Dear Foster Family,

Thank you for opening your heart and home to dogs and cats in need. This life-saving adventure you are about to embark on will continue to help us save hundreds of lives each year. This could not be done without YOU!

This Foster Care Guide is a reference for you during your foster journey.

Inside you will find important information on not only caring for foster dogs and puppies, but tips on crate training, house training, health and wellness, and so much more! Any special individualized care that needs to be given to a foster pet will be explained to you at the time you pick them up from the shelter.

This guide provides you with contact information for the Jackson County Animal Shelter Foster Program and who to contact in the event you have a foster animal emergency.

You will find helpful tips to guide you along your foster journeys. There may be times when you will be asked and instructed to reference a certain page when you have a question. This will help you to learn more about caring for foster pets and ensure you are able to find any information you need to know.

We are always here to support our foster caregivers in any way that we can. We cannot thank you enough for dedicating your time, love, home, and heart to homeless animals in need.

Sincerely,

Team JCAS
Foster caregivers must notify the Program and Volunteer Manager of changes in address, telephone number, email addresses, and/or changes in foster interest or availability.

Foster caregivers must not share foster emails with friends, family, coworkers, etc. The majority of animals seeking foster care are not available for adoption and their information should not be shared or forwarded to outside parties. Information on foster animals should remain confidential.

Images of your foster animal may be shared on your personal social media with permission from JCAS. Some foster animals may be involved with court cases and their images may not be allowed.

Any confidential information pertaining to animals or shelter business that a foster caregiver becomes privy to in the course of being a foster caregiver should not be discussed to outside parties.

If you do not actively foster for a six-month period, you will be asked to reapply. The only exception is if you communicate with the Program and Volunteer Manager in writing that you will be absent from the program for a period of time.

If you are unable to continue fostering your foster pet(s) please notify the Program and Volunteer Manager as soon as possible for a scheduled time to bring your foster pet(s) back to JCAS.

If you are bitten or aggressively scratched while fostering, you must report the injury to the Program & Volunteer Manager. You will be asked to bring the animals back to the shelter and will need to fill out a bite or incident report and will be advised to seek medical attention.

Foster caregivers must arrive on time for their scheduled appointments. Repeat tardiness, failure to schedule drop-off and wellness appointments, and/or absence from scheduled appointments without notifying the Program and Volunteer Manager ahead of time may result in dismissal from the foster program.

Foster dogs and puppies are not permitted to visit dog parks or off-leash parks.

Your foster dog/puppy must remain on leash at all times, unless they are in a secured fenced in yard at your private home.

Foster cats and kittens are not permitted to be taken outside for any reason. The only exception is when they are being transported in their secure carrier to and from JCAS.

Our foster program is solely for animals who are in the care and ownership of JCAS. We do not use our foster homes for animals you or someone you know finds or takes into their home.
After receiving and responding to an email, phone call, or text message about dogs or puppies in need of foster care, a pickup time will be scheduled for you to come to JCAS. Keep in mind we aim to place animals in foster care as soon as possible and foster placement will be scheduled with the first available foster volunteer.

It is preferred that foster pickups and returns happen during the Jackson County Animal Shelter’s normal working days and hours. However, other arrangements can be made if we have appropriate staffing. Pickup and return hours are between 8am–4pm Monday–Friday.

You will be sent home with any start-up supplies you may need, along with information about your foster animal(s). If it is your first time picking up a foster, you will sit down with the Program and Volunteer Manager and together go through each section of this foster care guide so that any and all questions you may have can be answered for you.

When it comes time to bring your foster back to JCAS make sure you prepare yourself and your family for the day your foster will be ready to stay at the shelter. Always come to your wellness appointments prepared that your foster may be ready to stay at the shelter if we have not already determined an exact return date. More on wellness appointments will come later in this guide.

Stay in contact with the Program and Volunteer Manager, never hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns.
Before you bring your foster pet home, make sure you have a suitable place for them to stay. Puppies need to be around people for socialization. The use of a crate is recommended for both puppies and adult dogs overnight, when you leave your home, and when you are unable to supervise them. Bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms can and do work well to house puppies in. Or any room in your home with a floor that is not carpeted. You can use baby gates to set up barriers to keep your foster puppies and dogs in their designated area.

We feed adult dogs Hill’s Science Diet. Canned food is sometimes mixed in and given to dogs and puppies who are picky eaters. You will be given the amount of food to feed your foster dog or puppies when you pick them up from the shelter. They must remain on the same brand of food while in foster care to avoid digestive upset. The only time you should feed a different brand of food is when your foster animal requires a specific diet for medical conditions. Each time you pick up a foster animal, all dietary needs will be explained to you if they apply. You will also be given the amount of food to feed your foster dog or puppies at each meal.

Make sure the area where you are housing foster dogs and puppies has secure windows, outlets that can be blocked, and any items that are breakable or could be easily chewed are put away. We will supply you with basic start-up supplies to care for your foster dog or puppies. Below are general supplies we will provide to you for fostering dogs and puppies:

- Wire crate
- Baby gates (if needed)
- Food and water bowls
- Toys
- Treats
- Bedding
- Leash and collar

Avoid using plastic bowls for water and food as they are incredibly difficult to disinfect between fosters. Stainless steel, ceramic, and glass bowls are recommended as they are sturdier and can be easily disinfected between foster animals.
Keep in mind that your foster dog or puppy will need time to adjust to your home. Please refrain from having house guests over to visit your foster animals until they have settled in. We recommend keeping a leash attached to adult dog fosters for the first few days, especially shy and/or fearful dogs for an easy way to guide them away from areas they should not go. This also allows you to quickly interrupt if your foster attempts to eliminate indoors. You should always assume your foster pet is not housebroken.

Foster dogs and puppies must always remain on leash when outdoors, unless you have a secured fenced in yard. The recommended fence height to take your foster dog or puppy off leash in your yard is 6 feet. Even in a fenced in yard, you should always supervise your foster dog or puppy when they are outdoors. Foster dogs are not permitted to go to off-leash parks or dog parks. Even though dogs are social animals, every dog is an individual and going to a dog park may not be a healthy or positive experience for your foster dog.

Dogs are individuals and they each have different personalities and behavior quirks. You should not expect your foster dog or puppy to have the same personality or behavior quirks as your resident dogs or dogs you have owned or fostered in the past.

Anytime fosters enter your home, they must be housed separately for a minimum of 14 DAYS. This is because most illnesses have a 14-day incubation period. Keep in mind, some illnesses, like ringworm, take longer to exhibit symptoms.

Housing separately minimizes stress on foster and resident pets and helps prevent the spread of illness. We cannot stress the importance of housing foster animals separately from resident animals enough. Introductions can quickly become disastrous resulting in injury to you and the animals.

**It is in foster care best practice to keep foster animals and resident animals housed separately throughout the entire duration of foster care.**

Fostering is temporary and most commitments are between 1–3 weeks in length. There is no need to rush introductions when they are not a necessary part of fostering.
The majority of puppies that we see enter the shelter are between 8–13 weeks old. These puppies are fully weaned and our focus for placing them in foster care is to let them build up immunity to their vaccines, make sure they do not break with any illness, and prevent the puppies from staying in the shelter while they await their scheduled spay or neuter surgery appointment.

**Feeding**

Puppies should eat 2–3 times a day. We feed Hill's Science Diet to our puppies. You are expected to keep them on this diet as switching foods can cause digestive upset and we will not continue to feed the puppies anything except Hill's Science Diet when they return back to the shelter.

You will be given instructions on how much to feed your foster puppies when you pick them up. Most puppies eat about 1 cup in the morning and ½ cup in the evening. It is best to stick to a feeding schedule by giving the puppies their meals at the same time each day as this will help with the house training process and being able to estimate when they will need to go outside for a relief break.

