

CAA FOSTER CARE HANDBOOK



**Companion Animal Alliance
2550 Gourrier Ave
Baton Rouge, LA 70820**

Quick Start Guide: The Foster Essentials

Foster Contact Information

Foster Manager: Collins Fairley

- **Email:** Foster@caabr.org
- **Contact:** (225) 408-5360 – CAA Main Line
- **Shelter Hours:**
Closed Monday, Tuesday – Friday 12 pm - 6 pm, Saturday 10 am - 6 pm, Sunday 10 am - 3 pm
Scheduled foster appointments may have different availability
- **Best form of communication is through email or Better Impact!**
I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. However, if you have a question or concern on my days out of the office, which are Saturdays and Sundays, I will respond as soon as possible on Monday

Get Connected to CAA's Better Impact

All fosters need to be connected to our web-based group, Better Impact. This page is how we communicate with our foster providers and how you will be able to schedule foster appointments for the following things: New Foster, Health Checks & Vaccinations, Selecting an Animal, Returning an Animal, and other non-medical related things

- Website: <https://www.betterimpact.com/>
- Better Impact Mobile App: My Impact
 - Free to download and works on both iOS and Android (phones and tablets)

Join us on Facebook: CAA Foster, Rescue, and Volunteer Network

The purpose of this page:

Fosters are welcome to post happy and cute photos of their foster animals, informative articles and resources, and ask questions among others in the community

There are certain things we ask you not to post, as they are better addressed with CAA staff members:

- Complaints, suggestions, or concerns about shelter policies and procedures
- Concerns or complaints about a staff member, another volunteer, or an issue at the shelter

This page is not a form of communication to get in touch with the foster manager or other CAA staff members.

Login to your personal Facebook account → Search for “CAA Foster , Rescue, and Volunteer Network” → Request to join, once a CAA administrator accepts your request you will be able to stay connected with updates and announcements from both CAA and other fosters!

Foster Program Policies and Procedures

Legal Guardianship

All pets in foster care are the property of the Companion Animal Alliance and are subject to all applicable Companion Animal Alliance policies, rules and restrictions.

Foster care providers must return foster pets at any time upon the request of the foster manager or other Companion Animal Alliance staff. Companion Animal Alliance staff may request the return of a foster animal for many reasons, including but not limited to: the opportunity to be reclaimed by a previous owner or the opportunity to be transferred to a partner organization.

Foster Care FAQ

What is fostering?

Fostering is providing a temporary home for an animal outside of the shelter. Fostering can be a wonderful experience for both you and the animal, and truly makes a difference in shelter pets and the ability for the shelter to function!

Do I need special training or skills?

Foster care providers should be compassionate and patient. You will be informed of your foster's known history and any special needs before placement in your care. The foster manager will also be available to help answer questions and provide resources as needed.

What are the requirements?

- Be willing to abide by policies and procedures in the handbook and foster care agreement
- Be able to access email regularly
- Be able to provide transport to and from CAA
- Provide some supplies and food for foster animals
- Spend time with foster animals and love them like your own
- Have up to date rabies vaccinations for all pets in the home

What are some potential risks of fostering?

Fostering is one of the most rewarding experiences that you can have, but there are some potential risks. While rare, risks include but are not limited to:

- Other pets in the home could catch a disease and/or parasite from a foster animal
- Foster care providers, members of their household, or visitors could catch a disease and/or parasite from a foster pet
- Other pets in the home could be injured or killed by a foster pet
- Foster care providers, members of the household, or visitors could be injured by a foster pet
- Foster pets could die in foster care or have to return to the shelter to be euthanized
- Foster pets may destroy personal items

How long do animals need to be in foster care?

Every situation is different! Foster needs range from a couple of days to several months or until the animal is adopted

How Fostering Works

Foster Care Opportunities

Long-Term Fostering: When an animal is taken out of the shelter environment into a home environment to prepare them for adoption or transport to another rescue. Animals experiencing behavioral or medical concerns in the shelter benefit the most from a long-term foster. These animals typically stay in foster care outside of the shelter environment until placement is found through adoption or rescue.

