



# Tabby's Place®

Tabby's Place Foster Manual

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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in fostering cats and kittens for Tabby's Place. As a foster, you will help Tabby's Place provide excellent care, individual attention and socialization to some of our most needy cats and kittens. Fostering can be a lot of work, but it is a very rewarding experience.

Through your assistance with this program, you will help save lives by providing cats with love and care during their greatest time of need, and uniting families with their new best friends. Together we are helping to change the world for cats, one precious life at a time.

## Types of Fostering

Tabby's Place offers a variety of foster opportunities that fall under two main categories, temporary fosters and forever fosters.

- **Temporary Fosters** – These fosters are typically kittens, nursing mothers or cats recovering from a procedure who would benefit from a temporary stay in a home until they are ready to be integrated into Tabby's Place, or when they are ready to be put up for adoption. The duration of temporary fosters typically last between 4-8 weeks, but can sometimes vary depending on their needs. The foster period will often include the cat's quarantine period, which is a three week introductory period of the cat to Tabby's Place. During this time, cats are screened for any communicable diseases or persistent health issues. **Due to this, temporary fosters must always stay separate from other pets in the foster home, even after they have medically cleared and have finished their quarantine period.**
- **Temporary Fosters include:**
  - **Medical Fosters:** Medical fosters are generally kittens, nursing mothers or cats recovering from surgery who would benefit from a short-term stay in a home until they are ready for adoption at Tabby's Place. Kittens in particular benefit from the additional socialization and reduced risk of disease provided by a home environment. This type of foster can also include healthy adult cats that need temporary placement while they await their “medical clearance” from quarantine, which will be described in detail further in the manual.
    - **Recovery Fosters:** Recovery fosters are considered medical fosters, but this specifically revolves around cats that are recovering from either surgery, or intensive treatment for persistent conditions that they may have.
  - **Hospice Fosters:** Hospice fosters include cats that are typically in the terminal stages of illness (which could range from days to a few months), and would be more comfortable in a home. This gives the opportunity for additional supportive care, and to be in a more comfortable space.
  - **Behavior Fosters:** Behavior fosters are specific to cats that have behavioral needs that would be better addressed in a home environment. Behavior fosters could include cats that:
    - Do not do well with other cats - exhibit signs of aggression, discomfort, or higher levels of stress around other cats/animals
    - Need to be socialized before being integrated into a suite in house
    - TNR cats that are being cared for prior to return to their colony
- **Forever Fosters** – Forever fosters are cats that are not likely to thrive at Tabby's Place, and are

unlikely to be adopted due to significant medical or behavioral issues. These cats would benefit from living out their lives in the comfort of a home rather than at the sanctuary. Examples are very elderly cats, cats with persistent health issues or cats with multiple special needs that require additional care. The eligibility of a cat for the Forever Foster Program is determined by availability of spots in the program and evaluation by the Foster Coordinator, Medical Department and Director of Operations. The duration of these types of fosters is for the remainder of the cat's life and can range from months to years. After a proper introduction process, these fosters are typically fully integrated into the foster's home to live as a member of their family.

## **Becoming a Tabby's Place Fosterer**

To become a foster for Tabby's Place you must:

1. Be registered as a Tabby's Place volunteer and have completed the volunteer onboarding process
2. Be 18 years of age or older
3. Attend a Foster Orientation or one on one meeting with a Tabby's Place foster team member
4. Read the Foster Manual, as well as the foster emergency information handout, and reviewed it with a foster team member
5. Live within a 90 minute drive of Tabby's Place and be willing to transport the cat to/from Tabby's Place as needed

After you've met the requirements and have gone through the foster onboarding process, the foster team will match you with appropriate foster(s) based on your level of experience and ability to provide care and address the needs of Tabby's Place. Our greatest need for Temporary Fosters is usually during kitten season which runs from late March through November. Opportunities for Forever Fosters may come up at any time depending on the needs of our resident cats and new arrivals.

Once we have identified one or more suitable fosters for you, the foster team will reach out to you, and a team member will confirm interest in fostering the cat based on their needs, review with you the cats' medical records and foster agreement, and help you prepare to take the cat home. During the foster period, Tabby's Place will provide all the medical care, food and litter for the cat. The foster is responsible for providing a safe environment, daily care, socialization, monitoring of the cat and any transport needed to and from medical or adoption appointments.

