



FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER MANUAL



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Important Questions to Ask Yourself

Before you decide to foster for the SF/SPCA...

- **Are you able to get to us quickly in an emergency?**
- **Will you be able to spend quality time with the animals?**
On average, it is best to spend **at least 2 hour** a day with your foster animals. Socialization can be as important as feeding them and keeping them clean.
- **Will you be able to commit to appointments ranging from once a week to every three weeks whether or not they are ill?**
- **Are you aware that there is a great deal of clean-up and even possible damage to your home when you take a foster home?**
Foster animals can ruin new drapes, carpeting, clothing and the SF/SPCA will not be held responsible for any damage incurred while fostering an animal.
- **Are you willing to work with our veterinary care system?**
Please understand that only our vets can treat foster animals free of charge.
- **Are you able to separate our animals from your own?**
Foster animals must remain isolated from your resident pets. Can you keep them in an enclosed area away from your animals?
- **Can you commit to spending the entire foster period with the animal?**
If something unexpected happens, you will need to call **415-522-3542** to inform us of an early foster return.
- **Do you feel comfortable explaining to friends that these animals are not yours to adopt out and that they must go through the regular adoption process at the SF/SPCA?**
- **Will you be able to bring the animal back at the end of the foster period?**
It can be difficult to let go once you have become emotionally attached.
- **Are you emotionally prepared to handle the death of one of your foster animals?**
This can be very difficult, but the sad truth is that it sometimes happens. In this event, the SPCA should be contacted immediately.



Welcome & Introduction



Welcome to the San Francisco SPCA Foster Care Program!

The Foster Care Program allows the SF/SPCA to take in about 100 more puppies per year than could be housed in the shelter due to limitations of space and resources. Your help will save the lives of many puppies who would otherwise be euthanized.

Generally, puppies in the Foster Care Program are those who have not yet received their second set of vaccinations and would be medically safer in a foster home than here in the shelter. After receiving their second set of shots, they are ready to return to the shelter where they will begin the journey that will lead to adoption and to their forever home!

In order to foster puppies, you will need some supplies. The SF/SPCA provides a carrier/crate, food, kongs, pee pads and medical care for the puppies. Foster parents are required to have bowls for food and water, and a safe and clean environment for the puppies to live in.

Fostering requires a flexible schedule and a personal commitment to the puppies. In a typical day you can expect to give food and water to the puppies at least twice. The pee pads will need changing and don't forget to make time for playing and snuggling! The expected minimum time commitment is about 2 hours a day caring for your puppies.

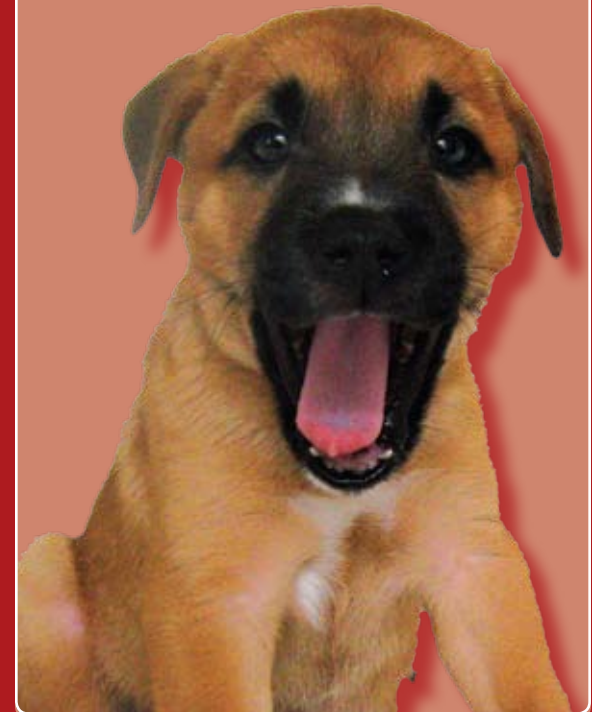
If the puppies you are fostering are sick, you will need to medicate your puppies as well. You are also required to keep appointments for regular vaccinations or medical care. Please bring your puppies to the SF/SPCA Spay and Neuter Clinic for all foster appointments. **The SF/SPCA Spay and Neuter Clinic is located on the second floor of the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center at 201 Alabama Street.**

Although fostering is a lot of work, it is a very rewarding experience. You will help puppies grow from helpless little beings to confident, well-adjusted family pets. You also get the fun of raising a puppy without the responsibility of lifetime care. Most importantly, you are saving lives.



