



HUMANE SOCIETY OF  
CHARLOTTE

# FOSTER MANUAL

FOSTER COORDINATOR

April Rogers

April 2020

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# Thinking about becoming a foster?

Ask yourself these important questions to see if you are a candidate!

## DO YOU HAVE TIME?

- Are you able to devote daily and weekly time to your foster animal?
- Are you able to bring foster animals to the shelter for vaccinations and wellness exams (often during the week)?
- Are you able to contact HSC and transport foster animals to our partner emergency care clinics quickly in the event of an emergency?

## EXPECTED TIME COMMITMENTS

Type of Foster	Duration of Foster	Daily Commitment
Sick/Injured Cats & Dogs	1 week - 2 months	2-3 hours
Weaned Puppies & Kittens	1 week - 3 weeks	3-6 hours
Mom with Puppies/Kittens	1 week - 6 weeks	3 hours
Adoption Ambassador	1 week - 4 weeks (can be longer)	2-3 hours

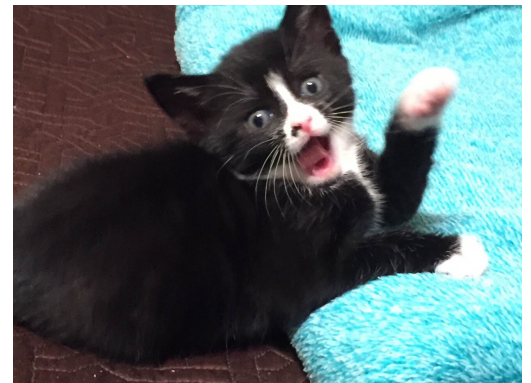


## DO YOU HAVE SPACE?

- Is everyone at home on board with fostering/Does your home allow fostering?
- Are you able to separate your foster animals from your resident pets for at least two weeks to protect them from illnesses and allow for a proper adjustment period?
- Are you able to handle cleaning procedures such as washing hands after every encounter and disinfecting your foster area routinely?
- Are you able to handle any potential damage to your home associated with animals?

## ARE YOU READY?

- Are you able to emotionally handle letting go of the foster animal, after becoming attached, once their foster period is over?
- Are you able to handle the potential of foster animals carrying illness that could affect your household animals/family?
- Are you prepared to handle illness or in worst case scenario, possible death of your foster animal?



## REASONS FOR FOSTERING

- Puppies/kittens that are too young to be adopted or do not have enough vaccinations
- Dogs/Cats that are in need of socialization, or help in building their confidence
- Injured dogs or cats waiting for surgery or recovering from surgery
- Dogs or cats with a current illness
- Animals that are under behavioral treatment best suited in a home environment
- A mother with nursing puppies or kittens
- Adoption Ambassadors-animals that can be adopted from the foster's home
- Any animal when the shelter needs (i.e. overcrowded, Emergency Response due to weather, puppy mills, hoarding cases, kennel maintenance, etc.!).)



## PREPARING YOUR HOME

Before bringing foster animal(s) home, make sure that you have a suitable place for them to stay. A bathroom, or a laundry/mud room often work well. The room should adhere to the following guidelines:

- A space where temperature can be controlled
- The space has been disinfected by using a mild bleach solution (1 part bleach to 32 parts water)
- Separate from resident pets
- Can withstand messes: water, food, vomit, urine, feces, etc.
- No breakable items or small items that can be ingested
- Electrical outlets and wires are blocked
- Secured windows and appliances

## TIPS & TRICKS

Use metal bowls as plastic bowls are porous and not easy to clean – they can also be chewed



## CATS & KITTENS

- Indoors only – please do not let your foster cat/kitten outdoors
- A large crate or separate room is best
- Keep in mind that kittens sleep 18-20 hours a day, but please note if your kitten is acting unusually lethargic
- Kittens that weigh under 2 pounds, or are picky eaters, will need to be weighed at the same time daily, to monitor weight gain/loss.



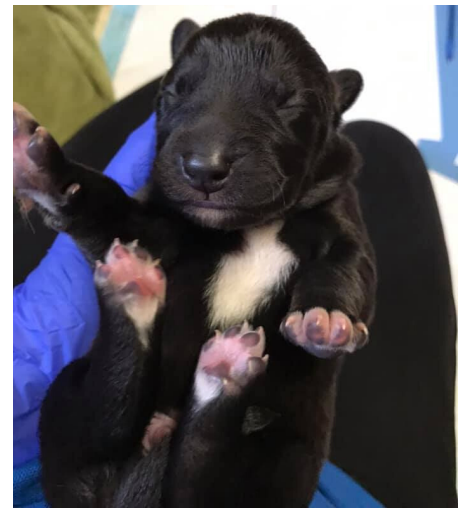
## DOGS

- Dogs should be kept indoors in a crate when unattended or a separate room/office
- Dogs should be on a leash at all times when outdoors unless in a private secure fenced in area. Recommended fence height is six feet.
- Foster dogs are not permitted to go to dog parks, dog bars.
- Dog parks can be extremely dangerous environments – conflicts may arise, not every dog is safe, and we do not know the health of other dogs there



