

# STOCKTON ANIMAL SHELTER



## FOSTER PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR KITTENS

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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KITTEN FOSTERS

CITY OF STOCKTON  
ANIMAL SHELTER  
1575 S. Lincoln Street  
Stockton, CA 95206  
(209) 937-8374

EMERGENCY  
VETERINARY CLINICS

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## **LAURA ZAPIEN**

Foster/Volunteer Animal Care Assistant

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*In the case of an afterhours emergency, please contact one of the afterhours emergency veterinary clinics listed. They will determine whether your foster needs immediate attention. Please have the animal identification card (kennel card) and your government issued ID at time of service or you will be charged for services.*

## **FOSTER VOLUNTEER MISSION**

*Foster volunteers provide temporary shelter for the City of Stockton's homeless animals with various needs until a permanent placement is found.*

## TYPES OF FOSTER ANIMALS...

- Puppies/Kittens under 2 months.
- Nursing mothers and their litter.
- Medical Cases.
- Animals needing socialization.
- Animals needing to mentally decompress from the shelter environment.

## REQUIREMENTS...

- **ALL** foster animals must be approved by the foster program before going into a foster home.
- Provide a safe and healthy environment for foster animals.
- Family commitment with everyone's support.
- Children and visitors understand that **ALL** animals require special care and gentle handling.
- Not allergic to animals.
- Knowledge of your fear of specific breeds.
- Have a space to keep separate from resident animals.
- A space that can be easily sanitized when fostering puppies and kittens.
- Fences must be at least 6ft. and in good condition to prevent foster dog(s) from escaping from yard.
- Foster dogs must be on leashes at all time when in public.
- The ability to bring foster animal to the shelter for vaccine and/or medical appointments.
- To administer required medications to foster animal(s) if needed.

## QUALIFICATIONS...

- **Must** be 18 years of age.
- Resident animals **MUST** be current on vaccines.
- **ALL** foster volunteers must be willing to learn and abide by the standards of care set forth by the City of Stockton Animal Shelter.

## FOSTER VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTION...

- Provide a temporary, loving home to foster animal(s).
- To feed, socialize, medicate, and groom.
- To provide a clean-living environment and basic training techniques to foster animal(s).
- To report any changes in health or behavior to the Volunteer/Foster Coordinator and/or the Foster Animal Care Assistant.
- Transport foster animal(s) to and from their appointments.
- Provide 48-hour notice before returning foster animal(s) to the shelter to ensure arrangements can be made for the animal(s).

## GUIDELINES...

*The foster program is for animals that are not adoptable due to age, medical condition(s), and/or specific behavior issues. Not adhering to the guidelines of the foster program may lead to termination. The following guidelines have been established for the health and safety of the City of Stockton Animals.*

- All underage animals are required to be brought in for vaccine appointments every 2 weeks.
- Only give medications provided by the veterinarians at the Stockton Animal Shelter.
- Stay consistent with food you provide your foster to prevent diarrhea.
- All foster animal(s) should be kept separate from resident pets for the first two weeks, unless otherwise authorized by the foster program. However, kittens and puppies are **ALWAYS** required to remain separate from resident animals and other foster litters. This guideline is set forth to prevent the spread of illness and/or disease to resident animals and vice versa.
- Kittens and puppies should be confined to a small space that can easily be disinfected. They are **NEVER** to be kept outdoors.
- All animals placed in foster are the property of the City of Stockton Animal Shelter and are not to be given away or dumped. If you are unable to care for the foster animal(s) that are in your care, please contact the foster program for new placement. Please provide the foster program with 48-hour notice.
- To notify the foster program if your foster animal has not eaten for more than 24 hours, unable to use the litter box, experiencing diarrhea, lethargic, or any other medical concerns that arise.
- To clean and disinfect all supplies used by the foster animal(s) and their designated areas before introducing another litter to this area.
- To return foster animal(s) on the scheduled date and/or on demand, as the foster animal(s) are only temporarily in your care and belong to the City of Stockton Animal Shelter. Foster animal(s) that are going to rescue will be asked for on demand. The foster program will provide 24-hour notice.

## HOME INTRODUCTIONS FOR KITTENS...

- Place carrier in a secluded and quiet space.
- Open carrier door and allow foster animal to come out on their own.
  - Please **DO NOT** force foster animal(s) to come out—they will come out when they feel safe.
- Place litter box in a space that is easy to find.
- Once your foster animal(s) have stepped outside of their carrier, allow them to smell their surroundings.
- Introduce yourself by sitting in the room with them. They will come to you when they are comfortable.

## DAILY CARE FOR KITTENS...

### FEEDING...

- Once kittens are eating on their own, they should be fed 1/3 can twice a day and dry food left out for them all day. Make sure to use the same brand food to avoid diarrhea.
- Clean the kitten's wet food dishes between feedings.
- Have fresh water available. If kittens are eating wet food, they will consume less water.
- Monitor your foster kitten(s) appetite. If your foster kitten(s) refuse to eat the food you were given, contact the Volunteer/Foster Coordinator and/or the Foster Animal Care Assistant and they will help you determine whether this is a medical problem or a preference issue. Do not attempt to make this decision on your own.

