



**Congratulations on
becoming a foster parent**

**Let us guide you through
the process**



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Our Process:

- Once you have shown interest in becoming a foster parent we will have you come in to pick what you would prefer to foster ie. mom and babies, bottle babies, older kittens, etc.
- The fosters will be evaluated before going into a foster home, meaning they will get their first vaccinations, dewormer, flea treatment, or any other medical they need.
- We will provide any supplies you may need during the foster process. Items such as litter pans, litter, scoopers, kitten food, blankets, and bottle baby supplies can be found here at the shelter for your use. As long as we have plenty of supplies we will do our best to provide them for you (sometimes we may run out of certain things and would ask you to purchase the supplies yourself). We can also provide crates and hide-away beds for nervous kitties.
- Before you leave we would ask you to sign a copy of our foster agreement, which states your responsibilities as a foster parent in a little more detail.
 - Your responsibilities as a foster parent:
 - We ask that you provide the transport of your fosters to appointments for vaccinations, which will be given here at the shelter.
 - Depending on how many spots we have in our surgery schedule we may have you run your fosters to a local vet to be spayed/neutered.
 - Socialize your fosters and give them love and attention.
- Once your fosters are fully vaccinated you can choose to bring them back to the shelter or keep them a little longer through their spay/neuter surgery.
- After you have completed your foster process you can bring them back to be placed on the adoption floor

Vaccinations Due:

Things to look out for:

- Loose stool or diarrhea, usually caused by parasites that may or may not be visible in feces; these can sometimes be treated with dewormer picked up at the shelter.
- Continual vomiting or occasional vomiting that lasts more than a day or two.
- Extreme lethargy for more than 2-3 days.
- Eyes that are red and inflamed or have an extreme amount of discharge and swelling, vs. small amounts of discharge, usually in both eyes (common with a URI). This can often be treated with eye ointment picked up at the shelter.
- Any crumbly wax-like substance in the ears (possible ear mites). We can clean out the ears and see if any medication is necessary.
- Fleas or flea dirt (black pepper-like substance in the fur). Flea medication is usually applied if fleas are noticed at the shelter. If you see flea dirt, we would recommend a dawn bath or flea combing through them regularly. If it has been over a month since their last flea treatment they can receive another one.

Important things to watch while fostering to help us place them into a home:

- Whether the cat likes to be petted or held
- Is a lap cat
- Purrs easily
- Is vocal or quiet
- Is active and playful or calm
- Has good litter box manners
- Uses a scratching post
- Has experience with other animals and children, etc.

Veterinary Visits

All vet visits must be pre-authorized unless you are willing to pay for the visit yourself. Please contact the shelter first. If you are having a medical problem with your foster we may be able to treat it with supplies we have here at the shelter. We will evaluate the situation and see if they need further care with a vet.

Watch out for these signs:

- Fever (103.5 or above, rectally), respiratory distress (choking, wheezing, open-mouth breathing, shortness of breath); green secretions and/or bad odor from nasal area; not eating or drinking for more than a few days; extreme lethargy for more than a day or two; obvious distress, pain or pronounced behavior changes.
- For kittens less than 2-3 weeks, open mouth breathing, not nursing or taking the bottle, and crawling away from the litter/mother.
- If kittens are eating and active, there is likely no urgency in seeking a visit to the shelter. Seek only in cases when symptoms are lingering, diarrhea is lingering, or secretions are green. It can also be considered when the lingering symptoms seem to be the only thing delaying a kitten otherwise ready for adoption.

Medical Supplies

Any of these items can be obtained at the shelter:

- Flea medication
- Tapeworm medicine
- FVRCP vaccination or boosters
- Nutracal
- Ear cleaner
- Dewormer (roundworms)
- Antibiotic eye ointment
- Triple antibiotic ointment (ringworm)
- Oral antibiotics for URI
- Pain medication

Bottle Kitten Basics

STEP 1: Mix the formula

- KMR formula should be mixed according to can instructions (2 parts water to 1 part formula). Mix well.
- For the first couple feedings, dilute the formula (3 parts water to 1 part formula) to help reduce digestive upset.
- Only mix what you think the kitten will drink that day. Leftover formula should be immediately refrigerated. It can be kept up to 24 hours once mixed. Unused mixed formula should be discarded after 24 hours. (Tip: write the date/time of mixing on the container.)
- The opened can of powdered formula should also be refrigerated.

