



Asheville  
Humane Society

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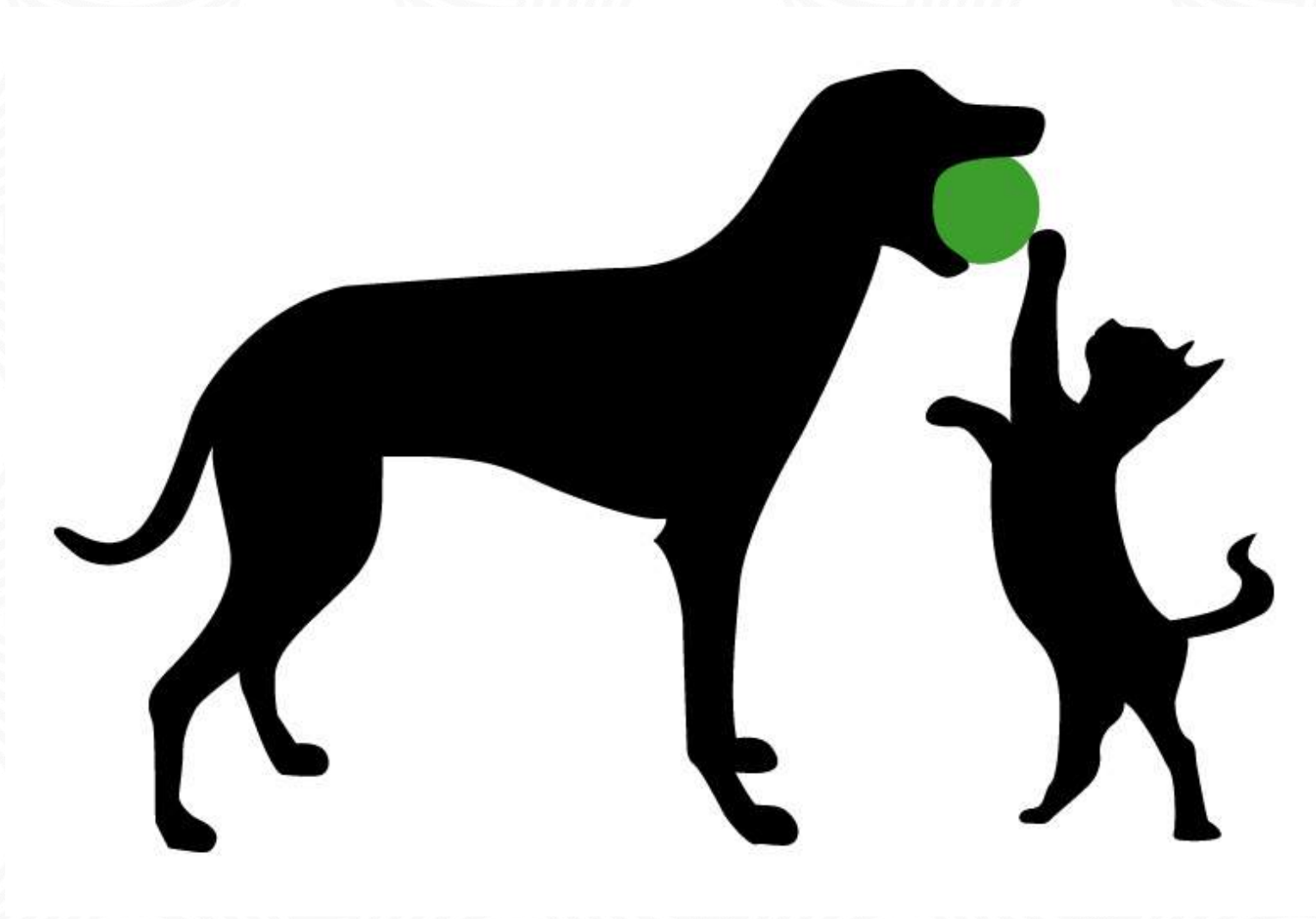
# DOG & PUPPY FOSTER MANUAL



Asheville Humane Society is about hope, not heartache. As Buncombe County's critical safety net since 1984, we are always here to save and protect every animal. We have mastered the art of saving lives within our walls and now we are going even further, helping our community's pets and their people thrive together. We are going beyond a no-kill community to ensure that each animal has the quality of life they deserve — a life worth living.

**BEYOND NO KILL - A LIFE WORTH LIVING**





# **Asheville Humane Society**

## **Foster Program**

Thank you for deciding to become a life-saving foster parent for the Asheville Humane Society! Our foster program allows us to save hundreds of lives every year, and it is all thanks to the dedication and care of over 400 wonderful foster parents.

The animals you will be helping are those who are not yet ready for the adoption floor. They range from those with ongoing medical issues, to nursing mothers and orphaned babies who need a little extra TLC before they can have a chance at finding their forever home.

This is where you as a foster parent come in. We cannot promise it will always be easy; puppies and dogs that have never been indoors before may have no concept of house training, and kittens and older cats may not always be able to make it to the litter box on time. Some animals, despite everyone's best efforts, will simply fail to thrive.

However, when the time comes and your foster gets a clean bill of health, moves to the adoption floor, and becomes a new cherished family member, you can know that it was due to your hard work and dedication.





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## Stay in the Loop!

- Asheville Humane Society Fosters Facebook page to talk with other foster parents & see pleas for immediate needs
- Check which animals need foster homes by visiting our foster-only website [ashevillehumane.org/fosterdaily](http://ashevillehumane.org/fosterdaily)
- Check emails regularly for pleas for specific animals needing help
- Opt in to our urgent needs texting system by texting NEONATES, DOGMOM, or BEHAVIORDOGS to 828-521-2681

## How It Works

Once the Foster Coordinator has accepted your foster application, you will be asked to join our Facebook Group “Asheville Humane Society Foster Parents” where weekly lists of animals in need of foster will be posted. If you decide not to join the Facebook Group, you will still receive emails of animals in need of fostering, but these will not be as frequent, and will only highlight specific animals. Available foster animals can also be seen at [www.ashevillehumane.org/fosterdaily](http://www.ashevillehumane.org/fosterdaily); we recommend saving this website to your bookmarks bar for easy access. Lastly, if you wish to receive text messages about our urgent neonatal puppy, nursing mom dog, or behaviorally advanced dog foster home needs, opt into our texting system by sending a message with either NEONATES, DOGMOM, or BEHAVIORDOGS to 828-521-2681.

If you see an animal that you would be interested in fostering, email the Foster Department at [fosteradmin@ashevillehumane.org](mailto:fosteradmin@ashevillehumane.org) with the animal’s name and ID number. They will then be in touch with you with details about the animal, and a date and time will then be scheduled for you to come and pick the animal(s) up.

## Picking Up Your Fosters

When it comes time to pick up your foster animal(s), you will go to the Adoption Center, located at 14 Forever Friend Lane. There are a couple of dedicated Foster Parent parking spots to the right of the main entrance, but if these are already taken you may park in any available space. Upon arriving at the Adoption Center, we ask that you please stay in your car and call us at 828-768-5451 to let us know you’ve arrived. We will meet you at your car to hand over supplies, go over any special needs and/or medications the animal(s) have, and then, the exciting part – we’ll hand over the animal(s)!







# Setting The Scene

## WHERE TO KEEP THEM

All foster dogs & puppies will be housed indoors, but adult dogs can have short amounts of unsupervised outdoor play time providing the play yard is secure - some dogs can jump/climb/dig under fences with ease so any outdoor play time needs to be supervised until you are confident that your foster dog will not escape. Once you're sure they can't escape the yard it's ok to leave them alone outside, but be sure to check in on them periodically. **Foster dogs should never be allowed off-leash in an unsecured area.** When you are not home, your foster dog should be kept inside in a manner that will prevent them from getting into trouble; AHS can provide crates and baby gates for this when necessary.



## Dog Parks

DOG PARKS AND DOGGY DAYCARES ARE STRICTLY OFF-LIMITS! Please respect this rule, and understand that it is simply too much of a liability for AHS to allow our dogs to go to dog parks. Much of the time, the animals we are sending into foster have only been with us for a short period of time, and we do not fully know how these animals will react in certain situations.

Dog parks simply offer too many opportunities for fights and bites, possibly putting a member of the public, someone's pet, and/or the foster dog at risk and creating a lawsuit for AHS. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this. Repeated violation of this rule may result in your termination as a foster parent with AHS.





Nursing mothers of any kind should be kept in the quietest room of the house, and should be fully separated from any other animals in the home. Once the mother is comfortable in your household, she may want to wander out of her quiet room and into the rest of the house; this is O.K. as long as the other dogs in the household are up to date on their vaccinations, no other animals can get to her babies in her absence, and she can return to them when she feels the need. Mothers are often very protective of their litters towards other animals, so we want to make sure we're keeping all household animals safe as the puppies grow. The foster team can give you an idea of how long a mom can be away from babies, depending on their age. **Never leave the house with mom separated from her babies.**

Once the puppies have had their first vaccine, they should be introduced to the other animals in the home (in a safe manner) to help their socialization skills.

When deciding where to set up puppies/nursing moms, be sure to take into consideration that puppies can be messy when they get older! If your home has carpet, you may consider securing a tarp under their containment area to keep your carpet clean. Puppy play pens are great to help keep puppies of all ages safely contained to a designated space, and can easily be affixed to wire dog kennels. Whelping boxes, such as a plastic kiddie pool, are also helpful in keeping neonatal puppies contained while allowing mom to come and go as she pleases. AHS is happy to provide any of these supplies at any time!



