



OC Animal Care Foster Caretaker Manual



561 The City Dr., Orange 92868 Volunteer Coordinator (714) 796-6427 Main Line (714) 935-6848 www.ocpetinfo.com

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Welcome

Thank you so much for expressing interest in fostering some of Orange County's homeless pets!

Our foster program has grown tremendously over the years and has become a welcome part of everyday life at the shelter. Being a foster caretaker is extremely rewarding, educational, and fun. Foster caretakers have a huge impact on the lives of orphaned, under-aged, and injured animals. For many of them it is the first time anyone has really cared for them. For most of them, the foster caretakers provide a second chance at adoption and an opportunity for them to find a forever home.

Each year, our foster caretakers help raise and rehabilitate 400 to 500 animals! Our volunteer foster caretakers truly provide these animals with **A NEW LEASH ON LIFE**!

This manual will overview OC Animal Care, its services and operations, and give you an understanding of what you can expect as a foster caretaker should you decide to join the program.

Facility and Programs Information

OC Animal Care's shelter

- Open 7 days a week
- 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, open until 7:00 PM on Wednesdays
- Approximately 500 animals sheltered & cared for each day
- Over 10,000 animals adopted each year
- Nearly 4,000 animals reunited with their owners

Veterinary Clinic

- Provide care and exams to almost 30,000 animals per year.
- Perform approximately 5,000 spay/neuter surgeries a year.
- On-site veterinarians and technicians everyday

Community Outreach Team

- Public Education Officer
- Adoption Partner Coordinator
- Volunteer Program Coordinator

Field Services/Animal Control

- 24 hours day/7 days a week service
- Pick up of stray, injured, or aggressive animals
- Investigates animal cruelty
- Handles over 40,000 calls for service per year

Special Operations

- Nuisance noise complaints
- Barking dog complaints
- Potentially Dangerous/Vicious animal investigations
- Canvassing license program
- Business licensing for groomers, boarding facilities, etc.

Rabies Control

- Maintains records of all bites that occur within Orange County
- Ensures quarantine of imported animals
- Communicates with health officials regarding suspected rabid animals

Customer Service Office & Call Center

- Processes 150,000 dog licenses per year
- Redemption of lost animals
- Private party and rescue adoptions







Social Networking

www.ocpetinfo.com

OC Animal Care's website, www.ocpetinfo.com, is consistently one of the most frequently visited County sites available! It receives thousands of hits per day. Recently, it ranked 3rd amongst the nation's County hosted sites.

The list of lost and adoptable animals is updated every 30 minutes, keeping information current and pertinent. Some of our talented volunteers strive to take attractive photos of our adoptable animals for our website in order to spark interest from potential adopters!

Facebook & Twitter

OC Animal Care actively participates in social networking using a variety of popular sites including (but not limited to) Facebook and Twitter! Social networking plays an important role in building public awareness of shelter adoptions and is a great avenue to open the lines of communication between OC Animal Care and the Orange County community.

Check us out on Facebook (Facebook.com/OCAnimalCare) or follow us on Twitter (@OCAnimalCare) to see what great stuff we've been up to!





Foster Caretaker Program

Program Description

The Foster Program buys time and gives a second chance for young or injured puppies, kittens, dogs, and cats. These animals need special attention and extra interaction, which the shelter cannot always provide. Foster caretakers care for and return these animals when they are deemed suitable for adoption. Being a foster caretaker can be a challenging and rewarding experience. By opening up your heart and home, you are giving these animals a second chance. This program has saved thousands of lives and with the support of new and existing foster caretakers, will save thousands more.

Program Requirements

- Must be 18 years or older
- Must submit completed:
 - Foster Caretaker Application
 - o Foster Caretaker Agreement
 - Foster Caretaker Manual Agreement
- Must have experience with animals
- Must be able to provide a safe, stable, and loving environment
- Must provide food, shelter, socialization, and any other needs of specific animal(s)
- Must be able to transport foster animal(s) to and from the shelter
- Must have the patience to deal with animal illness or occasional death due to complications that can arise

Time Commitment

- Kittens will stay with a foster caretaker until they reach 2 pounds. This generally takes two to four weeks. If a kitten is ill, it will stay with the foster caretaker until the county veterinarian has determined it is healthy enough to be made available for adoption.
- Puppies will stay with a foster caretaker until they are eight weeks old.
- Special needs animals will stay with the foster caretaker until the need has been taken care of. This is determined on a case by case basis. These animals will be required to come in for check-ups.

