

Foster Pet Program Guidebook



**Many thanks to the Cat Adoption Team of Sherwood, Oregon,
for their help in developing materials for our Foster Pet Program.**

WHO WE ARE

The Lincoln County Animal Shelter (LCAS) is a division of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. The Shelter's mission is to provide a safe haven for abandoned, lost, and unwanted animals; to educate the public on animal welfare issues; and to protect animal welfare and public safety by enforcing Oregon's anti-cruelty and animal control laws.



Location:

510 Harney Street
 Newport, Oregon 97365
 Website: www.LincolnCountySheriff.net/Shelter

Contact Information:

Telephone: 541-265-6610
 LinCom: 541-265-4231
 Fax: 541-574-0448

Public Hours

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Closed	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 5pm
The Shelter is closed to the public on major holidays						

Cleaning Hours (staff and volunteers only): Tues-Sat: 8am–10am. Sun: 8am-2pm. Mon: 8am-4pm

Shelter Programs and Services

Foster Pet Program
Pre-adoption Spay and Neuter
Animal Behavior Counseling
Volunteer Services Program
Animal Socialization and Training
Medical Trust Fund

Meals on Wheels for Pets
Community Food Bank
Second Chance Program
Inmate Program
Lost and Found Program

FOSTER PET PROGRAM CONTACTS

Liaison to Foster
 Pet Parents:

Brandi Richmond, Animal Care Specialist
 541-265-6610 x 6
brichmond@co.lincoln.or.us

After-hours Contact

Laura Ireland Moore, Shelter Manager
 Office: 541-265-0725
 Cell: 541-961-6612
lirelandmoore@co.lincoln.or.us

WELCOME TO THE FOSTER PET PROGRAM

We appreciate your willingness to open your heart and home to homeless dogs and cats.

Many wonderful companion animals come through our doors. Some of them are not suitable for adoption when they first arrive, and some simply need to wait until the right home comes along. Pregnant females and animals who are too young to live on their own cannot safely remain in the Shelter and need temporary care. All of these animals have the potential to become excellent pets, given time and loving support.

Foster volunteers open their homes to needy animals and are in charge of feeding, exercising, training, socializing and taking care of the animals as if they were their own. These caregivers help us meet our goal of offering happy, healthy, adoption-ready animals to the public. In 2010 alone, 473 cats and dogs of all ages found homes through the efforts of LCAS, and our Foster Pet Program played an integral part in our success.

The Mission of the Foster Pet Program

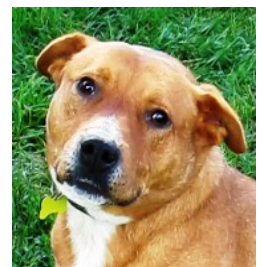
Our primary mission is to provide temporary homes and nurturing care to cats and dogs who are orphaned or unable to thrive in a shelter environment due to age, health, behavior or circumstances.

Specific Goals of our Program

- Provide a safe, healthy, nurturing environment for cats and dogs until they are ready for adoption into permanent homes or transfer to our Second Chance Program.
- Give long-term residents time away from the Shelter in a home setting.
- Socialize shy or timid dogs and cats.
- Provide a calm, uplifting environment so sick, injured, or recovering animals can heal.

We welcome you to our Foster Pet Program and hope that your time spent fostering is as rewarding to you as it is to the animals. Without your help, these animals wouldn't have a chance -- we greatly appreciate your efforts.

- Laura Ireland Moore, Shelter Manager



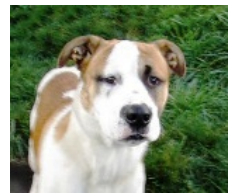
ANIMALS WHO NEED FOSTER CARE

- Orphaned puppies and kittens who require bottle feeding, socialization, and care until they are old enough to be spayed/neutered or transferred through our Second Chance Program.
- Nursing mothers and their litters. These families need quiet and peaceful settings in which to grow and thrive outside the busy activity of the Shelter.



- Young animals who are weaned from their mothers and are eating solid food, but who are too young to be spayed or neutered. While they grow, they require special attention and nurturing until they are mature enough for adoption from the Shelter or transfer to our Second Chance Program.

