



# **Foster Program Manual**

Burlington Animal Services  
221 Stone Quarry Road, Burlington, NC 27217  
336-578-0343  
[www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets](http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets)

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## Contact Information

**Lois Dixon, Foster Program Coordinator**

**Email:** fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov

**Address:** 221 Stone Quarry Rd., Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-578-0343

**After hours emergency - call 911 and ask for the on-call animal control officer to call you.**

General Email:	animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov
Hours of Operation:	Mon-Fri: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.   Sat: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Website:	<a href="http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/963/Animal-Services">http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/963/Animal-Services</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/BurlingtonPetAdoptionCenter">https://www.facebook.com/BurlingtonPetAdoptionCenter</a>
Emergency Veterinary Clinic:	All Paws Pet Emergency Hospital—Dr. Sharon Anthony 3317 S. Church St., Burlington, NC 27215 Phone: 336-270-4929   Fax: 336-270-5249 Business Hours: Monday – Friday 6 p.m. – 8 a.m. Saturday noon – Monday 8 a.m. Open 24 hours on holidays

### Management Contacts

Animal Services Director:	Jessica Arias 336-578-0343 X 103 <a href="mailto:jarias@burlingtonnc.gov">jarias@burlingtonnc.gov</a>
Animal Services Administrative Manager:	Tamee Penley 336-578-0343 X 104 <a href="mailto:tpenley@burlingtonnc.gov">tpenley@burlingtonnc.gov</a>
Animal Shelter Manager:	Elizabeth Overcash 336-578-1386 X 115 <a href="mailto:eovercash@burlingtonnc.gov">eovercash@burlingtonnc.gov</a>
Program Manager	Laura Michel 336-578-0343 X 102 <a href="mailto:lmichel@burlingtonnc.gov">lmichel@burlingtonnc.gov</a>

*Fosters are welcome to contact or visit Burlington Animal Services Center during our business hours to select a new foster animal, return a foster animal, and/or perform meet and greets with potential adopters. Foster parents can bring a foster animal in for a health check, to pick up supplies, or for preventative care during a time scheduled with the Foster Program Coordinator or veterinary staff.*



## **FOSTER EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

- Keep your foster in a safe environment. Your foster must be kept inside.
- Do not take your foster to any dog parks.
- Return your foster pet to Burlington Animal Services for needed veterinary care such as heartworm prevention, weight checks, vaccinations, spay/neuter, or any other veterinary related procedures and services. **\*Please note that heartworm prevention MUST be administered monthly and is based on the weight of the animal.**
- Join our closed Facebook group **Burlington Animal Services Foster Page** (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2006463296075392/>).
- Send updates so that your foster can be promoted through social media outlets. This needs to be done at least once a month, but preferably more. (This includes photos as well.)
- Promote your foster pet through social media.
- Promote your foster by bringing it to events such as 4th Fridays, Clear the Shelter, Carousel Festival, Burlington Christmas parade, St. Patrick's Day event, etc. (This applies to dogs and only if your foster dog is comfortable attending events.)
- Be available to bring your foster for meet and greets and also answer emails/phone calls **in a timely manner (within 24 hours)** concerning getting your foster pet adopted.
- Socialize and train your foster so that it will be ready for adoption.
- If you rent, make sure that you have permission from your landlord. If you have roommates, please make sure that they are in agreement for you to foster.
- Return your foster to Burlington Animal Services, if necessary, or upon request.
- Do not rehome your foster.
- Adoption of your foster by you, or another person, must be done through Burlington Animal Services.
- Contact Burlington Animal Services and/or the Animal Shelter Manager should any emergency arise:
  - During regular business hours, call 336-578-0343 **OR** email [fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov)
  - After hours and weekends, call 911 and ask for the on-call animal control officer to call you.

## Introduction

Welcome to the Burlington Animal Services Foster Program!

Burlington Animal Services is responsible for enforcement of laws pertaining to animal issues in the City of Burlington as well as providing public animal sheltering and pet adoption services for Alamance County. Additionally, Burlington Animal Services operates the Spay & Neuter Clinic of Alamance County.

Burlington Animal Services is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of people and pets in our community through our commitment to public service, active enforcement of state and local laws, providing humane animal care, promoting responsible pet ownership and addressing pet overpopulation in Alamance County.

Burlington Animal Services seeks to work with citizens, volunteers and community partners in accomplishing our mission.

The Burlington Animal Services Foster Program was developed to help those animals who are most at risk in a shelter setting. Those animals most in need of foster include those with medical needs, such as dogs with heartworm disease, recovering from a medical procedure or demodectic mange; animals with behavioral needs, such as those who are shy, fearful, or stressed by the shelter environment; and animals who are too young to be adopted, such as kittens and puppies.

The foster program allows animals to be placed into a foster home where they can receive medical treatment, work on socialization skills, or simply wait until they are old enough to be adopted. Some foster animals will need long-term fosters. For example, a dog receiving heartworm treatment may need a foster home for one to three months, while foster animals like kittens and puppies may need foster placement for less than a month. Burlington Animal Services staff will attempt to match foster parents with those foster animals who meet the foster parents' needs.

Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to foster for Burlington Animal Services! By fostering an animal, you are giving that animal a chance to find a loving and permanent home. We thank you for your compassion!

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**This manual is intended to serve as a reference guide for Burlington Animal Services foster parent volunteers. Medical care information in this manual is not intended to serve as a diagnostic tool. If the foster animal is ill or injured, you must immediately contact Burlington Animal Services and follow instructions for care, which may include bringing the animal to the shelter or a veterinarian for diagnosis. Burlington Animal Services will not pay for any outside medical care without a manager's approval. While some animal care is universal, please remember that each foster animal is unique in his/her needs.**

## **Requirements of the Burlington Animal Services Foster Program**

In addition to the terms and conditions agreed to in the Burlington Animal Services Foster Agreement, the foster parent volunteer is required to:

- Prepare a safe and suitable environment for the foster animal(s).
- Provide the foster animal(s) with fresh and wholesome food and water, administer prescribed medications and/or treatments to the foster animal(s), groom the foster animal(s) if necessary, and socialize the foster animal(s).
- Treat the foster animal(s) with kindness and adhere to the anti-cruelty laws of the State of North Carolina.
- Bring the foster animal(s) to Burlington Animal Services when required for medical treatments and vaccinations.
- Not alter, in any way, the animal(s) being fostered. This includes declawing, cropping of the ears, docking of the tail, spaying/neutering, micro-chipping, or tattooing the animal.
- Not use the foster animal(s) for any commercial exploitation.
- Immediately return the animal to Burlington Animal Services should the foster agreement be terminated by either party.
- Provide updated contact information to Burlington Animal Services staff should an address or phone number change.
- Follow the adoption policy and process of Burlington Animal Services.
- Return the animal(s) to Burlington Animal Services by the date set by Burlington Animal Services, if necessary or upon request.
- Actively market the foster animal, once made available for adoption by Burlington Animal Services, and participate in adoption events when possible.

The foster experience may last from a few days to a few months, depending on the specific needs of the foster animal. If you cannot fulfill the entire foster term, due to scheduling constraints, vacations, or unforeseen events, contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager as soon as possible so arrangements can be made to return the animal to Burlington Animal Services.

Fostering an animal will require daily feeding and watering, medicating, cleaning, and socializing the foster animal, as well as the scheduled and unscheduled trips to Burlington Animal Services for medical care and preventative care. A foster parent should physically interact with his/her foster animal at least twice each day for both the mental and physical health of the animal.

Please make sure you have the time and energy to foster an animal before taking him or her home!

## **Promoting Your Foster Animal**

Burlington Animal Services staff will do our best to promote your foster animal, but we need your help! Good photographs of the foster animal and a biography detailing the animal's personality are crucial in reaching adopters. Please send photographs and a biography/description of your foster animal to the Foster Program Coordinator, Program Manager or the Animal Shelter Manager. Please keep photographs and descriptions rolling in as you snap new photographs or learn more about the animal's habits—Burlington Animal Services staff will use this information to promote your foster animal on our website and on our social media.

Foster parents are encouraged to publicize their foster animal in any way they can think of or accommodate, whether through public appearances at parks and adoption events or through websites and social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. If you are taking your foster animal out into the community, Burlington Animal Services has "Adopt Me" harnesses, leashes, and bandanas that foster parents can borrow for the outing. Also, many businesses, including veterinarians' offices, pet stores, and venues like Starbucks, have community boards where they will allow you to post flyers of your foster animal. Many workplaces have internal bulletin boards where they will allow you to post flyers.

*Writing a Biography:* When promoting your foster animal, please be honest! Half-truths and sugar-coating can lead to the animal being returned. You know the animal better than anyone and that should be reflected in the way you promote them.

Some things you might consider including in a written biography are:

- How does the animal react with other animals? Is he/she okay with other dogs and/or cats? Is he/she okay with both male and female animals?
- How does the animal do (or, to the best of your knowledge, how would he/she do) with children. If you can, include age ranges, i.e. "okay with kids 5 and older" or "okay with teenagers," etc.
- What is the animal's activity level? i.e. "dog needs to run 10 miles every day" or "dog is happy just watching the world go by."
- Is the animal house trained, litter trained, crate trained, or scratching post trained? Does the animal know any commands?
- Please note any other special characteristics that will make your foster animal stand out.

