



PAWS[®]
CHICAGO

FELINE FOSTER PACKET

pawschicago.org/foster

Thank You

By fostering a homeless pet,
you open space at PAWS Chicago,
allowing us to rescue more animals.

- 3. Welcome
- 8. Preparation
- 10. Care
- 16. Moms with Kittens
- 17. Emergencies

ARE YOU READY TO SAVE SOME LIVES?

- a. **In the event of a medical emergency from 8:30AM – 6PM Monday-Sunday, are you able to bring your foster pet to our Medical Center at 3516 West 26th Street in the Little Village neighborhood?**

We are the only shelter in the Midwest with a robust shelter medicine staff devoted to the care of our animals. Having a medical team on staff allows us to save the most lives possible. **From 6:30pm – 8:30am**, we provide an emergency telephone number that can direct you to your nearest veterinary emergency room.

- b. **Do you have the time to spend with your foster kitten/cat(s)?**

We recommend that you spend at least two hours per day with your foster pet(s) giving individualized socialization, training and play time. This doesn't include feeding and cleaning, but don't worry; watching your foster pet enjoy the comforts of a home and learn new things will make the time fly by — we promise!

- c. **Can you commit to keeping your foster pet for the entire foster period?**

Life happens! Once in a while, you may need to bring a foster pet back early, but we strongly encourage you to keep your foster pet for the duration of the foster period. This will significantly reduce the cat/kitten's stress and help them stay healthy.

- d. **Are you willing to work within our veterinary program?**

Our vets know your foster pet's history and current course of treatment. Taking your foster pet to a vet outside of PAWS could jeopardize their safety. In addition, treating through PAWS costs less money, enabling us to save more animals!

- e. **Can you commit to bringing your foster pet in for various veterinary re-checks?**

Depending on the animal, we may need you to schedule occasional appointments with our veterinary team. These appointments may be weekly or once every two to three weeks.

- f. **Are you able to keep your pets separate from your foster pet(s)?**

We encourage you to keep foster cats/kittens in a bathroom or spare bedroom away from your pets for everyone's safety and to avoid illness transmission.

- g. **Are you prepared for the mess?**

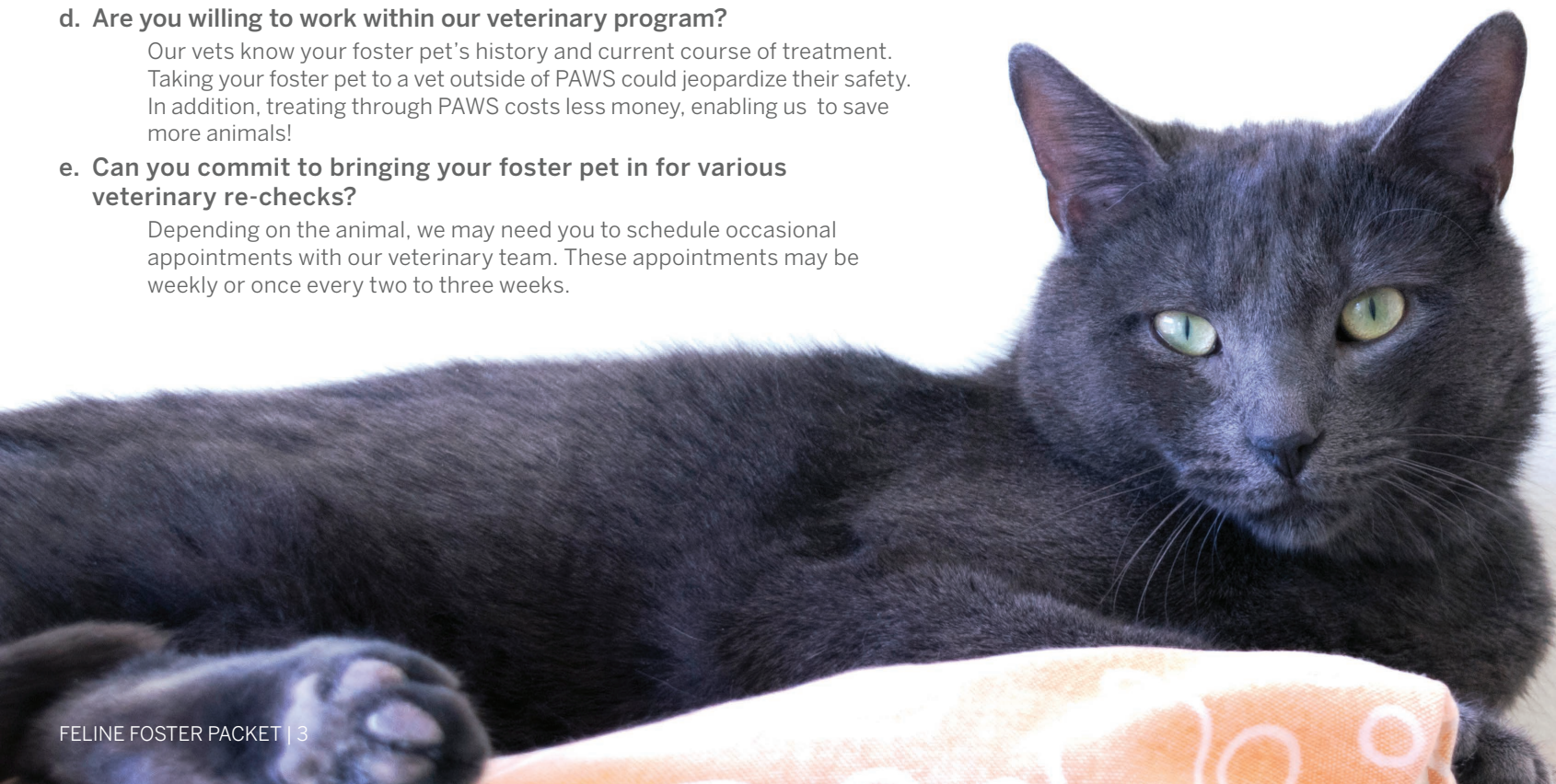
Fostering comes with a great deal of clean-up and potentially (although we hope not) damage to your home. Foster pets can sometimes ruin carpeting, rugs and furniture. **PAWS Chicago is not responsible for any damage incurred while fostering one of our animals.**

