

# Caped Crusaders



# Cat Rescue

FOSTER PROGRAM MANUAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Fostering Process.....	7
Notificationm .....	7
Pickup/Drop-Off.....	7
Follow-up Appointments.....	7
Adoption .....	9
The Basics.....	10
Feeding.....	10
Cleaning Up.....	10
Creating a Safe Haven.....	11
Common Behavior Concerns .....	12
Not Using the Litter Box .....	12
Confident Cat Program .....	11
Set Up.....	11
Handling .....	11
Getting Ready for Adoption .....	12
What If They Don't Come Around .....	12
Common Health Concerns .....	13
Diarrhea .....	13
Vomiting.....	13
Fleas.....	14
Ear Mites .....	14
Upper Respiratory Infection (URI).....	14
Ringworm.....	15
Chronic Renal Failure .....	15
Hyperthyroidism .....	16
Hospice.....	17
Emergencies .....	18
For emergencies between the hours of 8AM and 5:30PM: .....	18
For emergencies between the hours of 5:30PM and 8AM:.....	18
Frequently Asked Questions.....	20
Additional Resources.....	22

# WELCOME TO FOSTERING

First of all, we'd like to thank you and welcome you to the Caped Crusaders Cat Rescue (CCCR) team! CCCR was founded in 2020, and since that time we've rescued over 1,000 cats and kittens from all over the state of Missouri. Many of these cats have illnesses, injuries or are scared strays and require some tender loving care. We rely on our foster families to help us heal and recover these animals as they transition to a new and healthy life. For some of our cats we ask our foster families to give them their final home and to fill it with love and warmth. Fostering can be challenging at times but the rewards are great and we could not do it without our foster families. Here are a few basics about fostering with CCCR:

- 1) Fosters are the backbone of our program. Fosters bridge the gap between intake and adoption. A cat may be an intake from the public, an animal control or shelter. We do not typically intake cats from the street. This is partly in due to our licensing type. We are considered a foster-based rescue, not an animal control. The exceptions to this policy are very young kittens and injured animals. All intakes must be discussed and approved with the Cat Care Coordinator (Alexandria Stroup) **PRIOR** to taking in an animal. If you do not receive approval, we cannot guarantee CCCR will back (become financially responsible) the animal in question. The best policy is if you see a case you'd like to jump in on, always discuss it with CCCR first!
- 2) From time to time, fosters may get ill or require medical attention. Veterinary visits must be approved with Alexandria **PRIOR** to making veterinary appointments.

Oftentimes, issues come up that require medications (such as ear mites or routine flea medications) or other supplies we have on hand. We may tell you to contact one of our medical coordinators where we keep a stockpile of medication to set up a pickup or get additional help. We have 3 medical coordinators:

- a. Alexandria Stroup – Main Contact, all counties – Call or text 314-348-2880 or via Facebook.
  - b. Alaina Wilson – Medical Contact in Jefferson County – Call or text 636-638-9234
  - c. Tuesday Badell – Medical Contact in St. Louis County – Call or text 425-231-6099
- 3) Supplies such as cat litter or cat food are ordered weekly on Tuesday or Wednesday and requests for supplies are made on our Facebook group, Caped Crusaders Volunteers, Fosters, Transport, etc. The thread will go up on Sunday evening typically and we request that you make any requests for supplies by Monday evening. Occasionally those supplies will be sent up via foster delivery or on our weekly shuttle system. We ask that you make arrangements to get your supplies with the delivering party as soon as possible.
  - 4) Adoption events are held weekly at Washington PetSmart, 3152 Phoenix Center Dr, Washington, MO 63090, from 11 AM to 2 PM. We currently have 2 shuttles running, 1 from Alex's house in Union, MO, and 1 from St Louis area that is typically TBD and discussed on the group. Events are open to any foster that is fully vetted and ready to go. Fully vetted is considered – Vaccinated for FVRCP/Rabies, Spayed/Neutered, and SNAP Tested for FIV/FELV. If your foster cat is not currently ready for adoption, make sure and get with Alex on an appointment!
  - 5) **IN CASE OF EMERGENCY** – Emergencies are just that, emergencies, there is no telling when something might arise that you need help for. Alex is the main point of contact for anything emergent. You can call her day or night at 314-348-2880. Please note, Alex puts her phone on Do Not Disturb while she is sleeping. In order to break through the Do Not Disturb, you have to call twice in a row, back-to-back. Sometimes, she will instruct you to go directly to the nearest ER vet and other times, we may send you directly to her foster home for care.

Rest assured, we will get your kitty taken care of as soon as possible.

