



FAAS Feline Foster Manual

Five Acres Animal Shelter
1099 Pralle Lane
St. Charles, MO 63303
(636) 949-9918
www.fiveacresanimalshelter.org

Table of Contents

Contact Information	2
Bringing Home Your New Foster	3
Preparing For Your Feline Foster	3
How To Advocate For Pets In Foster	5
Litter Box Training	5
Cat Toys and Safety	7
Feline Body Language	8
Foster Pet Emergency Information	9



Contact Information

General Contacts:

Erin Moore- Foster Coordinator

P: (636) 949-9918 ext. 1011

E: foster@fiveacresanimalshelter.org

Emma Entner- Animal Care Manager

P: (636) 949-9918 ext. 1001

E: emma@fiveacresanimalshelter.org

Medical Needs:

Dr. Kathryn Kettenbach, DVM- Staff Veterinarian

E: medical@fiveacresanimalshelter.org

After Hours Emergencies:

Please email medical@fiveacresanimalshelter.org ASAP with your medical urgency/emergency. If it is in the red emergency category and you do not hear back within 10 minutes, then you can proceed to call our executive director, Jeana Roth, at 207-776-8548 if it is between the hours of 6pm-8am.

Please scan the above QR code for access to the following:

- Scheduling appointments with our veterinarian
- Access to our BAND page (internal communication platform)

Five Acres Ownership Statement

Five Acres Animal Shelter (FAAS) maintains ownership of all animals in foster care at all times. FAAS reserves the right to reclaim an animal from foster volunteers at any time during the fostering period. Foster volunteers will be informed of the reason(s) why the animal(s) need to be returned and asked to bring them to the shelter as quickly as possible. In extenuating circumstances, FAAS staff will retrieve animal(s) directly from a foster home for return to the shelter.



Scan QR code to
access our LinkTree,
which contains
important
documents!

Feline Fostering at Five Acres

BAND: Our Foster Family Social Network Platform!

Five Acres uses an app called BAND to communicate with our feline foster families as a group. This is where we post cats and kittens looking for foster, and families can comment to claim a cat or group of kittens to take home.

Please click this link to join our BAND:

It can be used on a desktop, laptop or tablet but most fosters download the app on their phone to receive alerts when foster needs are posted.

Bringing Home Your New Foster

Introduction to the Home

Going to a foster home can be a confusing time for a pet as they adjust to new people, a new environment, and a new schedule. There are some basic steps foster homes can take to ease this transition:

Designate a “safe place” that is “animal proofed:”

- This space should be separate from current household pets. Having a secure and safe area to keep your foster pet when you're not supervising will help protect your home as well as the pet.
- This can be a room that is able to be baby gated off securely, or that has a door that can be closed. Offices, spare bedrooms, bathrooms, and other similar rooms are all great options.

Set a schedule:

- To help your foster adjust, set a regular schedule for feeding, potty breaks, walks, etc. Kittens like to eat on schedule and have a clean box.

Be understanding:

This can be a very confusing time for a pet. Your new foster may take a couple of days to warm up and feel comfortable and may need some space to adjust and observe. Advise children not to force interaction on fosters and be respectful of boundaries.

Preparing for Your Feline Foster

Between fosters you will want to thoroughly clean the areas of your home and yard where they stayed and played.

Cat Proofing Your Home

Cats can be especially wily, so it behooves us to revisit cat proofing our homes and cover some items in a bit more detail.

Cats and kittens are inquisitive creatures, capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest spaces. Think of this as bringing home a toddler child, you must be one step ahead of them!

Things to inspect / be mindful of before bringing home a kitten:

- Use childproof latches to keep little paws from prying cabinets open.
- Keep medications, cleaners, chemicals and laundry supplies on high shelves. Be aware that everyday human medications can be lethal to animals, even in tiny amounts.
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a cabinet.
- Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes inside cabinets or behind washer, dryer or refrigerator units.
- Make sure window screens are securely fastened.
- Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover.

Suggestions on Cleaning Procedures

Hard vs. Soft Surfaces: When housing an animal, it is important to consider all objects he or she may have contact with and disinfect them accordingly. While hard surfaces are easier to scrub and sanitize, washing and/or vacuuming can also help decrease the number of environmental pathogens. Remember to wash laundry on hot and do not mix with your regular laundry.

Detergents: the mechanical action of scrubbing with a detergent is effective for many bacteria. Most disinfectants only work once the surface has been cleaned of debris.

Soluble alcohols: alcohol is effective against viruses and bacteria but not fungi. Remember that the surface must be scrubbed clean prior to use for alcohol to be effective.

Bleach:

- Recommended dilution is 1-part bleach to 32-parts water
- Recommended contact time is 10 minutes
- More is not better, and contact time is crucial!

Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide: most used disinfectant in animal shelters, it is sometimes referred to as Rescue or Accel. If you would like to use this product, we are happy to fill a spray bottle that you bring in from home.

Other Things to Note: With common household cleaners like Simple Green or Clorox wipes, it is important to read the labels. Many of these brands do not have an active disinfectant.

