



A Guide for Cat Foster Parents

Seattle Animal Shelter
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INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

Thank you for your interest in the Seattle Animal Shelter's Cat Foster Program! Attached you will find a variety of information to help you get started.

The Cat Foster Team Roles, Contacts and Pick-up Assistant Schedule (Cat Foster Team Roles) includes the foster team members, the roles we fill, and how we can be reached. We want to make sure you know how to contact us when you have questions or concerns about the cat/kittens you foster. We ask that you be in regular contact with your case manager(s) to let them know the status of your foster cat even when everything is going smoothly. If you can't reach your case manager(s), a team leader can also help you.

Also Included is information on care of sick cats, foster kittens, veterinary visits, treatments/medications available at the shelter, as well as vaccination/worming guidelines. When it comes time for a foster cat/kitten to find a permanent, adoptive home, there is information explaining the adoption phase of fostering.

It is best if you fill out our Foster Application and return as an e-mail to the foster cat team (rather than mailing to the SAS address).

The Cat Foster Parent Agreement needs to be read before taking your first foster case. Please read it over and return an acknowledgement of your intent to meet the expectations via e-mail or at a monthly orientation. Some important points include:

- Foster cats are always strictly indoor cats - guard against escapes! They can and will push out screens, escape from balconies, jump high fences, and take advantage of doors/windows left open by visitors and/or children.
- In order for a vet visit to be paid by the shelter you must contact a designated person for authorization first and use a vet from our list. The "Help The Animals Fund" [HTAF] supported by donations covers these.
- If you have an interested adopter for your cat or kitten, that is great, however, they *must always* go through the usual adoption procedure at the shelter before taking possession of the animal. Animals are always spayed or neutered *before* the new owner takes possession.

We hope you save this information as it will answer many questions that will arise when fostering (printed handouts are provided at the monthly orientation meetings). When in doubt, please e-mail one of us on the team.

Fostering literally saves lives! Despite the occasional challenge with a very sick cat or very young kittens, most foster cases are fairly routine situations where you give food, housing, and TLC to a needy and deserving feline. This is always a worthy endeavor and it will hopefully be a satisfying, joyful experience for you as well.

Monthly orientation meetings are given for new foster parents on the first Saturday of each month, from 12:00 to 1:30 in the conference room at the Seattle Animal Shelter, 2061 15th Avenue West. Please plan to attend as soon as possible; attendance is a requirement for continued fostering. However, we can get you on our active list and even fostering your first case if we've received your application, signed foster parent agreement, and have talked with you by phone. If we haven't already spoken with you, we hope to soon and get you ready for your first foster case!

Thank you!

FOSTER CARE APPLICATION

We appreciate the invaluable service that foster parents provide. We want to make the most informed decision regarding which animals to place in your care. Completing this application is the best way to ensure a positive experience for both you and the animals.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please answer all questions to the best of your ability, filling in, checking off, or circling as appropriate.

- 1) Type(s) of animals you are interested in fostering? Check all that apply.
 - Cats Kittens Dogs Puppies Critters
 - Other – Specify: _____
- 2) Have you fostered animals before? No Yes
- 3) If not, what experience have you had with animals that would be helpful in fostering?

- 4) Do you have any experience training and working with dogs with behavioral issues?
 - No Yes If yes, please describe:

- 5) Do you live in a: Apartment Condo House
 - Other – Specify: _____
- 6) Do you have a fenced yard? No Yes If yes, what height is it? _____
- 7) Are there any children in your household? No Yes
 - a. If yes, what are their ages? _____
- 8) Do any members of your household have allergies? No Yes
- 9) Will you be able to keep the foster animals separate from your own if necessary?

(This usually only applies to sick cats.)

 - No Yes
- 10) Where do you plan to keep your foster animals? _____
- 11) How many hours per day will your foster animals be without adult care? _____
- 12) What will you do to find your foster animal if it becomes lost?

- 13) What pets have you had in the past, if any? _____

- 14) If dog(s), what breed(s) were they?
a. Where are they now? _____
- 15) Do you have any pets in your household now? No Yes
a. If yes, what type and quantity? _____
b. What are their ages? _____
c. Are they spayed or neutered? No Yes
d. Are their vaccinations current? No Yes
e. Are they currently licensed? No Yes
f. If dog(s), what breed(s) are they? _____
g. If cat(s), are they kept indoors, outdoors, or both? Indoors Outdoors Both
h. If cat(s), are they declawed? No Yes
- 16) Can you accept the fact that some animals will not survive or may have to be euthanized and that this decision is up to the Seattle Animal Shelter (SAS) staff? No Yes
- 17) Do you understand that anyone interested in adopting your foster animals (including yourself) must go through the standard adoption process, and approval of candidates and placement of animals is up to the SAS Staff? (Of course, we welcome your referrals!) No Yes

I have answered the questions above truthfully and completely. I understand that although SAS takes reasonable care to screen animals for foster care placement, it makes no guarantee relating to the health of an animal, behavior, or actions. I understand that I receive foster care animals at my own risk and can reject or return any animals for which SAS has asked me to provide care. I indemnify and hold SAS and the City of Seattle free and harmless from all liability arising out of any and all claims, demands, losses, damages, action, judgment of every kind, and description which may occur to or be suffered by me, members of my household, or any third parties by reason of activities arising out of this agreement.

Print Name

Date

Signature

CAT FOSTER PARENT AGREEMENT

Monthly Cat Foster Orientations communicate the responsibilities of foster parents, and this Cat Foster Parent Agreement will clarify the expectations of the program. This will improve the quality and success of our foster program, as well as the wellbeing of our felines.

The Seattle Animal Shelter is a proud sponsor of this Foster Care Program. By joining, you are asked to comply with the policies of the shelter and the expectations of the foster program.

Please read and initial the following:

Program Requirements

- I understand that foster cases are the property of Seattle Animal Shelter and that as a foster parent I have certain responsibilities as detailed below. _____
- I have received the Cat Foster Team Roles handout so I know who to contact with fostering questions. _____
- I have received a Foster Care Manual and attended a cat foster orientation meeting. _____
- I have received and read the Sick Cats handout. _____
- I have received and read the Kitten Care Handout before fostering kittens. _____
- I have received the Vaccination and Worming Guidelines handout and agree to get vaccinations and worming done on schedule and/or as recommended. _____
- I understand that I need to get pre-approval from a designated team member for vet visits, and that the visit must be to one of the vet clinics listed on the Veterinary Clinics Approved for Foster Use handout. I further understand that I will not be reimbursed by the shelter for expenses incurred at a vet clinic not on the list. _____
- I understand that continued participation in the foster program depends on my cooperation with these expectations. _____

Cat Care Responsibilities

- I understand that tending to the safety of foster cats/kittens includes:
 - ♦ never letting a cat/kitten outdoors and preventing escape routes;
 - ♦ never using clumping litter for kittens under 6 months of age;
 - ♦ never allowing young children unsupervised access to kittens;
 - ♦ never allowing an unrestrained dog near cats/kittens unless the dog is extremely reliable.
- I agree to make every effort to answer any phone call or e-mail sent to me by a team member, my case manager(s), or shelter staff within 24 hours. _____
- All foster cats/kittens should be quarantined from foster parents' pet cats for at least 10 days and until all symptoms are resolved to avoid spread of illness. It is recommended that foster cats not mix with resident cats at any time to minimize risk. The shelter is not responsible for illness occurring in or veterinary care required for foster parents' own cats. _____
- In addition to providing a routine update about the status of my foster cat, I also agree to contact my case manager(s) and team leaders on an "as needed" basis whenever I have a concern or there is a change, including:
 - ♦ having picked up a new case from the shelter;
 - ♦ returning a case to the shelter (please give team leader warning so this can be avoided when possible);
 - ♦ extreme lethargy, loss of appetite, breathing difficulty, green nasal secretions, lack of weight gain in a kitten, mouth breathing, sudden behavior changes, etc.;
 - ♦ transfer to another foster home;
 - ♦ death or escape of your cat/kitten;
 - ♦ adoption of your cat/kitten.

Adoption Responsibilities

- I understand that once a kitten is 2 lbs. and healthy, and when a cat is healthy, I am expected to assist the adoption process as directed by my case manager(s) or team leaders. _____
- I agree to contact EVERY potential adopter that is referred to me within 24 hours, even if it is to inform them that my cat/kitten is adopted and to refer them back to the voice mail system. _____
- I understand that no cat/kitten is to be handed over to an adopter (or be kept as my own pet) until the official adoption paperwork is complete AND spay/neuter surgery is done. _____
- I am aware that screening is done on all potential adopters and that they must meet certain criteria before adopting. For this reason, foster cases cannot be promised to family and friends unless they go through the usual shelter or foster team screening process. _____
- If I decide to adopt the cat/kitten as my own, I must finalize this when they become adoptable (2 lbs., healthy, socialized). Otherwise, I will participate in the foster program's process for finding an adopter. _____

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature

Date

BASICS OF FOSTER CARE

A. Felines needing foster care:

- 1) Sick cats or kittens needing TLC and/or veterinary care (upper respiratory or “URI” most common reason)
- 2) Immature kittens under the adoptable weight of 2 lbs
- 3) Kittens needing socialization
- 4) Felines with injuries needing recuperation time
- 5) Any adoptable cat whenever the shelter is full

B. Goals of Fostering:

- 1) Assisting recovery by providing individual care in a home setting
- 2) Preventing illness and providing socialization for kittens while they mature
- 3) Save the lives of cats and kittens that wouldn’t otherwise thrive in the shelter environment
- 4) Finding foster cats and kittens permanent, responsible homes once they are big enough, well-socialized, or recovered from illness is the ultimate goal of fostering

C. FAQ’s of fostering:

- 1) How much will this cost?
- 2) How long do foster cases last?
- 3) How much time does fostering take on a daily basis?
- 4) How does the cat or kitten find an adopter?
- 5) What if I already have a cat?
- 6) What about vet visits?