## PUPPIES

- Indoors – crates and gates provided when available
- Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and should not be isolated
- Puppies should be kept in a crate (or an x-pen that they cannot escape from) at all times when not supervised
- Outdoors – only when supervised
- Puppies should not be exposed to other dogs, public spaces, or places frequented by other dogs, as they are not fully vaccinated. We want to decrease the chance they could acquire or pass disease.

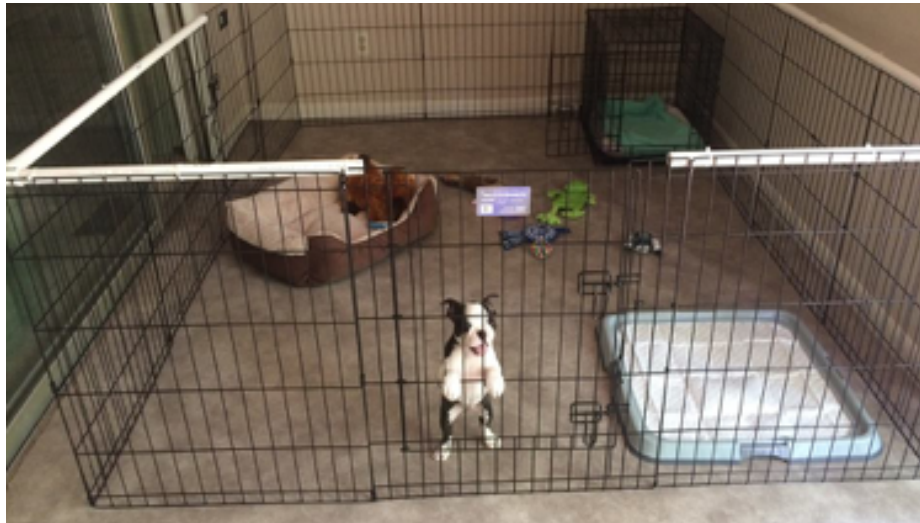
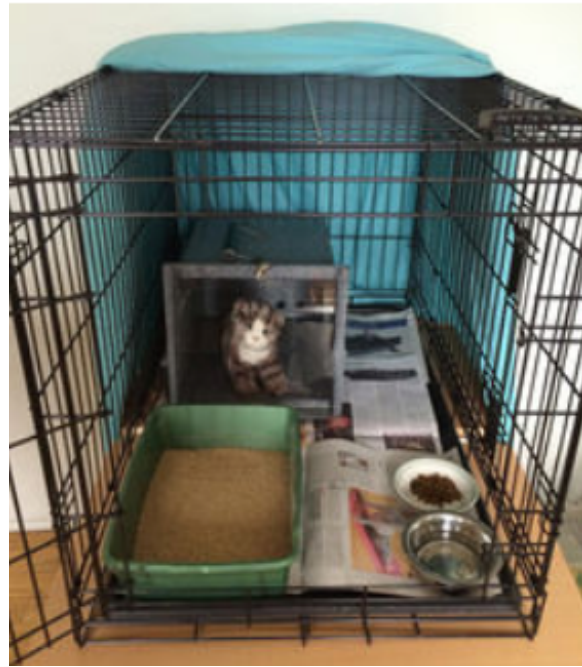


## TIPS & TRICKS

Bathe your foster with Dawn Dish Detergent Original Formula. Be sure to dry your puppy/kitten after their bath using a towel.

## EXAMPLES OF FOSTER AREAS

Food/Water bowls, bedding/carrier, toys (indestructible) are items that can be left in your foster area.



## FEEDING CONSIDERATIONS

Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding. Feed puppies and kittens until they are full but not bloated. The digestive systems of puppies and kittens are fragile. Do not offer them different treats, you can use kibble as a treat or training aid. Only feed them the food provided by HSC. If puppies or kittens are fighting over food, start to feed them separately. Never take food away from a puppy that is growling. Simply remove the other puppies and wait for the food bowl to be unattended.

