



**JOURNEY HOME**  
ANIMAL CARE CENTER

Foster Program Manual

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Dear Foster Parent(s),

It is with much gratitude that we welcome you to the Foster Parent Program at the Journey Home Animal Care Center!

We believe that fostering an animal is one of the most selfless forms of volunteering. Foster Parents make the commitment to provide physical and emotional care to an animal they barely know, only to connect and perhaps attach, and let them move on to other opportunities. For various reasons, not everyone has this calling, but for those who do, you are a very special group indeed.

Fostering an animal is an undertaking that requires a great deal of responsibility, care, and compassion, and it is also one of the most rewarding ways to help homeless pets. Research has shown that fostered shelter animals are less likely to suffer from behavior and training problems, are less stressed, and easily adapt to life in their new, forever homes.

Journey Home Animal Care Center takes pride in being a socially conscious shelter. This means that we never euthanize due to lack of space/resources, breed, or length of stay. We do not classify ourselves as a "no-kill" shelter because, if an animal in our care is terminally ill or shows aggression causing placement in a home to be considered unsafe, JHACC reserves the right to euthanize. While these instances occur rarely, it is important that all social media posts related to JHACC do not use the term "no kill".

When mentoring an ideal home for an animal, use information verbiage. Instead of "Fido can be really particular," say "We know that Fido takes a while to warm up to strangers and ideally would be placed in a home that doesn't have a lot of new visitors." Instead of "Muffy can get temperamental with kids in the picture," say "Muffy is looking for a home with no young children because she can get easily over-stimulated and needs adopters who can respect her boundaries".

Our goal is to find the right home for each pet, and it's okay if that takes time. We would much rather be thorough and transparent with potential adopters as opposed to sugar-coating a behavior or medical issue.

On behalf of the entire Journey Home Animal Care Center staff, we thank you for taking the step to become a foster parent with us. Throughout this process, you will receive the ongoing education and support you will need every step of the way. We think you will find that by fostering you will learn and grow in ways you never thought possible. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be working with you!

Fondly, Catherine (Foster Coordinator)

## Contact Information

Please contact the Foster Coordinator Monday- Friday between 8:00am and 5:00pm with questions, concerns, or to schedule foster animal veterinary or other checkups.

**Foster Coordinator: Catherine Cornelius**

**Direct Office Phones:**

Journey Home Animal Care Center 970-625-8808 ext 1007  
(7 days a week 8am-5pm)

On the days the foster coordinator isn't here please call JHACC at 970-625-8808.

In the case of an after-hours medical emergency please contact the Emergency Foster Line.

**Emergency On-Call Cell Phone**

(After hours & holidays)

**Emergency Foster Line: 970-579-1021**

Leave a message if I do not answer and you will receive a prompt call back.

## **Foster Program Overview**

These guidelines represent a summary of important information for foster parents for Journey Home Animal Care Center. Our intention is that these guidelines and general rules help with the entire foster process. The shelter management, however, retains the right in its sole discretion to add, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part at any time these guidelines, procedures, foster volunteer rules or benefits outlined in this guidance.

We recognize this information is not all-inclusive. If you have a question about a particular provision, about any shelter position or guideline, or about the animal(s) you foster, please talk to the Foster Coordinator.

The foster's role is to provide temporary care and housing for animals in the shelter's care. A home environment is crucial to the health and adoptability of many animals that have special needs when they arrive at the Shelter.

## **Why are animals fostered?**

Journey Home Animal Care Center's foster program prepares homeless animals for home life by placing animals in temporary homes. The foster home will provide them a safe and nurturing environment until their forever home is found.

- Colorado state law mandates that baby animals (puppies, kittens) must be a minimum of 8 weeks and 2 lbs for release for adoption.
- Animals that are sick or injured and require a quiet environment and special care may be fostered while they recuperate.
- Animals that are older or have a temperament that makes it difficult for them to adapt to the shelter environment may be fostered for their best welfare until forever homes can be found.
- Animals may arrive at the shelter with behavior issues that need to be addressed before they can be placed up for adoption. Specialized foster care may be needed to assist in modifying these behaviors.

## **Journey Home Animal Care Center Foster Parent Role Description**

### **Purpose**

Journey Home Animal Care Center Foster Parents are trained community volunteers who provide temporary care for animals that are not yet ready for adoption. Animals deemed appropriate for the Foster Program can include animals less than 8 weeks of age, mothers and their offspring, behaviorally needy pets and animals requiring specialized care after surgery or trauma. Foster Parents also

provide vital information to shelter staff throughout the fostering process to ensure consistent, appropriate care to the animals, and to assist with the most appropriate adoption.

