



# Foster Volunteer Handbook



## Foster Team Contact

[Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org)

Foster Department Line: 813-272-1157

PRC Main Line: 813-301 PETS (7387)

Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center

440 N Falkenburg Rd, Tampa FL, 33619

# Welcome and Thank You!

Welcome to the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Centers Foster Volunteer Program!

Being a Foster Volunteer is extremely rewarding, educational, and fun. You will have a significant, positive impact on the lives of homeless pets. Caring for orphaned kittens, nursing sick or injured pets back to health, providing some much needed socialization, and helping find potential adopters for your foster pets are just some of the ways you can impact the lives of homeless pets at PRC!

Our foster volunteers do so much for the animals at PRC! As a result of their time in foster, dogs and cats are less stressed in the shelter, are more socialized with people, and have better chances at finding their fur-ever homes. Most importantly, thanks to fosters like YOU, many dogs' and cats' lives are saved!

Thank you for giving us your time and for giving pets in our care your attention! We appreciate your commitment to helping us help them and we know your time is valuable. Each of you may have different reasons for wanting to be a foster volunteer, but all of you choose to foster at the Pet Resource Center because:



You wish to help provide positive human interaction to help cats and dogs get ready for adoption



You wish to help find homes for pets that deserve a second chance



You wish to provide temporary respite for shelter animals to get a break from the shelter



You wish to help save lives and make the Hillsborough area a model for the nation

As a foster volunteer, you are a valuable asset to our organization and to the many pets which need loving homes. Our goal is to continually expand our community outreach program and to place more pets into good homes. The time and energy you contribute by fostering helps us achieve these goals.

Since your support as a foster volunteer is extremely important, your decision to participate must be made with the full understanding of the commitment and responsibility it requires. This handbook has been prepared for you as a reference guide. It contains information regarding our policies and procedures, tools for working with the public, and how to safely handle foster pets. Please read it carefully so you will be well-equipped to answer questions knowledgeably, and to provide quality care to the pets in need.

As a Pet Resource Center foster volunteer you are an extension of the staff and a representative of Hillsborough County Government. Many of the same expectations placed on onsite staff members are also placed on the foster team.

Thank you for giving your time and energy to the pets at the Pet Resource Center. We hope the time you spend with us will be as rewarding to you as it is beneficial to the pets you help.

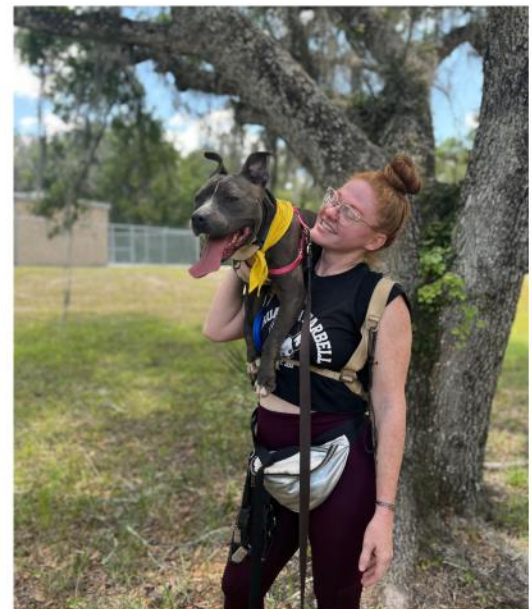
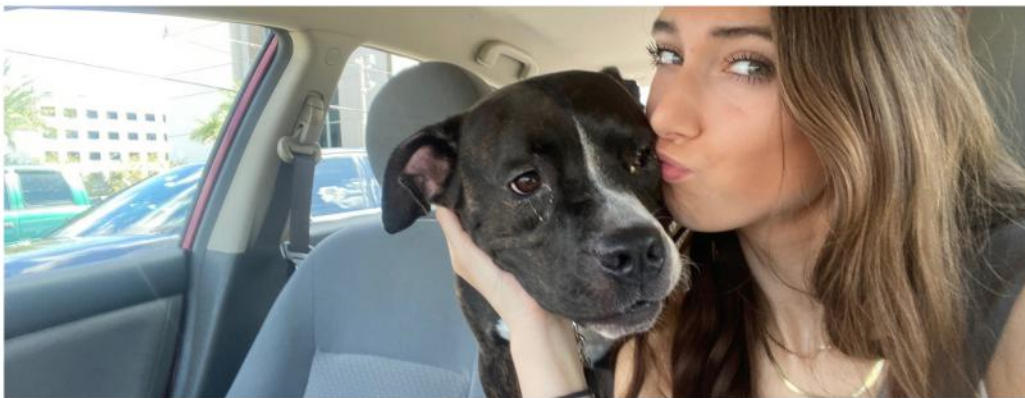


# The Purpose of This Handbook

This Handbook aims to inform you about Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center's history, philosophy, practices, policies, and conduct expectations, as well as the benefits provided to you as a valued foster volunteer.

Please read it carefully, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. We believe you will enjoy your foster volunteer experience and look forward to working with you!

Foster volunteer policies, benefits, and rules, as explained in this handbook, are subject to change. If and when changes occur, fosters will be alerted via email and an updated version of the Handbook will be sent out and is always available online via Better Impact.





# Functions of a Foster Volunteer

## Is fostering right for you?

Every family member in the household will need to be prepared for the commitment and emotions involved with fostering. PRC requires that all foster volunteers be at least 18 years of age. Foster volunteers will take on the responsibility of providing daily care and love to their foster pet until that animal can either be returned to the shelter for adoption or be adopted out directly from foster.

As a foster volunteer, you are your foster pets best advocate! Help us to find their forever home by providing up to date notes on how they do in the home environment and updated photos of them in foster that we can use to help highlight them for adoption. We also invite foster volunteers to assist in adoption events and meet and greets, as well as highlighting your foster pet for adoption on your own social media to help spread the word that they are available.

The goal of fostering is to be able to say goodbye! This can be difficult, especially at first, but know that you helped to save the life of an animal in need and by saying goodbye, you will be able to open up your home to a new pet in need.

## What is the time commitment like?

Short answer: it depends! We have foster opportunities to fit everyone's availability, from foster day trips, to long term commitments. We can work with you to find the right foster fit for your family! We offer day trip fostering (dogs only), weekend trips (1-3 days), short term fostering (1-2 weeks), or long term fostering (4 weeks or more). Required commitments will vary depending on what animal you are fostering. Foster time expectations will be explained prior to sending the pet home, but may change while your pet is in foster.

Some of our foster volunteers foster animals year round, while others only foster during certain periods or once every so often. To be considered an active foster volunteer, you will need to foster at least one animal per year. Inactive fosters are able to reactivate their foster volunteer profile at any time by reaching out to our foster coordinators.

## Do you have enough space?

Whether you live in a studio apartment or a six bedroom house-- fostering can be right for you! Most animals don't require that much space, and our foster coordinators are available to help find the right foster pet for your home.

Most importantly, you will need a space that is safe, temperature controlled, able to be separate from household pets if/when needed, secure, and easy to sanitize. PRC recommends pet-proofing your home to reduce potential safety hazards.



# Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center



Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center is not only the public shelter, but is also the only shelter in Hillsborough County which accepts every cat and dog regardless of breed, temperament, health conditions, and circumstance. Did you know around 15,000 pets per year pass through the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center? That's more than 50 pets per day, 365 days a year! We have a best-in-class team which stewards our missions of professionalism, responsibility, compassion, commitment, integrity, and accountability.

The Pet Resource Center is dedicated to pet adoption and maximizing positive outcomes for the cats and dogs that pass through the shelter. In addition to sheltering and providing veterinary care to all pets brought to the shelter, we also collaborate and coordinate with our Rescue Partners to expand our reach in getting as many pets as possible into good homes through adoption, foster, and rescue. We are committed to promoting responsible pet ownership through spaying/neutering, permanent radio frequency identification (RFID)- also known as micro-chipping, vaccinations, and other services. Campaigns and programs to educate and raise community awareness about these services play a key role in their success.

Hillsborough County has a mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas. Its size and unique characteristics create challenging circumstances for pet population control. In addition to a year-long breeding season that steadily increases the area pet population, our semi-tropical climate serves as an incubator for fleas, ticks and other parasites harmful to pets. One of the primary reasons animal control exists is because of the risk of rabies outbreaks. Through public education and rabies vaccination, the threat to humans has reduced greatly. For that reason, a current, valid rabies vaccination administered by a veterinarian is required to license your pet, and a pet license is mandatory in Hillsborough County. Pet Resource Center serves as the licensing facility, but most veterinary care facilities also provide the opportunity to purchase the Hillsborough County license for the convenience of their clientele.

Our goal is to provide care services that minimize fear, pain, stress, and suffering to pets in and out of the shelter, and we work to ensure safe and healthy human-animal interactions.

Pet Resource Center is moving into a new era where owners will be referred to available community resources if it will help them retain their pet rather than surrendering it because they have fallen on hard times. Some resources may include a pet food bank, low cost medical services, emergency services, and other similar resources that are offered throughout the community.

You, as a foster volunteer, can help us not only achieve these missions, but also help us identify where we can better serve the community in the future.

# What Does Pet Resource Center Do?



## Adoptions, Transfers to Shelters and Rescue Groups

- Dogs and cats are made available for adoption at our shelter, from foster, and at various offsite adoption events throughout the county.
- Pets are also transferred to area shelters and other rescue groups. We have over 200 rescue partners that pull animals.

Our goal is to provide everyone the opportunity to get their first or next family pet from our shelter or through one of our partners, so we strive to keep adoptions fees low. With low or waived adoption fees, we help to break down the barriers to adoption and help every pet find their fur-ever home!

## Lost and Found

- Reuniting owners with their lost pets is one of our key missions.
- If a pet is found with an ID tag or microchip, Pet Resource Center staff will call the owner to get the pet back to its home. If animal control officers find the ID or microchip in the field, they will attempt to return the pet home before even bringing it to the shelter- a great value for the minimal expense of a permanent microchip ID.
- People who have lost pets are encouraged to come to the Pet Resource Center rather than trying to call in to see if their pet is here. With hundreds of pets on-hand at all times and many pets looking the same, it is impossible for our team of staff and volunteers to know every pet in our care.

All pets that come into the shelter are shown on our website: [Hillsboroughcounty.org/pets](https://hillsboroughcounty.org/pets)

## Pet Safety Net and Owner Surrender

- Pets are a life-long commitment, and we strive to assist those pet owners in temporary need by providing a "pet safety net" program in conjunction with our community partners. This program helps match people in need with community resources to help get them through a tough time so they can keep their pet.
- Some owners cannot or choose not to fulfill the commitment they made when they brought a pet into their home. We try to inform owners of all the alternatives to help them re-home the pet themselves before surrendering their pet, so they can make a decisions that's best for the pet.

Owner surrenders are accepted by appointment, during specific hours in order to best serve the shelter populations and to provide people with the best counseling before relinquishing their family pet.



## Animal Safety and Enforcement

### Pet Registration/Licensing- The Law in Hillsborough County

- A pet license identifies and protects your pet in case it becomes lost. Even indoor pets can get out and become lost. The Hillsborough County code ordinance requires anyone owning a dog or cat four months of age or older to have his or her pet licensed and vaccinated against rabies. You are required to renew your license yearly and to keep your license updated when you move and/or your pet is given away, lost, stolen, or is deceased. The fine for not complying is substantial.
- A license and microchip identification could be a free ride home for your pet if it is lost and found by an officer and they are able to contact you while in the field.
- Annual pet registration/license fee: \$40 for unsterilized pets and \$20 for spayed/neutered pets. Senior citizens are afforded a reduced fee.

### Rabies prevention

- Please encourage everyone to report every incident involving bites and scratches that break skin. All animals that bite or scratch and break skin are required by law to be quarantined for 10 days for public safety. (Please see the section on reporting bites/scratches for more information.)

### Animal Cruelty

- Citizens must report acts of cruelty and neglect. Cruelty to an innocent animal is often a training ground for child abuse or domestic cruelty and they can occur hand-in-hand.
- The basic needs of an animal require that they have access to food, water, shelter, and exercise.
  - If the dog or cat is deprived of these, file a report and an animal control officer will investigate. Reports can be filled via our website: [www.Hillsboroughcounty.org/pets](http://www.Hillsboroughcounty.org/pets)



# What You Can Expect From The Pet Resource Center



Volunteers have the right to:

1. Receive a clear, specific job description.
2. Be assigned appropriate duties according to skills, interests, availability, and training.
3. Be trusted with sensitive information that will help carry out assignments.
4. Be given appropriate formal and informal expressions of appreciation and recognition.
5. Receive orientation, training, and supervision for jobs as needed and know how and why they are being asked to do a particular task.
6. Expect their time will not be wasted by lack of planning, coordination, and cooperation within Pet Resource Center.
7. Receive regular consultations for a review of job performance.
8. Discuss any problems with the Foster Coordinators of Pet Resource Center and receive prompt and fair responses to any complaints that may arise.
9. Expect their individual rights will be respected, and that all foster volunteers will be treated with courtesy and consideration.
10. Expect their personnel records will be kept, documenting volunteer experience, positions held, training, evaluation, and commendation.
11. Be afforded greater responsibility and volunteering opportunities on the basis of their ability and merit.
12. Have all these things done in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation, so Hillsborough County will continue to be known as a "Great Place to Volunteer!"

PRC provides every foster with:

**Foster Supply Kits-** PRC believes that everyone should have the opportunity to foster without the added stress of a financial responsibility. We are able to provide each foster volunteer with basic supplies throughout your foster journey. (Basic supplies include- food, bowls, toys, leash, collar, litter and litter pans.) Specialty supplies will be provided if/when needed and if supplies are available. (Specialty supplies include- formula, bottles/nipples, heat sources, medications, pee pads, crates/baby gates/playpens, etc.)