Remember, you are looking for the best match for your foster animal and you want to give the potential adopters that information so that they can make an informed decision.

Regardless of how you promote your foster animal, please remember that all adoptions must go through Burlington Animal Services. If anyone is interested in adopting your foster animal, please direct them to Burlington Animal Services.

**Never give a foster animal to a potential adopter before the potential adopter completes the adoption process. If an animal is given to any potential adopter prior to the adoption paperwork having been completed, your participation in the foster program will be immediately terminated.**

*\*See Ways To Help Your Foster Get Adopted tip sheet and Report Card on pages 37 and 38.*

## Preparing Your Home

### The Importance of Separation

It is important to keep the foster animal(s) separated from your animals for a period of 10 days. Foster animals come from an unknown background and may already be sick or carrying a disease and not yet showing symptoms. Burlington Animal Services can provide medication and treatment for the foster animal's illnesses but cannot provide medical treatment for your animals. **For more information about this process, see page 29, *Bringing Your Adopted Dog Home - The First Two Weeks*.**

Before you begin fostering animals, please make sure that your pets are current on their vaccinations. You may wish to discuss your interest in fostering with your veterinarian. You should keep all of your personal pets current on all vaccinations as long as you continue to foster.

### Should a Fight Occur Between Animals

If a fight occurs between your foster animal and one of your personal animals, please use the utmost safety in resolving this fight. Under no circumstances should you place yourself or any of your body parts (hands, arms, legs, etc.) between the fighting animals. Instead, try the following:

- Spray the animals with a hose, if possible, or throw a glass of water in the animals' faces.
- Try calling the animals away – say, “Let’s go for a walk,” etc., and clap your hands and move away.
- If two people are present, each person can grab the hind legs of one of the animals, lifting the hind legs off of the ground. When the animals release one another, move the animals backwards and away from each other. If the animals are attached and will not release each other, momentarily push the animals together, hard, to disorient them, then move them backwards and away from one another.
- If you are alone, loop a leash around the waist of one animal and attach that leash to a stationary object, such as a door or piece of furniture; then, either grab the hind legs of the second animal or loop another leash around the second animal. If the animals are not attached, then pull back on the hind legs or the leash looped around the second animal to separate them. If the animals are attached, then first momentarily push the animals together, hard, to disorient them, then pull back on the hind legs or the leash looped around the second animal to separate them.

Please use caution; a highly stimulated animal may redirect his/her aggression toward you, so please keep your head, face, hands, and all body parts away from the animal, especially the animal's head, as much as possible.

After the fight has ceased, please immediately contact Burlington Animal Services, the Foster Program Coordinator or the Shelter Manager.

### Creating the Foster Space

You will need to designate an enclosed space inside your home for the foster animal(s). You will want to consider a space that can be easily cleaned and sanitized. A small room or a few

adequately sized crates may help with protecting your home from unnecessary damage and controlling unwanted contact between the foster animal(s) and your own animal(s).

For an adult dog, a crate may be helpful. Please be sure that the crate is large enough to allow the dog to lie down, turn around, and stand comfortably. The dog will need to spend a good deal of time outside of the confinement of the crate. Adopters often appreciate and look for animals who are crate-trained. Crates are **NEVER** to be used as punishment. This is a space that is the animal's own and should be a safe zone for the animal. If you have questions on crate training, please contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager.

A playpen can be a useful enclosure for puppies and kittens, as it provides more room for them to exercise and interact. If you are fostering a litter of puppies or kittens with their mother, you will need to take special precautions to keep your own animals away from the mother and her litter. New mothers can be very intent on protecting their young from any perceived threat.

Cats and kittens should be provided with a place to hide where they feel safe but where they are still accessible, such as a cat carrier with the door removed. Be careful not to put kittens in areas with inaccessible hiding areas, such as behind furniture or under the bed. A small bathroom or a crate that is large enough to place a litter box, bed, food and water are ideal places to house kittens. Please be sure to remove valuable or breakable items from the reach of foster cats.

### *Pet-Proofing the Home*

Once you have chosen an area to keep your foster animal, you should take time to pet-proof the area. With the often rambunctious nature of puppies and kittens, pet-proofing is much the same as child-proofing. Pet-proofing means removing cords, small items that can be ingested, sharp objects that can inflict injury, and breakable items from area(s) in which the foster animal will be housed.

Please use the following tips as a guide to make your foster area(s) safe:

- Keep sharp objects, breakable items, electrical cords, garbage, cleaning supplies, chemicals, medicines, valuables, and any other items that could be chewed and ingested secure and out of reach of the foster animal(s).
- Keep plastic bags, which can cause suffocation, out of reach.
- Move toxic houseplants out of reach (see the section below on toxic houseplants).
- Make sure pets have not jumped into the dryer, washer, oven, refrigerator, or dishwasher before closing these appliances.
- Keep food out of reach—certain foods may be toxic (see the section below on poisonous foods).
- Keep the toilet lid closed.
- Keep trash cans secured or placed out of reach.

### Common Toxic Houseplants

The Humane Society of the United States ([www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org)), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ([www.asPCA.org](http://www.asPCA.org)), and the American Animal Hospital Association ([www.healthypet.com](http://www.healthypet.com)) provide listings of common toxic substances. The following is a short list of common toxic houseplants or flowers. Please refer to these websites and others of a similar nature for a complete listing.

- Aloe
- Amaryllis
- Caladium
- Chrysanthemum
- Corn Plant (aka Cornstalk Plant)
- Cordatum
- Cyclamen
- Daffodil
- Devil's Ivy
- Dieffenbachia
- Flamingo Plant
- Dracaena
- Green Gold Nephthysis
- Hyacinth
- Hydrangea
- Iris
- Kalanchoe
- Lacy Tree
- Lilies
- Mistletoe
- Philodendron
- Poinsettia
- Pothos
- Sago Palm
- Schefflera (aka Umbrella Tree)
- Tulip

### Poisonous Foods

The following is a short list of common foods that are dangerous to pets. This is not an exhaustive list. Please contact Burlington Animal Services or your veterinarian prior to giving your foster animal any food that is not specifically designated for animals.

- Alcohol
- Almonds
- Apple seeds
- Apricot
- Cherries
- Caffeine
- Candy (containing the sweetener Xylitol and/or chocolate)
- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Garlic
- Grapes
- Hops
- Macademia nuts
- Moldy foods
- Mushroom plants
- Mustard seeds
- Onions and onion powder
- Peaches
- Potato leaves and stems
- Raisins
- Rhubarb leaves
- Salt
- Tea (caffeine)
- Tomato leaves and stems
- Walnuts
- Yeast dough

### Poison Control

If you think that your foster animal has ingested potentially poisonous or toxic food, plants, or other materials, please immediately alert Burlington Animal Services. In addition, you may also contact the following resources:

Carolina Poison Center: 800-222-1222; [www.ncpoisoncenter.org](http://www.ncpoisoncenter.org)

Animal Poison Control Center: 888-426-4435; [www.asPCA.org/apcc](http://www.asPCA.org/apcc)

*Note: Utilizing the toll-free number may result in a consultation fee being assessed by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Please use this resource at your discretion, as you are responsible for paying the fees.*

### Recommended Supplies

You may find it helpful to stock up on the following supplies, depending on the species and age of the animal(s) you are fostering. Unfortunately, due to funding limitations, Burlington Animal Services is typically not able to provide these supplies to you, unless they have been donated and are available.

- Bottles
- Bowls/dishes
- Brushes/nail clippers
- Carrier/crate
- Cotton balls, facial tissue
- Heating pad
- Litter box, litter
- Newspaper
- Sanitizer, bleach
- Scratching post
- Stain/odor remover
- Thermometer
- Toys
- Towels

### Food

Burlington Animal Services will provide food for all foster animals; however, you are welcome to feed the foster animal(s) a food of your own choosing, so long as that food is of good quality and recommended for the age and species of the animal(s) you are fostering. You will not be paid for any food that you buy for your foster animal(s).

## **Bringing the Foster Animal Home**

The Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager will notify foster parents by phone or email when an animal is in need of foster care. The Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager will tell foster parents about the animal(s) needing to be fostered, an estimate on the length of the foster period, and any special treatment needed.

Once a foster parent has accepted a foster assignment, the foster parent will need to schedule a time to pick up the foster animal—due to constant space constraints at Burlington Animal Services, the sooner the animal can be picked up, the better.

When you pick up the foster animal(s), you will be given paperwork on each individual animal including vaccination records and treatment instructions. You may be required to set up a recheck appointment at the time that you pick up the foster animal(s).

