



FOSTER CARE POLICY

General. The SPCA of Bradley County Foster Program seeks to provide supplemental care to animals with special needs, to decrease the rate of euthanasia due to health concerns, to increase the rate of animal adoptions and to expand public relations within the community. The ultimate goal of the foster care program is find a permanent home for the foster animal. Animals will be selected for our foster program by the Shelter Manager, not by potential foster parents.

A. **Approved Foster Pets.** Foster care may be provided to animals that:

1. Currently Approved

- a. Are too young or ill to be adopted, or are pregnant or nursing
- b. Have temporary health problems (e.g. malnourished, healing wound, etc.)
- c. Have a temporary condition affecting their physical appearance (e.g. has ringworm, mange, etc.)
- d. Suffer from kennel / cage stress
- e. Require socialization and/or training

B. **Foster Requirements** To become an Approved Foster, a volunteer must:

1. Submit a SPCA Foster Application.
2. Submit the SPCA Foster Agreement, adhere to all SPCA policies and procedures outlined in the manual, Sterilization Agreement, and Outcome Plan.
3. Be 18 years or older.

4. Show proper identification. (If DL is not current, foster must provide a bill /lease with current address)
5. Be able to provide a safe, loving and stable environment for the foster animal.
6. Be willing to nurse an injury and/or illness — with the understanding that some issues may result in the death of an animal.
7. Be able to transport the foster animal to and from SPCA during normal SPCA business hours.
8. If applicable, provide proof that their landlord allows foster animals.
9. Be approved by the Foster Coordinator AND Shelter Manager.
10. Must use the private veterinarian of our choosing, currently ***Keith St. Animal Clinic***, for all medical attention the foster animal might need OR you accept all financial responsibility for the foster animals treatment if taken elsewhere.

C. Refused Foster Status. An applicant may be refused Approved Foster status if, among other things, he/she:

1. Requests to foster animals not allowed by a landlord, if applicable.
2. Demonstrates or acts in an aggressive or cruel manner towards an animal in the presence of a SPCA employee or volunteer.
3. Has turned in an owned animal to a shelter.
4. Was convicted, suspected or under investigation for animal cruelty, has left dead animals on property, or has left an animal in a vehicle in extreme weather conditions that caused injury or death to the animal.
5. Refuses to adhere to SPCA policy/procedures.
6. Have one or more members of the household who do not want to foster the type(s) of animals that are being requested.
7. Clearly states that he/she or a member of the household is allergic to animals.
8. Has repeatedly violated license, at-large or nuisance provisions of municipal, county or state code.

9. Cannot provide the animal with proper care, or cannot keep the animal confined or contained.
10. Appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during interactions with shelter staff or volunteers.
11. Acts in an abusive or disruptive manner towards a SPCA staff or volunteers.
12. Indicates that a pet recently died of an infectious disease that could risk the health of a foster animal.
13. Previously fostered from SPCA and did not honor the Foster Agreement.
14. Previously refused to return an animal as requested by SPCA.

D. **Guidelines.** When you become an Approved Foster, we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

1. Adhere to all SPCA policies and procedures.
2. Respond within 24 hours to communications from SPCA staff or volunteers.
3. Immediately report to SPCA staff any aggressive behavior by the foster animal.
4. Inform the Foster Coordinator regarding concerns about animal health, safety, and facility conditions as well as issues that need improvement. Fosters may also submit suggestions and concerns by email to office@spcaofbradleycountyttn.org.
5. Provide changes in your SPCA Foster Application personal information (i.e. name, address, phone, email, household occupancy) to the Foster Coordinator in a timely manner so that all records can be kept up-to-date.
6. **SPCA retains guardianship and control of all animals in foster care.** The shelter staff will make all final decisions regarding their placement. **Foster animals are NOT to be given away or kept – any adoption of an animal in foster care MUST go through the SPCA adoption process with all applicable and accompanying SPCA forms and fees.**
7. Foster animals are to be cared for as if it were your own pet and receive fresh food and water daily. Pet food will be provided to foster parents by request. Foster animals must be housed in a climate-controlled area that is comfortable and stress-free.
8. Foster homes may be limited to the number of pets fostered at any given time and will be considered on a case by case basis.

9. A home visit may be conducted prior to and/or during fostering.
10. Foster pets are to be kept in the home of foster parent on record; any situation necessitating removal or transfer of the pet must be communicated to SPCA, and express permission must be provided prior to removal or transfer of the pet.
11. Foster pets may not be transported outside the Bradley County area without the permission of the Foster/Rescue Coordinator or Shelter Manager.
12. SPCA staff will inform the foster family of medical treatment required, expected length of care required, the care objectives and any other expectations when the foster pet is picked up, and on an on-going basis.
13. Any problems/questions encountered during the fostering period should be discussed with the Foster/Rescue Coordinator or Shelter Manager immediately. Do not take an animal to the veterinarian without first informing the SPCA.
14. You are welcome to bring the fostered pet to your private veterinarian, however, **SPCA cannot reimburse for medical expenses incurred at another facility/vet.**
15. Foster parents may be required to schedule a follow up examination 14 days into the foster program. This will be determined by the Foster Coordinator or Shelter Manager. After the health clearance, the pet will be put in the adoption program. We ask foster homes to assist us in promoting the adoption of foster animals through friends, family and co-workers and websites. Attending off-site adoption events may be required.
16. As a foster parent, you are expected to keep the pet securely confined and return the pet to SPCA when requested. If an adopter requests to visit with the foster pet, the Foster Home must make arrangements with SPCA to return the animal to the facility for viewing in a timely manner. Foster parents will be required to bring animals to an on-site or offsite event to promote adoption of their foster animal.
- 17. If this has not been done already, after the animals estimated return date, the foster parent will be contacted to review the placement plan for the animal.**
18. Every effort will be made to adopt foster pets. If the pet begins to exhibit aggressive or undesirable behavior, a chronic debilitating or painful condition, or is terminally ill, euthanasia may have to be considered. This is rare, but the ultimate decision is reserved for a licensed veterinarian (see D.14) with support from the Shelter Manager.