Short-Term Fostering: Provides insight into the animal's behavior and personality outside of the shelter environment. After the short-term foster is over, this information can be used to provide a more complete bio and immediately update the animal's kennel for potential adopters to see. Another benefit of short-term fostering is using this time to evaluate if the dog or cat will be a good fit for your lifestyle and schedule, and if so, a short-term foster can be extended to a long-term foster. ***Short-term fostering is a minimum of 2 days upwards to 7 days***

Transport Fostering: When an animal is cared for outside of the shelter environment during their waiting period before they leave for a rescue. Transport fostering is the perfect opportunity to get involved at CAA without the commitment of long-term fostering or the need to advertise for an adopter because they already have placement with our receiving partners. During this period, the foster's main priority is to provide a comfortable home for the animal while observing its traits and behavior so that the receiving rescue can pick the best-suited adopter. The foster is also required to bring the animal back to the shelter at least once for a health exam and on the animal's departure date. ***Animals tagged for transport are NOT adoption candidates and are committed to the receiving shelter***

Neonate Fostering: Is for puppies and kittens under the age of 4 weeks. Neonates require much more assistance and around the clock monitoring than the shelter environment can typically provide (i.e. bottle feeding) ***If you are interested in becoming a neonate foster for CAA, you must complete the specific neonate orientation, which provides instructions necessary to successfully foster puppies and kittens***

Selecting a Foster

Now that you are an approved foster for CAA, there are many ways to view available foster candidates and determine which animals are available to go into foster care.

- View the "Animals in Need of Foster Homes" newsletter. This newsletter will provide as much information on the animals most in need of foster care
- Visit the shelter to view the resident animals
- Wait for shelter call outs during critical situations (natural disaster, shelter capacity, transport, etc.)

If you are interested in fostering any of the suggested animals or need help selecting a foster animal, please contact the foster manager as soon as possible. Once we receive your interest, we will verify that the animal is still available, answer any questions that you may have, and confirm a pick up date and time.

At pick up, a foster contract will be completed for each individual animal and a medical summary report will be provided.

Supplies

CAA will provide foster care providers with certain supplies:

- Any medications, supplements, or prescription diets that have been prescribed by our veterinary staff
- Starter bag of food for adult dogs and cats. The foster is expected to continue to provide food after the starter bag is gone. Food for puppies and kitten, such as formula will be provided when needed.
- Other items, such as leash/collar, food/water bowls, kennels/carriers, litter/litter boxes (based on availability and need)

How to Get Your Foster Animal Noticed

Photos & Bios

Every foster animal has a greater chance of finding an adopter through good photos and a bio that express their personality and behaviors.

- It is encouraged within the first few weeks to send 3 to 5 photos to the foster manager. Photos should be of good quality (good lighting/not blurry) and the backgrounds of photos should not look messy or cluttered.
- When fostering an animal for CAA, you are their number one advocate! I encourage you to write a short bio expressing your animal's personality, behaviors, and needs to thrive in a new home.
- Send photos and bios to foster@caabr.org or fosterassistant@caabr.org

Offsite Adoption Events

All foster parents should do their best to attend a minimum of two adoption events per month. Offsite adoption events are a great way to get your animal more exposure, which could lead to adoption inquiries and more sound adoptions.

- CAA's Offsite Coordinator will arrange adoption events through local pet stores and community businesses. Once scheduled, the offsite coordinator or the foster manager will send the details through Better Impact
- [Friends of the Animals Adoption House \(FOTA\)](#)

- CAA fosters are welcome to bring their foster dogs (no cats or kittens) to FOTA
- You must request a kennel placement and wait for a confirmation email to be approved before bringing your animal to FOTA. FOTA serves its own fosters as well as CAA, so spots are limited! If you do not have an approved kennel request and you arrive to drop off at FOTA, they will NOT be able to accommodate you.
- For more information, read the FOTA information sheet found on our website under Foster Resources

Foster Care Adoption Procedure

Foster Inquiries

All animals in long term foster care are adopted on an application basis. Foster parents have the ability to approve or decline an application; however, one should be open minded and make the best decision for the animal's needs.