Foster parents have serious responsibilities to the animals entrusted to their care. Foster families are expected to provide a clean, safe environment for the animals being fostered. If, for any reason, the foster family believes it may not be able to fulfill its responsibilities for a foster assignment, please contact the Foster Coordinator immediately so other arrangements may be made for the animal.

### Qualifications

- Must be over 18 years of age or participate in the Foster Program with an adult over the age of 18 who can assume responsibility for the care of the animal(s).
- Have the consent of all adults living in your household (Have the consent of your landlord if renting)
- Household pets must be current on vaccines
- Have a securely fenced yard to foster dogs, or be willing to walk your foster dog(s).
- Foster Felines must be kept indoors at all times.
- Understand that any veterinary care sought outside of JHACC for your foster animal(s) that has not be pre-approved by JHACC staff will not be reimbursed
- Understand that JHACC is not responsible for any damage, injury, or illness to animals or humans caused by a foster animal in your care
- Understand that JHACC remains the legal custodian of the animals; and that in rare cases animals can't be adopted out due to extreme behavior or health complications.
- Have the facilities (use of spare rooms, etc.) and willingness to **isolate** foster animals from your own animals as needed
- Maturity, stability, confidence, common sense.
- Interest in animals and meeting their physical and emotional needs.
- Appreciate that the **foster process is not trial for adoption**; it is a commitment to care for and prepare animals for adoption by others.
- Ability to work with all Shelter staff in a sensitive, positive and objective manner.
- Good verbal and written communication skills to convey questions and concerns about the animal(s) in their care.

- **Able to use email** with Foster Staff to receive general information and communicate about specific animals in a timely manner.
- Access to safe and secure transportation for foster animals to and from the Shelter. *Public transportation, bicycles and motorcycles are not adequate for foster animals.*
- Ability to pass an initial screening interview and yearly home visit per state Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) Program requirements and Shelter policies.
- Be willing to be adoption ambassadors and attend adoption events as scheduled

## Duties

- Provide the appropriate physical and emotional care as outlined by Veterinary, Health Care and Foster Program staff.
- Work with the Foster Staff and other Shelter staff as needed for the animals' care and support.
- Convey any and all concerns about an animal(s) status to Foster Coordinator via telephone, email or scheduled meetings in a timely manner throughout the fostering period.
- Follow the instructions of Shelter Staff and Management. Although other, perhaps contradictory, options may be found from other sources (your veterinarian, the internet, and other shelters), Shelter instructions will be followed unless shelter Staff agrees to the requested change.
- Keep all medical/veterinary appointments as scheduled.
- Return the animal(s) and any supplies back to the shelter at the end of the fostering period in a timely manner as instructed by Foster Coordinator.
- Training, support and supervision from Foster Coordinator staff throughout the entirety of each fostering assignment.
- The opportunity to learn about the physical and emotional health of sheltered animals.
- To be the eyes and ears of Shelter staff to best advocate for the most appropriate services for animals in foster care.
- The opportunity to expand your own skills and abilities.
- The satisfaction of assisting homeless animals with their medical and behavioral management, which leads to success in finding their forever home.

*\* Journey Home Animal Care Center is committed to equal opportunities for volunteers and does not discriminate because of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, and marital status. Any situation suggesting a possible violation of this policy should be reported promptly to the Executive Director.*

### **Responsibilities to Shelter Foster Program Coordinator**

- Maintain open and consistent communication with Foster Coordinator in regard to the overall status (physical/emotional/behavioral) of the foster animal(s) throughout their time in foster care. *Email is the most effective way of sharing this information; however, phone calls and/or scheduled meetings are valuable as well.*
- Keep Foster Coordinator informed of any status changes, (physical/emotional/behavioral), of the foster animal(s) in a timely manner. *This includes bites and injuries to people or animals that occur within the foster home.*
- Follow instructions of the Foster Coordinator. Other, and perhaps contradictory, options may be identified from other sources (i.e. the internet, your veterinarian, other foster programs or shelters), The Shelter instructions shall be followed unless Foster Coordinator agrees to the requested change.
- Keep Foster Coordinator informed of changes in or to your foster home, including changes in physical/email addresses, telephone numbers, vacation notifications, resident animals, etc.
- Keep medical/veterinary appointments, as scheduled, being mindful of timeliness to minimize ripple effect upon subsequent appointments, supporting health care staff, pre-arranged treatment preparation, etc.
- Cooperate with Shelter staff in the return of the animal(s) to the Shelter and in the adoption of the animal(s) into a forever home.
- Comply with Colorado State and Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) regulations, including cooperating to arrange for and participate in the required initial and yearly foster home checks.