**Veterinary Care-** All pets leaving for foster will be up to date with age appropriate vaccines, flea/heartworm prevention and spayed/neutered when appropriate. PRC covers all medical care for our foster pets through our Veterinary Services department while they are in your care. (Please see the After Hours Emergency Vet Instructions for medical emergencies)

**Behavior Support-** PRC has a Wellness team on site that can provide behavior support via email, over the phone, or through one-on-one sessions. If you have a behavior concern regarding your foster pet, please send us an email and we will connect you with the Wellness Team.



# What The Pet Resource Center Expects From You

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Your first responsibility is to know your own duties and how to perform them promptly, correctly, and pleasantly. Secondly, you are expected to cooperate with management, staff, and your fellow volunteers and maintain a good team attitude. How you interact with fellow volunteers, staff, members of the public, and how you accept direction, can affect the success of the foster department. In turn, the performance of one department can impact the entire service offered by Hillsborough County. Consequently, whatever your position, you have an important assignment: perform every task to the very best of your ability. The result will be better performance for the county overall and personal satisfaction for you.

You are encouraged to utilize opportunities for personal development that are offered to you. This Handbook provides insight on how you can positively perform to the best of your ability to meet and exceed Pet Resource Center's expectations. Looking to further your knowledge and experience as a foster volunteer? Contact the foster coordinators for additional resources.

We believe you should have the right to make your own choices in matters which concern and control your life, however, you should understand certain policies, protocols, and practices ensure the welfare of our pets. We believe in direct access to management. We are dedicated to making the Pet Resource Center an agency where you can approach your foster coordinator, or any member of management, to discuss any problem or question.

We expect you to voice your opinions and contribute suggestions to improve the quality of the foster program. (Please refer to the sections describing submission of grievances and suggestions.) Please communicate with us so we can make you and our organization more successful. Remember, you help create the healthy, pleasant, and safe volunteering conditions in partnership with Pet Resource Center. Your dignity and that of fellow volunteers is important.

**PRC Mission-** To enhance community prosperity by protecting the people and pets of Hillsborough County.

**PRC Vision-** To be an innovative, national leader in public pet sheltering and animal control that provides sustainable, life-saving programs for unwanted and homeless pets and engages community volunteers to assist in those efforts

**PRC Foster Volunteer Vision-** To work collaboratively with volunteers and all shelter departments to provide the best welfare for our pets while in our care, increase adoptions by highlighting the amazing qualities of our pets, provide much needed respite for animals experiencing shelter stress, and expand the communities knowledge on animal welfare through outreach efforts and ensure the safety and health of people and pets in Hillsborough County.

# Pet Resource Center Core Values

The Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center is a collaborative governmental function with a strong commitment to our community and its pets. PRC works transparently through creative, empowered teams with a strong sense of accountability to provide the best possible outcomes for pets within our community. We value compassion, respect, understanding, education, and continuous improvement in our work to provide judgment-free services to the people and pets of our community.

## **We Value Quality of Care and Quality of Life**

Provide quality care by treating every pet as an individual with empathy, compassion and a positive attitude.

## **We Value Commitment to the Community**

Focus on Community and pet support in a truly judgement-free setting allowing equal access, providing community outreach and education, and providing the best customer service.

## **We Value Responsibility and Accountability**

Expect accountability by empowering each other to do the right thing, be responsible for our own actions, respect each other and be dedicated to the mission.

## **We Value Continuous Improvement**

Cultivate innovation with continuous learning, creativity and continuous improvement to be the best we can be.

## **We Value Collaboration and Teamwork**

Commit to furthering the PRC mission through teamwork and collaboration, welcoming all that share the same goals.

## **We Value Transparency**

Buid community trust through transparency and openss.





# Fear Free and the Five Freedoms

The Pet Resource Center is not only focused on adoptions but also on the daily care of the animals at our facility. PRC staff and volunteers are certified in Fear Free practices and follow the Five Freedoms that all animals should be entitled to. Both programs aim to apply key strategies and techniques designed to reduce the negative emotional states that are commonly experienced by shelter and rescue animals- including fear, anxiety, stress (FAS), and frustrations- and increase their enrichment opportunities.



You can learn more about Fear Free practices and take the certification by visiting <https://fearfreeshelters.com/> We encourage all foster volunteers to take the certification. Completed certificates can be emailed to the foster team.



# The Foster Process

## Communication and Designating Animals in Need

| PRC Foster Team Contacts  |
|---|
| Email: <a href="mailto:Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org">Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org</a> |
| Phone: (813) 272-1157   |
| August Hutchins- Foster Coordinator Ext 51556   |
| Michelle Wludyka- Foster Coordinator Ext 51529  |

Email is the main way we communicate with our #PRCfostersquad and the best and quickest way to get a hold of us. Be sure to add [Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:Fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org) as a contact to ensure you receive all of our emails. Our inbox is shared between our foster coordinators and is manned 7 days a week- 9am-6pm. An out of office alert will be turned on if/when we will be out of the office during our normal office hours- i.e. Holidays, In service days, etc.

Once your application is approved, you are automatically added to our Active Foster email list. Whenever we have animals in need of a foster home, you will get an alert via email, along with any important reminders, program changes, etc.

Animals in need of foster are designated into one of three categories to help both staff and foster volunteers differentiate which animals are most in need and what type of assistance we are looking for. Their category will be listed in the subject line of the email as well as the email itself and will be color coded with the stop light system (Green, Yellow, and Red) to help distinguish which pleas are most urgent.



### Foster Highlights-

This animal would benefit from some time out in foster but is not currently at risk of euthanasia. The goal of this foster will be to provide home notes, cute photos, and to give the animal a break from the shelter. We are looking for short term foster commitments- day trips and weekend getaways, although fosters may choose to continue fostering for longer periods of time.

- Long stay animals that need a break from the kennel and updated notes and/or photos.
- Dogs that need some extra enrichment through the Adventure Tails program.

### Foster Request for Assistance-

This animal has a specific need that we are requesting assistance for. This animal is not currently at risk of euthanasia but may become at risk if their condition/situation worsens. These animals will typically be in need of longer foster commitment, but needs will vary on a case-by-case basis.

- Medical Cases- Animals recovering from surgery, undergoing treatments, etc.
- Behavior Cases- Animals that are shut down in the kennel, or have a mild-moderate behavioral concern (fearful, under socialized, jumpy/mouthy, etc.)
- Moderate to severe kennel stress- Animals that are starting to decline mentally due to kennel stress
- Retention Cases- Owned animals (See Retention Foster job description for more information)

### Foster Plea-

This animal is at risk of euthanasia if no commitment is found by the listed deadline. These animals will need a longer foster commitment.

- Underage kittens and puppies without a mom.
- Final pleas- Animals currently on the euthanasia list. In most cases, animals on the euthanasia list are not foster eligible, though some animals may be designated as foster eligible.

Animals can shift between these three designations at any time; updates will be sent if/when changes to an animal's status are made.

#### Foster Highlight

Not at risk for  
euthanasia

#### Foster Request for Assistance

Not currently at risk for  
euthanasia but may  
become at risk if  
condition/situation  
worsens

#### Foster Plea

This animal is at risk  
of euthanasia if no  
foster is found by  
the listed deadline

## Choosing Your Foster Animal and Scheduling a Pick up

You can choose a foster animal by responding to an email request, browsing our website for "Available Ready-to-Go" animals, or by scheduling a kennel walkthrough.