Lastly, the ambient temperature for puppies & nursing moms should stay above 68 degrees to prevent the puppies from becoming chilled. Pet-safe heaters are a great way to keep the temperature in their room appropriate if you prefer to keep your house on the cooler side!



Please ask the Foster Coordinator about your foster dog's behavior assessment before taking it out into high-traffic public areas such as pet stores, trails, etc





# Setting The Scene

## PUPPY HOUSING GUIDELINES

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**0-5 Weeks Old:** These puppies should stay indoors at all times and should not have interactions with other animals. They should remain confined to a small area, often times a plastic airline carrier and/or a puppy pen depending on their mobility needs. They are never to be taken out of the house, with the exception of returning to AHS in their carriers for appointments, until they have reached 5 weeks of age.

**5-8 Weeks Old:** Beginning at 5 weeks of age, providing they have had their 1st vaccines, puppies should be allowed to go into a secured area of the foster's yard, permitting there are no strange dogs or wildlife that frequent the yard. If the yard is very large and/or does not have a secure fence, the puppies should be limited by a metal play pen. At this age, it is encouraged to allow puppies to fully interact with other fully vaccinated, animal-friendly adult dogs.

**8-16 Weeks Old:** Puppies at this age are allowed to go to public spaces with low traffic of other animals. While they shouldn't be allowed to interact with animals with an unknown vaccine history, they should continue to be exposed to novel sights, sounds, smells, and ground textures (gravel, concrete, etc.). Examples of appropriate outings include friend's houses, walking around the Outlet Mall, or restaurants with outdoor patio seating. People should be encouraged to appropriately interact with puppies while out and about. **DOG PARKS, PET STORES, HIKING TRAILS, OR POPULAR WALKING PARKS HEAVILY TRAFFICKED BY OTHER DOGS ARE NOT PERMITTED FOR PUPPIES IN THIS AGE RANGE.**

**16+ Weeks Old:** Providing a puppy has been fully vaccinated by 16 weeks, or your puppy has received at least 2 vaccines at/beyond 16 weeks, there are no activity restrictions. Puppies of this age are allowed to frequent pet stores, hiking trails, and popular walking parks. Caution should always be taken when meeting other dogs with unknown vaccine histories and/or unknown behavior towards other dogs. People should be encouraged to appropriately interact with the puppies to continue to socialize them to novel interactions. **REMEMBER - DOG PARKS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FOR DOGS OF ANY AGE BEING FOSTERED THROUGH AHS.**





# Feeding Time

Feeding guidelines vary depending on who you are fostering. AHS will provide you with all food necessary to care for your foster animals, so if you are running low on supplies please let us know and we'll set more out for you to pick-up! We prefer to keep all our animals on a consistent diet, so please avoid switching brands of food or feeding what your personal pets eat, as this can cause upset G.I. systems. **Please refrain from feeding rawhides and/or bones of any sort, as these are dangerous and can cause serious medical issues**



You are welcome to purchase your own supply of food for your foster animals if you so desire, we just ask that you please use the same brands as we do so that there is no need for a food adjustment period when the animal returns for adoption. The foster department uses Science Diet Kibble for both puppy and adult dog food. Canned food for adults varies on donations, but puppies should always receive Science Diet Puppy canned food.



Puppies & nursing moms should be free-fed puppy kibble at all times. Mom needs all the calories she can get to keep up with the demands of her puppies, so feeding her puppy food will give her these extra calories. Nursing puppies will start to learn from mom how to eat wet food and kibble at around 3.5 - 4.5 weeks of age. Once they begin eating the kibble, they should have constant access as mom will soon begin to push them away when they try to nurse.

You can offer canned food as an extra bonus to mom's diet & to older puppies who are eating the kibble well, but puppies just learning to eat on their own may benefit from learning with canned food before they venture to kibble. Allow the puppies to eat as much of the canned as they want & remove any leftovers after about an hour, as it will start to spoil & grow bacteria. You should offer weaning puppies canned food at least 3-4 times a day until they are regularly eating the kibble.

Depending on the number of puppies you have, multiple food bowls may be necessary to prevent food guarding/bullying. A good rule of thumb is one more bowl than the number of puppies, if your space allows.





Most adult dogs will be on a diet of kibble only, although some with dental problems may require canned food in addition to, or instead of, kibble. AHS feeds Science Diet Adult to all dogs and puppies who are not on a medically special diet. The amount your foster dog should be fed each day is outlined below on the feeding chart below. If you would like a more exact amount to feed your foster dog, any member of the foster department can help calculate that for you.

Some dogs may be on a specialized diet for on-going medical conditions. Many of these are prescription diets, and should be strictly kept to as per the instructions given to you by the foster department to ensure the animal stays healthy. These prescription diets are only available through AHS, so be sure to let us know when you're running low!

# FEEDING GUIDE

DAILY FEEDING GUIDE GUIDE D'ALIMENTATION QUOTIDIEN GUIA DE ALIMENTACION DIARIA				
Ideal Weight of Dog Poids idéal du chien Peso ideal del perro	Weight Loss Perte de poids Disminución de peso		Weight Management Gestion du poids Manejo del peso	
	cups tasses tazas	grams grammes gramos	cups tasses tazas	grams grammes gramos
5 lb (2.3 kg)	1/2	45	3/4	70
10 lb (4.5 kg)	3/4	70	1 1/4	115
20 lb (9.1 kg)	1 1/4	115	2	180
30 lb (14 kg)	1 2/3	150	2 3/4	250
40 lb (18 kg)	2	180	3 1/3	305
50 lb (23 kg)	2 1/2	230	4	365
60 lb (27 kg)	2 3/4	250	4 2/3	425
80 lb (36 kg)	3 1/2	320	5 2/3	515
100 lb (45 kg)	4 1/4	385	6 3/4	615
120 lb (54 kg)	4 3/4	430	7 3/4	705

Reference packaging for full details.





# Bathroom Behaviors

It's important to remember that we may not know if your foster dog is house or crate trained! However, even for fully housetrained dogs, adjusting to a new environment and a new schedule can sometimes prompt potty accidents. For the first several days of your foster dog's stay in your home, it's best to keep the bathroom schedule rigid and predictable to help their system get used to your schedule. Additionally, the stress of a new environment can sometimes cause mild GI upset, so don't worry too much if your foster dog experiences slightly loose stools for their first couple of days with you.

Puppies can begin the housetraining process at 5 weeks of age, providing they have received their first vaccine. Until this point, AHS can supply you with as many puppy pads & large blankets as is needed to keep the puppies' housing area clean & free of potty accidents.

Please note that some unaltered or recently altered male dogs may try to mark in your home. If you need guidance on how to correct this behavior using AHS approved training techniques, please contact the foster department. AHS can also provide Belly Bands if needed.



Frequent urination for both male and female dogs may be a sign of a Urinary Tract Infection. If your foster dog regularly eliminates inside the home after having an outdoor potty break, or urinates multiple times in a short time span while outside, please alert the Foster Coordinator so a medical check appointment can be scheduled.





## Keeping Things Clean

One of the keys to healthy dogs and puppies is keeping them and their environment nice and clean. This means making sure their fur stays free of debris and mats, and that their bedding is regularly cleaned.

Puppies are usually attended to by their mother, so if you are fostering orphaned puppies it is up to you to assume the responsibilities. Moms with larger litters may struggle to keep up with the demands, so you should always do a nose-to-tail check on each puppy a few times a day. Puppies just learning to eat and use the puppy pads are pretty messy, so it is imperative their faces, paws, and rears are wiped off several times a day. Dried on food can become very itchy and can cause fungal and bacterial infections, as well as create ulcers on the skin and hair loss. Dirty bums can lead to serious issues, such as UTIs, scalding from urine & diarrhea, or impaction from stool stuck over the anus. Be sure to give every puppy a nose-to-tail check several times a day and clean any necessary body parts.

Sick dogs and puppies very often need their eyes and noses wiped to free them of dried discharge that can crust eyes and nostrils closed. If you are fostering a sick dog or puppy, be sure to check their faces several times a day, and gently clean any debris away with a cotton ball or washcloth dipped in warm water.

- Clean faces after messy meals, or when fostering sickies
- Give every foster a nose-to-tail check every day
- Make sure bums & paws stay free of fecal matter
- Check bedding daily





Long haired dogs and puppies are sometimes too luxurious for their own good, and often develop mats in their armpits, groin areas, rears, behind their ears, and along their necks. These can develop and worsen quickly, and can be very painful for the animal. If you notice small mats on your foster, ask the foster department for a comb and gently work at the mats for small time periods, multiple times a day. If the mats are not easily worked out with your fingers or a comb, please contact the foster team and we'll schedule a groom appointment for your foster with our volunteer groomer.

Bedding should be checked throughout the day for odd smells, debris or potty accidents and cleaned accordingly. Bedding should be replaced every 3-4 days if unsoiled. If your fosters are regularly soiling their bedding, please contact the foster department for guidance.



AHS is always happy to take your dirty foster laundry and exchange it out for clean linens!