# FOSTER PROGRAM RULES

When you signed up as a volunteer foster parent for Caped Crusaders Cat Rescue (CCCR), you agreed to the following rules:

1. CCCR provides foster parents with food, litter, and other necessary supplies necessary to care for the foster cat(s). Foster parent agrees to maintain a high level of cleanliness in their limited environment.
2. Everyone in the foster parent's home knows about and agrees to have the cat(s) in the home.
3. Foster parent will take their own cats in for yearly examinations and vaccinations. Their cats must receive rabies and FVRCP vaccines (common core cat vaccinations). Foster parents must also have proof of at least one negative snap (FIV/FELV) test for their personal cats. Their own cats must also be receiving all recommended preventatives (flea/tick/deworming) if necessary. Proof of above shall be verified prior to release of any cats/kittens to the foster home.
4. CCCR provides medical care through CCCR approved vets only. The foster cat(s) is/are not allowed to go to any other veterinary practices without prior approval from Alex at 314-348-2880. If a foster parent seeks outside veterinary care, reimbursement of expenses is not guaranteed.
5. If the foster cat(s) are in need of veterinary attention, show any signs of illness, or is lost or injured, the foster parent agrees to immediately contact Alex.
  - a. The foster parents will follow all instructions given to them by the shelter staff and veterinary team. This also includes instructions to return the foster cat(s) to CCCR upon request. The foster cat(s) remain the property of CCCR.
  - b. Kittens are very susceptible to minor and major illnesses. At the first sign of diarrhea, upper respiratory symptoms, not eating, weakness, the foster coordinator must be contacted.
6. Foster parents will keep the foster cat(s) isolated from their own pets for the duration of their stay in the foster parents home. If a foster parent chooses to allow the foster cat(s) to intermingle with their own personal pets, foster parents agree to hold harmless CCCR in the event of any transmitted illness or injury resulting from the intermingling.
  - a. Kittens – Healthy cats can be carriers for certain viruses and parasites that can be very dangerous to the kittens and show no symptoms in adult cats. Foster kittens can be incubating certain viruses that could be passed to your healthy cats and cause illness. We recommend using a separate room (bathroom, bedroom, etc.) to safely isolate the cats and kittens.
  - b. Adults – Adult cats are less susceptible to disease than kittens, but there is still a risk. The isolation is to protect your pet cat and any cat(s) that you are fostering.
7. Foster parents will provide updates on how the cat(s) is/are doing when the Foster Coordinator contact the foster parent. Foster parent agrees that the Foster Coordinator can conduct a home visit at a mutually convenient time if necessary.
8. CCCR is not responsible for any events and/or damages that may occur as a result of fostering cats. (e.g., soiled carpets, scratched furniture, etc.). The foster parent will also not be compensated for any additional expenses they choose to get on their own and not picked up or approved by CCCR. This includes, but is not limited to, food, litter, toys, beds, etc.
9. CCCR is not responsible for any pet fees that are charged by apartment complexes or any other housing. It is the foster parent's responsibility to inform their apartment complex about their foster and pay the

fee before they start to foster. If the foster parent fails to tell the apartment complex about the foster and other fees ensue, CCCR is not liable for any of those fees.

10. If the foster parent chooses to introduce foster cat(s) to their personal pet(s) (instead of keeping them separate as CCCR recommends, they assume all medical risks for both the owned and fostered cat(s) associated with that introduction. Possible medical conditions may include, but are not limited to, ringworm, distemper, feline upper respiratory infection, and parasites. Any medical expenses incurred as a result of this introduction will be the responsibility of the foster parent.
11. Foster cat(s) will be kept indoors at all times in the foster home. Cat(s) must be transported in a secure carrier.
12. Kittens are especially fragile and can be easily injured. The foster parent will closely supervise children with foster kitten(s) especially during playtime. Foster parent will also make sure that the foster room is set up to ensure the safety of the cat(s) (e.g. dangers from climbing, dangling cords, falling from heights, etc.)
13. Fostering parent agrees not to foster for any other organization or independently while fostering for CCCR without express permission from CCCR.
14. If the foster parent chooses to use social media to help get the kitten(s) adopted, the foster parent agrees not to post any videos or photos that show the foster cat/kitten(s) falling or climbing from heights that could injure them or using inappropriate behavior (i.e., scratching furniture, urinating, etc.)
15. The foster cat(s) cannot be transferred or temporarily transferred to another party or location without approval from CCCR. This includes pet sitters or outside family members.
16. The foster cat(s) are to be adopted to its permanent home only under approval of CCCR and our standard adoption policies will apply. Foster parents may refer potential adopters directly to CCCR.
17. If the foster parent is interested in adopting their foster cat(s), our standard adoption policies apply. This includes completing an adoption application, as well as potentially paying an adoption fee, although the Director may choose to waive those fees from time to time.