## TIPS & TRICKS

Always supervise playtime

## TIPS & TRICKS

BE CAUTIOUS OF HOUSEHOLD PLANTS AS MANY ARE TOXIC TO PETS, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) LILIES, PALMS, SUCCULENTS AND FERNS

## MOUTHING

Puppies are born with instincts to bite. One of the most important things they learn as a puppy, is how to control the strength of their bite. When one puppy bites another too hard, the other puppy yelps loudly and stops playing. As a foster parent, you can play this role. Any time a puppy mouths with too much force, yelp loudly. If the puppy stops biting, then praise him/her. If the puppy continues biting, turn you back and walk away. Resume after 10 seconds or so.

Remember, mouthing is important! A puppy who is never allowed to mouth will grow up to have a hard bite. Never scold, tap on the nose, or yell no at a puppy who is biting. Bite inhibition is a crucial development for puppies. A puppy who is punished for biting can turn into an adult with unsafe jaws. Simply yell "ouch" when a puppy bites too hard. Never encourage your puppy or kitten to play with your hands or feet!

## HOUSETRAINING

We always want to set our puppies up for success, and doing so in the house training process is essential! Puppies should have frequent breaks and be taken outside to the same spot to relieve themselves every 30-60 minutes when active (when waking up from a nap, after drinking or eating, and after a play session). The general rule of thumb is that a puppy can hold his/her bladder one hour for each month of age (i.e.: 2 months = 2 hours).

Remember these 5 steps!

- Prevent accidents
- Reward going to the bathroom
- Anticipate bathroom needs
- Interrupt accidents and avoid punishing
- Clean up accidents with enzyme cleaner



## CRATE TRAINING

House training and crate training go hand in hand. A crate can be a great tool to use for your puppy, but it can also be misused. The crate should be big enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and stretch out. Your foster puppy/dog should have a short term confinement area, such as the crate, and a long term confinement area, such as an x-pen or baby gated section of the house or room.

If you are beginning to crate train, feed your puppy in the crate, provide only durable toys (like Kongs, that can be filled with kibble/peanut butter) in the crate, and/or play crate games to build a positive association with the crate. Keep sessions short and fun, and have your puppy in the crate for short periods of time when you are home.

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



## LITTER TRAINING

Kittens can be trained to use the litter box as young as 3 weeks of age! Luckily, for most caregivers, the litter box comes instinctively to most kittens. Depending on how small your foster kitten is, a cardboard tray or disposable baking pan works as a litter box.

Kittens are curious animals who explore the world just like human babies do: with their mouths! While it's obvious to us that a litter box is no place for a snack, kittens are still figuring out what it's all about and may do a taste test to see if the litter is worth munching on. To avoid any unfortunate circumstances, use a kitten-safe litter that won't harm the kitten if ingested. Clumping litters and highly fragrant litters should be avoided; a more suitable alternative is pine pellet litter, which HSC can provide.

When kittens are learning to use the box for the very first time, it can be helpful to place their waste into the box to signal to them that that's where it belongs. If the kitten poops out of the box, move the waste into the box where she/he can see it. Always make sure to clean the litter box when you notice it is dirty.



## TOYS

Having toys available for your puppy or kitten is vital for their mental health and development. A selection of toys is best such as plush squeak toys, rope toys, stuffed Kongs, jingle bell toys, wand toys, crinkle toys, tunnels and teething toys. Soft or damaged toys and rope toys or string toys that can be chewed up should not be left unsupervised with your foster puppy or kitten as they may chew off and ingest pieces.

## SOCIALIZATION

From 3 weeks to 3 months, puppies and kittens are biologically primed to learn that new sights, sounds, smells, objects, environments, and people are fun and safe. This is the most crucial and sensitive period in a puppy and kitten's life. Socialization is not simply exposing your foster to a variety of people, places and things, but using positive reinforcement should teach your foster that new things are wonderful experiences. Take things slow if your puppy or kitten seems fearful of the new person, place or thing. Things to think about when socializing your puppy:

- People - hats, men with beards, canes/walkers, bags/purses
- Behaviors - laughing, talking loudly, walking, jogging, running
- Items - vacuums, mops, brooms, bicycles, lawnmowers
- Surfaces – grass, concrete, stairs, carpet, tile, hardwood
- Grooming – feet being touched, ears being touched, tail being touched

## TIPS & TRICKS

PUPPIES AND KITTENS ARE CHEWERS! BE SURE TO REMOVE ALL ELECTRICAL CORDS AND SMALL OBJECTS.



## POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

As a foster parents, there will be many situations for you to train your animals. The Humane Society of Charlotte only promotes training using positive reinforcement. Decades of research and scientific study concludes that positive reinforcement training is the most humane and effective method of training.