### **Helping the Foster Animal Settle into Your Home**

You may find it helpful to keep your foster animal in his/her crate or carrier for 15 minutes once you arrive at your home. This allows the animal some time to adjust to the new environment. If you have an adult dog or puppies, you may want to walk them on a leash outside and give them an opportunity to go to the bathroom before entering your home. Once the animal is in his/her foster space, give the foster animal a fresh bowl of water. Do not introduce your personal animals to the foster animal upon arrival at home. Instead, allow your personal pets to investigate the new smells and signs associated with the foster animal through a closed door over the course of several days. **For more information, see page 29, *Bringing Your Adopted Dog Home - The First Two Weeks*.**

After ten days in your home, the foster animal may be introduced to your pet(s); however, please be sure that your personal animal(s) and the foster animal(s) are strictly supervised and in a neutral territory or common area. For dogs, it is best to introduce them outdoors if possible. Please be particularly cautious of introducing a mother dog with a litter of puppies to any of your personal animals. Remember that mother dogs are very protective of their young, especially if they are still nursing. **Please never leave a foster animal unattended with your personal animal.**

### **Crate Training (Dogs) (Information Courtesy of HSUS' Dog Behavior Tip Sheet)**

Crate training uses a dog's natural instincts as a den animal. A wild dog's den is his home, i.e. a place to sleep, hide from danger, and raise a family. The crate becomes your dog's den, an ideal spot to snooze or take refuge during a thunderstorm. The primary use for a crate is housetraining. Dogs do not like to soil their dens. The crate can limit access to the rest of the house while the dog learns other rules, like not to chew on furniture. Crates are a safe way to transport your dog in the car.

#### **Crating caution!**

A crate is not a magical solution. If not used correctly, a dog can feel trapped and frustrated. Never use the crate as a punishment. Your dog will come to fear it and refuse to enter it. Also, do not leave your dog in the crate too long. A dog who is crated day and night does not get enough

exercise or human interaction and can become depressed or anxious. You may have to change your schedule, hire a pet sitter, or take your dog to a doggie daycare facility to reduce the amount of time he must spend in his crate every day.

Puppies under six months of age should not stay in a crate for more than three or four hours at a time. They cannot control their bladders and bowels for any longer than that. The same goes for adult dogs who are being housetrained. Physically, they can hold it, but they do not know that this is what they are supposed to do.

Crate your dog only until you can trust him not to destroy the house. After that, it should be a place he goes voluntarily.

### Selecting a crate

Several types of crates are available:

- Plastic (often called “flight kennels”)
- Fabric on a collapsible, rigid frame
- Collapsible, metal pens

Crates come in different sizes and can be purchased at most pet supply stores or pet supply catalogs.

Your dog’s crate should be just large enough for him to stand up and turn around in. If your dog is still growing, choose a crate size that will accommodate his adult size. Block off the excess crate space so your dog cannot eliminate at one end and retreat to the other.

### The crate training process

Crate training can take days or weeks, depending on your dog's age, temperament, and past experiences. It is important to keep two things in mind while crate training:

1. The crate should always be associated with something pleasant.
2. Training should take place in a series of small steps. Do not go too fast.

#### Step 1: Introduce your dog to the crate

Place the crate in an area of your house where the family spends a lot of time, such as the family room. Put a soft blanket or towel in the crate. Take the door off and let the dog explore the crate at his leisure. Some dogs will be naturally curious and start sleeping in the crate right away. If yours is not one of them:

1. Bring him over to the crate, and talk to him in a happy tone of voice. Make sure the crate door is open and secured so that it will not hit your dog and frighten him.
2. Encourage your dog to enter the crate by dropping some small food treats nearby, then just inside the door, and finally, all the way inside the crate. If he refuses to go all the way in at first, that is okay; do not force him to enter.

3. Continue tossing treats into the crate until your dog will walk calmly all the way into the crate to get the food. If he is not interested in treats, try tossing a favorite toy in the crate. This step may take a few minutes or as long as several days.

#### Step 2: Feed your dog his meals in the crate

After introducing your dog to the crate, begin feeding him his regular meals near the crate. This will create a pleasant association with the crate. If your dog is readily entering the crate when you begin Step 2, place the food dish all the way at the back of the crate. If he remains reluctant to enter the crate, put the dish only as far inside as he will readily go without becoming fearful or anxious. Each time you feed him, place the dish a little further back in the crate. Once your dog is standing comfortably in the crate to eat his meal, you can close the door while he is eating. The first time you do this, open the door as soon as he finishes his meal. With each successive feeding, leave the door closed a few minutes longer, until he is staying in the crate for ten minutes or so after eating. If he begins to whine to be let out, you may have increased the length of time too quickly. Next time, try leaving him in the crate for a shorter time period. If he does whine or cry in the crate, do not let him out until he stops. Otherwise, he will learn that the way to get out of the crate is to whine, so he will keep doing it.

#### Step 3: Lengthen the crating periods

After your dog is eating his regular meals in the crate with no sign of fear or anxiety, you can confine him there for short time periods while you are home. Call him over to the crate and give him a treat. Give him a command to enter, such as “kennel.” Encourage him by pointing to the inside of the crate with a treat in your hand. After your dog enters the crate, praise him, give him the treat, and close the door. Sit quietly near the crate for five to ten minutes, and then go into another room for a few minutes. Return, sit quietly again for a short time, and then let him out of the crate. Repeat this process several times a day, gradually increasing the length of time you leave him in the crate and the length of time you are out of his sight. Once your dog will stay quietly in the crate for about 30 minutes with you mostly out of sight, you can begin leaving him crated when you are gone for short time periods and/or letting him sleep there at night. This may take several days or several weeks.

#### Step 4, Part A: Crate your dog when you leave

After your dog can spend about 30 minutes in the crate without becoming anxious or afraid, you can begin leaving him crated for short periods when you leave the house. Put him in the crate using your regular command and a treat. You might also want to leave him with a few safe toys in the crate. Vary at what point in your “getting ready to leave” routine you put your dog in the crate. Although he should not be crated for a long time before you leave, you can crate him anywhere from five to 20 minutes prior to leaving. Do not make your departures emotional and prolonged—they should be matter-of-fact. Praise your dog briefly, give him a treat for entering the crate, and then leave quietly. When you return home, do not reward your dog for excited behavior by responding to him in an excited, enthusiastic way. Keep arrivals low key to avoid increasing his anxiety over when you will return. Continue to crate your dog for short periods from time to time when you are home so he does not associate crating with being left alone.

#### Step 4, Part B: Crate your dog at night

Put your dog in the crate using your regular command and a treat. Initially, it may be a good idea to put the crate in your bedroom or nearby in a hallway, especially if you have a puppy. Puppies often need to go outside to eliminate during the night, and you will want to be able to hear your puppy when he whines to be let outside. Older dogs, too, should initially be kept nearby so they do not associate the crate with social isolation. Once your dog is sleeping comfortably through the night with his crate near you, you can begin to gradually move it to the location you prefer, although time spent with your dog—even sleep time—is a chance to strengthen the bond between you and your pet.

#### Potential problems

*Whining*—If your dog whines or cries while in the crate at night, it may be difficult to decide whether he is whining to be let out of the crate, or whether he needs to be let outside to eliminate. If you have followed the training procedures outlined above, then your dog has not been rewarded for whining in the past by being released from his crate. If that is the case, try to ignore the whining. If your dog is just testing you, he will probably stop whining soon. Yelling at him or pounding on the crate will only make things worse.

If the whining continues after you have ignored him for several minutes, use the phrase he associates with going outside to eliminate. If he responds and becomes excited, take him outside. This should be a trip with a purpose, not play time. If you are convinced that your dog does not need to eliminate, the best response is to ignore him until he stops whining. Do not give in; if you do, you will teach your dog to whine loud and long to get what he wants. If you have progressed gradually through the training steps and have not done too much too fast, you will be less likely to encounter this problem. If the problem becomes unmanageable, you may need to start the crate training process over again.

*Separation anxiety*—Attempting to use the crate as a remedy for separation anxiety will not solve the problem. A crate may prevent your dog from being destructive, but he may injure himself in an attempt to escape from the crate. Separation anxiety problems can only be resolved with counter-conditioning and desensitization procedures. Contact the Foster Program Coordinator for additional guidance if you are experiencing this problem with your foster.

#### Housetraining

Below are resources on housetraining your foster animal. If your foster animal is house trained but suddenly has frequent accidents inside the home or refuses to use the litter box, this may be a sign of stress or a medical problem. Please immediately alert the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager.

A male cat who is straining to urinate or screaming in the litter box may have blockage and is a medical emergency. Such an animal needs to be seen by a veterinarian immediately. If this occurs, please immediately contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager.

### Houstraining Dogs and Puppies

Even dogs who were kept indoors before arriving at Burlington Animal Services may need a refresher course in appropriate bathroom behavior. The keys to houstraining are vigilance, positive reinforcement, consistency and patience. Before ever entering your home, give the dog an opportunity to use the bathroom. Be sure to take the dog outside immediately after every meal, first thing in the morning, and before bed at night. When the dog goes to the bathroom, praise the dog profusely. If the dog does not go to the bathroom, prepare to keep an even closer eye on the dog's behavior indoors. It is okay to block the dog in a small area (like a single room in the house) or tethering the dog to you within the house. This helps you keep track of the dog and will assist in houstraining.

Please remember that a young puppy needs to release himself/herself every couple of hours. Be sure to give your foster dog plenty of chances to go outside and relieve himself/herself.

When inside the home, keep an eye on the dog for any behavior that suggests that the dog needs to go outdoors. If you notice the dog whining, sniffing, going to the door, or circling, remain calm and immediately take the dog outside. Do not yell at the dog. If the dog uses the bathroom outside, praise the dog and give him/her a treat.