If you are available for one of the animals we are requesting a foster for, all you have to do is reply with your interest and when you would be available to pick them up. Foster animals are first-come-first-serve, meaning the first foster volunteer to reply to a request that meets the qualifications needed is designated for that animal.

All of our "Available Ready-to-Go" animals are also eligible to go to foster. Fosters are welcome to browse the website to choose a foster animal. If you find an animal that you are interested in fostering, please send us an email with the animal ID number and a day/time you would like to schedule a meet and greet/pick up appointment.

You are also able to schedule a kennel walkthrough to choose a foster animal here at the shelter.

All meet and greets, pick ups, and kennel walkthroughs are by appointment only. Due to our case volume, walk-ins can not always be assisted. We are able to bring out up to 3 animals per meet and greet appointment.

*Important Note:* Our main goal is to get animals adopted into forever homes, therefore we do not put animals on hold for foster volunteers. It is possible that your foster animal may be adopted prior to your meet and greet/pick up appointment. If that is the case, we are happy to keep your original appointment for you to meet with other animals in need, reschedule for another day/time, or cancel the appointment if you would prefer to wait until you have another animal in mind.

## Dog-to-Dog Foster Meet and Greets

Dog-to-dog meet and greets are not required unless the foster dog you are interested in known to be selective or reactive with other dogs. We run playgroup Monday-Saturday, so in most cases, we will have an idea on how our dogs do with other dogs. Our Wellness Team is also able to provide recommendations for you based on your dogs age, personality, and playstyle if requested.

If you choose to schedule a dog-to-dog meet and greet, they are facilitated by our Wellness Team and are available by appointment only. We also ask that you schedule a meet and greet with the potential foster dog first to make sure they would be a good fit for you before we schedule the dog-to-dog interaction. To avoid overwhelming both your dog, and our dogs, we will typically only do one dog-to-dog meet and greet per appointment.

If you plan to take your foster dog home right after the meet and greet, we recommend having two separate vehicles, or having a way to keep both dogs separate during the car ride home to ensure safety. If you are unable to do so, we will schedule you a separate pick up appointment.

Questions? Send us an email and we will happily walk you through the process!



*Important Note:* All animals can carry and transmit diseases including bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. Some of these diseases may infect people and/or other animals. Some of these diseases may be undetectable in what appears to be a healthy animal. In bringing an owned animal for a scheduled dog-to-dog interaction, your animal may be exposed to common infectious diseases found in shelter animals. It is important for all owned animals to be up-to-date on all vaccinations which may/may not help prevent some infectious diseases. PRC is not responsible for any/all illnesses your pet may become infected with after visiting the shelter.

## Bringing your New Foster Animal Home

At pick up, you will receive a copy of your foster animals medical history with behavior memos, any requested supplies, and any needed medications and/or care instructions. Please be sure to keep the copy of your pets records available in case of an emergency.

The Pet Resource Center recommends setting up your foster space ahead of time to ensure you have a safe and secure place to house them that can be separated from household pets and is easy to sanitize. This can look like a spare bedroom, or even just an area in the kitchen or living room separated by some baby gates.

In most cases, we don't have any information on the animals past experiences in a car, in the home, or with people. We recommend going slow with your new foster pet, allowing them time to decompress and settle in. It is important not to try and rush introductions with other pets, young children, or lots of new people in the first week, especially in the first few days.

The Pet Resource Center highly recommends keeping foster pets separated from any owned animals, at least for the first 1-2 weeks. This is to help ease the transition, as well as to ensure that the foster pet does not have any contagious illnesses that can be transmitted to your pets. Upper respiratory infections are the most common, and can typically take a few days to start showing symptoms.

*Important Note:* The Pet Resource Center is unable to treat owned animals for any illnesses or injuries caused by a foster pet.

The 3/3/3 rule is a general guideline for the adjustment period of an animal after leaving the shelter, however, every animal is unique and will adjust differently.



### 3 Days

- Feeling overwhelmed
- May feel scared/unsure
- Not comfortable enough to be themselves
- May not eat or drink
- Shuts down and/or hides
- Tests boundaries



### 3 Weeks

- Starts Settling in
- Feels more comfortable
- Realized this could be their forever home
- figures out the environment
- Gets into a routine
- Lets their guard down
- May begin to show their true personality



### 3 Months

- Finally completely comfortable
- Begins to build trust and a true bond
- Gains a sense of security
- Sets into a routine



# Scheduling Non-Emergent Medical Appointments

The Pet Resource Center provides all medical care for our animals while they are in foster. Routine follow up appointments and rechecks are scheduled at the time of pick up. You will receive an automatic appointment reminder 24-hours before your scheduled appointment. If at any point you need to reschedule your appointment, you can do so by emailing the foster team.

It is important that foster volunteers attend all scheduled appointments for their foster pets on time. It is the foster volunteer's responsibility to communicate any scheduling needs or conflicts. Multiple or continued no show appointments will result in disciplinary actions and possible dismissal from the foster program. (Please see the section on Volunteering Policies regarding disciplinary actions.)

*Important Note:* The Pet Resource Center is unable to reimburse for any outside vet charges. If you take your foster pet to an outside veterinarian without prior authorization, you will be responsible for all vet charges incurred.

If you have a non-emergent medical question or concern for your foster pet, please send us an email describing the concern with any relevant photos or videos. Medical appointments are typically scheduled Monday-Friday, weekend appointments are available on a case-by-case basis. You should receive a response within 48 hours regarding any medical related concerns.

Please be advised that foster volunteers are to follow any and all medical care instructions given by Pet Resource Center and are not permitted to diagnose or treat any medical concerns without the advisement of the Pet Resource Center Medical Team. Failing to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary actions and possible dismissal from the Pet Resource Center Foster Program.

Possible non-emergent medical concerns include but are not limited to:

- Coughing/sneezing
- Eye or nasal discharge or other URI symptoms
- Fleas
- Skin concerns
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Limping





## After Hours Emergency Vet Instructions

There may be times during the fostering period where an animal requires medical care after hours or during an emergency. Whether this is your first foster animal, or you are a seasoned foster volunteer, there is always a risk for an emergency to happen after hours or overnight while Pet Resource Center is closed. If your foster animal is having a medical emergency after hours please follow the protocol outlined below:

1. Contact the foster team by sending an email to [fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org) with a synopsis of the situation and any pictures (if applicable) so we know what is going on.
2. Proceed to one of the VEG locations listed below.
3. Be sure to have all PRC medical paperwork, or at least the animal's name AND animal ID number ready to bring to the clinic with you. You MUST provide the animal ID number for PRC to receive the invoice.
4. If possible, call your local VEG clinic before arriving so they can begin to assess the situation and prepare their team for your arrival.
5. Please send a follow up email to the foster team after your appointment to let us know how things went. A follow up visit will be scheduled with the Pet Resource Center for the following morning.

| <b>Tampa Veterinary Emergency Group</b> | <b>South Tampa Veterinary Emergency Group</b> |
|---|---|
| 238 E Bearss Ave, Tampa FL, 33613       | 1501 S Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa FL, 33629    |
| (813) 694-4620                          | (813) 793-7555                                |

PLEASE DO NOT administer any medications or treatments unless directed by a VEG veterinarian or the Pet Resource Center.

