

LHS Foster Situations and Descriptions

There are many different foster opportunities available! Below are some descriptions of our most common needs, though there may be more and different opportunities at any given time. Foster lengths will vary with each animal, and the ones listed below are just a general guideline. However, we are *always* glad to take an animal back at any time if it is not working out. For all fosters, we are happy to provide all necessary medical care and any supplies.

Common Cat Foster Needs:

Mother Cat with Nursing Young

Sometimes we will have nursing moms dropped off at the shelter with their kittens either as strays or surrenders, or a cat will give birth while already here. Mom will need to be kept with her kittens until they are weaned around 4- 6 weeks of age, and the kittens will need to remain in foster until they are ready for surgery and adoption (around 8-9 weeks of age). Required cared: up to 9-10 weeks in the foster home.

Bottle Baby Kittens

Occasionally, we may get newborn kittens in to the shelter that do not have a mother and will need to be bottle fed until they are able to eat on their own. These little guys generally require around the clock care, including overnight feedings, until they are at least 2-3 weeks old. They will not be very mobile or able to eliminate on their own until they're at least 3 weeks old and will need to be kept warm at all times. They can live in a carrier for the first couple of weeks. Required care: up to 9 weeks or so in the foster home.

Slurry Baby Kittens

These little guys are just past the bottle feeding stage and have just started eating on their own around 3-5 weeks of age. The slurry refers to a mixture of canned kitten food and kitten formula as they may not be able to eat the dry food on their own and will just be learning to drink water on their own as well. They will sometimes need some assistance via syringe or supplemental bottle feeding until they really get the hang of it, and will require at least 4-5 daily feedings until they are eating more consistently on their own. They should be starting to use the litter box on their own, but may need some help with that at first as well. Required care: usually require 4-6 weeks in the foster home.

Weaned Underage Kittens

These kittens will be about 5-8 weeks of age and should be fully weaned and eating completely on their own and generally be pretty good with the litter box. They will usually be independent and playful and will only require 2 wet food feedings in addition to their dry food. Required care: usually about 2-3 weeks depending on their age.

Under-Socialized Cats/Kittens

These kitties can vary in age and need some work learning how to fully trust people so they can become adoptable. Some will have come from feral cat colonies or hoarding situations and may never have known people before, and others just may be very shy. They will require a lot of patience and work with safe handling techniques to properly socialize them. Required care: It will vary depending on how easily they're able to be socialized.

Sick, Injured, Surgery Recovery, Break from Shelter, and Hospice Cats

These are many various scenarios that we may have a need for. These guys can vary in age, temperament, and need level. Most just need some TLC until they can come back for adoption, or a comfortable place to live out their days due a terminal illness. We will give complete instructions for their care both in the home and any necessary follow-up back at the shelter. Required care: It will vary depending on the reason for foster.

Common Dog Foster Needs:

Mother Dog with Nursing Puppies

Sometimes we will transfer in nursing moms with their puppies from out of state, or a dog will give birth while already here. Mom will need to be kept with her puppies until they are weaned around 4-6 weeks of age, and the puppies will need to remain in foster until they are ready for surgery and adoption (around 8-9 weeks of age). Required care: anywhere between 9-10 weeks in the foster home.

Weaned Underage Puppies

We will occasionally have a single puppy or a litter come into us as a stray, or surrendered by their owners. Also, puppies are frequently transferred from out of state to give them a new chance at life here! They are usually between 5 and 8 weeks of age and should be eating well on their own they're also very playful! They will need work with general manners, leash walking, and house-training, but should be a very fun foster to have! Required care: usually about 2-3 weeks in foster depending on their age.

In-Home Dog Training

Often times, we will have dogs who need a little extra support and time to work on certain behaviors. These most often include wariness of strangers, crate training, and separation anxiety; but every situation is different. Our Training and Behavior Team will be there to support you throughout the foster and will be happy help you with any issues that arise. Required care: It will vary depending on the individual needs of the animal.

Sick, Injured, Surgery Recovery, Break from Shelter, and Hospice Dogs

These are many various scenarios that we may have a need for. These dogs will vary in age, temperament, and need level. Most just need some TLC until they can come back for adoption, or a comfortable place to live out their days due a terminal illness. We will give complete instructions for their care both in the home and any necessary follow up back at the shelter. Required care: It will vary depending on the reason for foster.

Small Mammals and Other Animals:

Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, and Rats

We have a variety of small mammals here at the shelter and it is always possible that some may need to spend some time in a foster home. In most cases, they don't have any particularly special needs, but every foster is unique. Most often we have animals that are too young and need some time to grow, a specific medical issue, or just to get a break from the shelter and free up some space when we are overcrowded. Required care: the average is between 2 and 4 weeks.

Birds

The rarest of our foster scenarios, birds will sometimes require foster care. They may have a medical issue, or we may need to free up some space in our aviary. The foster period will be rather variable depending on the needs of the individual animal.

Other Animals

While we are generally unable to care for or adopt out reptiles, ferrets, and pigs; if we are unable to transfer them to an appropriate shelter environment, we may solicit foster until we are able to find them a more permanent home. These will be extremely rare, but are certainly a possibility! As with all listed above, the foster period will be variable.