If you catch the dog in the act of using the bathroom inside the house, give the dog a verbal correction or clap your hands. You do not need to yell at the dog, but rather just speak firmly to the dog. Immediately take the dog outside. If the dog finishes going to the bathroom outdoors, praise the dog. **Do NOT ever physically correct the dog.**

If you find that the dog has soiled inside the house, do not scold the dog. A dog will not understand why he/she is being scolded. Scolding after the dog has gone to the bathroom is a waste of time and energy and may cause the dog to become anxious or hide when he/she has gone to the bathroom inside.

Until you are sure that the dog is houstrained, keep the dog confined to one room, such as a kitchen or bathroom (for easy clean-up) or a crate. Dogs will often avoid using the bathroom if they are confined to a small area. If crate training (i.e. leaving your dog in his/her crate while you are gone), do not leave the dog more than a few hours. Otherwise, he/she will be forced to go to the bathroom inside the crate, which is not only unsanitary but also will not help with houstraining. As soon as you return, immediately remove your foster dog from his/her crate and take the dog outside so that he/she can go to the bathroom.

**Be patient.** There is no such thing as an un-trainable dog. If you are having difficulty houstraining your foster dog, contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager for more tips.

### Houstraining Cats and Kittens

The first thing you need to do when bringing home a foster cat is to show the cat where the litter box is located. The easiest way to do this is to simply place the cat in the litter box. Be sure to

keep the litter box clean; cats will often refuse to use a litter box that does not meet their standard of cleanliness. If the litter box is clean and the cat still refuses to use it, this may mean that the cat does not like the litter or there may be an underlying medical issue.

Cats have many reasons that they do not like their litter box. The cat may not like scented litter or the type of litter, or the cat may not like where the litter box is located. Litter boxes should be placed in quiet areas away from things that make sudden noises (like a washing machine). There should be at least one litter box provided per cat.

Crate training can be used for cats who are refusing to use the litter box (and who have been cleared of any underlying medical conditions) just like dogs. If you have a cat who refuses to use the litter box, put the cat in a crate or in a small bathroom. Place the cat's food and water on one side of the crate and the litter box on the other. The principal is the same as crate training a dog—i.e., a cat does not want to urinate where he/she sleeps, and this can be facilitated using the litter box.

Kittens are not born knowing how to use a litter box. Without a mother cat to show them the way, you will need to do this for them. Kittens should be introduced to the litter box when they start eating solid foods. They need a box with shallow sides, such as a cookie sheet, a box top, or cake pan. After they have eaten, place the kittens in the box. They will learn how to use the litter box very quickly. Orphans may need a little more assistance from you; simply pick them up and place them on the litter after each meal. When you bring home your foster kitten(s), show them where you have placed their litter box. Keeping the box clean is very important. Daily cleaning is a must. No cat or kitten wants to use or smell a dirty litter box.

Just like puppies, kittens tend to put everything in their mouths—including litter. Kittens need to use non-clumping cat litter. If they ingest clumping litter, it could cause an obstruction.

### *Cleaning Up Accidents*

It is not uncommon, even for house trained pets, to have the occasional accident inside the home. When that happens, use a pet soil remover to clean up the area. Usually, this involves cleaning up any solid waste, soaking the area in cleaner for 5–15 minutes, and wiping or blotting up the cleaner. If there is a stain, soak it up before it has a chance to dry completely. If possible, use an enzymatic cleaner, such as Nature's Miracle. Otherwise, the animal may return to the same spot.

If the animal continues to use the same spot inside the house, do not give the animal access to that spot until the animal's bathroom habits are back to normal.

### *Cleaning Between Foster Animals*

It is very important to thoroughly clean between foster animals. Bleach is a staple for any foster home and, when used properly, is an effective disinfectant as well as a virus and fungal killer. A diluted solution of bleach (i.e. 1 part bleach: 32 parts water) should be sufficient for cleaning litter boxes, cages, bowls and toys. If reusing bedding or towels, you should wash those in a diluted bleach solution as well. Never apply bleach directly to an animal.

## Medical Care

### Signs of Illness and/or Injury

Foster animals are typically from an unknown background and may be subject to becoming ill due to their immature or compromised immune system. **If your foster animal displays any of these symptoms, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately:**

- Sneezing and congestion with green or yellow discharge from the nose and/or eyes
- Coughing, wheezing, or heavy breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting—this can be life threatening to puppies or kittens!
- Straining to urinate or defecate—this can be life threatening, especially for male cats!
- Bleeding from any part of the body
- Lethargy
- Fever (Temperature is above 102F) or hypothermia (Temperature is below 99F).
- Gums are white or extremely pale
- Limping, difficulty standing or walking, or not putting weight on any feet
- Paralysis
- Extreme change in attitude or behavior
- Not eating or drinking regularly

Burlington Animal Services covers all medical care expenses for foster animals if (1) the procedure is performed at Burlington Animal Services, or (2) the foster animal is taken to another veterinary clinic with **prior approval from a member of Burlington Animal Services management**. Burlington Animal Services cannot reimburse any personal expenses incurred by foster parents, including, but not limited to, medical expenses should you choose to take your foster animal to your own family veterinarian or an emergency veterinary hospital other than with prior approval from a member of Burlington Animal Services management. Under no circumstances will Burlington Animal Services cover medical expenses for your personal pets. To help prevent the spread of illness, be sure to quarantine a new foster animal for the recommended 10 days and clean thoroughly after a foster animal leaves.

Many animals go into foster placement for medical reasons. Please administer medication as prescribed by Burlington Animal Services. **Please do not give foster animals any medicine other than that prescribed by the Burlington Animal Services veterinary staff.**

**Note: Burlington Animal Services sends medical cases to fosters in our Medical Fostering program. Because these cases often require special care, we offer training. If you would like more information about this program, please contact our Foster Program Coordinator!**

If your foster animal becomes sick, please contact Burlington Animal Services immediately. If you have an emergency during regular business hours, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately and ask for the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager. If neither of these staff members is available, please ask for another member of management. You will be advised on how to proceed based on the level of emergency determined.

**If there is an emergency after business hours or on the weekend, please call 911 and ask for the on-call animal control officer to contact you.**

If you are instructed by a member of Burlington Animal Services management to take the foster animal to the emergency hospital, please provide the hospital staff with your name and the animal's name and ID number, and please inform them that you are a Burlington Animal Services foster. You should not be charged for the visit as long as it has been pre-approved by Burlington Animal Services. Treatment decisions will be made by the Burlington Animal Services management and veterinary staff.

Please remember that, due to the limited budget of Burlington Animal Services and the large number of animals who enter the shelter yearly, Burlington Animal Services is unable to perform expensive procedures or extreme life-saving measures on animals. Unfortunately, there may be times when the recommendation for a foster animal in crisis is euthanasia, especially in cases when the animal is suffering or the animal's illness and/or injuries may adversely affect the animal's quality of life.

**\*\*\*Please remember, you MUST get permission from a member of Burlington Animal Services management before taking an animal to the emergency clinic. The emergency clinic will be used only as a last resort.\*\*\***

Emergencies may include but are not limited to:

- Being hit by a car or other vehicle
- Ingesting something hazardous
- Extreme diarrhea, vomiting, or both
- Broken bones
- Seizures
- Inability to stand or move easily
- Difficulty breathing, struggling to breath, or other respiratory distress

If you are unsure if you have a medical emergency, contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager to discuss.

### Administering a Pill

As a foster parent, you may at times need to administer pills to your foster animal(s). Please see the below instructions on how to give pills to dogs and cats.

*Dogs:* Most older puppies and dogs will eat the pill in a small ball of wet food or cheese without even noticing. For those tricky dogs who eat the treat and spit out the pill, you will have to put the pill down the dog's throat.

Begin by placing two fingers at the sides of the dog's mouth and opening the mouth. Place the pill at the back of the dog's tongue, then close the mouth and hold it closed while rubbing the dog's throat. Release the mouth after the dog swallows.



*Cats:* The easiest way to give a cat a pill is to put the pill into cat food (ideally crushing the pill first if possible). Please note—a cat will not eat what a cat cannot smell! If your foster cat has a stuffy nose and cannot smell his/her food, then he/she may refuse to eat. If the cat refuses to eat for quite some time, he/she may become anorexic.

To entice your cat to eat, you can try placing a little food on his/her paw or tongue to see if the cat licks at the food. If the cat still has no interest, you can experiment with different types of food (such as canned cat food, tuna or mackerel, or baby food (meat purees only please)).

If your foster cat refuses to eat for two days, please contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager.

## Socializing Your Foster Animals

First and foremost, we ask that you treat your foster animals with the same love and care that you give to your own companion animals. Daily attention from you and other family members makes them more people-oriented and more adoptable! This includes petting, playing, cuddling, trimming nails and grooming. By spending time with your foster animal(s) on a regular basis, you will not only increase the animal's chances of being adopted quickly, but you are also helping to shape the animal into a more social and loveable pet! Touch your foster animals! Play with their feet, tails, ears, mouth and nose. By helping them get used to this handling, you are helping the future adopter have an easier time trimming nails and helping their future vet be able to check their teeth and ears with more ease and less stress. You should also monitor your foster animals for behavior problems, such as inappropriate urination or scratching furniture.