Foster Animal Provisions

What OC Animal Care Provides

- Receipt detailing specific information for each foster animal, including Animal ID numbers
- Cardboard pet carrier to transport kittens
- Contact phone numbers for staff and veterinary clinic for questions and concerns
- Medical treatment:
 - Many young animals are susceptible to common illnesses, such as upper respiratory infections, conjunctivitis, and diarrhea/dehydration which can become serious very quickly. OC Animal Care veterinary staff provides a support system and medication to help foster parents manage these conditions promptly.

What the Foster Caretaker Provides

- Food:
 - Any high quality dry and canned kitten or puppy food is recommended, except for animals over 1 year of age.
- Two Food Bowls:
 - One for wet food and one for dry food. The larger the litter, the more food bowls should be provided to prevent competition.
- Water Bowls:
 - Provide access to water at all times
- Litter Box:
 - o The litter box should be shallow to allow easy entry for small kittens
- Litter (if fostering a cat or kittens)
- Kitten/Puppy-safe room or environment:
 - o If you are fostering kittens or puppies, remember that they will play or chew on anything they can find! Drapes, electrical cords, lamp shades and Austrian Crystal are as much fun as the toys that you give them. A spare bedroom or bathroom is perfect to safely house kittens/puppies. You can also use a large wire dog-crate to house them.
- Baby gates or large pet crates are recommended to help keep foster animals safely contained in their room/area
- Blankets and bedding
- Toys:
 - Provide any type that you want and lots of them
- 4 lb. Kitchen Scale:
 - Although this item is optional, it is helpful in determining when to bring the animal back to the shelter

Animals Available for Fostering

Each animal that comes to OC Animal Care is seen by the County veterinarian. Our veterinary staff members evaluate the health and temperament of the animal and determine if it is a good candidate for the foster caretaker program. The following criteria are used to select which animals will be great candidates for the foster caretaker program.

Small Puppies and Kittens:

- Is the puppy/kitten under 8 weeks of age?
- Does the puppy/kitten weigh between 1.5 and 2 lbs?
- Can the puppy/kitten eat pet food freely on its own?
- Is the puppy/kitten in good health?
- Does the puppy/kitten have a friendly temperament?

Injured Animals:

- Does the animal have an injury that will heal quickly with rest?
- Has the animal recently undergone surgery to correct a severe injury?
- Is the animal in otherwise good health?
- Does the animal have a friendly temperament?

If these conditions are met, this animal will likely have great success in foster care! The Volunteer Program Coordinator is notified of animals needing placement in foster homes, at which time he/she will send an email to OC Animal Care's registered foster caretakers describing the animals and any special needs they may have. Foster caretakers are able to select which animals they take into their homes. A foster animal will never be assigned to you without your consent.



Things to Consider Before Fostering

Can the foster animal(s) be kept separate from other animals in the home?

It is highly recommended that you keep foster animals separate from your personal pets to prevent any possibility of transmission of contagious illnesses.

Is the foster caretaker able to spend the time needed with the animal(s)?

Foster caretakers should expect to spend at least two hours per day for two weeks to a month with their foster animal(s). Many of the foster animals will need socialization to make them ideal candidates for adoption. Aside from providing food, water, and shelter to the animal, foster caretakers provide the animal with key social skills that will help them to be adopted by shelter visitors.

Can the foster caretaker transport the animal to the shelter for treatment?

If the foster animal becomes injured or ill and is in need of veterinary care, it will need to be seen by the county veterinarian at OC Animal Care. If you take the animal to another veterinarian, you will not receive compensation for monetary loss.

Can the foster caretaker commit to administering medication if needed?

If the foster animal becomes ill, it may require medication as prescribed by the county veterinarian. It is important that the animal complete the full course of the medication in order to fully recover and be eligible for adoption.

Does the foster caretaker have upcoming vacation plans?

If you return a foster animal to OC Animal Care before it is determined to be suitable for adoption by the county veterinarian, and a replacement foster home cannot be found by the Volunteer Coordinator, the county veterinarian may decide that euthanasia is the most humane option for the animal or the safest option to prevent spread of illness to other shelter animals.

Is the foster caretaker willing to return the animal to OC Animal Care?

All foster animals must be returned to OC Animal Care at the end of the foster period or adopted by the foster caretaker. If you choose to adopt your foster animal, you must return the animal for an adoption exam by our veterinarian so we may provide all of the necessary veterinary services.