- Animals who need socialization or re-acclimation to people to become eligible for adoption. These cats and dogs may have minor behavioral issues or be frightened of people or unfamiliar environments. If socialized with care, they can become wonderful companion animals.



- Overweight animals who need a special diet or exercise program.
- Special needs animals who need time for healing and rehabilitation, and animals who are being treated for injuries or non-communicable illnesses.
- Animals who need socialization or care because they have been at the Shelter for a long time and need a special “human touch.”

***"A house is not a home without a pet."
~ Anonymous***

QUALIFICATIONS TO BE A FOSTER PARENT

To be eligible to be a LCAS foster pet parent, you will:

- Have genuine concern for the welfare of animals, consistent with the values of LCAS.
- Be conscientious about monitoring the medical condition, mental state, and behavior of your foster animals.
- Be at least 18 years of age. We encourage children to participate actively in the Program, but adults are required to be the main caregivers of the foster animals in the home.
- Be a resident of Lincoln County. By law, we cannot send our animals out of the county.
- Complete a [Volunteer Application](#), which is available at the Shelter and on our website. Once you have been accepted into the Program, you will need to sign a Foster Agreement.
- Attend an orientation/training session given at the Shelter.
- Have appropriate space in your home.
- Assure that your own pets are current with their vaccinations. If you have dogs, they must be licensed.
- Have your property owner's approval if you are renting.
- Have the time to care for/play with your fostered animals.
- Be willing to place your trust in LCAS staff to determine what is best for the animals. This may include removing the animals if the foster situation is not advantageous to the animals.
- Be prepared to say goodbye. You have given your love and attention, so it may be difficult to part -- realize that your fosters are ready for adoption only through *your* efforts. You can trust our Animal Care Specialists to find them the best possible homes.
- Understand that there can be risks involved in fostering. Animals are fostered because they have circumstances or conditions that make them unadoptable. Special care will make most of them healthy and ready for adoption. However, in spite of our best efforts, there may be a few who will not become healthy, well-adjusted pets. In these cases, our Animal Care Specialists may have to make the very difficult decision to euthanize. And, tragically, sometimes animals simply cannot be saved and may die in your care.
- Be willing to give your time, a place in your home, and lots of love.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FOSTER PET PROGRAM: SHELTER POLICIES YOU WILL NEED TO FOLLOW

When you become a foster pet parent, you abide by certain policies we have put in place for the benefit of our animals, including:



- Foster animals are in your temporary care; they remain the property of the Lincoln County Animal Shelter.
- You may not release foster animals, even temporarily, to anyone other than LCAS for any reason. Veterinary care is okay, of course.
- Felines are indoors *at all times*. Canines share your space with you inside your home, and your yard must be securely fenced or have a dog run with some form of shelter. Our dogs are never tethered outside or left in the elements.
- Please take foster animals only when your calendar allows you to care for them for the full time they require to become ready for adoption. The “usual” stay is from two weeks to over two months, but this will vary depending on the needs of the animals.

We will give you our best estimate at the time of fostering, but ask you to be flexible as conditions change. Obviously, needier animals require more time and effort.

- Please give us *as much advance notice as possible* if there is an emergency and you cannot meet your commitment to the animals. As you know, a home environment is much better than the Shelter for animals who are not ready for adoption, so we will have to arrange for another foster parent to take over. This requires considerable time as there are many more animals needing fostering than people signed up to be foster parents. Unless it is an emergency, we need at least a week’s notice to arrange for alternative care for your foster animals.
- Readyng animals for adoption is our mission, but foster parents sometimes want to adopt their charges. If this happens, let us know your feelings. We are always happy when a perfect match is made, assuming that the animal is available and adoption procedures have been followed. However, we highly recommend serial foster parenting! Since fostering is so important to saving lives, we ask that you consider how adopting someone will affect your ability to continue fostering in the future.
- **All adoptions must go through LCAS.** We do not keep waiting lists or put animals “on hold” for certain individuals. Occasionally, people who want a specific animal become emotional or even angry when they are disappointed. Please help us make these people understand that our primary concern is the welfare of the animals – while we want to make people happy, the animals come first.