D. Picking Out and Picking Up a Cat to Foster:

- 1) Receive Foster Needs lists on e-mail
 - A few words about e-mail
- 2) Go to shelter to pick up and check out cat(s)/kitten(s)
 - First time foster parents should visit the shelter when one of the Pick Up Assistants are available to assist.
 - Before you leave: FELV test, microchip, case # - (optional and as needed: wormer, vaccinations, Advantage, etc.)
 - Always check out with an officer.
 - Take home available paperwork (cage card, foster slip, surrender form, etc.).
 - Notify the foster cat team leaders to confirm pick up and include basic info about cat: case #, name, gender, spayed/neutered, approx. age, fur color, length, other such as declawed, history with dogs, etc. Also include your case manager(s) on this e-mail so they are aware.
 - Check to see if the cat is already on the Web site. If so, notify the Web site poster.

E. While Kitty is a Foster in Your Home:

- 1) Keep your Case # available for all communications about your cat.
- 2) Be in regular contact with your case managers.
- 3) Resources, information, and support are available.
 - Foster Care Manual
 - Approved Veterinary Clinic List
 - Handouts/attachments (see list of topics at end of this outline)

- Cat Foster Team Roles, Contacts and Pick-up Assistant Schedule (Cat Foster Team Roles handout for who's who)
 - 4) Classes and Videos (available for borrowing)
 - Video Kitten Care Class
 - Video Care of Sick Cats Class
 - Subcutaneous Fluids Class
 - 5) Supplies and medications available at shelter (see handout)
 - 6) Home visits
 - Traveling digital photographers (for web photo of your foster cat)
 - Subcutaneous fluids and tube feeding can sometimes be given by experienced foster parents when you are willing to bring the cat/kitten to their home.
 - 7) Veterinary Visits
- F. Spay/Neuter:
- 1) Getting a foster cat/kitten altered before adoption is ideal, however, is on a space-available basis
 - 2) All animals will have an appointment for surgery made at the time adoption is done if they are not already altered
 - 3) The cat is taken to surgery by the foster parent and after surgery the adopter picks up the animal
 - 4) ALL CATS/KITTENS WILL BE SPAYED/NEUTERED BEFORE BEING GIVEN TO AN ADOPTER.
- G. Preparing for Adoption:
- 1) Web site photo and story
 - 2) Finding an adopter
 - Web site responses
 - Adoption events
 - Promoting your cat at the shelter (by appointment only)
 - 3) Screening potential adopters
 - 4) Shelter procedure for adoption
 - Never hand over a cat to new adopters until the adoption is official and completed by a shelter officer. They will always do the final screening and make the final approval of an adopter.
 - Foster parents should send a note of approval, including cat's case # and their phone # (in case of questions), when sending adopters to the shelter to do the adoption paperwork. The shelter staff wants to be sure we've approved an adopter before they complete the adoption.
- H. Other Useful Information:
- 1) Shelter hours are Monday to Sunday, 12:00-6:00
 - 2) Kennel phone number is (Monday to Sunday, 12:00-6:00), 206.386.4294.
Cat health and behavior Web sites (very informative on a wide variety of topics):
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Pointe/9352/alphalinks.html>
<http://www.vet.cornell.edu/fhc/>
<http://www.catsinternational.org/index.html>
 - 3) Helpful site on socializing semi-ferals from Alley Cat Allies at
<http://www.alleycat.org/pdf/taming.pdf>
 - 4) Adoption Room Schedule with links to Matchmakers Crib Sheet and Program Manual (for adoption room rules) – see the current Cat Foster Team Roles handout

- 5) Handouts and attachments on fostering routines and cat issues are available on the following topics:
- Socializing Semi-feral Kittens
 - Spay/Neuter Surgery Routine
 - Adoption Room Scheduling
 - Reasons to Adopt an Adult Cat
 - Adoption Guidelines (used by SAS shelter staff)
 - Hard Decisions in Fostering (euthanasia decision)
 - Home Remedies for URI
 - Foster Care Stats
 - Growth and Success
 - many more...
- I. Sign Foster Parent Agreements
- J. Optional Tour of Shelter

TEAM ORIENTATION THANK YOU MESSAGE

Hi _____ ,

Thanks for coming to the Cat Foster Orientation on _____ !

I hope your introduction to our foster program was helpful. Please consider the orientation just the first step and know that ongoing help is available from your case manager(s) and team leaders. Names and contact information are on the handout titled Cat Foster Team Roles, Contacts and Pick-up Assistant Schedule. Your case manager(s) are assigned by the first letter of your last name. When in doubt about any cat care or foster procedures, please don't hesitate to ask! Always e-mail or phone your case managers, and if you wish, include the team leaders as back up. If you ever feel your concern is urgent, please e-mail/call any of the case managers listed on the Cat Foster Team Roles.

Thanks again for your interest in fostering! Our foster parents save close to one-thousand feline lives each year. Whether you help with just one short-term case or many longer-term ones each year, you will have helped save lives and alleviated suffering!

Cat Foster Program Team Leaders
Seattle Animal Shelter

TOP TEN TIPS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

1. Always get pre-authorization before going to the vet and use a vet from our list.
2. Always notify the foster cat team and your case manager whenever you've picked up a new foster case, had one adopted, transferred, a cat dies or escapes, or any other comings/goings of cats.
3. Check in regularly with your case manager.
4. Ask for advice if your cat/kitten has stopped eating.
5. Kittens crash fast, ask early if their behavior changes.
6. Check your sick cat/kitten for hydration - they should be drinking water, using the litter box, have loose elastic skin tone, and a moist mouth.
7. Never use clumping litter for kittens under six months of age.
8. Wash your hands and change your shirt after handling sick animals to prevent spread of illness.
9. Never let your cat outside; guard against escapes.
10. Never give a cat to an adopter without seeing the completed adoption paperwork or before spay/neuter surgery has been done.

SICK CAT CARE

Due to limited observation time at the shelter, the health of any cat or kitten can't always be accurately assessed. After you've picked up a cat or kitten for fostering, if you are not contacted by a case manager or team leader, and/or you think your cat might need immediate veterinary care, please contact your designated cat case manager(s) or team leaders.

Upper respiratory infections (URI's)

These are very similar to human colds. The cat is often congested and cannot smell its food. Tempting your foster cat with smelly canned cat food, Hills A/D food (purchased at a veterinarian's office), baby food (no onions in ingredients, please), chicken broth, or even tuna in water (last resort as too much can cause diarrhea) will often get them eating again. You may have to coax them to eat by using your fingers, and even smearing it on their lips or nose. If your foster cat has not eaten for more than two days, force-feeding with a syringe may be necessary. If you don't know how to do this, we can describe this or show you how. *Nutracal* is a calorie and nutrient-packed supplement that even sick cats will often accept when not otherwise eating. This can be picked up at the shelter.

Steam from a vaporizer or hot shower often helps clear the nasal passages. Keep the nose and eyes clear of discharge with warm, damp cotton balls. A cat that doesn't feel well appreciates some extra petting and quiet time in your lap. If you can coax your foster cat to eat, and its drinking water, the infection will usually run its course, and no additional treatment is necessary. Please ask about using the home remedy of betadine/normal saline solution as eye/nose drops to help decrease the severity of a URI. We often have pre-mixed solution available for foster parents to pick up.

Dehydration is a serious concern.

Watch carefully to see if your foster cat is drinking water. You may have to carefully watch the level of the water bowl, and keep track of litter box activity. You can check for dehydration by pulling the skin up just a little lower than the back of the neck. It should be taut and snap back down. If it stands up or takes some time to go back down, the cat may be dehydrated. A lethargic cat is often dehydrated. If your cat is dehydrated, subcutaneous fluids may be necessary. This is a good skill to learn and you can be buddied up with an experienced foster parent who can teach you. There are several foster parents experienced with this and willing to make home visits to hydrate your cat. This may help a cat feel better sooner and will save money by not having to go to a vet. Please contact us right away if you think your cat is dehydrated. We may arrange a home visit, direct you to the shelter for fluids, or as a last resort, to one of the local veterinarians that bill the shelter directly.

If your foster cat is extremely lethargic, it may be dehydrated, have a fever (over 103 degrees F, rectally, constitutes a fever), and/or a bacterial infection, and we would probably direct you to veterinary care.

If nasal discharge is thick and yellowish-green (vs. clear and watery), this may be an indication that a bacterial infection has set in, and antibiotics may be necessary. In this case, we will direct you to take your foster cat to the vet.

