

Guide for Cat Foster Homes

Top Tips for Foster Parents

- Always notify the Foster Coordinator whenever you get a new foster or adopt one out.
- Check in regularly with the Foster Coordinator.
- Ask for advice if your cat/kitten has stopped eating.
- Kittens crash fast, so alert the Foster Medical Coordinator early if you see behavior changes.
- If your cat seems sick, check immediately for hydration - she should be drinking water, using the litter box, have elastic skin tone and a moist mouth.
- Never use clumping litter for kittens under six months of age.
- Wash your hands and change your clothing after handling sick animals to prevent spread of illness.
- Never let your cat run loose outside; guard against escapes.

Important Contacts

- ASVT Foster Coordinator
 - (Dogs) Arlyce (Fred) Kratochvil; fred.krat2015@gmail.com
 - (Cats) Tamra Dearing; tdearing@suddenlink.net
- ASVT Foster Medical Questions
 - Kathy Joslyn; kathy@blueheronbay.com; (936) 537-5768 (cell)
 - Hilliary Dumas; hdumas@lefco-inc.com
 - Juliene Pickens; jjpick@cebridge.net
- ASVT Foster Spay/Neuter Coordinator
 - Janie Gray; janie.gray214@gmail.com
 - Tamra Dearing; tdearing@suddenlink.net
- ASVT Foster Application Approvals
 - Ruby Cross; rcross2114@gmail.com
- ASVT Adoption Inquiries
 - Chris DelGreco; cdelgreco9@aol.com
- ASVT Offsite Adoption Event Coordinators
 - Please see adoption event email/Facebook post for coordinator
- ASVT Photographer
 - Bobbie Bennett; bobbiebennett52@comcast.net
- ASVT Treasurer
 - Elizabeth Jones; itjones61@comcast.net
- ASVT Database (RGO)
 - Account Number: 7261
 - User Name: will be provided via email
 - Password: Temporary password will be provided via email
 - Assistance: Elizabeth Jones; itjones61@comcast.net; 713-829-8081
- ASVT Facebook Page: Official Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas
- ASVT Facebook Foster Group: ASVT Fosters
 - Please request to join our group
- ASVT Website: www.ASVTexas.org
 - FOR ASVT FOSTERS tab
- ASVT Email address: ASVTexas@gmail.com

Foster Home Supplies

- Foster homes generally provide:
 - food, bowls for food and water, litter and litter boxes, bedding, toys and treats, cleaning supplies, newspaper
 - If assistance with these items is needed, let the Foster Coordinator know.
- Cleaning supplies should include:
 - bleach, an odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) for houstraining accidents, detergent and towels.
 - All items and areas used by your foster cat should be cleaned and disinfected (using bleach) regularly.
- Additional information on a variety of cleaning issues can be found on the ASVT website.
- ASVT provides all medications including flea preventatives
 - All medications given to the cat should be noted on the cat's record in RGO.

Health and Wellness

- Vaccines, Preventatives, Wormers
 - PLEASE DOWNLOAD AND PRINT THE VACCINE PROTOCOL FOR FOSTER PETS
 - Contact Foster Medical Coordinators
 - ASVT does not use Animal Hospital of Montgomery (AHOM) for vaccinations and/or preventatives.
- Veterinarian visits and emergencies
 - Contact Foster Medical Coordinators.
 - Provide cat's name, ID number, age, weight, temperature (if able) and other symptoms.
 - Medical Coordinators may suggest at-home care, including medications
 - Medical Coordinator can schedule an appointment with ASVT approved veterinarians.
- **ASVT Foster Medical Coordinator MUST pre-authorize veterinarian appointments. You will pay for the visit if not pre-authorized.**
- Authorization for veterinarian visits can be given for:
 - Kittens less than 2-3 weeks of age:
 - Open mouth breathing
 - Not nursing or taking the bottle
 - Crawling away from the litter/mother
 - These are bad, often hopeless signs
 - Call the medical coordinator immediately
 - Cats or kittens older than 3 weeks of age:
 - 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 two
 - Obvious distress
 - Pain or pronounced behavior changes
- Visit ASVT website for additional information on various health issues.
- **Spay/Neuter**

- Contact Foster Spay/Neuter Coordinator to schedule an appointment.
- ASVT uses Texas Litter Control (TLC) for most spay/neuter surgeries..
- Spay/Neuter surgery MUST be done prior to adoption, unless the cat is too young.
- **NOTE:** Email or mail any paperwork received from a veterinarian or clinic to the Foster Coordinator.
 - All medical procedures and medications received are recorded in RGO.