## FOSTERING PROCESS

### Notification

A request for the cats that are in need of foster will be sent out via our Facebook group as the need arises. Interested parties can respond to the group or via Facebook Messenger. We typically do not let a foster have more than five (5) cats or kittens at a time. Some exceptions are made for families that are larger than 5.



### Pickup/Drop-Off

You will make an appointment with the Cat Care Coordinator to pick up the cat. Bring your carrier with you or let us know if you don't have one and we will provide one.

Sometimes, the cats/kittens will come via shuttle or a direct meeting with the surrenderer is necessary. All of this will be discussed and agreed upon prior to release of the kitty. **YOU MUST KEEP YOUR KITTY UNTIL ADOPTION.** While we are very understanding that life happens, the point of fostering is to provide a home like structure for the cat until they find their forever home. Dropping out of the foster care program puts more stress on the rescue. We ask that you give us plenty of notice if you are no longer wishing to foster so that we may make placement arrangements for the cats and kittens in our care.

### Follow-up Appointments

The need for follow up appointments will vary with each individual cat. Some

may need to be seen quite often and others as infrequently as once a month. All veterinary appointments are scheduled with Alex at 314-348-2880. We use 2 main veterinary clinics, Pet Station in Union (636) 583-2858, 1220 W Main Street, Union, MO 63084, and Jones Animal Hospital in Crystal City, (636) 397-9000, 1237 N Truman Blvd, Ctystal City, MO 63019.



## Adoption

Cats that are in foster care for a medical reason will need to be cleared and approved by a veterinarian and the cat care coordinator prior to being made available for adoption.

Once cleared for adoption, foster parents are encouraged to network their animals, but it is not required. Adoptable cats will be listed on Petfinder, Adopt A Pet, etc. We have weekly adoption events at PetSmart in Washington, 3152 Phoenix Center Dr, Washington, MO 63090, from 11-2 PM.

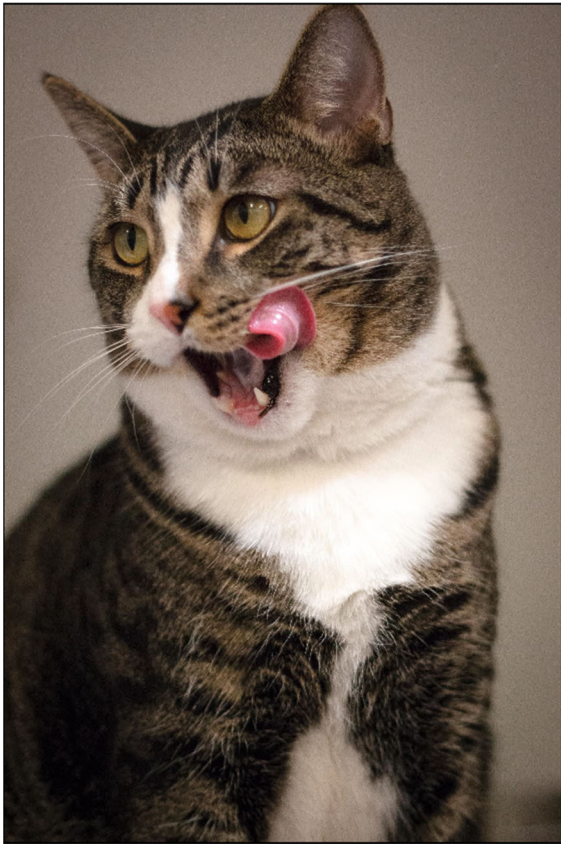
Things like providing us with a clear photo and a biography for the website make adoptions faster and more successful. The biography should include information about their ideal home setting and some of their great qualities or quirks. Include information about how they are with other pets, if known, unique interactions with you. Write the biography to grab the attention of the potential adopter.



### Adoption Promotion Tips

- ★ Create a short (~30 seconds) Youtube video and email the link to the Foster Coordinator to load on the website
- ★ Email the Foster Coordinator new photos-a different photo every week or two is ideal.
- ★ Email the foster Coordinator a modified bio-focus on other traits or try a new wording.
- ★ Print posters and put them up at local businesses
- ★ Social media-utilize, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.

## THE BASICS



### Feeding

Your foster cat should have access to a good quality dry cat food at all times, we provide Nulo brand cat and kitten food when requested. You can also offer your foster cat canned cat food. Senior, ill, or overweight cats may benefit from additional servings of canned food. We typically provide Nulo brand wet food, although occasionally other brands are donated. Cats should always have access to fresh water.