Foster Animal Release Procedure

Approved Foster Caretakers

- An animal shall only be sent into foster care with an approved foster caretaker who has submitted all
 of the necessary documents for review and approval to the Volunteer Program Coordinator.
- All foster caretakers will have a memo placed on their person ID number in OC Animal Care's Chameleon database indicating they have been approved to foster.
- Only the Volunteer Program Coordinator or a Community Outreach Team member designee may place a memo on a person's ID number in the Chameleon database indicating they have been approved to foster.

Appointments to Pick-up Animals

- An appointment should be scheduled with the Volunteer Coordinator to pick up an animal designated for fostering.
- An appointment may be scheduled with a Community Outreach Team member designee in the event the Volunteer Coordinator is unavailable

Foster Receipts

All animals sent into foster care must have a corresponding foster receipt created.

- The pink carbon copy of this receipt will be sent with the foster caretaker for their records.
- The white original copy of the receipt will be retained by OC Animal Care's Volunteer Program Coordinator.

Chameleon Database

- Only the Volunteer Program Coordinator, Community Outreach Team member designee, or a shelter supervisor may outcome an animal to foster care within OC Animal Care's Chameleon database.
- Prior to entering an outcome of a foster animal in the Chameleon database, all necessary precautions should be made to ensure the animal either meets the basic standards for foster program candidates or has been approved by a member of the veterinary staff or a shelter supervisor.

Leaving the Facility

No individual shall remove an animal from the OC Animal Care facility for the purposes of fostering without completing the following steps:

- Submit the necessary paperwork to be considered as an approved foster caretaker to the Volunteer Program Coordinator
- Be selected as an approved foster caretaker by the Volunteer Program Coordinator
- Coordinate the release of an animal through the Volunteer Program Coordinator, Community Outreach Team member designee, veterinary staff member, or shelter supervisor
- Ensure the Volunteer Program Coordinator, Community Outreach Team member designee, veterinary staff member, or shelter supervisor has been properly notified so the necessary adjustments may be made in the Chameleon database and a foster receipt may be issued

Returning Animals to the Shelter

Appointments to Return Foster Animals

A return date and time should be scheduled with the Volunteer Coordinator. The date on the foster animal receipt (pink paper) is a tentative return date and should not be considered an appointment. Once an appointment has been set, the foster caretaker will return the animal to the Volunteer Coordinator's office. If the Volunteer Coordinator is out of the office, a return appointment may be made with a Community Outreach Team member designee.

Veterinary Evaluation

The animal is returned by the foster caretaker and is examined by the County veterinarian to determine whether or not it is a good candidate for adoption. It is the decision of the County veterinarian which animals are suitable for adoption.

If an animal is not yet ready for adoption, it will need to be sent back home with the foster caretaker. If the foster caretaker is unable to accept the animal back into his/her care, OC Animal Care makes no guarantees that a replacement foster caretaker will be found.

Adoption

When an animal is made available for adoption at the shelter, OC Animal Care makes no guarantees about its adoptability or the speed at which an animal may be adopted.

The animal will be spayed/neutered, micro-chipped, vaccinated, de-wormed, and treated for fleas when it is adopted. The foster caretaker has the first opportunity to adopt the animals (adoption fees apply).

Foster Receipts

The Volunteer Coordinator should be notified ASAP if an animal has been returned from foster care on a day when he/she is out of the office. The Volunteer Coordinator must reprocess the original copy of the foster receipt and account for the hours an animal spends in foster care within the Volgistics volunteer database.

Chameleon Database

Each animal must be re-impounded into the Chameleon database upon being returned to OC Animal Care. This should be done only by the Volunteer Coordinator, a Community Outreach Team member designee, or in some instances a shelter supervisor.

Leaving the Facility

Once an animal is returned to OC Animal Care and re-impounded into the Chameleon database, no individual shall again remove the animal from the facility without the approval of the Volunteer Coordinator, a Community Outreach Team member designee, a veterinary staff member, or a shelter supervisor.