For Temporary Fosters, once the foster period ends the cats will return to Tabby's Place and be placed for adoption. Forever Fosters will reside in their foster home for the remainder of the cat's life unless the foster can no longer care for the cat; in this case, the cat would return to Tabby's Place. The transition back to Tabby's Place can be very stressful for these cats, so we try to avoid the return of Forever Fosters. Forever Foster parents should be able to make a long term commitment to their foster cat.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How much time do I need to spend with my fosters?**

As much time as you can. Socialization time is very important, especially with very young or shy kittens. The more time you spend with your foster kittens, the better socialized and adoptable they will be. Insight from foster families offers us early glimpses of the kitten(s) behaviors in the home, which helps us to ensure that their potential adoptive parents are good matches for them.

### **How much time does feeding take for fosters?**

The amount of time required for feeding will vary depending on the age of your fosters. In the first weeks of life, kittens need to be bottle-fed or syringe fed every few hours, while older kittens and adults need to be fed anywhere between 2-4 times a day.

### **Can I foster even if I have a full-time job?**

Yes. The Tabby's Place staff will match you with cats or kittens appropriate for your schedule. We will need you to be available, however, to bring your fosters into vet appointments if they are sick, and to regularly bring in any fecal samples or fungal cultures that they need brought in.

### **How many cats or kittens will I be fostering?**

This depends on your abilities and resources. If you are fostering kittens, we generally like to have at least two kittens in a foster home so that they can socialize and learn from each other. Sometimes there are special circumstances in which a kitten goes to a foster home alone, but if we have the opportunity to pair them with another cat, we will do that. Adult cats are usually fostered individually, but we do foster in pairs or groups when appropriate.

### **How often will I be asked to foster?**

We are always grateful for the help of our foster parents but we understand that it's important to take breaks from fostering. The foster team will check in with you periodically to determine if you would like to take more fosters, or if you would like a break from fostering.

### **Will I need to give medicine to my foster?**

It is likely that at some point during the foster period you will need to give your foster medication. In the case of fostering kittens, you will usually be asked to administer a few doses of oral dewormer, plus any additional medication needed, which may include oral antibiotics, topical eye medication, or ear drops. For forever fosters, your cat may require long term courses of medication. If your foster needs medication, we will show you how to administer it, and make sure you are comfortable, before you take your foster home.

### **Can I let my foster interact with my personal pets?**

**If you have temporary fosters, you must keep them in a separate room from all other pets at all times.** They should not be allowed to interact with other animals in your home. Kittens, in particular, are very susceptible to illness and can carry or catch ailments easily. We also advise that you carefully review the risks associated with fostering and consult with your veterinarian before fostering. You should ensure that all of your personal pets are healthy and up-to-date on all vaccines and any other preventatives deemed necessary by

your vet, such as flea preventative. **If, for any reason, your personal pet becomes ill while you are fostering a Tabby's Place cat, we cannot provide medical care for your personal pet.**

If you are fostering a permanent foster, we encourage foster parents to fully integrate their foster into their homes, so the foster may live as a member of the family. You should follow the instructions in our “Lasting Impressions” pamphlet to do a proper and slow introduction of your foster cat to your other pets.

#### **Is my foster allowed to go outside?**

**Temporary fosters may not go outside.** With approval from the Tabby's Place medical team, some Forever Fosters may enjoy the outdoors safely in an enclosure, stroller or harness if proper flea preventative has been dispensed by Tabby's Place and regularly applied to the cat.

#### **Will any of my fosters pass away or be euthanized?**

Sadly, some fosters may pass away in your care. This may be the hardest part of fostering. Kittens are very fragile, so it is always possible for them to become ill and pass away. Since Forever Fosters live the remainder of their lives with their foster parent, it is very likely that the foster parent will experience the loss of their Forever Foster.

Tabby's Place cats are only euthanized in cases when they have become terminally ill, all medical treatment options have been exhausted and the cat has a severely diminished quality of life. The decision to euthanize any foster will be made with input from the foster parent, but is ultimately at the sole discretion of Tabby's Place.

