



# SF SPCA Foster Protocol for Transition from Shelter to Foster Home

During the Covid-19 outbreak, all available dogs and cats should be placed in foster homes. Only animals that must remain in the shelter for special medical or behavioral care should stay in the shelter in order to minimize interactions between care staff. All animals should go out to foster homes as soon as a suitable foster home has been identified. For cats it should be determined if adoption or foster is the right approach, as the number of moves for cats should be minimized to avoid stress.

## Steps

- ▶ Send an email blast to potential foster families (e.g. current foster families, shelter volunteers, staff members) about fostering an animal during the COVID-19 pandemic. Set expectations with regards to the length of foster (e.g. minimum of two weeks).
- ▶ Send an email blast to current foster families requesting they keep their foster animal(s) until the updated foster return and adoptions processes have been established.
- ▶ For animals currently in foster care, cancel spay/neuter appointments, extend vaccines to every three weeks for puppies and kittens, and send foster homes information about picking up additional supplies.
- ▶ Create cloud-based spreadsheet to track in-house population designated for foster [e.g. dogs/cats to send out, behavior information, foster status (e.g. foster home identified, working on plan)].
- ▶ Have staff add information to the spreadsheet to assist the Foster Team in placing the animals (e.g. medication, medical care or behavior notes).
- ▶ Prep To Go bags for foster families.
  - ▶ Three weeks' worth of supplies
  - ▶ Medication
    - ▶ Adult Dogs: All dogs will be prescribed a seven-day course of metronidazole 15mg/kg PO BID to be started at the onset of score 6 or score 7 diarrhea lasting 24 hours or more. All dogs that arrived from out of county animal shelters on Monday 3/16/20 were also prescribed a seven-day course of doxycycline 10mg/kg PO SID to be started at the onset of persistent sneezing or coughing lasting 24 hours or more, or colored nasal discharge.
    - ▶ Puppies: All puppies will be prescribed a seven-day course of metronidazole 15mg/kg PO BID to be started at the onset of score 6 or score 7 diarrhea lasting 24 hours or more. All puppies will be prescribed a seven-day course of doxycycline 10mg/kg PO SID to be started at the onset of persistent sneezing or coughing lasting 24 hours or more, or colored nasal discharge.
    - ▶ Adult Cats: Adult cats will not be sent home with any preemptive prescriptions.
    - ▶ Kittens: All kittens will be prescribed a seven-day course of metronidazole 15mg/kg PO BID to be started at the onset of score 6 or score 7 diarrhea lasting 24 hours or more. All kittens will be prescribed a seven-day course of doxycycline

**Steps  
Continued**

10mg/kg PO SID to be started at the onset of persistent sneezing or coughing lasting 24 hours or more, or colored nasal discharge. All kittens will be prescribed a seven-day course of Ofloxacin to affected eye (s) BID at the onset of colored ocular discharge, persistent squint, or conjunctivitis lasting 24 hours or more.

- ▶ Behavior Animals: All animals will go home with previously-prescribed behavior medications. The duration of the medication is until planned end of foster period to avoid foster parent to have to come for more medication. If a longer duration is needed, refills can be handled like a medical refill (recheck).
- ▶ Appropriate Walking Equipment to be sent with the foster
- ▶ Potential foster home contacts Foster Team via email about fostering an animal.
- ▶ Foster Team responds back via email and/or telephone to go through the available animals' information with the potential foster home. (The pre-screening is meant to ascertain if the foster home would be a good fit.) If the foster home appears to be a good fit for one of the animals, Foster Team schedules an appointment with foster family to pick up the pet and all necessary supplies (e.g. food, bedding, potty pads, medication).
- ▶ Foster Team emails foster family paperwork (e.g. emergency form, daily journal, fecal scoring chart, process for prescriptions, foster return form).
- ▶ Foster Team sends foster family foster contract to sign via DocuSign.
- ▶ Foster family signs foster contract.
- ▶ Foster family goes to the main entrance on 201 Alabama Street at the time of the appointment.  
Note: All foster families must be wearing a face mask and gloves.
- ▶ Foster family checks in at kiosk.
- ▶ Kiosk calls Foster Team.
- ▶ Wearing a face mask and gloves, Foster Team member goes down to the kiosk to greet foster family and escort them to the Spay/Neuter Clinic lobby. Foster Team member and foster family will maintain a minimum distance of six (6) feet from one another at all times.
- ▶ Foster Team member leaves to collect To Go bag and dog or cat.
- ▶ Foster Team member brings To Go bag and animal to Spay/Neuter Clinic lobby.
- ▶ Foster Team member places To Go bag on Spay/Neuter Clinic lobby front desk.
- ▶ Foster Team member places animal on Spay/Neuter Clinic lobby front desk (if small dog/puppy or cat). If dog is large, Foster Team member tethers to Spay/Neuter Clinic front desk.
- ▶ Foster Team member steps back a minimum distance of six (6) feet.
- ▶ Foster family collects To Go bag and animal and leaves Spay/Neuter Clinic lobby.
- ▶ Foster family exits the premises, maintaining a minimum distance of six (6) feet from other individuals and/or animals.
- ▶ Special attention will be paid to areas where foster family went and/or things they touched. Those areas/items will be wiped down with Rescue (Accel) wipes.

**Steps  
Continued**

- ▶ Foster Team to consult with Behavior Team on foster family behavior concerns.
- ▶ Foster Team to consult with Shelter Medicine on foster family medical concerns.
- ▶ Behavior team to check in on a pre-determined schedule with foster parent to get updates
- ▶ Foster parent to send pictures and descriptions of their experience with the animals to foster team to be used on website
- ▶ If a foster parent becomes sick with COVID-19, the person should limit contact with the animal, just as they would with members of their own family. If the foster parent can no longer care for the animal, then the animal should return to the shelter following the protocols for an exposed animal. If the foster parent or their family can continue to care for the animal, then the animal should stay in the home until 14 days past the current definition of resolution of disease for the foster parent. Information regarding COVID-19 resolution can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>