats. They should not be given the chance to chew toys or any hard object that could damage their suture. Dental cases may require several visits with the veterinarian to ensure the incisions are healing well, typically 3 days post-operation, 8 days post-operation and sometimes a third exam is required 14 days post-operation.

Fostering a dog with dental requirements can last from 1 to 6 weeks, depending on the need for extractions.

Recovering from injury:

When a dog comes into the shelter with an injury (i.e. broken leg, wound) it may be in their best interest to recover in a foster home due to their higher needs. A foster home is a more relaxed environment and will provide a higher level of one-on-one care. Rehabilitation care can vary, depending on the injury, and can include:



- Crate rest
- Limited exercise
- Physiotherapy (exercises to help the dog regain strength and use of his limbs)
- Hydrotherapy (water exercises)
- Bandage changes

These dogs require lots of supervision and care to ensure their best chances at a healthy and quick recovery. Additional instructions specific to the nature of injury will be provided to you at the time of placement.

Fostering a dog in need of rehabilitation from injury can last from 1 week to 6 months, depending on the severity of the injury and needs of the dog.

Tips on care:

- **Allow the dog plenty of time to rest.** An injured dog needs plenty of time to relax in a stress-free, warm, dry, and well-ventilated environment.
- **Isolate.** While the dog may show signs of wanting to play and interact with other dogs, be sure to keep your foster dog away from other dogs during their recovery, to avoid further injury. Short walks with your ailing foster dog are encouraged, but a full out play session with bouncing, tumbling and rolling around could cause further damage. If there is another dog in the home, ensure the dogs are always supervised when together, to avoid play from escalating.

- **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).
- **Help ease discomfort.** Your foster may be sore, although they are prescribed good pain medication. Their discomfort can be minimized by providing them with thick bedding and avoiding walking on stairs and slippery floors.

Common health concerns:

The OHS gives all animals a thorough general physical exam upon intake to try to identify health concerns before they are sent to a foster home. Some conditions may only become apparent later. Contact the foster department immediately if you notice any changes in your foster or if your foster demonstrates any of the symptoms outlined in the chart below.

Symptom	Possible cause	What to do
Eyes • Clear discharge	Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.	Contact the foster department. Monitor the eyes. If discharge is excessive or progresses to a yellow or green colour, please contact the foster department. If you see clear discharge, it is a viral infection and no treatment is required.
Eyes • Green or yellow discharge	Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the anterior portion of the eyelid.	Contact the foster department to make a vet appointment. Gently wipe eyes with a warm, damp cloth. If yellow or green discharge is present, it is most likely a bacterial infection and should be treated.
Eyes • Third eyelid exposed	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.	If you can see this membrane for more than 24 hours, please contact the foster department.
Vomiting	Vomiting is not a common occurrence, but can happen when a dog ingests too much food or water at once—or eats too quickly. They may also vomit when ingesting grass, objects or human food.	Prevent them from consuming anything but dog food and treats. Contact the foster department and remove all food for 4 to 5 hours. If vomiting stops, give a very small amount of food, 4 to 5 times for a day. Return to regular feeding if no more vomiting occurs. If vomiting persists, remove food and contact us for additional follow up.
Diarrhea	Diarrhea is one of the most common ailments affecting animals and has many causes. Human food often causes diarrhea in dogs. Other causes of diarrhea include stress, allergy to food, parasites, improper absorption of food or change in food, and some diseases.	Prevent them from consuming anything but dog food and treats. Fecal analysis can rule out parasites as the cause of diarrhea. Please contact us to discuss. Provide plenty of fresh water, since diarrhea can cause dehydration. To check for dehydration, pull the skin up over the shoulder blades. If it snaps back quickly, the dog is not dehydrated. If the skin goes down slowly, contact the OHS!