## Training

JHACC is proud to offer trainings to assist and support our fosters. We will provide resources to take home, online course suggestions, and weekly zoom call trainings in collaboration with Kitten College. When needed we can offer one-on-one training sessions for animals and fosters in need of extra support while in foster care.

All fosters must agree to use fear-free methods and rewards-based training on our animals. JHACC forbids the use of any training tools that involve pain, intimidation, forceful manipulation, or physical correction techniques.

## Animal Proofing Your Home

Animals are curious creatures, many of whom are capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your foster animal in his or her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, we recommend that you animal proof your home.

- All cleaning supplies and medications should be kept out of the reach of jumping and climbing cats and dogs.
- Please remove all recreational drugs and have them locked away in a safe place where the animals won't be able to reach.
- Place all small chewable items out of reach.
- Put all socks, shoes etc. away- they are tempting to chew.
- Block off all small areas and hiding places.
- Trash cans should be kept covered.
- Wires and mini blind cords should be placed out of reach.
- Drapery and shower curtains should be placed out of reach.
- Count your foster animals when opening and closing closet doors.
- Keep household plants out of reach and supervise your animals outside.
- Make sure foster dogs don't jump the fence before leaving him or her unsupervised in the yard.

Protect your home from being damaged by using sheets, tarps, newspapers to protect carpet and floors. Any unprotected surface can potentially be damaged.

## **Picking Up Your Foster Animal**

When an animal needs foster care, the foster coordinator and center staff will contact a list of potential foster parents by phone or email. The first foster caregiver who responds to the request and accepts the foster assignment will receive the animal. You always have the option to decline a foster assignment for any reason.

When your offer to foster is accepted, you will schedule a time with the Foster Coordinator, to pick up your assigned pet/s along with any medications or other special items it may need.

## **Bringing Your New Foster Animal Home**

- Ideally, set up the area where your foster animal will be staying before you bring your foster home.
- New foster animals should be kept separate from your existing companion animals of the same species for a period of 7-10 days. This quarantine period is to protect your own animals and should be strictly observed.
- Cats and kittens do very well in a kitty condo, crate, bathroom or spare bedroom.
- Introduce your foster animal to one room of the house at first. Try to have homecoming be a quiet experience for the animal.
- Cats and Kittens need a cozy, secure place with a bed to snuggle up in. The bed can simply be a low box with a blanket in it.
- Show each cat and kitten where the litter box is located.
- Dogs and puppies should have a crate.
- Allow your new foster quiet time to adjust to the new environment.

## **Caring for Your Foster Animal**

Although you will care for the foster animal at your home, the animal may need to periodically return to the Shelter for additional care. This may include vaccinations, surgery, or other needs. You and the Foster Coordinator will schedule these appointments in advance at a time that works for you and the Shelter schedule.

As you start to learn about the animal in your foster care, please email the foster coordinator a pet summary and some photos of the animal in the home. The

information and photo may be used on the Shelter website to help potential adopters.

### **Provided Supplies (See Supply List Provided)**

- Dry Food
- Wet Food (as available)
- Clumping and/or Non-Clumping Litter
- Kitten/puppy milk replacement
- Medications and other veterinary care
- Carrier (for kittens or puppies) and Leashes/collars/tags (for dogs)
- Crates, bowls, litter boxes, bedding, etc. as needed

### **Daily Duties**

- Feed (may be doing 2-3 times per day or more)
- Replace soiled bedding, and spot clean the foster areas
- Clean bowls
- Supply fresh water
- Clean area where animal urinates and defecates; check for any problems (blood in urine, loose stools, and vomit in or near litter box ...)
- Groom coat as needed
- Examine paws
- Check for health issues. Contact Foster Coordinator if anything is abnormal
- Look inside mouth at gums and teeth (if needed)
- Socialize and play with animal
- Keep written record of the foster's weight and weighing daily, food intake, and medications given.

### **As needed duties:**

- Weigh animals every other day for very young, once a week for older animals  
(Kitchen scales work great for kittens and small breed puppies)
- Clean bedding
- Trim nails (We will do them at the shelter for free for animals in foster)
- Keep all scheduled vaccines appointments which can be found on your "Foster Animal Bio Form", and check in regularly with the Foster Coordinator.
- Check food and litter supplies and call JHACC if you need more

## Foster Dog & Cat Bite Protocol

Please follow this protocol if your foster pet bites you, a member of your household, or anyone else.

If a bite occurs:

1. Immediately remove the foster pet to a safe environment, i.e., a crate or other option that both prevents further injury to the person and provides a calm environment for the animal.
2. Report the incident immediately to the Foster Program Coordinator.
3. Do not show up unannounced to the shelter with your foster pet. Please contact the Foster Coordinator and contact the Emergency Foster Line. A bite doesn't necessarily require the animal to return to the shelter.