- When inquiring about animals in foster care, potential adopters are asked to fill out an adoption survey. Once the adoption survey is submitted, it is sent to the foster parent of the respective animal via email.
- Fosters must respond to adoption inquiries in 2 to 3 business days, whether they approve or decline. Declining an application? Send a "sorry" response – be courteous and give a reason why.
- Meet & Greets:
 - The foster should set up a time for the potential adopter, including family or personal pets to meet the animal as well as go over any behavioral and/or medical needs. Meet and greets can be conducted at CAA's dog park or a neutral location (Ex: community park)
- Foster Animal Trial Period:
 - CAA offers a 3 day trial period for foster animal to spend time with the potential adopter in their home
 - Allows more time to determine a good fit for all parties involved, including with family members and personal pets.
The foster animal still remains CAA's responsibility and property during the trial period

Found An Adopter?

Before an animal can be adopted they must be spayed/neutered, microchipped, rabies vaccinated, and up to date on all needed vaccinations at the time of adoption!

Adoption Paperwork that needs to be finalized to complete the Adoption:

- Adoption contract completed (*front and back*)
- Signed medical summary report (*dogs only*) acknowledging heartworm status. *Please encourage adopters to speak to their vet if they have questions regarding heartworms*

- Adoption Fee paid in full (*cash or credit/debit*)

Our adoption fees are a sliding scale based on length of stay. Base level fees for dogs range from \$100-\$200. Adoption fees for animals that have been at the shelter longer than 60 days are 50% off. Adoption fees for animals that have been at the shelter longer than 90 days are completely waived.

Adopters may NOT take home the animal until you or the shelter has received all 3 parts of the adoption paperwork listed above. If the adopter has paid the fee using a card over the phone, please check with CAA or call the front desk to confirm the payment has been made BEFORE giving the animal to the adopters

If the adopter needs to RETURN the animal after the adoption due to it not being a good fit, the adopter MUST contact the shelter to schedule an appointment to surrender. Unless the animal is posing a safety risk to the members of the household, the foster is not allowed to take the animal back into their care until the adopter has completed surrender paperwork at the shelter.

Can foster care providers adopt their foster animals?

Yes. Foster care providers may adopt their foster animal(s), but should notify the foster manager of their decision as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Medical Care, Appointments, and Emergencies

Medical Care

All medical care and treatment is provided by CAA's veterinary staff

While an animal is in foster care the foster parent is expected to administer and insure any medication, vaccinations, and preventions are given properly in a timely manner.

- Medication: All necessary medications will be provided by vet staff or the foster manager
- Heartworm/Flea Prevention:
 - All monthly preventions are located inside the building in the vestibule area when you walk through the first set of doors. There is a box on the greeter table where the preventions are organized in alphabetical order by *your last name*. Please make sure to utilize the printed sign out sheet when you retrieve your preventions so we know that you got them!
- Vaccinations:
 - Vaccinations *cannot* be given before the due date, but can be given a day or two *after* the due date.
 - If you are comfortable giving vaccinations yourself, please email foster@caabr.org and we can arrange for you to pick up the vaccine, please bring an insulated bag or ice pack as they must remain on ice.
 - Otherwise, please make an appointment to come into the shelter where a staff member can provide the vaccine for you. You will need to bring your foster animal with you for this appointment!

Medical Questions

Please email the foster manager for any medical questions, concerns, and/or to schedule an appointment for your foster animal(s).

- When emailing the foster manager, please have your foster animal's impound number and give a description of the problem, how long the problem has been present, and if applicable bring in a sample or send a photo/video

Please note: Due to the large number of animals in the foster program, if you arrive at the shelter without a scheduled appointment you will be asked to leave and schedule for a later date.