SHOPPING LIST

- Food bowls
- Water bowls
- Towels for bedding



Important Notice for Foster Parents

All foster puppies MUST be kept at home

One significant aspect of fostering underage puppies is that you are dealing with animals that have not yet developed immunity to a variety of potentially fatal canine diseases. While you might be anxious to play with the puppies in the park, etc., the puppies must not walk on any surfaces (such as parks or sidewalks) where another dog may have urinated or defecated in the past. Even if it appears clean it may still be harboring contagious diseases. It is imperative for puppies to stay in the home until they have been fully vaccinated — which is usually around 4 months of age.

The most common symptoms of illness in a puppy are vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy and lack of appetite. These may appear in any combination. If your puppy exhibits any of these symptoms, please contact our 24hr medical hotline at (415) 740-1646.

Thank you for helping the SF/SPCA save the lives of animals in need. You are invaluable to us, and we appreciate you opening your hearts and homes. Please feel free to contact us with any questions — our staff is here to support you.



COMMON SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

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SF/SPCA Foster Parent Agreement & Waiver (Volunteer Copy)



I understand The San Francisco SPCA runs a Foster Care Program for an animal(s) that is not adoptable because of age, medical condition or behavior. I fully understand that this animal(s) is only temporarily in my care and belongs exclusively to The San Francisco SPCA. I further understand that the purpose of this foster relationship is solely to provide care for this animal(s).

I understand that the designated foster supervisor must approve any determination made concerning this animal(s).

I understand and agree that I will return the animal(s) on the scheduled date or on demand whichever is sooner. I understand that any and all placements will only be made through Maddie's Adoption Center and are subject to the same guidelines as any other adoption.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read, fully understood and fully agreed to all parts of The San Francisco SPCA Foster Parent Agreement in addition to the above, and that the Agreement form shall serve as a binding addendum to this Foster Parent agreement.

Volunteer Copy



SF/SPCA Foster Parent Agreement: Puppy/Dog (Volunteer Copy)

As a foster parent for the SF/SPCA, I agree to the following:

- To keep my foster dog/puppies current on their vaccinations
- To give my foster dog/puppies only medications prescribed by the SF/SPCA Medical Department
- To feed ONLY the food given to me or approved by the SF/SPCA Foster Care Program
- To keep my foster dog/puppies separate from any resident pets
- That I will not give the care of my foster dog/puppies to anyone else at any time.
- To notify the SF/SPCA Foster Care Program or the SF/SPCA Medical Department if my foster dog/puppies are not eating for more than 24 hours.
- To notify the SF/SPCA Foster Care Program or the SF/SPCA Medical Department if my foster dog/puppies are having diarrhea for more than 24 hours.
- To return all supplies (crate, kongs, leash, etc.) used by my foster dog/puppies when I return my foster dog/puppies.
- To keep my foster dog on leash unless they are safely in the house.
- To report and record any difficulties or accomplishments observed.



I hereby acknowledge that I have read, fully understood and fully agree to all parts of the San Francisco SPCA Foster Parent Agreement.







If I am unable to comply with this agreement, I understand that it may lead to a termination of my fostering with the SF/SPCA.

Volunteer Copy



Procedures for Daytime & Nighttime Emergencies

What you do with a sick puppy depends on the time of day and the urgency of the situation. See the chart below.

 <p>DAYTIME</p>	 <p>Between the hours of 7:00am – 6:00pm</p>
	 <p>Foster Tech Line: 415-554-3028 (for medical questions and emergencies)</p> <p>If it is between the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm any day of the week, you can call the tech line (415-554-3028) for advice or if your puppy is having an emergency. They will instruct you where to bring the puppy and what to do when you get there.</p>
 <p>NIGHTTIME</p>	 <p>Between the hours of 6:00pm – 7:00am</p>
	 <p>Foster Emergency Line: 415-740-1646 (for emergencies)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Call the Foster Emergency Line at 415-740-1646. 2 Speak to a tech (make sure to get their name). Describe what's happening and they will let you know if you should go to an emergency clinic. 3 If they do give you authorization, bring your foster animal and your pink foster form with you to San Francisco Veterinary Specialists (SFVS). 4 Make sure to tell SFVS that you are a SF/SPCA Foster Parent and that the visit should be covered by the "Robert's Fund." This way you won't be billed for the visit. 5 Before leaving SFVS, always ask for a copy of the treatment sheet. Information on this sheet is important for future follow up treatment at the SF/SPCA Infirmary. 6 Call Alison Lane, Laura Mullen, or one of the SF/SPCA Techs the next morning and let them know what happened. The puppy will probably need to come in to the SF/SPCA for a recheck.