Shelter Contact Information

Community Outreach Team Members

Meghan Koyama, Volunteer Coordinator	714-796-6427
Tammy Osborn, Adoption Partner Coordinator	714-796-6425
Elizabeth Alianell, Public Education Officer	714-796-6426
Katie Ingram, Community Outreach Supervisor	714-796-6428

Miscellaneous Numbers

OC Animal Care veterinary clinic	714-796-6451
OC Animal Care main line	714-935-6848
OC Animal Care after hours line	714-935-7158

Emergency Contact Information

Between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM:

Contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Adoption Partner Coordinator, Public Education Officer, or the supervisor. If you can't reach any of them, please call 714-935-6848. You will be on hold until the next available operator can take your call. Please be patient, they will answer the call.

Between the hours of 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM:

If you have an emergency after our normal business hours, you'll need to call 714-935-7158 and leave a message. Staff members monitor all calls to this line. One of them will give you a call back. This number should only be used in the case of medical emergencies. An Animal Control Officer will usually pick up the animal and transport it to OC Animal Care or an approved emergency clinic for care.

If you, for any reason, take a foster animal to a veterinary hospital on your own, you will not receive compensation for monetary loss.

As a foster parent, you agree that, should the animal(s) require extensive medical treatment, OC Animal Care may request that you return the foster animal(s) with the understanding that OC Animal Care may euthanize the animal(s) for humane reasons.

You Foster Animal's General Appearance

Your kitten or puppy's eyes should be bright and clear. Any discharge collecting in the corners should be cleaned away with a cotton ball soaked in warm water. The ears should be clean in appearance and free of discharge or odor. The nose should be clean and moist without discharge or sores. Discharge should be cleaned away with a cotton ball soaked in warm water.

Illnesses Affecting both Cats and Dogs

Diarrhea:

A common ailment of kittens and cats, and can be caused by many factors including bacteria, viruses, parasites, toxic substances, food, or psychological upset. If diarrhea persists more than 24 hours, call for instructions. You may be asked to bring in a sample of the diarrhea to help diagnose the problem.

Vomiting:

Occasional vomiting can be considered normal, frequent vomiting is not.

Fleas and ticks:

Should you find fleas or ticks on your foster animal(s), call for instructions. Please do not attempt to treat on your own.

Earmites:

Nearly microscopic, these parasites live in the ear canals of dogs and cats and cause a brown waxy material that looks similar to coffee grounds to form in the ears. Call for instructions.

Ringworm:

Ringworm is not a parasite but a fungal infection of the skin. It is more commonly found in kittens than in cats. It is more common in puppies than adult dogs. The infection can come from another animal or from fungus that is found in soil. Classic symptoms appear as a scab or irregularly shaped area of skin infection and may include a rapidly enlarging circle of hair loss. Ringworm can be easily transmitted to humans, especially children, the elderly and immune-suppressed people.

Coccidiosis:

Microscopic, one-celled organisms irritate the intestinal lining, leading to diarrhea and weight loss. Coccidiosis is transmitted through feces.

Hookworms:

More common in dogs than cats. Puppies acquire hookworm before birth through the mother or by ingesting hookworm eggs. They cause diarrhea, weakness and anemia as a result of intestinal bleeding caused by the parasite "hooking" itself to the intestinal wall.

Illnesses Affecting both Cats and Dogs

Roundworms:

These are the most common parasite in cats and kittens and a leading parasite in dogs and puppies. They live in the intestine and are occasionally passed in vomit or stool and appear as short, white, spaghetti-like strands when fresh. Roundworms are transmitted by ingesting contaminated soil, feces or prey. Cats and dogs can transmit roundworms to their offspring through nursing. They can cause weight loss, weakness, pneumonia, and intestinal obstruction.

Tapeworms:

Tapeworm is acquired by eating uncooked meat, certain prey, and also from fleas. It can be hard to detect until a segment of the tapeworm is found in fresh stool or around the anus. Watch the litter box for opaque white, rice-like segments that are capable of movement when fresh.

Whipworms:

Whipworms are another worm found as common in dogs as puppies. They are rarely found in cats.

Demodectic and Sarcoptic Mange:

Caused by microscopic mites, mange can often present itself as areas of hair loss, sometimes with the presence of scabs. Demodectic and sarcoptic mange can only be differentiated by microscopic examination. Sarcoptic mange (also known as scabies) is considered contagious to human beings.

Feline (Cat) Illnesses

URI:

An upper respiratory infection is a viral infection of the upper respiratory system that presents itself initially as sneezing. URI's are highly infectious and are usually contracted from other cats. Once ill, the kitten is more susceptible to bacterial infections of the upper respiratory tract as well. Secondary bacterial infections usually present symptoms such as congested breathing, goopy or runny eyes, or nasal discharge. The virus that causes the initial infection cannot be treated, but a veterinarian may decide to treat the secondary bacterial infections with antibiotics or a decongestant.