Other things to watch for that may require additional care or a vet visit:

- Loose stool or diarrhea - usually caused by parasites that may or may not be visible in feces. Depending upon the parasite, this can be treated with wormer picked up at the shelter or a vet visit.

- Continual vomiting or occasional vomiting that lasts more than a day or two.
- Extreme lethargy for more than 2-3 days.
- Eyes that are red and inflamed or have an extreme amount of discharge and swelling, vs. small amounts of discharge, usually in both eyes that is common with a URI. This can often be treated with eye ointment picked up at the shelter, but may need a vet visit if the infection doesn't respond within a couple of days.
- Any crumbly wax-like substance in the ears (possible ear mites). Ear mite medicine can be picked up at the shelter.
- Fleas or flea dirt (black pepper-like substance in the fur). *Advantage* is usually applied if fleas are noticed at the shelter. If you see flea dirt, we will find out if *Advantage* was already applied. One application lasts 30 days. If it hasn't or if you find live fleas, please bring your foster cat to the shelter for *Advantage* to be applied.

Veterinary Visits:

- All vet visits must be pre-authorized. Unless you are willing to pay for the visit yourself.
- See the Cat Foster Team Roles handout to see which team members can authorize visits.
- Please only go to a clinic listed on the Veterinary Clinics Approved for Use page.
- Always use the Case Number at vet visits.

All authorized vet visits are paid by the Help the Animals Fund [HTAF]. We work with a number of vets in and around the Seattle area. They bill the shelter directly so there are no out-of-pocket vet costs to a foster parent. While the fund is strictly donations, due to great fundraising efforts by volunteers, and some large donations and bequests, we have been able to pay for some extraordinary care; including eye, leg, and jaw surgeries; major blood work; etc. However, we must be very cautious when deciding whether or not a foster animal needs to go to the vet as office visits add up very quickly. Each case will be evaluated individually by what is best for the animal as well as economically feasible for the shelter.

If you take your foster cat/kitten to the vet and pay for it yourself, you will **not** be reimbursed.

Please review the Meds and Supplies Available at SAS page to know what treatments are available at the shelter and should NOT be accepted from a vet clinic, in order to help save money.

MEDS AND SUPPLIES AVAILABLE AT SAS

To help save money, please do not accept these items from veterinary clinics as they can be obtained at the shelter:

- Advantage (for fleas)
- Droncit (for tapeworm)
- FVRCP vaccination or boosters
- Nutracal
- Otomite or Acaress (for ear mites)
- Pet Tinic
- Strongid-T (routine wormer, mainly for roundworms)
- Teramycin antibiotic eye ointment²
- Triple antibiotic eye ointment ("BNP")²

These items are also available at the shelter, but you may accept from a vet clinic if you don't know how to give subcutaneous fluids:

- Fluid bags (Lactated Ringers or Normosol)
- Tubing and needles for fluid administration

Please ask if your cat needs subcutaneous fluids for dehydration and lethargy. There are several people in the foster parent group willing to make home visits to administer fluids. This will often get help to a sick cat faster and also save money.

Betadine/Normal Saline in a 1:20 solution can be used as an eye drop and nose drop in cats/kittens with URI and/or eye inflammation. This home remedy may reduce the severity of URI symptoms and the need for veterinary care, as well as other medications.

¹ **Pet Tinic** ("lixotinic") is now available from the shelter. Please ask if you need this vitamin and iron supplement for a debilitated and/or flea-bitten kitten/cat. Please save the bottles that this is dispensed in for later refilling to save on expenses.

² All oral or injected antibiotics require a vet visit and prescription, as well as other eye ointments or drops other than the two mentioned above.

AUTHORIZING VET VISITS

The following information may be useful in helping you decide what warrants a veterinary visit for team volunteers authorizing visits, generally case managers and/or team leaders. If the vet visit needs to happen ASAP, it will most likely be obvious. If you are unsure and want a second opinion, then the cat probably isn't in any immediate danger or distress, therefore, feel free to ask a team leader or Virginia Dalton, SAS Animal Care Supervisor.

Some foster parents prefer to pay for vet visits themselves so they can go to a vet they like or not have to travel very far. This is fine as long as it is realized and agreed they won't be reimbursed and are doing it as a donation. Receipts can be kept for charitable donation/tax write-off purposes.

Authorization to foster parents for vet visits can be given for any of the following:

Cats: fever (103.5 or above, rectally), respiratory distress (choking, wheezing, open-mouth breathing, shortness of breath), green secretions and/or bad odor from nasal area, not eating or drinking for more than a few days, extreme lethargy for more than a day or two¹, obvious distress, pain, or pronounced behavior changes.²

¹ Lethargy - suspect dehydration first and treat (please see if an experienced foster parent is available to hydrate the cat.³

² Consider if the cat might be in heat or reacting to one who is before getting excited about a behavior change.

³ There are several foster parents willing to have people bring their cat or kittens to them for sub-q's and tube feeding to help the cat ASAP when getting to the vet quickly is difficult, and to help avoid a vet visit. After hydration, the cat often feels better and starts getting better without needing a vet visit. Some kittens noticeably rebound after a "crash" since all they needed was fluids or calories.

Kittens: any of the above cat symptoms in a young kitten, however, help should be sought much sooner, preferably the same day.

For kittens less than 2-3 weeks, open mouth breathing, not nursing or taking the bottle, and crawling away from the litter/mother are bad, often hopeless signs. Vet care will usually not help, may prolong the kitten's suffering and will use money that might be better spent on more hopeful cases. Euthanasia or letting nature take its course are often the options. Please call a team leader for help, as needed.

If kittens are EATING AND ACTIVE, then there is no urgency in seeking a vet visit. Seek only in cases when symptoms are lingering, diarrhea is lingering, or secretions are green. It can also be considered when the lingering symptoms seems to be the only thing delaying a kitten otherwise ready for adoption.

Diarrhea (TAKE A FRESH STOOL SAMPLE TO VET)

For adults, observe for a couple days to see if it resolves. Watch for signs of dehydration/lethargy (sub-q fluids as needed).

For kittens, if energy lags, seek vet care and keep kitten hydrated (*Pedia-lite* or sub-q fluids) until care can be sought.

Regarding taking in kittens: if the concern is about one or two in a litter, have them seen by the veterinarian, however, it is recommended that the entire litter be taken to the appointment. This

will help obtain enough medication for the entire litter, especially since if one kitten is sick today, the rest will most likely be ill soon as well.

Additional Visits

In general, avoid them if possible; however, there are times when they will be necessary.

- Veterinarians will sometimes recommend another visit. This is often not necessary for routine situations where antibiotics were prescribed and kitty appears to have recovered normally. If the additional visit is free, then the foster parent is welcome to do so if they choose.
- If symptoms are unchanged after completing a course of antibiotics, or worse after 3-5 days on antibiotics, then another visit may be needed. Try a phone call first; some vets might prescribe something else with just a phone call if the animal was just seen a few days before.
- **STOOL SAMPLES SHOULD BE CHECKED AT THAT TIME AND CAN BE CHECKED ON THE FIRST VISIT. EVEN IF DIARRHEA IS NOT A SYMPTOM.**
- Stool samples should be checked more often and earlier. A parasitic infestation can debilitate a cat and interfere with recovery from illnesses like URI. Some parasites can mimic URI to some extent (lungworm can cause coughing).
- For a second or third visit, the foster parent should consider seeing a new veterinarian. Not because the first was incompetent, but because a new view of the situation is often a help in solving the issue.

Taking Care

Most vet visits are for the purpose of seeking *Clavamox* for complicated or unresolved URI, diarrhea, or anorexia. Be more conservative and ask before authorizing vet visits for:

- X-rays, unless an obvious trauma, like a fall or injury needing assessment
- expensive diagnostics, such as ultrasounds or procedures requiring anesthesia
- dental work
- surgeries
- unusual and expensive medications
- chronic conditions – will expensive to support medically, get other opinions before continuing with visits
- clear nasal discharge, sneezes, and watery eyes - in general, a cat or kitten with that is otherwise active and eating won't be much helped by a vet visit - the foster parent should try *Betadine* eye drops and wait unless several weeks have gone by, then alternatives will be considered

Spay/Neuter

Spay and neuter surgeries are generally done at our clinic at the time of adoption, however, anytime a cat has to undergo anesthesia for a procedure, they should be altered at the same time.

Female kittens with umbilical hernias will have this repaired at the time of their spay surgery. Male kittens should have their umbilical hernias repaired at a vet clinic, as it involves an abdominal incision and our Spay/Neuter Clinic does not do those on males, they should be neutered at the same time.

Euthanasia

It is always preferred that a euthanasia be done at our shelter for cost reasons. It would be better to phone ahead to ensure Virginia Dalton (SAS Animal Care Supervisor) or another supervisor is available, so the cat will not be left waiting. They have always been sensitive and understanding about this and a foster parent can be present and hold kitty if they wish. There is even an option for individual cremation and getting the ashes back in a little urn, should anyone ask. The cost is about \$60.00 and the foster parent will need to pay. If no supervisor is available, a cat is in awful distress, and if waiting would be inhumane, euthanasia at a clinic can be authorized.