Treats formulated for cats are a good way to build relationships and encourage positive behaviors and are also ok to give in moderation. Your foster cat should not be given milk or any human food that is not listed in this manual. If you have a cat that is struggling to eat, see the tip box in the “Common Medical Concerns” section for approved human food suggestions.

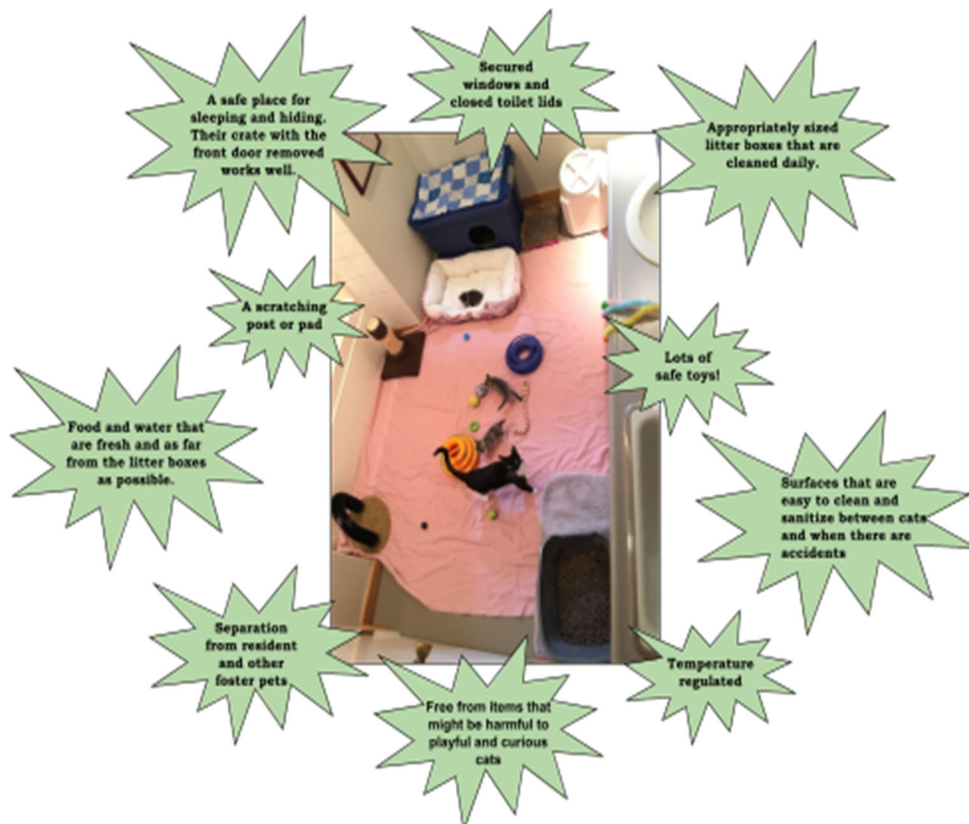
### Cleaning Up

Prior to bringing home a new foster cat, it is important to clean your foster space. You will want to use a 1 part bleach to 32 parts cold water mixture to wash any hard surfaces including walls and floors or a 99.95 surface disinfectant like Odoban or Lysol. Food bowls, hard toys and litter boxes should be soaked in the solution for a minimum of 10 minutes. Any soft materials, such as towels, rugs and blankets, should be washed on a high temperature with bleach. Any cardboard or other items that cannot be washed should be discarded. Foster cats should only be given access to surfaces that can be disinfected with bleach or discarded. Areas that cannot be disinfected could hold onto germs that could be spread to other animals or even people.

Carpet cannot be properly disinfected and we strongly discourage allowing foster cats to have access to it.

## Creating a Safe Haven

Foster cats should be kept indoors only and be transported in a secure crate when outside of the home. Upon arrival to your home, even a confident cat may take some time to adjust and should have their space limited for the first two weeks. A small room, bathroom or a large dog crate work well. Create hiding places where the cat can feel safe but you are able to reach them. Vertical space is important as well - placing a table, or a bookshelf, by a window or other place of visual interest, provides an easy and effective perch for cats who feel more confident when they are elevated off the floor. Make sure that food, water and litter are in places that are low traffic. Limit interactions with new people for the first several days.



## COMMON BEHAVIOR CONCERNS

It's important to remember that your foster cat has recently been through several difficult transitions. They are feeling unsure of things and even though we know a foster home is a fabulous place, they may still struggle with the transition. Patience is key but the following tips will help with with some of the common concerns.