Conjunctivitis:

What appears to be a swelling of the inner eye or the fleshy pink tissue within the eye can be caused by several things. Depending on the severity and the expected cause, the veterinarian will prescribe appropriate medication.

Feline Distemper:

Feline distemper is caused by a virus. No specific conditions are required for it to exist so it attacks unprotected kittens indiscriminately and without warning. It is extremely harmful to cats of all ages and is especially lethal to young kittens. Kittens can fall into a coma and die before a foster parent even realizes a kitten is sick. Symptoms include listlessness, lack of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea and blood in the stool.

Feline (Cat) Illnesses

Feline Panleukopenia:

This deadly disease is caused by a virus and affects kittens greatly. Symptoms may include dehydration, lethargy, and vomiting. The virus is transmitted via an infected cat's saliva, feces, and other bodily fluids.

Feline leukemia:

This deadly disease is caused by a virus that inhibits the immune system. Orphaned kittens under the age of eight weeks cannot be tested reliably for the disease. If taking in kittens whose mother could not be tested, foster parents should be extremely careful in keeping contact between their pets and foster pets from occurring. It is transmitted from cat to cat via saliva, urine and other bodily fluids.

FIP:

This disease does not occur as commonly as URI. Symptoms are the same as distemper but with abdominal bloating and labored breathing.

Canine (Dog) Illnesses

Canine Distemper:

Distemper is an extremely contagious and often fatal viral disease. Over 50% of dogs and 80% of puppies that contract the virus die from it. It is an airborne infection that can be transmitted with or without direct contact with an infected dog through mucous, urine, and feces. Some of the symptoms include squinting, pus from the eyes, weight loss, coughing, vomiting, nasal discharge, and diarrhea.

Kennel Cough:

Kennel cough is the equivalent of a human cold. Just like people who have colds, kennel cough develops when the dog is stressed or when the immune system is compromised. Kennel cough usually goes away as soon as the dog has a warm, quiet, and soothing place to sleep, and where they can drink lots of water, eat healthy food, and receive lots of TLC! Kennel cough is typically a dry, hacking cough. There may be some discharge from the nose and a clear liquid that is coughed up. It's generally a mild, self-limiting illness of the trachea and bronchi encountered in all age groups of dogs, but especially in those under unusual stress, crowding or close confinement. Kennel cough exists in shelters, boarding kennels, groomers, veterinary offices, off-leash areas, etc. Because kennel cough is contagious, infected dogs should NOT be around other dogs until they're over their cough. If you have a dog at home and plan to foster a dog with kennel cough, we have found that if your own dog is healthy and has been vaccinated annually, then your dog will most likely not get sick. Talk to your vet about giving your own dog the Bordetella nasal vaccination.

Canine (Dog) Illnesses

Parvovirus:

Parvo attacks the intestinal tract, white blood cells and heart muscle. Signs of infection are depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, severe diarrhea, fever, and sometimes kennel cough symptoms. The illness is contracted through contact with the infected feces of another dog. This is why you must NOT take your foster puppy out to public places where other dogs have been until he has completed his vaccine series against the disease. This virus can be deadly. Call OC Animal Care immediately if you believe your foster dog may have this illness.

Disinfecting Your Home

It is highly recommended that you disinfect your home during periods between foster animals. Even if you have not experienced any illness with foster animals thus far, it is a safe practice to ensure the spread of illness will be minimal and unlikely. Pre-cleaning an area with a detergent to remove any organic material will help disinfectants be more effective. A solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water is usually sufficient to disinfect an area.

Applying as a Foster Caretaker

Once you've read through this manual thoroughly and you've carefully considered the great responsibility asked of our foster caretakers, you may complete the necessary application and agreement forms to apply for acceptance into the program.

Complete the Following Forms

- 1. Foster Caretaker Manual Agreement
- 2. Foster Caretaker Application
- 3. Foster Caretaker Agreement

Submit Forms to the Volunteer Program Coordinator

Forms may be submitted via mail, fax, email, or personal delivery to the shelter.

OC Animal Care
Attn: Volunteer Program Coordinator
561 The City Dr. S.
Orange, CA 92868

Fax: (714) 935-6373