STEP 2: Prepare the bottle

- Estimate required amount of formula in clean bottle (stomach capacity of kittens is generally 4mL per 100g of body weight).
- Heat water in a mug or container (a microwave works well for this) and place the cold bottle in hot water for a few minutes.
- Test temperature of formula on wrist. If too cool, return it to hot water. If too hot, swirl formula around in bottle and wait 30 seconds and test again. Formula should be warm to the touch, but not hot.
- Test the nipple. Formula should slowly drip from tip when bottle is upside down, and should not be streaming.

STEP 3: Prepare the kitten

- Kitten should be warm before feeding. If extremities feel cool, slowly warm the kitten before continuing.
- Kitten should be fed on its stomach, with its head tilted slightly up with the neck extended, similar to its position when nursing from mom. (Tip: Never feed a kitten on its back as this can cause formula to enter the lungs!) You can “burrito” the kitten in a towel if needed.
- Burp the kitten by gently patting or rubbing its back.
- If you notice any formula coming out of the kitten’s nose, stop immediately. This can be a sign of overfeeding or that the formula is streaming too quickly from the nipple.

STEP 4: Stimulate the kitten

- Use a warm damp cotton ball or paper towel and gently rub the kitten’s genitals to stimulate it to urinate and defecate. Kittens will not defecate every time.
- Continue stimulating for 30 seconds after kitten stops urinating to

make sure bladder is empty and to give the kitten a chance to defecate.

- If mom is available, she might do this part for you!

STEP 5: Clean up after feeding

- If bottle is empty or if it has been 24 hours since the leftover formula was mixed, clean it out with warm soapy water and let it dry between feedings.
- Remember – feeding smaller amounts more frequently is better for kittens, as it will help to keep them hydrated and prevent issues associated with overfeeding.
- Kittens are ready to transition to wet cat food around 4 weeks old, or when teeth emerge.

Other helpful links:

[How to Care for a Mama Cat & Kittens \(3 Top Tips!\) - YouTube](#)

[Learn How Baby Kittens Grow: 0-8 Weeks! - YouTube](#)

[How to Care for a Bottle Baby Kitten \(QUICK Tutorial!\) - YouTube](#)

kitten weight and feeding chart

AGE	WEIGHT	AMOUNT PER FEEDING	SCHEDULE
0-1 week	50-150 grams	2-6 ml	Every 2 hours
1-2 weeks	150-250 grams	6-10 ml	Every 2-3 hours
2-3 weeks	250-350 grams	10-14 ml	Every 3-4 hours
3-4 weeks	350-450 grams	14-18 ml	Every 4-5 hours
4-5 weeks	450-550 grams	18-22 ml	Every 5-6 hours
5-8 weeks	550-850 grams	(weaning; offer ample wet food)	Every 6 hours

Fading Kitten Emergency Protocol:

What is “fading kitten” syndrome?

Fading kitten syndrome describes a kitten that “crashes”—it suddenly becomes ill or unresponsive, even if it was previously healthy.

Symptoms:

- Hypothermia/low temperature—feeling cool or cold to the touch, particularly in limbs/extremities.
- Lethargy—inability to stand up, or is unresponsive to touch
- Labored breathing—exaggerated breathing, often with mouth open
- Excessive meowing—particularly loud, pained cries combined with any of the above symptoms
- If you think your foster kitten is exhibiting these symptoms, don’t wait!