EMERGENCY CLINIC FOR SF/SPCA FOSTERS

San Francisco Veterinary Specialist

600 Alabama (at 18th Street)

San Francisco, CA 94110

Phone: 415-401-9200

It is essential to notify the SF/SPCA the day after the emergency. The shelter must know of any emergency the following day.



General Criteria for Emergencies

Emergency situations include:

- Continuous weight loss
- Continuous diarrhea
- Continuous vomiting
- Bleeding of any kind—nose, urine, stool
- Any trauma—hit by a car, dropped, limp, stepped on, unconscious
- Difficulty in breathing/blocked airway
- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- If the animal has vomiting or diarrhea, but is still active, eating and drinking, it can probably wait until the next day to receive help. **However, if the animal is lethargic and shows no interest in food or water, it is wise to seek emergency help at the time.**
- Coughing or sneezing should pose no immediate problems unless accompanied by blood or symptoms such as lethargy or dehydration.



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Guide to 4–8 Week Old Puppies

Things you can do to help your foster puppies develop

1 Socialization

Between the ages of 3–12 weeks, puppies are forming bonds towards people, dogs and other animals which will last them a lifetime. Puppies who are not exposed to and/or do not have good experiences with people, dogs or other animals during this period can end up with fear and aggression problems later on. As much as possible (and keeping the puppies' safety in mind), get the puppies around all kinds of people — including children, big, uniformed men, etc. and make sure they have good experiences (play, petting and treats). It's also a good idea to expose the puppies to cats to maximize their chances of growing up to like cats.

2 Sights & Sounds

Puppies are cataloguing other things in their environment besides people and animals. Make sure they see and hear common household things like vacuum cleaners, TV's, etc. Praise and treat the puppies every time they come into contact with something new so they have positive associations with these experiences.

3 Crate Training

Teach the puppies to enjoy being in a snug, comfy crate by putting them in for naps and keeping the crate close to you so they doesn't associate it with abandonment.

4 Housetraining

Put the puppies on the pee pads as soon as they wake up, right after eating and at last once an hour to start. Reward him with enthusiastic praise **EVERY TIME** he urinates or defecates on the pad. Change the pads frequently and encourage them to use it.

5 Handling

Handle the puppy **ALL THE TIME** all over his body, play with his feet, brush him, hug him and give him treats/food while you do it so he learns to love it.

6 Training

Even at this age, you can teach puppies sit, down and other things provided you use gentle lure-reward or clicker methods and keep the training sessions short and fun!

If you have any questions or would like more handouts on behavior and training, please call the SF/SPCA Foster Program at **415-522-3542**.



Diagram:
Happy Puppy In Its
Confined Space



Housetraining Checklist

- Very strongly recommended to crate-train puppy — vital for both housetraining and chew-training (*Please contact the Foster Coordinator if you are fostering more than one puppy so you can get more specific information on how to crate train puppies*)
- Crate-training exploits puppy's instinct to keep his bed clean — gradually tones up his flabby little puppy muscles
- Puppy muscles weaker, bladder smaller, frequent meals — much more frequent elimination
- Place your puppies on the pee pads:
 - First thing in the morning (very first thing)
 - After eating
 - After waking from a nap
 - Young puppies (8–10 weeks) usually need to go to the bathroom every hour
 - Last thing before bed
- If puppy doesn't eliminate on any particular outing, crate him with a chew toy to avoid an accident (puppy is full or near full!) try again in 30 minutes
- Do not leave puppy in crate too long as this will force him to soil it and may result in a ruining of his tendency to want to keep it clean
- Crate duration rules of thumb (very general guidelines)
 - 8–10 week old puppies: one hour at a time in crate max
 - 11–12 week old puppies: two hours at a time in crate max
 - 13–16 week old puppies: three hours at a time in crate max
 - 17–20+ week old puppies: four hours at a time in crate max
- Use a long-term confinement area for times that are longer than the puppy can hold in the crate
- Kitchen is ideal confinement area — not too large, high traffic, easy-to-clean floor. Confine with pet-proof gates — place pee pad at one end; bed, food, water, toys at other
- Praise and reward all elimination on the pad for first few weeks.
- Clean all accidents thoroughly with an enzymatic cleanser (e.g. Nature's Miracle). If the puppy makes a mistake never, ever punish.
- It is reasonable to expect an adult dog to hold on 4–5 hours max. Of course, many dogs can hold on longer but is it humane to make them?
- If you are having difficulties, please call the SF/SPCA Foster program at 415-522-3542.