If problems arise, contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager to discuss behavior modification strategies. Burlington Animal Services is not responsible for damages that might occur to yourself, others in your household, or your personal property as a result your foster animal.

Semi-feral kittens and puppies are a special challenge. These animals can be socialized, but only with daily handling. Sometimes they will hiss and spit or scream when you attempt to pick them up. Gently pick them up and hold them close to your body, giving them a sense of security. Speak softly as you pet them. These animals need plenty of reassurance and attention. **DO NOT** put them in a room in which they can hide from you. They need a box or crate in which to feel secure, but you must still have access to them at all times. They will not become socialized unless they are handled many times each day. They need to become accustomed to the sights and sounds of people and a working home. This should be done gradually but consistently.

## **Kitten and Puppy Development**

### *Stages of Development*

Below is some general information about what to expect at each stage of a puppy's or kitten's development. Remember that these are averages!

Newborn → Completely dependent on mother. Eyelids closed, ears folded forward—cannot see or hear. Sense of smell is the first to develop completely and is the most developed sense at birth.

One week → Eyes begin to open—all kittens have blue eyes. They huddle together for security and warmth.

10 days → Ears unfold, hearing will develop. They can move along with the belly on the ground, “paddling” limbs for movement.

Two weeks → Begin to play with littermates, learning how to socialize. Can stand and balance but cannot walk easily.

Three weeks → Mobile and eager to explore, making mock-aggressive rushes and stalking littermates. Teething begins. Kittens at this stage cannot retract claws. Weigh regularly to keep an eye on development. Should be played with and handled at least an hour every day for good socialization. Watch them! This is when they start thinking they can jump off the couch or from one piece of furniture to the other!

Four weeks → Introduce solid food in four to six small meals per day. Begin litter box training in kittens and outside potty training for puppies. Will begin wrestling with littermates. Should receive first deworming. Kittens will start learning to hiss and spit, and sometimes it will shock them when they do it.

Five weeks → Learning to hunt by pouncing on toys and each other.

Six weeks → Adult eye color begins to appear. Foster animals will need to be brought into the shelter for their first vaccination and second deworming.

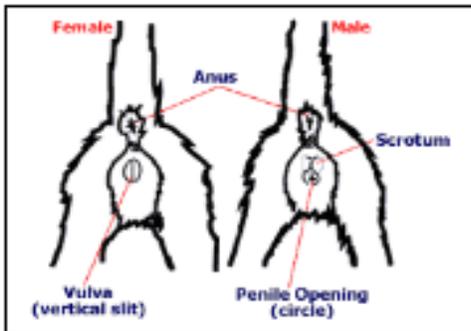
Eight weeks and older → Mom and babies need to be brought to the shelter for their scheduled updates to include deworming if needed, treatment for fleas if needed, and possibly another vaccine. The animals will be weighed to help determine age (if not already known). Puppies and kittens may be adopted out once they reach six weeks of age.

Is my kitten a boy or a girl?

Burlington Animal Services will attempt to sex kittens before they leave the shelter, but if you have had a litter of kittens since infancy, they may not have been sexed. It can be difficult to sex newborn kittens.

In the male kitten, the testicles (scrotum) are located below the anus and above the back of the hind legs. The cat's penis is immediately below the scrotum and is normally not visible. The penis is enclosed in the prepuce.

The female kitten's vulva is located below the anus and above the back legs. The vulva appears more as a slit than the more circular appearance of the prepuce in the male and is generally located closer to the anus than a male's testicle.



## Puppy and Kitten Care

### Puppies and Kittens

Fostering puppies and kittens, with a mother or without, is a rewarding experience that can also be very time consuming and difficult. Luckily, they can usually be returned to Burlington Animal Services and adopted out after just a few weeks!

Animals under 8 weeks of age have immature immune systems and are more susceptible to disease and illness. They are also fragile and easily injured. Monitor your litter closely; if you think something is wrong, immediately contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager.

### Supplies

These are some supplies that young litters of both puppies and kittens require:

- Towels, washcloths, and blankets
- A crate or box with high sides (newborn to 4 weeks of age)
- Heating pad (newborn to 4 weeks of age)
- Bottle or syringe (bottle feeders)
- Milk replacement formula (bottle feeders)

### Mom and Babies

If the mother is around, or a surrogate mother has taken the litter, your main concern is to monitor the litter from a slight distance and take good care of mother.

A mother can be very protective of her litter and will sometimes overreact to perceived threats. Keep other animals away from the mother and her litter for everyone's safety. If the mother is nervous, give her space and let her relax. If she feels threatened, she could hurt her own babies.

When introducing the mother and her new litter to your home, it is sometimes a good idea to put the babies in place before introducing the mother to the new environment.

In most cases, mom will feed, clean, and socialize her babies during the first few weeks; you simply need to feed and clean up after her. Towels in the box housing the mother and her litter will need to be changed periodically. If a mother dog is house-trained, you will need to take her outside so she can use the bathroom.

### Feeding Mom

A pregnant, nursing, or recently nursing mother needs lots of nutrients. Feed her both wet and dry puppy/kitten food, as much as she will eat. If she is underweight, add a little formula to her food. Puppy milk replacement and kitten milk replacement can be provided by Burlington Animal Services. All fosters should have access to water at all times.

## Weaning

The mother dog or cat will know when the time is right for weaning. Typically, puppies and kittens may begin the weaning process around 4-5 weeks, but will not be fully weaned until at least 6-8 weeks. Babies will start to show interest in the moist food that their mother is eating. **You should always have wet food available for both the mother and her litter.** Once puppies and kittens begin eating this food, smaller more frequent meals are preferable to larger meals less often.

## Older Puppies and Kittens

Older puppies and kittens require less care but still need socialization and a safe place to play. Try to spend at least an hour each day holding or playing with the puppies and kittens. The more time you spend with them, the more social and adoptable they will be. Cuddling, playing, grooming and training will be time well spent.

The mother dog or cat should help teach her litter some manners, but it is your job to help and make sure the puppies or kittens are getting all they need. Continue watching out for signs of illness or injury. If you notice behavioral problems developing, please contact the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager for behavioral modification tips. The sooner you help them, the easier it will be to correct.

When they are old enough to play, puppies will need a space to explore and run around. A playpen is an ideal area for puppies to play. Remember, puppies will chew on everything they can reach and need to have toys that are safe to chew on. Keep everything that should not be chewed out of reach!

When kittens are old enough to play, they are old enough to climb. Kittens will need an enclosed area, like a crate, to sleep in where they will be safe. When they are out playing, they must be watched to ensure that they do not get into trouble, such as by climbing to (and falling from) great heights or getting lost behind the washing machine. Make sure there are no spaces that they can get lost in or unsecured windows or doors.

## Under-Socialized Puppies

Many of the fun loving and playful puppies on the adoption floor were once scared puppies. The best way to work with any under-socialized puppies is calmly, quietly, and slowly. Also, since you will have limited time to turn them around (remember you are trying to get them on the adoption floor while they are still cute), you should confine them to a small space (a dog crate is perfect) in which they will be unable to find a hiding place.

If using a room, start with an area that does not include beds, chairs, couches, or walls with holes. If they cannot run and hide from you, they will have to learn to cope with your existence. Try to make every interaction rewarding instead of frightening. You will be the one that brings only good things—food, water, toys and treats! Do not just go in for the grab and snuggle—wait for the puppy to approach you. Sit on the floor, as you will be smaller and less frightening than when you are standing. You may even place the food bowl near you or entice them with a toy or tasty treats. In time the puppy will likely come and play with you.

## Adoption

There will come a time when your foster animal is ready for his/her forever home. You may feel something from relief to anxiety when preparing to bring your foster back to the shelter or finalizing an adoption with the new family. It is understandable that you have formed a bond with the animal and want to ensure his/her lifelong happiness—so does the shelter!

Understand that Burlington Animal Services is charged with finding homes for thousands of healthy, adoptable animals each and every year and as a government agency will not offer preference to specific citizens but rather must operate on a first come first served basis.

### Kittens and Puppies

Kittens and puppies are generally ready for adoption at six to eight weeks of age. For kittens, this will be when they weigh approximately 1.5 lbs.

### Shelter Adoptions

Any foster animal ready for adoption can come back to the shelter. Always inform the Foster Program Coordinator or the Animal Shelter Manager before returning your foster animal. We want to ensure that we have adequate kennel space on the adoption floor for your foster.

### Adoptions from the Foster Home

You may choose to promote your foster animal on Facebook or other web locations as long as they are deemed available for adoption. Keep in mind all adoptions must go through Burlington Animal Services.

Any person interested in adopting an animal in foster care must contact Burlington Animal Services. A foster parent may show a foster animal to a potential adopter at a location other than Burlington Animal Services, but the adoption itself must be done either in person at or by phone to Burlington Animal Services. Typically the adopter is then required to pick up the foster animal at Burlington Animal Services, and the adopter will complete the final adoption paperwork at that time. You will be required to schedule and drop off the animal for surgery (if he is she is old enough) before the adopter comes to pick up the animal.