- **Refer prospective adopters directly to our Animal Care Specialists.** There are several reasons why you should not try to arrange adoptions yourself, including:
 - All foster animals must return to the Shelter to ensure that they have been spayed/neutered, are current on vaccinations, they are microchipped, and are in good mental and physical health.
 - Potential adopters must complete an adoption application, be approved, and pay the adoption fee. Additionally, dogs must be licensed.
 - Occasionally, animals are at the Shelter because they are the subjects of legal proceedings. By law, this is confidential information, and we cannot divulge it to anyone. Depending on the situation, these animals may be on adoption hold or not available at all.

So, rather than discussing adoption with other people, please refer them to LCAS. We are always seeking good homes! If the animal is available and ready for adoption, we will be happy to begin the process with qualified applicants.

- If you are removed from the Foster Pet Program, you must return the foster animals to the Shelter immediately.



GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOSTER PET PARENTS

Fostering can be a wonderful, rewarding experience for you and a happy time for the animals. We have developed the following guidelines to help you to be successful...and to steer you through some of the challenges that your unpredictable furry friends will inevitably bring your way. We hope that the rewards of fostering will make up for any difficulties you may encounter.

- Provide loving care.
- Prepare your home to be a clean, safe, accident-free environment. Like other companion animals in the home, foster animals may harm carpets, drapes, clothing or other valuables, so please provide that “ounce of prevention”! *Please refer to “Appendix I: Home Safety” for notes on how to animal-proof your home.*

- Socialize the animals you are fostering. “Socialize” simply means being around the animals to make them comfortable with people through such activities as talking, touching, petting, cuddling, grooming, nail cutting, and basic instruction. Depending on the age and condition of the animals, it may include anything from potty training to obeying basic commands to walking on a leash.
- Use only positive, “reward-based” training techniques.
- **Call us immediately if you notice anything unusual** such as vomiting, diarrhea, excessive sneezing, or lethargy. LCAS pays for all veterinary care and medicines. *Please refer to “Monitoring the Health of Your Foster Animals” in this guidebook.*



- Closely observe your animals to determine their temperament in new and different situations. Please advise us of any undue aggression towards humans or other animals.
- Transport the animals to the veterinarian or the shelter when requested; for example, for medical care or vaccinations.
- Foster Pet Questionnaires - We know that you are going to enjoy the particular characteristics of your foster animals – and that you will have lots of stories to tell. We ask that you keep brief notes that will help us to match each individual animal to their best “forever home”. For this purpose, please use one “Foster Pet Questionnaire” for each pet.
- Along similar lines, you may want to take some pictures – prospective adopters enjoy looking at appealing pet photos.
- Your concluding duty – with our sincere thanks – will be to bring the animals back to LCAS when they are ready.
- Please be truthful if you notice bad habits. We need to know right away in order to start



***“There is no psychologist in the world like
a puppy licking your face.”
~ Ben Williams***

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LCAS IN THE FOSTER PROGRAM

√ Entry examinations √ Behavior assessments √ Vaccinations
√ Worming √ Medications √ Spay/neuter √ Check-ups
√ Emergency care √ Prescription food √ Microchips
√ Dog licensing √ Counseling and Guidance

We are here for the animals, and we endeavor to make the fostering experience as positive as possible for all concerned. Briefly, our Animal Care Specialists will:

- Screen the health and assess the behavior of potential foster animals to determine suitability for the Program.
- Provide vaccinations, worming, and other necessary medical procedures.
- Match available animals to foster pet parents based on the needs of the animals. Of course, you may specify the type of animals you wish to foster, and we will find the animals most suitable for you and your home environment.
- Provide supplies and food if you need them. Some people are already set up; others may need start-up items; still others may want to borrow non-consumables such as crates. Please discuss your needs with us.
- Support and counsel the foster pet parent during all stages of the process. We are always willing to provide guidance on animal care and encourage you to call us if you have any questions or concerns.
- Assure that foster animals receive regular check-ups, weigh-ins, and medical procedures. At these times, appointments are made and you bring the animals to the Shelter or to the veterinary office. We pay all medical costs, including medications, formula, and prescription food.
- Spay/neuter at the appropriate age/weight.
- Microchip at the appropriate time.