Allergies

Cats, like people, can have allergic reactions to medication. Most medications are not given first at the vet office. If some sudden, adverse reaction happens after giving a new medication, such as wheezing or eyes being more inflamed, do not give any more medication and call the veterinarian.

Other important information

- Remember to always include case numbers in any communication.
- Emergency visits are generally not for URI cases and should be used conservatively, they are, however, available for a reason, if in doubt, please don't hesitate to ask.
- Eye exams at the Animal Eye Clinic on Roosevelt can be approved for special cases or as referred by a regular veterinarian. Pre-authorization is required by a team leader or Virginia Dalton (SAS Animal Care Supervisor). Several cats with corneal scarring or needing eye lid surgery have been treated if they are otherwise healthy and with a good chance at being adoptable.
- Occasionally a vet clinic (most likely Carkeek) will prescribe a medication that needs to be filled at Ballard Plaza Pharmacy. They WILL bill the shelter, so use the case number as usual. FYI, the medications received there can be flavored in cat-friendly ways, such as fish, chicken, and turkey.

VETERINARY CLINIC GUIDE

Does your foster need to be seen by a veterinarian?

Approval must be pre-authorized before any cat can be seen. Be aware that after-hours and emergency services are more expensive and should only be used in true emergencies, see \$\$\$ below.

A lethargic cat or kitten often needs hydration, so please consider having subcutaneous fluids administered by a foster team member or at the shelter to save on veterinary expenses. Ask your case manager or team leader for more details.

Who approves a vet visit?

First contact your case manager(s). If you need a quick reply, you can contact any case manager and/or team leader; we are all here to help. Don't hesitate to call if you feel e-mail is too slow.

The case # is important!

Always identify your cat as a Seattle Animal Shelter foster case and have the case # handy. These clinics will bill the shelter directly using your case # and should not charge foster parents. Should a veterinary group insist a foster parent pay for services, first explain that the shelter already has an agreement to be billed directly. If this doesn't work, please notify a team leader and we will handle these situations. Please note that the shelter does not reimburse foster parents for visits to contracted vets, and cannot reimburse any charges to a veterinary group not on our Approved Veterinary Clinic List.

PET HEALTH UPDATE

This is the form all foster parents must fill out prior to a surgery for your foster animal.

Date: _____ Case Number: _____
 Name of Owner / Foster Parent (please circle one): _____

Please take a few moments to complete the following questionnaire so that we may have current information regarding the health of your pet prior to surgery.

- 1) How long have you had this pet in your home? _____
- 2) Has your pet received any vaccinations other than those received at the Shelter? No Yes
 - a. If yes, which ones? _____
- 3) Has your pet been to a veterinarian for an exam or treatment? No Yes
 - a. If yes, were any problems detected or treatment initiated/continued? No Yes
 - b. If yes, please explain: _____
- 4) When did your pet last eat? _____
- 5) Is your pet currently experiencing any of the following problems and, if so, for how long?

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Check one:</u>	<u>Explain:</u>
Decreased appetite	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
Lethargy/listlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
Nasal Discharge	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
Sneezing	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
Vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	_____
- 6) Is there anything else regarding your pet that we should we aware of?

VACCINATION AND WORMING GUIDELINES

The Seattle Animal Shelter administers the FVRCP vaccine to cats and kittens.

"FVR" stands for feline viral rhinotracheitis, which is a disease that causes sneezing and discharge from eyes and nose (the URI, or upper respiratory infection, symptoms often seen).

"C" stands for calici virus, which causes oral ulcers and symptoms similar to, but less profuse, than FVR. Calici virus sometimes progresses to a type of pneumonia.

"P" stands for panleukopenia (aka "feline distemper"); the usually deadly disease that attacks rapidly dividing cells and causes loss of appetite, bloody diarrhea, and/or vomiting, extreme lethargy, and collapse.

Kittens should be started on vaccines at six weeks of age.

By this age the maternal antibodies (from the mother's colostrums, or antibody-rich first milk) are beginning to fade. *Boosters need to be given every 3 weeks until 16 weeks of age.* The vaccine will not trigger the desired response until the maternal antibodies have worn off and it is impossible to tell when exactly that happens.

"Between 6 and 16 weeks of age, a window of risk exists lasting one to two weeks during which a kitten's passive antibodies [maternal antibodies] are no longer fully protective, but may yet interfere with the vaccination process. For this reason, kittens should not be vaccinated before six weeks of age, and should not complete the vaccination series before 12-16 weeks of age."

Cat Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook

Vaccinations should be given even if kittens have URI symptoms.

Unless the cat or kitten has a rectal temperature of 103.5 or greater. Though the vaccination won't protect them from what they already have (FVR), it will start the antibody-building process protecting them from calici virus and panleukopenia. There is minimal risk of prolonging their FVR/URI symptoms by giving the vaccine while ill, according to a veterinarian who helped with these guidelines.

***Strongid* is the wormer given to cats and kittens.**

The dose is 0.1cc per lb. An adult of 10 lbs. would receive 1 cc, a kitten weighing 1 lb. would get 0.1 cc). Worming should start at 1 lb., usually around five weeks of age. *Strongid* treats roundworms or Ascarids, also hookworms and whipworms, which are very common in kittens. Different worms/parasites require different medications.

A second dose of wormer must be given ten days to two weeks after the first dose.

Since *Strongid* does not kill worms in the larval stage, the lifecycle will start over again if the second dose is not timed correctly or missed. *If you miss the two-week mark, you must start over with a first dose.*

Virginia Dalton, SAS Animal Care Supervisor, recommends the following: give a dose daily for four days, wait ten days, then repeat another four-day course. This is a very thorough way to worm. There are other recommendations on how to dose, at the very least, however, two to three doses spaced 10 to 14 days apart are needed.

Recommendations from veterinarians who do not treat shelter populations of cats/kittens may vary from this practice. Additional vaccinations may be required or optional after adoption, but are not given to cats/kittens that are still in the shelter or foster care, including rabies, Chlamydia, and feline leukemia vaccines.

SPAY/NEUTER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Foster parents bringing in their cat/kitten(s) for spay/neuter surgery must follow the below instructions.



Night before surgery:

- Pick up the cat or kitten's food.
- Adults should have nothing to eat after 6:00pm.
- Younger kittens should have nothing to eat after 9:00pm.
- For the safety of the animals, please do not bring them in for surgery if they have eaten. Food in the stomach can cause life-threatening complications during surgery and while under anesthesia.
- Water should be left out.



Morning of surgery:

- Bring your case # to appointment.
- Drop off at Municipal Spay and Neuter Clinic between 7:30-9:00am.
- Park in the clinic's lot on the north side of the shelter; 2061 15th Avenue West.
- Have a separate carrier for each animal brought in for surgery.



Afternoon of surgery:

- Call between 2:00-3:00pm (206.386.4260) to check on the recovery of your animal and to check on plan to pick up (provide case #).
- Plan to pick up your animal between 3:00-5:30pm (note that the clinic closes earlier than the downstairs shelter).
- If the new adopter will be the one picking up the animal, they need to be the one to call the shelter to check on status and pick up time.



Other considerations:

- If preparing for an adoption event, surgery needs to be done one full week before the event to allow sufficient recovery time.
- Nursing mothers should be 3-4 weeks past weaning, it is best to allow nursing to at least 8 weeks of age, or at least the nipple area should be flat and not engorged with milk.
- As always, kittens should be AT LEAST 2 pounds (weigh ahead of time at shelter if necessary) and animals should be completely healthy with no lingering symptoms.

SOCIALIZATION OF SEMI-FERAL KITTENS

Basics of Socializing

The ideal time for socializing kittens is from two to seven weeks of age. As soon as their eyes and ears are opening, socialization opportunities begin. Socialization after this age range is still possible, but becomes more difficult. Attempting socialization after 12 to 14 weeks of age will have a more limited success.

Cats and kittens are individuals and each will respond differently to socializing techniques. Some cats can be genetically friendly but feral by experience.

Try to avoid raising solo kittens. Not only do we want them to socialize them to humans, but also they learn how to be a cat, gain a social identity, and are likely to tolerate feline companions later if raised with a sibling or littermates. Even if kept as an only cat in adulthood, a solo-raised kitten is more likely to display undesirable behaviors to its human companions.

The experience of the shelter's cat foster program is that larger litters do not socialize as well. For this reason, it is suggested that the older the kittens, the smaller the group be that a foster parent takes; two to four kittens are a reasonable number. Kittens that otherwise should not have been shy, sometimes end up that way when foster parents take on too many and can't devote individual time to them. Unless the foster parent is experienced, has the time, and is able to separate kittens appropriately, groups of over eight are unmanageable for most people. If the kittens are six weeks or older, the groups should be smaller than this and litters can be split.

A useful guide to socialization is the book "*Tellington T-Touch*" by Linda Tellington-Jones. Before beginning *T-Touch*, the kitten must be approachable. Approach should be gradual, over days or longer as needed.

Eye contact, when made should be quickly broken. Staring at a kitten is threatening. When fearful or stimulated, a cat's eye will dilate. Be aware of the eyes, you may see them dilate as a first (fear) reaction, but as the kittens get familiar with you, the pupils will quickly return to a normal size. Keep the kitten in a room with no inaccessible hiding spots.