### CLEANING SCHEDULE...

- Only use the non-clumping litter provided to you by the Stockton Animal Shelter (SAS).
- Scoop out litterbox at least 2 times a day.
- Monitor for diarrhea.

### PLAYTIME & MENTAL STIMULATION...

- Kitten(s) should receive 1-2 play sessions a day.
- Solo toys can be left alone with kitten(s) when you are away.
- Interactive toys should only be given when you are observing your foster kitten(s).
- Remember to discourage your foster kitten(s) from playing with hands.
- Change the environment around them in small ways, such as add a cardboard box and move things around in the kitten area.

### SOCIALIZATION...

- Kittens should receive a minimum of two 30-minute visits daily.
- Under socialized kittens should receive a minimum of three 20-minute visits a day. Shorter, but more frequent visits help to socialize the kitten without overwhelming them.
- Encourage affectionate behavior, such as cuddling and nuzzling. At different times practice gently scruffing kittens, touching their paws, mouth, and ears.
- Getting kittens used to gentle human contact is an important part of socialization.

### HANDLING & GROOMING...

- Pick up each kitten and take note of any changes that can become a problem later. Look at their eyes, mouth, and ears.
- Check your foster kitten's energy levels.
- Medium or long-haired kittens especially may benefit from daily exposure to brushing in very small amounts.
- Gently handle paws in preparation for nail trimming.
- Pick kittens up and hold them to encourage socialization and comfort handling.

### CRITERIA FOR EMERGENCY SUPPORT...

- Listlessness, lethargy, or decreased energy.
- Decreased appetite.
- Sudden limping.
- Vomiting more than 3 times in a 24-hour time span.
- Urinating frequently or straining to urinate.
- Appearing to be constipated.
- Blood in urine.
- Diarrhea without blood lasting two or more feedings.
- Diarrhea with blood.
- Post-operative complications with the surgery site, such as discharge and swelling.
- Sneezing, coughing, runny nose, and/or goopy eyes.

## **VETERINARY SERVICE HOURS...**

### **SHELTER VETERINARY HOURS...**

Monday-Friday 8AM – 5PM

### **AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY HOURS...**

Monday-Friday 5PM – 8AM

Saturday & Sunday

## **AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY PROTOCOL...**

For any medical concerns during regular business hours, please contact the foster program via text or call at (209) 420-0242.

In the case of an afterhours emergency, please contact one of the after-hours emergency veterinary clinics listed below. They will determine whether your foster animal needs to be seen immediately and will direct you on where to take your foster animal. Please have the animal identification card with you and government issued identification card at the time of service or you will be personally charged for services.

**All Creature Veterinary Clinic (209) 472-7387**

**Family Pet Hospital (415) 470-2424**

## **ZOONOTIC DISEASES...**

Zoonotic diseases are transmissible between animals and humans. For example, ringworm is transmissible from infected animals to humans via contact. Good personal hygiene and animal husbandry reduce the risk of contracting diseases when working with animals.

It is essential to always wash your hands after handling animals, cleaning their areas, and before eating. While the Stockton Animal Shelter makes every effort to avoid the spread of all diseases, we need the diligence and compliance of our foster volunteers to catch these diseases and address them appropriately before it spreads.

Shelter animals in a kennel environment are especially susceptible to disease. It is important to make every effort to keep your foster animal healthy. Set aside time each week to thoroughly clean and disinfect your foster animal(s) designated area, the crate and bedding, and food/water bowls.

## DISINFECTING GUIDELINES...

The following disinfecting guidelines will prevent the spread of disease and/or illness. Disinfecting the area before and after new foster animal(s) is essential to reducing the risk of contamination.

- Remove all solid waste and items such as bowls, blankets, litter boxes, and toys from the area. Discard of any items that cannot be washed and disinfected.
- Clean the area using warm water and soap. Do not use bleach until the area has been thoroughly cleaned with soap and water as the bleach is ineffective when used on dirty surfaces.
- Dilute (1) part bleach to (32) parts cold water, or (1) ounce per quart. Bleach should always be mixed with cold water to reduce harmful vapors.
- Wash all bedding using laundry detergent and bleach.
- Wash food/water bowls with soap and water, following the initial washing, disinfect with your 1:32 bleach solution. Leave bleach solution on items for 2-3 minutes so it can fully disinfect the item. Be sure to rinse thoroughly to remove bleach residue.

**IMPORTANT:** Bleach can be harmful to surfaces, such as wood, metal, fabric, and carpet. Prior to use please test in a discreet location.

These precautions are necessary to prevent disease and illness.