



Foster Manual

Policies and Procedures

PawsCo | P.O. Box 6261 | Denver, CO 80206 | (720) 675-8758 | www.pawsc.org

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ABOUT PAWSCO



PawsCo is a 501(c)3 animal welfare organization based in Denver, Colorado.

PawsCo is about collective impact; it is about changing lives. PawsCo's Executive Director works with a large group of volunteers to make a difference for animals who need us the most.

At PawsCo, we want to make a systematic difference in animal welfare, so we take a comprehensive approach that involves being proactive with outreach, addressing current issues, and being a resource to existing organizations.

PawsCo is dedicated to reducing pet homelessness by keeping animals in their homes through partnering with the Food Bank of the Rockies for a year-round Pet Food Drive and serving as a partner to shelters and rescues to foster the most in-need animals – those animals not thriving in a shelter setting.

Support PawsCo

PawsCo needs your support, please find resources below to help us save lives.

	<p>Share our Amazon Wishlist with your friends and family. Amazon Wishlist: Shop for animals in need</p>
	<p>Add PawsCo to your King Soopers & City Market cards. King Soopers -King Soopers Community Rewards</p>
	<p>Become a reoccurring donor and support PawsCo in the most impactful way. Become a PawsCo Donor</p>
	<p>Help PawsCo Spread The Word About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering • Adopting • Supporting & Giving Back <p>to a Lifesaving Mission!</p>
	<p>Follow Us, Comment, Like, Share and Stay Connected!</p> <p>PawsCo.org Facebook Instagram Twitter Pinterest</p>



COVID-19 Procedures

We know this pandemic can affect everyone and things are constantly changing. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we work through this together. We are committed to keeping everyone safe and adjust our COVID-19 policy as needed. We intend to communicate as much as possible, we will communicate via your primary email.

Below is an outline of our COVID-19 policies and procedures as well as information regarding our resources. We understand everyone's comfort level may be different please use your own discretion and follow the CDC recommendations for wearing masks, social distancing, sanitizing, etc.

PawsCo follows the guidelines set by the CDC. This includes wearing masks and maintaining a distance of at least six feet when interacting with shelter partners and volunteers, other PawsCo fosters, vetting partners, PawsCo volunteers, and potential adopters. If you are not able to wear a mask due to a medical exemption, please contact the Foster Team.

Consult the PawsCo Foster Team if you have any questions.

COVID-19 - Taking a New Animal

- If you are high risk and do not feel comfortable with current CDC guidelines, please do not take a new foster animal as they will need vet care, supplies, and meet and greets.
- Vetting may take longer. Even if our clinics continue to spay/neuter, they may be inundated with appointments. Please be kind, patient, and understanding.

COVID-19 - Supplies and Vetting:

- If you have an animal and end up getting sick or are at high risk, we will work with you to get what you need or transport help. Please note, our physical and staffing resources may be limited as people are affected and this may take some time.
- Do not wait until you are almost out of supplies to restock. Most importantly, make sure you have enough food and litter. But do not hoard.
- Expect to stay in your car when attending intake at PawsCo headquarters. Our PawsCo volunteers will come out to your car to get your foster animal. Please wear a mask inside your car as our team will need to discuss your foster animal's needs with you.
- When picking up supplies at PawsCo headquarters, please wear a mask and make sure you have signed up for a time slot, so our volunteers are prepared and can practice proper social distancing.
- All vet clinics are now asking people to stay in their cars, everything will be done via phone to mitigate people entering the clinic.
- Vet clinics may take more and more precautions and there may be a slowdown in routine vet care which may result in having your animal longer.

Thank you for always being kind, understanding and patient to each other, volunteers, and vet partners. PawsCo's *Standards of Conduct* is always in effect.

Communications & Contacts

The communication in our rescue is done mostly through email but also through phone calls and texts. We ask that you help us to be as efficient as possible. Below is an overview of the communication process.

PawsCo's Communication Commitment

- PawsCo's Foster Team volunteers are dedicated to support our foster families.
- Foster Team will reply within 48 hours of your communication.
- Foster Team will assist you in an emergency with your Foster Pet.



Foster's Communication Commitment

- Report concerns, challenges, and questions about your foster pet to our Foster Team.
- Respond within 48 hours to emails, texts, and phone calls from PawsCo. *(If you need more time to respond, send a quick email/text to let them know.)*
- Be respectful of PawsCo team member's time.
- Let PawsCo know immediately if any of your primary contact information changes.

Facebook Group: [PawsCo Volunteer Group](#). This page is a great forum to ask questions, pose concerns, or share ideas with other fosters. This is a closed group, so you must ask permission to join.

Email Communications:

- 1.) **"Animals in Need" email:** a weekly email is sent to active fosters primary email. This email has a link that will take you to the animals in the community that need foster homes.
- 2.) **Other emails:** policy updates, organization updates, foster information and all other communications are emailed to foster's primary email.

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE	PURPOSE
Emergency	director@pawscoadoptions.org	(720) 675-7722	Safety concerns, medical emergencies, immediate foster support.
Foster Team	foster@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	All communications regarding your Foster Pet
Vet Team	vet@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	All medical needs for your foster animal.
Shelter Relations Team	rescue@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	To tag an animal from "Animals In-Need" list and/or ask about animals you are interested in
Transport Team	transport@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	To arrange transport for your animal from the shelter and/or to/from any appointments
Adoptions Team	adopt@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	Meet and greet communications and details
Intake Team	intake@pawscoadoptions.org	720-675-8758	Questions about intake processes and/or questions about supplies for your foster animal

PawsCo's Foster Program

PawsCo is 100% foster-based so animals live in foster homes rather than a shelter facility. Animals come to PawsCo from a variety of shelters in Colorado, Wyoming, and Kansas.

Why be a PawsCo Foster

- Foster homes are critical to the adoption of our foster pets.
- It provides a loving home so that they are not in a shelter that can be very stressful to them.
- Fosters can give adopters valuable information that they have learned from their foster pet that is a key element when matching foster pets with potential adopters.
 - Regarding the foster pet's needs, behavior, personality, temperament, and sociability.
 - If the foster pet is good with other animals, children.
 - If the foster pet is housetrained, litterbox trained.
- Fostering being a part of this rescue team is an extremely rewarding experience.



What PawsCo Provides

- Foster pets receive a basic veterinary exam upon intake.
- Foster pets that are not already altered will be spayed or neutered before adoption.
- PawsCo will cover all pre-approved medical expenses and care as needed with PawsCo approved vet partners.
- PawsCo supplies fosters with all necessary supplies for their foster animals. (Includes leash, collar, crate, food, treats, toys, and other necessities.)



How To Become a PawsCo Foster

1. **Becoming a Foster:** To become an approved foster, you must go through both the volunteer and foster onboarding and complete these items.
 - Foster Application (complete & sign) <https://pawscos.org/get-involved/volunteer>
 - Foster Orientation (background check, copies of your photo ID and car insurance.
 - Foster Agreement Release & Codes of Conducts (read & sign both) [Foster Agreement](#)
 - Foster Manual (read and sign)
 - Foster Home Inspection (completed & sign)
2. **Orientations:** After the foster application is completed the Volunteer and Foster Team will connect with you to schedule the orientation sessions.
3. **Complete, sign and submit all necessary paperwork to become a foster.**
4. **Approval:** Once you have been approved to foster you will receive a weekly email from the Shelter Relations Team with the link to our “Animals In Need” page. This link is a list of the animals that are available for us to tag with the possibility of transferring the animal into PawsCo.
 - a. These animals that are in need are offered to many other shelters & rescues and therefore PawsCo cannot guarantee receiving any animal on that list.
 - Once an animal is tagged and accepted Shelter Relations Team will make arrangements for you to pick up your foster pet.