### TIPS & TRICKS

TAKE PHOTOS! –  
GET ON THEIR  
LEVEL AND USE THE  
RIGHT  
LIGHTING/SETTING

Do not scold or punish bad behavior. When an unwanted behavior is offered/performed, re-direct the puppy with a kissy noise or toy. Praise and reward the puppy for stopping the undesired behavior and giving you attention. Punishment can instill fear, which can lead to aggressive behavior. When a behavior is immediately followed by a positive outcome, that behavior is strengthened.



# MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

## DIARRHEA

There are three types of stool: normal, soft and diarrhea. Normal stool is firm and has a definite shape. Soft stool is not firm, but still has some shape.

Diarrhea is liquid, with or without color to it. Diarrhea is common and can be caused by various factors – parasites, viruses, bacteria, food changes, stress, overfeeding and other issues.

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

## INTERNAL PARASITES

Fosters are dewormed upon intake and every 2 weeks after. Parasites are commonly found in the stool of puppies and kittens. Tapeworms may look like grains of rice. Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be seen in the stool or in vomit. If you notice worms, please schedule a recheck.

### Common types of internal parasites in dogs and cats



## VOMITING

Vomiting is not serious unless it happens continuously or accompanied with diarrhea. It can lead to dehydration. If vomiting occurs 2-3 times in a row, please schedule a recheck.



## EYE DISCHARGE

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

## EAR MITES

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



## FLEAS

Animals that have fleas will scratch themselves often. All fosters are given flea treatment and fosters over 2 pounds will be given flea prevention. If you still notice signs of fleas, you can wash your foster in a small amount of Dawn dish soap followed by using a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. Be sure to thoroughly dry your foster following a bath. Baths should not be given more than once every 1-2 weeks as this dries out the skin. If you still notice signs of fleas, please schedule a recheck.



## RINGWORM

Ringworm is a contagious fungus that can spread to other animals and humans. A sign of ringworm is thinning hair or patches of hair loss. Ringworm is difficult to remove from your house. To help with prevention and spreading of ringworm, please maintain proper cleaning protocols and a good hand washing routine. Please schedule a recheck in you notice any hairloss.

## MANGE

Mange is caused by parasites that infect the skin of animals. Some forms of mange are contagious to other animals and humans. Symptoms include itching, hair loss and sores. If you notice these symptoms, please schedule a recheck.



## UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION (URI)

URI's are common and are caused by contagious viruses and bacteria. Signs to look for

- Sneezing and discharge from eyes/nose
- Coughing/hacking in dogs/puppies
- Congested breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy/enthusiasm)
- Dehydration
- Oral ulcers (in cats/kittens)

If you notice any of these symptoms, please schedule a recheck.

If we have seen your foster animal and prescribed medications, sometimes steam therapy can help! If you have a humidifier, you can run this several times a day to help moisten the nasal passages and keep any mucus/phlegm moving. If you do not have a humidifier, a hot shower works the same! Just place your foster animals in the bathroom (in a carrier if you have to) while you run hot water to steam up the room.



## HYPOGLYCEMIA

Hypoglycemia or low blood sugar is a common problem in small breed puppies and young kittens. Clinical signs of hypoglycemia include weakness, lethargy, poor appetite, altered mentation, twitching, tremoring, seizures and coma. If left untreated, hypoglycemia will be fatal. If a foster suspects hypoglycemia, they can help to increase blood sugar by rubbing a small amount of Karo syrup on the gums. Care must be taken not to administer too much or to get it in the back of the throat, causing aspiration or obstruction of the air way. Please alert HSC immediately if the Karo syrup does not seem to improve your foster kitten or puppy's symptoms.

## PARVOVIRUS (CANINE)

Parvo is a deadly and highly contagious virus that attacks a dog's gastrointestinal tract. Once parvo is present in an environment, it is extremely difficult to remove. It is transmitted through direct and indirect contact with contaminated feces.

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

If you notice any of these symptoms, please schedule a recheck immediately



## DISTEMPER (CANINE)

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

- Signs to look for
  - Severe URI or Pneumonia
  - Lethargy
  - Neurological signs such as seizure activity, convulsions, and partial or complete paralysis

If you notice any of these symptoms, please schedule a recheck immediately



## PANLEUKOPENIA

*Commonly referred to as feline distemper or parvovirus in cats*

Panleukopenia is a deadly and highly infectious virus spread easily via contact with feces, urine, saliva, and microscopic molecules that contaminate any objects that come into contact with the infected animal. Once panleukopenia is present in the environment, it is very hard to get rid of.

- Signs to look for
  - Nausea
  - Liquid diarrhea
  - Dehydration
  - Lethargy
  - High fever
  - Anorexia
  - Sudden death

If you notice any of these symptoms, please schedule a recheck immediately



## FIV/FELV/FIP (FELINE)

Many of these health concerns can be spread through direct contact (from one animal to another), but also many be spread through contact with contaminated objects in the environment, such as shared bedding, dishes, or even unwashed human hands or clothing. Some are also aerosol and can spread through the air. Understanding how each virus is spread will help you proactively avert illness through establishing food prevention measures so that other animals aren't at risk.