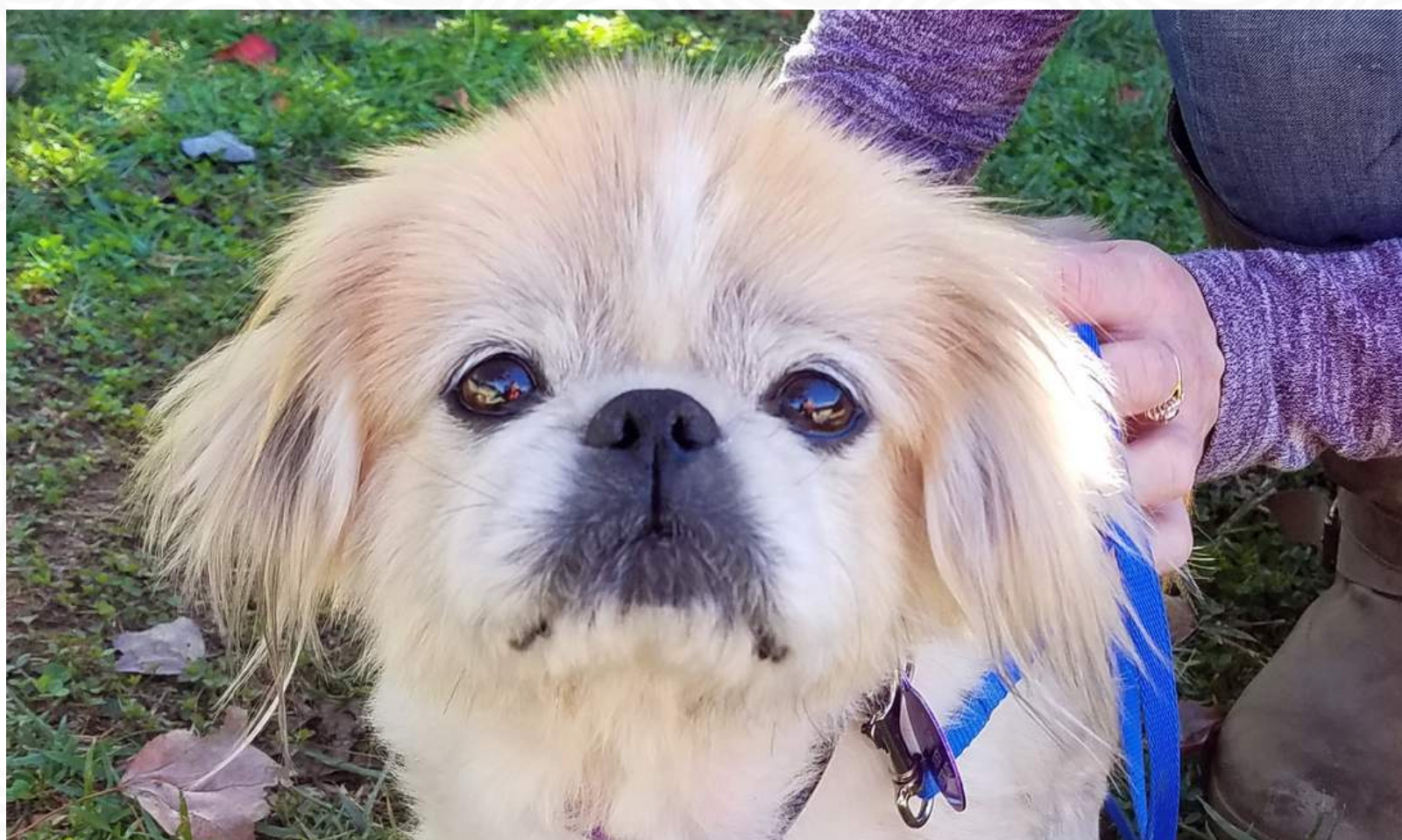


# Proper Socializing

If you are fostering dogs or puppies specifically to socialize them, please refer to the foster department for more specific socialization protocols and procedures.

Socialized puppies are adopted puppies! Once your foster dogs/puppies have adjusted to your home, start presenting them with novel objects and people. Inviting friends over to visit and running the vacuum near their room are great places to start! Introducing them to your other pets (per the guidelines on page 6) is also a wonderful building block to help them learn how to socialize with other animals. If you are fostering fully vaccinated adult dogs, take them out to walking parks (remember – please no dog parks) and around on the town (providing their behavior evaluations suggest this will be appropriate for the individual dog) to help expose them to lots of new sights & smells.

For more in-depth information on how to raise your foster puppies to be well-socialized, please read our handout located on the Foster Resources webpage titled "Raising a Behaviorally Healthy Litter of Puppies." Introducing them to novel people, sights, sounds, smells, and textures is essential to helping them grow into well-adjusted, confident adult dogs.







# Keeping Fido Enriched



Be sure to check out the full list of doggy enrichment ideas located at the end of the manual. You can also see what fun things you can come up with, too! Start simple and gradually increase the difficulty as your foster dog gets the hang of the game. Your dog will thank you, and you'll find they are more likely to relax afterward!

Making sure your foster dog or puppy is enriched is a very easy (and fun!) thing to do, and helps to make sure their brains stay active and gives them a break from the mundane day-to-day. Enrichment should be an ongoing thing that includes novel objects as well as taking ordinary things and making them more fun and challenging.

For dogs, enrichment can be anything from searching for treats hidden throughout the house, to being fed from puzzle feeders, to taking slow "sniffy" walks allowing your foster dog to smell anything and everything they want!

These simple things, along with daily, interactive play sessions, will help keep your foster pet entertained and will keep them using their beautiful brain to solve puzzles and get a break from the mundane.





# Training Tips

A lot of the time, we have little to no history of what basic training any of the dogs that come into the shelter know. Adopters are more likely to adopt a dog that already knows the basics plus a few tricks, so it's very helpful for foster families to work on these things. Please note that AHS does not support the use of aversive/dominance theory training techniques, and instead uses positive reinforcement training methods. Use of aversive/dominance theory training may result in your termination as a foster parent with AHS. If you would like more information on positive reinforcement training, we will happily get you in touch with our behavior department and provide you with guidance and resources!



When in doubt, let us know that you're experiencing issues! Don't wait until you're overly frustrated or the behavior has become the 'norm' for your foster- it's much easier to begin working on these issues before they become a big deal. We don't expect you to know how to handle every issue or want you to feel like you need to deal with them on your own - we're here to support you and make the fostering experience as successful as possible for everyone involved.





# Mouthing

If your foster expresses their excitement by putting things in their mouth, they need help learning what things are appropriate to do this to (like toys), and what is inappropriate to do this to (like hands and shoes). If your foster dog or puppy is mouthy when they get excited, try redirecting them by placing a toy in their mouth when they grab inappropriate objects, and praise lavishly or reward with a moment of playtime when they automatically go for their toy.



If you are fostering a singleton puppy, they will need to learn bite inhibition, which is the ability to control how much pressure to use with their mouths. Normally, they learn this when playing with their littermates. If a puppy bites too hard, the other puppy yelps loudly and play comes to a halt momentarily. You can mimic this by yelping like a puppy whenever your foster puppy mouths you. When they remove their mouth, give lots of praise and resume playing. If they do not respond, turn around and walk away from the puppy – completely ignoring them. After a minute or so, resume play.

Never hit them, flick their nose, simulate bites, or “alpha roll” them to “train” them to not use their mouths. These are aversive training techniques that are not supported by AHS. If you are having problems getting your foster to stop mouthing you, please contact the foster department ASAP for help - we're here to help you work through it!

**You should always avoid playing with your foster animals with only your hands, as this will confuse them about what appropriate toys are. Always make sure you have a toy in your hand when going to play with your mouthy puppy, and make sure playtime focuses on the toy.**