- **Emergency Protocol:**
- Provide warmth—wrap the kitten in a blanket or towel with a heat source.
 - Make sure the heat source is not directly touching the kitten, but is covered by a cloth or blanket.
 - Don’t have a heat source? Put uncooked rice into a clean sock, knot the end, and microwave for 2-3 minutes.
 - No microwave? Put hot (not boiling) water into a doubled-up Ziploc bag.
- Increase blood sugar—use light Karo corn syrup or mix some sugar into warm water until it dissolves.
- Use a syringe or finger to place a few drops of sugar source into the kitten’s mouth every 3 minutes. (Plain chicken baby food also works well)
 - Using a stopwatch or timer can help!
 - If the kitten cannot swallow, rub the sugar source onto its gums.
- Contact the shelter so we can determine if any additional steps are needed.
- If the kitten has not begun to improve within 15 minutes, their chance of survival is very low, but in some cases we may be able to provide more specialized emergency care. If the kitten does not pull through, please remember that you have done everything you can, and that the kitten could have other underlying, non-treatable issues.

Kittens with URI (Upper Respiratory Infection)

Typical Symptoms:

- Sneezing, eye discharge (clear or colored), coughing, nasal discharge
- Limping and/or fever
 - When to contact the shelter:
 - Decrease in appetite and/or energy
 - Eye(s) getting “stuck shut” with goopy discharge
 - Persistent nasal discharge, especially if colored (whitish/yellowish/greenish)
 - Kitten hasn’t eaten for more than 12 hours
 - Kitten non-responsive, not-weight-bearing, unable to walk
- Home Care:
 - How to clean eyes and/or nose:
 - Use warm/damp compress (washcloth) and hold over goopy areas. Gently wipe nose to remove crusty/goopy material. Gently wipe eyes (from close to nose outwards towards ears) to remove crusty/goopy material.
 - Clean eyes before giving eye medications (if prescribed).
 - Eyes and nose can have warm compresses applied several times per day.
 - Use of steam (hot shower, humidifier, etc.):
 - If kittens are congested, you can expose them to steam/humidity to help open up clogged breathing.
 - For hot shower system: run hot shower water in a small, enclosed bathroom (door shut, ventilation fan off). Let kitten sit in bathroom for 15 minutes of steam therapy.
 - For humidifier system: set up humidifier in small, poorly vented area. Let kitten sit in the area for 15 minutes. You can also run the humidifier in the designated kitten area for 15 minutes every several hours. Too much exposure to humidifiers can get kittens wet.
- Supplemental feeding:
 - Spoon-feeding kittens: mix up gruel (applesauce texture mixture of canned kitten food and hot water). Use the handle of a spoon and place small mouthfuls of gruel in the kitten's mouth. This is a messy procedure, but can help kittens remember that gruel is delicious. Persistence with small bites is more effective than giant bites. Please keep in mind that kittens needing supplemental feeding are frequently congested and may need their noses cleaned before and after each feeding.

When to ask for help:

- No improvement after 2-3 days
- 1 kitten getting worse, especially if others are improving

Undersocialized Kittens

Typical Symptoms:

- Level 1: Hiding, running, avoiding contact with people
- Level 2: Hissing, growling, swatting at people
 - How to socialize kittens in foster care:
 - Environmental Set-up
 - Undersocialized kittens should be housed in smaller spaces that minimize hiding opportunities. Avoid spaces with areas you cannot easily access (i.e. under beds, behind furniture, etc.).
 - Foster program can lend “kitty condos” and crates for these kittens.
 - Handling & Time with People
 - Kittens should be handled for many brief “sessions” each day. Once kitten has relaxed, let them go (this can be the biggest reward).
 - Each handling session should include being picked up.
 - Sessions can involve “burrito-wrap” kittens in blankets
 - Hand-feeding wet/baby food
 - Sessions include: cuddling, holding kittens close to your body, gentle petting, etc.
 - Sessions should be individualized: if you are fostering multiple undersocialized kittens, please cuddle each kitten separately, focusing on increasing their relationship with you the person.
 - Use of Toys and Treats
 - Hand-feeding tasty treats and/or wet/baby food
 - Interactive toys
 - Exposure to novelty
 - Host “kitten parties” – friends (all ages) visit and interact with kittens
 - New environments – once kittens get comfortable, expose them to novel areas of your home
 - New noises – normal home sounds include: t.v., radio, vacuum, appliances, etc.
 - Grooming – nail clipping and/or touching paws; combing/wiping with damp cloth
 - Cat-friendly dogs – if you happen to have a dog who loves cats, this can be an opportunity for kittens to learn about dogs