If losing your foster is something you don't feel you can cope with, then fostering may not be for you. Please keep in mind that foster homes improve the quality of life of cats and kittens and help us to save more cats who may otherwise not have a chance at a long, happy life. By fostering, you are helping to save lives.

#### **Who will take care of my foster if I need to go out of town?**

If you have travel plans while you are fostering for Tabby's Place, contact a Foster Coordinator to provide them **with at least two weeks' notice prior to your scheduled trip.**

*Temporary Fosters* - We prefer that the foster be able to fully commit to the entire foster term before they take any temporary fosters home. If travel plans come up during the foster period the foster may be returned to Tabby's Place or, in some rare cases, a temporary caretaker approved by Tabby's Place may care for the fosters temporarily. This may be another household member, or another foster.

*Forever Fosters* – We understand that you may need to travel during the time you've committed to caring for a Forever Foster, and some Forever Fosters have needs above that of a normal cat. Finding adequate temporary care for these cats can be difficult. A Foster Coordinator will help you make arrangements for your Forever Foster's temporary care at Camp Tabby's Place or by an approved temporary caretaker. This may be another household

member, a pet sitter or another foster.

**You cannot leave your foster cat with an unauthorized person or pet sitter. We have specific training for foster parents, and unapproved pet sitters have not undergone that training or signed our foster agreement.**

#### **What should I do if my foster bites me?**

If any of your foster cats bite you and break skin with their teeth, causing you to bleed, you need to report the bite to one of our foster coordinators within 24 hours of the bite. You and the cat will not be in trouble, but we do need to create a report for each bite occurrence. You should immediately clean the wound for several minutes with soap and running water. We also recommend that you see your physician as soon as possible to have the wound evaluated and treated. You may submit any bills for your out-of-pocket costs related to an injury to our administrative assistant for reimbursement.

#### **What if I want to adopt one of my fosters?**

If you want to adopt a foster cat, you will need to complete an adoption application and follow the full adoption process. **Please immediately notify the foster team if you are interested in adopting a foster, and complete an online application.** It's important that you begin the process as soon as you decide you want to adopt your foster cat because **we process adoptions on a first come first serve basis.**

#### **What if I know someone who's interested in adopting one of my fosters?**

We are very grateful for adoption referrals from our foster parents. If someone you know is interested in adopting one of your foster cats, please have them complete an adoption application and contact an Adoption Counselor and the foster team right away. They will need to complete an adoption application and follow the full adoption process. **Note: Forever Fosters are not typically available for adoption to anyone except their foster parent.**

#### **Will it be difficult for me to say goodbye to my foster?**

Saying goodbye can be a very difficult part of fostering, but remember that we always have more cats and kittens in need of wonderful foster homes. By fostering, you are playing an important role in helping to save lives.

#### **Can I foster cats to fulfill a community service obligation?**

Unfortunately, Tabby's Place cannot sign off on community service hours spent fostering cats. Community service must be supervised work, and fostering is unsupervised, since it takes place in your home. If you need community service hours, we'd love to have you sign up as an on-site volunteer. You can begin your volunteer enrollment process by visiting our website at: [www.tabbysplace.org/volunteer/](http://www.tabbysplace.org/volunteer/).

#### **What should I do if I can't find my foster?**

Immediately after you realize your foster cat is missing, conduct a thorough search of your house and check with your housemates to see if they have seen the cat or think it may have slipped out of the house. If the cat is not located during a thorough search, reach out to one of our Foster Coordinators

right away. Our staff is trained in finding lost cats, and we are here to help you. All Tabby's Place fosters are microchipped and registered to Tabby's Place.

#### **What should I do if my foster gets out of the house?**

**If your foster accidentally gets out of the house, contact one of our foster coordinators immediately.** Our staff is trained in recovering lost cats, and we will assist you in any way we can to get your foster cat back quickly and safely.

#### **Can my foster come with me to Tabby's Place when I work a shift at the sanctuary?**

Unless you have a scheduled appointment or you're fostering a very young kitten that needs frequent feedings, we recommend that you leave your foster at home during any shifts you have scheduled at the sanctuary. Remember there is an increased risk of exposure to disease here. If you do need to bring your foster to the sanctuary, follow the instructions in the Veterinary Care section of this manual.