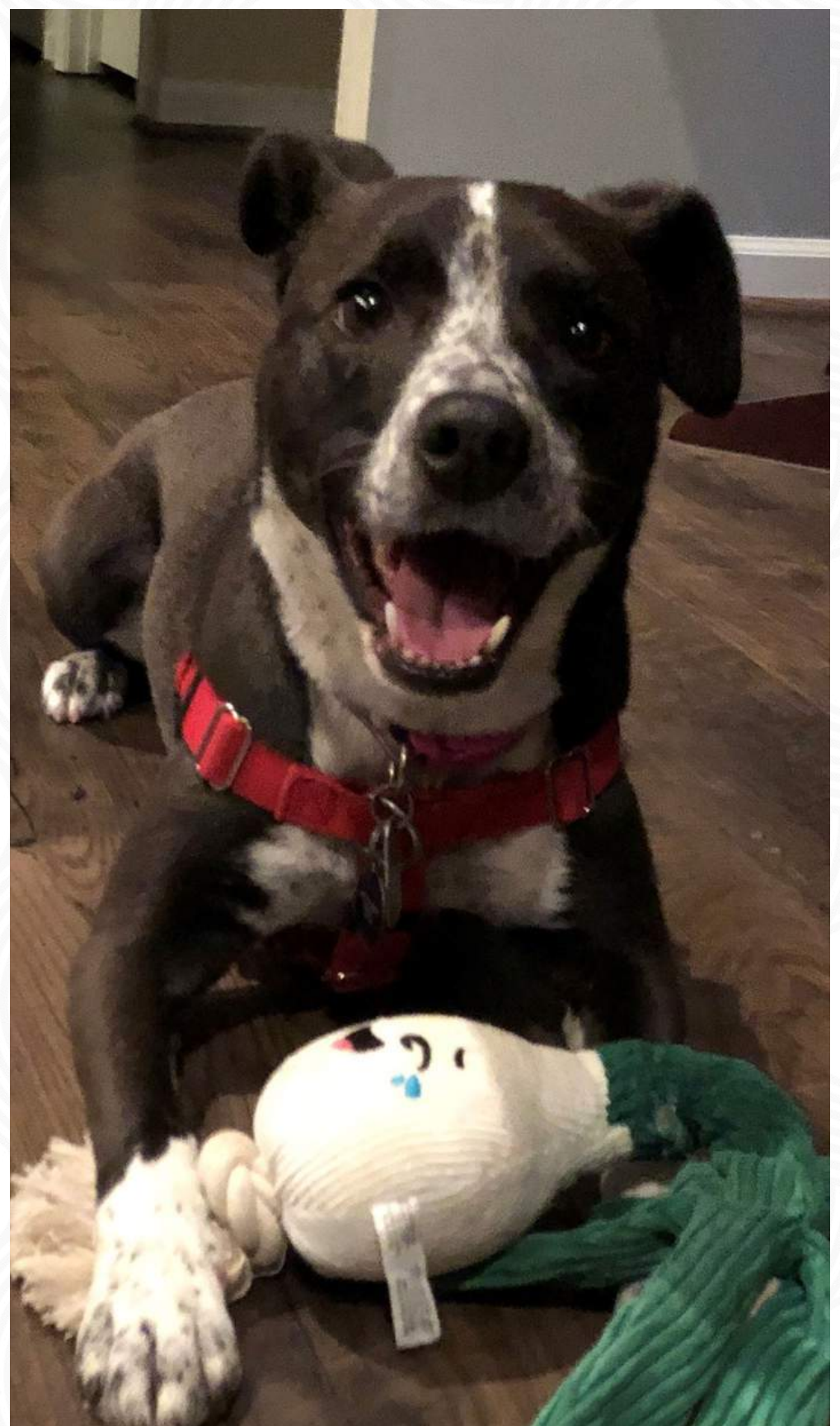




# Chewing

Chewing is a necessary way for dogs to release stress and satisfy their natural urge to destroy things. Additionally, chewing helps alleviate the pain puppies experience when they are teething. Give your foster plenty of appropriate items to chew up and they will be far less likely to chew up shoes and doors! We ask that you never give your foster dog any rawhides, Bully Sticks, or real bone toys/treats as they can be very dangerous when ingested.

Appropriate toy options include any toy given to you by AHS (please monitor to ensure pieces of toys are not ingested), as well as any paper object - toilet paper/paper towel rolls, paper bags, tissue boxes, etc. You can make fun feeders with these objects and turn meal time into a super fun puzzle that not only makes them use their brain, but also allows them to safely shred and destroy! Non-laminated paper objects are safe for ingestion and will pass through the G.I. system easily. Always discard any destroyed toys or small pieces, and if your foster dog is a toy-destroyer always monitor them closely when they have toys.



**Remember - never give your foster dog any rawhide/Bully Stick/real bone toys/treats, as they can be very dangerous when ingested.**







# House Training

Almost everyone's first question regarding adopting a dog is "are they house trained?" Very often, we really don't know so having a foster parent work on house training really helps them get adopted! Adult dogs can typically hold their bladders anywhere from 4-10 hours, depending on the age & the size of the dog. Smaller dogs & geriatric dogs will need more frequent potty breaks, while larger dogs & younger dogs may be able to go longer periods of time. Try to offer potty breaks at the same time of day every day to help your foster get into a routine. After waking up, after meal times, after play time, and before bed are all good rules of thumb. If you catch your dog eliminating in the home, never scold them or rub their nose in their mess; instead interrupt them (if possible) and take them outside (or to a puppy pad if appropriate) to their potty area. Give extravagant praise when they finish eliminating outside.



Puppies can generally hold their bladder for one hour per month of age (i.e.: 1 month = 1 hour, 2 months = 2 hours, etc). Similar to adult dogs, placing them on puppy pads after waking, after meals, after play sessions, and every 30-60 minutes when awake will help them quickly learn where their potty spot is. Remember to never punish a puppy having an accident; instead follow the guidelines for adult dogs - interrupt them and place them on a puppy pad in a dedicated "potty area" of their enclosure and give lots and lots of praise when they successfully go on the pad. Again, puppies who have received their first vaccine should begin being trained on pottying outside. For more details on proper housetraining, please visit our Foster Resources webpage.





# Crate Training

Just like with house training, we very often do not know if a dog is crate trained or not. Many adopters prefer to crate newly adopted dogs at first, so getting them used to being crated is a huge bonus!

Crates should always be a happy, safe place where only good things happen. Never use the crate as a punishment, as this will build a negative association and cause avoidance. You want to make sure the crate is large enough for the dog or puppy to stand up without having to crouch, turn around, and stretch out. When starting out, feed all meals in the crate with the door open and only offer specific, high-value toys & treats in the crate to help build a positive association. Start closing kennel door for small periods of time once your foster is comfortable going into the crate - just long enough to go out and get the mail, or just long enough to play a short game of catch with your personal dog outside. Gradually build the amount of time your foster dog or puppy is left in the crate, and always take them directly outside to their potty spot once they leave the crate. This will help reinforce their house training and prevent any accidents in the home.

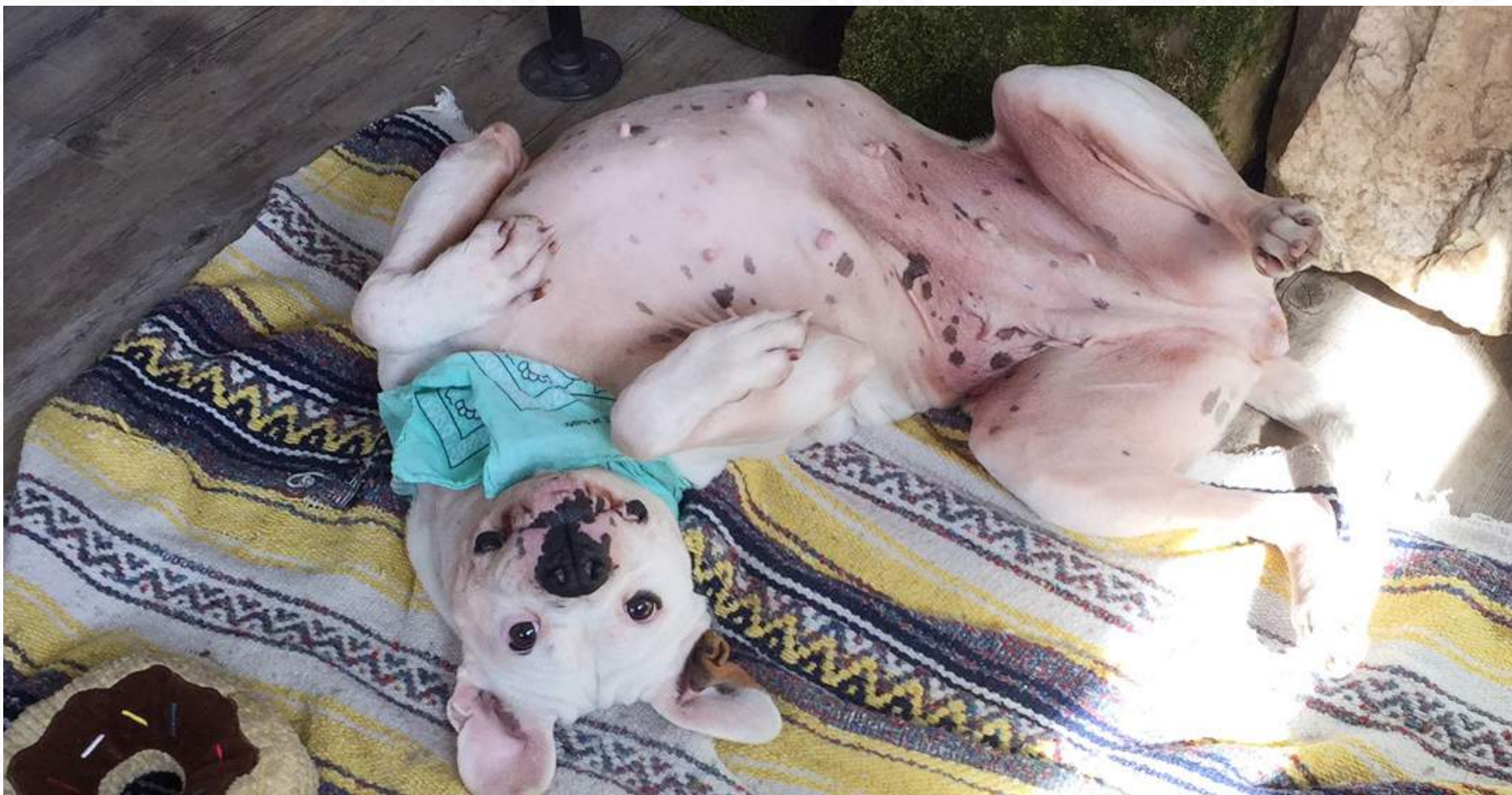
For more detailed information on how to successfully crate train your foster dog or puppy, please see our handout on the Foster Resources webpage.





# Tricks!

Have fun and teach your foster dog or puppy as many tricks as you can! Use high value treats as reinforcement, and keep training sessions short and fun. Start with short sessions of about 5 minutes, and gradually build up to about 30 minutes. Always try to end on a good note when possible, by finishing a training session with a trick your foster knows very well. Be sure to let us know what fun tricks they learned so we can tell adopters!



## Easy Tricks to Teach

- Sit
- Down
- Stay
- Come
- Spin (both directions!)
- Roll Over
- Weaving through your legs





# Nursing Moms & Their Puppies

Fostering a nursing mom and her puppies can be one of the most enjoyable fostering experiences! Mom does all the hard work while you get to watch her babies grow and develop personalities. Whenever possible, we will keep a mom with her babies through weaning, as puppies raised with their mothers are much healthier and have a much higher chance of survival than those that are separated.



Never leave the house with mom separated from her babies!

Nursing mothers of any kind should be kept in the quietest room of the house, separated from any other animals in the home. Once the mother is comfortable in your household, she may want to wander out of her quiet room and into the rest of the house; this is O.K. as long as no other animals can get to her babies in her absence and she can return to them when she feels the need.