Possible Emergencies include but are not limited to:

- Hit by Car or had any other major traumatic event
- Difficulty breathing
- Convulsions or seizures
- Ingested poison or a toxic substance
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Persistent or severe vomiting or diarrhea for over 12 hours
- Lethargy or lack of appetite of over 12 hours
- Swollen or distended abdomen

If your foster pet is experiencing an emergency during normal business hours (9am-6pm 7 days a week, excluding holidays) please contact the foster team via email or phone and head to PRC.

# Bite Protocol

All bites and scratches to a human or another animal that break the skin must be reported immediately.

If a bite occurs:

1. Immediately remove the foster animal to a safe environment, i.e. a crate, or secluded area that both prevents further injury to the person and provides a calm environment for the animal.
2. **Call 911 if injuries' are life-threatening or severe (eg. excessive bleeding, broken bones, person is in shock or unconscious)**
3. First aid:
  - a. Wash bite and/or scratch wounds with soap and water immediately.
  - b. If there is no break in the skin, no further action is required.
  - c. If a break in the skin occurred, stop any bleeding with pressure.
    - i. Professional medical care should be sought as soon as possible if/when needed.
4. Report the incident immediately to the foster team via email at [fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org).
  - i. Your email should include a detailed description of the incident, and photos of any injuries.
5. The foster team will verify the status of the pet's rabies vaccination and provide you with proof thereof, as needed.
6. The foster team will complete and submit a bite report with the county.

*Important Note:* Any and all bites/scratches that result in broken skin must be reported per Hillsborough County regulations, and the animal must be placed on a 10 day rabies quarantine for public health and safety. This can usually be done at the foster home or, in some cases, may require the pet to serve the quarantine at the Pet Resource Center.

A reported bite does not immediately qualify an animal for euthanasia or hurt their chances of adoption. It is important that we receive accurate information at the time of the event to better find placement for each animal in our care.

**For severe bites or incidents that make you feel unsafe around your foster pet, please contact animal control at 813-744-5650.**



# The Adoption Process

We encourage all foster volunteers to post about their available foster pets on social media, neighborhood groups like next door, post flyers, etc. to help highlight their pets for adoption! We also ask that foster volunteers provide us with continued updated notes on how the pet is doing in your home along with photos and videos of the pet for us to update their adoption profile and share on our social media.

The Pet Resource Center highlights available foster pets on our Facebook page on Fridays, called Foster Fridays, and posts available foster pets on a board in the front lobby to help get them seen. Available foster pets are also listed on our website. Upon return to the shelter, the foster team creates a Foster Favorite report card with the photos and notes you provide to hang on their kennel.

If we get a citizen interested in meeting an animal out in foster, we will be reaching out to schedule a meet and greet. Meet and greets typically take place at PRC, however if both parties approve, an offsite meet and greet can be scheduled. If choosing to do an offsite meet and greet, we recommend it take place in a neutral, public space for the safety of all parties involved.

If you have found a potential adopter for your foster pet, please follow the steps outlined below.

1. Conduct a meet and greet- if this is with a person you know or are comfortable with, the meet and greet can be at your home. Otherwise we recommend a public location, or we can coordinate a meet and greet here at PRC.
2. Send an email to [fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:fosterpets@hillsboroughcounty.org) with the adopters information.
  - a. First/last name
  - b. Phone number
  - c. Email address
  - d. Home address
  - e. Photo copy of their ID
3. Once we receive their information, we will coordinate with our customer service team to process the adoption. This can be done virtually via email, or we can schedule an in person appointment if the adopter prefers.
  - a. If the pet is not fully ready for adoption- like underage kittens, medical cases, etc. we will list them as the pre-adopter and will contact them to process the adoption once the pet is available.
4. Once the adoption has been processed the pet can be transferred to their new home!

*Important Note:* All foster pets MUST remain in the care of the approved foster volunteer until an adoption has been processed and the foster volunteer has been given the all clear to transfer ownership. Failure to abide by this policy will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the foster program.

As a bonus for being part of our #PRCFosterSquad, foster volunteers get first choice to adopt their foster pet! We call these foster finds, not failures! Our foster volunteers are wonderful and we could not imagine a better home for our pets! If you decide to make things official, please send us an email and we will have our customer service team assist with the paperwork.

# Foster Returns

Outside of emergency situations, foster returns are scheduled by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled by emailing the foster team.

At the time of return, please also return any borrowed supplies, like toys, bowls, and crates, so we can ensure we have supplies for each foster volunteer.

Please be sure to send us any final notes and photos/videos of your foster pet so we can update their adoption profile. We also create Foster Favorite report cards to go on their kennels. Notes and photos from from foster make a world of difference in helping to get our pets adopted!

You can find examples of notes and photos below:



"Andie loves her play time with our larger dog and really would love to play with our smaller dogs, but they prefer to have nap time with her. She does need to have a bone to chew on while we are away, or she gets frustrated in her kennel. We've started shutting the other dogs away so that they can't get to her. Hopefully that will help with her frustration. She is always so happy to see us when we have been away, or when she wakes up in the morning. She loves getting pets and giving kisses. She also prefers to sleep in the bed and under the covers. I think she believes she is a tiny dog. She had her first golf cart ride, and was perfect with her seat belt on. She just took in all of the fresh air and looked around. She is not remotely reactive to dogs on walks, in the car or on the golf cart. She is always so happy to see other dogs on walks and wants to sniff and say hi to all of them. She is a really good and happy girl."

We've nicknamed him Boo Boo and he actually responds to it. He gets along well with my 16year old blind senior dog, but does NOT like cats. He is very food motivated and loves to keep us company in the kitchen while we cook. His favorite pastime is hanging out with his humans, especially cuddling on the couch. He's well behaved and knows basic commands like sit, paw, and lay down. He loves car rides and I take him to my office where he does very well there too. He's a pretty calm dog, but has bursts of puppy energy every now and then.



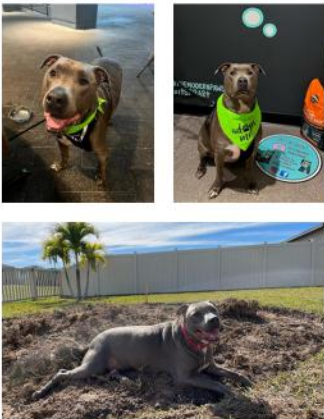
PRC FOSTER SQUAD FAVORITE!

**ROCKY A2246156**

**MY FOSTER SAYS:**

- I'm friendly and affectionate.
- I'm dog social!
- I walk well on leash!
- I do well with bath time!
- I am great in the car!

Rocky did amazing in the car! While walking, more times than not there was no pulling and had extra slack in the leash. We passed several dog that Rocky went nose to nose to very politely and gently. There was one dog that was a little aggressive and Rocky remained neutral and none reactive (he showed up the other dog with his good boy skills lol). Health mutt was our next stop for a bath and more treats! During the bath Rocky was easily position and remained in the tub without trying to escape or avoid the bath (seriously perfect, he didn't even shake water everywhere). Rocky did amazing in the home setting! He wasn't hyper or running around or over analyzing everything. Rocky was calm and just satisfied with being by my side.



