

Fostering for ARF



WHAT IS THE FOSTER CARE PROGRAM?

ARF does not have a shelter facility; therefore we depend on foster homes to temporarily house animals that are in ARF's care. These animals may be too young, too small or have health needs that make them unavailable for immediate adoption. Some are just in need of housing until they are adopted. The more foster homes we have, the more lives that can be saved.

WHO WOULD MAKE A GOOD FOSTER PARENT?

Anyone who cares about animals and is willing to donate their time and provide lots of tender love and care would make a good foster parent. Retirees, seasonal residents, people who work at home or have flexible work schedules all would be good candidates for this program.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

In order to be a foster parent, you must:

- Be over 18 years of age.
- Have space in your home to keep foster animals.
- Preferably have a fenced in yard if fostering a dog.
- Keep cats indoors at all times.
- Must keep in contact with us regarding your foster pet(s)
- Should have all personal pets up to date on all vaccinations and examinations prior to taking in a foster.
- ARF asks that only animals that come through the ARF foster system be placed in the foster home.

We will visit your home to evaluate the environment where the foster animal will be kept, and once approved you will be required to sign the Foster Care Program Agreement. At this time your name will be placed on our Foster Parent List.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

You can expect a lot of work, as fostering is not an easy job. On the other hand, we feel there is no job as rewarding as the one you are about to undertake. This job comes with unlimited benefits in the form of licks, cuddles, purrs, and lots of love from your fosterling. You and your family can expect to fall in love with your little charges, and you might have a hard time letting them go. Please remember that our goal in this program is to get these pets out of the foster home and adopted into their forever home. Without our foster parents, this would not be possible. In the event that you have any acquaintances interested in adopting the animal, we ask that you contact us. Please refer them directly to ARF for all information.

WHAT COSTS ARE INVOLVED?

ARF will provide food, supplies and any needed medication for foster animals. Any items you would like to provide on your own is greatly appreciated.

Any veterinarian care necessary should be cleared through us first if possible. If this is not possible, such as in cases of an emergency, contact us as soon as possible. Vaccinations and deworming will have been provided for the pet before it is to be fostered. You will be provided with a medical record for the pet which will let you know if further vaccines or treatment are necessary.

WHAT SUPPLIES WILL I NEED?

1. Their Sleeping Space:

If you are keeping your foster in a dedicated room for sleeping and relaxation, ARF will supply a crate upon request for dogs if needed. If you wish to leave the dog or cat in a room without a crate you will need to completely pet-proof this room. Make sure there are no exposed electrical wires. Also, check for any plants that may be poisonous. Cleaning supplies, laundry detergents, bleach, paint, paint thinner, pesticides, fertilizers, antifreeze, disinfectants, mothballs, roach poison, ant poison, rat poison, and medications are just a few of the items that can be deadly to an animal.

2. Food:

Dry kitten or puppy food is recommended for animals six (6) weeks or older. You may want to moisten the food with water for the first week or so. If you will be fostering any nursing moms, dry puppy or kitten food is best for her as well; she needs plenty of nutrition during this time. Once the nursing is over, adult dry food should be given. If you choose to purchase food rather than receive it from us, please read labels carefully for all adult food. Be sure the food label states “balanced” and “complete.” We recommend a quality pet food such as Kirkland, which is available at Price Smart.

Kittens (not nursing) and adult cats: Leave fresh dry food out each day, all day, and always make sure they have plenty of fresh water. Also, keep a separate bowl of canned food for specific feeding times.

Puppies (not nursing) and adult dogs: Feed a puppy at regular meal times, as much as he/she wants. Pick up the food after 15 minutes. Adult dogs should be fed the appropriate amount indicated on the packaging, morning and night. Always be sure they have plenty of fresh water available.

3. Specific Cat or Kitten Supplies

Litter Box and Litter: Will be provided to you if needed.

A Cat Bed: A bed can be made out of a roomy shoebox. Line the box with an old blanket or with any soft washable material. We also may have available washable beds for use.