***“Dogs have given us their absolute all. We are the center of their universe. We are the focus of their love and faith and trust. They serve us in return for scraps. It is without a doubt the best deal man has ever made.”
~ Roger Caras***

STILL INTERESTED? GREAT! HOW TO BEGIN FOSTERING

If this will be your first foster experience:

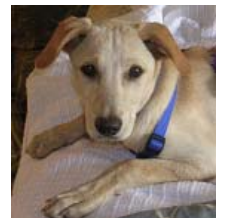
- Contact LCAS for a Volunteer/Foster Application:
 - Call: 541-265-6610 for information...or
 - Visit us at the Shelter and pick up an application. We would be happy to discuss the Program with you then...or
 - Go on-line at www.lincolncountysheriff.net/shelter
 - Click on “Volunteers”
 - Click on “Volunteer/Foster Application”
 - Print out the application
- Complete the application and get it back to us. As you will see, on the application form you will be able to tell us about your volunteer interests and preferences for foster pets. Please be aware that the Sheriff’s Office will conduct a background and driver’s license check before you can begin volunteering, and a home visit may be required before fostering.
- Once you have signed a Foster Pet Agreement and have completed the orientation, we will search for a good match for your home, circumstances, and pet preferences.
- When you respond to an email or call and discover there are animals who need you, set up an appointment with Brandi Richmond to pick up your foster pets. At this time, you will be given background information on the animals and specific notes on their needs.



FOSTERING AND YOUR HOME: THE PHYSICAL SPACE

General guidelines for foster spaces:

- Your home must be clean, safe, and non-smoking indoors to prevent injury and illness.
- Before you bring your foster animals home, make your space as pet-proof as possible.
- If you rent, you must get your property owner’s approval to have an animal.
- An Animal Services Deputy may make a pre-foster visit to look at the space in which you intend to house your fosters. In addition, we reserve the right to conduct in-home evaluations at any time during the foster period. We do this to ensure that animals are maintained in clean, safe, and humane conditions.



Spaces for dogs and puppies

Outside Areas for Dogs

- Yards must be securely fenced.
- Do not allow young dogs outside in the yard without the supervision of an adult.
- Outside your yard, your foster dogs must never be off-leash. When outdoors, keep them on-leash at all times, away from unfamiliar animals, unless you are in your secure yard. Foster dogs may not be left outdoors alone.
- Our mutual goal is to provide the best space possible, depending on the needs of the animals. Some dogs can be integrated into your home immediately; some may be shy or afraid and need careful supervision, while still others may have medical needs that require them to be isolated. Of course, before you foster, we will discuss these needs with you.

Inside Areas for Dogs and Puppies



- There is no getting around it: puppies will be messy. Restrict youngsters to the bathroom, mudroom, laundry room, or other area that can be cleaned easily. Remember, though, that infants need to be around people for socialization purposes -- spend lots of time with them.
- For puppies, the ideal set-up is a crate and an exercise pen in a room that can be closed off from the rest of the house.
- When you first bring your adult foster dogs home, restrict them to a single room, like a kitchen or family room where you spend a large part of your day. Your home is a new environment and they will need time to become familiar and comfortable. You may want to use a crate in this room for times when you are away from the house. *Please refer to Appendix I: Home Safety.*
- Once they are used to their new space, welcome your adult foster dogs to the appropriate animal-proofed areas in your home.
- You may want to use a baby gate to restrict them to specific areas of the house.
- Our dogs and puppies deserve space in the main area of your house -- do not keep them in a garage or basement. Never tether them outside.



Spaces for cats and kittens



- Foster cats and kittens must be kept indoors at all times. Why? Take a moment to think of the dangers lurking outside for felines: cars, diseases, people, predators, other cats, fleas and ticks, becoming lost...the list could go on. Veterinarians recommend keeping cats indoors because indoor-only cats live longer, healthier lives. This is an important policy of our Program.
- Your home should be cat/kitten-proof to protect the felines *and* your possessions. *Please refer to Appendix I: Home Safety.*
- Cats/kittens must be in carriers when leaving the house for transport.
- Keep doors and windows closed at all times, unless they are covered with a screen that is *securely* in place. If you must have a window open, the opening should be no more than 1 ½ inches with a support in place so that it cannot be opened farther. Please be safe: a frightened cat/kitten can escape through the tiniest of holes.
- Cats and kittens are fond of hiding. It's easy to lose someone, so make sure possible hiding places are blocked up or easily accessible to you when you want to extract the kitties.
- If one or more of your charges manages to get outside, try to get them back into the house at once. If you delay, they may run away, decreasing your chances of getting them back inside. Do not chase them, as this may drive them even farther from your home. If they are still missing in one or two hours, call us so we can help you determine a recapture strategy, such as using a humane trap that we can supply.