#### **Do I need to be a volunteer to become a foster for Tabby's Place?**

In order to foster, you do need to be registered as a volunteer with Tabby's Place.

## Bringing Your Foster Home

On the day of pick up, you will be asked to sign a foster contract if you have not already done so. Any medical records, medication or treatments and appointments will be reviewed with you.

Once appropriate fosters have been selected for you, a staff member will set up an appointment for you to pick up your fosters. Prior to your scheduled foster pick up, you should prepare your foster room or playpen. Supplies can be borrowed from Tabby's Place in advance if needed. You may also use some of your own supplies, so long as they are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.

### Supplies

- Dry food
- Canned food
- Food & water bowls
- Litter, litter boxes, and litter box scoopers/scrapers
- Beds, towels & blankets
- Laundry bags
- Toys, including wand toys and enrichment toys
- Crate or playpen, if needed
- Scale
- Medications or food supplements, if applicable
- Pet friendly cleaning solutions
- Gloves (latex or vinyl), Shoe covers/booties, or other PPE
- Medical sample supplies (fecalyzers, fungal culture dishes)

Non-medical supplies, including supplements and non-prescription food, can be replenished by visiting Tabby's Place anytime during our hours of operation. If you have a forever foster and live far away or are unable to transport supplies, autoship can be set up for supplies to be sent directly to your home. If you have a forever foster and would like to set this up, please discuss this with the foster team.

## Daily Care

### Cleaning<sup>1</sup> and Handling

#### **During Quarantine**

While the foster is under quarantine, certain precautionary measures should be taken when cleaning and handling to reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases or parasites such as ringworm or fecal parasites to pets in the foster home.

**Please make sure to wear gloves during cleaning and handling, and make sure you wash your hands thoroughly before and after cleaning.**

1. Be sure to wash your hands and arms after handling the foster and before touching resident pets.
2. **If the cat is a ringworm suspect, wear gloves and use a scrub shirt or extra t-shirt when in the foster room and when cleaning and/or handling the foster. Remove the shirt before leaving the room and leave it in the room or place it in the laundry bag. If the foster is loose in a room, wear shoe covers to avoid tracking any hair and contaminants throughout the house.**
  - a. All members of the house and visitors should be made aware of the potential risks before handling the foster. These risks include:
    - b. Transmission from foster to resident pets, or to other members of the household.
3. Change dirty or soiled bedding daily.
  - a. If you are bringing dirty laundry to be washed at Tabby's Place, it should be kept in a green laundry bag (which is provided by Tabby's Place) and brought in to be washed with a bleach additive. In some cases, the fosterer may choose to wash the bedding in their own home. We recommend using bleach, detergent and hot water when washing in your home.
4. All surfaces should be wiped down weekly (sooner if surfaces are wet or dirty) with Rescue spray or wipes<sup>1</sup>. 2. The litter box should be kept clean, scooped and changed frequently<sup>2</sup>.
  - a. Keep the litter boxes scooped and areas around the litter box clean to avoid tracking any fecal matter in the house. The surrounding areas of the enclosure or room should also be kept clean to prevent tracking into other areas of the home.
5. All food and water should be replaced daily.
  - a. When returning dishes to Tabby's Place, please secure them in a clear plastic bag.
- 6.

#### **Post Quarantine**

Once the foster has been cleared of ringworm, the cleaning protocol is as follows:

1. Change the bedding if soiled or dirty.
  - a. All dirty laundry can be brought to Tabby's Place in a blue laundry bag to be washed.
2. Wipe down any surfaces with Rescue spray or wipes as needed (if surfaces are dirty, if any food or water has spilled, etc).

<sup>1</sup> Use the 1:16 dilution for the Rescue spray (1:16 dilution if they are a ringworm suspect)

<sup>2</sup> Intestinal parasites are shed in the feces. If the cat(s) are walking or lying in feces, they can ingest the parasite and become infected again by normal grooming habits. This can also transfer to other housemates.

<sup>3</sup> All supplies provided at Tabby's Place- gowns, gloves, shoe covers, etc.#

3. Keep the litter box clean and scoop frequently.
4. All food/water should be replaced daily.
5. **Forever Fosters:** At this time, **if you have approval from the Tabby's Place staff**, you may begin integrating your foster into your home using the procedure outlined in our "Lasting Impressions" brochure.
6. **Temporary Fosters:** **At no point should the foster interact with resident pets. This is for the protection of all animals in the home.**

## Feeding

Food for each foster will be provided by Tabby's Place. It is very important to keep the diet consistent.

