

Kittico Cat Rescue- Foster Care Program Overview

Importance: The foster care program is vital to saving lives. Taking pets into foster cares gives them an opportunity to be socialized. Without foster homes, we cannot rescue pets and many will die. Foster care allows the sick and young to be adopted later.

Training: The foster program coordinator will explain the program. Complete a foster program application and read thru the furnished manual, which outlines the responsibilities of the foster parent and the organization. You will be assigned a mentor to help you with any further questions.

Time involved: This will depend on the needs of each animal. Most foster pets are healthy and adoptable so time expended is minimal. Time required also depends on the number of animals fostered. Time is also needs to be allocated for transporting cats to veterinarian appointments if necessary and mobile adoptions at least once a month.

Qualifications: Most important is love and concern for pets.

Time and desire to socialize pets.

Willingness to provide food, water and medication, if necessary.

Provide a clean living environment and daily care.

Other animals in the home must be current on all vaccinations, and neutered as age appropriate. (All foster animals will have been tested for disease and been wormed prior to being placed in foster care.) Fosters should be kept separate from the foster parents own animals, if at all possible

Duties: Aid in the care of healthy adults and young animals.

Aid in the care of sick, injured or very young animals.

Provide food, water, litter and other necessities.

Medicate the animal, if necessary; take to the veterinarian, if necessary.

Bring the animal to at least one mobile a month.

Expense: Most fosters provide food, litter and other necessities for the animal, however, Kittico will provide everything, if necessary. Kittico will arrange for and pay for all medical care.

**PLEASE HELP US SAVE THE LIVES OF UNWANTED PETS!
YOUR HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED.**

If you are interested in being a foster volunteer after reading the information in this packet, please just fill out the foster contract and send with the volunteer application (if not previously submitted) to:

**Kittico Cat Rescue
Attn: Foster coordinator
PO Box 600447
Dallas, TX 75360**

Things to consider about Foster Care for Cats and Kittens

Thank you for your interest in joining our team of Foster Parents! If you have never had the opportunity to foster before, you are now being given the chance to experience all the joys of parenting without the lifetime of responsibility. We want this experience to be a positive and rewarding one for you. You will be giving your foster cats a chance to adapt to a normal, warm and loving foster home environment while it waits for a permanent one. Because some of you may be unfamiliar with cat/kittens care, you will be assigned a Kittico Cat Rescue member to be your mentor throughout the foster period. You are encouraged to call them with any questions that may arise.

Please know that if not for caring people like you, hundreds of beautiful cats and kittens will be euthanized or die living as strays where they are susceptible to many unhealthy and unsafe conditions. While there are many positive reasons to open your home to a homeless animal there are numerous practical factors to be considered as well. Prior to making this commitment, please consider the following questions.

1. Are you able to separate the foster pet from your own pets? This is for the safety and well-being of all involved.
2. Will you be able to spend quality time with the foster animal(s)? On average it is best to spend at least 20 minutes a day with each foster animal. Socialization can be as important as feeding them and keeping them clean.
3. Are you willing to work with our vet care system? Please understand that only our vets can treat our foster cats/kittens at selected facilities. Some procedures are done for a substantial savings to our organization. Additionally, all medications must come from our sources only. If you choose to go to a vet outside our system without our prior consent (other than life-threatening emergencies) or get medications from outside our system, then any cost incurred will be the fosters responsibility.
4. Do you feel comfortable explaining to friends that these animals are not yours to adopt out and that they must go through the regular adoption process at Kittico.
5. Are you willing to transport the foster pet to at least 1 mobile adoption per month?
6. Can you commit to spend the entire foster period with the animal? If something unexpected happens and you need to have someone else care for your fosters, we need to be informed and have a chance to talk to the sub-foster parents.
7. Are you aware that there is a chance of the foster animal causing damage to your home? For example, cats and kittens can be destructive towards your furniture and curtains if allowed in areas where they are present. Not all cats will climb and scratch destructively. However, it is a risk if you choose not to isolate the animals in a safer, more restricted area of your home.

If you still have questions or reservations concerning fostering, please feel free to discuss it with our foster care coordinator or any of our foster volunteers.

As with anything else that involves change, there may be an adjustment period for you and your foster cat/kitten. Please be patient — many of our animals have come from rough situations and are frightened. Many times, their only way to communicate their fears is what we humans refer to as abnormal or deviant behavior. Some will hide, while others may exhibit any number of signals: inappropriate urination/defecation, growling, hissing, snapping (also called fear biting), cowering in corners, etc.

Foster program explanation:

Our goal at Kittico is twofold: (1) to reduce the number of feral/stray cats in the metroplex thru our trap/neuter/release program (2) while attempting to give a second chance to adoptable cats/kittens by working with local animal control facilities.

***We need foster homes for domesticated cats/kittens. Some may need to recuperate from illness, others may just be too young to adopt. Often it takes just a little longer to adopt the adults/teen cats, and we ask for patience from our fosters while we do everything in our power to find good homes.