Spaces for Animals with Special Needs

Foster animals need to adjust and build confidence in the new environment that is your home – it is their refuge. Thus, you and an Animal Care Specialist will have to assess your space according to the needs of the animals.

- Some animals may need isolation from your personal pets, particularly nursing mothers and their kittens/puppies.



- Sick, injured and recovering animals may need their own space to heal, free from the tension and stressful distractions other animals cause. This will also protect the other pets in the household if any communicable conditions exist.
- As you socialize them, timid animals or animals with behavioral problems may need to retreat to the security of their own space at times.

Co-Mingling with Your Personal Pets

You may incorporate healthy, friendly foster animals into your household. When you do, please:



- Be alert and introduce the animals to each other gradually and calmly. Watch behavior very closely for several days.
 - Speak in a normal voice to the animals and assure them that they are safe.
-
- At the beginning, leave leashes on dogs so you can re-establish control immediately.
 - Prevent jealousy by giving everyone lots of love and attention.
 - Be patient with your foster animals -- they may have been abused, may have experienced stressful surgery, and have probably faced many recent changes.

PLAYTIME -- HAVING FUN WITH YOUR FOSTER DOGS OR CATS

General Play Guidelines

One of the best things about fostering is that you get to spend lots of time playing with the animals. Human contact is important for recovering, sick, injured or neglected animals and is vital for the healthy development of puppies and kittens. It is very rewarding to see these animals blossom under your care.



- Play with your animals several times a day. Through gentle play, you teach them the people skills they need to become happy companions, while helping them develop physical coordination and keep fit.
- Talk to your animals and get them used to simple commands.
- Encourage children (always under supervision) and friends to interact with them as well. Remember, you can't take puppies and kittens out, so you'll have to bring people to them.
- By all means, encourage play with toys. Kittens and puppies like to use their teeth and claws, so when you play, use toys as *toys*, not your hand or anything else your animals shouldn't think of as prey.
- Treat/toy time is a good opportunity for dogs and puppies to learn easy commands – “sit” and “stay” perhaps.

- When they are ready, you may acclimate your foster dogs to the car during brief rides. Crate them for safety. Some people take their cats out for rides as well, always in their carriers. While in the car, take special care to provide for their comfort, and do not allow them to become hot or thirsty.

Play Guidelines: Children and Foster Pets

- Children under 12 years of age should not be left alone and unsupervised around unfamiliar animals. Puppies and kitties look like toys, but they definitely are not – although young children may think otherwise.



**Definitely
needs supervision!**



As much as young children and young animals like to play together, both the animals and the kids are still learning the ropes. Please supervise them at all times so that everyone stays safe and unhurt. Use pet playtime to teach children to treat animals kindly, gently, and respectfully.

- Teach children to leave the animals alone when the animals are eating and sleeping.

FEEDING AND MAINTAINING YOUR FOSTER ANIMALS

Some foster parents are already set up for the fostering process and do not need food or supplies from the Shelter. If you do need help, we are happy to give/loan you what you need to get your fosters off to a good start.

It's In the Bag!

The bag is yours to keep with our thanks. Medicines, instructions and guidelines will be included. Depending on what you need, it may contain starter food and consumables (such as litter) and loaner items (such as bowls, brushes, and crates).

A Word About Shelter Costs

The average cost of a healthy dog's stay at the Shelter is \$902. The average cost for a healthy cat's stay is \$663. While these average costs include spaying/neutering, they do not include unscheduled visits to the vet or emergency medical expenses (and about half of our animals require some veterinary care).