### Not Using the Litter Box

There are both medical and behavioral reasons an adult cat may stray from using the litter box. Most reasons are easy to resolve. Begin by determining if the cat is spraying or if it is a case of inappropriate elimination. If there is urine on a vertical surface, you have a cat who is spraying and if the urine is on a horizontal surface, you may have a case of inappropriate urination. Notify the Foster Coordinator immediately of any cases of either.

Spraying is likely the result of stress. A new home (even a really great foster home), the presence of another pet or being recently or still unaltered may all contribute to this behavior. The cat is trying to feel more safe and secure. Begin by assessing the likely cause of the spraying. Confine the cat to a smaller and easily cleanable space, separate from children and other pets.

Inappropriate urination or defecation can also be the result of stress but it may also be a simple dislike for the litter type, litter box location, lack of an appropriate amount of litter boxes, arthritis or a urinary tract infection. To resolve, begin by keeping a clean litter box. Scoop it a couple times daily and completely dump and sanitize it on a weekly basis. Provide your foster cat with more than one litter box, and if possible place one in the area that they are using instead. Use an uncovered litter box with unscented cat litter and if needed try other types of litter to find



what they like. For example, you can try clumping, non-clumping, pellets, wheat based, or even soil. There is also Cat Attract litter which has enzymes that will encourage the cat to the litter box.

In both cases, be sure to thoroughly clean the affected area with an enzymatic cleaner that was designed for cat urine. After cleaning, you can utilize Feliway as an added support. Any instances of straining to urinate, blood in the urine or frequent attempts to urinate and not producing a normal amount should be reported to CCCR immediately.

## Overarousal

Overarousal may present as a cat who strikes, growls or even bites in response to something that excites them. This may be another cat, a dog or may be as simple as petting. Some cats are more prone to this behavior than others. In response to these behaviors, we should seek to reduce the exposure to the things that cause this response. You can remove other pets or limit petting to a location or



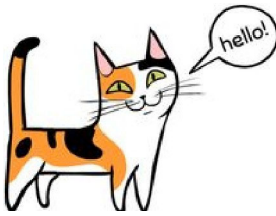
amount of time that is more comfortable. Once you understand their threshold, you can begin to work on desensitization. You can use treats or wet food to slowly acclimate the cat to these stimuli. Go slow! For example, use a photo of another cat and then treat. Very gradually increase their exposure to the stimuli, being cautious to stop before they are at their threshold. Keep sessions short and do them several times daily.

Some cats can become over aroused in the form of play. You should never encourage your foster cat to bite or kick at your hands or feet. Use wand or dangling toys to encourage the cat to play appropriately and move them away from your body. Keep play sessions short and end before they become too aroused. Always reward positive interactions and behaviors, and ignore negative behaviors.

# CAT LANGUAGE



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



TRUSTING



FRIENDLY. RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED. CAUTIOUS



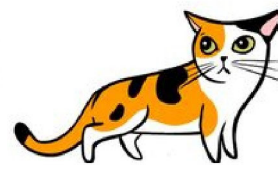
PLAYFUL



EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED

THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRffATED



DISGUSTED



## CONFIDENT CAT PROGRAM

The shelter is a busy place for cats. Many cats struggle in this environment and may exhibit extreme fear or even reactivity. Some of these cats are scared house cats who when given a more safe environment are friendly. Others are actually undersocialized cats that may never be comfortable with people interacting with them. Generally a foster home is the best way to determine the difference. By following the below program, we should be able to know the difference in a few short weeks. This program has proven time and again to be successful. If you find that you are not able to move through these steps in about three weeks, contact the Foster Coordinator with an update and a new plan will be put in place.

### Set Up

One of the most important components of the program is to have the right set up. Generally a large dog crate, a rolling cage, or a small bathroom are the best places to start. Ideally, the cats should be able to observe normal household activities but not be overwhelmed by them. They should be provided a space to hide so they can take breaks, but make sure that they are not out of reach. Adjust the location of the acclimation area as needed to provide balance. Fearful cats should not have access to the entire house. This will drastically increase the amount of time needed for them to come around and may cause us to assume an inaccurate assessment of their degree of socialization.



### Handling

To begin, offer your foster cat a treat they love-canned food, baby food, tuna oil on canned food etc. and walk away. Strive for three to five sessions a day.