Frequent visits to the room where you just sit, gets kitty used to your presence. Next, using a stick or dowel with feathers attached to one end, provide visual stimulation and distraction. A second stick or dowel with a soft fabric on it can be used to touch. As kitty gets comfortable with your presence, try moving closer each time. Do this when kitty eats, perhaps just laying your hand nearby, progressing to being able to hand feed and later to touching kitty. At this point, when you are able to touch, use a finger to make small 1-¼ clockwise circles all around kitty's shoulders, head, and upper back. Make the circles small and quick and leave the body after each time.

This kind of touch changes the brain and kitty's reaction to touch. Progress with these "*T-Touches*" to the face, mouth, and gums. The gum area is connected to the limbic area of the brain (the limbic system is connected with emotional behavior and learning).

A video on *Tellington T-Touch* is available for borrowing; while it is about dogs, the basic principles are the same. Please contact Sandy Hansen or a team leader to inquire.

Desensitization and habituation can be for taming semi-ferals. Desensitization reduces anxiety or fear responses by keeping the exposure to fearful stimuli small enough that a pleasant (or at least neutral) state of mind is not disrupted. Positive activities, such as eating or play, can be paired with increasing intensities of the fear-evoking stimulus, including progressively moving closer while it eats until able to touch the cat.

If the cat becomes fearful, back off to an early level, like increasing the distance between you and the cat while it feeds. When feeding semi-ferals, it is a good idea to let the cat see the food being placed. Feeding is a positive experience as an animal must be in a calm or neutral state of mind to eat, so staying with the animal during feeding times helps desensitize kitty to your nearness.

Young kittens should not be raised solo if it can be avoided; lack of appropriate social identity can lead to life-long behavioral problems, including aggression toward other cats and/or humans. Habituation is a passive training tool. When a stimulus (the noise produced by crackle-y paper when walked on, for example) continues despite a cat's fear response, over time the fear response diminishes (i.e.; they get used to it without the stimulus being associated with you).

Another approach is "flooding," where anxieties and fear-producing situations are continued until it no longer evokes the fear response. This is a stressful and risky approach and should be avoided. Wrapping a fearful cat in a towel and holding it against its will is an example. Removing the siblings and isolating the most fearful kitten is also a form of flooding, a calmer or neutral state of mind is presumably present in the presence of their siblings. Please try other, slower approaches that empower the animal first. Separating/isolating kittens to speed-up taming is considered a version of "flooding" rather than desensitization.

In desensitization you try to keep the cat in as calm a state as possible so that the calmness is what becomes associated with (gradual) exposures to potentially frightening stimuli, such as unfamiliar creatures, places, sounds, smells, sights, etc. The presence of a littermate would lend support to a state of calmness.

Another socialization tip is to avoid eye contact as this can be threatening to felines and other animals. Kittens are kept in a smaller room with no hiding places. Sit in the room with the kitten several times a day. Let the animal make the moves. At feeding times, set the food a little closer to you each time, desensitizing the kitten to your nearness. As kitten becomes comfortable with this, leave your hand lying near the food bowl, progressing to having your hand touching the kitten.

To get a kitten comfortable with being held, bring the food dish to counter level. You might have to pick the cat up briefly to get to that level. After getting comfortable eating at this level, you can hold your hands around kitty's body, without actually picking them up. Take small steps towards the desired goal and let the animal make the moves as much as possible.

Sometimes respond with a "meow" if the kitten growls or hisses. Other times, talking to them in a long, drawn out voice with something like the resonance of a purr seems to help. When spending time in the room, it is helpful to lie down (less threatening to kitten) to let them get used to you. If one kitten in a pair or litter is more anti-social than the others, it can be helpful to separate them from the other kittens. A frequent misconception is that just because a kitten will sleep with you, it doesn't mean it is becoming more socialized, it just means that you're warm and non-threatening when lying down. The goal is a cat that will approach and seek out interaction with humans.

The goal is to help kittens learn that humans are a source of good things and to approach us for contact, including petting, companionship, warmth, food, etc.

To summarize some main points in working with semi-feral kittens:

- Allow no inaccessible hiding places; a small room with a secure (for the kitten), but accessible and visible space (crate, carrier) is best. **NO FREE ROAMING** in a large

space with hiding places! A hiding kitten is learning nothing about trusting humans and valuable socialization opportunities are being wasted.

- Slow approach; let kittens make the first moves towards you. Respect kitten's space and don't force contact or holding. The first few days may be spent just sitting several feet away and talking to kitty.
- With a toy, you might even pull it back when kitty approaches it to empower the kitten.
- Eye contact should be avoided or brief to not threaten the animal. Try a series of blinks or a yawn to communicate, "I am not a threat".
- Talk in a low, soothing voice. Experiment with "meows" in response to hissing; purring to respond to purring.
- Avoid sudden movements or loud noises; try leaving a radio on low to habituate the kitten to normal human noises.
- Approach the kitten gradually during times of a calm or neutral state of mind, like eating or play times. If kitten reacts with fear, pull back and take a slower approach.
- Place food successfully closer to you and progress to hand feeding. The hand should become a good thing (feeding, petting) and not a threat (grabbing, holding against kitty's will). Make sure kitty associates you with food, even if it is just that they can see you put the food down at first.
- First contact might be done with a cloth-covered stick while kitty is playing or eating, progress to petting with your hand.
- Try *T-Touch* as described above when beginning to touch kitty. *T-Touch* is short and brief. Petting should be long, slower strokes, since faster petting strokes can agitate a kitten.
- After a kitten is comfortable with petting and approaching you, try briefly picking kitty up and place it on a counter or your lap. Being picked up and set on a counter with some tasty food waiting there can help them associate being picked up with something desirable.
- Sometimes separating a hiding, shy kitten from others can turn them around quickly. Because this isolation is probably stressful, try other approaches first and use this for as short a time as possible.
- Avoid raising solo kittens whenever possible.
- If a mellow, calm cat is available, this can be a great role model for the semi-feral one. Kittens learn a lot from watching and copying other cats. Therefore a calm, purring cat that seeks human interaction is good exposure.
- Avoid wrapping and holding a fearful kitten in favor of these slower, less stressful approaches.
- The Alley Cat Allies Web site has a fact sheet on taming kittens that might offer additional ideas: www.alleycat.org/pdf/taming.pdf

Tips offered from:

- *Karen Stone*, Instructor at Pima Medical Institute and experienced with numerous kitten fostering cases including ferals
- *Ellen Leach*, experience and training with cats and a variety of zoo animals; instructor at *Behavioral Resources*, which offers classes on cat behavior
- Foster team members & foster parents

GETTING YOUR CAT ADOPTED

Is your foster ready for adoption?

If you are fostering an adult cat that is ill, yet already spayed or neutered, it could potentially go to its new home prior to being 100% well. However, in most cases, a cat is not ready for adoption until it has had no symptoms of illness for at least one week. If you don't know if your foster cat is spayed or neutered, you can bring it by the shelter anytime during business hours, Monday - Sunday, 12:00-6:00pm, to find out.

If you are fostering kittens, they must weigh two pounds to be adopted. Kittens usually reach two pounds between nine and ten weeks of age. They must be completely healthy and have not had any symptoms of illness for at least one week prior to adoption.

Is your foster on the Web?

Once you have spent some time with your cat and have gotten to know its personality, usually after the cat is being close to fully recovered, find out if its picture is already posted on our Web site. Adults are often put on the Web site prior to getting sick and going into foster care. You can check yourself at www.seattleanimalshelter.org, or you can check with your case manager(s) or team leaders.

If its picture is already on our Web site, you should write a new story about the cat's personality. If not, see below. A good story makes a big difference in the number of calls the cat gets, so be descriptive. Try to include things like if the cat likes to be petted; held; is a lap cat; purrs easily; is affectionate; is vocal or quiet; active and playful; calm; good litter box manners; uses a scratching post; if it's had any experiences with other cats, dogs, children, strangers, and how it reacted to those situations; is it outgoing and friendly, or shy. Of course, any other cute things that it does or anything you want to point out about its fur or appearance is good as well. It can be as long as you want, but the typical description is a paragraph or two.

If the cat has some bad habits, this can be discussed during the first phone conversation. The web story should generate interest, not turn people away. We don't want to mislead people; however, we really try to focus on the positive. Please e-mail the story to the web sit posting team and it will be posted to the web.

How do you get your fosters picture on the web?

If your cat's picture is not yet on the Web site, then there are several options for getting pictures taken and posted. If you have access to a digital camera and would like to take the pictures yourself, you are welcome to do so. Please e-mail them in .jpg format to the web site posting team with your story (see above for story tips).

You are welcome to take your cat to the shelter during one of the regularly scheduled digital photography sessions. These take place on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings from approximately 6:00-7:00pm., depending on the quantity of animals they are photographing. Please make sure you have your case number. You can e-mail the story and have it pasted into the Web page. Please be patient as they are responsible for taking the picture of every adoptable animal in the shelter and are usually pressed for time.

Another option is to have a traveling photographer come to your home to photograph your foster cat. This is a nice option for shy cats and those that don't travel well, or for foster parents with schedule and transportation difficulties. Please contact the traveling photographer team to arrange this option.