If the bite resulted in an injury follow these additional steps:

1. Assess the injured party's need for medical care.
2. If the bite broke the skin (deep scratch, puncture wound, bleeding), it is required the foster pet be quarantined for 10 days.

Bite Assessment/Wound Care:

1. Rinse the wound in running water for 5 minutes and do not use soap.  
If the person is undecided if medical attention is needed, here are some guidelines:

- Did the bite break the skin? –

If no, no further action is required. –

If yes, see below depending on the type of wound:

- Scratches: Watch for signs of possible infection - swelling, redness, abnormal discharge. If any of those symptoms occurs, seek medical attention.
- Punctures: The person bitten may need oral antibiotics. Please seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY to prevent sepsis, loss of function, or even death.
- Bleeding: Apply pressure directly to the wound to try to stop the bleeding.

Bites are a very dangerous issue and must be reported immediately per JHACC policy.

Not doing so can be cause for removal from the foster program.

In addition, reporting a bite and the circumstances surrounding a bite enables the JHACC team to potentially develop a more customized plan for your foster pet.

**JHACC IS NOT liable for any damages relating to a bite or responsible for any medical bill or other cost associated with a bite (including any injury to another animal). However, we can often provide suggestions on what to do after a bite occurs. If you choose not to seek medical help, JHACC IS NOT liable for any resulting consequences.**

### **Cleaning Procedures**

As you set up your foster area, keep in mind the fact that animals are messy, especially kittens and puppies. You will spend a significant part of the foster period just mopping up messes. Obviously, cleanup is quicker, easier and more effective in an area with washable walls and a tile or vinyl floor than in one with flocked wallpaper, thick carpeting, heavy drapes, and upholstered furniture, so choose your foster area carefully. This will protect your companion animals and any future foster animals.

Keeping your foster area clean serves several purposes:

- It minimizes damage to your home
- It keeps foster animals cleaner and more comfortable
- It decreases objectionable odors
- It reduces the spread of disease

### **Routine Cleaning While Foster Animals are in Residence**

Take the foster animals out of the room while cleaning and only use a gentle soap. A small amount of bleach may be used as needed. Do not use any cleaners – the animals can ingest them off of surfaces or while they are grooming themselves. While you have the foster animals, a good thorough soap and water cleaning of your foster area and the items in it will go a long way towards keeping your foster animals healthy and free of disease. For felines, remove solid waste from litter boxes daily. Change litter and wash the litter box with soap and water weekly. If you are dealing with an outbreak of diarrhea, consider using bleach. Clean food and water dishes

Daily – if the animals are ill, use the dishwasher “Sani-cycle” or soak dishes in a weak bleach solution after washing and rinse thoroughly. Check bedding in the sleeping area and wash with bleach, but no fabric softener, as needed.

## Foster Parent Cleaning Protocols

### URI

- Areas where foster animals have been should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with an approved disinfectant before and after bringing in new fosters.

### Panleukopenia and Parvo Virus

- Once exposure is found, bathe all kittens/cats/puppies/dogs exposed immediately and please contact the foster coordinator.
- Wash and clean any surfaces/items that the animal came in contact with immediately. Any items that cannot be fully disinfected should be thrown away.
- After 2-week exposure quarantine is complete, exposed animals will need a 2<sup>nd</sup> bath.
- Once exposed animals have left foster home, foster parent will need to deep clean. This includes exposed areas/surfaces in house and they need to be cleaned 3 times with approved cleaner. If using Rescue, area needs to sit for 10 minutes at each cleaning before wiping off.
- Foster parent must notified the foster coordinator once deep cleaning is complete and the quarantine period will begin at that time.
  - A quarantine will start after the foster parent has returned their foster animals and the foster parent has notified the foster coordinator they have thoroughly cleaned the areas the foster animal/s have been.
  - All hard surfaces must be completely cleaned of any organic material by sweeping, vacuuming and or mopping. Then the area must be disinfected with an approved disinfectant with an appropriate contact time of 10 minutes. This is a two-step process.
  - Foster Coordinator can provide Rescue or the foster parent can use dilute bleach to disinfect.

### Ringworm (See Foster Parent's Guide to Ringworm for more)

- Once an outbreak has occurred, physical separation must be established between exposed, at-risk and unexposed animals or groups of animals.
- In some circumstances, a properly set up isolation room may suffice to control the spread of disease. Ideally, animal movement should be stopped until a targeted control strategy can be implemented.
- Animal handling and foot traffic should be limited.
- Animals should be monitored for signs of disease twice daily.
- JHACC will provide the medical treatment for the animal.