PACFA

- **PACFA Regulations:**

The Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) Program is a Colorado State licensing and inspection program dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of those animals in pet care facilities throughout Colorado. Please help PawsCo comply with all animal care regulations set forth by PACFA.

- Each foster may have no more than eight total animals in their home at a time, including their own personal animals. A female dog or cat with its kittens or puppies under 8 weeks of age count as one adult animal.
- All animals riding in a vehicle must be secured either with a seat belt harness or an enclosure that is secured to the vehicle.
- All foster homes must have an annual home inspection performed by PawsCo.

***By choosing to foster, you are committing to caring for an animal until adoption. PawsCo is 100% foster-based so we do not have backup placement options if an animal is having difficulty transitioning into your home. For that reason, we ask that you use our help and support to work with your foster if challenges arise. Fostering is incredibly rewarding and can also be difficult at times, and we want to ensure that your expectations are realistic.**

The Foster Program: Step-by-Step

1. **Select Foster Pets** View the “Animals in Need” list. Email the Shelter Relations Team with your top 3 selections.
 - These animals that are in need are offered to many other shelters & rescues and therefore PawsCo cannot guarantee receiving any animal on that list.
 - PawsCo has the right to say no to transferring in any animal without explanation.
 - An animal on the list does not mean that they are approved to be transferred into PawsCo, and varies depending on the currently capacity of the PawsCo Team.
 - Consider size, energy, social skills, and medical needs carefully as these animals don’t have anywhere to go once they come to your home.
 - Remember many of the animals PawsCo rescues may have limited training, crate-training, and socialization skills. If you are unsure about an animal’s background, please ask our Shelter Relations Team for more information.
 - Shelter Relations will try and match your preference with fit based on the animal’s characteristics and foster’s home environment and experience.
 - Once the animal is confirmed, Shelter Relations will tag the animal for you.
 - All communication about animals in need must be done through our Shelter Relations Team. **Do not contact the shelter directly as this increases the burden of our shelter partners and doing so is grounds for volunteer termination.**

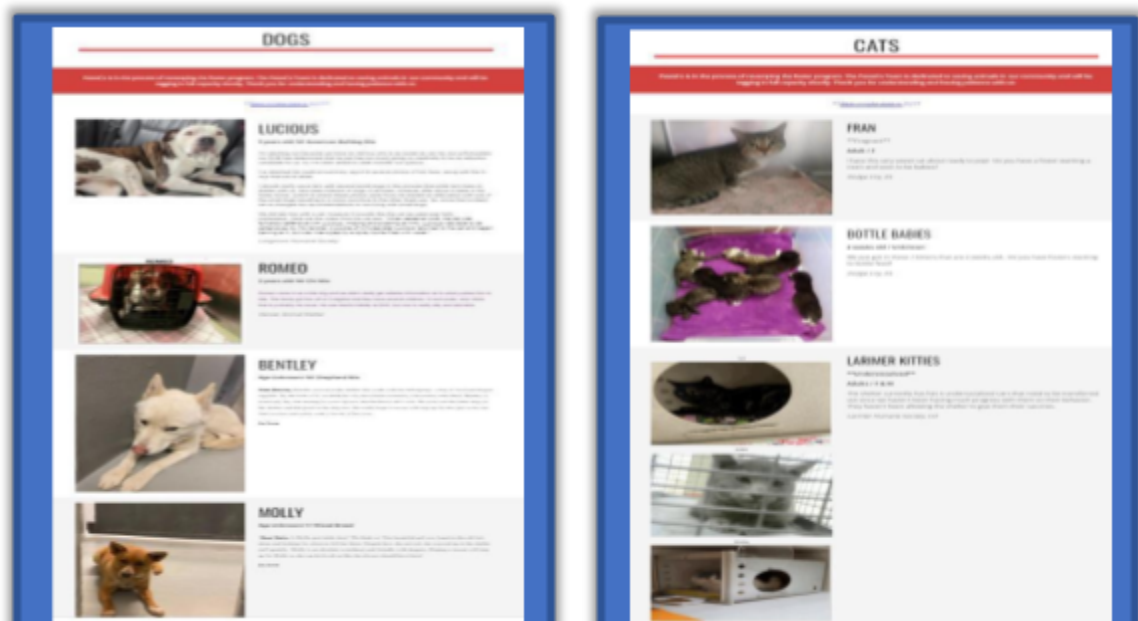
Transportation & Pick-up:

Shelter Relations Team will arrange with you to pick-up your foster pet.

Local Shelters: If the animal is at a Denver area shelter, Shelter Relations can arrange a meet/greet where you can meet the animal before deciding if it is a good fit for your home. For dogs, it is highly recommended that you bring any resident dogs to the meet/greet for an introduction to ensure compatibility.

Distant Shelters: If the animal is located at one of our rural shelter partners, the Transport Team will contact you to arrange transport for the animal to Denver. Meet & greets are NOT an option if Transport Team is bringing the animal to Denver.

Animals- In- Need List



2. **Intake & Supply Pick-Up** Once you know the date that the foster animal is arriving you need to sign up for PawsCo Intake and supply pick-up, which is required for all fosters and their animals.
- **Intake:** Is held bi-weekly on Saturdays from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. (any changes will be emailed) Address: 8200 East Pacific Place #205 Denver, CO.
 - **Intake Sign-up:** Make sure you sign-up for Intake and supplies. [Intake & Supply Sign-Up](#)
 - **Supplies:** Pick up supplies during intake. For supply needs outside of intake, fill out the Supply Request Form, and our team will do our best to assist. [Supply Request Form](#)
 - Please email intake@pawscoadoptions.org with any questions about intake or supplies.
 - **Vetting & What to Expect at Intake**
 - PawsCo Vet Team examines the pet and a routine medical evaluation is performed: vaccinations, microchip implant, heartworm test, heartworm prevention, deworming, etc.
 - In needed, follow the Vet Team's instructions for scheduling additional vetting at the PawsCo veterinary partner they assign. Once scheduled, email your appt day/time to vet@pawscoadoptions.org
 - PawsCo does not allow any of the vaccines that are administered by the PawsCo Vet Team to be administered at a vet clinic. All additional veterinary care must be pre-approved by the Vet Team.
 - You can pick up needed supplies for Foster Pet (*Supplies are the property of PawsCo, should only be used for foster animals and in furtherance of our 501(c)(3) nonprofit purposes, must be returned after fostering)
 - **Foster Pet Medications:**

Most medications for our fosters can be ordered through our veterinary partners and paid for by PawsCo. If your foster animal requires medication through a regular pharmacy, we may ask for fosters to initially pay and PawsCo will reimburse you. Feel free to email vet@pawscoadoptions.org if this situation occurs and you have any concerns. All reimbursements must be submitted with receipt within 30 days to qualify for payment.
3. **The First Seven Days**
- **Biographies:** Fill out the [Foster Pet Bio Form](#) within seven days of bringing the foster home. The Bio Team will write a biography and post your animal on the PawsCo website, Petfinder, Rescue Me, and social media.
 - **Pictures:** Take pictures following these guidelines [Foster Photo Guidelines](#) and send to pics@pawscoadoptions.org within seven days of taking Foster Pet home.
 - **Foster Fail:** PawsCo loves when fosters fail and want to adopt their Foster Pet. If you are considering adopting your animal please let the Foster Support Team know within seven days of bringing the animal home – **once an application is active, you will not have the first right to adopt.** (see Foster-to-Adopt Policy)

Tips for the First Week

- **Walk the Dog:** Familiarize foster dogs with your neighborhood. If they were to escape, they may be able to find their way back “home.”



- **Scared Dogs:** If your animal is extremely fearful and skittish, please hold off on walks until they feel comfortable. Allow them a small space in your home & practice “on leash” exercises inside and in the backyard before taking them for a walk.