For mothers with newborns, we want to provide mom with a nesting box, filled with soft, clean blankets. Plastic kiddie pools work very well for this - AHS can provide one for you if necessary. Try to mess with the nesting box as little as possible so that mom doesn't feel the need to relocate her babies. Do visual inspections of the bedding in the nesting box daily to make sure they are clean, and try to use white bedding so you can tell if there is urine or feces on it. Only change the bedding when necessary. As the puppies grow older, lots of layers of bedding can help pad the pool, making clean up easier by just removing the top layer or two every so often.





# Possible Problems

THINGS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER WHEN FOSTERING A NURSING MOM

On occasion, you may wind up having a foster experience that doesn't quite go as planned. The following problems may arise without any rhyme or reason, but by letting the foster team know about any of these situations ASAP we can work together towards the best outcome possible in these tough situations.



## MATERNAL NEGLECT

When moms stop caring for their babies and supplemental care is necessary

## FAILURE TO PRODUCE MILK

When mom stops making milk or doesn't make enough, and supplemental feedings are required by the foster

## MATERNAL AGGRESSION

When moms become too protective and take it out on their caretakers or their babies

## FADING PUPPY SYNDROME

When puppies just don't thrive, no matter how much extra care is given

## PUPPY-ON-PUPPY NURSING

When puppies comfort nurse on each other, causing major health issues.

## UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION

The doggy head cold.



## Maternal Neglect

It is important to note that sometimes, even with the best supplemental care, neglected individuals or even entire litters may not survive.

Sometimes, mother dogs will fail to care for their babies. This could stem from a variety of reasons, but most often it is because the mom is young and inexperienced or there are genetic defaults with the puppies that we are not aware of, but the mother is. On occasion, stress can also be a factor in causing a mom to neglect her babies.

With litters that have been neglected, it is imperative to their survival that they receive supplemental feeding and care as soon as the neglect is noticed. Please contact either the foster department or call the after-hours on call phone if you suspect your mom dog is neglecting her litter.







# Maternal Aggression

Nursing mothers are naturally protective over their babies. On occasion, this becomes elevated and can translate into aggression towards her caretakers and other animals. Alternatively, on rare occasions a nursing mother will act aggressively towards her babies and can cause physical harm or death. It is essential that nursing moms have their own quiet space in the home free from other pets to decrease stress and the likelihood of maternal aggression. If their aggression becomes severe to the point you are unable to provide basic care or the mother is causing harm to her puppies, please alert the foster department ASAP.

Decrease the chance of maternal aggression towards other animals in your home by ensuring the family unit is kept in a low-stress, low-traffic area of the home completely separated from resident pets.





## Failure to Produce Milk

When a mother is very young, sick, skinny, or stressed she can sometimes fail to produce milk for her babies. Foster parents should be diligent about checking the weights of each nursing puppy daily until they are about 5 weeks old to make sure they are gaining daily. If they are not getting enough milk from mom, supplemental feeding will be required to keep them growing healthy and strong. If they fail to gain or begin to drop weight, immediately contact the foster department for assistance. Switching puppies over to being formula-fed can be difficult on them, so please refrain from starting any supplemental feeding without being instructed to do so by the foster department.



## Upper Respiratory Infections

Upper Respiratory Infections, otherwise known as “URI” or “kennel cough” are the equivalent of a human head cold. They are caused by various bacteria and viruses, and are generally treated with oral antibiotics to prevent secondary infections. Eye infections may accompany URIs and eye ointments may also be necessary. Keep an eye out for the symptoms outlined below, and be sure to contact the foster medical department if you notice the following:

- Nasal and/or ocular discharge
- Congested breathing
- Frequent sneezing
- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite
- Frequent coughing which may produce phlegm







# Fading Puppy Syndrome

Some puppies, despite everyone's best efforts, will just fail to thrive. Others may be doing great and growing strong, but then will suddenly and rapidly decline in their health. Both of these situations are examples of Fading Puppy Syndrome (FPS). There are many contributing factors for FPS, but with quick emergency action puppies can sometimes bounce back. Be sure to keep a very close eye on young puppies and call immediately if you sense there is a problem.

## Symptoms of FPS:

- Failure to gain weight
- Lethargy (sudden or extreme)
- Muscle wasting
- Gasping for breath
- Odd vocalizations
- Dehydration/pale, tacky gums
- Hyper/hypothermia



Even puppies who are with their mom can develop FPS, so be sure to keep a close eye on all puppies you foster for symptoms!





## Puppy-on-Puppy Nursing

As strange as it may sound, this is a very real and very dangerous problem you may encounter. It isn't seen quite as often with puppies who have mothers, but it is something every puppy foster needs to be very vigilant about checking for.

Puppies will nurse on each other for comfort (like a human child sucking its thumb), or if they are not getting enough to eat during mealtimes. Most often, the one doing the nursing will suckle on the genitals of its' siblings, but sometimes they will nurse wherever they can (bellies, sides, etc.). Tell-tale signs a puppy is being nursed on include:

- Little rosettes suddenly appearing in the fur
- Genital area is constantly wet, smells like urine, and/or appears swollen and irritated
- The puppy does not urinate when stimulated

When puppies nurse on each other's genitals, two things happen - the puppy doing the nursing fills up on urine and excrement and, therefore, does not feel hungry at the next meal time and does not eat any milk/food. This leads to several health issues, most notably rapid weight loss. Additionally, the puppy getting nursed on can develop a UTI and/or ulcerated genitalia, making elimination very difficult and painful. Occasionally, the genitalia become so ulcerated and infected that it becomes impossible for the puppy to eliminate, and humane euthanasia is needed.

If you see (or suspect) your puppies may be nursing on each other, please separate the puppy doing the nursing immediately, and contact the foster team on the next available business day. If you have to separate a puppy from a nursing mom please give it a heat source, such as a rice sock, and allow it individual time with mom to nurse, as often as is appropriate for its' age:

- 0-2 weeks: every 2 hours
- 2-4 weeks: every 3-4 hours
- 4-6 weeks: every 4-5 hours
- 6+ weeks: supervised group play times, several times a day





# Parvovirus

Similar to the Panleukopenia virus in kittens, Parvovirus most commonly affects young puppies and dogs without a good vaccine history. Symptoms include vomiting, bloody diarrhea, anorexia, and extreme lethargy. This disease attacks the rapidly dividing cells of the body, which include the GI system and the immune system. Unfortunately, there is no way to test if a puppy has Parvo before they begin showing symptoms.



If your puppy is diagnosed with Parvo we will immediately begin a critical care regimen for the animal consisting of daily sub-cutaneous fluids, antibiotics, antiemetics, and pain medications - if we feel it is fair to the animal to do so. Sometimes, however, an animal may be so sick that we do not feel it is fair to put them through treatment, or they do not respond to the supportive care, and the decision may be to humanely euthanize them.

Parvovirus is very prevalent in our area, and is part of the reason we strongly suggest a 14 day quarantine for all foster puppies.



# Other Commonly Seen Health Concerns



We ask that you please  
DO NOT give your  
foster animals flea or  
tick preventatives  
(including flea baths)  
yourself - if you suspect  
your foster animal has  
fleas or have any  
concerns about  
preventatives please  
contact the foster  
department for a  
treatment plan.

## Fleas

All puppies and dogs aged 6 weeks and over will receive flea prevention upon intake to the shelter and so will be treated before entering your home. Puppies under the age of 6 weeks are not safe to treat with medications and will need treated for fleas on a case by case basis. If you notice your foster has fleas, alert the foster department ASAP and begin brushing your foster with a flea comb and bathing them using blue Dawn dish soap. Be sure if you bathe your puppies that you dry them entirely before leaving them alone by using a hair dryer on the low setting. Fleas can quickly cause other health problems, such as tapeworms and anemia, and there is a risk of them getting into the carpets and upholstery in your home. Be sure to contact the foster department at the first signs to begin treatment!



## Demodectic Mange

Demodectic mange (or, simply “demodex”) is the most common type of mange seen in dogs. It is caused by a mite that lives naturally in the dog’s hair follicles and is not contagious. Almost all dogs have a few of these mites on their skin but as long as the body’s immune system is functioning properly, these mites cause no harm. Demodectic mange occurs most often in dogs with an immature or compromised immune system, allowing an overabundance of these mites to reproduce. If you suspect demodex or see hair loss, especially with reddened areas, alert the foster department to schedule an exam and test for demodectic mange.



## Internal Parasites

Parasites are extremely common in a shelter environment. Asheville Humane Society has a very thorough deworming policy, however, some puppies will need multiple treatments of dewormers to kill all their parasites. The most common visible parasites are tapeworms and roundworms. Tapeworms look like long, flat grains of rice and can be found in the stool or on/around the anus. Roundworms look like thin, white spaghetti and can be seen in the stool or in vomit. Not all parasites are visible to the naked eye, though, and can only be seen under a microscope. If you notice or suspect parasites, let the foster department know; we’ll ask you to bring a stool sample by the shelter for us to run a fecal test so we can begin the proper treatment.







## Diarrhea

It is not uncommon for puppies, especially those weaning, to experience loose stool or diarrhea during their time in foster care. If your foster experiences loose stool more than once, please bring a recent (less than 5 hours old) sample by the shelter for a fecal test to be run by our medical department. If you are unable to come directly to the shelter with it, you can refrigerate the sample for up to 2 hours.