Fresh water must be provided at all times.
## PUPPY FEEDING AND EXPECTATIONS BY AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>FEEDING</th>
<th>DEVELOPMENT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Bottle feed 1/2 tablespoon of formula every 2-3 hours, overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. If there is a Mom dog, make sure that all puppies are nursing. Puppies can nurse from Mom for up to 45 minutes at a time. A lot of crying or activity could indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply.</td>
<td>At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep about 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Puppies should be kept in a warm environment as chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until puppies bellies are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours.</td>
<td>Healthy puppies should be round and worm. When you pick up a puppy they should wiggle energetically and healthy puppies seldomly cry. They puppy's ear canal should open between 5-8 days. Eyes will open between 8 and 14 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>Bottle feed formula every 3-4 hours until puppies' bellies are full but not bloated.</td>
<td>Puppies begin to crawl around and should be almost standing. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails, and paws before their teeth come in. They should be teething at this period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Bottle feed formula ever 4 hours until the puppies are full but not bloated. Puppies may start to lap from a bowl.</td>
<td>Puppies begin to see well and their eyes begin to look and function like adult dog eyes. Puppies will start cleaning themselves. If they have a mother, she will continue to do most of the serious cleaning. At three weeks, puppies are in their canine socialization period. If they have siblings, allow them to play at will.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>Bottle feed as needed to keep puppies from crying with hunger. Puppies usually can drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks. Weaning should be done gradually.</td>
<td>Begin housebreaking at four weeks of age. This can be done by using training pad or taking the puppy to an outside secure fenced in area of your home. After each feeding, place the puppy on the pad/outside for him or her to go to the bathroom. Be patient! He or she may not remember to do this every time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Feed gruel 4 times a day. Thicken the gruel gradually by reducing the amount of water mixed with it. Introduce dry food and water. If you are fostering a litter with their mother, continue weaning. For reluctant eaters, try mixing puppy formula into the gruel.</td>
<td>At about 5 weeks, puppies can start to roam around the room, under supervision. The strongest, most curious puppy will figure out how to get out of the nest and the others will quickly follow. Be sure to allow the puppies to have different types of toys around so they may explore and become familiar with a variety of surfaces and textures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>By this age, puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed the puppies at least three meals a day. Puppies may not eat much at a single sitting, they usually like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.</td>
<td>By this time, you will have “mini-dogs”. They are able to wash themselves and play games with each other and you. Some puppies may be food possessive, you may need to use a second dish and leave plenty of food out. Do not use adverse or punishing correction techniques. Be sure to take the puppies to their pads or outside after feeding, during play sessions, and after naps. These are the usual times that puppies need to eliminate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Offer dry food 3-4 times a day. Leave a bowl of water down for them to drink at will. Do not feed the puppies table scraps.</td>
<td>Continue playing and socializing with the puppies. You can even begin training such as sit, down, roll over, and come when called.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8+</td>
<td>Offer dry food 3 times a day. Leave down a bowl of water for them to drink at will.</td>
<td>By this time, the puppies should be ready for spay/neuter surgery and adoption.</td>
</tr>
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**Housing**

Bathrooms, kitchens, or spare rooms work well for housing puppies. Rooms without carpet are preferred as puppies are not housebroken. Puppies should be crated at night, when no one is home, and at times when you are unable to supervise them. Puppies should not be crated for excessive amounts of time as they require social interaction. Crating is not an acceptable form of long-term housing. Baby gates work well to keep your foster puppies contained to one area.

You are expected to keep your foster puppies housed separate from any resident animals for at least 7-10 days. Even after that time, we cannot guarantee the health of any animal in our care. You do risk the health of your resident pets by letting foster animals co-mingle with them. We also can never guarantee that introductions will be a safe or positive experience. If introductions are not performed appropriately between resident and foster animals, things can quickly escalate resulting in a negative experience for your foster dog and resident dog. Remember that puppies are learning and if they form one negative experience, it can make a lasting impression on them for any future interactions they will have with other dogs.

**House Training**

It is unlikely that your foster puppy is housebroken. You can set your foster puppy up for success by keeping a consistent and realistic schedule when it comes to the housetraining process. Puppies will need frequent breaks outdoors to eliminate. Start by taking them outside every hour when they are awake and active and each time they awake from a nap. Puppies and adult dogs should be taken outside to eliminate before eating, 30-60 minutes after eating, and right before bed. Puppies should never be expected to hold their bladders for an entire day or overnight.

**House Training Success Tips**

- Reward your foster dog/puppy every time they eliminate outside. Use verbal praise, treats, or petting to reward your foster dog/puppy for eliminating outside.
- Never punish your foster dog/puppy for having an accident inside. If you catch your dog/puppy in the process of eliminating, clap your hands and interrupt the behavior. Take your foster dog/puppy immediately outside.
- If you find an accident in your home, do not go back and punish your foster dog/puppy. They will not be able to connect why you are upset with them. Simply clean the accident with an enzymatic cleaner like Natures Miracle® and monitor your foster dog/puppy more closely.
- Pee pads are popular, but we do not recommend them as they do not help the puppy or dog learn to eliminate outside. They can reinforce the puppy or dogs desire to eliminate inside and causes confusion for them on where they should be eliminating. The use of puppy pads can make the house training process more difficult.
- Remember: puppies are only able to hold their bladder for however old they are (up to a certain point). For example: a two-month old puppy should not be expected to hold their bladder for more than two hours, etc.
Socialization
One of the most important things you can do for your foster puppy is to socialize them. Socializing your foster puppy is not just about exposing them to different people, places, and things. You must make sure that all of these experiences are positive and fun for your foster puppy. If you have a shy or fearful foster puppy, you must take things slow. Treats can help aid in making positive associations with new stimulus. It is extremely important that you take a proactive approach to socializing foster puppies. Just remember to keep everything fun and positive. Pay attention to the puppy’s body language to ensure they are enjoying the new experiences. If you continue to approach new stimulus too quickly with puppies who are fearful or displaying signs of being uncomfortable you could create a puppy that grows into a fearful adult dog.

Why Puppies Are Fostered Together
Puppies with litter mates will never be fostered alone. The only time you will be able to foster a single puppy is if they arrive to us by themselves. Puppies who are taken away from their litter mates and not given the chance to learn appropriate bite inhibition will grow into adult dogs who have no bite inhibition. This means the puppy will grow into an adult dog who bites down very hard and can unintentionally cause a bite wound to happen to another person or animal.

Puppies will teach each other how to bite and tell each other when they are biting down to rough. They will give a loud yelp to tell the other puppy to back off. Puppies with moms often learn very quickly when their bite becomes too hard as mom takes the role of teaching her puppies to stop when their mouthing becomes too much. It is important to allow your foster puppy to mouth appropriate items. You will want to teach your puppy that mouthing hands and skin is inappropriate.

As a foster parent, you can help your puppy learn appropriate bite cues. If your foster puppy starts to mouth your hands, say “ouch” in a higher pitched tone. If the puppy stops mouthing you, praise them. If the puppy continues to mouth you, stop all interaction and walk away from the puppy. After 10-15 seconds, resume interaction. Repeat as necessary until the puppy learns that mouthing hands results in being ignored.

Never yell at, smack on the nose, or scold puppies for mouthing. You need to teach them what is and is not appropriate. Yelling, scolding, and smacking them on the nose can create fear. You do not want your puppy to grow into an adult dog who does not know the power of their jaw strength. Simply go “ouch” in a high pitch when your puppy mouths too hard.

Chewing and mouthing are normal behaviors for puppies. This is one way they explore new objects and also relieve their gums as their adult teeth come in. Provide foster puppies with different varieties of toys to help expose them to new surfaces and prevent them from becoming bored and wanting to chew and mouth on inappropriate items, including hands.
LEARN TO INTERPRET BODY LANGUAGE

TALKING DOG

Dogs communicate using body language more than they do vocally. Here’s a quick guide to get a good idea of what your dog is telling you. Look at the whole of the dog: head, face, body and tail to get a more accurate idea of what the dog is saying.

FEARFUL / ANXIOUS / STRESSED

In all cases, respect the dogs need for space and offer signs of appeasement and peace: See the Doggy Dos and Don’ts poster

If not read correctly, stress, anxiety and fear often lead to behaviour commonly termed “aggressive”, as the dog attempts to make it clearer that they are uncomfortable; raised hackles are a sign of fear.

CONTENT / HAPPY / SOCIAL

These dogs pose no immediate threat.