- **Cat Space:** Give a foster cat a safe room or area - a place of their own where other animals cannot access them. It is ok to have the cat in this room for a few days to acclimate before giving them free roam of the house. Even then, a baby gate in the doorway helps keep this room a safe place for the cat to go.



- **Feeding:** Your foster pet may not eat the first day – this can be part of the transition and it is OK. Just monitor them and keep us informed if it persists. You can add a small amount of wet food or treats to the food to entice them.



- **Collars:** Always keep a collar and PawsCo tag on your foster pet. Do not let them outside unattended. Animals can escape.



- **Escape Artist:** Be cautious around the door. It is common for new dogs to try to escape your home. Be cautious around the door! If you have to have your door open for any reason, put them on a leash – they CAN & WILL run!



- **Lost Fosters:** If your foster animal escapes, inform the Foster Support Team immediately & call/text 402-480-0764



- **Potty Time:** Help your foster establish routines – going outside too much at first is better than not enough!

- **TLC:** Love them as your own! They will need and deserve plenty of Tender Love & Care.
- **Trust:** Help them become comfortable with humans, pay attention their body language and give them what they are asking for.



- **Bath Time:** Once you know your foster pet is comfortable with you and in your home, it is recommended to give them a bath. DO NOT: bathe animals for two weeks following a spay/neuter or any other surgery.



- **Accidents:** Your foster dog may mark inside and outside – marking outside is harmless so allow that. For inside marking, be diligent in watching them the first day or so they are in your home. PawsCo has doggie diapers and belly bands, if needed. Reward your foster dog for relieving themselves outside.



- **Fears:** Your foster animal may fear stairs, mirrors, hair dryers, home appliances, etc. – this is normal, as many have not been in a true home environment. Be patient with them, give them time – they normally catch on quickly. Routine and yummy treats help!



- **Rescued:** These animals have just been rescued and need a safe environment, a routine, and TLC. Do not put the animal in a situation that puts them at risk –take it slow.



- **Foster Siblings:** The foster animal may not be best friends with your animal(s) – having your pet and the foster ignore each other is ok and having them play is ok too.



- **EMERGENCY:** If there is a medical or other emergency: Call (720) 675-7722



The Adoption Process

1. Adoption Application Process:

- Cleared for Adoption: The team will decide when the right time for your foster pet to be cleared for adoption. Medical and behavioral cases can sometime take longer.
- Foster Pets are posted for adoption on our website, PetFinder, RescueMe, social media and other rescue websites. *We encourage our fosters to use their social network to help promote your pet for adoption.
- Applicants: The Adoption Team screens all applicants thoroughly and completes an adoption interview. Once they find a good match, will reach out to set up a meet and greet.
- Matching: Sometimes, our adoption team already has a great application on file that matches your animal's personality and needs so you may not see them posted right away.

If you know someone who might want to adopt:

- They must submit an application.
- Note: have them put in the note of the application their relationship to you and your familiarity to the foster pet they want to adopt.
- PawsCo cannot guarantee any foster or adopter the right to adopt an animal.

If you want to adopt:

- If you are considering adopting your animal please let the Foster Support Team know within seven days of bringing the animal home – **once an application is active, you will not have the first right to adopt.** (see Foster-to-Adopt policy)

Meet and Greet:


- **Potential Adopter:** The Adoption Team will reach out to you once they have found a good match for your foster animal.
- **Meet & Greet:** You will then work with the Team to set up a meet and greet with the potential adopter at the foster's house or a central location.
- **COVID-19:** During a health crisis PawsCo will try to conduct meet and greets outdoors or areas where social distancing can be maintained due to guidelines set by the CDC.

- **Show & Tell:** This is a time for fosters to share information about their foster pets.
 - Show all the pet's tricks. Sit, stay, down and any other great training skills.
 - Share how the foster pet is with other animals, kids, adults, and strangers.
 - Share information about the foster pet's crate-training and obedience, and how the pet does on leash and walks.
 - Sharing this information helps set this adoption up for success.
 - **Approved Adopters:** Adopters are approved if a meet and greet is scheduled.
 - **Going Home:** Approved adopters can take the animal home the same day as the meet and greet if they decide to adopt.
 - **24 Hours:** Approved adopters can have up to 24 hours after the meet and greet to make a final decision about the animal if they need more time.

Adoption Agreement and Fees:

- **Application:** Potential adopters must fill out an Adoption Application on our website.
- **Adoption Fee:** The adoption fee helps offset the costs of having the pet spayed or neutered, vaccines and microchip.
- **Adoption Fee Schedule:**

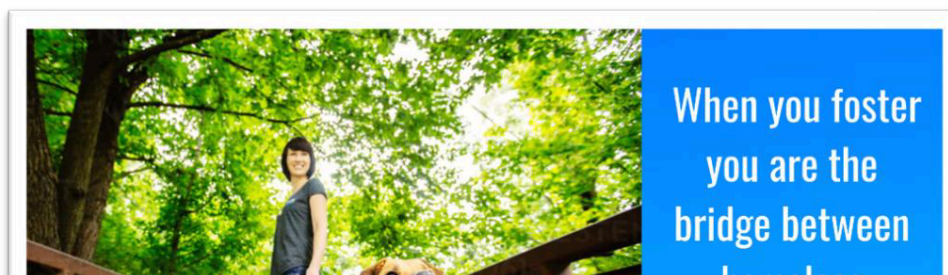
	
Puppy (under 6 months)	\$225.00
Dog (over 6 months)	\$150.00

	
Kitten (under 6 months)	\$125.00
Cat (over 6 months)	\$75.00

Saying Goodbye to Your Foster Animal:

While it is tempting to adopt your foster dog, please remember that as a foster, you will be more impactful to saving animals if you continue to foster new animals rather than adopting. Foster families are special volunteers who help PawsCO save countless animals' lives. We could not do this work without our those committed to fostering!

- **Keep in Touch:** Give the adopter your contact and ask them to send updates. Be mindful and give them space as they adjust to their new family member.
- **Foster Pet's Belongings:** If you have things that are the pet's and will help make their transition easier, pack a bag for them. (If the items belong to PawsCo they must be returned to PawsCo. Send any questions to the Foster Team.)
- **Save Another Life:** Nothing would be more honoring to your foster pet than to open your home to save one of their friends that so desperately needs you.



Foster-to-Adopt Policy:

While the goal is to say goodbye to your foster animal, we know attachments form and our fosters want to adopt their foster pet. Fosters must decide if they would like to adopt the animal within the first 7 days of bringing the pet home so as to not delay the adoption process.

- If you want to adopt after the first 7 days and the pet already has an active adoption application, the Adoptions Team will move forward with that application first. If the animal does not have an active adoption application, a foster may apply to adopt the pet.
- Contact: adopt@pawscoadoptions.org and foster@pawscoadoptions.org as soon as you decide if you'd like to adopt your foster pet.
- If you know of any other interested parties, they must complete an adoption application.
- Good News: Even if you adopt you may still be eligible to foster!!!



Foster Protocols

Preparing for a Foster Animal

PawsCo's foster animals come to us from unknown origins, sometimes with underlying medical issues and conditions, so it is important that you protect your family pets as much as you can.

