

Frequently Asked Questions

Find answers to some of the most frequently asked questions by potential Volunteer Foster Parents at Toronto Humane Society.

General Foster Questions

Q - What supplies will I need?

A – Toronto Humane Society will provide all supplies, from food and medication to blankets and towels. If you run out of anything during your fostering time, you can contact the Foster Department to arrange a pickup of more supplies.

Q- Can I foster if I have my own pets at home?

A - You need to keep your foster animals separate from your other pets. In most cases your foster animal will need a separate space in your house, a sanctuary room. If you have a space for this then we absolutely will accept Volunteer foster Parents who own their own animals in addition to fostering. In some situations with prior approval foster animals may be able to interact with your owned animals . In all cases your animals should be up to date on vaccines - and spayed/neutered of course!

Q - What if I work all day?

A – Individuals who work all day can still make great foster parents; it just might limit what kind of cases you can take on. Most cats can be left alone during the length of a regular work day but cats with special needs may require more regular monitoring. We would still encourage you to come out to an orientation and discuss your schedule with a Foster Care Specialist in the interview process.

Q - I'm a student; can I foster an animal?

A –This solely depend on your personal schedule and if you have the time and resources to devote to an animal. In many cases, students make fantastic foster parents. All foster parents are required to provide their own transportation for pick-ups, drop-offs, appointments and in the event of emergency. Keep in mind TTC has restrictions on when animals can and cannot travel so a backup plan is required.

Q - Do I need to have experience?

A- Although training is provided we are looking for individuals that have some experience with the species of animals they are looking to foster. The more experience you have the more complex of cases you may be able to take on. The Foster Department will be on hand during your whole foster experience to answer any questions you may have, make recommendations and schedule appointment as needed. We are here to help and guide you through the process.

Q- What is the time commitment for fostering?

A- The time period for fostering can greatly vary depending on the case. Our Foster Department, with the assistance of the Veterinary staff will give the best estimate for the length of the foster period. Infant kittens are required to stay in foster care from birth until they are a minimum of 900g in weight, at which point they may be spayed/neutered, fully vaccinated and made available for adoption. With palliative animals the time may vary from a couple weeks to several years. Our goal is that the foster animal will stay in their foster home for the entire duration of the foster period, however, as the animal remains owned by THS, the foster parent can return at any time if required.

Q- How often will the foster animal need to come in for appointments?

A- Again, this will vary depending on the animal. Some animals may require weekly or bi-weekly veterinary appointments at THS, others may require monthly recheck visits. Palliative animals that are stable are usually seen every 6 months unless issues arise. Foster parents are required to get the animal to all scheduled appointments at the shelter. In the event that the animal became unwell at any point in time the foster parent should contact the Foster Department and be prepared to seek medical attention on short notice if it is required.

Q- What if my foster animal gets sick?

A - Sometimes the animals will become sick and may die due to their compromised immune systems. If at any time you feel that your animals are not doing well, you can call to speak to one of the Foster Care Specialist. They will advise you whether you should bring the animals in for an examination or not. If it is after regular shelter hours we have after hour emergency care hospitals that you can bring your foster animal to.

Q- What if I want to adopt after the foster period ends?

A- In most cases foster parents can have the opportunity to adopt their foster animal if they give advance notice to the Foster Department and shelter before the foster period ends. The regular adoption process (application, interview and adoption fees) will apply. This only applies to the foster parent themselves. Anyone else wishing to adopt your foster animal will have to wait until the animal becomes available and go through the regular adoption process; the animal will be available on a first come first serve basis.