### FIV: FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS

FIV – Feline Immunodeficiency virus is a slow-acting infection that weakens the immune system of a cat, making him/her more susceptible to illness. Kittens under 6 months of age are not tested for FIV, as false positives are a common occurrence. The virus is contracted primarily through deep bite wounds and, in rare cases, can be transmitted from mom during the birthing process.

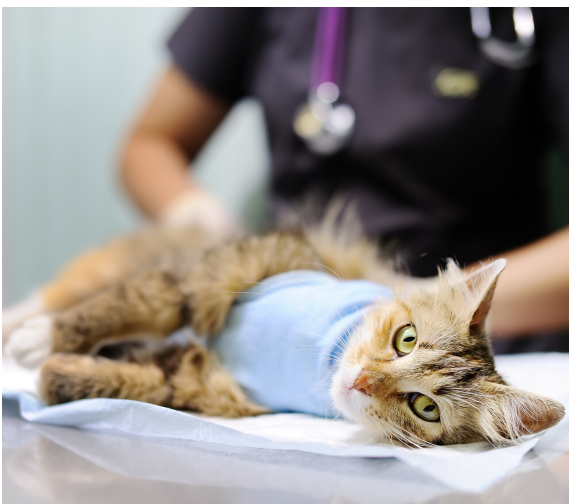


## FELV: FELINE LEUKEMIA VIRUS

FeLV – Feline leukemia virus is a serious retrovirus that can infect cats and kittens. The virus attacks the body's natural defense system and bone marrow, making them more prone to other diseases including anemia, bacterial infections, viruses, and even cancer. Unfortunately, FeLV is typically considered a terminal illness, especially in kittens, whose bodies are less able to fight off the disease. FeLV can be transmitted via saliva, nasal secretions, blood, urine, feces, or even breast milk. Kittens are not always tested for FeLV prior to being placed in a foster home, so should be kept separately from household cats.

## FIP: FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS

FIP – Feline infectious peritonitis is a fatal viral disease caused by a mutation of certain strains of the feline coronavirus. While coronavirus is prevalent in multi-cat households, not all cats infected with the coronavirus will develop FIP. In most cases, the cat will never have symptoms. However, a small portion of immunocompromised cats – typically young kittens – may eventually develop FIP over time. Symptoms can vary, including a slow decline in weight, appetite, and energy, or even neurological symptoms. Many kittens present with a chronic low-grade fever and unkempt coat. While other symptoms can be more rapid, including weight loss, lethargy and difficulty breathing due to an accumulation of fluid in the abdomen or chest. At this time, there is devastatingly no cure for FIP; it is progressive and is inevitably fatal. For this reason, caregivers often make the decision to humanely euthanize kittens before their suffering becomes too much.



## VETERINARY CARE

Routine veterinary care is provided by The Humane Society of Charlotte during foster appointment hours. After hours, the foster coordinator will take calls when emergencies arise. In the event of an emergency, the foster coordinator will contact the shelter veterinarian as to how to manage each particular case and, should afterhours treatment be needed, the foster coordinator will instruct the foster parents on the appropriate steps to take.

The Humane Society of Charlotte will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by The Humane Society of Charlotte veterinary staff.

# SCHEDULING RECHECKS

## APPOINTMENTS

All foster animal rechecks require an appointment to receive veterinary care and in order to return to the shelter to be made available for adoption.

**Due to recent COVID-19 developments, we are currently scheduling all foster appointments:**

- Monday-Saturday between 1pm-4pm

**WE WILL ONLY SCHEDULE ONE APPOINTMENT PER HOUR TO HELP MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING DURING THIS TIME. IF YOU ARE FEELING SICK, PLEASE RESCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT. THIS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

Once we retain our regularly schedule appointments, they will be as follows:

Vaccination/Medical Exam/Return appointment times:

- Tuesday-Friday from 3pm-4pm
- Saturday 10am-4pm
- Sundays and Mondays are for emergencies only at this time

If for any reason you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, please contact HSC to reschedule.



## VACCINES

Kittens and puppies receive vaccinations every two weeks from the time they are 4 weeks of age until they are 16 weeks or unless otherwise directed by our shelter veterinary team. Animals between 12 and 16 weeks of age will receive a **Rabies vaccination** as required by Mecklenburg County law.

Cats and kittens receive **FVRCP vaccine** (feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia).

Dogs and puppies receive the **DAPP vaccine** (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza).