TAIL POSITIONS

- Tilted
- In line with spine
- High and rigid
- Low and wagging slowly

TAIL POSITIONS

- Relaxed
- High and wagging quickly
- Cossed at 45 degrees

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For further resources and information on dog training and behaviour, see www.JezRose.co.uk

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This section will outline caring for nursing mom dogs with puppies. Mom dogs with puppies do a very good job in taking care of their puppies. For the most part, you will allow mom to “do all the work” while you monitor for signs of trouble. Mom dogs with puppies must be kept in quiet space away from resident pets where mom can focus on taking care of her puppies in a calm and quiet setting. You will need to make sure the mom receives regular bathroom breaks outside and is provided with regular meals and fresh water. It is normal for a nursing mom dog to appear thin. Her body is working hard taking care of her puppies and she will start to gain weight as the puppies become older and begin the weaning process. Mom dogs can be fed puppy food to help them gain weight.

**Bringing Them Home**

Once home, mom will need some time to adjust to her new surroundings. A nesting area should be set up in the room they will be staying in. Mom will use this area to nurse her puppies. If you are fostering a mom with newborn puppies, keep handling of the puppies to a minimum for the first two weeks of life. However, you will need to check on the puppies a few times a day to make sure they are all nursing. Keep in mind that if mom feels stressed from constant handling of her puppies, she could stop nursing them.

Nursing moms eat about 4 times as much as other dogs. You may allow mom to "free fed," which means dry food is left out at all times for her, allowing her to eat as much as she pleases. You can adjust such an arrangement while the puppies are weaning to ensure mom doesn’t overfeed and does not feel deprived when she goes back to a regular feeding schedule. At all times, mom and pups should have access to water.
Caring for Nursing Puppies
Young puppies will rely on their mom for constant warmth and nutrition. Remember young puppies are not able to regulate their body temperature. Mom will essentially do all the work associated with feeding, grooming, and caring for her puppies.

Make sure all the puppies are nursing. This can be done safely without causing too much stress to the mom dog by wearing gloves and gently picking up each puppy to feel for round bellies full of milk. Do this twice a day to ensure all the puppies are nursing. If you feel a flat or concave belly that means the puppy is not nursing and you may need to bottle feed that puppy. You will need to call the Program and Volunteer Manager if this happens for instructions on what to do next. This could mean coming into the shelter for a one on one bottle feeding class.

Mom will groom and clean up after her puppies. She will also play a vital role in teaching the puppies proper social cues and behavior. Once the puppies reach about 4-5 weeks old, it will be time to begin the weaning process. Start by offering the puppies a mixture of canned food and warm water in a shallow bowl. By observing their mom eat her food, the puppies should learn to eat on their own quickly. However, it will be normal for them to continue to nurse (or try to nurse) from their mom up until the time they are separated from her.
Possible Issues With Mom Dogs

Maternal Neglect: Some dogs lack maternal instincts or sometimes nature tells mom to stop caring for her puppies because they are sick or weak. Environmental stress plays a huge role in maternal neglect. Therefore, it is very important to keep mom and her puppies in a private room away from loud noises and other pets. If you notice mom avoiding her puppies by ignoring their cries and if she stops feeding and grooming them, call the Program and Volunteer Manager.

Maternal Aggression: As mom protects her puppies, it can be normal for her to show signs of aggression towards humans or other animals. If you notice severe aggression towards yourself as the foster caregiver or you notice mom behaving aggressively towards her puppies, please call the Program and Volunteer Manager.

Mastitis: Mastitis refers to a bacterial infection in the milk ducts of female dogs. Mama dogs have a lot to contend with, including carrying their puppies to term and nursing them, once born. During this time, their breast glands are stimulated to produce milk. The combination of the stress of pregnancy, nursing, and sharp puppy teeth create a potential playground for bacteria. In most situations, the nursing mom’s immune system can fight off the bacteria, but if mama dog lacks proper nutrition, is overly stressed, or is contending with other factors, her immune system can’t successfully clear the bacteria and an infection develops. Although it is usually limited to one or two teats, mastitis is extremely painful and, if left untreated, the bacteria can spread and the mama dog can become seriously ill. Mastitis causes the mammary gland to become blocked, thus milk cannot be released. The teat swells and becomes red and painful to the touch. Sometimes it may feel hard or pus or discolored milk may be released. It becomes increasingly difficult for mama dog to nurse her puppies because of the pain, so the whole litter suffers.

Please keep an eye on the nursing mama dog’s teats. If you see any signs of mastitis, please contact the Foster Team immediately. If caught early, treatment is usually effective and involves antibiotics and daily warm compresses.
Basic Care
In the first few weeks of life, puppies are helpless and vulnerable. They are still developing basic reflexes, their hearing and vision are still not fully developed, and they are unable to properly control their body temperatures. They should therefore be confined to a cozy, confined, temperature controlled area free from drafts. Puppies should not be allowed to mingle with your own pets.

During the first 1-3 weeks of life puppies do not urinate or defecate on their own and require stimulation for elimination. Before and after each feeding, gently rub the puppy on its lower abdomen, as well as the genitals and rectum with a soft tissue or cotton ball/pad dipped in warm water. Make sure to rub only enough to get the puppy to eliminate because over-stimulation will irritate the area. Keep an eye out for chafing and lingering dirt and do not let the puppy get chilled. Puppies should (and almost always will) urinate during each stimulation. They should defecate at least once daily. Keeping the puppies clean from food and feces is vital for his or her health. If you notice your puppy has food, urine or feces on him or her gently wipe the puppy down with a warm damp cloth or baby wipe. Be sure to dry the puppy well and place near a heat source like a snuggle safe afterwards so that they do not become chilled.

Feeding
Never give a neonate puppy anything other than their specified formula! (No cow’s milk!)

Puppies who are less than three weeks’ old are fed Esbilac Puppy Milk Replacer. Frozen formula will last for 6 months. The powder formula must be mixed fresh for feedings and may be kept in the fridge and reused for up to 24 hours. After that point, it must be discarded.

It is important to closely follow mixing directions, one-part powder into two parts warm water, as it can cause diarrhea or constipation if not done correctly. Test the temperature of the formula before feeding, it should be warm (around 100° F or 38° C), but not hot and free of clumps. Warm the bottle by placing it in hot water for a few minutes or by putting it in the microwave until it reaches the correct temperature. If you use the microwave be sure to mix the formula well before testing because hot spots may develop in the heating process. When mixing do not use a blender.
Feeding Etiquette

- Only use clean nipples and bottles!
- Feed puppies one at a time. Place them on your lap and with a level head. This simulates how they would nurse from a mom.
- NEVER feed a puppy while she is on her back. This can cause formula to go down the wrong way and end up in the lungs (aspiration).
- Gently open the puppy’s mouth with your finger and place the nipple on the tongue.
- Stroking the puppy can help them to eat.
- Pull lightly on the bottle. This promotes strong sucking.
- Tilt the bottle up slightly. This prevents the puppy from inhaling too much air.
- Do not squeeze the bottle to force formula into the puppy’s mouth. This can cause formula to move into the lungs.
- After feeding, burp your puppy by gently massaging their back and give each puppy a full-body once over with a barely damp, warm washcloth. Use short strokes like its mom would use. This activity keeps the puppy’s fur clean and gives it needed socialization. Make sure the puppy is completely dry before placing it back in its housing area.
- After feeding stimulate the puppies to urinate and/or defecate. Stimulate them using a damp tissue or a warm cloth if necessary.
- Fill out a Daily Weight and Feeding Record.

For additional info, please visit https://www.maddiesfund.org/how-to-bottle-feed-kittens-and-puppies.htm

If you have continuous trouble getting your foster puppy to latch, please contact the Foster Team for advice.

