



FOSTER CARE HANDBOOK

On behalf of the KATA staff and animals, we want to thank you for choosing to open your heart and home to a foster animal. We hope your experience is fun and rewarding. This handbook was written to provide you with a useful tool to get you started with your foster care experience.

Never hesitate to contact KATA staff with questions you may have. You are helping us save lives, and your contribution is invaluable to our organization.

Thank you again for your contribution to Kitty Angel Team Adoption!

Table of Contents

Frequently Asked Questions	3
Veterinarian Care Guidelines.....	5
Emergency Contacts	6
Foster Care Guidelines for Cats.....	7
Common Diseases in Cats.....	8
Household Items Poisonous to Animals.....	9
Glossary.....	10

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Lucy Lou Lou

Welcome to Kitty Angel Team Adoption's Foster Care Program!

Kitty Angel Team Adoption is a network of foster homes. KATA relies heavily on foster homes to help provide a safe place for as many cats and kittens as we can. KATA does not euthanize for space, cats and kittens are taken in on an "as space available" status and we always run over-capacity because the need is so great. Foster homes provide the love and stability, which give these animals a chance to grow, heal, and find forever homes.

Frequently Asked Questions about Our Foster Care Program



What Kind of Cats & Kittens Need Foster Homes?

- 🐾 Kittens too young to be adopted
- 🐾 An abused/abandoned cat or kitten that needs socialization
- 🐾 A cat or kitten recovering from an injury or treatment for illness
- 🐾 An abandoned pregnant cat, or a mother with a litter of kittens

What are Foster Parents Responsible for Providing?

KATA will provide all the medication and medical care. Foster parents are asked to provide space, time, and lots of love... We also hope you are able to provide food and litter for the cats and kittens as we are a very small organization with limited resources. We are happy to help out wherever we can when we get donations.

What Happens When Foster Animals Need Veterinary Care?

It is the policy of KATA that we will not reimburse Foster Care providers for vet bills unless previously arranged by our board and seen by our partner veterinarians. If your foster cat or kitten is in need of veterinary care please contact KATA's Foster Care Coordinator and they will arrange for the cat or kitten to be seen by a vet.

How do Pets in Foster Care Get Adopted?

All cats or kittens in foster care **must** be adopted through KATA. If there is interest in the cat or kitten, foster parents will be contacted to set up a time for the interested party to meet the cat or kitten. Foster parents are of course able to adopt any cat or kitten they foster.

How long do Animals Stay in Foster Homes?

The length of time a cat or kitten stays in foster care is completely dependent upon the animal. The average length of stay in foster care is two to four weeks; however it may be much longer. KATA will try to estimate the amount of time the cat or kitten will be with you, but an exact amount of time can be hard to predict depending on the situation.

Do Foster Care Animals Put my Pets at Risk?

It is always a risk to expose your animals to other animals. The majority of animals that are put into foster care are strays with little known history. We recommend keeping foster animals separate from your pets. It is your decision if you feel comfortable introducing foster animals to your pets, but KATA cannot be held liable if your pet becomes ill.

Are Foster Cats or Kittens Ever Euthanized?

The only time a cat or kitten is ever euthanized is if it has an incurable illness or injury that severely affects its quality of life.

Where Should Foster Animals Stay While at Your Home?

Indoors Only (do not let your foster cat/kitten outdoors) – kennel, separate room (bedroom, bathroom, laundry room, or closet), or warm and dry garage.

THIS IS A NON-NEGOTIABLE REQUIREMENT

What Sort of Time Commitment and Responsibilities are required of a foster parent?

Commitment and responsibilities depend on the situation and animal. Animals going into foster care have often been through a lot of stress. It is important to remember as a foster parent that moving an animal from the rescue into a foster home is very stressful and emotional for the animal, and often the foster parent too! The cat or kitten will depend on you to guide them through this emotional adjustment time! Understand that this adjustment period, depending on the cat or kitten, can range from days to weeks to months. Please be patient and don't give up on your foster animal. Contact the rescue if you need assistance. Our staff will help you through this introduction period in any way we can, as our goal is to keep these animals in a stable consistent environment. Remember, if the cat or kitten has to come back to the rescue or moved to another foster home, it will have to go through this stress all over again!