Saving animals is a rewarding but costly endeavor for us – which is why we ask that you take on the responsibility of providing food, litter and other supplies for your fosterlings if you can. Your contributions make a huge difference.

Of course, if your financial situation prohibits you from purchasing foster care supplies, please let us know – we are able to help you.

General Feeding Guidelines

We have developed specific feeding protocols for animals from infants to seniors and will discuss food and feeding with you when you begin to foster. Following are some all-purpose tips:



- Puppies really need puppy food and kittens really need kitten food. These specialty foods are high in additional protein and calories, and are designed for young animals' smaller bodies and developing chewing abilities.
- Be reliable. Feed your foster animals at the same time every day.
- If your foster animals are integrated into your household, you may have to feed them in a separate room and close the door to help prevent food aggression between the resident and foster animals.
- Always keep water bowls clean and full of fresh water.
- Feed good-quality food – never not table scraps or “people food”. Feeding animals from your plate is a bad idea – it can make them into beggars (a habit that’s difficult to break). Additionally, some foods can be toxic to pets, including grapes, raisins, tea, alcohol, garlic, onions, avocados, salt and, of course, chocolate. See the Appendix for a partial list of some human foods that are poisonous to animals.
- Please purchase a natural, dye-free quality brand. Some premium brands include:
 - Iams
 - Call of the Wild
 - Natural Balance
 - Royal Canin
- Do not overfeed – this can cause digestive problems and lead to obesity.
- The amount of food and feeding schedules will vary with the size, condition, and age of the animals. As you know, puppies and kittens need to eat frequently and require special food, while some animals past the adolescent stage might need modification of their diets.
- You know this, but we’d like to remind you: never feed canine food to cats or feline food to dogs. If you have mingled cat and dog households, be sure the cats are fed where the dogs can’t get at the food.

MONITORING THE HEALTH OF YOUR FOSTER PETS

One of your most important responsibilities as a guardian is to monitor the physical and mental conditions of the pets in your custody. Consult with one of our Animal Care Specialists if you notice anything abnormal. Depending on the severity of an injury or illness, your animal may need Shelter or veterinarian care.

While the following does not list every type of possible problem, please take special care if your foster animal:

- ✓ Becomes unconscious
- ✓ Is not acting normally
- ✓ Is bleeding
- ✓ Has a sudden loss of appetite
- ✓ Has lost or gained a lot of weight
- ✓ Vomits
- ✓ Does not produce normal stools
- ✓ Does not produce normal urine
- ✓ Drags bottom on floor/ground
- ✓ Chews tail excessively
- ✓ Does not have a full coat
- ✓ Has large mats of fur
- ✓ Scratches or licks excessively
- ✓ Has unhealthy skin: dry flakes, greasy feel, bad odor
- ✓ Has fleas or ticks
- ✓ Has red, inflamed gums
- ✓ Sneezes more than two-three times a day

- ✓ Has or develops lumps or bumps
- ✓ Has debris in ears or ear odor
- ✓ Shakes the head or scratches ears excessively
- ✓ Has dull eyes or matter in eyes
- ✓ Does not appear to hear well
- ✓ Does not react as usual in the environment
- ✓ Moves stiffly or painfully
- ✓ Does not have healthy-looking feet or nails
- ✓ Has trouble breathing
- ✓ Is excessively thirsty or ...
- ✓ Does not drink enough water
- ✓ Strains when urinating
- ✓ Has a very hot nose and/or...
- ✓ Has discharge coming from the nose
- ✓ Tires very easily

Keeping Medical Records

The medical histories of all animals at the Shelter are computerized and kept up-to-date by our Animal Care Specialists. When you pick up your foster animals, you will receive copies of these records.

If your animals need on-going care, these requirements will be listed in the records. For example, puppies and kittens need to be weighed periodically and vaccinated on schedule.

Routine vaccinations will be scheduled at the shelter by Brandi Richmond. As the date for revaccination approaches, she will call or email to schedule a time to bring the animal in. Reworming or flea treatments are done as needed. If you observe fleas or worms, please contact Brandi for scheduling of those treatments.

LCAS will pay for all medical expenses incurred by our foster animals. Please call Laura at 541-961-6612 if there are medical concerns. If there is a medical emergency, please seek veterinary attention.