Suckling

Puppies naturally suckle on each other and on fingers, even after eating. Puppies suckling on each other excessively may be a sign that the frequency of feedings need increased. If litter-mate suckling becomes problematic, especially around the genital area, separate the puppies. Check each puppy’s genitals to ensure sucking activity is not causing problems (redness, irritation, penis hanging out, etc.). Suckling on genitals can lead to serious issues, so it’s very important to monitor and separate problem sucklers. If you notice this behavior, please contact the Foster Team for advice.
Weaning
Weaning can occur at 4 weeks and should be conducted gradually. Continue bottle feeding through the weaning process to ensure puppies get adequate nutrition and are not overly stressed. The first step of the weaning process is to get the puppy to lap up formula from your finger and then a spoon. Once it masters this skill, put formula in a flat dish. Introduce the puppy to solid food by mixing warm canned puppy food and prepared puppy formula into a thin gruel. Gradually reduce the amount of formula mixed with canned food until the puppy is eating just the food.

If a puppy does not seem interested in the gruel, try gently opening the puppy’s mouth and rubbing a little of the food on its tongue or teeth. Be patient, the weaning process takes time. As the puppies catch on, thicken the gruel. When puppies are eating thicker gruel, they should always have fresh water available in a low spill-resistant bowl.

Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding. Feed puppies until they are full but not bloated. Puppies often walk through their food. Make sure the puppies are clean and DRY after eating. Most weaning puppies are messy eaters so you may not be able to leave gruel or water in their housing area at first. Wet puppies can rapidly lose body temperature.
**Concentration 0.9 kcal/ml. Most commercial puppy milk replacers in the US provide less than 1 kcal/ml, acting to increase the volume of milk required to meet caloric needs. This can be problematic in terms of the number and size of feedings given relative to stomach capacity and more likely to result in gastrointestinal disturbances. This may also account for why bottle fed puppies grow slower than puppies that nurse off a mother.**

You may also start to offer dry food on a free feeding basis.

At 6–8 weeks of age, puppies should be eating canned and dry food well. Feed the puppies at least three meals daily. If one puppy appears food-possessive, use a second dish and leave plenty of food out so that everyone is eating. Bear in mind that a puppy has a very small stomach, so although they may not eat much at a single sitting, they like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.

**Cleaning Equipment**

Keeping the puppies’ nursing bottles and supplies clean is vital as this will prevent diarrhea, vomiting, or infection. Cleaning the bottles and nursing nipples is quite easy. Using hot, soapy water, clean the bottle with a bottle brush. If you do not have a bottle brush, you may wash the bottle and nursing nipple in the dishwasher. You may place them in the silverware rack or in a dishwasher basket.
The adult dogs that we typically have in need of foster care are those who are recovering from a dental procedure, illness, or orthopedic surgery. However, there are times when we need more information on an adult dog and may seek foster placement to learn more about them and how they react in a home environment.

As with puppies we do ask that your adult dog foster be housed separately from your resident pets for at least 7-10 days. Even then, introductions between foster dogs and resident pets can easily turn disastrous and it may not be a positive experience for your foster dog or resident pets.

You should never introduce your foster dog to other dogs or animals you may see when out walking them in your neighborhood, etc.

**Feeding**
We feed Hill's Science Diet to all of our adult dogs (unless prescribed differently by our Veterinarians). You are expected to keep them on Hill's Science Diet. Switching their food can cause digestive upset. The amount of food to feed your foster dog will be given to you when you pick them up.

**House Training**
Never expect your foster dog to arrive at your home already housebroken. They have most likely been through a lot of changes since arriving at the shelter and will need to learn appropriate elimination habits. See the house training tips on page 10 helping your foster dog learn to eliminate outside. Keep them to a consistent schedule by taking them outside regularly to eliminate and rewarding them when they do. Never scold your foster dog for eliminating inside. If you find an accident in your home, clean it up well using an enzymatic cleaner like Nature's Miracle®. Scolding your foster dog after finding accidents inside can cause them to become fearful of you as they will not be able to associate why you are upset with them.
**Crate Training**

We strongly encourage and recommend crate training when fostering. Crate training will help considerably with the house training process. It is important to note that some adult dogs may have separation anxiety and crate training may not be beneficial to them. Deciding whether crate training is beneficial for your adult dog foster should come on a case by case basis along with advice from our Foster and Behavior teams.

Never use the crate as punishment. Crates are a place where a dog should feel safe. The right size crate provides your foster dog/puppy with enough room to stand, lie down, and fully turn around comfortably. If the crate is too large, your foster dog/puppy may use the extra room to eliminate.

Crates are for short term confinement. Examples of short term confinement would be: when no one is home, at night, and short periods of time when you cannot supervise or keep an eye on them. Baby gates or x-pens can be used to block your foster dog/puppy from entering areas you do not want them to have access to while you are home and monitoring them. Crates should never be used for long term confinement.

To start off right with the crate, dogs and puppies need to first become acclimated being in the crate. When you arrive home with a new foster dog/puppy and immediately place them in a crate without first making a positive association with the crate, there is a high chance that they will bark and whine. To create a positive association for your foster dog/puppy with the crate make sure they are always receiving a reward for going in the crate. Feed your foster dog/puppy in the crate for all meals and offer them a long lasting treat, like a frozen stuffed Kong when placing them in the crate. By providing positive associations for the dog when entering the crate, you will help them to gain confidence with the presence and idea of being placed in a crate when necessary. You will find that most dogs enjoying going into their crate on their own to nap or rest.

**Training: Positive Reinforcement**

As a foster parent, the only appropriate method of training is positive reinforcement. The use of shock collars, choke chains, pinch collars, and any method of adverse and/or punishment training methods is prohibited. Positive reinforcement training means that you reward your foster dog/puppy for behaviors you want them to do. Unwanted behaviors are ignored. The reward creates a positive association with the wanted behavior which in turn strengthens the wanted behavior. Positive reinforcement training is the most effective and humane method of training. If you are found to be using adverse training methods with a foster dog/puppy dismissal from the foster program will be considered.
JCAS Behavior Support

Here at JCAS we are fortunate to have a team dedicated to the behavioral health of the animals in our care. If you need additional behavior support, advice, and tips, the Program and Volunteer Manager will make sure a member of our behavior team reaches out to you via a phone call for additional support.
The first 3-5 days that a foster dog is home, you may notice they seem extra tired and lay around or sleep a lot. This is called the decompression period. Many people mistake this as their foster dog’s true personality and behavior. In reality, the dog is getting their mind back to a normal and calm state and decompressing from the stress of living in a shelter. Once the decompression phase is over, this is often when calls come in that the dog may be displaying some unwanted behaviors like jumping, counter surfing, etc. This is because the dog is now comfortable and relaxed enough to exert their true personality and behavior quirks. All dogs go through this phase, but it is especially prevalent in dogs who have been in the shelter an extended period of time.

Allow your foster dog to have quiet time in a crate with a stuffed Kong to relax and ease their mind. Your foster dog was living in a stressful environment before you took them home and often, their minds have been in a state of stress that is often constant. Shelter dogs rely on this decompression phase to help them cope and adjust to a normal home-like setting and environment. During the decompression phase do not conduct introductions between resident pets and avoid having friends and family come over to visit and meet the dog. You do not want to keep introducing stimulus that can be stressful to the dog while they are trying to decompress. Wait until your foster dog has adjusted before introducing them to your friends and family members.

Keep your foster dog crated at night, anytime you are unable to supervise them, and whenever you leave your home. Remember: If you decide not to crate your foster dog, you take full risk and responsibility for any items the dog may damage while left alone, including the risk of house soiling as you should never expect a foster dog to be housebroken. As well, under no circumstance should you allow your foster dog to be left alone with resident pets if you have decided to introduce them after the 7 to 10-day period.

Each dog is an individual and decompression times do vary. Some dogs may take up to one week or more to fully decompress.
If you have personal pets who are dogs, you’ll want to plan on keeping your foster dog separated for about 2 weeks before introducing them to your foster dog. During this time, you will be exchanging blankets or towels between the foster and resident dogs’ area to help them get used to each other’s smells (scent swapping).

After this period you’ll want to introduce them one at a time, letting them see each other before letting them touch. It’s a good idea to introduce them outside in a large yard or on a walk, keeping all the dogs walking parallel on leash and allowing them enough space to get adjusted to one another. Most dogs will benefit from a few nice walks, then separated again before interacting inside the home, and some steps may need to be repeated.