Parasites and their eggs are difficult to deal with because many are very resistant to cold and heat and can survive for years in the soil. The most effective way to deal with parasites in the yard or litter box is to clean up after an animal as often as possible. This should be done with all fosters regardless of whether we have determined that they have a contagion.

When using cleaning products, especially around kittens and ill animals, be aware of ventilation, and not allowing them to walk on freshly cleaned surfaces. Most of these products will irritate paws, eyes, nose and mouth.

How to Advocate for Pets in Foster

Sharing Your Pets and Friends & Family Adopters

Unless you have been instructed otherwise, please feel free to share your foster stories and photos with friends and family. Friends and family are more than welcome to put in an application to adopt an animal you are fostering. Please advise us if you know someone interested in adopting your foster pet.

Spaying and Neutering

Five Acres takes great pride in the role we are playing in ending overpopulation of companion animals. To that end, we have chosen to practice pediatric sterilization of our animals. Pediatric sterilization is done on animals eight weeks and older and weighing at least two pounds. Dissolvable sutures are most often used but care must be taken to monitor the incision for signs of infection.

Tattoo: All pets spayed/neutered at the FAAS veterinary clinic receive a green/blue tattoo on their mid-abdomen. The tattoo is there to show other veterinarians that the pet has already been altered.

Dropping off your pet for spaying/neutering:

- All animals should be dropped off for surgery between 8-8:30am on the scheduled surgery date unless other arrangements have been made in advance.
- Drop-off is at the intake/clinic entrance on the lower level.
- Puppies and kittens under three months of age should have a light breakfast. Dogs and cats over three months should be fasted after midnight. Water should always be available.
- Puppies, dogs, cats and kittens returning to foster post-surgery will have a post-operative instruction sheet and medications ready to go home.

Litter Box Training

Most cats have a specific preference about where they want to eliminate. By following the suggestions outlined below, you'll be able to start off on the right paw with your new cat.

Location: Most people are inclined to place the litter box in an out-of-the-way spot in order to minimize odor and loose particles of cat litter in the house. Often, the litter box ends up in the basement, sometimes next to an appliance and/or on a cold cement floor. This type of location can be undesirable from your cat's point of view for several reasons.

If you have a kitten or an older cat, she may not be able to get down a long flight of stairs in time to get to the litter box. Since she is new to the household, she may not remember where the litter box is. Your cat may be startled while using the litter box if a furnace, washer or dryer suddenly comes on and that may be the last time she'll risk such a frightening experience! If your cat likes to scratch the surface surrounding her litter box, she may find a cold cement floor unappealing. Therefore, you may have to compromise. The litter box should be kept in a location that affords your cat some privacy, but is also conveniently located. If you place the litter box in a closet or a bathroom, be sure the door is wedged open from both sides, in order to prevent her from being trapped in or out.

Type of Litter: Research has shown that most cats prefer fine-grained litters, presumably because they have a softer feel. Scoopable litters usually have finer grains than the typical clay litter. However, high-quality, dust-free, clay litters are relatively small-grained and may be perfectly acceptable to your cat.

Once you find a litter your cat likes, don't change types or brands. Buying the least expensive litter or whatever brand happens to be on sale, could result in your cat not using the litter box.

Many cats are put off by the odor of scented or deodorant litters. For the same reason, it's not a good idea to place a room deodorizer or air freshener near the litter box.

Number of Litter Boxes: You should have at least as many litter boxes as you have cats. That way, none of them will ever be prevented from eliminating in the litter box because it's already occupied.

You might also consider placing them in several locations around the house, so that no one cat can "guard" the litter box area and prevent the other cats from accessing it. We also recommend that you place at least one litter box on each level of your house. Occasionally, a cat may refuse to use the litter box after another cat has used it. In this case, all of the litter boxes will need to be kept extremely clean and additional boxes may be needed.

To Cover or Not To Cover: Some people prefer to use a covered litter box; however, there are some potential problems with using this type of box. You may want to experiment by offering both types at first, to discover what your cat prefers.

Cleaning The Box: To meet the needs of the most discriminating cat, litter should be scooped daily. How often you dump the used litter and replace it with fresh depends on the number of cats you have, the number of litter boxes, and the type of litter you use. Twice a week is a general guideline for clay litter, but depending on the circumstances, you may need to change it every other day or once a week. If you scoop the litter daily, scoopable litter can go two to three weeks before the litter needs to be changed. If you notice an odor or if much of the litter is wet or clumped, it's time for a change. Don't use strong smelling chemicals or cleaning products when washing the litter box, as it may cause your cat to avoid it. Washing with soap and water should be sufficient.

Depth of Litter: Some people think that the more litter they put in the box, the less often they will have to clean it. This is not true. Most cats won't use litter that's more than about two inches deep. In fact, some long-haired cats actually prefer less litter and a smooth, slick surface, such as the bottom of the litter box. The litter box needs to be cleaned on a regular basis and adding extra litter is not a way around that chore.