- Ringworm is generally resolved when there are no new lesions appearing and hair starts growing back where lesions were.
- The minimum time to cure is thought to be 42 days.
- Begin environment decontamination and notify Foster Coordinator when this has begun.
- Cleaning and disinfecting against ringworm should include pre-cleaning and disinfecting.

## Health Issues

All animals at the shelter are evaluated for age, health, and temperament before being placed in a foster home. There are no guarantees that the animal will not get sick later on so their initial isolation from your companion animals is crucial. We are happy to provide all necessary veterinary care for your foster animals, but cannot treat your resident animals if they become infected as well. **All foster animals MUST see an JHACC veterinarian.** You cannot take the foster animals to your personal veterinarian without prior approval from the Foster Coordinator. Many of the diseases that we deal with in a shelter environment have an incubation period. Your foster animal may have been infected with a disease before they came to the shelter and/or before going to foster, but will not show symptoms until after you have brought them home. Below are some symptoms to look for.

**Symptoms - Call IMMEDIATELY for the following symptoms (if it is after hours, call the emergency line and we will guide you):**

- Vomiting blood
- Severe diarrhea, especially in combination with vomiting
- Excessive blood in diarrhea (especially in puppies)
- Labored breathing
- Unconsciousness, seizures, uneven pupil dilation, or fainting
- Severe lethargy or dehydration
- Broken bones

**Other symptoms – Call during regular operating hours:**

- **Vomiting** – more than three times
- **Dehydration** – To check for dehydration, lift the skin between the animal's shoulders and drop it back into place. If the skin drops back slowly or bunches up the animal may be dehydrated. Dry, sticky gums are another sign of dehydration.

- **Diarrhea** – Although common with young animals, if left unchecked it can lead to death see below for sample collection/analysis procedure of a fecal sample.
- **Fever**
- **Lethargy** – or other behavior changes for more than one day
- **Weight loss** – in an animal eating normally and failure to gain in a young animal
- **Loss of Appetite** – for more than two days in adult animals or for more than two feedings in very young animals
- **Trouble eating or mouth pain**
- **Excessive drinking** – for more than three days in adult animals or for more than three feedings in very young animals
- **Increased urination, difficult urination, or inability to urinate** – watch for sudden accidents in the house, straining, bloody, or discolored urine.
- **Sneezing** – with or without nasal discharge for more than one day
- **Eye problems** – squinting, redness, swelling, or discharge
- **Ear problems** – head shaking, scratching at ears, or ear discharge
- **Coughing** – for more than one day
- **Hair loss** – with or without scabs, scales, crusts, scratching

## General Care

### Bringing your Fosters in for Vaccines/Deworming

Your foster animal's next vaccination date will be listed on your Foster Animal Information sheet given to you at the time of pick up. If your foster animal requires a vaccination booster while in your care, you will need to bring them to the shelter. Contact the Foster Coordinator to arrange an approximate date/time for vaccinations

### Return and Adoption

When the fostered animal is brought back to JHACC, the animal is given a health and behavioral evaluation before it is available for adoption. Foster parents are encouraged to find a new forever home for their foster animals – our ultimate goal is to have healthy animals adopted out of foster homes to clear space in the shelter for more adoptable animals. Foster parents are also encouraged to provide a write-up about the animal for display on the animal's kennel and online PetFinder description. The write-up can be clever (but always honest and positive)

and should contain information about the animal's personality and behavior. You are welcome to create a kennel card for your fosters, but please also email the text to the JHACC staff, so it can easily be added to the animal's profile. The text may be edited for grammar, spelling, and word choice, but we will do our best to keep it as close to the original as possible!

## **Returning Foster Animals**

If you are not adopting your foster animals and your foster animals are ready to return to the shelter for adoption (i.e spay/neuter), contact the Foster Coordinator.

Come to the front desk and ask for Catherine the Foster Coordinator. The foster coordinator will physically come down to take the animals and please return all foster supplies at this time. Animals returning from foster do require an exam and behavioral evaluation before they can be made available, so please don't panic if your animal isn't immediately on the adoption floor or website!

If you need to return your foster animals before the scheduled spay/neuter return date please contact the foster coordinator immediately, so a replacement foster can be arranged if needed. When you arrive, please ask for Catherine, the foster coordinator so she can come pick up the animals.

Foster parents need to understand that returning their foster animal to JHACC can be a very emotional time, even under the best of circumstances. When polled, foster parents overwhelmingly said their least favorite part of the foster program was returning the animal and not knowing if the animal was adopted, and to whom.

All staff at JHACC understand the mixed feelings foster parents have when returning their animal(s) to the shelter. Many staff members are also foster parents and have experienced these same emotions. Do not hesitate to speak of your feelings. **You are never alone.** Every effort will be made to place your foster animal in the ideal home. You are always welcome to call or visit JHACC to find out the status of the animal. Privacy laws prohibit the shelter from disclosing the names of foster animals' adopters.