**Never, ever give the foster animal to a potential adopter for a test drive!** Until the animal is officially adopted, he/she must remain at your home or under your control. The foster animal is the legal property of Burlington Animal Services until he/she is adopted.

**THANK YOU FOR OPENING YOUR HOME AND HEART TO A FOSTER ANIMAL!!**

## 2 Weeks to Adoption Tips

### **Day 1: Photo and video session at home**

Try to use natural light and have dog interacting with a person. It's a great time to learn what your new foster dog can do: Does she know sit, fetch or other simple commands? Is she housetrained? These are things adopters will want to know!

### **Day 2: Post those cute videos and photos you took to social media**

Email your friends and coworkers about your amazing new friend who is looking for a home! Then hit the streets – parks, areas with a lot of foot traffic – for some in-your-face marketing. Stay at least two hours (and don't forget business cards and Adopt Me vest!)

### **Day 3: Meet a friend for coffee and bring your foster**

Be sure to snap pictures or videos of your animal out and about – tag the business you are at and they might even share your cute adoptable!

### **Day 4: Get active with your pup in a public place**

Or just sit back and have a beverage in an outdoor café or bar. Don't get discouraged if you haven't found an adopter yet – keep trying and remember that the more people your dog kisses, the better!

### **Day 5: Take your dog to a local sporting event**

Kickball, soccer – at the right time of year you can find events like that all over town. Take this opportunity to teach your dog a new trick or one of the basics like shake!

### **Day 6: Explore more of the great outdoors**

Wherever there are a lot of people and a safe environment is a great place to just ramble with your foster.

### **Day 7: Take a day to decompress**

Fill in all your friends & family on how your foster is doing. Email pictures around to your friends and colleagues and post them to any groups you are a part of.

### **Day 8: Bring a friend & your foster to a lively in-town street**

Take time to wander! Grab a coffee and chill or grab lunch at an outdoor spot. If you're having no luck finding people, ask the Foster Coordinator for ideas.

### **Day 9: Hit the tourist spots in your town**

These are also great locales for snapping exciting pictures of your pooch!

### **Day 10: Find an outdoor festival**

Festivals or farmer's markets are great places to strut your stuff.

### **Day 11: Return & rewind**

Go back to a place where you had the most interaction and hang tight. Smile and be approachable and your pup will have a family in no time.

**Day 12: Repeat**

Do the same as Day 11, and send out communications to your friends and family and ask them to share – the more people who know about your dog, the better!

**Day 13: Expand your reach**

By now we hope you have found at least one person interested, but if not just think further afield. Try an outdoor wine bar or other place where a new audience can be found.

**Day 14: Adoption day!**

Hopefully your pup is on his or her way home – but if not just repeat the process. Ask other Ambassadors and your Coordinator for ideas!

**Every day:** Post Facebook, Twitter and Instagram updates!

**Material generously shared by Louisiana SPCA [ASPCapro.org/ambassadors](http://ASPCapro.org/ambassadors)**

When you adopt a dog, it is important to set your family (including any other pets in your home) and the dog up for success. The most important thing is to take things very slowly. Think about it this way: your new dog has just had their world turned upside down. These dogs all came from various past experiences, some good and some bad. Either way, before coming to the shelter, the dog has been removed from what he has always known. This is extremely stressful, even short term. Regardless of why they ended up in the shelter and what their past was, the dog will be going through a period of adjustment and needs to decompress. Even the more well-adjusted dogs, will need to adapt to the new schedule and environment. The other animals in the home also need time to adjust.

If you have more than one dog in the home and the meet and greet in the shelter went well, that is great, but it does not ensure that things will go well at home, it is just one snapshot of behavior. Think of it this way: If you meet someone in a crowded subway, would you interact with them the same way in that 5 minutes as you would if they came into your home and lived there? The meet and greet typically takes place at a location that has many smells and sights to take in. Almost like taking your dog to the vet, doing a meet and greet at a shelter, even in a quiet part of the shelter has many distractions. Very rarely would either dog be thinking: "Wow! I bet this is the dog that I am going to spend the rest of my life with!" Instead they are probably thinking "Who is this? Where am I? What are all these new smells?"



221 Stone Quarry Rd.  
Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-578-0343

E-mail: [animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov)

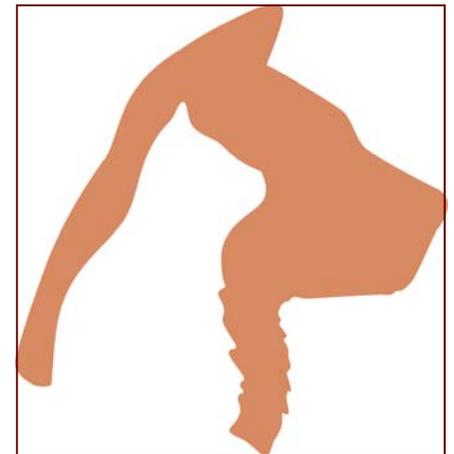
Website: [www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets](http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets)

## **BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES**

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# **BRINGING YOUR ADOPTED DOG HOME— THE FIRST TWO WEEKS**

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### ***Two Week Shutdown (The relax and Unwind time)***

There is a recommended two week shut down that makes it way less stressful for the dog to get to know their new home. This shut down gives the dog time to catch up on sleep, bond with their new people and get to know their new environment. Not rushing things will allow your new pet to trust you even more so. When you have had a stressful week, think of how good it feels to have downtime to unwind. The two week shut down is a dog's two week vacation from living in a shelter. During this two weeks, limit outside time to potty breaks and hold off on new visitors. For now, just allow your dog to get to know, trust and bond with the immediate family. While you can reward for good behaviors, also hold off on formal training until the dog has this time. You will have plenty of time after the two weeks to take your dog out and about and your dog will thank you for it!



Giving your dog limited access for a short time will help prevent his world from being too large and too overwhelming. Use a tall baby gate, so that he can still observe his new world. Crating also gives a dog, a safe place to hang out, and can help with house training. Speaking of houstraining, try to keep a consistent schedule. Even dogs who are houstrained at shelter need to adapt to new potty times, new food and new places to go to the bathroom. If

the dog is not used to being crated, take it slowly. You want crating to



be a positive experience. If the room is gated, you can leave the crate door open, and randomly place food rewards inside to make it a haven of good things.



### ***Dinner Time!***

There is no rule that says a dog should be fed from a bowl! Instead, get to know your new dog by hand feeding. Hand feeding meals can help the dog bond with you and your family. It also gives shy dogs confidence and teaches outgoing dogs a little self-control. Meal times should also be scheduled. Set feeding times will give the dog needed structure and security. It will also help with houstraining. If you know what and when your dog ate, you know when to give them a bathroom break.

If you have more than one dog, giving each dog a designated time and area to eat can prevent spats over food. It can also help you monitor how much each dog eats to notice and prevent health issues.

### ***Lets all get along***

Using a baby gate allows for less stressful interaction between the new dog and the other animals in the house. Each dog has time to get to know each other from a distance, without the pressure of constant interaction. Even when the animals are ready to interact without gates, it is important to give the animals daily breaks from each other. Give each pet some one on one time. Without breaks from one another, it would be the equivalent to spending every day, all day with your sibling. Too much time together increases the chance of altercations. When the dogs are together, removing resources is also a good way to prevent squabbles. Toys, food, bones can all be items that start altercations. Many times prevention is the best solution.

After the two week shutdown, if your new dog is doing well, take the dogs on short walks together in the neighborhood. Ideally with one person per dog. Speaking of dog interactions, how do you know if they are going well?

Look for: loose tail wag, soft eyes, wiggly body. You will know the dogs need some more space if you notice: very stiff posture, ears forward, hackles raised and/or avoidance. When introducing the dogs, allow a 3 second rule for the first sniff and then lead them away from each other. To learn more about the 3 second rule:

[www.thrivingcanine.com/letting\\_dogs\\_meet\\_the\\_three\\_second\\_rule](http://www.thrivingcanine.com/letting_dogs_meet_the_three_second_rule).

### Should a Fight Occur Between Animals

If a fight occurs between your foster animal and one of your personal animals, please use the utmost safety in resolving this fight. Under no circumstances should you place yourself or any of your body parts (hands, arms, legs, etc.) between the fighting animals. Instead, try the following:

- Spray the animals with a hose, if possible, or throw a glass of water in the animals' faces.
- Try calling the animals away – say, “Let’s go for a walk,” etc., and clap your hands and move away.
- If two people are present, each person can grab the hind legs of one of the animals, lifting the hind legs off of the ground. When the animals release one another, move the animals backwards and away from each other. If the animals are attached and will not release each other, momentarily push the animals together, hard, to disorient them, then move them backwards and away from one another.
- If you are alone, loop a leash around the waist of one animal and attach that leash to a stationary object, such as a door or piece of furniture; then, either grab the hind legs of the second animal or loop another leash around the second animal. If the animals are not attached, then pull back on the hind legs or the leash looped around the second animal to separate them. If the animals are attached, then first momentarily push the animals together, hard, to disorient them, then pull back on the hind legs or the leash looped around the second animal to separate them.

Please use caution; a highly stimulated animal may redirect his/her aggression toward you, so please keep your head, face, hands, and all body parts away from the animal, especially the animal’s head, as much as possible.