Toys: Kittens will play with anything that moves. Choose safe toys that cannot be splintered, torn apart or swallowed. A hard rubber toy that rattles, a ping-pong ball, an empty wooden thread spool, an unshelled walnut, a cardboard toilet paper tube, a large paper bag, or a catnip toy are all safe for a kitten. Do not give kittens a ball of string or yarn, spools of thread, rubber bands, balls of aluminum foil or cellophane, corks or wire twist ties. Nothing with hard, sharp points that can be broken off should ever be available to them. Be wary of toys that can break and be careful not to give them anything small enough to swallow (like buttons, beads, or paperclips). Keep all plastic bags away and out of the room. They can become trapped inside and easily suffocate. ARF may have toys to supply for the foster duration so please check with us.

4. Specific Dog or Puppy Supplies:

Bed: Be sure that the puppies or dogs have an area that is covered with soft towels and/or blankets for sleeping. We may have available a bed that we could provide, so please check with us if needed.

Toys: Be sure to give your puppy his own toys and chewable items. Do not give a dog or puppy anything made of rawhide, as it may become lodged in his/her throat. Choose nylon chews, hard rubber toys, or items with squeakers that cannot be torn off or swallowed (remember that puppy teeth are sharp and can pierce things you would not necessarily consider penetrable).

HOW DO I GO ABOUT PICKING UP MY FOSTERLING?

When the need for a foster home arises, you will be contacted. At this time you may pass or accept. If you accept, an appointment will be made for you to pick up the fosterling or an ARF representative will deliver the animal to you. Every time you foster you will receive a health record for your fosterling. It will tell you if and when the animal(s) may need vaccines, worming or anything else that requires a veterinarian checkup. You will need to contact us to schedule an appointment a couple of days before these are due.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Your daily responsibilities require you provide a clean environment for your fosterlings. You will need to provide fresh food and water daily. You will need to keep your fosterlings clean and warm. You will need to supervise any children that come in contact with them. Most importantly, you will need to provide a lot of “TLC.” We ask you to play with your fosterlings as much as possible. It is important that they receive a lot of positive human contact, so that they develop a love and trust for humans. This socialization helps the animals when placed in a new home.

You should only bathe your fosterlings if necessary and if they are over six (6) weeks of age. Frequent bathing can dry out the skin and coat. Be sure to use a good quality puppy or kitten shampoo. Rinse well after shampooing, and then gently blow-dry the animal to avoid chills. Never apply any flea control products to any fosterling unless asked to do so. ARF will provide Flea and Tick prevention for the fosterling. Check with us if you have any concerns about your fosterling.

WHAT DO I DO IN THE EVENT OF AN ILLNESS?

Puppies and kittens are generally very fragile. If you notice that they are not eating or drinking within a six (6) hour period, or if any fosterling appears lethargic, is vomiting, has labored or heavy breathing, diarrhea, or is sneezing, contact us immediately. We will set up an appointment for you to bring the animal to a veterinarian to examine and/or treat. If the veterinarian deems medication is necessary, we will supply it at no cost to you. As noted previously, if you are unable to contact ARF prior to taking the animal to a veterinarian, notify us as soon as possible.

HOW LONG CAN I EXPECT TO HAVE MY FOSTERLINGS?

Most foster animals will stay with the foster home until they are adopted. Some of the animals will need to be spayed or neutered during the foster period. ARF will coordinate with you to have the animals brought to the clinic at the end of each month.

We will make every effort to find a suitable, loving home for your foster animal. Upon receiving your foster(s), you will be provided with a questionnaire. The questionnaire is to help you to record personality and pertinent re-homing notes on each animal. Please remember that this information is very helpful in finding a suitable forever home for your foster(s). At this point, you should feel proud that you have helped us get one step closer to our goal – finding these rescues a forever home.

If you are interested in being a foster parent please fill out our ARF Foster Care Program Agreement and email it to arf.boquete@gmail.com