Dogs and puppies will also receive the **Bordetella vaccine** (kennel cough)-this is a one time vaccine.





## READY FOR ADOPTION!

Once puppies and kittens reach the appropriate age, weight, vaccination status, and health status, they can be ready for adoption!

All foster animals that are not already spayed/neutered do have to return to HSC for their surgeries before they can be placed into a forever home.

If your foster animal is already altered and you have a potential adopter lined up, please let HSC know as they may not have to return to the shelter before going home with their new families.

If you are interested in adopting your foster, please let us know! Foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster pet.

*Adoption fees will apply.*



# HEALTH CHEAT SHEET

Non-Emergencies	Emergencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor First</li> <li>• Please schedule a recheck appointment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require Immediate Veterinary Attention</li> <li>• Call HSC during business hours</li> <li>• After Hours: 704-574-3142</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runny discharge from the eyes or nose</li> <li>• Lack of appetite</li> <li>• Lethargy (lack of energy)</li> <li>• Diarrhea lasting more than 3 or 4 feeding or more than 2 or 3 bowel movements within the same day</li> <li>• Vomiting</li> <li>• Weight loss</li> <li>• Coughing and sneezing</li> <li>• Lack of bowel movements for more than 36 hours or straining to urinate/defecate</li> <li>• Swollen eyes or eyes held close</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous diarrhea longer than 24-36 hours</li> <li>• Continuous vomiting longer than 12 hours</li> <li>• Loss of appetite or refusal to eat for 24 hours</li> <li>• Bleeding of any kind (from nose or in urine/stool)</li> <li>• Any trauma (hit by car, dropped, limping, unconscious, etc.)</li> <li>• Difficulty breathing</li> <li>• Foster that is non responsive</li> <li>• Lethargy with or without fever</li> </ul>

If you have questions or concerns about the health of your foster animal or if an emergency situation should arise **during regular hours of operation, please call 704-377-0534, ext. 226, 227, 228.**

Our regular hours are Sunday-Saturday from 11am-5pm.

If your foster animal has an emergency that **occurs outside of the normal hours of operation, please call the emergency after-hours phone number at 704-574-3142.**

The Foster Coordinator will contact the shelter veterinarian of the VP of Operations for a treatment plan. Should after-hours treatment be needed, the Foster Coordinator will instruct the foster family on the appropriate steps to take. **The Humane Society of Charlotte must approve any and all treatments for foster pets.**

- If HSC has not approved any or all treatments to foster pets, the foster parents will be responsible for ALL costs.
- If the foster parents takes a foster pet to any other veterinary or emergency clinic than the one designated by HSC, the foster parent will be responsible for ALL costs.
- HSC has a policy that we will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by HSC veterinary staff.
- The HSC does not reimburse for veterinary medical bills incurred for resident pets should they become ill/injured during the foster's stay.

# FOSTERING NURSING MOMS

## BRINGING MOM HOME

You will need a separate space for a mom with her litter. When you first bring them home, leave them alone in their new space. The separate area may be referred to as a whelping box or nesting area (we use the bottom halves of airline carriers or even kiddie pools to keep the babies in one place). Mom will need some time, up to a few days, to adjust to her new space. Be sure to offer mom fresh food, water and a clean nesting area.



## SOCIALIZATION

Even adult dogs and cats need socialization; however, proceed slowly with any adult animal that you do not know. Create situations for socialization but let her come to you. Stop the session if you notice any negative signs such as swishing tail, ears laid back, head jerk towards you, tensing up, moving away, or growling/hissing. It is always best to move slowly and use caution when reaching into the nesting area.



For the first few weeks, mom will do everything necessary to take care of her babies. Puppies and kittens start nursing very soon after birth. Mom will also groom her babies. It is best to leave the mom alone for the first two weeks except to feed, clean, get daily weight checks on the babies, and for dogs – to go out for potty breaks.

## POTENTIAL ISSUES WITH MOM

Maternal neglect – in some case, about 8% of the time, puppies and kittens die from poor maternal care. There are a few causes of this. Some dogs/cats lack maternal instincts and, in other cases, it is nature's way of handling sick or weak babies. Environmental stress is an important factor, which is why it is important to create a calm environment for mom and the litter. Foster parents should watch for signs of maternal neglect such as avoiding feeding and grooming the puppies/kittens and ignoring their cries. Please alert HSC in the event this happens.

Maternal aggression – as mom protects her babies, it is common for her to be aggressive towards humans or other animals. Do not try to introduce your household pets to your foster mom as this adds too much stress to the environment. If aggression becomes severe, please contact HSC right away.

