

# CAMDEN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

## FOSTER CARE INFORMATION

### “Foster Team Members”

- The shelter managers as well as senior staff and senior foster parents will guide you as part of the foster team throughout your time as a foster parent.

### To Become a Foster Parent

- If you want to foster an animal, the foster application must be completed. Once the application is turned in, it is reviewed by the foster coordinator and veterinary/landlord references are checked.
- Once your application has been approved, you will receive an orientation, orientation packet, and foster agreement form from a member of the foster team. Once you have gone through orientation, read through the orientation packet and signed your agreement form, you will be considered part of the "Foster Family" at Camden County Animal Shelter. At this time, you will be able to foster animals from the shelter.

### To Meet Your Foster Animal Match

- If there is a particular animal that you wish to foster, you can talk with the "Foster Team" or email us at [info@ccasnj.org](mailto:info@ccasnj.org)
- You may come down to the shelter at any time during the process to meet potential foster animals, but for the safety of our animals, you may not take them home to foster until a member of the foster team approves the match.
- The Foster Team may call and ask you to foster a particular animal if there is an urgent situation. The animal may require special care or need to be out of the shelter to become more social, obedient, healthy, and/or adoptable.
- Many cases will involve puppies or kittens, some who may need to be bottle fed. It is important to try and keep these little guys and their developing immune systems out of the shelter and away from all the possible diseases!
- There will be emergency calls made for all animals that require that they be bottle fed or receive immediate foster care. If you wish to be part of this emergency foster care system, please let the foster team know, and you will be trained to handle these special situations.

## *Taking Your Foster Animal Home*

- Once a member of the foster team has approved your match, it is time to get the paperwork together.
- Please do not leave the shelter without signing the "Foster Agreement Form". You must fill out this form for EVERY animal you take. A copy will be placed in your foster parent file as well as in the file of the animal in your care. This is very important in tracking the animals' location and care.
- Please do not leave the shelter without verifying your foster animal is up-to-date on all vaccinations. Ask for a photocopy of the animal's med sheet, and verify the following have been administered or noted:
  - ❖ Distemper Vaccine (FVRCP for cats, DA2PP for dogs)
  - ❖ Rabies Vaccine
  - ❖ FeLV/FIV Combo Test (Cats Only)
  - ❖ Bordetella Vaccine (Dogs Only)
  - ❖ Deworming medication (Pyrantel) if necessary
  - ❖ Additional vaccines or their due dates for kittens and puppies
  - ❖ Spay/neuter status or the time/age when this can be completed
- After you have taken your foster into your home and acclimated to each other, please update CCAS on how everyone is adjusting. You can contact one of the foster team members via email at [info@ccasnj.org](mailto:info@ccasnj.org)

## *Adoptions*

- The shelter is thrilled whenever an animal is adopted - especially a foster animal. They depend on you to help "network" and seek a good home for them. Because we may never know where or when we may bump into that special adopter, we suggest that you carry adoption applications and procedure information with you at all times. Keep a picture of your foster animal too. You just never know who may be interested at that time or who might know someone that may be interested! Please make sure you tell anyone that you give an application to that all applications are approved through the shelter only. They can either hand deliver or fax the application to the shelter. Under no circumstances should the foster family approve an application or give away their foster animal. All adoptions must take place at the shelter.
- All animals that are up for adoption (except for puppies/kittens that may be too young) are placed on the pet-finder website and the shelter's website [www.ccasnj.org](http://www.ccasnj.org). If the animal is in foster care, that will be stated on the animal's bio. All potential adopter correspondence will initially be sent to the shelter's main email address. At this time, a general statement is sent to the potential adopter, along with the information about the shelter and how they can fill out the pre-adoption application.
- The foster team will send all correspondence that are reviewed as "good" upon initial contact to the related foster family. At that time, the foster family is able to make contact and get to know the potential adopters. All correspondence to potential adopters needs to be cc'd to the shelter email at [info@ccasnj.org](mailto:info@ccasnj.org)

## (Adoptions Continued)

- Once an application has been approved through the shelter's office staff, the foster family is able to assist the shelter in a more in-depth adopter assessment, and help select the best home for their foster animal from these approved applications. This process helps assure the foster family that the home selected is a good home and to create a relationship via the internet to bring a sense of comfort to the foster family. Please remember that there may be many applications for just one animal. Selection may be difficult and you can always ask for help from the foster team during the process. Also, when you get many applications for just one animal, you are going to have some people that are disappointed. Suggest alternatives such as another animal at the shelter including the older dogs/cats. Often, with a little assistance, these applicants can find another animal in need of a home at CCAS. In the meantime, if anyone seems like they would make a good foster parent, find out if they are interested in becoming part of the foster family and put them in touch with the foster coordinator. Please remember, all applications must be processed by the shelter's office staff.
  - ❖ All approved applications for your foster animal will be kept alphabetically in the approved application binder at the shelter. You may go to the shelter to review these applications at anytime.
  - ❖ While deciding on an adopter, you may select a few of the approved applicants and ask if they want to meet your foster animal. You can set up meets at the shelter, so you can get to know the applicants and see how they interact with your foster animal, which will help you in the selection process. Home visits may be arranged in special circumstances with the approval of the foster coordinator.
  - ❖ Make sure to contact approved applicants who were not selected to adopt your foster animal. Encourage them to come in and meet some of our other adoptable animals in need of homes. Let them know that their application was approved and will remain "active" in the shelter's files. If they wish to adopt another animal, they do not have to fill out another application, they can just refer the office staff to the "approved active file". We want to keep everyone hopeful that they will find and be able to adopt a new pet soon.