You may also schedule a time for your personal dogs to meet the foster dog before you take the foster dog home, but even if the meeting goes well, guidelines for a slow introduction will still need to be followed once in the home.

In addition, make sure that high-value items (food, chew toys, plush toys, Kongs, rawhides or anything else that your dogs hold in high regard) are put away whenever the dogs are interacting. You don’t want to allow the possibility of a fight. Those high-value items are best placed in the dogs’ personal areas. Finally, never feed your dogs in the same room as the foster dog; always separate them at feeding time.
**Separation Anxiety**
A certain amount of anxiety such as whining and barking is normal for dogs while they are settling into a new environment. The term separation anxiety describes a specific disorder that results in displays much more severe than how the term is often applied. A dog with separation anxiety will usually attempt escapes that are often extreme and will result in self injury and household destruction. Other signs include excessive drooling or incessant howling or barking. Separation anxiety is often wrongly suspected when there is destruction or barking simply because these behaviors only happen when the dog is alone. Barking and destruction often occur out of boredom. One determining factor is whether the behavior begins immediately after leaving (separation anxiety) or much later during your absence.

We can help prevent separation anxiety from starting by building the dog’s independence (and frustration tolerance) by practicing exercises where the dog must stay a distance away from you while you are home, maybe even out of sight for periods. Practice leadership exercises where you insist your foster dog wait and be patient to get what he wants.

Keep your departures and arrivals very low key. Keep it to simple “goodbye” and “hello”, again, not to paint a dramatic contrast to when you are home versus gone.

Make the “special stuff” happen when you leave, not when you return. Your leaving should signal the time your foster gets a special long lasting treat, he only gets when you leave. Try leaving the dog with a stuffed Kong toy, or teaching your dog to find hidden treats.

If you learn that the dog you are fostering has symptoms of separation anxiety, the above exercises under prevention will be a part of the treatment, but will probably not be sufficient. Please contact our Foster Team for assistance coming up with a behavior plan.

**Reactivity**
Some dogs are reactive toward other dogs when they are on lead: They whine, bark, snarl, growl or lunge at other dogs. Dogs can also be reactive toward other things: men, people on skateboards or bikes, cats or other animals. It’s important to know that reactivity can mimic aggression, but a reactive dog is not the same as an aggressive dog. Even though the signs are somewhat similar, the underlying reason for the behavior is different. Reactive dogs are, simply put, dogs that are prone to overreacting. Reactivity is a complicated issue for dogs that often starts out as some form of frustration, fear, or a lack of socialization. For instance, dogs might react because they can’t get close to a particular stimulus, perhaps a cat, person, another dog, or a wild animal.
Reactivity Continued
It will be important to limit the frequency that the reactive dog is exposed to their trigger/s while we work on the behavior. For example, you can block his visual access with barriers, control it with training tools, or simply move your dog to another environment when the stimulus is likely to be present.

These troublesome behaviors may begin innocently, with a social desire to play or interact. Reactivity can conceivably worsen over time and turn into aggression if chronic frustration isn’t addressed.

If your foster dog has been observed to be reactive in a kennel environment, our behavior team will send you home with tips to help you manage this behavior.
If you notice new signs of reactivity from your foster dog, please let the foster team know right away and we can assist you with a behavior plan.

Resource Guarding
Resource guarding is when a dog controls access to food, objects, people and locations that are important to him through defensive body language or overt aggressive display. This is a relatively common canine behavior and is influenced by a number of environmental and situational stimuli, including a dog’s natural instinct to survive.

It’s possible that your foster dog was once malnourished due to underfeeding or competing with others for limited resources. It can lead to an association of other people and animals around his dish with having his food stolen. It will make him anxious to protect it. The threat of losing the resource and the good feeling that the resource provides make a dog more vigilant, angry and irritable. Always keep your foster dog separated from other pets or young children when feeding, giving treats or toys, even after they have been introduced. Do not leave any of these valuable items in public spaces. Do not yell at the foster dog if they begin to show signs of resource guarding. By scaring them when they show us their warning signs we are encouraging them to HIDE their warning signs. If you notice your foster dog protecting their valued resources, such as food, toys, sleeping areas or even people by displaying aggressive behavior such as growling or lunging, please contact the foster team for assistance.
At the Jackson County Animal Shelter, we have the ability to treat dogs for heartworm disease if they test positive upon arrival to our shelter. If you foster a dog who is undergoing heartworm treatment and recovery, you will need to provide a quiet, calm, and stress free environment for them to recover in. It is incredibly important that you adhere to all treatment rules when fostering a dog undergoing heartworm treatment as their activity level must be kept to a minimum. Failure to do so can compromise the recovery and treatment process and cause your foster dog to become incredibly ill.

Heartworm disease is treated over a period of three months. If the dog is asymptomatic we will spay or neuter them prior to heartworm treatment. Once all treatment is finished, your foster dog will be ready to go up for adoption.

The general foster commitment timeline for dogs undergoing heartworm treatment is anywhere from 1–2 months. This is a longer term foster commitment and we will expect you to commit to the entire length of treatment. We will send you home with handouts on heartworm disease and how to successfully keep your foster dog on a low activity schedule.

**Heartworm Diagnosis**

Any dog who is 6 months of age or older is tested for heartworm disease. We test for heartworm by using a SNAP heartworm test that uses a sample of the dogs’ blood.

**Heartworm Treatment**

Our heartworm treatment begins by giving the dog an antibiotic given to the dog for 30 days to treat the micorfilaria (baby heartworms). Once the antibiotics are finished the next step in treatment is with an injection of medication called Melarsomine. This injection is given to the dog on day 60, 90, and 91 of treatment. Heartworm positive dogs receive 3 total injections over a period of two months. For 4 weeks following the first injection, your foster dog will be placed on a steroid medication which you will need to administer at the correct schedule and dosage while the dog is in foster care. Detailed instructions will be given to you on how and when to give all needed medication.
Activity Restriction
Dogs undergoing treatment for heartworm disease must be kept on a strict exercise restriction plan. As a foster caregiver for a heartworm positive dog, it is imperative that you follow all instructions given to you by the Foster Coordinator. Dogs undergoing heartworm treatment need to be kept on cage rest. This means they are not permitted to go on lengthy walks, play with other dogs, or run around off-leash. They must remain as calm as possible throughout treatment and recovery.

Because the shelter setting is often stressful, we aim to place dogs undergoing heartworm treatment in foster care to keep their stress and activity levels as low as possible to aid in a successful treatment and recovery process.
is important to always be aware of your foster pet’s health. This section will help you gain a better understanding of some common health concerns that may be observed while fostering. Please read this section carefully as you will be asked to reference it.

**Zoonotic Disease**
Zoonotic diseases are those that can be transmitted from animals to humans. Although the frequency of this transmission is rare, you need to be aware of the risk and practice good hygiene after handling foster pets. Always wash your hands after cleaning litter boxes, handling feces, urine, etc. and if you are bitten or scratched by your foster animal alert the Program and Volunteer Manager immediately. Those with a suppressed immune system are at a greater risk when it comes to zoonotic disease transmission. We will let you know ahead of time if your foster dog or puppy has been treated for or tested positive for a zoonotic disease.

**Diarrhea and Loose Stool**
The most common issue we see in foster animals is diarrhea. The cause of diarrhea can be a number of things (stress, diet changes, overfeeding, viruses, bacteria, parasites). If your foster animal has loose stool or diarrhea and is otherwise acting normal, eating, and drinking the best thing to do is monitor them. As much as we all wish there was a magic cure or medication for diarrhea, there is not. Treatment, if applicable, will be determined at the discretion of our Veterinarians.

Many people confuse loose stool and diarrhea. They are not the same and you should understand the difference. Refer to the fecal chart located on page 45 of this guide to reference the different scores of stool. You will be required to give a fecal score number if you contact the Program and Volunteer Manager about stool issues.