Before bringing home your first foster animal, make sure your animals are up to date with their vaccinations. Talk to your veterinarian about fostering and follow their recommendations about any precautions you need to take. The veterinarian may suggest additional vaccinations/immunizations to protect your animal. *You are responsible for any treatments and costs related to your own animals.*

Preparing Your Home

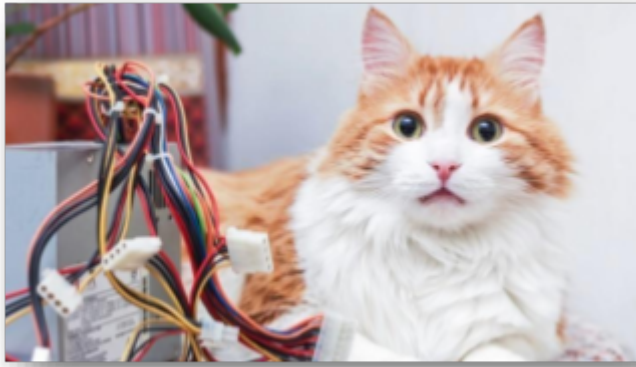
Cats and dogs are curious and love to explore. Many can jump onto high surfaces or squeeze into the smallest of spaces. Take adequate time to prepare your home for your new foster pet.

- **Pet-Proof:** To protect foster animals in a new environment and to safeguard your belongings, please pet-proof your home. Even with the most diligent preparation, sometimes accidents happen!
- **Toys:** If you have pets at home, put away toys & chew toys or bones for the first day or two until you know how your foster animal interacts with other animals and toys. This will help avoid any potential resource guarding situations. Also, try to remember that while your resident animal may be well-behaved, your foster animal may not have had any previous training.
- **Pet's Area:** Once you have chosen an area where you will care for your foster animal, you should pet-proof the area.
- **Attention:** Pay attention to any small or dangerous objects, such as small objects, chemicals, plants, cords, and any other items that are potentially dangerous. Be sure to check the areas your foster animal will be spending their time for any holes, cracks, or tight spaces they could get stuck in.



Kitchens/Bathrooms/Utility Rooms

- **Cabinets:** Use childproof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets.
- **Food:** Keep food out of reach in cabinets or your refrigerator.
- **Danger:** Keep medications, cleaners, and chemicals on high shelves, childproofed cabinets, or pantries/closets with closed doors. Dogs and cats can jump on counters and ingest harmful/toxic foods and items.
- **Trash Cans:** Keep trash cans covered and make sure dogs cannot easily open them with their paw or nose.
- **Toilets:** Keep toilet lids closed to prevent drinking, and more seriously, drowning.
- **Double Check:** Check for and block any small spaces where pets may hide. Make sure that spaces behind the washer and dryer units are closed off so your foster animals cannot get in.
- **Washer & Dryers:** Always keep your dryer and washer units closed and check to make sure they are empty before starting them.
- **Utility and/or Garage Door:** Always check that the doors are closed.



Indoor Spaces

- **Wires:** Kittens and puppies often think wires are toys and love to try to chew them. Get toys for your pet at Intake so they have something to play with.
- **Personal Items:** Children's toys and valuable items should be kept away. Understand that the foster pets can easily knock things over, play with, or chew things.
- **Houseplants:** Many houseplants can be poisonous to animals. Please make sure your houseplants are non-toxic or keep them out of reach.
- **Other Animals:** Secure aquariums and cages that house small animals, like fish, reptiles, birds, or hamsters, to keep them safe from curious paws.
- **Under Furniture:** Be mindful that foster pets may hide under the bed if they are shy or scared and may be hard to retrieve safely. Under furniture should be clean and safe.
- **Doors:** Keep doors to the outside closed at all times to prevent the foster animal from sneaking out unnoticed. You should know where your foster pet is at all times.



Outdoor Spaces (including garages)

- **Garage Spaces:** Foster animals should never be housed in a garage. Most garages contain too many dangerous chemicals and unsafe items to be an acceptable foster site. Remember to move all chemicals to high shelves or cabinets/closets with doors. Clean up all antifreeze, which can be lethal to an animal, from the floor and driveway.
- **Fenced Yard:** If you have a fenced yard, ensure all gates can and are closed securely, no holes are present, and the fence is high enough for the size of your foster animal.
- **Attended:** Keep an eye on your foster dog when they are in your backyard, your foster pet should always be attended. Some dogs are escape artists and can fit through tiny holes/gaps that you may not have noticed or jump a fence that you thought was high enough.

Resources: Living with Your Foster Dog

Introducing the Foster to the House:

- **Resident Dogs:** If you have resident dogs in the house, make sure you take your time in making introductions.
- **Neutral Grounds:** A foster dog and resident dog should meet on neutral territory (e.g., a park or friend's yard if possible).
- **Leashed:** Keep all dogs leashed for the initial introduction.
- Ideally, dogs should be introduced on a walk while walking parallel with one another.
 - Start with dogs at least a few feet apart (if you have two people, start with the dogs on opposite sides of a quiet street) and allow them to briefly smell each other and interact while walking.
 - As the walk continues, allow them to get closer. Both animals should be leashed and only greet each other with a loose leash. A tight leash creates tension.
 - Once the greeting has gone well, you are ready to bring the dogs into your backyard and let them explore and play off-leash, and then inside.
- **Inside the Home:** When you bring your new foster animal into your home, slowly introduce them to the various rooms of the house. Restrict your foster dog's access to your house the first few days they are with you and slowly expand their access over a few days so they are not overwhelmed, and you can keep track of their whereabouts.
- **Other People in the Home:** Your foster dog should also be introduced to other people in the house slowly. Foster pets need time to calm down and get to know their new home, routine, and family. Give your new foster dog time to adjust and approach people in their own time. Children must be always supervised with your foster dog.





Setting Up a Routine:

It's a good idea to introduce your foster dog to a routine right away. This includes feeding, going on walks, training, playing, and going outside.

Feeding Time:

- **On Time:** Try to keep feeding time the same time(s) each day.
- **Out of Food:** Do not wait until you are out of food to let PawsCo know.
 - You can pick up food at Intake or submit a supply request to pick up outside of the Intake schedule. (see Vetting & Supplies)
- **Food Policies:**
 - Always feed the recommended food by The PawsCo Team
 - Never allow any type of raw hides.
 - Cat food (if you have a cat, make sure its food is well out of the way for the dog!)
- **Loss of Appetite:** Your foster pet may not eat much the first few days while it gets used to its new foster home. Do not be discouraged if it takes a few days for the foster dog to eat consistently.



- **Treats:** It is best to use treats made for cats and dogs. Some **HEALTHY** human-food is fine for dogs to have as a healthy treat.
 - You can place the food in the dog's bowl, use it while training, or put it in a Kong.
- *Use these foods sparingly, too many of any treat can cause upset stomachs or other GI problems.**

Approved Treats:

- Peanut butter (natural, no sugar)
- Pinky nail-size small bits of cheese
- Apple or pear slices (no seeds or core)
- Carrot pieces
- Canned pumpkin
- Cooked sweet potato
- A few spinach leaves
- Fresh or frozen blueberries
- Green beans or pea pods

Some food is **NEVER** okay for dogs:

- Grapes
- Onions
- Raisins
- Chocolate
- Seeds and nuts
- Mushrooms
- Avocado

WHAT NOT TO FEED YOUR PETS

We all love to spoil our pets by giving them a tasty treat once in a while, but not all foods are suitable for your pets. The following are best kept away from your furry friends...

DOGS



Avocado

This can be toxic to dogs in large amounts as it contains persin, something which is found in the fruit, leaves, seeds and bark.



Salty foods

Sodium ion poisoning can occur if your dog has too much salty food, so it's best not to share things like chips and pretzels with them.



Peaches & plums

The pits in these fruits contain cyanide which is poisonous to animals and people - we know not to swallow this, but dogs don't!



Grapes & raisins

These fruits can cause kidney failure in dogs but it's not clear why. Keep them off counters as even a small amount could make your dog ill.



Sugary foods

As with humans, too much sugary food and drink can lead to obesity, dental problems and the onset of diabetes.

Other foods not to feed your dog include: Macadamia nuts, alcohol, chocolate and bread/yeast dough.

CATS



Caffeine

There's little you can do with a cat that's consumed a large quantity of caffeine, so make sure to keep things like coffee and energy drinks out of their reach.