Below is a chart with estimated commitment time. This is just an estimate; numbers will vary depending on the individual animal.

FREQUENCY	TYPE OF ANIMAL	WEEKS INVOLVED	DAILY HOURS
Most Common	Weaned Kittens	1-3 weeks	2 hours per kitten
	Kittens with Mom	2-8 weeks	1-2 hours or more
	Injured Cats	1 week- 2 months	1-2 hours
Least Common	Orphaned Kittens	6-8 weeks	3+ hours per kitten
If additional health problems develop, daily hour commitments may be extended.			
Foster parents may have to transport their foster animals to the vet during regular business hours.			

Veterinary Care Guidelines

It is KATA's policy that one of our staff members will take it to see a veterinarian if deemed necessary. Foster parents are able to accompany the KATA staff member if desired, but **a staff member must accompany the cat or kitten to the vet** unless previously arranged.

Please use the below guidelines, which were written by a veterinarian, to help determine if your foster cat or kitten may need to be assessed, or feel free to call KATA at (541) 367-7575.

It is the policy of KATA that we will not reimburse foster care providers for vet bills unless previously arranged by our Board of Directors or President.

General Guidelines for Seeking Care:

Cats younger than nine months:

Diarrhea that lasts for more than a day
Vomiting and Diarrhea for more than six hours
Vomiting more than once in a hour
Not eating for more than 12 to 24 hours
Lethargy without fever for more than 12 hours
Lethargy with fever

Cats Older than nine months:

Not drinking for more than 24 hours
Diarrhea that last for more than one to two days
Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than a day
Vomiting more than two to three times in a hour
Not eating for more than two days
Lethargy without fever for more than two to three days
Lethargy with Fever



A Guide to Pet Vaccines

Vaccines are the best line of defense we have against diseases in both humans and animals. All KATA cat or kitten, whose current state of health and age allow us to, are vaccinated. Many people routinely submit their pets to be vaccinated with little understanding of how these vaccines work, and more importantly why they might not work.

What is a vaccine?

A vaccine is a suspension of attenuated (modified so as not to produce disease) or killed infective agents or antigens derived from these agents. This suspension is administered to an animal either by injection or by placing drops of the suspension in the nostrils/eyes. The ideal situation is that the animal's immune system responds in a complex way and to such an extent as to protect the animal the next time it is exposed to that particular agent. Of particular concern, especially in a rescue situation is why animals continue to get sick despite being vaccinated. This does not necessarily mean that the vaccine was defective but rather that the vaccine failed to induce an immune response. There are many reasons why this might occur.

KATA's Vaccination Policy

Kittens: Kittens receive their first vaccine while in foster care at six to eight weeks of age. They receive their second vaccine at eight to ten weeks. Ideally, at this time the kitten will weigh over two pounds, allowing it to be spayed or neutered.

Adult Cats: Adult cats receive a vaccination during their intake exam upon entering KATA, unless an owner surrendering them can provide proof the animal is current on its vaccinations or if pregnant or very ill. Three weeks later they will receive a booster vaccination.

Cats are vaccinated against Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calici Virus, Panleukopenia, Chlamydia, and Psittaci. KATA does not vaccinate the animals in our care against Rabies. It is the responsibility of the adopters to provide this vaccine to the animals, as a licensed veterinarian must administer it.

Pregnant animals cannot be vaccinated.

Foster Care Guidelines for Cats



Foster Kitty “BeBe” born with an umbilical hernia. Surgery is needed to repair this condition.

Preparing Your Home for Your Foster Cat

Bringing home cats and kittens to foster is extremely stressful for most cats. To help ease their anxiety we recommend, if possible, preparing a space just for them before they arrive. Foster cats and kittens should be kept in an area away from your pets, especially if you are fostering a sick cat. We recommend keeping your foster cats or kittens in a separate room such as a bedroom, bathroom, laundry room, or a warm and dry garage. Having their “own space” will also help to ease the anxiety of the cat.