**After the fight has ceased, please immediately contact Burlington Animal Services.**

**FOR EMERGENCIES DURING BUSINESS HOURS: BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES AT 336-578-0343 OR FOSTERPETS@BURLINGTONNC.GOV**

**FOR EMERGENCIES AFTER HOURS, CALL 911 AND ASK FOR THE ON-CALL ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TO CALL YOU IMMEDIATELY.**

Name/ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return date and reason:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



221 Stone Quarry Road  
Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-578-0343  
E-mail: [animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov)  
Website: [www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets](http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets)

# BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES

## FOSTER CARE GUIDE



**Congratulations!  
You're fostering!  
Now what?**

## **Relax!**

Taking a shelter pet home for even a day gives them a break from the day-to-day stress of shelter life. It also provides the pet with a chance to express his/her personality, and it provides enrichment for the community. We can't thank you enough! Have fun with your foster pet, and contact us if you have any questions.

**Thank you for being a Burlington Animal Services foster parent!**



### **Let's start with a few simple rules:**

- Prepare a safe and suitable environment for the foster pet.
- Provide the foster pet with fresh and wholesome food and water, administer prescribed medications and/or treatments, groom the foster pet if necessary, and socialize the foster pet.
- Treat the foster pet with kindness and adhere to the anti-cruelty laws of North Carolina.
- Bring the foster pet to Burlington Animal Services when required for medical treatments and vaccinations.
- Not alter, in any way, the pet being fostered. This includes declawing, cropping of the ears, docking of the tail, spaying/neutering, micro-chipping, or tattooing the animal.
- Not use the foster pet for any commercial exploitation.
- Return the pet to Burlington Animal Services by the date set by Burlington Animal Services, if necessary or upon request.
- Do not take your foster dog to any dog parks.
- Contact Burlington Animal Services and/or the Animal Shelter Manager should any questions or emergencies arise.
- Return the foster pet to Burlington Animal Services for any needed veterinary care.

### **Signs of Illness and/or Injury**

Foster animals are typically from an unknown background and may be subject to becoming ill due to their immature or compromised immune system.

#### **If your foster animal displays any of these symptoms, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately:**

- Sneezing and congestion with green or yellow discharge from the nose and/or eyes
- Coughing, wheezing, or heavy breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting—this can be life threatening to puppies or kittens!
- Straining to urinate or defecate—this can be life threatening, especially for male cats!
- Bleeding from any part of the body
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Paralysis
- Extreme change in attitude or behavior
- Not eating or drinking regularly

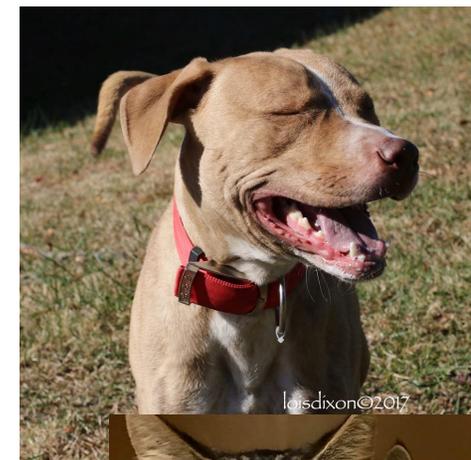
Burlington Animal Services covers all medical care expenses for foster animals if (1) the procedure is performed at Burlington Animal Services, or (2) the foster animal is taken to another veterinary clinic with prior approval from a member of Burlington Animal Services management. Burlington Animal Services cannot reimburse any personal expenses incurred by foster parents, including, but not limited to, medical expenses should you choose to take your foster animal to your own family veterinarian or an emergency veterinary hospital other than with prior approval from a member of Burlington Animal Services management. Under no circumstances will Burlington Animal Services cover medical expenses for your personal pets.

***\*\*\*Please remember, you MUST get permission from a member of Burlington Animal Services management before taking an animal to the emergency clinic. The emergency clinic will be used only as a last resort.\*\*\****

### **Pet-Proofing the Home**

Please take a few minutes to pet-proof your home by doing the following:

- Keep sharp objects, breakable items, electrical cords, garbage, cleaning supplies, chemicals, medicines, valuables, and any other items that could be chewed and ingested secure and out of reach of the foster animal(s).
- Keep plastic bags, which can cause suffocation, out of reach.
- Move houseplants out of reach (some are toxic to pets).
- Make sure pets have not jumped into the dryer, washer, oven, refrigerator, or dishwasher before closing these appliances.
- Keep food out of reach—certain foods may be toxic.
- Keep the toilet lid closed.



## Your Puppy & the Outdoors

Although it may be tempting to take your puppy outside on a warm spring or summer day, there are several dangers which might pose a threat to your new companion. Parvovirus may be carried by other dogs or wildlife into your yard. Parvovirus is highly contagious and can be fatal to your puppy. Young puppies are not fully vaccinated against parvovirus so it is best to keep your puppy inside and away from places where other dogs are present, like dog parks and pet stores, until he/she has been cleared by your veterinarian as being fully vaccinated. Other threats include birds of prey which can grab puppies if left unattended for even a moment.

If your puppy displays any of these symptoms, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately:

- Sneezing and congestion with green or yellow discharge from the nose and/or eyes
- Coughing, wheezing, or heavy breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Straining to urinate or defecate
- Bleeding from any part of the body
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Paralysis
- Extreme change in attitude or behavior
- Not eating or drinking regularly

**For emergencies during business hours, call 336-578-0343 or email [fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov).**

**For emergencies after hours - call 911 and ask for the on-call animal control officer to call you immediately.**

Name/ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions:

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Return date and reason:

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221 Stone Quarry Rd.  
Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-578-0343 or 336-578-1386  
E-mail: [animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov)  
Url: [www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets](http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets)

# BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES

## PUPPY CARE GUIDE

### FOSTER TO ADOPT



## Congratulations on your new puppy!

Please take a few moments to read the following and learn how to care for your new puppy.

Remember, while you are participating in Burlington Animal Services' Foster-to-Adopt Program, you can and should call Burlington Animal Services if you have any questions or concerns for your puppy. Once you have adopted your puppy, then you should direct any questions or concerns to your veterinarian.

## Feeding Your Puppy

Puppies in Burlington Animal Services' Foster-to-Adopt Program have already begun the weaning process. If puppies are 4 to 6 weeks of age, they will need to be fed a thin gruel of wet/canned puppy food mixed with puppy milk replacer formula. They should be fed four to six times per day. In general, if puppies are not gaining weight, they need more food. If puppies develop diarrhea, they may be overfed or have a health problem. Please contact us if your foster-to-adopt puppy develops diarrhea.

When feeding your puppy, you may need to place the puppy in front of the bowl. If your puppy does not begin to eat, you can put a little of the gruel mixture on the end of your finger and allow the puppy to suckle it off your finger.

As your puppy becomes more comfortable eating this mixture, you can increase the amount of canned food and decrease the amount of formula you are using. Once your puppy is approximately 6 weeks old and eating the mixture with a healthy appetite, you can gradually start to introduce dry food. Begin adding dry food to your puppy's diet by mixing it in with your puppy's canned food.

This stage of eating can be quite messy for puppies, and you will most likely need to help them clean their faces while they are eating "sloppy" food.

## Housetraining Your Puppy

The keys to housetraining are vigilance, positive reinforcement, consistency, and patience. Before ever entering your home, give your puppy an opportunity to use the bathroom. Be sure to take your puppy outside immediately after every meal, first thing in the morning, and before bed at night. Praise your puppy when he/she goes to the bathroom.

Please remember that a young puppy needs to release himself/herself every couple of hours. Be sure to give your puppy plenty of chances to go outside and relieve himself/herself.

When inside the home, keep an eye on your puppy for any behavior that suggests that he/she needs to go outdoors. If you notice the puppy whining, sniffing, going to the door, or circling, remain calm and immediately take the puppy outside.

If you catch your puppy in the act of using the bathroom inside the house, give a verbal correction or clap your hands. Do not yell at your puppy—just speak firmly. Immediately take your puppy outside. If your puppy finishes going to the bathroom outdoors, praise him/her. **Do NOT ever physically correct your puppy.** If you find that your puppy has soiled inside the house while you were away, do not scold your puppy—he/she will not understand why he/she is being scolded hours after using the bathroom inside.

While housetraining, keep your puppy confined to one room, such as a kitchen or bathroom (for easy clean-up) or a crate. If crate training (i.e. leaving your puppy in his/her crate while you are gone), do not leave the puppy more than a few hours. Otherwise, he/she will be forced to go to the bathroom inside the crate, which is not only unsanitary but also will not help with housetraining. As soon as you return, immediately take your puppy outside so that he/she can go to the bathroom.

**Be patient.** There is no such thing as an un-trainable dog. If you are having difficulty housetraining your puppy, contact Burlington Animal Services for more tips.

## Keeping Your Puppy Warm

To remain healthy, puppies must be kept at the proper room temperature—i.e. around 72°F. Provide your puppy with blankets, beds, and stuffed animals for them to cuddle up with and keep warm.

Keep a thermometer in the puppy area to monitor your puppy for signs of low or high temperature. A normal body temperature for a dog is 100–102.5°F. If your puppy's temperature falls outside of this range, please give us a call.

