



Hearts 4 Paws, Inc. Foster Guidelines

- ★ **Housing** - Foster animals must have their own space for transitioning or living, whether it be the whole home with no other animals, a room with a door, a cage, or a crate. Hearts 4 Paws (H4P) can help secure appropriate cages or crates upon request for fosters to borrow. The animal must be kept at the foster address listed below unless approved in writing by an H4P representative. An H4P representative is authorized to conduct a home visit at any time a foster animal is in your care.
- ★ **Feeding** - Foster cats must be fed Purina Cat or Kitten Chow as age appropriate. H4P uses Purina in foster homes and in the Adoption Center for affordability and so that the foster animal is able to transfer into the Adoption Center without developing digestive distress from a food change. H4P can provide the required food upon request if it is a financial burden.
- ★ **Toileting** - Foster animals must be provided with a clean toileting area. Litter of your choice may be used. H4P can provide litter upon request if it is a financial burden but may not be able to accommodate requests for certain types of litter.
- ★ **Transportation** - Foster animals often need to be transported to medical appointments for spay/neuter surgery, vaccinations, checkups, and more. H4P contracts with 2 different vets located in New Bedford, MA and in Marion, MA. Other volunteers are also available to help with transportation if needed, and it helps immensely to be able and willing to coordinate with them if you are unable to transport the foster animal yourself.
- ★ **Foster Timeline** - Foster animals often need behavioral work or medical care before they are considered adoptable. Some animals heal and/or warm up quickly, while others may take more time. Additionally, H4P does not have their own facility to house animals. We depend on our network of foster homes to house animals until they can be placed in the PetSmart Adoption Center or adopted straight from their foster home. Appropriate spots in the Adoption Center may vary based on the behavioral and medical needs of the animals in the center and in foster at any given time. We understand that some volunteers may have time constraints, and we have flexibility in certain circumstances.
- ★ **Behavioral Issues** - Foster animals sometimes come from an unknown environment and are at risk of having and/or developing behavioral issues. H4P does our best to match foster animals with foster homes that we think are a good fit, but exact animal behavior can never be guaranteed. Foster animals may urinate or defecate outside their litter box. Foster animals may scratch or bite other animals, adults, or children. Foster animals may scratch or chew items in your home. H4P is always available to help address behavioral issues!
 - **If you have a behavioral concern with your foster animal**, text Sarah at 774-437-2473.
- ★ **Medical Issues** - Foster animals may be injured or fall ill, just like any other animal. H4P does our best to determine the health status of an animal before placing them in a foster home, but exact animal health can never be guaranteed. Animals may carry parasites, bacteria and/or viruses that may be able to spread to other animals (for example, upper respiratory infections or ear mites) and/or humans (for example, fleas or ringworm). H4P is always available to help address medical issues!
 - **If you have a medical concern with your foster animal**, text Sarah at 774-437-2473.
- ★ **Veterinary Care** - H4P must be contacted for all veterinary issues BEFORE you take your foster in for care. We have a team of veterinarians and experts on call that can help to diagnose and provide support for foster issues. If foster animals are brought to the vet without prior approval from Hearts 4 Paws, we are not responsible for the cost, and this is included in the signed foster liability waiver and agreement. We are an all-volunteer non-profit organization that depends upon grants and donations to fund our work, so we contract with certain vet clinics for discounted rates so that we can afford to help as many animals as possible.
 - **If you think your foster animal requires veterinary care**, text Sarah at 774-437-2473.

I have read and agree to follow these guidelines.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____

Foster Address: _____