What you will need:

- 🐾 Litter box
- 🐾 Litter: If small kittens, use non-clumping. If ingested, clumping litter can cause digestive and respiratory problems.
- 🐾 Crate: we require all cats and kittens to be transported to and from the rescue in a crate. A crate can possibly be provided when you pick up your foster animal.
- 🐾 Food: KATA recommends Kirkland or Natural Balance cat and kitten food to ensure continuity in the cat or kitten’s diet. (Our donation foods vary, so during times of low stock, we may have to change types of food)
- 🐾 Water: Hydration is very important. Make sure to have clean water available to animals at all times.
- 🐾 Heating pad or hot water bottle: Usually only used with *very small* kittens. When using a heating pad always remember to keep it on the lowest setting and to make sure animals cannot get tangled in electrical cords. Be sure it does not have auto shut off.
- 🐾 Toys: It is important that a foster animal have access to lots of toys to keep them busy. This also helps reduce the risk of destructive behavior. All toys should be disinfected before being given out, and again before being used by another animal.
- 🐾 Bed: This can be the crate or bed or blanket... your cat will let you know what it prefers.
- 🐾 Two food bowls: two food bowls are recommended. One for dry cat food and one for wet food.
- 🐾 Time, patience, and love! These foster cats need you to be there to comfort them, love them, and play with them!

Common Diseases in Cats

Ear Mites

Ear mites are a common parasite for cats. Watch for a lot of scratching of the ears, often creating a sore behind an ear. If the cat starts to scratch especially when its ear is touched, then it may have ear mites. Also watch for it to repeatedly shake its head. You cannot see ear mites without magnification, but the cat will have a dark brown, crumbly wax because of the mites. If you think your foster cat has ear mites call the rescue to see if medication is necessary.

Fleas

Fleas can quickly invade your home if not treated. All animals over six weeks old that are put into foster care are given flea treatment at the time of their intake. However, kittens cannot receive flea treatment until they are six weeks old and must be bathed regularly. Use regular blue Dawn dish soap or other very mild kitten shampoo.

Tapeworms

These internal parasites are picked up by ingesting fleas, rodents, raw meat/fish, or from adult animals that are carriers. Tapeworms are passed through the animal's feces. Often you can spot tapeworm segments in your cat's stool or under their tail (they look like small grains of rice). If you see signs of tapeworms contact us as soon as possible for additional de-worming medicine.

Roundworms, Hookworms, and Whipworms

These internal parasites cause symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, a potbelly, and a dull coat. If you see any signs your foster animal has worms contact us for additional de-worming medication.

Feline Upper Respiratory Infections (URI)

Feline upper respiratory infection (URI) is a highly contagious disease affecting the nasal passages and sinuses of cats and kittens. URI is transferred between cats by fluid discharged from the mouths and noses of infected cats. Cats spread the virus through the air by sneezing, coughing, or breathing; or by direct physical contact with cages, toys, food bowls, even the hands and clothes of people. Because of how the virus is spread, this disease is especially prevalent in rescues. Cats that are stressed by overcrowding, poor nutrition, cold/heat, or age are especially susceptible to URI. Kittens are also more susceptible to the disease because their immune systems are underdeveloped. Symptoms of feline URI include sneezing, fever, runny nose, red watery eyes, nasal congestion, or ulcers on the tongue, gums, lips, nose, or roof of mouth. Symptoms are generally mild at first and worsen within one to three days. The incubation period (the time period between infection and the first signs of illness) is from 2 to 17 days. The illness typically lasts from one to four weeks. Feline URI is easily treatable. Often cats with URI are put on antibiotics to help combat the secondary bacterial infection that often times occur. Treatment of feline URI is aimed at strengthening the cat's body and immune system to help the animal fight the virus, and usually consist of good nutrition and good nursing care. Infected cats may stop eating or drinking, and may require special help to combat dehydration and malnutrition. The disease can lead to fatal pneumonia if medical care is not provided so notify us of symptoms immediately.