Diarrhea is caused by various things, but parasites, food changes, overfeeding, viruses, stress, and bacteria are the most common causes. Severe diarrhea can quickly lead to dehydration, so it is very important to begin treatment as quickly as possible. If your foster has loose stool more than once, or diarrhea, please contact the foster department to let them know. For more information, please see our handout on diarrhea on our Foster Resources webpage.



## Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungus that is found all over the environment. Most people and animals come into contact with it regularly throughout their lives, but those with lowered or compromised immune systems are at a higher risk of becoming infected. Signs of ringworm on puppies include portions of thin or missing hair with scabby, flaky skin. It is most commonly seen on the face, ears, legs, and paws. Ringworm is treated with a topical Lime-Sulfur bath given twice a week, and in more severe cases oral antifungals may be added. If you suspect your foster may have ringworm, please contact the foster department to schedule an exam and a fungal culture. The foster department will provide you with a treatment and cleaning protocol.

Ringworm is not as scary as it sounds! Some people may be concerned about their family or their own pets getting ringworm.

There is, of course, always a possibility of this happening, but the risk is low if you pay attention to hand washing, cleaning, etc. If you did end up with a spot of ringworm, it is easily treated with an over-the-counter fungicidal cream such as Lamisil.





# Recheck Appointments & How They Work

All animals in foster care will need to be seen periodically by our medical team. For the majority of animals, this will be every 2-4 weeks. For animals in long-term foster care, time between appointments may increase to once every 4- 6 weeks. These appointments will be for a variety of things, ranging from boosters and weight checks to surgery site inspections and URI rechecks. The foster department will work with you to find the best date and time for you to bring in your animals for their rechecks. Once an appointment has been scheduled, you will receive an email alerting you to the appointment date, time, and details. You'll also receive a reminder email and a reminder text message a few days before your scheduled appointment. Please keep a close eye out for these emails! Appointment email notifications will come from SetMore, and may be filtered out by your spam blocker, so be sure to keep an eye on both your inbox & your spam folder.

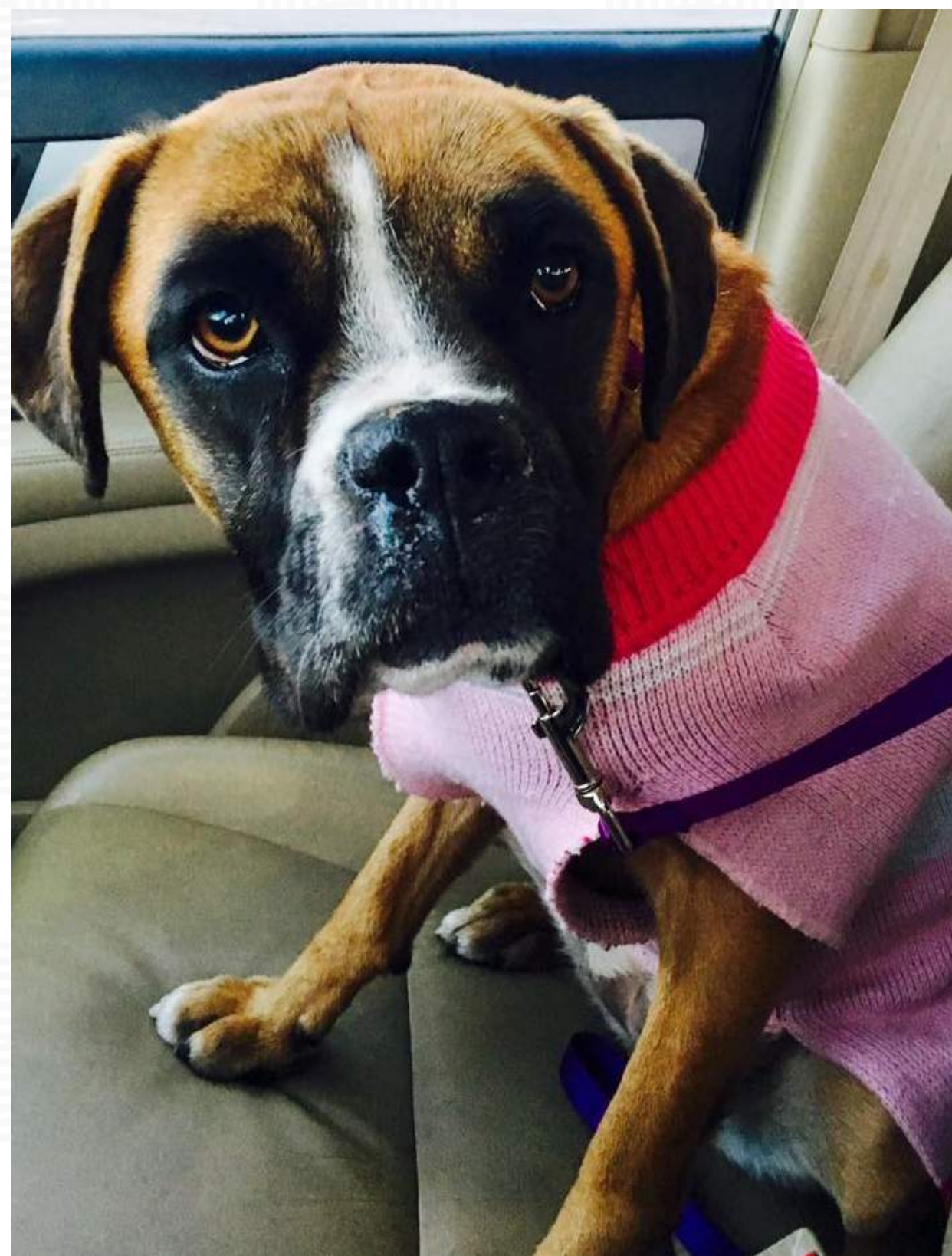


Appointment times are scheduled for a window of time depending on the type of appointment & the number of animals we'll be seeing, but please understand this is **not** a window for arrival time. This is the window blocked off in our schedule to talk to you, examine your foster animal, give treatments, fill medications, and enter notes. If you are running late to your foster appointment, please text or call a member of the foster department to let them know. If you cannot make your scheduled appointment, please give 24 hours notice if possible. If you are more than 15 minutes late to your appointment and we have not heard from you, we will not be able to see your animal on that day and will contact you to reschedule. We appreciate your promptness for scheduled appointments, as this helps everything run smoothly. Thank you for understanding that we cannot always see unscheduled/walk-in appointments unless they are emergencies.





When you arrive for your appointment, you will come to the Adoption Center (red building to the right). We have dedicated foster parking spaces to the right of the building, but if those are all taken you can park in any available space. When facing the building, you'll see a black gate to the right - go through that gate to the picnic table immediately to the left. Take a seat and give us a call at 828-776-1203 to let us know you've arrived. A staff member will be with you shortly to take your fosters back for their exam. We'll give you a call when we're finished & heading back to the picnic table. During inclement weather, you are welcome to stay in your car and call us - we'll direct you where to go to keep you and your fosters out of the elements.



Please be aware that foster parents cannot accompany their foster animals back to the medical area, as this is a staff only portion of the building.

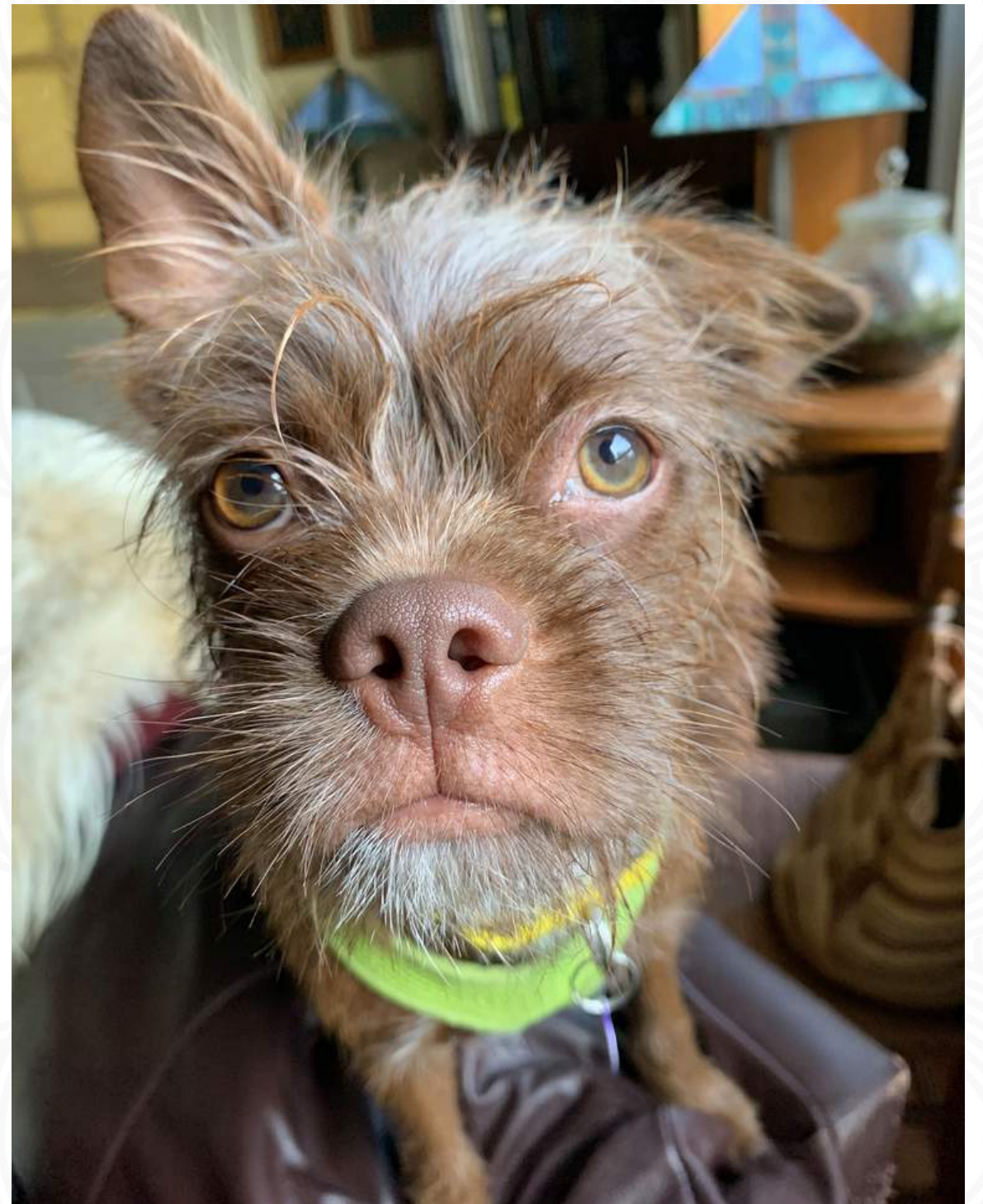
Unless we mention otherwise, please stay on campus for the duration of your foster animal's appointment. We do not have the space to house foster animals after their appointments have finished, so we need to be able to hand them back over as soon as we have finished with their exam. You are welcome to walk around outside, walk through the adoption center, stay at the picnic table, or hang out in your car - we'll call/text you when we've finished and are ready to give your foster animals back. If you are needing to coordinate your foster's appointment in-between other errands you have in the area, please let us know ahead of time so we can plan appropriately for your foster animal(s) to hang out after their appointment, and/or reschedule the appointment to a different time or day.