**Parasites**
Foster pets are routinely treated for internal parasites. There are many parasites and sometimes repeated or extra treatments may be required. Common parasites include but are not limited to: coccidia, tapeworms, roundworms, giardia, and hookworms. Parasites are commonly found in the stool, but it is not uncommon to find them on the anus. Tapeworms look like tiny pieces of rice. Roundworms look like spaghetti noodles and can be seen in stool or in vomit. Other types of parasites can only be detected during a fecal exam where a sample of your foster pets stool is examined under a microscope.
Some symptoms of parasites include a large and hard belly, diarrhea, worms present in stool, and inability to gain weight. Parasites can often be transmitted by direct and/or indirect contact and most are contagious to other animals. Some parasites are zoonotic and can be passed from human to animal. Wash your hands thoroughly after touching any items that may have come in contact with animal feces. Most parasites are treated with a suitable worm medication. The presence of worms is not an emergency. But, you should contact the Program and Volunteer Manager to see if a fecal or wellness exam should be scheduled.

Some worms will present themselves in the stool up to 72 hours after a worming medication has been given. We will let you know if your foster dog or puppy was recently given a worming medicine and if you should expect to see the passing of worms in the stool.

**Vomiting**
Animals sometimes get upset stomachs, just like humans. If you have a foster that vomits 1–3 times and is otherwise acting normal, eating, and drinking, continue to monitor them. Medication will not be given to an animal who vomits once or twice and is otherwise acting normal and there is no magic way to diagnose why the animal vomited.

If the vomiting happens continuously or if you have young puppies that vomit continuously, followed by lethargy, and lack of appetite and it has not happened after a car ride, or other reason explained to you when picking up your foster animal, then you should give the Program and Volunteer Manager a call to discuss the vomiting.

**Eye Discharge**
Small pieces of crust around the eyes are normal for animals after waking up. If you see continuous yellow or green discharge, accompanied by swollen or closed eyes, your foster pet may have an eye infection and we will want to have them examined by our vet. You can use a warm, damp cloth to help keep infected eyes clean. Clear ocular (eye) discharge should be monitored for any changes and signs that may indicate an infection. Medication will not be prescribed for clear discharge coming from the eyes. If you notice the symptoms of an eye infection, schedule a wellness check with the Foster Coordinator as medication may be needed at that point.

**Ear Mites**
Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal. They can cause itching, scratching, head-shaking and dark brown discharge in the ear that often resemble coffee grounds. Ear mites are contagious to other animals and will need to be treated. If you notice signs of ear mites, schedule a wellness visit for your foster pet.
MAINTAINING DOG AND PUPPY HEALTH Continued

**Fleas**
Dogs and puppies with fleas will often frequently scratch themselves. All dogs and puppies over the age of 4 weeks are given flea prevention upon intake into the shelter. If you notice fleas on your foster pet, schedule a wellness visit to bring them in to be examined.

**Ringworm**
Ringworm is a very contagious fungus that is transmittable to other animals and humans. Signs of ringworm are patches of hair loss or thinning hair in irregular or circular shapes. Ringworm spores live in the environment for a very long time. If you suspect your foster dog or puppy has ringworm call the Program and Volunteer Manager. Signs of ringworm are not an emergency and this can be handled during regular business hours.

**Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC)**
CIRDC is caused by contagious bacteria and viruses. Symptoms of CIRDC include: coughing, sneezing, congested breathing, loss of appetite, lethargy, dehydration, and yellow/green discharge coming from the nose/eyes. If you notice these symptoms, give the Program and Volunteer Manager a call during regular business hours.

If the dog or puppy is acting normal and eating and drinking, but they have clear nasal discharge, they are most likely fighting off a virus and supportive care is the best thing for them. Continue to monitor your foster dog/puppy and if they stop eating, give us a call to have them examined by one of our Veterinarians.

If your foster dog or puppy has yellow or green nasal or ocular (eye) discharge, then it is most likely caused by a bacteria and antibiotics will most likely be used to treat the infection.
Parvovirus
Parvovirus is a very contagious and fatal virus that attacks the gastrointestinal tract of dogs and puppies. Parvo is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated feces.

Symptoms of parvo include:
• Lethargy, Fever, Dehydration
• Dehydration
• Vomiting
• Severe diarrhea with or without blood and a very foul odor
• Loss of appetite
• Abdominal pain and bloating

If your foster puppy or dog is displaying all of the symptoms associated with parvo, call the Program and Volunteer Manager right away, this is a life-threatening emergency.
All veterinary care for your foster animals is provided by the Jackson County Animal Shelter. All veterinary care will be scheduled by appointments only. The Program and Volunteer Manager works directly with the shelter Veterinary Technician and clinic staff to manage the health and well-being of each foster animal. The Program and Volunteer Manager’s cell phone number is provided to you. Please use this number for situations that occur after hours. You will also be emailed instructions to download a free tele vet app for both Apple and Android devices. This is a secondary level of assistance if you are not able to reach the Program and Volunteer Manager. Jackson County Animal Shelter has a policy that we will not reimburse individuals for veterinary costs incurred for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by JCAS medical staff. Remember you are not authorized to take your foster animal to your personal vet.

**Wellness Checks**
Foster animals are required to return to the shelter every 2–3 weeks or sooner for vaccinations, deworming, and general exams. Jackson County Animal Shelter staff will schedule these appointments with you. All wellness checks require an appointment. You will schedule your first wellness check appointment at the time you pick up your foster animal.

If your foster animal is recovering from an injury or undergoing special medical treatment, wellness checks may occur at odd intervals. The Program and Volunteer Manager will inform you of any special wellness needs when you are first contacted about the foster opportunity. JCAS staff will go over this information with you again when you arrive to pick up your foster.

Wellness appointment times vary. JCAS staff will schedule wellness checks with you for every two weeks (unless otherwise stated).

**Scheduling Wellness/Drop-Off Appointments**
JCAS staff will be in contact with you to schedule all appointments for your foster animal.

If you are fostering an animal who still needs a spay/neuter surgery or other type of procedure, JCAS staff will schedule that appointment with you prior to the day of surgery.

JCAS staff will let you know ahead of time when your foster pet’s procedure has been scheduled to allow you ample time to make drop-off arrangements. Drop-off appointments are usually Monday through Thursday morning between 8:00 and 9:00 with pick-ups scheduled after 4:00 PM unless otherwise indicated.
Rescheduling Appointments
You are allowed to reschedule wellness checks if you are unable to make your appointment. We ask that you give at least a two-hour notice prior to rescheduling wellness appointments.

Spay and neuter surgeries and heartworm treatments cannot be rescheduled.

Vaccines
All puppies who are 4 weeks and older are vaccinated upon intake with a subcutaneous DA2PP vaccine and an intranasal Bordetella vaccine. The DA2PP vaccine is repeated every 2-4 weeks until the dog is 18 weeks old unless otherwise directed by a Veterinarian. All dogs and puppies 4 months of age and older receive a rabies vaccine.

Adult dogs receive an initial DA2PP vaccine and are given a second vaccine 2-4 weeks after their first dose, unless otherwise directed by a Veterinarian.

DA2PP stands for Distemper Adenovirus (Type 2) Parvovirus Parainfluenza

(Please note that Parainfluenza is NOT the same as canine influenza. The canine influenza virus is different from the parainfluenza virus. The canine influenza vaccine is also a separate vaccine. We do not administer the canine influenza vaccine.)
The day your foster animal is ready for adoption placement is a day to celebrate! Knowing you have played a crucial role in the life-saving work of being a foster caregiver and preparing your foster animals for the journey into a forever home is an incredible accomplishment. And one that should be celebrated! Each time a foster animal is ready to find their permanent home, you should feel empowered knowing you have provided them with the care and love to begin their next chapter in life. Saying goodbye to your foster animals allows you to help more animals in need. There are a few ways foster animals find homes once they are ready to graduate from foster care.

**Shelter Adoption**
When your foster pet is ready they will come back to the shelter for adoption placement at JCAS. We will ask to complete a report card to provide us with information about your foster pet’s behavior and personality quirks. We encourage you to take pictures of your foster pet that we can use on our website and social media pages to promote your foster pet.

**Offsite Adoption Events**
There may be times when cage space at the shelter is limited and we will not be able to bring your foster pets back to the shelter when they are ready. You may be asked to attend offsite adoption events to help find your foster an adoptive home until cage space opens at the shelter.