Establish a routine that they can predict. After the first several days, begin staying in the area after feeding them. Over the next week, gradually remain closer to their kennel while they eat. If they stop eating, you are staying too close. Continue to stay under their threshold but keep lingering longer until you are able to sit right outside their kennel. Next, try leaving your hand near the food. Then try reaching in for a pet on the face or head. If this step is too much, you can try petting with an inanimate object, such as a wand toy or a back scratcher. Always stop progressing when they stop eating.

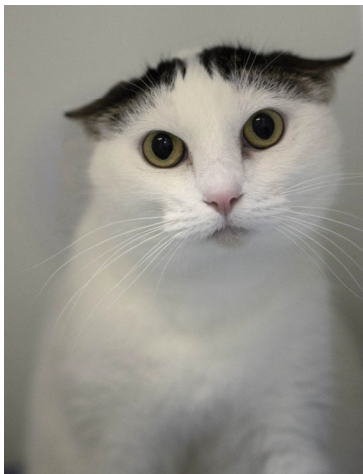


Continue these interactions until you are able to comfortably pet them with food. Next, you want to try petting before offering food and give a treat after the touch. Try coaxing the cat onto your lap with food or a toy. Continue to normalize household sounds through these days.

Once the cat is comfortable with you petting and responding positively to it, you can increase their living space. Continue to offer food or toys as an incentive to interact with you and improve the degree of trust.

## Getting Ready for Adoption

Once you are able to confidently pet your foster cat, email a description and bio to the Foster Coordinator. Being able to catch her loose in a room, pick her up or have her come to you for snuggle time are not required before listing for adoption. The adoptive family will be counselled on how to continue your plan in their home. We want to provide the adoptive family with a great foundation but also want to empower them to help, so that we can help the next cat in need.



### What If They Don't Come Around

Each cat will progress at a different rate but generally speaking you should be able to pet your foster cat by week three even if they do not necessarily enjoy it. If you are not seeing progress at this point, you should contact the Foster Coordinator for tips. The determination may be made to place this cat in a barn home. Not all cats are socialized to humans

and that is ok, there is a home for those guys too. Following this plan will help us determine the best plan quickly without causing the cat undue stress.

## COMMON HEALTH CONCERNS

Cats don't always receive health exams before going into foster care, but any known health concerns will be discussed with the foster parent prior to pick up. However, it is possible for symptoms to develop after the cats are taken home. Because of this, it is very important to keep your foster cats in a separate area, with separate bedding and without contact to your other household animals. CCCR is not responsible for treating any other animals in the foster home in the event that something is shared from a foster pet.

*It is expected that all veterinary care will be provided by CCCR or an approved emergency veterinarian under an emergency situation only. A foster parent may not take a foster pet to any other veterinarian. No medications, prescription or otherwise, are allowed to be given to foster pets unless previously authorized by CCCR or veterinarian staff. Failure to follow this rule may result in no longer being a foster parent with CCCR. Any unauthorized veterinary care will not be reimbursed by CCCR.*

### Diarrhea

Diarrhea can be caused by a variety of things including a change in diet and stress. Soft stool or diarrhea is to be expected the first couple days after coming to your home. If the stool doesn't improve, it may be indicative of a more serious concern. CCCR should be contacted if it persists for more than 72 hours or is accompanied with lethargy, loss of appetite or vomiting.



### Vomiting

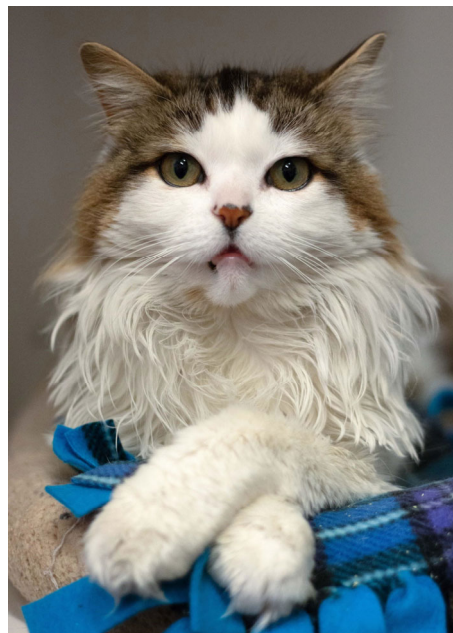
Vomiting may also be the result of stress or diet change and should be monitored. If the vomiting continues for more than 48 hours or is accompanied with lethargy or loss of appetite, CCCR should be contacted.

## Fleas

Whenever possible, your foster cat will be treated for fleas before going home with you. Flea treatment should be applied monthly. Contact CCCR for follow up treatments.

## Ear Mites

A cat with ear mites will have crusty black debris in their ears. The ears will often be itchy and may have a foul odor. Treatment is simple with medication, though sometimes more than one treatment is required for complete resolution.



## Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)

URI is simply a “cat cold.” They are generally caused by viruses, but bacterial infections may be involved. Stress can make the cats more susceptible.

URI generally appears as sneezing, discharge from the eyes or nose, congestion, coughing, or swollen eyes.

Mild cases of URI do not need to be seen by a veterinarian. If the cat has clear nasal discharge and is eating, maintaining weight and otherwise acting normally, then an appointment may not be needed. Most mild URIs resolve on their own within seven to ten days. CCCR should be contacted if the URI has not resolved or if the cat develops lethargy, poor appetite, weight loss, colored nasal discharge, severe congestion or a fever.

### Tips to Encourage Eating

- ★ Increase the odor - cats generally need to smell what they are eating
  - Warm canned food a bit
  - Add a small amount of tuna or clam juice
  - Add low sodium chicken or beef broth (no onions or garlic)
- ★ Offer single meat baby food (no onions or garlic)
- ★ Offer different canned foods with a variety of textures and flavors
- ★ Pet or sit with them - some cats are “social eaters”
- ★ Keep food fresh

## Ringworm



Ringworm is fairly common in our population of kittens. It is a fungal infection and is typically found on the head and legs. The skin will look dry and the hair will be missing. Ringworm is treatable and typically involves medicated baths and a topical medication. It is contagious to other animals and humans and can live in the home. However, it is not a reason to panic, it's very easy to treat and never fatal. Contact CCCR if you suspect that your foster cat has ringworm.

## FIV/FelV

CCCR, in accordance with many local shelters, routinely tests cats for FIV/FelV. Testing will be conducted at a time determined by CCCR. It will be communicated with the foster family when a cat is known to be positive for either. FIV is generally only transmitted through deep fight wounds and mating. FeLV is more easily spread and can include the transmission of saliva through close contact, such as mutual grooming. The virus does not live long in the environment and normal cleaning protocols will eliminate the environmental risk to other cats.

## Chronic Renal Failure

- nose until you feel them swallow.
- Follow with food
- ★ Use a pill gun
  - This is a tool that will help place the pill in the mouth safely. Ask Animal Health for one and instructions on how to use it.

Chronic Renal Failure, also known as kidney disease, is a common condition in older cats and has a variety of causes. Each cat has a different rate of progression and it can be difficult to predict how long the disease will take to progress. Your foster cat is likely to drink and urinate in larger than normal quantities. They may also develop weight loss, poor appetite, decreased energy, anemia and vomiting. A prescription diet is likely to be recommended and will be provided by CCCR. It is essential to make sure these cats have access to water at all times.

## Hyperthyroidism

Hyperthyroidism is also common in older cats. It is caused by an abnormally functioning thyroid gland. It can cause excessive drinking and urination, restlessness, vomiting or diarrhea. Cats often lose weight, despite having an eager appetite. Life-long medication is typically required and these cats should always have access to water.

## HOSPICE

CCCR has a hospice program for cats that enter the shelter with a terminally ill condition. These animals may have a variety of medical concerns but are still having a good quality of life. CCCR will provide palliative care for these cats and ask that our foster families provide them with a loving and compassionate home.

Hospice cats will need monthly rechecks at CCCR or our veterinary team and may occasionally “graduate” from the program and be cleared for adoption. At each of your appointments, the Cat Care team will assist with creating the best plan for these cats.

It is common for hospice cats to need subcutaneous fluids and/or medications. CCCR is available to show anyone the process. We can also have them come to CCCR to receive fluids as needed.

Monitoring your hospice cat’s quality of life is important. Cats are exceptionally good at hiding pain and discomfort. As their caregivers, we need to look for the more subtle signs that they may be ready to go. These signs may include: a loss of appetite, significant weight loss, change in litterbox habits, having more bad days than good, difficulty breathing or changes in behavior. Contact CCCR if you are concerned about any of these symptoms. CCCR is skilled at making these decisions and are here to talk with you through the process.



All of fostering, but especially hospice care, is a special process and one that takes immense compassion. Please see the “Additional Resources” page at the end of this handbook for some places for assistance with grief support. Always know that staff are available as well to help you through the harder times of this journey.

## EMERGENCIES

For emergencies between the hours of 8AM and 5:30PM:

1. Text Alex at 314-348-2880

For emergencies between the hours of 5:30PM and 8AM:

1. If you are unsure if it is an emergency, refer to our Medical Coordinator contact sheet on page 3 for a list of current foster mentors for guidance.
2. Text Alex at 314-348-2880. Or call 2 times, back to back, to break through Do Not Disturb.