## POTENTIAL ISSUES WITH MOM CONT.

In the first two weeks of life, puppies and kittens are helpless and vulnerable. They are still developing basic reflexes, their hearing and vision is not fully developed, and they are unable to properly control their body temperatures. During the first 1-3 weeks of life, puppies and kittens do not urinate or defecate on their own and require stimulation from mom to eliminate.

Weaning can start occurring at 4 to 5 weeks of age. Mom will usually start discourage them from nursing; however, some moms will allow the nursing until the puppies/kittens are old enough for adoption. Some nursing activity is the animal equivalent of thumb-sucking, that is, for comfort only. You can also encourage weaning by place them in a separate area for a few hours at a time to reduce their dependency on mother's milk and her overall presence. Put them in their own special area with a litter box and food and water bowls. As the kittens become more independent, they can spend more time away from their mother until they are completely weaned. Even if the puppies/kittens appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all of the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure they are eating food and gaining weight. You may start with wet food and gradually add in kibble

It is important to make sure your nursing mom is getting plenty of food as their bodies need the higher fat and protein content! If mom will let you, keep an eye on her belly to ensure she's having a comfortable lactation experience. If you notice that she has any swelling, redness, or pain from nursing, please schedule a medical exam with HSC right away!



# BOTTLE & SYRINGE FEEDING

## LEARNING TO FEED

If a kitten or puppy is orphaned or unable to get enough nutrition through nursing, you'll need to bottle-feed. Bottle-feeding is an acquired skill and it's totally normal to feel a little awkward the first time you do it.

First, assess the kitten. Make sure the kitten is not hypothermic and do not feed until she/he is warm to the touch and moving freely. HSC may have 'snuggle-safe' heating discs for you to borrow, but a rice sock (uncooked rice in a sock, microwaved) can work as well. If a kitten is not able to swallow (too lethargic to lift head or has some sort of deformity), it is not safe to try to feed him/her.

Second, make sure you have an appropriate kitten or puppy bottle and species-specific formula. Never feed a puppy or kitten cow's milk, other dairy products, alternatives, or human baby formula. Once it's opened, keep the formula refrigerated and follow the labeling for storage, use and expiration. Third, make fresh formula every one to two feedings as old formula can spoil or develop unhealthy bacterial content. Make sure clumps are eliminated and formula is a comfortable temperature.

The kitten or puppy should always lay in a natural, belly-down position, never on his/her back as this can cause aspiration! The goal is to have your puppy or kitten roll their tongue into a 'U' shape and begin to swallow. This is called latching. In general, when your foster is done eating, they will unlatch and turn their head away.

Syringes can be used in the absence of a bottle. Syringes make it easier to measure in small increments, so you can feel confident that your foster has eaten a full meal. However, it does come with some risks, so make sure that you are not aspirating your foster animal.



## WEANING & TRANSITIONAL KITTENS

Serve kitten milk replacer in a shallow bowl. Do not use cow's milk, as this will cause stomach upset and diarrhea in some kittens. Dip your fingertip (or the syringe or bottle the kitten is used to nursing from) into the liquid, let the kitten lick it, then guide him by moving your finger down into the bowl. Please do not push his nose into the bowl. He may inhale the liquid and develop pneumonia or other lung problems. Once he becomes accustomed to lapping liquids, create a gruel as described below.

Though you should continue to bottle-feed while the kitten is learning to eat from the bowl, you can help with the gradual transition by always offering the bowl first, and then the bottle.

Make a gruel by mixing a high-quality dry or canned kitten food with kitten milk replacer until it is the consistency of oatmeal. As the kitten gets accustomed to eating, gradually decrease the amount of milk replacer you add, while slowly increasing the amount of kitten food. By five to six weeks, he should be eating only lightly moistened food. Now you can start to leave out small amounts of dry food and fresh water at all times. By eight to 10 weeks, kittens should be accustomed to eating unmoistened kitten food.



# ADOPTION AMBASSADORS

Our Adoption Ambassadors provide a safe, temporary space to adoptable animals, which frees up room at the shelter, creating a happier and healthier environment for the animals while they wait to find permanent homes.

Adoption Ambassadors help animals find a new home by fostering, taking animals out into the community and promoting them on social media and through networking.