How we adopt:

- We run ads in local papers
- We post our adoptables on our website as well as petfinder.com and pet-ark.com websites
- We run mobile adoptions

Adoption ages/places to show:

Less than 8 weeks old are only adopted under special circumstances.

8-16 week old kittens kept/shown in foster care or adoption events, and on the Kittico website

- Kittens must be adoptable at the time they attend adoption events. This means no fur missing, no coughing/sneezing or obvious illness and must be completely socialized.
- No sick kittens allowed at the adoption events, we will contact original foster to retrieve if at all possible, since this is the least stressful for the kitten.

16 weeks old and up will be shown by appointment, at mobile adoptions, and on the Kittico website.

How it works:

- Cats/kittens will enter our system from animal control after being tested for Feline Leukemia and given the appropriate vaccinations for age/weight, many also will be neutered.
- Cats/kittens entering our system from any other person/group must be first approved by the foster coordinator or Exec. Director
- We will not take any cat/kitten without written proof of Feline Leukemia testing. If we do take cats/kittens from sources other than animal control, we will ask that they help with veterinary costs by giving a donation.
- Cats/kittens will be placed in foster care and given a system number. At this time the foster will be given an estimated time the cat/kitten is ready for adoption.
- At the estimated ready date, the foster coordinator will contact the foster for further instructions. Any changes in the ready date or emergencies should go thru the foster coordinator or Exec. Director only
- All cats can be listed for pre-adoption, if not ready at time of intake. We encourage fosters to take pictures of these cats and give a short bio so that we can post them to our website ASAP. Please be patient with the process, sometimes the older ones take a bit longer to adopt.
- If fosters have any medical problems or need assistance with food/litter/meds, it is necessary to contact the foster coordinator ASAP. Please try to contact before the situation becomes an emergency/after hours event. If the situation is an emergency and it is after hours for a vet or very late, take care of the cat and we will work with you.
- We will be sending out a small guide for our fosters listing some typical symptoms/diseases/treatments. We hope this will help.
- Please keep fosters separated from animals that you own, at least at first. This is critical for the well being of your current pets.
- Please feed all cats under 1 year and pregnant/nursing mothers **kitten** food that is marked 100% nutritionally complete. We recommend using brands such as Iams, Nutro, Science Diet, Purina One or their equivalent.
- We have kitty condos, food, and litter for our fosters to use if needed.
- If you have any changes in your status, i.e. willing to show from your home, a pending adoption, wanting to take a break, or specifying type of cats to foster, please contact the foster coordinator. Please give us ample notice if possible.
- Make sure that when you first receive your fosters that the foster coordinator has all pertinent info-age, sex, color

We will work with you! We want to do a great job helping cats without overextending our resources or overusing/stressing our foster volunteers. Thanks for all you do!

For any questions/concerns/suggestions: volunteer@kittico.org or call 214-826-6903 x1

Thank you for agreeing to give needy animals a warm, loving foster home while it waits for a permanent one! We want this experience to be a positive and rewarding one for you, and a chance for your foster cat or kitten to adapt to a normal environment.

As with anything that involves change, there may be an adjustment period for you and your foster pet. Please be patient, many of our animals have come from rough situations and are very frightened. Many times, their only way to communicate their fears is through what we humans refer to as abnormal or deviant behavior. Some will hide, while others may exhibit any number of signals: inappropriate urination/defecation, growling, hissing, snapping (also called fear biting), cowering in corners, etc.

When you bring your foster cat or kitten home for the first time, try to confine it in a small room (bathrooms are ideal) that can be shut off from the rest of your family and pets. Put out water, food and a litterbox for your foster. In addition, consider leaving the carrier out, with the carrier door open for the cat or kitten to crawl into until it feels secure enough to explore the room on its own.

Be sure to remove toilet paper and clear things off of the bathroom counters, and any other surfaces the cat or kitten could jump onto and accidentally knock over. Talk very softly to it anytime you are in the same room. Try to avoid sudden loud noises. Depending on its previous circumstances, it may be ready to explore and let you gently pet it shortly after its arrival, or it may take several hours or days before it trusts you. This is okay. When the cat or kitten decides to go to the next level of friendship, it will let you know. Many times, this occurs as soon as it realizes you are the food giver!

Kittico will tell you everything we know about your foster pet with regard to its behavior, general health, eating preferences, etc. Please keep in mind that although it may appear healthy, we often do not know if it has been exposed to any diseases, infections or parasites, other than what we have already tested or treated it for. This is why, at least initially, it is a good idea to isolate it from your other pets. We also strongly recommend that you wash your hands after handling it. A few things, like ringworm (a fungal infection, similar to athlete's foot) are contagious to humans. It often appears as a circular rash on you, and is easily treated if you are sensitive to it.