## **Know someone interested in one of your animals?**

Foster parents should call the shelter to inform the Foster Coordinator that their animal has had an adoption application request. JHACC staff trust the opinions and

judgment of the foster parents but reserve the right to approve or deny applications. The foster coordinator will let you know if the application has been approved for a pre-adoption hold (there is no fee associated with this hold) or if a hold on an animal has been released.

**If someone puts in an application for a foster animal that doesn't know the foster.**

If an application comes in for an animal in foster care, Catherine the Foster Coordinator will work on coordinating a time for the animal an interested party to meet. Sometimes foster parents are okay contacting the interested party themselves and if you are please let the foster coordinator know. Otherwise please wait to hear from the foster coordinator.

If you would like to oversee the meet and greet and handle the adoption please have reviewed the Adoption Ambassador Manual.

If you, the foster parent, want to adopt your foster animal, you will need to inform the Foster Coordinator so we can place a hold on the animal for you. No dog/family meets are required for animals that have been in your home already. You will need to fill out an adoption application for our records. While we try to accommodate everyone, holds are first come first served. Occasionally there will be pre-existing holds on an animal before they enter into foster care. These are usually the finder (if the animal was a stray) or occasionally a staff member. We will inform you of any existing holds on animals at the time of pick up.

### **ADOPTION AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

The Adoption Ambassador Program at Journey Home Animal Care Center (JHACC) is designed to increase adoptions, reduce stress on the shelter animals and allow more space in the shelter to save lives. Through the program, foster parents can adopt out their foster animals directly from their home and potential adopters might never have to set a foot inside Journey Home Animal Care Center! Foster parents often say that this is one of the most rewarding parts of fostering their shelter animals.

Foster dogs will be sent home with their tags and an "Adopt Me!" vest to wear when they are in public.

We ask that adoption ambassadors be actively searching for homes for their foster animals. This involves lots of interpersonal communication! The more outgoing you

can be while advocating for your foster animal, the faster your animal will be adopted.

### **Advertise! Advertise! Advertise!**

The fastest way to get your foster animal adopted into their forever home is **to get them seen!** Many foster parents take their foster dogs with them everywhere they go. Walks in public parks, dog parks, weekly visits to dog friendly businesses/places, and hikes are all great places to get your foster dog seen! Journey Home Animal Care Center hosts at least one adoption event per month that dogs can attend. Foster parents can coordinate with the Foster Coordinator to see when and where the adoption events are. Farmers Markets and festivals are also fantastic places to take your foster dog. If you bring the dog's adoption paperwork with you, there's a chance you could even be going home with one less dog!

Some animals can't be taken out into public places (cats, kittens, sick or injured dogs). We strongly encourage foster parents to take advantage of all of the wonders technology can do! Word of mouth is a great way to spread word that you have adoptable foster animals looking for homes. Friends and family can be your biggest asset! Foster parents can also email pictures and descriptions of their foster animals to the foster coordinator so we can post them to our facebook and petfinder pages.

When showing your foster animal to a potential adopter it is important to be open and honest about the animal's great qualities and not so great qualities. You are playing matchmaker, and wonderful matches don't occur if both parties aren't honest. Most potential adopters know what behaviors they are willing to work on and what they aren't.

### **QUESTIONS:**

At the shelter, we do an adoption "interview" before we have an adopter fill out an application. This gives us a more thorough idea of what kind of animal would be a good fit for them. This not a formal process, and we do most of it while we are showing the adopter different dogs. These are some questions we recommend you

ask your potential adopters to make sure you are sending your foster animal home to the best possible home.

#### DOGS

- How active is the family?
- Are there any breed specific laws where they live?
- Do they have any other animals?
- Do they have a fence? What is the height? Are they willing to walk the dog on-leash if they don't have a fence?
- Where will the dog stay when alone? If outside, do they have insulated shelter, water, and shade?

#### CATS

- Do they have dogs or other cats?
- Will the cat be indoor or outdoor?
- Are they willing to keep an indoor/outdoor cat inside for at least three weeks before letting them loose?
- Does anyone in the family have an allergy that would cause the cat to need to be returned to the shelter?

Foster parents can also observe the potential adopters to judge if it is a good match with their foster animal. Some things to watch for include:

- How does the potential adopter interact with the animal? Is he/she respectful of the animal's boundaries?
- Does the animal seem fearful?
- How do the children respond to the animal? Are they respectful/appropriate?
- Is the potential adopter respectful towards you?
- Does the potential adopter give lots of vague answers?
- If your foster animal doesn't listen to a command, does the potential adopter yell or scream, or adopt a threatening position to get the animal to obey?