**Yes, you can adopt your foster pet!**
Foster caregivers are always given first choice to adopt their foster pet. Just remember, we rely on and need you to keep fostering! The goal of fostering is to prepare your foster pet for adoption and allow them to become a life-long companion for a loving family. This means you can continue to help us with our mission and save more lives by continuing to foster. But, if you foster an animal you just cannot part with you are more than welcome to adopt them. It happens to the best of us! Normal adoption fees and protocols will apply.

**What if a friend or family member wants to adopt my foster animal?**
Remember that animals are not available for adoption when you begin fostering them and there is an adoption process. But, chances are you will come across friends and family members who fall in love with one of your foster animals. If this happens, it is YOUR responsibility to communicate with them that normal adoption fees and protocols will apply and that we will not be able to “hold” animals for them.
What if a friend or family member wants to adopt my foster animal? Cont.

When your foster animal comes back to the shelter and if you have someone seriously interested in adopting them, you must give the Program and Volunteer Manager the name and phone number of the person interested in adopting. A phone call will be made when the animal is ready for adoption and the interested person will have to be at the shelter when we open for adoptions.

Due to the large volume of phone calls our staff receives, phone calls from friends and family wanting updates on the animal they are adopting will not be returned.
It is extremely important to clean and disinfect between foster pets. This will greatly decrease the chance of a disease or illness from spreading to future foster pets, resident pets, and humans through organisms called fomites. Doorknobs, light switches, litter boxes, food and water bowls, pens, etc. Anything that your foster pet or you touched after handling your foster pet needs to first be cleaned and then disinfected.

Ideally, you should house your foster pet in an area with surfaces that are easy to clean and disinfect. It is important to remember that anything your foster pet or their fur touches or lands on has potential to become a fomite. Books, desk lamps, televisions, etc. Only keep necessary items in your foster pet’s room to lessen the amount of surfaces that will need cleaned and disinfected after the foster pet leaves. Stainless steel items are easy to clean and disinfect. We recommend you use stainless steel food/water bowls and litter boxes. It may be best to use items that are disposable or can be disposed of after your foster pet is done using them.

**What Are Fomites?**
A fomite is a nonliving object that can carry infectious organisms on its surface. Fomites can essentially be anything that contains traces of a sick foster pet’s fur or body secretions (nasal discharge, saliva, blood, vomit, feces) on them. Fomites are on all surfaces that a sick foster pet comes in contact with. Even you as a foster caregiver have the potential to carry fomites on your hands and clothing during and after handling foster pets that are or may be sick. This guide will help you to learn the difference between cleaning and disinfecting to ensure the health of your foster pets.

**The Difference Between Cleaning and Disinfection**
Cleaning is the removal of dirt and debris from an item and/or area, followed by a washing of the item and/or area with soap and water. Cleaning will remove viruses and bacteria but it will not kill them.

Disinfection is the application of an agent that will kill the viruses and bacteria. An example would be properly diluted bleach.

You should always clean first, then disinfect. Surfaces cannot be disinfected before they are cleaned.
Easy surfaces to clean and disinfect:
- Tile or vinyl floors and counter tops
- Tile walls
- Splash boards
- Bathtubs and showers

Difficult surfaces to clean and disinfect:
- Wallpaper
- Carpet
- Wooden furniture
- Hardwood floors
- Books
- Plastic surfaces and items (Ex. Plastic food/water bowls and plastic litter boxes)
- Any cardboard items
- Stuffed toys

When and How Often To Clean and Disinfect
You should always clean and disinfect before new foster pets arrive and after foster pets leave to come back to the shelter. If you are fostering a sick foster animal, you should clean and disinfect daily. This will remove viruses and bacteria from the environment that could continue to infect your foster pet. If your foster pet is healthy, cleaning and disinfecting should happen weekly. You should provide daily clean-up of messes as needed for your individual foster pet(s).

Choosing a Cleaning and Disinfecting Agent
You will first need to select a detergent or degreaser as your cleaning agent. The dish washing detergent Dawn® is a recommended choice. A detergent aids in the removal of dirt and grease from surfaces. A degreaser is a powerful detergent that is formulated to specifically remove oils and greasy debris. Detergent should be mixed with warm to hot water.

Next, you will select a disinfectant. The disinfectant that you choose must be able to kill all kinds of infectious diseases and viruses. Household bleach is the easiest and most recommended disinfectant to use in foster homes. (Remember: bleach can ruin items, this is why it is important to house your foster pet in an area with bleach safe items and surfaces that are easy to clean and disinfect.)

Bleach must be properly diluted to be effective. See the attached Diluting Bleach for Disinfection handout on page 46 for proper bleach dilution ratios. We recommend storing diluted bleach in a spray bottle. Bleach is light sensitive. Once diluted, bleach should be stored in an opaque bottle or container and made fresh every 24 hours.
Keep in mind that bleach can burn. Wear disposable gloves and eye protection when mixing bleach. Avoid exposing foster and resident pets to bleach fumes and make sure the room you are cleaning and disinfecting has good ventilation.

**How to Clean and Disinfect**

**Step 1:**
Remove all debris (fur, food, litter, feces, urine, nasal discharge, vomit, etc.). Scrub all surfaces with the chosen detergent or degreaser. Follow with a rinse and dry of those surfaces.

**Step 2:**
Disinfect those surfaces by spraying them with diluted bleach and allowing the bleach dilution to remain on those surfaces for at least ten minutes. The diluted bleach needs a ten minute contact time to kill viruses and bacteria. You will want to make sure you use enough diluted bleach to keep the surfaces wet for the entire ten minutes. If the surface dries before the contact time is up, you will need to repeat the process. Once the ten minute contact time is up, you need to thoroughly rinse the surfaces with water and dry them. If your foster pet became ill with panleukopenia, parvovirus, feline calicivirus, or ringworm, you will need to repeat the disinfection process at least another two times.

**How to Clean and Disinfect Surfaces Not Bleach Safe**

Bedding, carpet, and upholstered furniture are a few items that would become damaged by using diluted bleach on them. For bedding, clothes worn while handling your foster pet, stuffed animals, and fabric toys place them in a washing machine and launder with hot water. Wash these items separate from your regular household laundry. Laundry detergent should be measured out using the label on the bottle.

You will want to choose a cycle that washes the items with detergent and then rinses them. Follow that cycle with one that introduces bleach to disinfect and provides a rinse. Some washing machines allow you to adjust the setting to run this way, if not, you will need to run your washing machine twice.

Dry the items in the dryer or direct sunlight once done washing. Sunlight will act as an additional disinfectant but should never be relied on as the sole means of disinfecting.
For carpeted surfaces you will want to thoroughly vacuum the carpeted area making sure to get under all tables, chairs, furniture, etc. Then, you will need to clean the carpet with a carpet cleaner. You can rent carpet cleaners if you do not own one. You can also steam clean the carpet as an appropriate means of disinfecting. Use the same method for furniture by vacuuming the surface and underneath, then follow with a steam cleaner. Remember that the vacuum, carpet cleaner and/or steam cleaner can become fomites themselves and they will need cleaned and disinfected after use.

Wooden furniture and floors, as well as wallpaper are extremely hard to disinfect. The best option for these types of surfaces is to polish wood furniture and flooring several times with a furniture polish to thoroughly clean it. However, wood flooring and furniture cannot be disinfected because it is not bleach safe. For wallpaper, carefully wipe it down with a disinfecting wipe or a cleaner safe to use on wallpaper. Remember, wallpaper is also not able to be disinfected, only cleaned because it is not a bleach safe surface.

The disinfectant that we use at JCAS is called Rescue®. They do sell a product that can be used in a carpet cleaner. In addition, you can also purchase the disinfectant to use in your home. The use of bleach is recommended for its low cost and easy dilution. If you would like more information on the Rescue disinfectant visit their website: https://rescuedisinfectants.com/

Additional Considerations
There are a few infectious diseases that are incredibly difficult to get rid of in the environment. Panleukopenia, ringworm, and parvovirus are a few examples. If your foster pet has come down with one of those viruses, you should dispose of any items that cannot be disinfected. Follow the phrase, “when in doubt, throw it out”.