RGO (Rescue Groups.org) - ASVTs Foster Database

- You will receive an email with ASVTs RGO Account number (7261), your User Name and a temporary password.
- Log into RGO as soon as you receive the email to update your Contact information.
- You are responsible for keeping your foster pet's information (weight, description) up-to-date.
- Animal's photos and information such as age, weight and description are uploaded from RGO to animal adoption websites, including:
 - Petfinder.com, Adopt-A-Pet.com, PetHarbor.com, ASPCA.com and many others
- Find more information for accessing and changing data in RGO on the ASVT website.

Socialization of Kittens

- Socialization opportunities begin as soon as kitten's eyes and ears are open
- Socialization after this age range is possible, but more difficult.
- Attempting socialization after 12 to 14 weeks of age will have more limited success.
- Cats and kittens are individuals and will respond differently to socializing techniques.
- Try to avoid raising solo kittens.
 - They need to 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.
- Staring at a kitten is threatening, so eye contact should be quickly broken.
 - When fearful or stimulated, a cat's eye will dilate.
 - As the kittens get familiar with you, the pupils will quickly return to a normal size.
- Keep the kittens in a room with no inaccessible hiding spots.
 - Make frequent visits to the room and just sit so the kittens gets used to your presence.
- Food is your best socialization tool.
 - Some simple techniques using food can be found at:
<http://aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-behavior-enrichment/using-food-successful-kitten-socialization>

Showcasing Your Foster

- Online Presence
 - A good description of your cat will increase the number of inquiries she receives. Try to include things like:
 - Whether the cat likes to be petted or held
 - Is a lap cat
 - Purrs easily
 - Is vocal or quiet
 - Is active and playful or calm
 - Has good litter box manners
 - Uses a scratching post

- Has experience with other animals and children, etc.
 - Any cute things that she does or anything you want to point out about her fur or appearance is good as well.
 - The description should generate interest, not turn people away.
 - If your cat has some bad habits, discuss them during the first phone conversation or meeting.
 - We don't want to mislead people; however we really try to focus on the positive.
 - The description should be added to the cat's RGO record.
 - The typical description is a paragraph or two.
 - Use your personal Facebook, Instagram or other social media accounts to showcase your foster.
 - ASVT does not allow negative comments to be posted on social media; keep all posts upbeat. Do not post "Hurry, this cat is going to be EU'd" type comments. Posts like these reflect badly on our organization.
- Photos
 - An ASVT photographer will contact you if there are not pictures of your cat uploaded into RGO.
 - If you have access to a digital camera and would like to take the pictures yourself, you are welcome to do so.
 - Crop photos so the cat is the main subject.
 - A head shot and whole body shot should be included.
 - You can upload the photos into your cat's record in RGO.

Adoption

- The ASVT website includes printable adoption applications and contracts.
- ASVT Adoption Events
 - Events are posted on the ASVT Facebook page.
 - Emails are sent with information on where and when the event will be held.
- OPA Adoption Events
 - ASVT foster animals are welcome to attend OPA (Operation Pets Alive) adoption events.
 - The ASVT website has information on how to sign up for OPA adoption events.
- "Foster Failures" - You and your family decide to adopt your foster cat!
 - As soon as a decision is made, let the Foster Coordinator know.
 - Adoption paperwork and adoption fee will be completed and paid.

More Information

- The following websites contain excellent information helpful to foster homes.
 - www.aspcapro.org
 - www.animalsheltering.org under the Resources Tab
 - www.pets.webmd.com

Acknowledgements: Much of this information was found on the ASPCA Pro website (www.aspcapro.org).