Raw fish

Salmon, trout, shad and sturgeon contain parasites which could cause "fish disease", something which may be fatal within two weeks if left untreated.



Lilies

Certain types of lilies could be very toxic to your cat. If pollen or a leaf is ingested, poisoning could result.



Onions, garlic, chives & leeks

Small amounts taken regularly or a large quantity taken at once can destroy a cat's red blood cells, causing anemia.



Raw eggs

Because they're rich in protein, cooked eggs are great for both humans and cats. But E coli and salmonella are a risk from raw eggs, so don't feed them to your cat.

Other foods not to feed your cat include: Chocolate, alcohol, grapes, raisins, and bread/yeast dough.

Going for Walks:

- **Exercise:** Walking is a great way to exercise your dog
- **Walking:** Helps your foster pet to learn good leash manners.
 - Make sure you use walking as a reward for going to the bathroom, and the dog goes at the beginning of the walk not the end.
- **DO NOT USE:** PawsCo does not allow the use shock, prong, chain, or choke collars.
- **Harnesses:** A harness is encouraged. It is more comfortable for the dog and allows you to have better control. It helps if the dogs pulls or if they are not used to walking on the leash.
- **Gentle Leaders:** Gentle leaders are also available for use under the supervision of our Training Team.

Leaving the Dog Alone:

At some point, you may need to leave your dog alone in the house.

- **Crate Training:** It is PawsCo's recommendation that you crate train all foster dogs.
 - Many of our foster dogs have not been crate-trained before or have had bad experiences with crates in the past. Be patient as they adjust.
 - Exercise your foster dog before having to use the crate.
 - If you have resident animal(s) make sure that the foster dog is separated from your resident dogs when they are unsupervised. This is to ensure the safety for all pets.
 - Reach out to the Foster Team if you have any questions concerning crate training.
 - Size: The crate should be big enough for the dog to stand comfortably, lay down stretched out and turn around. For a potty-trained dog, you can give them more space.
 - See Crate Training in the Resources section.
- **Their Space:** Most dogs love their crate if they are properly introduced to it. If your dog is still getting comfortable with the crate and you need to leave, you can try to baby gate off a small area in your home.

***If you choose to not crate the foster dog when you leave them alone, PawsCo is not responsible for any damage done to your home or belongings.**



Crates can give a pet a safe space of their own.

The traditional wire crate is a good choice for most dogs. Most models now come with a removable pan for easy cleaning and are fully collapsible for easy transport and storage.

Wire Crate



Travel crates make great choices for frequent travelers. Hard plastic crates are generally accepted for pet air travel when checked as cargo.

Plastic Crates

Soft-sided travel crates are good for small breeds who are travelling as a carry-on item. Most are small enough to stow under your seat so your pet can



Decorative crates make it

If you do not have an extra crate, you can pick one up at Intake or

Behavior and Training Resources

Here is the link to PawsCo's training page where you can find many resources for better understanding dog behavior and training: [PawsCo Training Resources](#)

The More You Know: Training plays a crucial role in helping any animal with behavior challenges. Understanding basic animal behavior and positive reinforcement training techniques is critical in helping to educate the public in conscientious animal ownership and directing them to resources that provide support and solutions. And, as animal advocates, PawsCo supports and only uses positive reinforcement training techniques.

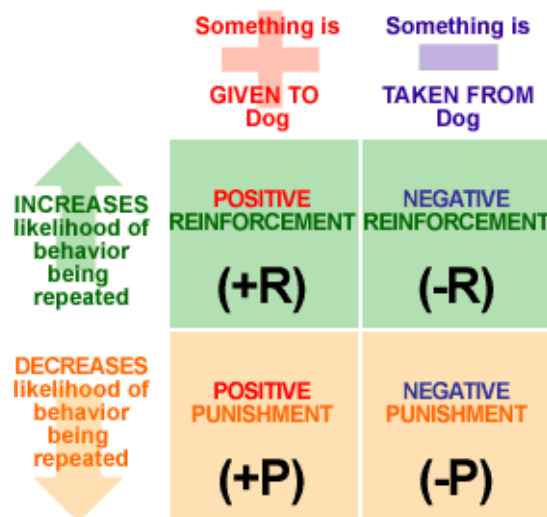
Positive Reinforcement Training: PRT uses praise and/or treats to reward your dog for doing something you want them to do. Through the process of rewarding a desirable behavior, the likelihood of recurring desirable behavior is increased. This method does not use force or intimidation, but rather adopts a proactive approach where the animal is given the opportunity to think, learn, and acquire tools to live harmoniously in the human world. Learn more about positive reinforcement [here](#).

***We do not allow any dominance or punishment-based methods to be used with our foster animals, including prong collars, choke chains, shock collars.**

Why Use PRT:

Many of the animals that we take in have been neglected and/or abused. Punishing these animals can cause further emotional and mental harm. Using force-free training/positive techniques will build confidence and provide long-lasting behavioral improvements.

Science has proven that animals learn best when free of pain, fear, and coercion, and has found positive reinforcement to be more effective with longer lasting results than traditional methods. This is because the underlying cause of a problem behavior is addressed, and all new behaviors are made by choice rather than force.



Why Training is a Priority:

- Early puppy socialization is the best way to prevent behavior problems in adult dogs, which decreases the likelihood of dogs ending up back in the rescue system as adults.
- Good manners make pets more adoptable and less likely to become homeless again.
- Early interventions prevent minor issues from becoming significant behavior problems.
- Promoting a positive, force-free approach to training and behavior adjustment is our responsibility to our community, to the companion animals whose well-being is our responsibility, and to our goal of reducing pet homelessness.

30 POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT TIPS FOR YOUR PET



1

REINFORCEMENT

Dogs learn by association.



2

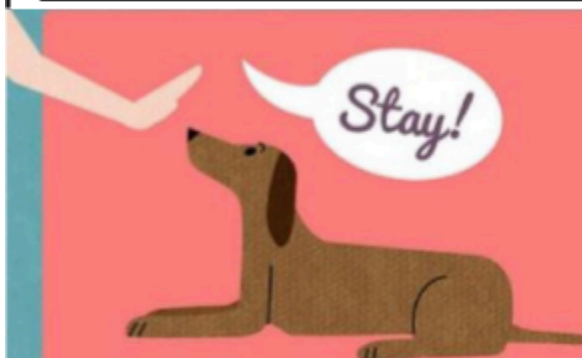
Reward your pet immediately so they associate the command word with the proper action.

Good Dog!

Every time you give a reward, pair it with verbal praise like "Yes!" or "Good, dog!"



Training Tips for Your Pet



Keep any commands **short** and **uncomplicated**.

5

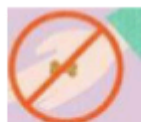
Don't say the command word **more than once**. They will learn the sooner they obey, the sooner they'll get the treat.

6

Always use the **same word** for the same action.



7



Only offer rewards for behaviors you want to **encourage**.

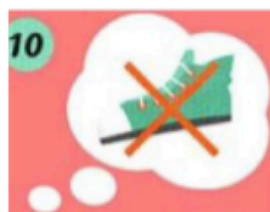
8



Don't punish bad behaviour- ignore, or redirect into an alternate good behavior than you reward.



9



10

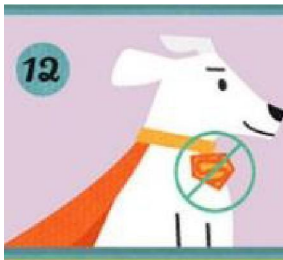


11

Some dogs may increase an **unwanted behavior** before it goes extinct, but don't give up!

Eventually they will **learn**
to perform the alternate
behavior first.

Ignored behaviors
will
eventually go "extinct."