Cenizio is doing well. He loves his toys and has gone into the crate all on his own! He pulls a bit on the leash at first though. Cenizio is very calm in the car and laid down the whole time they were driving. Cenizio very much enjoys his nap time! He sleeps in his crate without issue and got up for a potty break when his foster parent took him outside. "When I brought him outside, first thing he did was take a nap from the hard journey he made from the couch to outside." Cenizio is a 'sun bathing king'. He did great with kids and strangers for his meet and greet. He scarfed down his dinner tonight. He loves the dry and wet mixed together. He's doing great and is a perfect house dog in all



# Foster Volunteer Opportunities

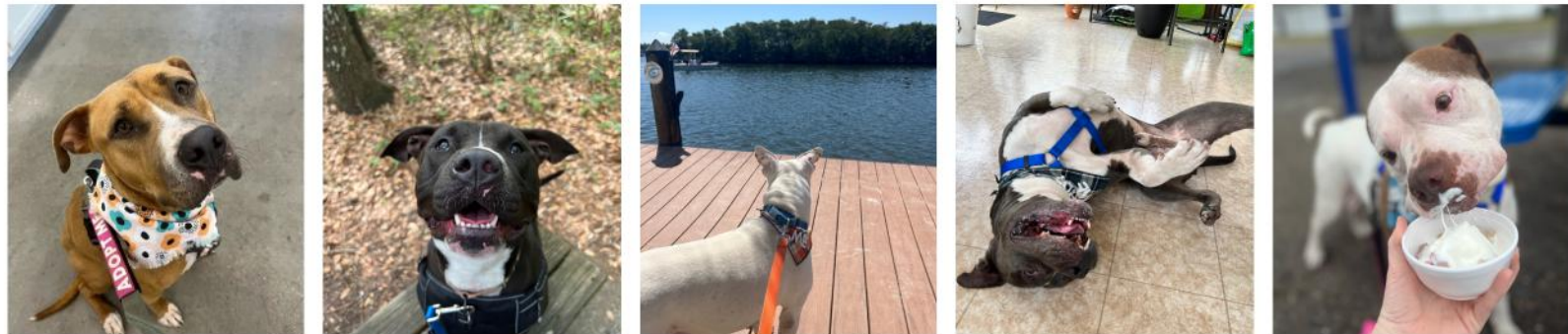
## Adventure Tails Day Trips- Dogs Only

Adventure Tails fosters work directly with the foster team to help enrich the lives of our shelter dogs! Foster volunteers can take one of our shelter dogs out for the day for a hike, stroll through the park, lunch at a pet-friendly restaurant, a pup-cup at a coffee shop, and so much more! Short day trips provide our shelter dogs with extra enrichment and the notes and photos collected help to get them adopted!

Adventure Tails can be scheduled 7 days a week, excluding holidays. Pick up appointments are scheduled in the morning 9:30am-10am. Later pick up appointments are available on a case-by-case basis. Return appointments are scheduled between 2pm-5:30pm.

Adventure Tails day trips are by appointments only. We ask for 24 hours notice in advance of your scheduled pick up. Foster volunteers can select any "Available Ready-to-Go" dog, or ask to be paired with a blind date!

More information can be found in the Adventure Tails Handbook.



## Sleepovers and Weekend Getaways- Dogs Only

Studies show that even just a night away from the shelter can be beneficial for shelter dogs! Since the majority of the dogs in our shelter come in as strays, we often don't know anything about them. Sleepover and weekend foster volunteers provide 1-3 days of foster care to allow us to learn more about our dogs' personalities so we can help them find their forever homes!

Due to the super short term nature of these fosters, we typically recommend keeping them fully separate from household pets.





## Orphaned Kittens

During kitten season, roughly March-December, we become overrun with orphaned kittens in need of foster care. Orphaned kittens typically need 2-8 weeks in foster, depending on their age when they arrive at Pet Resource Center.

Foster volunteers will need to bring their foster kittens in for booster vaccines and weight checks every 2 weeks until they are 1.5-2 pounds and can be scheduled for their spay/neuter surgeries and be put up for adoption.



## Bottle Baby Kittens

Bottle baby kittens, ages 0-4 weeks, are our most vulnerable population. Kittens this young need to be bottle fed every few hours, stimulated to urinate/defecate, and need constant heat support. Foster volunteers in this role provide life saving care.

Due to their vulnerability, foster volunteers will need to complete training with the foster team and/or have previous experience with bottle feeding kittens before taking them home. All training and supplies will be provided by PRC.

Bottle babies are very fragile and can be challenging, even for the most experienced foster home, but they are also the most rewarding! They will need to be kept separate from other animals until they have begun their vaccinations.

Additional training materials and resources can be found in the Cat Foster Handbook.





## Nursing Cats and Their Kittens

Nursing moms do all the hard work of feeding and cleaning their babies. Your job is to provide a safe and clean space for them to wean their babies until they are old enough for spay/neuter as well as provide lots of love and socialization!

Nursing moms typically need 2-8 weeks in foster, depending on the age of their babies when they leave for foster. Most mamas are friendly with people, but some are under socialized or timid. Mamas can often be protective of their babies, so we recommend keeping them separate from other animals.



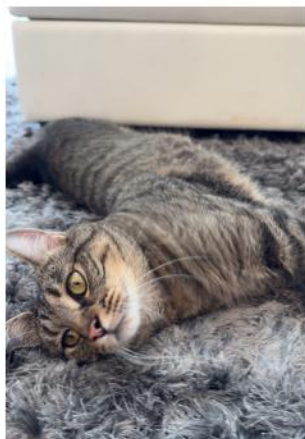
## Foster Adoption Ambassadors

Foster adoption ambassadors are foster volunteers who help to highlight our long stay pets for adoption, as well as provide them with a break from the shelter environment. Foster adoption ambassadors can be short or long term fosters, depending on the foster volunteers availability as well as the needs of the individual pets.

The main job of our foster adoption ambassadors is to actively highlight their foster pets for adoption by sharing them on social media, talking about them to friends, family members, and neighbors, and taking them out into the community to be seen. The more exposure the better!

Foster adoption ambassadors are also expected to provide updated notes and photos for their foster pets so we can update their adoption profiles, as well as be available for adoption meet and greets, and onsite/offsite adoption events. See the sections on The Adoption Process for more information.

You can find additional resources regarding marketing your foster pet in the Resources page.





## Medical Fosters

Medical foster volunteers provide a loving, calm environment for pets recovering from injuries, illnesses, or surgeries. In most cases, medical fosters are a longer time commitment, averaging 2-4 weeks but can be longer depending on the pet's condition.

The most common illnesses/conditions sent to medical foster are:

- Ringworm
- Scabies
- Demodex
- Upper Respiratory Infections (URI's)
- Underweight/emaciated animals
- Fractures

Medical foster volunteers will be expected to bring their foster pet in for all follow-up appointments and recheck, typically every 1-2 weeks or more as needed.