Household Items that are Poisonous to Animals

This list is a short list, not all poisonous items are listed (*those printed in ALL CAPS may be fatal*)

Alcohol	CALLA LILLY	Hyacinth bulbs	OLEANDER
ALMONDS	Castor bean	HYDRANGEA	ONION
Amaryllis bulb	Cherry	Holly berries	PEACH
Anthurium	(CHINESE	Iris corms	PENCIL CACTUS
ANTIFREEZE	SACRED)	JIMSOM WEED	Poinsettia
APRICOT	CHOCOLATE	Kalanchose	Potato
ASPIRIN	CHOKO CHERRY	LANTANA	Raisins
CROCUS	Chrysanthemum	Lilly	Rhodadenderon
Avocado	Clematis	LILLY OF THE	Rhubarb leaves
Azalea	Crucus bulb	VALLEY	Rosary Pea
BEGONIA	Croton	Lupine species	Schefflera
Bird of Paradise	Daffodil	MARIJUANA	Shamrock
Bittersweet	Delphinium,	MILKWEED	Spurge
BLEEDING-	larkspur	MISTELTOE	Tomatoes
HEART	Dumb cane	BERRIES	YEW
Boxwood	Elderberry	MORNING-	WINDSHIELD -
Bracken Fern	English Ivy	GLORY	WIPER FLUID
Buckeye	Fig	MOUSE OR RAT	
Buttercup	FOX GLOVE	-POISON	
Caffeine	GARLIC	Mountain laurel	
Caladium	Grapes	Narcissus	

Glossary

We know that at KATA there are words in our everyday vocabulary that are specific to animal care, which may seem very foreign to you. We have put together a list of terms and abbreviations that will help you feel more comfortable in your volunteer position.

Bordetella: Vaccine given to dogs to help prevent kennel cough

Distemper: Distemper is a multi-systemic viral disease found throughout the world. It is highly contagious and fatal in over half the cases.

D.L.H: Domestic Long Haired Cat

D.M.H: Domestic Medium Haired Cat

D.S.H: Domestic Shorthaired cat

Feline Leukemia or FeLV: A deadly disease in cats. It causes degenerative blood disease and tumors. There is no cure for FeLV, but there is a diagnostic blood test and preventative vaccine available.

Feral: Animals that have escaped from domestication and turned wild

FIV: Feline Immunodeficiency Virus is a retrovirus in the same family as the human HIV virus, with a few significant differences. FIV is not always fatal in cats nor is it contagious to people.

FVRCP: A four in one combination vaccine for cats. The vaccine contains Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Chlamydia, and Panleukopenia.

Intake Fee: Fee charged to surrender an animal

Neuter: An operation to sterilize male animals

Hold: A slip that is attached to an animal's paperwork if someone has completed an application and scheduled an adoption interview or has already adopted the animal.

Owner Release: The owner of the animal releases it to KATA for any number of reasons.

Pet personality profile: An information form completed by the former owner when an animal is surrendered. This gives a potential adopter more information on the animal's background.

Rescue: An organization or individual with an interest in saving a particular group of animals, usually with the intention of adopting them to the public.

Spay: An operation to sterilize female animals

Stray: An animal that doesn't have an apparent owner.

Stray Time: A designated amount of time a stray animal must spend in the rescue, before it is eligible for adoption.

URI: Generalized term for any of a variety of infections in cats that affects the respiratory system and causes symptoms such as sneezing, congestion, nasal and eye discharge, as well as lethargy. These infections are very contagious to other cats.

Agreement

I have read and understand the policies and expectations for Foster Families as outlined in the Foster Care Handbook.

I acknowledge that not following these policies and expectations is grounds for me to be terminated from Kitty Angel Team Adoption's Foster Care Program.

Foster Care Provider

Date

Foster Care Provider

Date

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