- Provide fresh dry food and water daily. Use a clean dish for each feeding.
- The daily feeding amounts and type of food will be determined by the needs of the cat. A staff member will discuss the foster's diet with you upon pick up, and it will be documented on the foster contract.
- Diets:
  - Nursing moms and kittens up to 8 weeks old:
    - Royal Canin Mother and Baby Cat dry, or GI Kitten dry
    - GI Kitten wet or poultry/beef pate canned
  - Kittens 2-12 months old:
    - Royal Canin Kitten dry/Gi Kitten dry food
    - GI Kitten wet or poultry/beef pate canned
  - 12 months- Senior:
    - General adult cat diet: Science Diet Adult and any canned wet food
    - Senior: to be determined due to health status
    - Special Needs: Diet to be tailored to the cats' needs.
  - **All diets and diet changes need to be confirmed with the foster and medical team before starting.**
  - Forever Foster:
    - Tabby's Place will provide a special diet if required. If the cat does not need a prescription diet and the fosterer wishes to put them on a diet of their choice, a transition schedule should be discussed with a Tabby's Place foster team member and noted in their chart.
  - **AT NO TIME SHOULD FOSTERS BE FED A RAW DIET.**

**Any changes to the diet must first be discussed and approved by the Tabby's Place medical staff.**

## Monitoring

Tabby's Place relies on foster parents to monitor fosters closely. Any concerns should be brought to the attention of the Tabby's Place staff – and, if necessary, addressed by the medical or behavior staff.

Things to monitor closely in foster include:

- A. Weight
  - a. Temporary Foster: The foster parent should weigh the foster daily or weekly as indicated by the medical staff.
  - b. Forever Foster: Frequency of weights will be discussed with and set by the medical staff based on health/appetite concerns.
  - c. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Overweight, losing weight rapidly or weight consistently trending down, a kitten not gaining weight despite eating well.
- B. Changes to their eating/drinking habits
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Not eating/drinking well or eating/drinking excessively.
- C. GI distress/upset
  - a. GI distress is concerning. This includes frequent vomiting, diarrhea, and constipation.
- D. Urinary concerns
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Change in urinary behavior, straining, no urine production, blood in urine, increased urination (frequency and/or volume)
  - b. Poor litter box habits
- E. Grooming concerns
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Not grooming, over grooming, matting
- F. Behavior
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Sudden change in behavior, aggression, rough play, “love bites”, biting, scratching, chasing hands or feet
- G. Signs of upper respiratory issues
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Coughing, wheezing, sneezing, nasal or ocular discharge
- H. Signs of illness
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Lethargy, drinking excessively, not drinking at all, dehydration, pale gums
- I. Skin issues
  - a. Concerns might include but are not limited to:
    - i. Wounds, dermatitis, lesions, itchy, hair loss, scaly, thickened patches of skin or fur.

It is recommended that the foster family keep a journal of their foster and their daily condition/habits. This allows for proper documentation of their daily habits and a smooth transition back to Tabby's Place or another fosterer.

## Risks

Please be aware that when fostering, there are some risks to you, your household members, visitors and pets. By following the guidelines in this packet, you can greatly reduce the risks associated with caring for a foster. Prevention is the key!

### External Parasites

#### **Ringworm**

Ringworm is a fungus that feeds on the dead skin cells and hair on humans and animals. In humans, it may cause a red lesion with a ring of scale around the edges. In animals it most commonly looks like a dry, gray, scaly patch, but it can present like other skin conditions. Ringworm spores can live in an environment for years, so proper cleaning and maintenance is essential to limit exposure and spreading. The spores prefer an area of skin that has abrasions, as it cannot infect healthy skin (*although fosters can still be carriers without symptoms*). Infection can come from an asymptomatic carrier, an infected animal/human and/or the environment. Ringworm lesions usually present one to three weeks after exposure.