# Vaccinations

All animals 4 weeks and older receive vaccinations upon intake to the shelter. Dogs under 4 months of age will need regular boosters of the DAPP (distemper, adenovirus, parainfluenza, and parvovirus combo) vaccine every 2-3 weeks until they are 4 months old. Once animals are 12 weeks old they will receive their rabies vaccine.



# Dewormers

All animals will receive various dewormers depending on their age, starting at 2 weeks old up through 16 weeks. Some of the dewormers may need to be given at home. If you aren't sure how to draw up or give any medications, always let the foster team know and they can help.



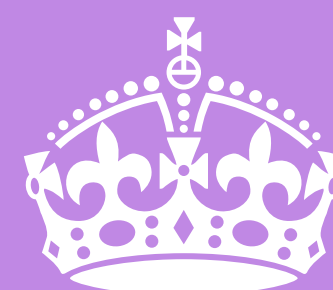


# Strange Situations You May Encounter



Animals are predictably unpredictable. If you foster for long enough, you're bound to run into a situation that is outside of the normal.

We've highlighted a few things that occasionally happen, but if you ever experience something with your foster animal and you're not sure what your next steps should be, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Foster Department! That's one of the reasons we're here - to make sure your foster experience is as good as it can be.



**Keep Calm  
And  
Alert The  
Foster  
Department!**





## My Foster Escaped!

The first thing you should know is that this happens to even the most diligent foster parents. Animals are animals, and even the most laid-back dog can sneak through an open door or find a hole in your fence line. Generally, all adult dogs and all puppies over 2lbs are microchipped to AHS. Please follow the steps outlined to the right should your foster animal escape.

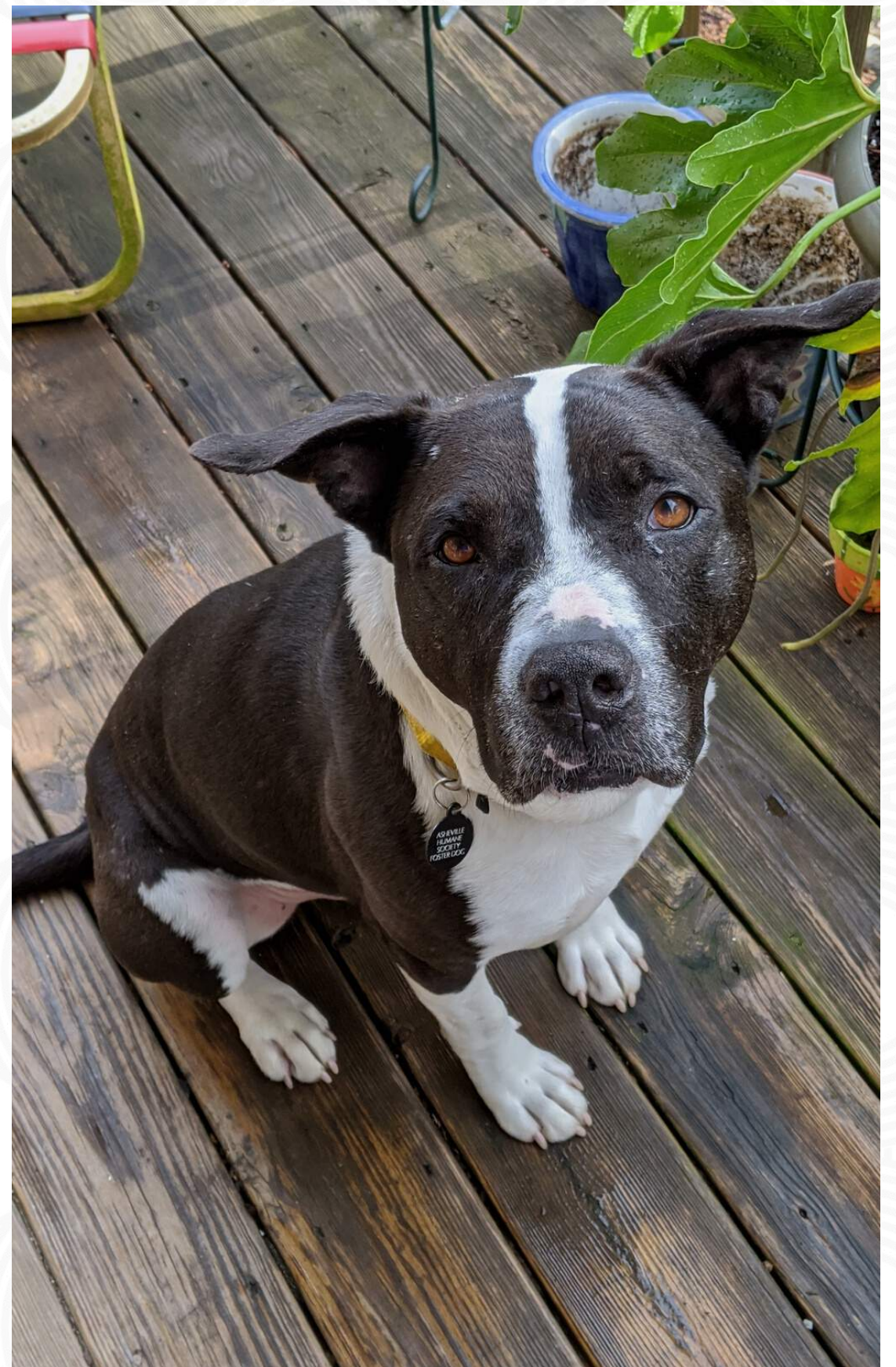


- Immediately call someone from the foster department. Please do not wait - call as soon as you realize your animal might be missing! If it is after hours, please notify the on-call personnel at 828-231-0365.
- Call the animal control agency for where you are located
  - Buncombe County - 828-250-6670
  - Asheville City Animal Services - 828-252-1110
- If your foster dog was a social, people-loving dog, go ahead and begin looking for it. Start around the house first, then expand into the surrounding area. Ask your friends & family for help to catch your foster. Taking other dogs your foster dog was familiar with out for walks could help draw them back to you.
- If your foster dog was a fearful dog, it likely will not come to you - DO NOT CHASE IT. Instead, ask for a trap to set out near your home. Placing objects familiar to the dog, such as their favorite toys and blankets, in and around the trap/your house could help.



## My Foster Bit Someone

Again, the first thing you should know is that this happens to even the most diligent, animal-savvy foster parents. Bites can happen for a wide variety of reasons, some of which are highly unpredictable. If your foster should bite you and it breaks through the skin, the first thing you need to do is seek immediate medical attention. Once you have been seen and treated by a medical professional, your next step is to call the Foster Manager and let them know in as much detail as possible what happened leading up to the bite



Once you have spoken with the Foster Manager, your next step will be to call the Animal Control Agency appropriate for your county or city of residence. **IT IS REQUIRED BY LAW TO REPORT ANY ANIMAL BITE THAT BREAKS THE SKIN.**

After you have reported the bite, the foster animal will need to go into a 10-day quarantine as required by law. This can often be done at your home if you are comfortable, but it is at the discretion of the animal control agency and county health department. **Please understand having a bite on an animals' record is not necessarily a cause for euthanasia.** AHS will take all information surrounding the bite into account and a committee will meet to determine the next steps for the animal.

*Please understand that it is imperative for the Asheville Humane Society to know if your foster bit you; lying about the severity and/or circumstances surrounding the bite may put other members of the public/animals at risk and may result in your termination as a foster parent.*





There are local & internet support resources available:

- Bright Star Studio, Hendersonville; <https://honoringourpets.com/monthly-pet-honoring-memorial-service/>
- 4 Paws Farewell Pet Loss Grief Support; <http://4pawsfarewell.com/pet-loss-support/>
- Day By Day Pet Caregiver Support; <https://daybydaypetsupport.com/>
- The Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement; [www.aplb.org](http://www.aplb.org)
- The Pet Loss Support Page; <https://www.pet-loss.net/>

## My Foster Passed Away

As hard as we try to save every life, unfortunately there are some that just don't make it. Should you discover that your foster animal has passed away, please alert the foster department ASAP, calling the on-call phone if it is after-hours.

