

How long of a time frame do I need to commit to?

Our goal is to have fosters commit to a year-long period, with breaks in between animals. That may mean that you foster, say, six animals over the course of the year or it may mean one. The time commitment per animal is completely dependent upon that particular animal's needs. It's important for fosters to understand that we cannot guarantee a time-frame for a fosterling, but we want them to find their forever home just as much as you do!

If committing to a year-long period is more than you're able to do currently but you'd still like to help foster, perhaps consider being a Respite Foster, which allows you to temporarily foster an animal when it's current foster goes on vacation, has an emergency, etc. It may also allow you to foster an animal for a temporary amount of time until a full-time foster is available.

How long is the animal typically in my care before being adopted?

Typically, it takes about 10-14 days for an animal to settle into a foster home enough to give us the best picture of its disposition and personality. For that reason, it's ideal to have an animal in foster care for 2 weeks before being put up for adoption. Some animals that go into foster are already ready for adoption. On average, an animal may be in foster care for up to two months before being adopted, but many factors affect this time frame, such as breed, disposition, temperament, training and medical needs.

Can I still foster if I have animals of my own?

Most certainly! As you know your own animal's personality best, we take that into account when pulling animals from shelters. We ask that foster families have an area of the house where new animals can be separated as needed (a bedroom or other indoor living space), which is beneficial during introduction periods or should there be a medical or behavioral concern.

It's important to note that some dogs have not been dog-dog tested during their time at the shelter, and it is not possible to test them with cats before pulling them. Should you have a resident dog, we ask to introduce your dog to the potential fosterling dog at the shelter *before* pulling him or her from the shelter. If introducing a fosterling dog to a home with resident cats, we ask that it be done very cautiously with the dog on leash for an extended period of time, and always under supervision.

We do not require that resident animals and fosterlings be separated throughout the foster period, but do take all steps to prevent any transmission of illnesses or personality conflicts, and do ask that resident animals be current on all vaccines.

Can I still foster if I rent?

Yes, we just need written authorization from your landlord stating that it's okay for you to foster before taking a fosterling in.

Can I still foster if I work 40 hours per week?

Yes! The most important thing to consider is whether you feel you have the time to commit to fostering, especially if you lead a busy social life outside of work. If you feel you do, then we try to pull the most compatible type of fosterling for your lifestyle. Puppies and kittens would not be ideal with the amount of training and attention

necessary, but perhaps an easy-going adult dog or cat that's fine to relax while you're away at work. Oftentimes, depending on the age of the animal, a companion animal for them is beneficial while you're away, so fostering two easy-going animals may be the best fit.

Can I foster if I have children?

We have many foster homes with children, and they're a tremendous help in socializing the right animals. We ask that children be over the age of 7 years. We do take into account specific factors, such as the kids' familiarity with animals, their activity level, etc. as this helps us to best match a fosterling. Depending upon the animal, they may have just undergone a tremendous amount of stress, and so placing them in a home with children would only exacerbate potential behavioral concerns. Others gravitate towards kids, so we give them what they love!

What if I don't have a secure yard, or no yard at all?

This is not a disqualifying factor for fostering. All of our fosterling cats are required to be indoor-only at all times during their foster care. Fosterling dogs, however, regardless of a yard, will need routine walks as this helps bond the animal with you, gives routine exercise, and helps to make the animal more adoptable. If a yard is not secure, we ask that you do not let the dog out off-leash as we do not know enough about the dog to ensure that he/she won't run off.

If I foster a dog, do I have to crate train him/her?

We realize that not everyone is familiar with crate-training, so while we recommend it, we do not require it. Crate training is not a punishment but a very beneficial training tool. It can help the dog to feel more secure, give him/her a "safe place" to go and in many cases, increase chances for adoption.

How are the animals promoted? Am I required to bring them to weekend adoption events?

Our dogs and cats are promoted through our website, Petfinder.com, AdoptaPet.com, and an additional 10 or so other smaller sites. We do hold weekend adoption events for our Kitty Corner cats and may have events where we ask fosterlings to be present as well. Advanced notice will be given in cases such as these, however.

Can I return the dog or cat if I can't foster him/her any longer?

Unfortunately, these are situations we try very hard to avoid as we don't operate a shelter. We ask that fosters be fully committed to fostering for the length of time necessary for that animal to find its forever home. Should an emergency arise, we will obviously try to accommodate as best as possible, be it a respite foster, a boarding facility, or Kitty Corner for fosterling cats, but we cannot make a guarantee.

I'm worried I might fall in love and want to keep the animal!

We won't lie... it happens sometimes! We are not opposed to fosters adopting fosterlings, although by allowing them to find a new forever home, fosters can help yet another animal in need. Our foster families say all the time that despite it being hard to say goodbye to a fosterling, it's all worth it in the end when you find that perfect adoptive family and you know the animal lives happily ever after! If fosters find that they're absolutely smitten with their fosterling and can't bear to live without him/her, we ask that that decision be made and we be notified before we put the animal up for adoption publicly. Once he/she is up for adoption, if there is an interested party, we can no longer guarantee adoption to the foster.