#### **Predisposing factors**

##### ***Animals***

- Age- Puppies, kittens and senior cats/dogs
- Lifestyle- Outdoor/free-roaming
- Climate- Warm and humid weather
- Immune suppression- FIV, FeLV, chronic or acute illness, etc.
- High stress levels
- Wounds or chronic skin conditions
- Breed- Persian cats and Yorkshire terriers have high infection rates.

##### ***Humans***

- Young children
- Pregnant women
- Elderly
- Chronic illness/Immune suppression
- Chemotherapy patients or any patient on immunosuppressive medication
- High stress levels
- Wounds or chronic skin conditions

#### **Treatment**

##### ***Animals***

Treatment will be determined by the species of ringworm. Some species require topical therapy and oral medication. In the event that the cat needs treatment they will return to Tabby's Place or in unique situations can begin treatment within the foster home.

##### ***Humans***

- Treatment to be determined by your primary care physician.

## Fleas

### Predisposing factors

- Age- All cats
- Lifestyle- Outdoor/free-roaming
- Climate- Warm and humid weather
- Immune suppression- FIV, FeLV, chronic or acute illness, etc.
- High stress levels
- No preventative
- Limited to animals

### Treatment

- Treatment will consist of an oral medication to eliminate adult fleas and a topical treatment to halt the life cycle.
- Possible need for bathing.
- Keep the environment clean.
- Change blankets regularly and vacuum where indicated.
- No interaction with other pets.

## Lice/Mites

### Predisposing factors

- Age- All cats
- Lifestyle- Outdoor/free-roaming
- Climate- Warm and humid weather
- Immune suppression- FIV, FeLV, chronic or acute illness, etc.
- High stress levels
- No preventative
- Wounds or chronic skin conditions
- Limited to animals

### Treatment

- Treatment will consist of a topical treatment.
- Possible need for bathing.
- Keep the environment clean. Change blankets regularly and vacuum where indicated.
- No interaction with other pets.

## Ticks

### Predisposing factors

#### *Animals*

- Age- All
- Lifestyle- Outdoor/free-roaming
- Climate- Warm and humid weather
- No preventative

#### *Humans*

- Age- All
- Lifestyle- Outdoor
- Climate- Warm and humid weather

### Treatment

#### *Animals*

- Manual removal of ticks.
- No interaction with other pets.

#### *Human*

- Manual removal of ticks
- See Primary Care Physician with concerns.

### Internal Parasites

There are many types of internal parasites that cause a variety of symptoms. Some parasites are commonly referred to as “worms” due to their appearances, but their eggs and several other parasites are invisible to the naked eye. These internal parasites may reside in the intestinal tract or other organs in the body including the lungs and liver.

#### *How do they get internal parasites?*

Depending on the species of parasite:

- Newborns- from infected mother’s milk
- Ingestion of an infected animal or insect(s)
- Ingestion of infected stool- if there is stool on their coat or feet during normal grooming habits.
- Skin contact
- Ingestion of infected water or soil
- Consumption of a raw diet

### Predisposing factors

#### *Animals*

- Puppies and kittens
- Lifestyle (outdoors, hunter)
- No preventative treatment
- Immune suppression
- Raw diet

#### *Humans*

- Young children
- Gardeners or those who work outside
- Poor sanitation habits
- Increased exposure to potential carriers and/or their environment (TNR, foster parents, wildlife workers, etc.)

### Treatment

### **Animals**

- Medication to be determined by a veterinarian
- Clean environment and litter box

### **Humans**

- Treatment to be determined by your primary care physician.

## Behavioral Problems

Dealing with fosters is never the same experience twice. At Tabby's Place, we take on many different cats with a variety of different personalities. It is very important to report any negative behavior to a staff member, so things can be addressed in a timely manner.

### Potential behavioral issues

- Shy/fearful cat
- Biting- includes aggressive, play and love bites
- Scratching- includes scratching during play
- House soiling- includes urination and/or defecation outside of the litter box
- Aggressive play
- Chewing on or eating things that are not food
- Resource guarding behaviors (food aggression/toy aggression)

In the event that any of these behaviors occur, please reach out to our foster team to discuss ways to encourage more positive behaviors. Early intervention is the key to dealing with behavioral problems. Reinforcing positive behavior will increase the animals' quality of life and give them the best chance possible to find their forever home. The staff will work with all persons involved in fostering challenging cats/kittens and provide them with the knowledge and tools to work with each cat appropriately. If there is a frequent for a more in-depth evaluation.