If Problems Develop: If your cat begins to eliminate in areas other than the litter box, your first call should always be to your foster coordinator. Many medical conditions can cause a change in a cat's litter box habits and we will need to contact our veterinarian to determine if there is a medical problem. If we determine that your cat is healthy, the cause may be behavioral. Most litter box behavior problems can be resolved by using behavior modification techniques. Punishment is not the answer. For long-standing or complex situations, we will work with our behaviorist to address the concern.

Cat Toys & Safety

"Safe" Toys: There are many factors that contribute to the safety or danger of a toy. Many of those factors, however, are completely dependent upon your cat's size, activity level and personal preference.

Be Cautious: The things that are usually the most attractive to cats are often the very things that are the most dangerous. Cat-proof your home by checking for: string, ribbon, yarn, rubber bands, plastic milk jug rings, paper clips, pins, needles, and anything else that could be ingested. All of these items are dangerous, no matter how cute your cat may look when she's playing with them. Stuffed toys that are made for children often are problematic for pets because of their filling materials.

Recommended Toys:

- Plastic rolling balls, with or without bells inside.
- Ping-Pong balls and plastic practice golf balls with holes, to help cats carry them. Try putting one in a dry bathtub, as the captive ball is much more fun than one that escapes under the sofa. You'll probably want to remove the balls from the bathtub before bedtime, unless you can't hear the action from your bedroom. Two o'clock in the morning seems to be a prime time for this game.
- Paper bags with any handles removed. Paper bags are good for pouncing, hiding and interactive play. They're also a great distraction if you need your cat to pay less attention to what you're trying to accomplish. Plastic bags are not a good idea, as many cats like to chew and ingest the plastic.
- Empty cardboard rolls from toilet paper and paper towels are ideal cat toys, especially if you "unwind" a little cardboard to get them started.
- Catnip-filled soft toys are fun to kick, carry and rub.
 - Kittens under six months old seem to be immune to catnip.
 - Catnip is not addictive and is safe for cats to roll in, rub in or eat.
- Soft stuffed animals are good for several purposes. For some cats, the stuffed animal should be small enough to carry around. For cats that want to "kill" the toy, the stuffed animal should be about the same size as the cat. Toys with legs and a tail seem to be even more attractive to cats.
- Cardboard boxes, especially those a tiny bit too small for your cat to really fit into.
- Hide and seek is a fun game for cats to play. "Found" toys are often much more attractive than a toy which is blatantly introduced.



Feline Body Language



Body Language of Feline Anxiety



Slight crouching



Major crouching

More Subtle Signs of Fear & Anxiety



Dilated Eyes



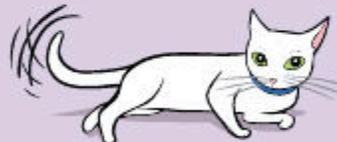
Ears Turned Back,
Furrowed Brow



Staring,
Focused on Object



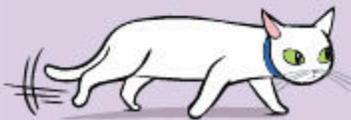
Hiding,
Looks Half Asleep



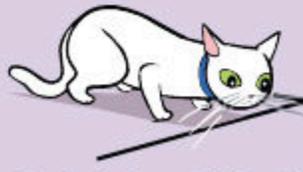
Laying on Side,
Tail Flicking



Hair Raised, Staring,
Ears Turned Back



Walking with Flat Back,
Tail Down, Head Down



Ready to Jump Off Perch



Suddenly Grooming,
Excessive Grooming

© 2020 Veterinary Information Network



Home of Low Stress Handling®
CattleDogPublishing.com
A PART OF THE VIN FAMILY



FOSTER PET EMERGENCY INFORMATION

CODE RED: EMERGENCY!

Email medical@fiveacresanimalshelter.org ASAP. If no answer within 10 minutes, call 207-776-8548

- Lost Foster
- Unresponsive
- Hit by Car / Seriously Injured
- Ingested Dangerous Items
- Major Wounds / Excessive Bleeding

- Having Trouble Breathing
- Cold to the Touch
- Injury to the Eye
- Straining / Unable to produce urine
- Unable to Stand or Walk

- Seizure/Unstable/Disoriented
- Neonates not Eating, Weight Loss, Severe Diarrhea
- White or Blue/Very Pale/Sticky Gums
- Pregnant Animal in Distress
- Temperature ≤ 97.0 F or ≥ 105.0 F

CODE YELLOW: URGENT

Email medical@fiveacresanimalshelter.org ASAP. Will respond as soon as possible but not immediately.

- Vomiting Multiple Times
- Lethargy/Not Eating

- Colored Nasal Discharge
- Incident of Aggression

- Diarrhea Multiple Times Over 24hrs (6 weeks or older)
- Chewed/Removed Sutures/Staples
- Slightly Open Spay Incisions

CODE GREEN: WELLNESS CHECK NEEDED

Email medical@fiveacresanimalshelter.org ASAP. Will respond as soon as possible, likely the next day.

- Vomiting Once or Twice
- Lethargy/Low Appetite
- Congestion/Clear Nasal Discharge

- Intestinal Parasites/Worms in Stool
- Pink or bloody urine
- Diarrhea for more than 24hrs
- Limping

- Dirty/Smelly Ears
- Skin Irritation