## **ALL ADOPTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED AT THE SHELTER - NO EXCEPTIONS**

- If there are any last minute instructions that you need the adopter to be aware of, you can include them in the little "care kit" the shelter provides new adopters with. We recommend, especially with puppies/kittens, that a sampling of their current food be included in this "care kit". This will help in the "transition" of their digestive track. When an animal changes food, it can suffer from diarrhea. This is much worse on a puppy/kitten's digestive track.
- You can continue to correspond with the adopter to keep tabs on the foster animal. This helps the foster family in the "letting go" stage of foster care.

## Medical & Emergency Care

- During the shelter's hours of operation, there is always someone on staff that is willing to aid or assist you in any problems/concerns you may have about your foster animal.
- If one of the shelter vets happens to be at the shelter when you are experiencing your difficulty, the vet will be more than willing to examine your foster animal.
- Before bringing your foster animal home, please check his/her paperwork to be sure that he/she have received all of the following medical necessities:
  - ❖ **CATS:** DVRCP vaccine, FeLV/FIV test, Rabies vaccine, Pyrantel (or other deworming medication and additional parasite treatment if necessary)
  - ❖ **DOGS:** DA2PP, Bordetella vaccine, Rabies vaccine, Pyrantel (or other deworming medication and additional parasite treatments if necessary)
  - ❖ Spay/Neuter. Know the s/n status along with their sex and make sure it has been properly recorded in the file.
  - ❖ Some puppies/kittens may be too young to receive some of the above medical treatments. Make sure you know when they will be due for the ones they have not received so you can bring them back to the shelter.
- If you have a medical concern during off hours, you can always reach out to the foster team. Many medical concerns are minor and can be treated at the shelter, saving money on the cost of medication and veterinary care. For the more major concerns, we have veterinary offices that we work with at reduced rates to provide proper and more affordable care for our animals. Please consult with a member of the foster team or the shelter emergency number on the best course of medical treatment for your foster animal.
- **The shelter has an emergency number, 856-325-7535 that is monitored at all times by someone on the shelter staff. The staff person can give you some directions to assist you through your situation.**
  - ❖ The staff member you reach on the emergency phone or a member of the foster team may determine that the medical concern is minor and can be treated the next day at the shelter. Or they may determine that your foster animal should see a veterinarian in which case they can recommend someone we work with at a reduced shelter rate. In order for CCAS to cover the cost of the vet bill, unless it is a life or death situation, the veterinary visit must be approved by the staff or foster team. If you take the foster animal to a vet without proper authorization, it will be at your own expense.
  - ❖ You will have to pay for the vet from your own pocket at the time of the visit, but you will be reimbursed by the shelter for an authorized vet visit. You will be required to submit your receipt for reimbursement.
- CCAS will not pay for any treatment that was not approved through the shelter staff or foster team.

## *Foster Animals and Your Pets*

- Most foster parents have pets of their own. Caution should be administered when introducing fosters to your own family and pets. Take into consideration what the foster animal may have been experiencing prior to entering your home. How a foster parent introduces an abused adult animal versus a stray animal would be totally different in methods. If you have some concerns on a method or approach, please ask before you place the foster animal or your own pet in harm's way.
- Make sure your own pets are up to date on all their shots. The shelter really appreciates you being able to take a shelter pet into your home; however, they do not ever want to see you compromise anyone's safety or health. In a rare case that your pet may have acquired something from the shelter pet, the shelter can usually provide some help. In the case of worms, which is a fairly common minor medical issue, deworming medication will be provided. If your dog develops the very same cough as the shelter pet, CCAS will provide the appropriate medication for your pet as well. More serious veterinary expenses, such as those from bites or injuries, would be at your expense. Please be very cautious of how you arrange your temporary living situation.
- Take the same caution when introducing your foster animal to family members. Sometimes foster animals may have an adverse reaction to a certain type of human. For example, some animals may react differently to males vs. females. Please alert us of these cases for adoption purposes as well as to help find the most suitable home for your foster animal.
- Definitely "Show Off" your foster animals by taking them on walks or to special events. Make sure you are very familiar with your foster before you do these things. We do not want to place the animal in a situation that may place it, other animals, or any person in harm's way.
- If you are fostering puppies/kittens, do not let many "hands" handle your foster(s). Every hand that touches the little one carries bacteria and germs. The little pets' immune systems have already been compromised by not being with their mother and we do not want to jeopardize their health any further by exposing your foster babies to potential illness. Once the foster babies have reached a healthy 5-6 weeks, then you may slowly start to introduce the little guys to others - but slowly!
  - ❖ The shelter will notify you when you must bring in the foster puppies/kittens for their first shots. Make sure that all immunizations are recorded on a medical sheet and placed in the foster animal's file.
- The foster animal has been released into your care. You and only you are responsible for the care of the foster animal. At no time are you allowed to "Give Away" or allow another person (that is not approved through the foster team) to take the foster into their home for "visits" longer than several hours without you being there. If you know of a potential adopter that would like to spend time with the pet, arrange your schedule so that you will always be there as well. Or, you can have them apply to be a foster family. We are aware that there are rare instances when there are special circumstances, but in those cases, you must still get authorization from the foster team.
- If you are going to be away on a trip or vacation, arrangements must be made for the animal to stay with an approved foster family. Foster team members can help you find a family or approve a friend or family member to be a foster if they go through the application process. Please plan ahead to allow enough time for proper arrangements to be made.

*Thank you for your interest in becoming a part of our "Foster Family".  
Our animals are looking forward to meeting you!*