**Foster Program FAQ’s**

***How do I become a foster parent?***You will need to fill out Your Organization’s online volunteer application.  Our volunteer coordinator will set you up for general volunteer orientation as well as a specific training for the foster program.

***What is required of me as a foster parent?***Providing a safe, ‘kitten-proofed’ room in your home that contains the kittens’ necessities; food, water, bedding, litter box, toys, etc.  You are responsible for ensuring that your kitten receives any scheduled medical treatments on time, is healthy, and well socialized.

***I found a litter of kittens.  Can I foster them through your program?***

Yes, with approval and appointment. We will try to work with you on setting an appointment if you are the foster parent. If you cannot foster this litter it may take us some time to find a foster home. We will do our best to work with you.

***What are the requirements for a foster room?***
The foster room needs to be a designated place for your foster kittens to spend the bulk of their time.  Your Organization recommends a spare bedroom, den, office, or a large bathroom.  This room will need to be ‘kitten-proofed’ and have plenty of space for a litter box, food and water dishes, as well as sleep and play areas.

***What supplies do I need to provide myself?***Your Organization will provide you with a baby bag full of basic medical supplies as well as provide all vaccines and medication necessary for your kittens. We will also provide you with a high quality dry and wet kitten food diet. Pellet litter is also available if needed. Foster parents generally supply litter box, food dishes, toys and scratching implement, bedding, and other small incidentals. However, if you need help with some of these supplies, we will do our best to help you.

***How do I get a group of foster kittens?***After you have completed foster training you will receive an email invitation to the Your Organization’s Google group.  As foster kittens become available the foster coordinator will post a plea for a foster home to the Google group.  Whoever responds first, and is the best match for the foster kittens, will get the group.  The foster coordinator will then send further information with specifics on arrival and pick up information.

***How much do I need to supervise my foster group?***You need to do welfare checks on your foster group three times a day.  This is to make sure everyone is healthy, eating, and using the litter box.  You need to spend about 1-2 hours per day interacting with your foster group so that they become well socialized.

***Can my foster kittens and mom cat interact with my resident pets?***Foster groups in which the kittens have been vaccinated need to be kept separate from resident animals for two weeks. Kittens who have not been vaccinated may not meet any resident pets until 5 days after their first vaccines. If your foster kittens or resident animals are sick they may not interact.  If your kittens were too small to be tested for FIV/FeLV they should not interact with your resident cat. All interactions must be directly supervised.

***Can my children interact with the foster kittens?***We encourage your children to have supervised interaction with foster kittens.  Children should not be permitted to handle newborn kittens.  Caution and direct supervision is a must!

***Do we bottle feed kittens?***Your Organization does not intentionally take in young kittens that will need to be bottle fed.  However, occasionally a situation arises where kittens need to be bottle fed.  If this is the case we will train our foster parents to bottle feed, or place the kittens with a foster parent who is experienced at bottle feeding kittens.

***How will people know that I have kittens?***Your Organization keeps a foster kitten list that is available to the public through a link on our website.  When kittens turn 6 weeks old foster parent contact information will appear on the kitten list and the public will be able to contact foster families.  At this age foster kittens’ information will be automatically pulled from our shelter software and posted on Petfinder.com.  This is another way the public will be able to find kittens available for adoption.

***Do I have to have people come to my home?***
Having prospective adopters to your home is encouraged as it helps to see the kittens in a relaxed home environment. However, it is not required.

***If people come to my home and want to adopt a kitten what do they do next?***If you are a trained adoption counselor, and have the necessary paperwork, you are welcome to complete the adoption at your home.  If you are not an adoption counselor you will need to send your adopters to the Your Organization’s shelter in (Your Location) to complete the adoption with a trained adoption counselor. If you live close to one of our offsite adoption centers you can also send your adopters to one of those locations on the weekend. Please contact the foster coordinator to confirm offsite adoption hours ahead of time.

***Who do I call for help?***Each foster family is assigned a mentor.  Your mentor will be your first point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have about your group.

***If my foster kittens get sick do I take them to my own vet?***All veterinary care will be provided through Your Organization.  Foster parents are **not** permitted to seek veterinary care from outside clinics.  Any visits to outside veterinarians that are not pre-approved will be the financial responsibility of the foster parent.

***Do I need to give my own vaccines?  Can I learn?***
Your assigned mentor is trained to give vaccines.  You will make appointments with your mentor to assure kittens get their vaccines on time.  We encourage foster parents to learn to give vaccines and offer clinics at the shelter for those who are interested.

***What do I do if my own cats get sick?***Your kittens should be kept separately from your resident cats.  However, we do recognize that cross contamination can happen.  If your own cats get sick it is your responsibility to seek veterinary treatment.  In some instances, Your Organization may be able to help you by seeing your cat and prescribing medications for specific conditions.  However, this is not possible for us to do all of the time and you should not count on this service. Remember there is always an inherent risk of disease when you bring new animals into your home. This is why we require that all animals in the home are current on vaccinations.

***Do my owned pets have to be up to date on their vaccines?***For everyone’s protection and safety your resident pets are required to be up to date on vaccines.

***Do my owned pets have to be altered before I foster kittens?***Yes.  Your Organization can help you set up an appointment to have this done through our on-site clinic.

***Can my owned pets come to Your Organization for care? Is there a discount?***We offer discounted vaccines to our volunteers.  Please inquire at the front desk for pricing and appointment availability.

***What if I have to leave out of town unexpectedly?***Contact the foster coordinator as soon as possible so that we can find alternate placement for your kittens.

***What do I do if I don’t like or get along with my mentor?***We encourage you to form a good relationship with your mentor and keep communication open.  If you have an issue you feel you cannot resolve on your own please contact the foster coordinator for help.