### What to do if you have been injured

- Clean the wound well with antibacterial soap and warm water.
- For a short time, bandage the wound. Change the bandage frequently and keep the wound clean. You can also use antibiotic ointment.
- Notify a Tabby's Place employee and document the event- How and when did this occur?
- Call your primary care physician if indicated
- Bring any receipts for out-of-pocket expenses for reimbursement from Tabby's Place

### What to do if one of your fosters have been injured due to bad behavior? (i.e., heavily aggressive play or biting, or incessant aggression)

Foster parents should take all necessary precautions to keep all members of their household, people and animals, safe. Any negative incidents are to be reported to a staff member and any bite wounds should be addressed with the Tabby's Place foster team.

## Veterinary Care

All veterinary care will be provided for fosters by Tabby's Place at no cost to the fosterer. Any veterinary care for fosters outside of the Tabby's Place is ONLY in the case of a medical emergency or for medical consults with our partner veterinarians, and all medical decisions have to be authorized by our medical director.

### General Guidelines

- A member of the Tabby's Place medical staff will be in contact with the fosterer regarding appointments, lab results, medication pick-ups, return dates and anything else pertaining to the cat.
- The foster will need to feel comfortable medicating the cat as directed by the medical staff.
- Training on medicating will be provided by a Tabby's Place employee.
  - In the event that the foster is not comfortable or successful medicating or treating the cat as directed, they are to notify the foster team immediately. Additional training can be provided, or the return of the cat can be arranged.
- In the event that there is an emergency, please refer to our emergency protocol, which is outlined here, as well as the emergency information sheet, which will be provided upon foster onboarding.

### Appointments Scheduling

*Temporary Fosters* - Email and/or text updates will be provided for temporary fosters with the dates of appointments and any standard medications that will come due during the foster period. This information will also be documented in the foster contract, which is to be reviewed and signed at the time of foster pickup.

*Forever Fosters* - Appointments will be set by the medical staff based on the health status and needs of the cat.

### Handling of Fosters During Appointments

#### *During Quarantine*

- If your foster is not cleared of ringworm:
  - You should bring them in through the intake door by the holding rooms. Before you come in, notify a staff member through the foster text line so that a staff member can let you in.
    - In the event of an emergency, you may be instructed to come right to the main vet room for immediate treatment.
  - If you are bringing the cat in during your volunteer shift or dropping off for the day, please notify a staff member so that a cage can be set up either in a quarantine room or the holding room hallway. Please minimize handling of your foster before and during your shift to reduce the risk of spreading contaminants to our resident cats. Wash your

hands thoroughly before beginning your shift.

#### Cleared of Ringworm

- Bring your foster cat/kitten through the side door by the lounge. You can place the carrier outside of the vet room and notify a staff member that you have arrived.
- In the event that you are bringing the cat in during your volunteer shift or dropping off for the day, please notify a staff member so we can set them up in a cage in Hospital, Surgery or other appropriate location.

## Emergency Protocol

We hope that there will not be an emergency with a foster in your home, but the possibility is always there. It is best to stay calm and be prepared by knowing who to call and where to go.

**All foster parents should familiarize themselves with the location of Blue Pearl in Levittown, PA. The address is 301 Veterans Highway, Levittown, PA, and their phone number is (215)-750-7884. This is the primary veterinary facility that we send our cats to, and should be used for emergencies unless otherwise discussed with the Tabby's Place staff.**

**If you are experiencing a true emergency, and are not as close to Blue Pearl, we also recommend going to Crown Veterinary Specialists in Lebanon, NJ. Their address is 23 Blossom Hill Road, Lebanon, NJ, and their phone number is (908)-236-4120.**

**In the event that you need to go to either emergency hospital, or a more local emergency hospital, it is good practice to call them on your way if possible to let them know that there is an emergency and that you are heading to their facility. If you are not comfortable with this, the foster team can contact them ahead of time on your behalf to ease the process of getting your foster swift medical care.**

If there are any concerns with the hospital or location, other options should be discussed in advance with a Tabby's Place staff member.

In the event of an emergency, we are here to support you and your foster's needs, and will cover all the costs of emergency medical care!