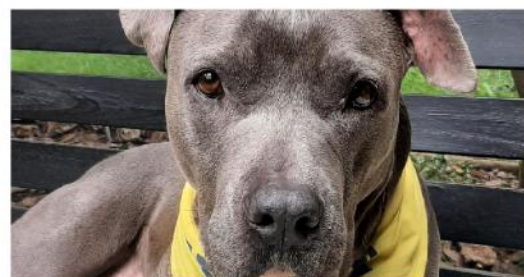
Medical experience is not required prior to committing to a medical foster as the foster team will provide any and all training and care instructions along with any needed medications at the time of pick up. Foster coordinators will be available for any additional questions throughout the foster pet's stay.

*Important Note:* Some illnesses are contagious to both pets and people. It is advised that medical foster pets be kept separate from household pets and that foster volunteers follow all handling instructions from the Pet Resource Center to prevent the spread of diseases.



## Hospice Fosters

While it does not happen often, we occasionally get animals who are suffering from terminal illnesses. Our hospice fosters provide these animals with love and care until it is time for them to cross the rainbow bridge. Due to the nature of this type of foster, the time commitment varies greatly on a case by case basis. This is one of the more difficult foster opportunities due to the sensitive nature, but your commitment to helping our pets enjoy life in a home prior to their time is incredibly rewarding.





## Behavior Fosters

Our behavior foster volunteers work alongside of foster team and wellness team to provide behavior support to animals in need. In most cases, behavior fosters are a longer time commitment, averaging 4-6 weeks.

The most common behavior concerns are:

- Under socialized cats/kittens
- Under socialized dogs
- Pets experiencing severe kennel stress that need a safe space to decompress
- Dogs that need more consistent training on leash behavior, jumpy/mouthy behavior, fearfulness, reactivity, etc.

Our wellness team is available to provide our behavior fosters with ongoing support via phone, email, and one-on-one appointments when needed.

Our behavior fosters provide critical support to pets that often have a harder time getting adopted due to their behavior concerns. Often, just having a calm environment and a more consistent routine helps our pets to overcome these issues and become wonderful adoption candidates.

No amount of animal training experience is required for most behavior cases however, some behavior dogs will require a more experienced dog handler or someone familiar with that particular breed/behavior issue.

Additional resources and training information will be provided to all behavior fosters, as well as fosters interested in learning more about these opportunities.





## Retention Fosters

Often, we have citizens reach out to us who are going through hard times and are temporarily unable to care for their beloved pets. Rather than having those citizens surrender their pet, our pet support team is able to connect the citizen with resources to get back on their feet and our foster volunteers provide a safe place for their pets until they can reclaim them. Our retention fosters are a critical resource for the Pet Resource Center and help us to achieve our goal of keeping pets in loving homes.

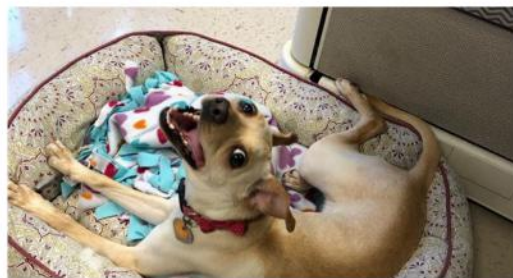
Retention fosters are a long term commitment, in most cases starting out with a 30-90 day commitment. Some cases are extended for longer periods based on foster availability and the owners' needs.

These foster pets are not available for adoption unless the owner is unable to reclaim their pet at the end of the agreed upon length of time. We also ask that retention fosters use discretion when discussing their fosters' case, as some situations may be confidential.

### Success Stories:

Sara's owner was recently homeless and working 2 jobs to secure housing. She was living out of her car, which wasn't suitable for Sara to be left in while she was working. Sara's owner came to PRC to surrender. As she was explaining her situation, that she didn't want to surrender but didn't see any other options. Pet Support was able to work alongside the Foster Team to find a foster for Sara. Sara's owner was able to secure housing and reclaim her 3 weeks early! Enjoy some pictures from Sara hanging out with Pet Support and the Reunion with her owner!

Tyrone's owner was down on his luck. He is an older gentleman and was scammed twice by the housing market. When he called our Pet Support team, he had been living in his Jeep for a week. His social security check was going to put gas in the Jeep to keep the A/C on for Ty. At this point Ty was becoming reactive to people walking near and around the Jeep to protect his owner. Ty was rescued when he was 6 weeks old and has been his owners companion for 10 years. His owner didn't know where to turn. His family wasn't willing to help. He reluctantly called Pet Support to surrender Ty. His owner had been offered a spot at a shelter, but it wasn't dog friendly. After another week in the Jeep he knew Ty couldn't keep living like this. Pet Support, thanks to our awesome foster team, was able to offer a foster for 30 days. One of our amazing fosters was able to take him into her home and work with him. Unfortunately Ty's owner then went into the hospital. Ty's foster ended and he was returned to the shelter. During this time Ty's owner was still trying to find housing even while being in the hospital. Once his owner was released from the hospital, he was able to secure the housing he needed and reclaim Ty. Ty ended up being in foster/at PRC for 68 days. The reunion was so happy. Ty's owner mentioned numerous times that he didn't think Tyrone was going to remember him. You can judge from the pictures.





## Public Events Foster Volunteer

Foster volunteers are great advocates for the foster program as well as Pet Resource Center as a whole! Foster volunteers can sign up to attend events as a spokesperson for the program.

Your job at events will be to man the foster program information booth and talk with prospective foster volunteers about your experience as a foster parent, hand out information packets on the program, and have people sign up via our sign up sheet.

Stories are powerful, and word of mouth is one of our biggest recruiting tools!



## Virtual Foster Volunteer

We already know that foster volunteers are our pets best advocates, but what if you aren't able to foster an animal in your home all the time? Our virtual foster volunteers are able to be the spokesperson for an animal on site!

Virtual fosters are asked to either take their virtual foster for a day trip(dogs) or schedule meet and greet sessions here at the shelter at least once a month to be able to provide updated photos, notes, and most importantly so they can get to know their virtual foster pet.

Virtual fosters then create frequent social media posts for their foster pets, pass out flyers, share on neighborhood sites, etc. Basically your job as a virtual foster is to help advertise your foster for adoption any way you can!

Virtual fosters can showcase multiple pets at once, or focus on just one at a time, whatever works best for you!

Virtual fosters should have at least a basic knowledge of social media and will require internet access.

# Volunteering Policies



## Attendance

In order for us to keep an accurate record of your contributions and to assist us in seeking grants and other funding to support our programs, we will now be tracking foster volunteer hours. All foster volunteers will receive a Better Impact login I.D and password.

Foster hours are calculated as 2 hours per animal per day for regular dog and cat fostering, and 4 hours per animal per day for more complicated fostering like bottle babies and complicated medical or behavior cases.

It is important that foster volunteers attend all scheduled appointments for their foster pets on time. It is the foster volunteers responsibility to communicate any scheduling needs or conflicts. Multiple no-call-no-shows will result in disciplinary action. Continued no shows may result in dismissal from the PRC foster program.