Shelter Veterinary Medicine

KittiCo, like many other humane rescue groups, practices shelter medicine. In a nutshell, this is kind of like socialized medicine for animals. This is using the resources we have in a responsible way, treating each individual animal while thinking of the entire group of foster animals. Basically, shelter medicine focuses on prevention of illnesses by hygiene and vaccines where possible. Also, addressing common illnesses found in specific breeds of animals and treating them with the most common and cost effective treatment. It is giving care to companion animals on a large scale. This involves protocol to treat illnesses: each animal's illness or symptoms does not need expensive or extensive testing, but rather treating for the most common causes of those particular symptoms then proceeding to testing when the most common causes are ruled out. This saves money for unnecessary office visits that can be used to help more animals. We have a protocol for many things such as URI, diarrhea, inappropriate urination, parasites, behavioral issues, and many others. If you are the type that wants to take an animal to the vet for every little cough, sneeze, badly formed stool, then rescue work is not the place for you.

KittiCo Cat Rescue Foster Program Contract

1. I agree to take in animal(s) into my home for adoption placement. These animals are considered foster animals only if placed by the foster coordinator or their authorized agent. I understand that KittiCo reserves the right to inspect the foster home at any time to ensure suitability for these purposes. If an animal(s) is brought into my home by any other means and I choose to have it placed for adoption, then this animal(s) is considered under KittiCo's Assistance Program. I agree to be bound under the terms of the Assistance

Program for that animal(s). (initials)

2. I agree to take full responsibility to provide adequate food, shelter and a loving environment for the foster animal(s). Cats must be kept indoors at all times. Dogs must be kept indoors, in fenced yards, or on a leash (short-term) at all times.
3. I understand that KittiCo does not knowingly misrepresent any animal's age, condition of health, or temperament. I also understand that KittiCo cannot guarantee the health of the cat beyond what is established by provided veterinary care.
4. I understand that KittiCo cannot be held responsible if the animal(s) is unsuitable for my home environment or becomes ill or acts in an erratic manner. If I cannot keep the foster animal(s), I agree that I will return it to KittiCo. (initials)
5. Under KittiCo policy and the laws of the State of Texas, all animals must be spayed or neutered as soon as they are old enough. If an appointment is made for the animal(s) to be sterilized, I agree to take it to the approved veterinarian at the appointed time.
6. I agree to administer any medication(s) provided to me for the animal(s). I agree to take the animal to the approved veterinarian for any immunization or treatment required. I understand that all medication and medical treatment will be paid for by KittiCo, provided that it is authorized by KittiCo. I understand that KittiCo practices shelter medicine, and as such, any medication or veterinarian care not authorized by KittiCo, is the sole responsibility of the foster volunteer or their agent. In the event of an emergency with the animal(s), I agree to call the Executive Director or the Foster Program Coordinator. I understand that I will not be reimbursed for any expenses not approved in advance by KittiCo, unless it is a life-or-death situation. (initials)
7. I understand that the foster animal is the sole property of KittiCo and cannot be given to anyone or adopted by anyone without completion of a KittiCo Application for Adoption, Adoption Contract, and collection of the required Adoption Fee. If the animal is given away, the Foster Parent will be responsible for the Adoption Fee and any expenses. (initials)
8. I understand that food, litter, medications, and other necessary supplies are available from KittiCo if needed for approved foster animal(s). If I request or purchase supplies other than those authorized by KittiCo or available from KittiCo, then the cost is my responsibility. These costs may be considered in-kind donations if used specifically and only for KittiCo foster animal(s). I can request a donation record for tax purposes with the verifiable receipts.
9. I understand that sometimes animal(s) that are adopted need to be returned by the new owners to KittiCo. I agree to take the cat(s) back into my care again at any time while I am actively fostering with KittiCo, unless disease or unusual circumstances prohibit this.
10. I have reviewed and understand all KittiCo adoption documents. I further understand that I will not execute the KittiCo Adoption Contract without approval of a member of the Adoption team or the Foster Program Coordinator.
11. I agree that the foster animal(s) must be brought to at least one mobile adoption per month, unless otherwise agreed upon with the foster coordinator. The animal(s) must be clean and flea-free, healthy and in good condition. I also agree to be on-time, and to show up when scheduled, as space is limited at mobile adoptions.
12. I understand that foster animals should be kept separate from personal animals for the protection of the personal animal's health. If I choose to mingle personal and foster animals, then it is my responsibility, for any costs incurred, to treat personal animals if their health is compromised due to foster animals. (initials)
13. I understand that working with scared or ill animals may involve risk. I release KittiCo Cat Rescue, its volunteers, agents, and the treating veterinarians and their staff and agents from all liability related to the handling, treatment, and transportation of the animal(s) that I foster.
14. I agree to notify KittiCo immediately if there are any changes in my address or phone number.
15. I certify that my own animals are current on all immunizations and are spayed/neutered.
16. I agree to return the foster animal(s) to KittiCo upon request by KittiCo if all of the above conditions are not met.
17. I agree to defend, indemnify, and hold KittiCo, its Board of Directors, officers, and volunteers harmless from direct or indirect and consequential damages arising out of this foster care arrangement.

I have read, understand, and agree to the above conditions. Sign Name _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Complete address _____

Send by fax: 214-826-3412, **email:** volunteer@kittico.org, **or mail to:** KittiCo Cat Rescue, Attn: Foster Program, PO Box 600447, Dallas, TX 75360