Sneezing and/or nasal discharge	Sneezing and nasal discharge are commonly found in dogs who are suffering from kennel cough. Reverse sneezing is when a dog appears to be forcefully pushing air in and out making a throat sound (like honking). This will typically come in “fits.”	Contact the foster department. Monitor sneezing and contact the foster department if sneezing fits increase or worsen. Nasal discharge: contact us if discharge is yellow or green as the dog will need to be seen by the veterinarian.
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Additional canine diseases and medical conditions:

Foster animals may be harbouring an unknown illness and may become symptomatic in your home. This chart explains some additional canine diseases and medical conditions. This chart is simply meant for information purposes. **If you notice any changes in your foster dog’s behaviour or health, please contact the foster department immediately for assistance.**

Condition	Description and Symptoms	Treatment
Anorexia	The loss of appetite or lack of eating. Symptoms include a lack or refusal of food consumption, lethargy.	Please contact us if your canine is not eating. Treatments can include: appetite stimulants, subcutaneous fluids (if dehydrated), change in diet and/or nutritional supplements.
Aspiration pneumonia	Inflammation of the lungs and consolidation due to inhaling foreign material (food). Symptoms include: coughing, sneezing, difficulty breathing, lack of appetite and nasal/ocular discharge.	Please contact us if your canine has difficulty breathing and appears in distress. Early veterinary treatment is critical. The prognosis for adult dogs is generally good, although puppies often do not recover, even with intensive care.
Coccidiosis	Due to a single-celled protozoan parasite and it can spread between dogs. It can cause diarrhea. It does not spread to people.	Please contact us if your canine has abnormal bowel movements. Treatment usually consists of 10 days of oral medication.
Ear Mites	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. Infected animals will shake their heads and scratch or rub their ears.	Please contact us if you notice your foster dog shaking his head or scratching his ears excessively. Treatment requires application of a topical miticide and routine ear cleaning.
External parasites	Organisms that live on an animal (e.g. hair, skin, nasal and ear passages) where they obtain their nutrition and protection from their host. Symptoms include: hair loss, excessive scratching and/or visual identification of parasite.	Please contact us immediately if you suspect your foster may be suffering from an external parasite, or you see one feeding off your foster. Treatment is dependent on the type of parasite.
Fleas	Fleas are the most common external parasite that is found on the skin of animals. An adult flea is a dark brown insect that can be seen on the animal’s skin along	All animals are given a flea treatment soon after their arrival at the shelter. Please contact us if you notice excessive scratching or fleas on your foster canine as they will need additional treatment.

	with their eggs and flea feces (black specks).	
Internal parasites	Organisms that live within an animal (e.g. heart, intestinal tract) where they obtain their nutrition and protection from their host. Symptoms include a distended abdomen, diarrhea and lack of weight gain.	Please contact us immediately if you suspect your foster may be suffering from an internal parasite. Treatment is dependent on the type of parasite.
Lice	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 different species.	Please contact us if you notice excessive scratching or lice on your foster feline. Treatment requires routine shampooing.
Ticks	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. It's important to always do a full examination of your foster dog's body when returning from a walk in long grass to see if there are any ticks present.	If you see a tick on your foster, please contact us. Please do not try to remove the tick yourself.
Worms	Canines can get roundworms, whipworms, tapeworms and hookworms, and they can be passed to other animals and people. Symptoms include a distended abdomen, diarrhea and lack of weight gain. It is important to de-worm canines as directed.	Please contact us immediately if you suspect your foster dog may be suffering from worms. Treatment is dependent on the type of worm.
Heartworm	Canines can get heartworm from an infected mosquito. This is a blood worm that infests the heart and can be invasive.	Please contact us immediately if you suspect your foster has heart worm, or if they are acting lethargic, quiet and have a loss of appetite. Treatment is dependent on the degree of infestation.

Canine medical conditions not treated in foster care:

The OHS does its best to ensure we have diagnosed all injuries or illnesses in animals before placing them into foster. Dogs suffering from the following conditions will not be placed into foster care. If you suspect your foster may be suffering from any of the following conditions, contact the foster department immediately.