## Contact Information

It is important to keep your contact information up to date at all times. Therefore, fosters should update their contact information via Better Impact.

## Equal Opportunity Volunteering

Hillsborough County provides equal volunteering opportunities for everyone regardless of actual or perceived age, gender, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, political belief, or disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions. All matters relating to fostering are based upon ability to perform the job, as well as dependability and reliability. In addition to the foster coordinators or Pet Resource departments managers, you have the right to contact the Hillsborough County Human Resources department if you have any concerns or questions regarding this provision.

## Respectful Behavior

As a member of the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center team, you are a representative of the Pet Resource Center and are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner. You must be respectful and courteous in your interactions with the public, staff, and fellow volunteers. Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior, sexual harassment, threats, disparaging remarks, discriminations, or vulgar language will not be tolerated and you may be dismissed for such conduct. This code of conduct applies to online and/or written material as well as personal interactions with staff, other volunteers, and members of the public.



## Harassment

Hillsborough County intends to provide a volunteer environment which is pleasant, healthful, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility, or other offences which might interfere with volunteer performance. Harassment of any sort- verbal, physical, and visual- will not be tolerated.

Harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to: words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when such conduct creates an intimidating environment preventing an individual from effectively performing the duties of their position.

As a foster volunteer, you are responsible for keeping our volunteer environment free of harassment. Any foster who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, must report it to the foster coordinators or any supervisor with whom you feel comfortable. When the department becomes aware harassment might exist, it is obligated by law to take prompt and appropriate action

## Privacy Policy and Conveying Correct Information

Some information pertaining to Pet Resources records and specific criminal investigation are strictly confidential and may not be discussed with others. Please refrain from offering the public information on fees, or policies unless you are sure you have the current, accurate information. When in doubt always refer the person to a staff member. Volunteers are not to disclose any confidential information (contact, personal information, financial, etc.) of shelter customers or staff members.

## Disease Control

Pet Resource Center is responsible for ensuring public safety, including rabies control and other zoonotic disease containment. As a foster volunteer, you must wash your hands frequently as well as clean all pet handling equipment and foster spaces thoroughly to prevent the spread of disease.

If you are bitten or scratched, you must report the incident to the foster coordinator immediately. Be sure to have the identity (animal ID number) of the pet ready. The pet may need to be quarantined per county regulation. The foster coordinators will advise you on how to proceed if that is the case. You are responsible for your own personal healthy and safety, as well as the safety of your owned animals.

The Pet Resource Center foster team recommends keeping foster pets separate from any owned pets for at least 7-14 days to prevent the spread of disease. PRC is unable to treat your owned pets for any illness or injuries sustained by the foster pet.

## Unacceptable Activities

Generally speaking, we expect each foster volunteer to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable activities are noted below. If you have any questions concerning any volunteer or safety rule, or about any of the unacceptable activities listed, please see the foster coordinators for an explanation.

The following violations may result in immediate dismissal without warning:

- Willful violations of a County rule: any deliberate action which is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental.
- Willful violation of security of safety rules or failure to observe safety rules of the foster volunteer program safety practices; failure to wear required safety equipment; tampering with equipment or safety equipment.
- Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person or pet in our care.
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence, or making threats of violence toward anyone on county premises or when representing Hillsborough County; fighting, horseplay, or provoking a fight on county property, or negligent damage of county property.
- Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by the foster coordinators and/or any manager or supervisor within Pet Resource Center.
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercing fellow volunteers, employees, or members of the public on or off the premises, at any time, for any purpose.
- Theft of county property or the property of employees or volunteers; unauthorized possession or removal of any county property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management; unauthorized use of county equipment or property for personal reasons or for personal profit.
- Dishonesty; willful falsifications or misrepresentation on your foster volunteer application or other volunteer records; unauthorized alterations of county records or other county documents.
- Breach of confidentiality of personnel information.
- Malicious gossip and or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another volunteer or county employee on the job; willfully restricting volunteer or county employee output or encouraging others to do the same. This applies to the use of social media.

## Discipline

Hillsborough County promotes a system of progressive discipline for its employees, and the Pet Resource Center extends this system to include our foster volunteers. Volunteers who commit minor violations of policy and procedure will be verbally counseled in an effort to achieve acceptable compliance. Such violations could include disruptive behavior, habitual absenteeism, misstatement of policies etc. Continued violations could result in additional counseling or dismissal from the program.



# Progressive Discipline

Unacceptable behavior which does not lead to immediate dismissal may be dealt with in the following manner:

- Verbal Warning
- Written Warning
- Disciplinary Suspension
- Dismissal

Warnings will discuss the objectionable behavior and the consequences of this behavior. You will have the opportunity to explain your actions at the time the warning is issued.

## Dismissal

Foster volunteers who do not adhere to the rules of the foster volunteer program and those of Hillsborough County, or who fail to satisfactorily perform their foster volunteer assignments are subject to dismissal.

No foster volunteer will be terminated until the foster volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with the supervisory staff.

Foster volunteers may be dismissed without warning for just cause. The foster coordinators or Pet Resource Center management has the right to tell a foster volunteer to leave and/or return current foster animals immediately for any reason.

Ground for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination.
- Theft of property or misuse of county funds, equipment, or materials.
- Lies or falsification of records.
- Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts.
- Abuse or mistreatment of customers, pets, staff, or fellow volunteers.
- Unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of Pet Resource Center and/or the objectives of Hillsborough County.

## Euthanasia

As a foster volunteer for Pet Resource Center. You may be exposed to pets facing euthanasia, even though you will never have to witness it. Euthanasia may be due to medical, behavioral concerns. Hillsborough County uses a humane sodium pentobarbital solution injected intravenously. Whether or not you personally agree with the Practice, this is our current reality. Pet Resource Center utilizes every resource available to provide each animal with a positive live outcome, through intake prevention, adoption, rescue and foster prior to electing for euthanasia.

If you are not comfortable in this atmosphere, supporting Pet Resource Center as it strives to make Hillsborough County a more humane community, then this may not be a positive fostering experience for you, and that is okay! You may be better suited to foster at another pet shelter or agency in the area. Please ask the foster coordinators to assist you with a list of alternative foster opportunities. We have plenty of rescue partners who would be happy to have you one their team!

## Receipt and Acknowledgement of Hillsborough County Pet Reoursce Center Foster Volunteer Handbook

This Foster Volunteer Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with Pet Resource Center. This handbook will also serve as a guide,; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

Please read the following statements and initial and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the Foster Volunteer Handbook.

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | I understand the policies, rules, and benefits described in the Foster Volunteer Handbook are subject to change at any time  |
|  | I understand my volunteer position is terminable at will by Hillsborough County, regardless of the length of my fostering.   |
|  | I am aware that during the course of my foster volunteer work, highly sensitive information may be made available to me. I understand this information is critical to Hillsborough County and must be handled accordingly. |
|  | I understand my signature below indicates that I agree to read and have received a copy of the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center Foster Volunteer Handbook.  |
|  | I agree to adhere to all policies and procedures as described in the Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center Foster Volunteer Handbook.  |

Foster Volunteer Signature

Date