Don't expect too much too soon!



"Shaping" behavior is rewarding small actions that eventually lead to the desired action.

Food treats should be very small- pea-size or smaller- so long training sessions don't interrupt their regular feeding routine.

Keep a variety of treats on-hand so your pup won't get bored.



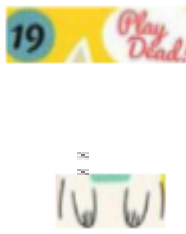
If your dog isn't motivated by treats, keep a favorite toy on-hand for brief playtime reward.



Use interactive toys to engage them and prevent destructive, bored behavior.



Always keep a "jackpot" treat - the best of the best - for ultra-good behavior!



If they are slow to exhibit a desired behavior, only give them the "jackpot" once they do it immediately, with the correct command word.



When you are teaching a behavior, use continuous reinforcement by giving your pet a treat every time they exhibit the behavior.



When they've learned the behavior, switch to intermittent reinforcement. Intermittent reinforcement includes...



ALWAYS use the verbal praise.



Slowly decrease the number of times your pet is rewarded with a food treat.

Use a **vulnerable**
schedule so they
don't learn a pattern.

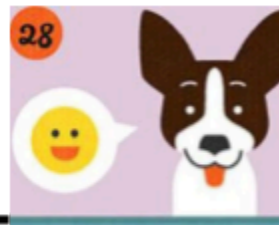
...

Slowly phase out food treats and use lots of **real-life rewards** like petting and play.

keep training sessions short.
3-5 minutes a few times a day
is good.

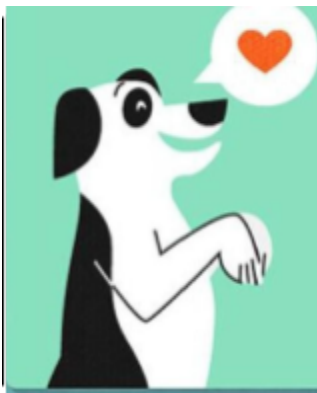


Focus on a **single behavior** in each training session.



Always train when you and your dog are in a **good mood**.

Training should be **fun**!

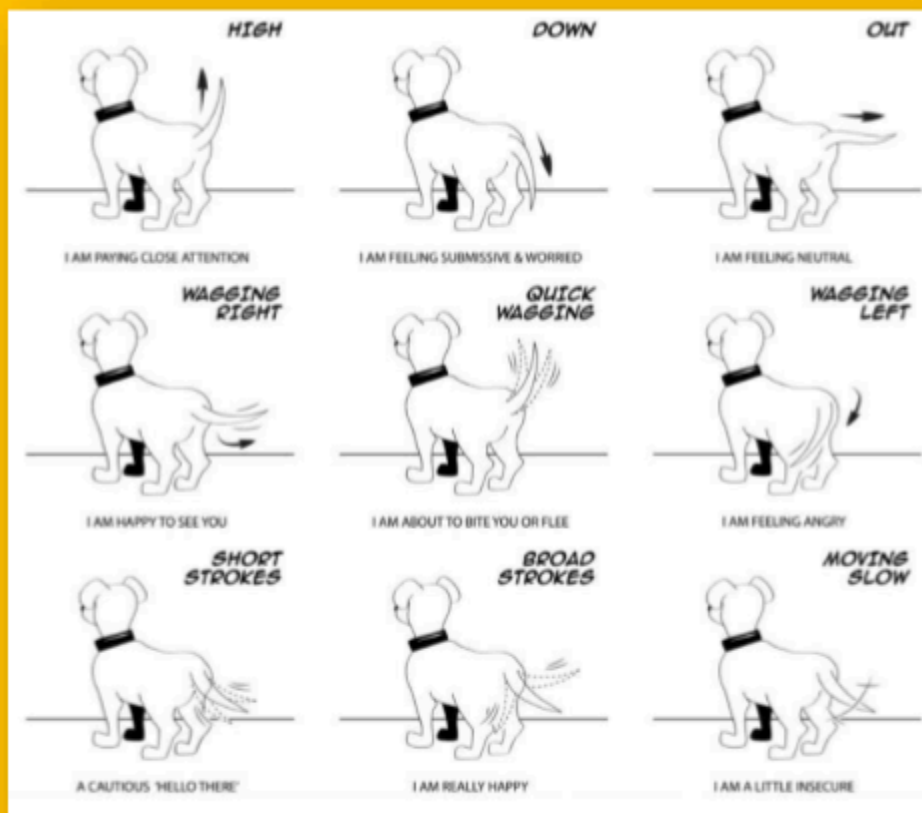


At each training session, give your dog a **chewy treat** and **rub their paws**. This builds comfort and confidence between you.

SOURCES:

www.petwave.com/Dogs/Health.aspx
www.petwave.com/Dogs/Basics/Exercise.aspx
akcdoglovers.com/author/americankennelclub/
www.petcarerx.com/article/common-dog-sleep-disorders/896
www.petsadviser.com/behaviors/how-long-dogs-sleep-average/

Dog Tail Language:



Dog Body Language:

Reading Canine Body Language: T-E-M-P.

(with Tickle the Pit Bull)

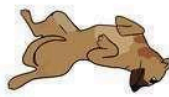
Tail, Ears & Eyes, Mouth, Posture



Relaxed (down)



Relaxed



Submissive / Happy
I'm Not A Threat



Happy



Ready To Play



Submissive
Deferential



Please Leave
Me Alone



Anxious
Stressed



Terrified



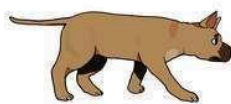
Fearful: Ready
To Fight



Alert



Wary / Unsure
Suspicious



Stalking



Defensive
Territorial



Angry: Ready
To Fight

Teaching Calm:

Teaching calmness is a great training exercise that can be useful when out in public with your foster dog or when you need your foster dog to entertain itself and be calm in your home on rainy/busy days! To start, get some treats. You can use a portion of their kibble from a meal or break treats into very small pieces. Put the dog's leash on them and sit on the couch/chair next to them. From now on, ignore your foster dog. Once the dog settles down, even for a second at first, quietly give a treat and say "yes." If the dog gets excited again, ignore it and wait for it to settle down again. When the dog settles down again, repeat the "yes" and treat. Try to do this training exercise when you won't have to talk or move a lot. You can do this for 30 minutes or so until your foster dog has shown you "calm" for an extended period of time.

After multiple times doing this training exercise, the dog will begin to understand what you want and settle down more quickly. When this happens, you may introduce a word (settle, relax, etc.). Say the word just as the dog begins to settle down and then give them a treat if the dog does it. If speaking distracts the dog, work on just getting the behavior again a few more trials and then reintroduce the word more quietly.

As the dog gets good at this and will settle down for the word, start raising the criteria. Increase the time--go gradual and rather random as you increase your time (2sec, then 5 sec, then 3 sec., then 8 sec. then 5 sec. then 1 sec, then 8 sec, etc.) working up to longer and longer stretches of time of the dog remaining calm before marking and rewarding. Most dogs progress very quickly with patience and treats!

Jumping:

Jumping: This is probably the most complained about problem of dog lovers and haters alike. It is also a very fast way for someone to pass up a handsome foster dog who is an angel in every other way. It will be very difficult to instill good behavior if the dog is allowed (and rewarded) to jump on others. Even though it can be fun and cute for a dog to jump, it's a turn-off for many potential adopters, so commit these tactics to prevent the dog from ever jumping on others!

Jumping on you: Make sure your dog knows the command "sit" and use high value treats until he responds consistently. When you approach the dog or vice versa, ask for a sit then be prepared with a treat. Only treat the dog if he is sitting or has "all 4 on the floor." If he jumps on you then turn around and try again. If he continues jumping, try to leave the room and re-enter, closing the door if you need to. It should not take long for your foster pup to learn that sitting or standing nicely (not jumping) gets him not only your attention but yummy treats!