Crate & Confinement Training Pointers

- Begin crate training right away — first day home.
- Practice puppy going in for small, tasty food treats.
- When puppy is comfortable going in, practice waiting a few seconds inside before getting treat — then practice closing door.
- Gradually extend time in crate to 10 minutes with door open and closed.
- Put crate next to sofa, rent video and keep puppy in crate next to you while he works on stuffed Kongs and other approved toys/chewies.
- Put puppy in crate for 30 minutes with chewies while you're home going about routine — visit puppy at crate every 5–10 minutes to reassure.
- Start leaving puppy alone in crate — the first few times you do this, he should be **tired** (just exercised), the time should be **short** (15–30 minutes) and he should have a good **chewie**.
- Get pup out to eliminate as soon as you come home after an absence.



Puppy Mouthing/Biting

Puppies are programmed to bite; in a litter of puppies they bite each other continuously. But, when one puppy bites the other too hard, the bitten puppy will yelp and stop playing. This is how dogs learn to inhibit the force of their bite. Probably one of the most important things we can begin to teach puppies in our care is to have a soft mouth...if a puppy is never allowed to mouth from the very beginning, he will grow up to have a rude/hard mouth. The best technique for hard bites is to remove the thing the puppy wants most—YOU! To do this effectively, the puppy must be on a collar and leash.

When you are handling a puppy or playing with him, as soon as you feel a hard bite, dramatically yelp “OUCH!!” in a high pitched voice. If the puppy pulls back, begins to lick or stops biting, immediately praise and continue playing. If he does not immediately stop biting hard, quickly take hold of the end of the leash, extend your arm, holding the leash (and puppy) away from you; turn your back and do not look at the puppy. Just before you turn your back, make it a big deal—“OKAY THAT’S IT! I’M NOT GOING TO PLAY WITH YOU ANYMORE!”

After just 5-10 seconds, resume interacting with the pup where you left off—without any grudge. Go back to him talking in your happiest, giggliest voice. The important thing is that the puppy learns that there is an immediate consequence for hard bites—being without a playmate and without the freedom to roam! Repeat several times, as needed, until you notice a marked difference in the pressure of the bites. ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND IT’S THE HARD BITES WE WANT TO DISCOURAGE—NOT THE PUPPY’S PLAYFULNESS OR LOVE OF PEOPLE AND LIFE!

You can practice mouthing exercises. Feed the puppy kibble or tiny treats one by one, releasing only for gentle takes. If he takes it hard, say “OUCH!!” and withdraw the food. Say “gentle” and offer him a treat. Do this over and over until he begins to learn that a gentle mouth will earn him a treat.