Once the pictures and stories are posted, the calls are funneled through the foster care voice mail where a pre-screening of potential adopters is done. You will be provided the names and numbers of potential adopters. Call and discuss the cat and further screen them as you like. If they sound like suitable adopters, you will arrange a meeting with them, usually at your home. The process for adoption should then be followed if things work out.

If you wish, your own contact information (phone/e-mail address) can be posted with the web story. Since the public will be contacting you directly without having been pre-screened, this option requires you to be able to pre-screen potential adopters yourself. This is not suggested for newer foster parents or those not comfortable interviewing and perhaps turning down unsuitable adopters. Please contact your case manager(s) for further information on this or read *Questions to Ask Potential Adopters*.

Promoting your foster at the shelter

Sitting with your foster cat at the shelter to promote its adoption is a great way to speed the process of adoption and still get to meet potential adopters, as well as exchange information so that you can possibly remain in contact with adopters. This is done **by appointment only** and a foster ID badge needs to be worn. See the current Cat Foster Team Roles for information on scheduling your foster cat. Please remember that you are only there to promote your own foster cats.

Only one cat is to be out of a cage at a time and potential adopters must fill out an application and check with an officer at the front desk BEFORE handling any cat. Please do not try and answer questions about other cats unless you are a trained Matchmaker. More detailed adoption room guidelines are available and you should familiarize yourself with this; ask your case manager(s), or a team leader about obtaining these guidelines. The shelter opens at 12:00, and staff are usually busy cleaning right up until they open, so please be respectful if you've entered the building ahead of time.

Returning your foster to the shelter

If the Web site isn't doing the trick, you simply don't have enough time to wait things out, and have no time to stay at the shelter and promote your foster cat, you are welcome to return it to the shelter for adoption. Please let your case manager(s) and team leaders know your plans. We need to know where your foster cat is at all times. We can tell you whether or not there is space at the shelter, and we can sometimes reserve a cage in the main adoption room during the slower times of the year.

When returning your foster cat, you must bring a description to put on their cage. The best thing you can bring is the web page. If you cannot print out the web page, please make sure that your description contains the following:

- the case number
- an introductory line indicating that the cat was in foster care so the public knows that your story is based on observations made in a home
- something indicating whether the cat is already on the Web site so the digital photography team doesn't waste time taking repeat pictures

When your foster has been adopted

Please let your case manager(s) and team leaders know when your animal has been adopted. This way they can be removed from the web, and we will know they are no longer available in case there were any other calls about the cat.

Getting your foster spayed/neutered

While many cats and kittens will be spayed or neutered at the time of adoption after the adopters do their shelter paperwork, it is possible to have the surgery done while they are still in foster care. Call the Municipal Spay and Neuter Clinic, at 206.386.4260, to schedule an appointment for your healthy and over 2 pounds kitten/cat. Ask for the surgery guidelines information sheet if you are not familiar with the routine. All felines attending the Fabulous Felines adoption events must be spayed/neutered at least one week prior to the event. You will receive e-mails announcing the dates that are set aside in the clinic for this purpose.

Additional adoption options

Monthly adoption events are held to promote adoptions and give the shelter and foster program publicity. Feel free to ask if any events are coming up. All felines attending monthly adoption events must be already altered and have their surgery done at least one week prior to the event.

Friends, co-workers, and relatives often want to adopt your foster cats. If they are qualified adopters, we are more than happy to adopt to them. Please follow the guidelines in the adoption procedures document for these cases. *Shelter officers always do a final screening and have the final authority to approve all adoptions.*

You are also welcome to adopt your foster cat, following the same procedures as everyone else.

Questions to ask potential adopters

Foster parents are encouraged to screen potential adopters regardless of prior pre-screening by voice mail volunteers, screening volunteers at adoption events, or staff. Ask open-ended questions about their plans for adding a new feline to their household. If this is a second cat for them, the shelter has an excellent handout on introducing a second cat.

Please remind them that cats can live over 20 years, and that this is a lifetime commitment!!! What will they do if they move? Travel? If the cat gets sick?

Statistics show that the lifespan of an indoor cat is doubled!! SAS does not have a policy on this. If they plan on letting their cat outdoors please remind them of the many dangers of being outside, including cars, wildlife, poisonous substances, troubled people, etc. Also, NO adopter should plan on letting a small kitten outdoors for quite some time, unless it's on a leash and harness.

These are just a few suggestions. If you are not comfortable interviewing potential adopters, feel free to refer them to the foster care voice mail at 206.615.0737. The volunteers on voice mail are experienced with pre-screening people who call on Web site pictures. Team leaders, case managers, and shelter staff can also help you evaluate a potential adopter.

WEB SITE POSTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make sure your kitten is over 2 pounds and healthy. We cannot post any kitten that is under 2 pounds or who is not healthy. We also cannot store information on a kitten that is too young. Please send this information only when each kitten is ready to be adopted.
2. Use a copy of this form for each kitten you want posted. Fill in the below information, a through h, in an e-mail body if possible, and include your written story about the kitty. Then send it to the web posting team.
 - A. Your Name and phone - this is for voice mail screeners to be able to call you
 - B. Kitten's breed and color/colors –t he generic term for a mixed breed cat is Domestic Short/Med/Long Hair (DSH/DMH/DLH)
 - C. Gender of animal
 - D. Approx size when adult; small, medium, or large - this is a guess when they are so small
 - E. Cat's age - baby, young, or adult (baby is from birth to 6 months, young would be 6 months to 2 years, and adult would be 2 years or older)
 - F. Cat's name
 - G. Case number with addendum for this cat/kitten ONLY - no multiple listings.
 - H. Has the cat been altered?
3. Write a story about the cat. To make it clear to people that this cat is not sitting in a cage down at the shelter, you may want to begin each story with "This cat is currently living in a foster home." Make sure you write your story about ONE KITTEN ONLY. If the kitty is really attached to a sibling, you can mention that in their story, encouraging people to take them together, but we still need each kitty to have its own listing.
4. If you want people to contact you directly, include your phone or e-mail in the story, otherwise the usual blurb will be included, "If you would like to learn more about this kitten/cat, please call the foster care voice mail at 206.615.0737".
5. Photos make a huge difference in how many calls your kitten will get. Each photo should be of ONE KITTEN ONLY. Save the photo as a .jpg file. Please send only one picture that you think is the best of each cat. Space for incoming mail is limited and numerous pictures of one kitten/cat takes up a lot of space in a mailbox, even if zipped.
6. Check the Web site a day or two after you have sent your info. You know the cat best and will catch any errors on the site. If you don't see the cat listed, or if there are mistakes in the information, just send an e-mail with any corrections.
7. Check the Web site regularly to ensure the cat or kitten's posting is still there. Postings sometimes disappear and we don't want your case to miss adoption opportunities. Please notify the web posting e-mail address (see #2 above) if missing.
8. When your kitten is adopted, send an e-mail to the team leaders and your case manager. They will notify the voice mail team and the web posting team.
9. Case managers can answer questions about the adoption process or refer you to other appropriate team members as needed. For questions regarding Web site information, you can send an e-mail to the web posting address.

PROMOTING A CAT FOR ADOPTION

Web site

This is the best way to get to choose from the most adopters. You can screen by phone ahead of time and/or you can have them pre-screened by a team member before talking with them. They see your kitties in a home-like setting where their behaviors are most normal. You can spend more time chatting with adopters and educating them on how to train cats for the best possible manners, such as biting, scratching posts, and clapping to get them off counters. Adopters willing to go through the steps and time this takes, tend to be less impulsive and more thoughtful about their adoption decision.

Adoption events

This is a good way to have many adopters see the cat to help find a good match for them. The adoption takes place immediately and the staff is readily available onsite. It is moderately easy to screen adopters. It is fun to meet other foster parents and feel part of the foster community.

Adoption room promotion at the shelter

This can facilitate a quick adoption, since this is where the public mainly comes to seek a cat/kitten for adoption. For kittens, they often are adopted within a few minutes or hours (depending on season).

The adoption room is available by appointment only. Please ask your case manager about this.

Posting information at local businesses

The method is especially helpful for special cases or long-timers in foster care. A wide variety of people will see the available fosterlings, whether they're seeking a cat or not. People who didn't know about Seattle Animal Shelter will now. Certain businesses (vet offices and pet supply stores) are likely to allow you to post. You can have people call the foster voice mail for pre-screening as with any case or post your own contact information.

Placing an ad in any local publication

By placing an ad in a local newspaper or online publication you can reach a large audience which may lead to a quicker adoption. The cost to place the ad is at the foster parent's expense.

Returning kitty to shelter for adoption

This may be the only option for some adult cats that are difficult to adopt through other methods. Most adults left in the adoption room are adopted within 2-4 weeks. If you opt for this, let your team leader know first since there may be reasons that a return to the shelter at a particular time is bad (shelter full or an outbreak of a nasty disease, for example). Please, *always* leave a nice descriptive note on the cage with the kitty that indicates they spent time in a foster home (your descriptions are more credible since you've lived with kitty) to help them get adopted faster.

Returning a kitten to the shelter is strongly discouraged. Please try to transfer the case instead. There is high risk of illness and euthanasia is possible. Use this as a last resort after asking case manager/team leader only.