## Socializing Your Puppy

Socialization is very important for puppies! Puppies should be petted, cuddled, and played with at least an hour per day. This helps give puppies important mental and physical stimulation. If they have littermates, they will stimulate each other when moving; however, spending time with humans is still important. Snuggle with each puppy as you wake him/her to eat and for a time after eating. Nurturing will help a puppy thrive not only in puppyhood, but also into adulthood. Soft stuffed animals can also offer something to snuggle with while sleeping.

When they are old enough to play, puppies will need a space to explore and run around, such as a playpen. Remember, puppies will chew on everything they can reach and need toys that are safe to chew. Keep everything that should not be chewed out of reach!

**Under-Socialized Puppies:** Some puppies may be less socialized than others. In such cases, try confining the puppy to a small space where he/she cannot hide. Try to make every interaction with your puppy rewarding instead of frightening. You will be the one that brings only good things—food, water, toys and treats! Do not just go in for the grab and snuggle—wait for the puppy to approach you. Sit on the floor, as you will be smaller and less frightening than when you are standing. You may even place the food bowl near you or entice them with a toy or tasty treats. In time the puppy will likely come and play with you.

### *Your Kitten & the Outdoors*

Although it may be tempting to take your kitten outside on a warm spring or summer day, there are several dangers which might pose a threat to your new companion. Feline panleukopenia can be carried by wild life or feral cats into your yard, even if you do not see these animals. Panleukopenia is highly contagious, can be fatal, and is related to parvo virus in dogs. Young kittens are not fully vaccinated against panleukopenia so it is best to keep your kitten inside until he/she has been cleared by your veterinarian as being fully vaccinated. Other threats include birds of prey which can grab kittens even if left unattended for a moment.

If your kitten displays any of these symptoms, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately:

- Sneezing and congestion with green or yellow discharge from the nose and/or eyes
- Coughing, wheezing, or heavy breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Straining to urinate or defecate
- Bleeding from any part of the body
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Paralysis
- Extreme change in attitude or behavior
- Not eating or drinking regularly

**For emergencies during business hours, call 336-578-0343 or email [fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov).**

**For emergencies after hours - call 911 and ask for the on-call animal control officer to call you immediately.**

Name/ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return date and reason:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



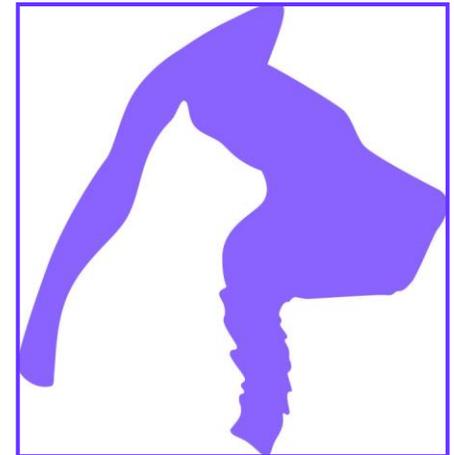
221 Stone Quarry Rd.  
Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-578-0343  
E-mail: [animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:animalservices@burlingtonnc.gov)  
Website: [www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets](http://www.burlingtonnc.gov/pets)

## **BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES**

## **KITTEN CARE GUIDE**

## **FOSTER TO ADOPT**



## **Congratulations on your new kitten!**

Please take a few moments to read the following and learn how to care for your new kitten.

Remember, while you are participating in Burlington Animal Services' Foster-to-Adopt Program, you can and should call Burlington Animal Services if you have any questions or concerns for your kitten. Once you have adopted your kitten, then you should direct any questions or concerns to your veterinarian.

### ***Feeding Your Kitten***

Kittens in Burlington Animal Services' Foster-to-Adopt Program have already begun the weaning process. They will need to be fed a thin gruel of wet/canned kitten food mixed with kitten milk replacer formula. They should be fed four to six times per day. In general, if kittens are not gaining weight, they need more food. If kittens develop diarrhea, they may be overfed or have a health problem. Please contact us if your foster-to-adopt kitten develops diarrhea.

When feeding your kitten, you may need to place the kitten in front of the bowl. If your kitten does not begin to eat, you can put a little of the gruel mixture on the end of your finger and allow the kitten to suckle it off your finger.

As your kitten becomes more comfortable eating this mixture, you can increase the amount of canned food and decrease the amount of formula you are using. Once your kitten is approximately 6 weeks old and eating the mixture with a healthy appetite, you can gradually start to introduce dry food. You will need to soften the dry food with water to make it easier for your kitten to eat the food.

This stage of eating can be quite messy for kittens, and you will most likely need to help them clean their faces while they are eating "sloppy" food.

### ***Using the Litter Box***

You will need to introduce your kitten to his/her litter box. Make sure you are using a litter box/pan with sides that are low enough for a kitten to climb over. Fill the pan with a little bit of litter. After your kitten finishes eating, place your kitten in the litter box. Wait for the kitten to urinate or defecate. Afterward, you may need to "encourage" the kitten to cover the pee or poop with litter. You can do this by taking a paw and gently scratch some litter over what the kitten has just done. Your kitten may still need you to help him/her clean up afterward. Until your kitten is 8 weeks of age, please use a non-clumping litter as sometimes kittens will "taste" the litter and clumping litter can cause GI issues.

Kittens in Burlington Animal Services' Foster-to-Adopt Program will most likely be able to urinate and defecate on their own. Kittens should go to the bathroom after nearly every meal; if your kitten does not urinate and defecate after two meals, try stimulating your kitten. A cotton ball or piece of very soft toweling works well. Moisten it with warm water and gently rub the anal and genital area. Within one to two minutes the kitten will urinate and/or defecate. Some kittens will respond better before eating while others respond better after eating. Try both times to keep the kitten healthiest.

If your kitten does not urinate and defecate after 12 hours, please call Burlington Animal Services immediately.

Observe the urine and feces for signs of sickness. The urine should be a pale yellow or clear. If it is dark yellow or orange, the kitten is not drinking enough water. Increase the number of times per day that you are feeding kitten milk replacer. It is possible to feed a kitten too much, but not too often. Too much food causes bloating, gas, regurgitation, and sometimes aspiration into the lungs. The stool should be a pale to dark brown and partially formed. Green stool indicates an infection, and too firm of a stool indicates dehydration (not getting enough water).

### ***Keeping Your Kitten Warm***

To remain healthy, kittens must be kept at the proper room temperature—i.e. around 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Provide your kitten with blankets, beds, and even stuffed animals for them to cuddle up with if they would like to be warmer.

Monitoring your kitten's temperature will also be important in monitoring his/her health. Keep a thermometer in the kitten area to monitor your kitten for signs of low or high temperature. A normal body temperature for a cat is 100-102.5 degrees Fahrenheit. If your kitten's temperature falls outside of this range, please give us a call.



### ***Socializing Your Kitten***

Socialization is very important for kittens to help them become great family pets! Kittens should be petted, cuddled, and played with by humans for at least 30-40 minutes per day. This helps give kittens important mental and physical stimulation. If they have littermates, they will stimulate each other when moving; however, spending time with humans is still important. Snuggle with each kitten as you wake him/her to eat and for a time after eating. Nurturing will help a kitten thrive not only in kittenhood but also into adulthood. Soft stuffed animals put in the box can offer something to snuggle with while sleeping.

# Ways To Help Your Foster Get Adopted

Our goal is to get the animals in foster care adopted. Here's how you can help:

- Good photos and videos are the key! If you aren't a great photographer, Lois is happy to help with this. We also have a wonderful professional photographer who is willing to help. You can contact Katie Smith at [katie@katiesmithphotography.com](mailto:katie@katiesmithphotography.com).
- Social media gets our animals adopted. Post updates of what your foster is doing: cute poses, outings, anything that makes them appealing. Please send these updates to us so that we can post on our BAS fb page. You can send them to Lois via text at 919-636-0577 or you can email them to her at [lfidixon@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:lfidixon@burlingtonnc.gov) or [fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov](mailto:fosterpets@burlingtonnc.gov).
- Bring your foster to events. We have many public events throughout the year. Watch our Facebook foster page and emails for notifications of upcoming opportunities.
- If you have a dog, take it for public outings. It will be good for the dog and also give it exposure.
- Bring your fosters to BAS on Saturdays. These are generally busy days for visitors.

**\*\*\*These are the most frequently asked questions by adopters. Please send this information to us and include it in your posts:**

- Is the dog house trained or crate trained?
- Is the dog good with cats? other dogs? children?
- Is the cat litter box trained?
- Is the cat friendly with other cats? dogs? children?
- Any known health/behavioral issues?
- General temperament of the animal
- How does the dog walk on a leash? Does it have any basic obedience?



**Report Card for:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Some fun things that I got to do:**

**Here are some things about me:**

(Circle all that apply.)

- House Trained/Litter Box Trained
- Crate Trained
- Good with children
- Enjoyed meeting new people
- Good with other dogs
- Loving/affectionate
- Listens well
- Shy/Timid
- Playful/Outgoing
- Good with cats
- Purrfect lap kitty



**My Behavior Was....**

**A**bsolute Angel

**B**etter than most

**C**ould have been better

**Thank you for sharing your time with a shelter pet!**