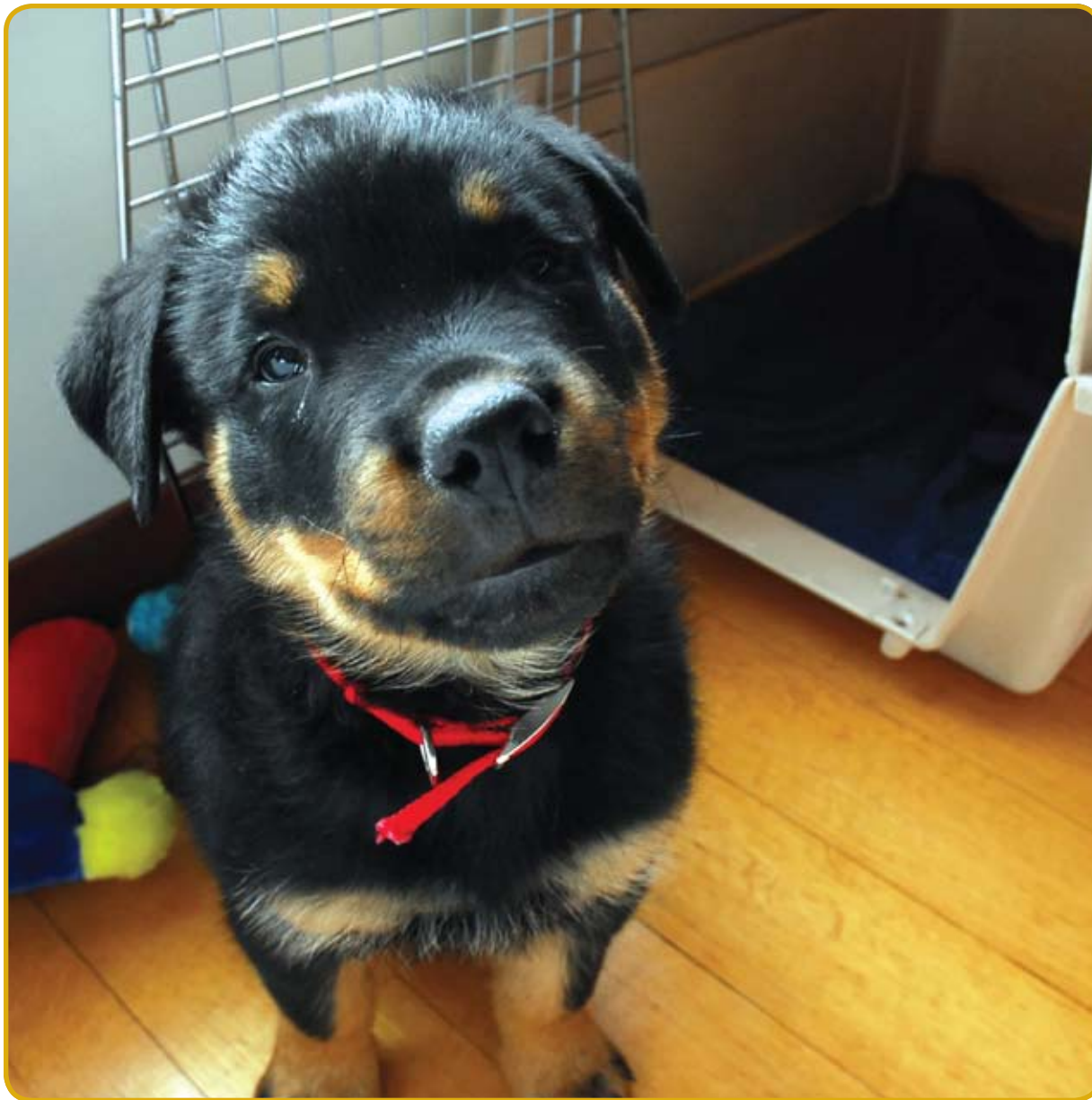


Returning Your Foster Puppies

Usually, you will be fostering your puppies until they get their second set of vaccinations. Please make sure that you call and make a revaccination appointment for them, it's very important that they stay on their vaccination schedule! Revaccinations cannot be given before the due date, so please schedule their appointments accordingly.

A few days after the puppies have had their second set of shots, they will be ready to return to the shelter. Call the Foster Coordinator to schedule their return. Returns must occur during the SF/SPCA's business hours.

Please make sure the puppies have their ID collars on, and remember to fill out the puppy return forms. The return forms will give us information on the puppies and their behavior while in your home. Please bring your puppies and all the foster puppy supplies to the Spay/Neuter Clinic located on the second floor of the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center at 201 Alabama Street.



Foster Care Phone List

Foster Coordinator (415) 522-3542

Tuesday–Saturday: 8:30am–4:30pm

Schedule pick-ups and drop offs and for all other questions. Leave a message if you get no answer and if it is not an emergency. The Foster Coordinator is not locked into these hours and may be able to help you at other times as well.

Medical Appointments (415) 554-3084

Monday–Saturday: 8:30am–5:00pm

To make medical appointments (including revaccinations).

Tech Line (415) 554-3028

7 Days/Week: 7:00am–6:00pm

For health-related questions about foster puppies.

Dog Trainer (415) 522-3500

Monday–Sunday: 11:00am–6:00pm

This is also the phone number for the Maddie's Adoption Center—let them know you are a foster parent and would like to speak to a trainer.

Foster Emergency (415) 740-1646







24 Hours/Day, 7 Days/Week

To get advice about the urgency of a situation and/or to obtain permission to go to the emergency vet if necessary.

- Get the name of the person you speak to and inform the foster coordinator the next morning.
- Try the tech line first when it is open.

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- 3 If they do give you authorization, bring your foster animal and your pink foster form with you to **San Francisco Veterinary Specialists (SFVS)**.
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