ADOPTION ROOM SCHEDULING

Foster cats may be shown in the SAS adoption room "by appointment only". To find out more about adoption room policies or to schedule a time slot, contact the adoption room scheduler.

Shelter staff and other volunteers ask that we observe the following guidelines:

- **Matchmaker volunteers will be working in the adoption room. They are assisting the public to meet shelter cats and foster parents should not interfere with their jobs.** Please cooperate with their requests or reminders about shelter rules. They are specially trained to assist the public and know the shelter cats and shelter rules usually better than we home-based volunteers. One of the Matchmaker volunteers describes their job this way: *"I work really hard to find out about people, and help them make the right choices, BEFORE I show them any cats. I also work hard to discourage people who want to make the wrong choices. And I send a lot to the Fabulous Felines [adoption] events (especially those with special needs for cats to live with other cats and/or dogs). But when the [foster] kittens are out in someone's arms, and the foster parent starts talking to prospective adopters the minute they walk in the room, I don't have a chance to screen/assess. I'd appreciate it if you could remind foster parents that they should not sit there and hold their cats the entire time, and/or interfere with the work of Matchmakers by talking first to people who come in the room."* However, you are the authority when speaking about your foster cat and Matchmakers should defer to you when describing your foster cat.
- **Please don't "push" your cat or kittens onto people when they first walk into the room.** We are not there to compete with shelter cats or Matchmakers and we will not be welcome if we do this. Let people browse the room and be approached by the Matchmaker first, if one is present. However, after a potential adopter has looked over the shelter cats and before they leave the room, it is acceptable to say something to the effect of, *"This cat is also available for adoption. I'm the foster parent and can tell you about this cat"*. As people walking into the adoption room have *not* been pre-screened, it is best to not push.
- **The rule of one cat out of a cage at a time applies to foster cats.** Please do not monopolize this advantage by holding your foster on your lap or in your arms. Please leave your cat in its cage unless someone wants to see them. If you want more flexibility and the room is busy with other cats out and being visited, consider making arrangements for the potential adopter to meet at your home where you will have all the freedom you need to have kitty out and about.
- **It is a shelter rule that all potential adopters must fill out an application and talk to an officer BEFORE they handle ANY cat, including foster cats.**
- **Please avoid bringing extra family members during your shift as our small adoption room gets crowded very easily.** Also, please don't bring children and leave them to roam about the shelter. If a potential adopter seems to need space to visit another cat, please be flexible about moving your carrier and yourself from the bench. Having volunteers and foster parents occupying the limited seating area makes it difficult for a serious adopter to visit the cats.

THE ADOPTION PROCESS

No cat or kitten is to be given to a potential adopter prior to their completing the adoption process through the shelter.

The following procedures should be followed for **any** adoption taking place directly from your home. This includes Web site referrals, as well as friends or relatives wanting to adopt a foster cat.

Kittens:

Kittens MUST WEIGH 2 lbs. to be adopted. There are no exceptions made. They must weigh 2 pounds to be spayed/neutered, which must be done PRIOR to going to their new home, and after the adopters have done their paperwork and paid the shelter. There are no exceptions to this either. If adopters are concerned about the early spay/neuter, they are welcome to call the voice mail at 206.615.0737 to discuss the issue, and, if necessary, they will be directed to the shelter or clinic staff. If the cat has been sick, they must also be completely healthy prior to surgery -- no lingering symptoms, such as sneezing or coughing, for at least one week prior to surgery.

If you have people wanting to adopt foster kitten(s) and you approve of them, please give them a note indicating:

- Your approval
- Your full name
- The cat's case number
- Addendum if assigned
- A phone number where you can be reached (please see a sample Adoption Approval form)

Shelter officers will expect to see this information. They can now go to the shelter to complete their paperwork, have a final screening by a shelter officer, and pay the fees. They **MUST** have the correct case # and addendum # in order to complete the adoption. If you are unsure of the correct addendum #'s for kittens, please bring them in to the shelter for identification prior to sending people in to adopt.

Adopters should arrive at least one hour before closing time (6:00 pm) to allow enough time for the process, and not keep staff after closing time. Please ask adopters to avoid starting the adoption right at opening time as well (12:00), as this is a very busy time for the officers.

When the prospective adopters go to the shelter, they will fill out an adoption application and be interviewed by the staff. Please remind adopters that if they rent they must have their landlord's approval. If they are approved they will then pay the fee. The fee is approximately \$82 to \$87, depending upon the gender of the animal, where the adopter lives, and what the licensing requirements/fees are in their area. This amount covers the adoption fee, leukemia test, first vaccination, worming, licensing, microchip, spay/neuter, and a free office visit at any vet within King County.

If spay/neuter surgery still needs to be performed, the shelter staff will call you at that time to let you know when they are to be brought in, usually the following business day. Food must be withheld after 9:00pm the night before surgery, water is acceptable. They need to be dropped

off at the spay/neuter clinic (connected to the shelter, parking lot is directly off 15th) between 7:30-9:00am. The adopters will then call the spay/neuter clinic in the afternoon to confirm pick-up that evening. The spay/neuter clinic closes at 5:30pm. The adopters' pick-up the kittens and your job is done.

Cats:

If the foster cat is already spayed/neutered it can be adopted at any time. Once the adoption process is complete, any additional veterinary costs for a sick cat will be the adopter's responsibility. If your foster cat is not spayed/neutered, it must be completely healthy prior to surgery -- no lingering symptoms, such as sneezing or coughing for at least one week prior to surgery.

If you are not sure (we often don't know if females are spayed), please bring the foster cat to the shelter to be shaved, in order to check for a spay scar any time during business hours, prior to sending a potential adopter down to adopt. The adoption fee will be less if the cat is already spayed/neutered.

If they are not already spayed/neutered the same process described in the kitten section above will be followed, with the exception that food must be withheld after 6:00pm. You will drop the cat off and the adopter will pick it up. Sometimes the following morning with adult cats, but the clinic will advise the adopter when they call the afternoon of the surgery as to when they can go home.

If they are already spayed/neutered, once the adopter is approved and pays for the cat, they can pick it up from you. Please make sure they have a receipt from the shelter before giving them the cat.

GUIDELINES FOR ADOPTION

Animals will only be adopted to responsible owners as pets and companions where they will be assured a lifetime of care and commitment. Adoptions will not be done solely to prevent humane euthanasia of a shelter animal. The animal's welfare after leaving the shelter is first and foremost! For this reason, the following guidelines are set forth. These are the guidelines used by staff in adoption counseling. Exceptions to these policies can be, and are made, based on individual circumstances determined by a supervisor. Most exceptions will require approval from a manager or designee.

Please note the following:

1. Seattle Animal Shelter (SAS) reserves the right to refuse adoption of any animal.
2. By policy, no person under 18 years of age is allowed to sign the adoption contract or agreement.
3. Any person showing signs of intoxication or under the influence of illegal drugs at the time of application will be refused adoption.
4. Any person adopting an animal must be able to show proper identification consisting of a driver's license or other suitable identification, which includes a photograph of said person.
5. Individuals living with a parent or guardian must have the consent of the parent or guardian to adopt an animal. The parent or guardian may be required to sign the adoption agreement prior to adoption of the animal.
6. No animal shall be adopted as a gift to another person, with the only exception being a parent for a minor child living within the same household. Gift certificates are available to allow the new owner to select the animal of their choice. The person signing the adoption agreement will be held legally responsible for the lifetime care of that particular animal.
7. SAS will not adopt an animal to someone who is trying to get an animal for another individual who has already been refused an adoption, or to someone who is trying to adopt an animal for someone else to avoid the costs associated with a redemption.
8. SAS will not adopt an animal to anyone who displays an unwillingness to comply with SAS policies pertaining to animal adoptions.
9. SAS will not adopt an animal to a home to replace a lost pet unless the owners can show proof that they have made a sincere effort to locate their animal. It is recommended owners spend a minimum of 30 days seeking their lost pet before they consider adopting another animal.
10. As SAS adopts out pets only to persons willing to make a lifetime commitment to that animal, no animal will be adopted to any person who intends to sell or give the animal away; persons who cannot and will not keep the animal are required to return the animal to SAS.
11. SAS will not adopt an animal to any person who lives in a rental unit/house without the expressed permission from the property manager/owner, indicating that animals are allowed on the premises.
12. SAS will not adopt an animal to anyone who has demonstrated a lack of responsibility for their pets, such as being run over by a car, impounded on violations, previous cruelty citations, and license violations.