Jumping on others: Practice the above exercise with a couple of cooperative visitors who will follow your instructions. Have them go through the same procedure as you do until your foster dog is calm. It would help to hand them treats beforehand, so they're prepared as soon as he offers the desired behavior (e.g., sitting and being calm!)

Avoid pushing the dog, yanking his collar, or sticking your knee up to block him. These are all counterproductive!



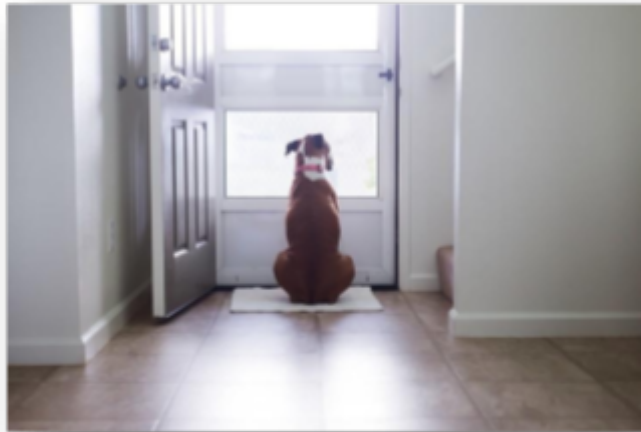
Potty Training:

First, please remember that even the most potty-trained dog may have an accident or two in your home, especially the first few days. Make sure you are taking the dog out to do its business several times throughout the day and get the dog into a good routine.

If you are fostering a puppy (under 1 year old), a good rule of thumb for letting the dog out is to add 1 to the dog's age in months to determine the longest amount of time in hours the dog can go without an accident take the dog's age in months (e.g. a 3 month old dog can go no more than 4 hours – 3 months +1=4 hours). If you do need to work on potty training with the foster dog, here are a few tips to help you!

There are 3 R's to potty training:

- **Right Time:** Most dogs naturally urinate upon waking and defecate shortly after a meal. Use these predictable times to set them up for success!
- **Right Place:** Make it easy--bring it to the same place every time (on leash) – it is even more helpful if you haven't cleaned up the dog's business, so the dog remembers why he's there! Don't walk, don't talk, don't stare--just stand still and wait for up to 5 minutes.
- **Reward:** Once the dog has deposited correctly, and the dog is coming out of the "position" give a lavish reward of praise and treats! Make it worth it!!!
 - Peeing on the cozy warm rug indoors is very easy compared to going outside on cold ice in -15°F weather, so make sure to reward handsomely with praise, food, play, walking, etc. to ensure the dog understands the increased value of going outside.



Telling You They Need to Go: Most dogs offer some predictable behaviors indicating their need to go. Restlessness, sniffing, and circling are the most common. Another thing to watch for is a sudden disengagement while playing. Use these cues to take them out and follow the last 2 R's.

If you are finding the foster dog is not doing its business when you let it out, try and keep the dog tethered to or at least near you while in the house and before you try again. Try to watch for any signals the dog needs to go and be ready to head out to try again. Also, it is less likely the dog will sneak behind the sofa and have an accident if it's close to you!

If you catch the dog in the act inside your house, try to remain calm. Shouting at the dog could cause it to become fearful and anxious. A firm, calm "no" or another sound (ehh-ehh) to cause the dog to stop what they are doing is a good way to get the dog to realize what it is doing is wrong. Also, try to take the dog outside as soon as you can to help reinforce the idea that it should do its job outside! Do not try and correct the dog after-the-fact. They will not make the connection to the behavior and will likely just get confused.

Crate Training:

You may need to do this if the dog has never been crate trained or if the dog is uncomfortable in a crate. If you don't have an extra crate, you can pick one up at intake or request one using our [supply request form](#).

The crate should be big enough for the dog to stand comfortably, lay down stretched out and turn around. If you are using it for potty training, it should be no bigger than these parameters, but for a potty-trained dog, you can give them more space.

To make the crate more attractive, you can feed all meals in the crate and put toys in the crate to make it comfortable and engaging for the dog.

It's important to practice short time periods in the crate. Reward your foster dog with a treat when it is calm, even for a second or two. Play the same type of game as you did with the Teaching Calmness game. Keep the time short at first and gradually work up to longer times. It's good practice to not let a dog out of its crate unless it is calm. This teaches dogs that they need to be calm in the crate and to be let out of the crate. Make sure the dog is comfortable in their crate before leaving the house for extended periods of time. Rushing the crate training process can worsen separation anxiety and make a dog more fearful of the crate!

Please email training@pawsocadoptions.org for additional training support!

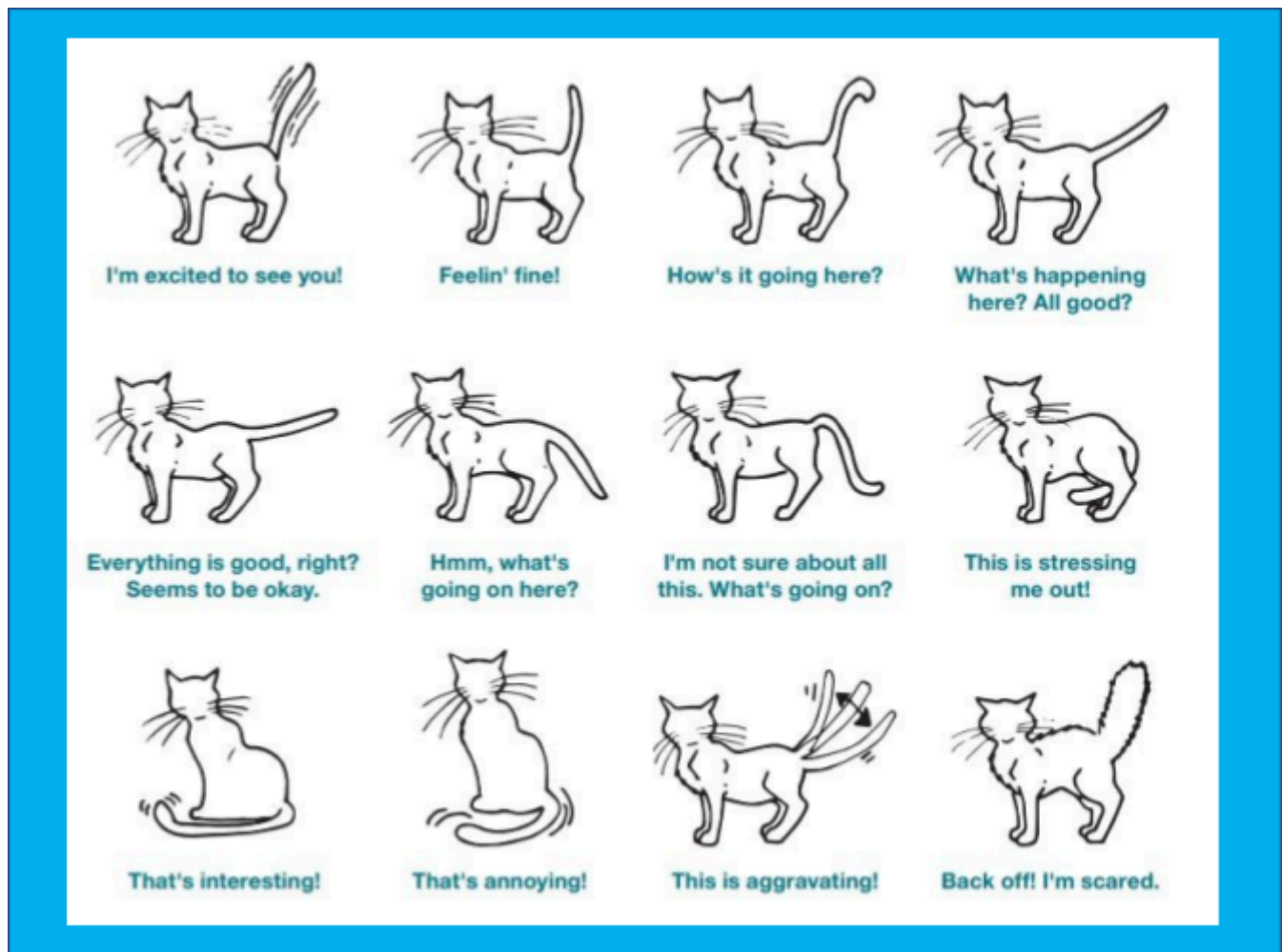


All Things Cat

Cat Tail Language:



Cat Body Language:



Resources: Living with Your Foster Cat

Here is the link to PawsCo's training page where you can find many resources for better understanding cat behavior: [PawsCo Training Resources](#)

It takes time for cats to adjust to new environments and cats' signals are often overlooked by people, so it is important to know the signs of stress, fear, and content in cats so you can make their experience in your foster home easy and stress-free.

Signs of a Happy Cat Can Include:

- Purring (also done to self-soothe in stressful situations)
- A low-swinging tail
- A "question mark" tail that is straight and curved at the top
- Pressing their hand into your head or hands for pets
- Walking toward you with a raised hind end
- Greeting you with a lowered head

Signs of a Fearful Cat Can Include:

- Hiding in a litter box or other closed and small space (why it's important to check your home for small, dangerous, and unreachable places before bringing a foster cat home)
- Puffed up fur on its back and tail.
- Tail is tucked between its legs or held close to its body with quick flicking.
- Ears flattened against its head.
- Hissing or spitting (often trying to tell you to give it some space)
- Biting or scratching (telling you to give it space)

About Cat Personalities:

When in doubt, give a cat some space. They will approach you when they are ready for your affection and attention. Some cats are very affectionate while others are more independent and enjoy having their own space or sitting in close proximity to you but do not enjoy being pet. Some cats will play with you all day long and others are completely content lounging in a sunspot for most of the day. Let your foster cat show you their personality and adjust accordingly.

Placing the Litter Box:

Be sure to place the litter box in a place that is easily reachable by your foster cat but also a little tucked away from the commotion of day-to-day life. Cats like to have their privacy in the litter box, which is why people tend to place litter boxes in corners, closets (with 24/7 access), or quieter rooms. Remember to scoop any pee/poop out of the litter box daily to encourage your foster cat to always use the litter box. It's a great idea to show your foster cat their litter box soon after arriving at your house so they know where they can find it right away.

Resources: Other Training Resources

[Animal Humane Society's Pet Behavior library](#): A wealth of articles on all types of pet behavior

Here is the link to PawsCo's training page where you can find many resources for better understanding dog behavior and training: [PawsCo Training Resources](#)

If you need more support with your foster animal's behavior or training, please reach out to PawsCo's Training Team (training@pawscoadoptions.org) for support. PawsCo partners with multiple trainers and organizations to help our fosters.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

What does PawsCo pay for?

- Veterinary bills at partner veterinarians – all services must be pre-authorized by Vet Team
- PawsCo supplies provided, if needed: food, treats, crate, dog beds, toys, leash, collar. All PawsCo animals are required to have an ID tag.

What do I do if my foster animal becomes lost?

- Call our emergency line: (720) 675-7722 and let the Foster Support Team know immediately (foster@pawscoadoptions.org)

How can I help my foster get adopted?

- Give your foster some experiences and note how they react – that way when a potential adopter asks questions, you will have an answer (adopters most often want to know if the animal is good with dogs, cats, kids, crate trained, and good on a leash). If you have questions about introductions, please reach out to foster@pawscoadoptions.org
- Post your foster on your Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, Twitter or social media. Share a couple photos or a video and tell people about them. Encourage your friends and family to share your foster's information, too.
- Fill out the foster bio form within 7 days of bringing the foster home: [Bio Form](#)
- Take photos and videos frequently send photos and info to foser@pawscoadoptions.org
- Take your dog places that you feel they will be comfortable and tell people that they are up for adoption. Use an “adopt me” leash or bandana.

Are there training options for my foster pup?

- Any behavioral questions can go to the Foster Support Team or your assigned trainer. If you want to go to classes with your foster pup, PawsCo has a training partnership with multiple organizations and trainers and there are many free opportunities – let the Foster Support Team know and we will connect you.

How do I get training support?

- Please email training@pawscoadoptions.org

What medical care does PawsCo provide for foster animals?

- Please work with the Vet Team to get your foster animal to the vet for basic vetting and as needed. Foster pets will be given an exam, spayed/neutered, and microchipped. Dogs are tested for heartworm (age appropriate) and given heartworm prevention, dewormed (precaution), and brought up-to-date on all vaccinations, including rabies, distemper/parvovirus combination; cats are tested for FELV/FIV.

What if I need something for my foster pet, like a certain play toy or more food?

- PawsCo supplies everything you will need to foster. If you feel your foster needs additional or special toys, please let us know and we will do our best to provide those things within reason (we are a nonprofit and must be selective with our limited funds). PawsCo asks that you pick up any additional supplies from our weekly intake session, usually Saturday afternoons. Please contact the Foster Support Team to verify the times and location if you do plan on dropping by.

I know I am going to be out of town in a few weeks. What options do I have?

- As soon as you know you will be out of town, let the Foster Support Team know. We do require at least two weeks notice prior to your travel plans. We have a network of temporary foster-sitters

who may be available to watch your animal while you are unavailable to care for them. Having another foster watch your animal also helps us if we are setting up a meet and greet for your animal while you are out of town.

Have a friend or family member who can help out? Email us so we can determine if they will be approved to watch your animal while you are out of town. All short-term sitters must agree to taking the animal to any vet appointments or meet and greets that may come up.

How do most PawsCo animals find their forever homes and families?

- PawsCo advocates for and promotes your foster on our website, Facebook, RescueMe and Petfinder.com (and at events). We track how our rescue pets find their forever homes and the majority is found via Petfinder.com and our website. However, we also find them homes through sharing pictures and bios on social media. Sometimes fosters meet their new person when they are out for a walk or at doggy daycare.

What do I do if I see an animal in need that I want to foster that isn't on the weekly PawsCo email list (on Facebook, online, etc.)?

- Email our Shelter Relations Team at rescue@pawscoadoptions.org. They will work with the shelter or facility where the animal is located to get set up to possibly transfer the animal to PawsCo. All animals must go through the Shelter Relations Team in order to be brought into PawsCo.

I found a stray or lost animal. Can PawsCo take it into the rescue?

- Please see our Lost Animals section on the PawsCo website. Bringing an animal to the shelter is the best way to reunite it with its caretaker.

I have a friend or a family member who needs to rehome their animal. Can PawsCo help?

Because PawsCo's mission is to rescue animals from underserved shelters in the Colorado area, we do not bring in animals that currently have a home.

PawsCo Foster Manual Acknowledgement

My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of PawsCo's Foster Policies and Procedures Manual.

I understand that this manual contains information regarding PawsCo's rules, regulations, policies and procedures which pertain to me as a PawsCo Volunteer Foster.

I acknowledge I have read and understand this Foster Manual.

I understand that PawsCo may revise, supplement, or rescind policies, procedures, rules and regulations described in this manual with or without notice.

I understand to keep informed on any changes I will need to refer to the most updated copy.

Signature:

Email:

**The PawsCo Team wants to Thank You
for fostering and helping us save lives!**



Thank you for fostering! Please let your PawsCo Team know if you have any questions!