Ringworm
Ringworm spores are airborne and will travel everywhere. Use extra caution when cleaning after a ringworm foster to avoid spreading spores where you do not want them. Refrain from shaking out bedding and be careful when dumping litter into a trash bag. Swiffer dusters are a great tool to use in catching ringworm spores and fur on surfaces. Dispose of the Swiffer duster after use as it cannot be disinfected. If you foster a pet with ringworm or one who has come down with ringworm, you should change the furnace filters in your home.

Panleukopenia and Parvovirus
These two viruses are extremely persistent and can last in the environment for years. If your foster pet has come down with one of these viruses it is recommended that you do not bring another foster or resident pet of the same species under the age of 5 months old into your home for at least one year. The only pets that should enter your home are those who are over the age of 5 months old and fully vaccinated against the virus that affects their species. These two viruses are extremely serious and fatal. You can never be too safe when these hard to eliminate viruses are present in the environment.
Helpful Tips when Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Be sure to practice frequent hand washing after handling sick foster pets and cleaning up after them. Wearing disposable gloves is never a bad idea when cleaning up and handling sick foster pets.
- Clean items should not be placed on dirty surfaces and vice versa.
- Keep small containers of supplies in your foster area/room to avoid contaminating entire bags of food, etc.
- Never hesitate to contact the Foster Coordinator if you have questions on the cleaning and disinfection process.

Cleaning and disinfecting are very important in preventing illness and disease from spreading. Even if you do not have any resident pets, it is extremely important to house foster pets in a separate area of your home. If after 7-10 days, your foster pet appears healthy and is not being treated for any illness, if you choose you may contact the Program and Volunteer Manager to ask for permission to allow your foster pet to explore more areas of the home. If your foster pet is sick or becomes ill, it is very important they remain in their foster area and separate from your resident pets to avoid contamination to your home and resident pets. Cleaning and disinfection may not be the most fun part of being a foster caregiver, but it is a very important aspect of foster care.
**Best Friends Vet Access App**
Best Friends Vet Access is an app that you can download on your phone that offers support and advice to foster caregivers. When you take home a foster pet you will automatically receive login information for BFVA, whether or not you have the app.

BFVA will prompt you to download the app and provide you with a coupon code.

BFVA is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended to have if you are able to download apps on your phone.

**Join our JCAS Volunteers Facebook Group**
Please feel free to join our Facebook group where you can post pictures and share stories of your foster pets. We encourage you to seek general advice and tips from other foster parents and you can find and share educational articles related to foster care. Please adhere to the rules of our Facebook page. We reserve the right to remove any posts, comments, etc. that are not appropriate. Please remember: medical questions, concerns, and advice regarding your foster pets should not be posted on this page.

**Continuing Education**
As you check your email regularly for important foster program information and updates from the Program and Volunteer Manager, keep your eyes open for opportunities to enhance your foster care education with special in-house training and seminars hosted by our foster team.

**Euthanasia Policy**
JCAS does not euthanize animals for space or place time limits on animals in our care. We will not place aggressive, terminally ill, very sick, or suffering animals in foster care.

In the incredibly rare event you take home a foster animal whose mental and/or physical well-being brings about a terminally ill or aggressive diagnosis we will have an open discussion with you regarding euthanasia, quality of life, and safety to the public.

If you ever have a foster animal who suddenly passes away, you should immediately alert the Program and Volunteer Manager. This is an extremely rare occurrence with neonatal/young kittens being the most susceptible to sudden death.

Please know that if something tragic happens we will always be here to support you in any way that we can.
Use this cheat sheet to help you decipher between emergencies and non-emergencies. You will be expected to adhere to this cheat sheet and will be asked to reference it. The non-emergencies listed below are still health concerns we want to know, but they do not warrant an after-hours emergency phone call. Utilize the health section in this care guide to assist you when you become worried.

Please try to remain calm in the event of an emergency or if you become concerned over the welfare of your foster pet. Remember that JCAS will not reimburse you for medical care sought outside of the shelter that is not pre-authorized. Your phone calls will be returned in a timely manner when you leave a voicemail.

If you have questions about the health of your foster animal or if an emergency should arise, please call the Program and Volunteer Manager at 517-262-9481.

**Emergencies**
- Continuous vomiting and/or bloody diarrhea accompanied by lack of appetite, and lethargy
- Any trauma (hit by car, dropped, unconscious, limping caused by trauma, severe bleeding, etc.)
- Difficulty breathing
- Straining to urinate
- Very pale, blue, or grey gums
- Seizures
- Very high or low body temperature (Below 100°F or higher than 102.5°F)
- Difficulty giving birth (if applicable)
- A foster animal that has escaped your home

**Non-Emergencies**
- Runny discharge from the eyes or nose (clear or yellow/green)
- Lack of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy) for less than 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Weight loss
- Coughing and sneezing
- Lack of bowel movements
- Lack of urination
- Swollen eyes or eyes held closed
- Blood in urine
Primary Contact:
Marc W. Daly
Program and Volunteer Manager
517-262-9481

*The after-hours calls should only be made for emergency and life-threatening situations. Please don’t call after-hours for minor concerns like sneezing, eye discharge, etc. ONLY life-threatening emergencies.*

Normal Business Hours
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday
10:00 AM to 4:30 PM
Thursday
10:00 AM to 7:00 PM
Saturday
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Fecal Score Chart
Please use this chart if you call the Program and Volunteer Manager concerned about your foster pets stool. This will be used to help figure out what is going on with your foster pet and how we will be able to best treat the problem or concern.
Diluting Bleach for Disinfection

Basic Practices:

- Prepare fresh diluted bleach solutions daily or when solution is contaminated by organic material. Discard any solution left from the previous day.
- Use the appropriate dilution for the disinfection task:
  » 1:32 for general disinfection
  » 1:10 to inactivate ringworm
- Tightly close containers that hold bleach and diluted bleach solutions.
- Protect the diluted bleach solution from light.

To prepare a solution:

1. Assemble an empty container of the required size with 5.25% bleach, and water.
   
   **Note:** The percent concentration of bleach (sodium hypochlorite) is printed on the product label.

2. Add the correct volume of bleach to the empty container.

3. Add water to the container until the required volume is reached.
   
   **Example:** Add 1/2 cup 5.25% bleach to a gallon container, and then add water to the container until the solution reaches the 1 gallon level.

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## Diluting Bleach for Disinfection

### 1:32 Dilution: Use for General Disinfection

(Also Parvovirus, Panleukopenia, Calicivirus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This Volume of Water</th>
<th>Requires this Volume of 5.25% Bleach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 ounces</td>
<td>4-1/2 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 ounces</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ounces</td>
<td>1-1/2 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1:10 Dilution: Use for Disinfection If Ringworm May Be Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This Volume of Water</th>
<th>Requires this Volume of 5.25% Bleach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>1-1/2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 ounces</td>
<td>1/4 cup + 1-1/2 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 ounces</td>
<td>3 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ounces</td>
<td>4-1/2 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Liquid Volumes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This Volume...</th>
<th>Equals...</th>
<th>In Milliliters...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>4 quarts OR 8 pints OR 16 cups OR 128 ounces</td>
<td>3840 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>2 pints OR 4 cups OR 32 ounces</td>
<td>960 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pint</td>
<td>2 cups OR 16 ounces</td>
<td>480 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>8 ounces</td>
<td>240 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>30 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>3 teaspoons</td>
<td>15 ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 tablespoon</td>
<td>1-1/2 teaspoons</td>
<td>7.5 ml</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I have received and have been given an opportunity to read a copy of Jackson County Animal Shelter Foster Care Guide(s), and I understand that it is my obligation to be aware of the policies contained therein. I agree to fully comply with the policies, guidance, and requirements set forth in the Foster Care Guide(s) as applicable to any foster animal(s) I take into my home. If I have any questions regarding the policies or content or how they apply to my volunteer foster caregiver status, I understand that I have the right to ask the Program and Volunteer Manager.

I certify that I have read and agree to the Foster Care Guide(s).

Foster Caregiver’s Name:

_______________________________________________

Foster Caregiver’s Signature:

_______________________________________________

Date: ____________________