In most cases, you are more than welcome to bury your foster animal if you would like, or you can bring their body back to the shelter. There are also a few pet cremation organizations in the area if you would like to have your foster pet cremated; our team is always happy to walk you through this process if desired. In some cases, our medical team may request the body be returned to the shelter building so a necropsy can be performed to determine cause of death, so please always check with the foster department before burying your foster animal.

Losing an animal is never an easy thing, especially when it's an animal you have been fighting so hard to save. Should you feel the need for help with your grieving process, please don't hesitate to reach out to any member of the foster department. We will always be here to help you however we can.







# What Happens Next?

We all fall in love with our foster animals, but the ultimate job of any foster parent is to get them ready for their next big adventure - adoption. **While it can be incredibly difficult to let them go, the goal is to say goodbye.** This next section will go over what to expect when your foster animal reaches this point in their journey and lets you, the foster parent, know what next steps your foster animal is taking before they go home with their new family.



If you've fallen completely smitten with your foster animal and wish to adopt them let the foster team know! We lovingly call this "foster failing" and we happily provide adoption fee discounts to foster parents.

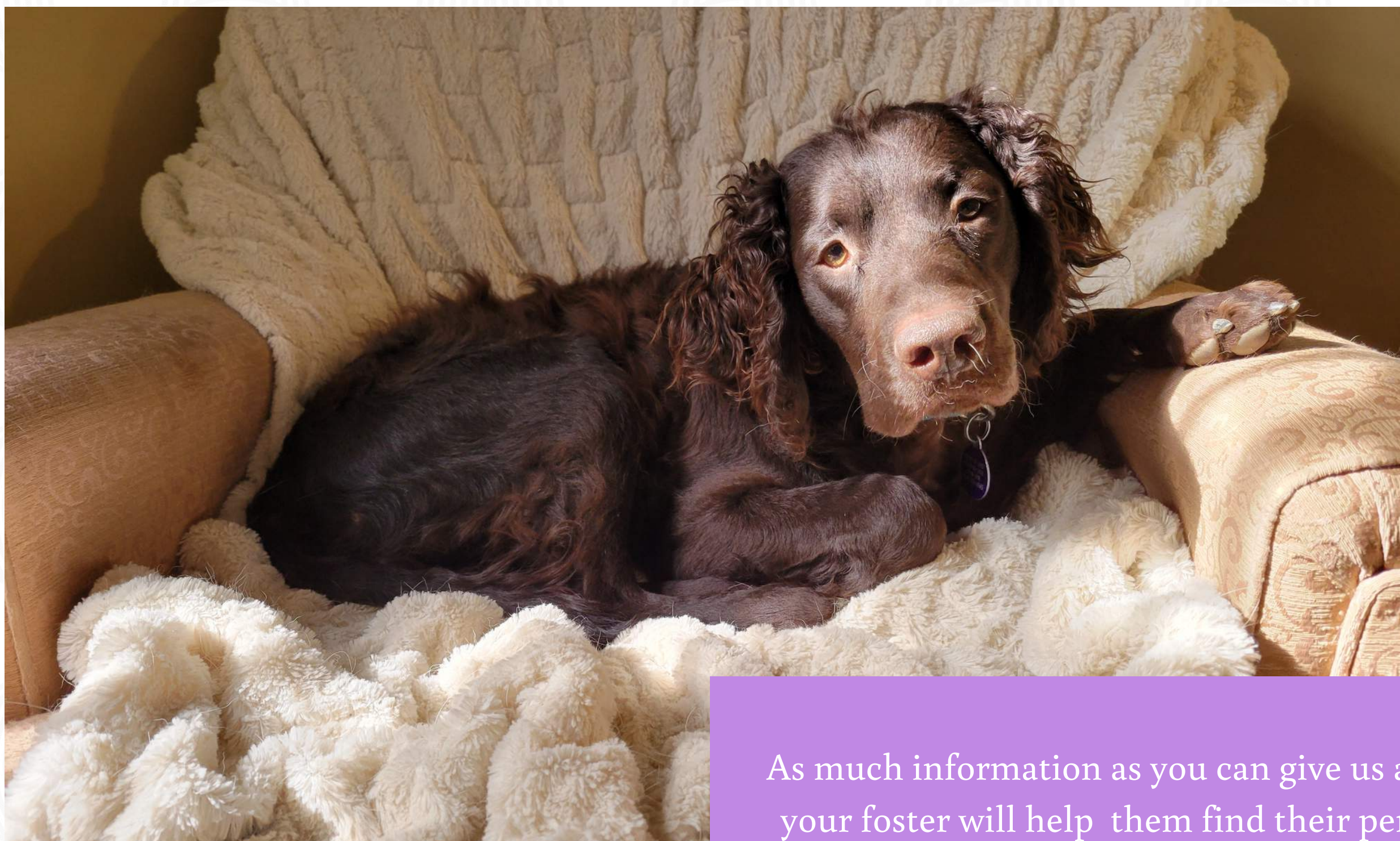




# Returning Your Foster

When your foster is ready to be returned to the animal shelter and placed for adoption, the Foster Department will work with you to schedule a return appointment. Generally, puppies generally return once they are 8 weeks old and free from any illnesses. Older puppies & adult dogs that were sent out to recuperate from colds must be cleared by our medical staff before they can be returned; this generally takes a minimum of 10 days from the start of medications. Animals that were sent out for weight loss/gain or other medical issues will be returned on a case-by-case basis.

If your foster ends up not working out in your household and you wish to return them, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the foster team. We are always more than willing to help you try to work through behavioral issues, but if you decide they are requiring more time and energy than you can provide, we will schedule a time for you to bring them back. It is at this time we request you bring back any unused food, as well as toys, harnesses, food bowls, crates, and any neonatal supplies you were given, regardless of the condition it may be in. We will sanitize everything here on campus.



As much information as you can give us about your foster will help them find their perfect forever home! You can email pictures & adoption bios to [foster@ashevillehumane.org](mailto:foster@ashevillehumane.org).





All animals **MUST** be spayed/neutered before they can be adopted. Please understand we schedule all surgeries through our veterinary partners, and cannot accomodate requests to use personal veterinarians.

## Spaying & Neutering

If your foster animal has already been spayed or neutered, they will simply move over into the Adoption Center as soon as a spot is available upon their return. If your foster animal has yet to be spayed or neutered, they will go onto the adoption floor (as space is available) to be pre-adopted until the next available surgery spot opens at the ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance (ASNA). Surgery days are typically Monday - Thursday, and the animal will spend the night at ASNA after their surgery. They'll return to AHS first thing the following morning at which point they'll be ready to head home!

Adult dogs can be spayed or neutered as soon as they are deemed healthy by our medical team, and puppies can go once they are 8 weeks old, two pounds, and medically cleared.







At the discretion of our Adoptions Manager, certain animals may qualify to become Adoption Ambassador animals. This means they stay in their foster home until they are adopted while their foster parents actively help us find their new families. If you are interested in learning more about the Adoption Ambassador program, please ask the Foster Manager for more information.

## Finding Your Foster A Home

We are always happy to hear that foster animals have homes waiting for them! Any interested adopters do need to actually meet and spend time with the animals before we will put a note on the animals' file about an interested adopter. If you are not comfortable having interested parties over to your home to meet the animal, simply let them know when the animal returns to AHS and tell them to keep a close eye on the website. We do ask that if you share your foster on social media that you only post them on your personal pages and stay away from community groups or community apps.



Please know that all adopters must be counseled by a trained adoption counselor before making an adoption official, and AHS reserves the right to refuse any adopter for any reason.







# EMERGENCIES REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

- LETHARGY
- COLD TO THE TOUCH
- DIFFICULTY BREATHING
- EXCESSIVE BLEEDING
- POSSIBLE BROKEN BONES/SUDDEN ONSET OF SWELLING
- SEVERE LACERATIONS
- SEIZURES/NEUROLOGICAL SYMPTOMS
- UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO VOMIT
- VOMITING BLOOD
- INJURIES TO EYES
- MALE CATS VOCALIZING WHILE TRYING TO URINATE/UNABLE TO URINATE

# CONCERNS THAT CAN WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT BUSINESS DAY

- DIARRHEA
- CONGESTION
- WEEPY/SWOLLEN EYES
- NASAL DISCHARGE
- BLOODY STOOL
- HAIR LOSS/SKIN LESIONS
- LIMPING
- MINOR TAIL INJURIES
- FLEAS
- INTESTINAL PARASITES
- VOMITING





## CONTACT INFORMATION & HOURS OF OPERATION

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### BUISNESS HOURS:

Monday - Saturday

828-776-1203/828-768-5451

9:00am - 6:00pm

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### CLOSED:

Sundays; Monday - Saturday 6:00pm -

828-231-0365

9:00am

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### FOSTER MEDICAL TECH:

[mfoster@ashevillehumane.org](mailto:mfoster@ashevillehumane.org)

828-776-1203

Tuesday - Saturday, 9:00am - 6:00pm

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### FOSTER PLACEMENT

### COORDINATOR:

[fosteradmin@ashevillehumane.org](mailto:fosteradmin@ashevillehumane.org)

828-768-5451

Tuesday - Saturday, 9:00am - 6:00pm

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### FOSTER MANAGER:

[foster@ashevillehumane.org](mailto:foster@ashevillehumane.org)

Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 6:00pm