If everything is going well and you believe that your foster animal and the adopter are a good match, you can begin the adoption process.

## Adoption Process

Please make sure that the adopter answers every question – the more detailed they are, the better! If your foster animal has been spayed/neutered and microchipped, they are ready to go home and you can move on to the next step. If your foster animal has not been spayed or neutered, he CANNOT go home with the adopter and the adopter can fill out the rest of the paperwork when the animal is ready to go home. **The animal must remain with you until he has been spayed/neutered and microchipped.**

Once the adoption application has been completed, review it quickly. Ensure that all questions have been answered honestly and that there are no contradictions between what was said aloud to you and what was written. If you have any extra questions for your potential adopter, now is the time to ask!

Next, have the adopter fill out two copies adoption contract. They MUST initial every statement and fill out the entire bottom portion of the form. One copy will be kept and returned with the rest of the adoption paperwork, and the other will be given to the adopter for their records.

After the adoption contract has been initialed and completed, the adopter must fill out a microchip form. **The adopter must give an alternate contact.** The microchip company that Rifle Animal Shelter uses won't register the animal under the new adopters without a secondary contact. Please check the top of the microchip form and make sure that the number on the top of the form matches your foster animal! RAS will try to ensure that the microchip form is labeled and ready to go, but if the animal was microchipped after he or she was sent home with you, please make sure that one of their microchip stickers is in the designated spot on the top right corner of the microchip form. The adopter does not need to fill out the bottom half of the microchip form – they will only need to fill out the top two boxes.

After these have been completed, it is time for payment. All dogs at Journey Home Animal Care Center are \$75, and all cats are \$30 or two for \$50. Journey Home Animal Care Center will let foster parents know when prices change due to adoption specials. Adopters may pay you, the foster parent, directly, with cash or

check, or visit the shelter to pay with a credit card. **Please do not send your foster animal home until payment has been received.** Always call to confirm that the adopter has paid at the shelter.

Once the adopter has paid, your foster animal is ready to go to their forever home! Give the adopter their copy of the adoption contract and the animal's blue folder (given to you after the animal has been spayed/neutered, or upon pick-up if the animal was previously altered). This folder should contain:

- Microchip tag/stickers
- Free physical form
- Rabies certificate (if animal is old enough to have received their vaccination)
- Rabies tag (dogs only)
- Vaccination history (will also include revaccination dates)

If you notice anything missing from the folder, please call the shelter during regular business hours or have the adopter stop by the shelter to pick up any missing paperwork. We can mail out missing paperwork, so if they can't stop by please have them call us!

Once the adoption is complete, please bring the paperwork and payment to the shelter as soon as possible so we can finalize the adoption in our system and mail in the microchip paperwork. You can also mail these to us.

## **Troubleshooting**

Sometimes potential adopters aren't a good match for the animal they're interested in adopting. This can be for a variety of different reasons. Not every home will be absolutely perfect, but if you don't feel like the home is a good fit for your foster animal you do not have to approve the adoption application. We trust our foster parents and adoption ambassadors to choose the right adopters for their foster animals. Foster parents know their foster animals better than most of our staff because they live with them and have a better idea of what kind of home the animal will need.

### ***How do I say no?***

If you are uncomfortable telling the potential adopter "no" give them an adoption application to fill out and let them know that Journey Home Animal Care Center

will be in contact with them to approve or deny their application. Please contact the Foster Coordinator during regular business hours and provide a copy of the completed adoption application so she can look it over and contact the adopter. You may also recommend that they visit the shelter to take a look at our other adoptable animals before making any decisions. If the potential adopter is not willing to wait, remind them that all applications must be approved by RAS management before an adoption can be completed.

### ***High-energy dogs***

When adopting out high energy dogs, it's important to make sure that the potential adopter understands that high energy breeds need a lot of exercise and mental stimulation. Ask the potential adopter how they plan on exercising the dog or if they would be open to considering a training class. The foster parent should also take living space into consideration. A family living in a condo or an apartment might not be the best fit for a husky or a border collie if the family does not live an active lifestyle. Conversely, a potential adopter that is looking for a dog to take on long hikes and runs with may not be the right fit for an older dog with hip problems.

### ***I want this dog/cat. Now.***

As an adoption ambassador you will eventually run into a potential adopter who has their heart set on taking an animal (any animal) home that day. This is usually characterized by the "point and claim", in which the potential adopter takes one look at an animal and says "I want that one". They are usually in a rush and are unwilling to spend time meeting/greeting the animal or talking to you. They also do not want to wait for the animal to be altered if it has not been altered previously, and often do not want to schedule a time to introduce their dogs to the dog they are interested in. **Try to stay calm and in control of the meeting.** Remind them that no animal can go home until they have been altered, and dogs cannot go home until they have met all of the dogs they are moving in with.

