

## What is a pet foster parent?

By being a pet foster parent, you provide a temporary home for a cat or kitten, prior to adoption. Fostering is a wonderful and personal way to contribute to saving homeless felines.

## Why do animals need foster care?

- Foster care helps save lives when a shelter is full.
- Some animals don't do well in a shelter environment because they are frightened or need a little extra care.
- Some kittens need to be nursed or bottle-fed.
- Some animals need time to recover from an illness or injury before adoption.

Whatever the reason, these felines need some extra love and care before they can be adopted. Providing foster care for a few days, weeks, or months can be a lifesaving gift.

## Would I be a good pet foster parent?

If you want to do something to help, fostering can be flexible, fun and rewarding. Here's why:

- It's more flexible than volunteer jobs that require you to show up at a specific time for a certain number of hours.
- It's a great way to enjoy a cat if you are not in a position to make that lifetime commitment right now.
- Would you like to add a cat to your household, but you're not sure? Fostering can be a great way to find out.

Taking cats into your home, loving them, then letting them go requires a special kind of person. Your role as a foster parent is to prepare the animal for adoption into a loving home.

## How much time will fostering take?

The specific needs of the animal will determine how much time is involved. Newborn orphaned kittens, for instance, must be fed every few hours. A frightened animal who needs socialization or training will also require some extra time. We will discuss your availability to determine what kinds of cats you'll be best suited to foster.

## What skills are needed to be an animal foster parent?

It's best to have some knowledge about companion animal behavior and health. BCCC will also provide training. Some of the animals most in need of foster care are those that require a little extra help or some training. Shy cats need time to learn to trust and the quiet of a home environment. By getting to know the cat(s), you'll help learn more about their personality prior to adoption.

## What else is required?

BCCC requires a home visit. You also need a separate room to foster. If you have pets of your own, they must be up to date on their medical care such as vaccinations (also, combination test (for cats)).

## What about food and medical care for the animal?

**BCCC provides** all necessary food, litter, vet care and medication. Vet appointments will be made through our Foster Care Coordinator at one of our specific veterinary clinic for treatment of your foster animal.

## What about my own pets?

Consider how the animals in your household will adjust to having a foster pet. Some animals do very well with a temporary friend and can help socialize the foster animal. Other pets have a harder time with new animals being added to or leaving the family. You're the best judge of your pet's personality.

For the safety of your pets and the foster animal, it's important to keep your pets up-to-date on vaccinations. In many cases, the foster pet will need to be isolated from your own pets, either temporarily or throughout the foster period. We will discuss to determine what's best in each situation.

## Will I have to find a home for the foster animal myself?

BCCC takes full responsibility for finding a new home, though you can help by telling friends, family and co-workers about your foster pet. WE will occasionally hold Meet & Greets at local locations.

## What about when it's time to let them get adopted ?

Giving up an animal you've fostered, even to a wonderful new home, can be difficult emotionally. Some people like to be there when the pet goes home with the new family. Seeing your foster animal ride off into the sunset will help you remember that s/he has found a lovely new home. A lot of foster families get photos and updates of their old charges enjoying their new homes. Knowing you were part of saving a life and helping the animal find a loving home is tremendously rewarding. Sometimes a foster home turns into a permanent home. That's why we're always on the lookout for new foster homes!

## But is it fair to the animals being fostered ?

Some people are reluctant to foster animals because they are concerned that it is unfair to take in a cat, establish a bond and then allow the animal to be adopted out into another home. Isn't that a second abandonment?  
Not at all ! Being in a foster home can be a lifesaving bridge for a stray or frightened pet. It gives the cat a chance to get used to life in a house and opportunity to learn that people can be kind, food is available and there is a warm, secure place to sleep. Foster care can help prepare a cat for a new life in a permanent home. There's no shortage of animals who need this preparation time before finding their own people.

## How do I give pet fostering a try ?

When you are ready, start by filling out our on-line foster application (SHAUN : PLEASE ADD FOSTER APP LINK HERE) so we can discuss. BCCC provides training , as needed. Foster parents can make an enormous difference in the number of animals euthanized each year because shelters don't have space for them. It is important, valuable work, and, best of all, it saves lives.

## I can't provide animal foster care, but are there other ways I can help?

Absolutely ! Volunteer at one or some of our events, transport cats to and from the vet or other useful volunteer tasks. Promote them through social and local media. Support our foster care program by raising funds for medical care, food and supplies.