Medical Appointments with CAA

Drop-Off Appointments:

- Drop off appointments are utilized for most medical concerns to ensure our veterinary staff has ample time to examine and evaluate the animal
- Drop off appointments are scheduled Tuesday through Friday, and occasionally on Saturday and Sundays if a veterinarian is scheduled
- Drop off time: 8:00 am - 9:00 am
- Drop off location: Use door on side of building labeled 'Staff Only' with a sign directing for foster surgeries.
 - *Cats:* Place the carrier on the table right inside the 'Staff Only' door. Fill out the labeled form and attach it to the carrier.
 - *Dogs:* Place the dog in an open kennel. Fill out the labeled form and attach it to the carrier.
- Pick up time: 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm the same day of surgery
- Pick up location: Please go to the front desk and let the staff members know you are here to pick up your foster animal from their surgery. A staff member or I will retrieve your foster animal from the surgery unit. If needed, you will be sent home with any necessary medication following surgery (ex: dewormer, antibiotics)

Surgeries:

- Spay/neuter surgeries are scheduled Tuesday – Friday. Please email the foster manager to get your animal added to the schedule.
 - Follow the same procedure for drop-off appointments.
- Surgeries other than spay/neuter (amputation, FHO, etc.)
 - You can schedule with the foster manager
 - Same drop off procedure. Pick up may be different depending on type of surgery, always check with the foster manager to determine pick up time/date.

Medical Emergencies

- If there is a medical emergency during CAA business hours, please notify a staff member at CAA by calling (225) 408-5360 and bring the animal to the shelter immediately.
- See *"Guidelines for After-Hours Treatment at LSU Veterinary Hospital"* document for more details on how to proceed with medical emergencies involving animals in foster care.
- If a foster animal is displaying any of the following medical signs after hours, they should be taken to LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital for further evaluation:
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Vomiting for over 12 hours
 - Vomiting or excreting excessive amounts of blood
 - Seizures
 - Severe trauma and/or broken bones
 - Extreme lethargy and lack of appetite for more than 12 hours
- **Fading kitten and puppy neonates less than 4 weeks of age SHOULD NOT be taken to LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Supportive care should be provided by the foster parent, and then brought to CAA the next day during business hours.**

Outside Vet Treatment

- Any and all outside veterinary treatment must be pre-approved by our CAA veterinarian, and there must be an outside treatment form signed and completed first.
- We are legally responsible for your foster's medical care, and must be kept aware of any and all outside treatment and approve it beforehand.
- **If not approved by a CAA director or manager, and medical care is still sought at an outside veterinarian, Companion Animal Alliance is not financially obligated or responsible for reimbursing the foster parent.**

Returning Foster Animals to the Shelter

CAA will always take the animal back at the shelter, but once the animal is here at the shelter, they're available for adoption, transfer/transport to another rescue, foster care, or euthanasia

- Please email the foster manager at least 2 days in advance, so that we can make arrangements at the shelter
- You will need to complete a behavior profile for the animal(s) you are returning

Going out of state

CAA highly recommends not taking your foster animal outside of state lines due to the responsibility and liability CAA has for the animal.

- We always recommend finding a temporary CAA foster while you're out of town
 - Ask in the Facebook group if anyone would like to temporarily foster, and give the temporary foster all the information they should know about your foster's personality. Next, give them a digital or paper copy of the animals medical.

- Let the foster manager know if your animal will be staying with a temporary foster, and provide their name, contact information, and duration.
- If you can't find a temporary CAA foster – A family member, close friend, a trust worthy neighbor, or a boarding facility are also options to look after your foster animal.

Companion Animal Alliance Foster Resources

For additional resources regarding the foster program and behavioral resources, please scan the QR code below.

Foster Program Resources

Foster Care Adoptions

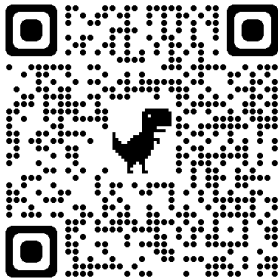
- CAA Adoption Contract
- Foster Adoption Checklist
- CAA Foster Trial Period Waiver
- Adoption Survey

Foster Resources and Documents

- CAA Foster Care Handbook
- CAA Foster Kitten Handbook: Caring for Kittens 8 weeks or Younger
- First Week Checklist
- Camp Bow Wow Policy
- Friends of the Animals Adoption House Policy

Foster Medical Resources

- Guidelines to After-Hour Treatment at LSU Veterinary Hospital
- Outside Veterinary Treatment Waiver
- Approaching Heartworm Disease



Foster Behavior Resources

Need help with your foster animal's behavior? Scan the QR code to view articles and tips that might help with your foster animal!