### What is an emergency?

This is always a tricky question as there are many possibilities and perception is a big part of the evaluation. Tabby's Place will never penalize you for making a decision to have a foster evaluated if you are concerned. Some common emergencies include but are not limited to:

- Respiration: Increased respiratory rate, trouble breathing, open mouth breathing
- Collapse
- Lethargy
- Toxic ingestion- medication, household plants, cleaners, essential oils
- Urination- Straining with little to no production, blood in urine
- Injury- wound, limping, swelling
- Diabetic complications
- Neurological symptoms

### Tools

- **Foster Emergency Line: (732) 338-8724**
  - The foster emergency line is the primary point of contact for general questions, scheduling appointments, and reaching out to the foster team due to emergencies. This line is active 24 hours of the day, and is monitored by the foster team members at all times. In the event that there is anything strange or unusual going on with your foster, or if your foster is experiencing an emergency, please use this line to seek medical advice and authorization for treatment. Saving this phone number as a contact will make reaching out due to an emergency easier, so please save this phone number prior to taking fosters home.
- Emergency Hospital
- Emergency Information Handout

- TPR reference sheet
  - Normal temperature range
  - Abnormal findings on basic physical

## Protocol

### What to do in an emergency?

- Call the Emergency Foster Line first for instructions.
  - If the foster line is busy, or if you do not get an answer, please leave a voicemail, and call again.
  - If you've left a voicemail, tried calling the foster line again and still received no response, call our Medical Director, Denise.
  - In the event that you are unable to reach a staff member, please make your way to an emergency hospital, and continue communications with the emergency foster line, giving updates on the medical status of your foster.
  - Tabby's Place prefers and has a close relationship with Blue Pearl in Levittown, PA.

### What to do once you arrive at the emergency room

- List Tabby's Place as the owner of the foster.
- The emergency hospital should be instructed to call a Tabby's Place employee (preferably the Medical Director, Denise) for authorization of diagnostics and treatments.
- No decisions for treatment, hospitalization or euthanasia should be made by the foster parent unless the cat is obviously suffering and attempts to contact the proper staff members have been unsuccessful.
- Tabby's Place will assume financial responsibility for treatment of the foster.

## Ending the Foster Period

At any point during the foster period the foster parent may return the foster to Tabby's Place for any reason. Tabby's Place may also request the foster be returned to Tabby's Place at any point during the foster period for any or no reason.

### Temporary Fosters

Near the end of your foster period one of the staff will contact you to confirm a return day and time and instruct you on where to take your fosters when you arrive at Tabby's Place. Items that you have borrowed from Tabby's Place may be returned on this day or retained for future fosters.

### Returning Supplies

- Food & litter – Return to the storage room adjacent to the Laundry Room.
- Food /water bowls and litter boxes – Put in the Laundry Room sink to be washed and sanitized. Items from quarantined fosters should be placed in a clear plastic bag before being brought into the building.
- Beds & blankets – all bedding should be put into laundry bags and returned to the Laundry Room at Tabby's Place. If your foster has completed their quarantine period, laundry can be put in a blue laundry bag. If your foster is still not medically cleared, bedding from your foster home should be placed in a green laundry bag before being brought into the building.
- Toys, including wand toys and enrichment toys – Regular toys should be placed in a mesh bag by the washer. Wand toys and enrichment toys should be placed in the Laundry Room to be washed and sanitized. Items from quarantined fosters should be placed in a clear plastic bag before being brought into the building.
- Crates & playpens – Place in the Carrier Room with the dirty carriers to await sanitization. Do an initial cleaning at home with 1:16 Rescue if foster has not yet been cleared of quarantine.
- Scale – Wipe with Rescue wipes and place outside of the Exam Room.
- Medications – Return unused medications to the Foster Bench outside of the Vet Room.
- Paperwork, including weight sheets – Give to a member of the foster team, or text a photo of it to the foster emergency line.

### Permanent Fosters

Permanent fosters typically remain in their foster home for the remainder of their life. However, if for any reason you can no longer care for your foster cat, s/he may always return to Tabby's Place at any time.

**The support of our foster parents is crucial to providing Tabby's Place cats and kittens with an excellent quality of life while they await their forever homes. Thank you for providing these cats with love and sanctuary.**