Do not let them pressure you into approving an adoption that you wouldn't approve otherwise! Remind the potential adopter that there is an adoption process that everyone has to go through to make sure everyone is going to a great home that fits them. Suggest an alternate time to meet if they seem rushed or in a hurry to get somewhere else. If the dog/cat is not the right animal for them,

recommend that they come to the shelter to look at the other animals JHACC has available. Some just need a gentle reminder that it's okay to wait- the right animal will come and it's not fair to the animal or to themselves to take home an animal just because he was the only one available.

If you are still having trouble getting the potential adopter to relax, you can ask them to leave politely. You can also have them fill out an application and let them know that a member of the shelter staff will contact them about the status of their application. If you choose the latter, please contact the Foster Coordinator and provide a copy of the adoption application and a description of your interaction with them.

***I don't feel comfortable with strangers coming to my home.***

That's okay! As an adoption ambassador you are under NO obligation to allow strangers into your home. You can meet your potential adopters at the place of your choosing- public parks, a dog friendly business, etc. If you would like to meet at the shelter, please call ahead during regular business hours with a date and time so our staff can have a yard available for you. This can be more difficult with cats (parks aren't the best place for them to meet strangers) but potential adopters can meet with your cats/kittens in our front office.

***Do I have to give out my contact information?***

**NO!** While it can be helpful and more time efficient for our adoption ambassadors to provide an email or number for interested parties to contact them through, the staff at JHACC is happy to facilitate contact between yourself and the interested party.

Dear foster family

There I sat, alone and afraid,  
You got a call and came right to my aid.  
You bundled me up with blankets and love,  
And when I needed it most, you gave me a hug.  
I learned that the world was not all scary and cold,  
That sometimes there is someone to have and to hold.  
You taught me what love is, you helped me to mend,  
You loved me and healed me and became my first friend.  
And just when I thought you'd done all you could do,  
There came along not one lesson, but two.  
First you said, "Sweetheart you're ready to go,  
I've done all I can and you've learned all I know."  
Then you bundled me up with a blanket and kiss,  
Along came a new family, they even have kids!  
They took me to their home, forever to stay  
At first I thought you had sent me away.  
Then that second lesson became perfectly clear,  
No matter how far, you will always be near.  
And so foster family you know I've moved on,  
I have a new home, with toys and a lawn.  
But I'll never forget what I learned that first day,  
You never really give your fosters away.  
You gave me these thoughts to remember you by,  
We may never meet again, and now I know why.  
You'll remember I lived with you for a time,  
I may not be yours, but you'll always be mine.

**Thank you, Foster Parents!**

Know Someone Interested in being a Foster Parent?!

Step 1: Fill out online application

Step 2: Foster Coordinator will contact interested party

Step 3: Pick up foster animal & schedule home inspection with Foster  
Coordinator

Step 4: Enjoy being a Foster Parent!

# LEVELS OF EMERGENCY FOR FOSTERS

Please review the information below to determine what type of emergency you have and what to do.



## RED: IMMEDIATE PHONE CALL

- ✓ Lost dog
- ✓ Dog bite/broken skin
- ✓ Bleeding profusely
- ✓ Hit by car or otherwise seriously injured
- ✓ Having trouble breathing
- ✓ Unresponsive
- ✓ Ingested a dangerous item
- ✓ Unable to stand or walk
- ✓ Seizure / disoriented / drunk walking / ataxia

\* Please call your Foster Coordinator immediately. If it goes to voicemail, continue to call through the Staff phone tree list. In the event of a dog bite, please be sure to record all contact information of anyone involved.



## YELLOW: SEND A TEXT | TO YOUR FOSTER COORDINATOR (during business hours)

- ✓ Vomiting for more than 24 hours or more than once / twice in a day
- ✓ Cut or puncture wound
- ✓ Lethargy and low appetite / not eating
- ✓ Colored nasal discharge
- ✓ New limping
- ✓ Incident of aggression

\* You will receive a response from your Coordinator within 24 hours of sent text message.



## GREEN: EMAIL IS FINE :)

- ✓ One episode of vomiting or diarrhea
- ✓ Reverse sneezing or regular sneezing
- ✓ Itchy skin
- ✓ Watery / goopy eye(s)
- ✓ Dirty / stinky ears
- ✓ Broken nail
- ✓ Hot spot / skin irritation
- ✓ Visible worm in poop
- ✓ Diarrhea for more than 24 hours
- ✓ Straining to urinate / blood in urine
- ✓ Chewed or removed sutures or staples
- ✓ Coughing