Time commitments for Adoption Ambassador's vary. We ask that you take an animal for at least 1 week and no more than 4 weeks unless otherwise approved by HSC.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Feed, socialize, groom, train and provide medication if needed
- Take to events and approved locations to find a new owner
- Interview prospective owners and facilitate the adoption
- Provide positive reinforcement techniques and positive human interaction – petting, brushing, love
- Observe animal's health, behavior and attend to his/her needs and report on animal's condition to HSC

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Able to provide a safe, loving and stable environment as well as care to your foster animal
- Willing to nurse injuries/illnesses – have common sense and patience
- Able to transport the animal to and from the shelter, events and approved locations
- Self-motivated and able to make appropriate judgment calls
- Willing to maintain communication with HSC and ask questions with needed
- Possess good communication skills with prospective owner to facilitate adoptions and to be honest about the animal's behavior and needs



## DO'S

- Promote your foster animal on your personal social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Nextdoor, SnapChat, etc.), be sure to tag us @humanecharlotte #humanecharlotte
- Post an adoption flyer at your workplace, local businesses, or your place of residence if allowed
- Make sure to walk your dog with 'Adopt Me' gear on
- Take lots of photos to share or even start a blog
- Participate in any shelter events or predetermined visits to the shelter
- Once you get to know your foster, send us updated information about their personalities!
- Take your foster out on a hike, or a walk around the neighborhood, or to a local store/restaurant that is pet friendly



## DON'TS

- NO OFF LEASH ACTIVITIES – this includes, but is not limited to dog parks and dog bars. Your foster should remain on leash at all times when outside of the home or in a private and securely fenced yard
- Please do not let any potential adopter leave with your foster animal unless all adoption paperwork and payment is completed

## TIPS FOR WRITING A GREAT BIO ABOUT YOUR FOSTER:

Accentuate the positive and let potential adopters know why they should consider your foster. Try to pull the reader into the bio so they can start to imagine a life with this new friend. Tell potential adopters what you know about your foster. People like to know the basics too, like are they housebroke, crate-trained, been around other animals or kids and how they did, or even if they know any behaviors (sit, shake, stay, etc.). People also like the cute specific things like 'Fluffy loves to play fetch with crinkle balls' or 'Bingo likes to sleep with a blanket covering him.' Not good at writing? That's OK! Send us any information that you learn about your foster and we can





# APPENDIX

## FEEDING GUIDES

Remember! Recommend feeding amounts are for the whole day. This amount should be split into 2-3 meals throughout the day.

### FEEDING GUIDE FOR PUPPY

Weight of Dog - lbs (kgs)	Amount per day - cups (gram) - growth less than 4 MONTHS (pregnancy weeks 7 - 9)	Amount per day - cups (gram) - Growth 4 to 9 months (pregnancy weeks 5 - 6)	Amount per day - cups (gram) - Growth 10 to 12 months (pregnancy weeks 1 - 4)
2 (0,9)	1/2 (50)	3/8 (35)	1/3 (35)
5 (2,3)	1 (100)	7/8 (85)	2/3 (65)
8 (3,6)	1 1/2 (150)	1 1/4 (125)	1 (100)
10 (4,5)	1 3/4 (175)	1 1/2 (150)	1 1/8 (110)
20 (9,1)	3 (300)	2 1/2 (250)	2 (200)
40 (18)	5 (495)	4 (395)	3 1/4 (320)
60 (27)	6 2/3 (660)	5 1/2 (545)	4 1/2 (445)
80 (36)	8 1/4 (820)	7 (695)	5 1/2 (545)
100 (45)	9 3/4 (965)	8 1/4 (820)	6 1/2 (645)
120 (54)	11 1/4 (1115)	9 1/3 (925)	7 1/2 (745)

### FEEDING GUIDE FOR ADULT DOG

Weight of Dog - lbs (kgs)	Amount per Day - cups (grams)
5 (2,3)	5/8 (60)
10 (4,5)	1 (100)
20 (9,1)	1 2/3 (165)
30 (14)	2 1/4 (225)
40 (18)	2 2/3 (265)
50 (23)	3 1/4 (320)
60 (27)	3 2/3 (365)
80 (36)	4 1/2 (445)
100 (45)	5 1/3 (530)
120 (54)	6 1/4 (620)

# APPENDIX

## FEEDING GUIDE FOR KITTEN & ADULT CAT

Weight of Cat - lbs (kgs)	Amount per day - cups (grams) - growth less than 4 MONTHS	Amount per day - cups (grams) - growth 4 to 6 MONTHS	Amount per day - cups (grams) - Growth 7 to 12 months and pregnancy
1 (0,5)	1/4 (35)		
2 (0,9)	1/3 (45)		
3 (1,4)	1/2 (70)	3/8 (50)	
4 (1,8)	5/8 (85)	1/2 (70)	
6 (2,7)	3/4 (100)	2/3 (90)	1/2 (70)
8 (3,6)		7/8 (120)	2/3 (90)
10 (4,5)		1 (135)	3/4 (100)
12 (5,4)			7/8 (120)
14 (6,4)			1 (135)
16 (7,3)			1 1/8 (155)

## EXAMPLES OF HAIR LOSS

### Mange



### Ringworm