13. Puppies or kittens under the age of four months will not be placed in homes with children under six years of age, unless monitored interaction shows the child to be mature and gentle, and the adult conscientious. Adopters with small children will be cautioned to monitor all interaction between the new pet and children to assure the animal does not harm the child, and vice versa.
14. The legal limit for household pets in the City of Seattle is three, unless otherwise zoned in accordance with the Department of Construction and Land Use zoning codes. Anyone admitting to the presence of more than the limit, including the animal they are planning to adopt, must show proof of having a valid kennel license granted by the appropriate authority before being allowed to adopt.
15. All animals are to be placed in homes as loved pets and companions only. No animal shall be adopted primarily as a “working” animal; including dogs that would be used as watch, guard, attack, hunting, or cattle dogs; and cats used as mousers or barn cats. Adoptions shall be refused to anyone suspected of using animals for dog fighting, vivisection, experimentation, occult rites, or other activities that may be inappropriate or harmful to the animal.
16. SAS requires dogs and cats which are adopted from the shelter be sterilized before leaving the shelter. Exceptions will be allowed only in cases where the animal’s age or health does not warrant immediate spay or neuter, or the adopter wishes the animal to be altered by their own personal, local veterinarian.
17. SAS will not adopt an animal to someone who has previously surrendered their own healthy animal to the shelter for reasons of convenience or irresponsibility.
18. A fenced yard is required for all dogs unless it is clearly demonstrated that the owner can humanely confine the animal, keep it indoors or on a leash at all times, and provide controlled exercise. Dogs shall not be adopted to homes where they will continuously be chained outside or allowed to run at large outside the confines of the owner’s premises. Any adoption of large breed dogs (over 40 pounds) to homes without a fenced yard must be approved by the manager or designee.
19. No kittens or puppies under the age of six weeks shall be adopted.
20. Puppies and other dogs not housebroken should be placed with people who are at home during most of the day. Any animal under four months of age should have all day supervision until fully housetrained and well-adjusted to the rules of the new household.
21. All pet owners are strongly encouraged to keep their pets indoors at night.
22. Adoption of wild animals is strictly prohibited.
23. Licensing of pets, including those currently at home, with the appropriate city or county agency is mandatory with each adoption.
24. SAS will not allow a dog to leave the shelter riding unprotected in the back of an open pickup truck. A temporary leash will be provide to secure the dog in the truck before the animal will be released and adopters will be informed of the danger to their pets from riding unprotected and unrestrained in the truck bed.
25. All new owners must be informed of the need for regular veterinary care, inoculation, and grooming for their pets. Owners must be willing to provide proper care for an animal’s entire lifetime.
26. Owners of adopted animals must be willing to provide their animals with obedience training, as necessary. Such training is to the owner’s benefit as well-trained animals are seldom a nuisance to the community.

27. SAS is often not fully informed by previous owners about an animal's health condition, character traits, or behavior patterns. Therefore, SAS staff should encourage prospective adopters to become familiar with different breeds by researching through books or magazines, or consulting veterinarians or breeders prior to adopting an animal.
28. All fees incidental to the adoption must be paid in full prior to the release of the animal from the shelter.
29. The decision to approve or disallow an adoption shall not be influenced by the applicant's race, gender, age (if of legal age), national origin, religion, disability, sexual preference, or appearance.
30. Seattle Animal Shelter can make no guarantee as to the animal's condition; however, we strive to offer for adoption those animals which have behaved socially and appeared healthy during their shelter stay. To enhance the animal's chances of remaining healthy, we worm, vaccinate, and surgically sterilize them prior to their release to new homes.

SCREENING QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Potential adopters will be pre-screened by a voice mail volunteer if you've posted a foster to the Web site. Pre-screening is also done on visitors to adoption events. Sometimes a shelter officer will have done the pre-screening and referred someone to you.

However, every foster parent is strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with these suggested screening questions and re-screen before deciding if a potential adopter is an appropriate match for your foster feline.

Pre-screening does not guarantee that a potential adopter is right for a cat; it's merely the first step in assessing a potential match.

Screening is a great opportunity to educate people who might not be aware of some issues that affect the wellbeing of an animal. Some potential adopters will appreciate the information they learn and you may feel confident that they will become responsible cat owners. Others will persist with an opinion that you do not feel is in your foster cat's best interest. Ask open-ended questions about their plans for adding a new feline to their household. Here are some important questions to consider:

Do you have any other cats or pets?

It's nice to see little kittens go to homes either with a sibling or another cat to keep them company, unless the kitten will not be alone all day.

The shelter has an excellent handout on introducing a new cat or kitten to resident cats and dogs.

Have you had cats or other pets in the past? What happened to them?

Hit by a car or "not sure" are answers that send up red flag!!

Who is your regular veterinarian (if they have other pets)?

Having a regular vet is a sign of responsible pet ownership. If they say their pet has never been sick, ask them where they've been getting them vaccinated. Some people don't believe in vaccinating adult cats that are indoor-only, but in general most pets should be current on their vaccinations.

How many children do you have? What are their ages?

Small kittens will probably do best in homes without children under the age of six. However, it most definitely depends on the child and you should insist on any small children, if there are any, under about the age of eight coming with the parent to visit the kitten so that you can see how they interact with the cat.

Will the cat be indoor, outdoor, or both?

Statistics show that the lifespan of an indoor cat is doubled! If adopters plan on letting a cat out, please remind them of all the many dangers of being outside, including cars, wildlife, poisonous substances, and troubled people. Also, NO adopter should plan on letting a small kitten outdoors for quite some time unless it's on a leash *and* harness.

Owning a pet is a lifetime commitment!

Please remind potential adopters that cats can live over 20 years, and that this is a lifetime commitment! What will they do if they move, travel, have children, or when the cat gets sick? .

Some additional open-ended questions:

- Why are you interested in THIS cat/kitten?
- Why are you interested in a cat/kitten at this time?
- Cats have a natural need to scratch. Some people handle this by providing scratching posts, others allow scratching anywhere, some people opt for declawing, and others learn to trim claws. How do you plan to deal with this
- Will this kitty get any outdoor time? (Again, if you advocate indoor only or supervised outdoor time, asking in this way may get a more honest answer).

These are just a few suggestions. If you are not comfortable interviewing potential adopters, feel free to contact your case manager, team leaders, or a voice mail volunteer for assistance.

CAT ADOPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

City of Seattle
Department of Executive Administration – Seattle Animal Shelter

CAT ADOPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Thank you for considering adopting an orphan from our shelter. You will be making a 10-20 year commitment to the cat you adopt, and our goal is to help make the best match possible for you and the orphaned cat in which you are interested. The following questions will help us achieve that goal.

- 1) Do you currently live in a: Apartment Condo House Other: _____
- 2) Do you currently: Lease Own Rent the residence where you live?
- 3) How long have you lived at your current residence? _____

If you are not the property owner, Seattle Animal Shelter has permission to verify current pet policy:

Landlord's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

- 4) How many adults live in your home? _____
- 5) How many children? _____ Ages? _____
- 6) Does anyone in your household have allergies? No Yes
- 7) Who will be primarily responsible for the care of this cat? _____
- 8) Is this cat a gift? No Yes If yes, for whom? _____
- 9) Which of the following best describes your reasons for wanting this cat? Check all that apply.
 - Companion for me/family For kids To breed
 - Companion for pet Mouser Other: _____
- 10) What attracts you to the cat you are interested in?

- 11) Will this cat be: Indoor only Outdoor only Both
- 12) Where will the cat be kept when no one is home? _____
- 13) Where will the cat be kept at night? _____
- 14) Do you plan to have the cat declawed? No Yes

If yes, why? _____

- 15) Have you had pets in the past (as an adult)? No Yes
 If yes, list all pets you have had in the last ten years, include current as well as those you no longer own (fill in or circle as appropriate):

Breed	Age	Sex	Spayed/ Neutered	Owned how long	Does the pet still live with you	If no, what happened to them
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	
		F / M	No / Yes		No / Yes	

- 16) If you have other pets, are their vaccinations current? No Yes
 17) If you have other pets, are they currently licensed? No Yes
 18) Do you have a regular veterinarian? No Yes

If yes, name and location of vet: _____

- 19) Under what circumstances would you **not** keep this cat?

- 20) How much money do you expect to spend per year caring for this cat, including vet care, tags, food, supplies, and toys?

\$ _____

- 21) Please check the topics you would like our staff to discuss with you today:

- Cats with kids Grooming Introduction to other pets Nail trimming
 Declawing Indoors vs. outdoors Litter box issues Scratching the furniture

I certify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I also acknowledge falsification of the above can result in my being denied adoption of an animal, or, if an animal has been adopted to me, the return of that animal to Seattle Animal Shelter. I understand that all animals adopted from Seattle Animal Shelter must successfully pass a health and temperament screening, and must be spayed or neutered before they are released from the shelter.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Case Number: _____ Reviewed by / Date: _____

ADOPTER APPROVAL FORM

Date: _____

I/We have interviewed: _____

And recommend him/her/them as adopter(s) for Case #: _____

Addendum # (if applicable): _____

Description of animal(s):

Gender:

Color:

Age:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Foster parent information:

Print name: _____

Phone # where you can be reached day of adoption: _____

Signature: _____

Please note:

All adoptions are subject to final approval by an officer of the Seattle Animal Shelter. This form is only to verify that the potential adopter has met the foster parent(s) and animal(s) in foster – it does not guarantee adoption.

In order to process the adoption without significant delays, this form must be submitted at the time of adoption. If the completed form is unavailable, please realize that the foster parent will need to be contacted before the adoption can be finalized. This is to ensure the appropriate animal is adopted.

Please arrive to the shelter one hour prior to closing to begin the adoption procedure. Also try to avoid opening time (12:00pm), which is typically a very busy time at the shelter. Thank you very much!