## Not Immediately Concerning - Appropriate to monitor

- URI
  - Clear ocular or nasal discharge, sneezing
  - Cat is otherwise eating and active
- Poor appetite of less than 48 hours (cat is still active)
- Lethargy (low energy) of less than 48 hours
- Vomiting of less than 24 hours (cat still active and eating)
- Diarrhea of less than 3 days (cat still active and eating)
- Lack of bowel movement of less than 48 hours
- Weight loss of less than 10%

## Non-Emergency - Contact Alex at 314-348-2880 to see if an appointment is needed or rescue stocked medications can be used.

- URI
  - Significant ocular or nasal discharge
  - Any degree of signs where the cat is also lethargic or anorexic
- Diarrhea
  - No stool improvement after 3 days (if cat is active and eating)
  - Diarrhea lasting 24 hours (if cat is lethargic and anorexic)
- Vomiting
  - No improvement after 24 hours (if cat is active and eating)
  - Vomiting of less than 24 hours (if cat is lethargic and anorexic)
- Poor appetite of over 48 hours
- Lethargy of more than 48 hours
- Lack of bowel movement of over 48 hours
- Weight loss of more than 10%
- Hair loss
- Skin or ear infections
- Swollen or closed eyes (may be an emergency, contact for guidance)
- Mild trauma, pain or lameness
- Mild bleeding that is no longer active
- Seizures (a single, short-lasting one)

## Emergency - Requires immediate attention - See "Emergencies" on previous page for guidance

- Unresponsive or collapsed
- Severe trauma or pain
- Labored or difficulty breathing
- No urine production after 24 hours of straining to urinate
- Significant active bleeding
- Seizures (more than 3 in a 24 hour period or 1 that lasts more than 3 minutes)
- Continuous vomiting over 24 hours and unable to hold down food/water



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Can I let my foster Cat interact with my personal pets?

A: We do the best we can to notify foster parents of all known illnesses that a cat may have. Unfortunately, they may be carrying a disease or parasite without showing symptoms for quite some time. We highly recommend keeping foster cats and personal pets separate at all times. At a minimum, we recommend a two-week quarantine period. Personal pets must be up to date on vaccines, parasite preventatives and be healthy.

Q: How much time will I need to dedicate to fostering cats?

A: The time commitment will vary with each case but generally you can expect to spend between one and three hours a day interacting with your foster cat in some form. For cats in foster for behavior reasons, this time is best spent split into short, ten minute sessions.

Q: How does medical treatment work with an CCCR foster pet?

A: As a CCCR foster parent, you will be required to work with our veterinary staff for all routine care and emergencies that occur during the hours of 8AM and 5:30PM. This may mean several visits to our vet's location throughout the time you have the foster cat.

Q: How long will I be fostering each pet?

A: The length of need for fostering will also vary with each cat. Each case is unique. The request for foster will generally provide you with an expected time frame.



**Q: What should I do if my foster cat bites someone?**

**A:** In the event that your cat bites a person and the bite bleeds, you must contact the Foster Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident. We hope to avoid these situations whenever possible, but they do happen and we are here to support you and the cat through the process.

**Q: What should I do if my foster cat escapes?**

**A:** If your foster cat escapes, you should make every attempt to get them back into the home as soon as possible. If you are unable to get them quickly, contact CCCR right away.

**Q: What if I want to adopt one of my foster cats?**

**A:** Foster caregivers may adopt their foster cat. They will need to notify the CCCR, complete the adoption application process, and pay the standard adoption fees (they may be waived from time to time at the discretion of CCCR).

**Q: What if one of my friends or family members wants to adopt?**

**A:** Foster parents are encouraged to find adopters for their cats through friends and family members or social media. The potential adopter should reach out to CCCR during normal business hours after the cat is cleared for adoption.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [www.aspcapro.org](http://www.aspcapro.org)-A resource for a variety of topics regarding shelter animals and their care.
- [www.maddiesfund.org](http://www.maddiesfund.org)-Another great resource for a wide variety of information including many how-to videos.
- [www.sfspca.org](http://www.sfspca.org).-San Francisco SPCA has an online cat behavior library. Also has a great packet on hospice fostering and kitten fostering.
- [www.dovelewis.org/pet-owners/pet-loss-support](http://www.dovelewis.org/pet-owners/pet-loss-support)-Dove Lewis has a wide range of Pet Loss Support resources including art therapy, remembrance ceremonies, and grief support.
- <https://bestfriends.org/resources/cats>-Best Friends is the largest No-Kill Animal Sanctuary in the United States. Their website is full of great behavior and medical tips.