Condition	Symptoms	Transmission
Canine Parvovirus (Parvo)	Severe depression, total loss of appetite, variable temperature/fever, vomiting, bloody/watery diarrhea and dehydration. It may cause sudden death in young puppies.	Parvo is highly contagious amongst canines. It is transmitted by direct and indirect contact with excrement from an infected animal. The virus is highly resistant and can withstand extreme temperatures.
Distemper	Squinting, congestion of the eyes, discharge from the eyes, weight loss, coughing, vomiting, nasal discharge and diarrhea.	Distemper is an extremely contagious and often fatal viral disease. It is an airborne infection that can be transmitted with or without direct contact with an infected dog through mucus, urine and feces.
Leptospirosis	Sudden fever and illness, sore/stiff muscles, reluctance to move, shivering, weakness, depression, lack of appetite, increased thirst and urination, rapid dehydration, vomiting (possibly with blood), diarrhea (possibly with blood), bloody vaginal discharge, dark red speckled gums, yellow skin and/or whites of eyes, difficulty breathing, fast breathing, irregular pulse	Dogs will typically come into contact with the leptospira bacteria through infected water, soil, or mud, while swimming, ingesting contaminated water, or from coming into contact with urine from an infected animal. The <i>Leptospira spirochete</i> bacteria is zoonotic (can be transmitted to humans).



Chapter Seven: Zoonoses in dogs

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.



Transmission of zoonoses:

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.

Increased risk factors for human illness:

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.

Increased risk factors for animal illness:

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.

Zoonotic diseases:

- **Giardia:** Is caused by a protozoan parasite and is less commonly seen. It causes severe and ongoing diarrhea in both animals and humans and will resolve with and without medication.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Ringworm:** This is a skin infection caused by a fungus, not a worm. It causes irregularly shaped areas of fur loss and rough, scaly skin on infected animals. 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. This is not common in dogs. Please note: All animals are screened for ringworm upon admission to the OHS via a woods lamp, although this test is not always 100% reliable.



Prevention:

The good news is that most zoonoses can be prevented by taking simple precautionary actions.

What the OHS 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

Protection:

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 this and procedures provided to you.

Hand Hygiene (borrowed from <http://aspcapro.org/routine-practices-prevent-infection-foster-homes>):

Soap and water:

- recommended when significant soiling or risk is present
- Follow these steps:
 1. Wet hands with warm (not hot) water
 2. Apply liquid or foam soap (1-2 full pumps)
 3. Vigorously lather all surfaces of hands for a **minimum of 15 seconds**
 4. Removal of bacteria requires a minimum of 15 seconds of mechanical action
 5. Pay particular attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs (most commonly missed areas)
 6. Dry hands thoroughly



Alcohol-based hand sanitizers:

- Can be used when hands are not visibly soiled
- Provides a rapid kill of most transient microorganisms. They are not recommended when risks of ringworm or parvovirus are significant
- Follow These Steps:
 1. Ensure hands are visibly clean (if soiled, follow hand washing steps)
 2. Apply 1 to 2 full pumps of product
 3. Spread product over all surfaces of hands, concentrating on fingertips, between fingers, back of hands, and base of thumbs (most commonly missed areas)
 4. Rub hands until product is dry, for a **minimum of 15 to 20 seconds**



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 dogs in your home, be sure to pick up feces immediately.

Contaminated home environments:

Different illnesses require different disinfection protocols. Some illnesses, such as ringworm, can contaminate your home environment for an extended period of time. Should your home end up contaminated, the foster department will provide you with additional information on how to properly disinfect your home.

Foster volunteer department manual acknowledgment

I have read and understand the *Ottawa Humane Society's Canine Foster Manual*. This information is intended to explain the procedures of the foster volunteer program and to provide health and safety guidelines so that volunteers have a positive experience, in a safe environment.

I understand that new volunteer or workplace policies may be created and that existing policies are subject to revision at any time.

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the *Ottawa Humane Society's Canine Foster Manual* in its entirety and am aware that I am responsible for following all volunteer policies regarding participating in the foster program.

Direct any questions about the *Ottawa Humane Society's Canine Foster Manual* to the CSR: Foster.

Print Name

Signature

Date