- h. **Will you be able to bring your foster pet back at the end of the foster period?**

Letting go can be hard! We understand, but because of foster parents like you, we can save more lives.

- i. **Are you prepared to handle the potential death of a foster animal?**

Although we work hard to get our foster animals healthy and ready for adoption, death is an unfortunate reality that occasionally comes with fostering. In this event, **please contact PAWS Chicago Foster Team immediately.**



FAQS

a. What kinds of cats need foster?

We regularly have a range of needs including nursing moms and kittens, adult cats recovering from illness or awaiting a surgery, weaned and unweaned kittens awaiting vaccines, cats or kittens in need of socialization, and animals whose owners are in the midst of a crisis.

b. Will I need to give medications?

Almost every kitty who leaves our Medical Center will be on medication, but we show you everything you need to know to correctly administer the medications. If you are unable to give medications, we recommend trying our socialization foster program with healthy cats.

c. How long is a typical foster period?

Depending on the type of foster you have, the time will vary. For example, kittens typically require a two-week period while sick cats and kittens need 1–2 weeks. Special animals like neonates/moms and babies need up to eight weeks and animals needing socialization/behavior medication can average 30 days. Healthy animals who are preparing for a special event can range from one night to several weeks.

d. How much time should I plan to spend with my foster kitty?

We ask that you spend **at least two hours a day** with your kitty. But of course, the more positive exposure he has with people and experiences, the happier and better-adjusted he'll be when he becomes available for adoption.

e. Where will I pick up my foster pet?

If you are fostering a cat for socialization, you will most likely pick up your animal at the Lincoln Park Adoption Center (1997 N. Clybourn). All other fosters are typically picked up from the PAWS Chicago Medical Center (3516 W. 26th Street) with occasional pickups at the PAWS Chicago Enrichment Center on Racine and Clybourn (1968 N Racine) or our North Shore Adoption Center (1616 Deerfield Road, Highland Park). We will let you know in advance where you can expect to pick up your foster.

f. Do I need to find an adopter for my foster animal?

No, you are not required to find an adopter for your foster animal. However, we always encourage you to discuss your foster pet with friends and family as feedback and connections play a large role in finding them homes.

g. Can I meet my foster animal first?

Perhaps — it depends on the type of foster you are interested in. You will have an opportunity to meet and choose your foster if they originate from our Lincoln Park Adoption Center. However, you will not have this option for animals originating from our Medical Center. We do our best to match you with an animal who fits your home environment and lifestyle needs.

h. How many kittens will I be fostering?

It's best for kittens to learn kitty manners from their siblings, so when fostering kittens, we prefer to send them out in groups of two or more. It also helps to have multiple kittens to keep each other busy.

i. Can my foster kittens play with my resident pets?

- **We strongly advise against it.** Kittens and cats in shelters have stressed and/or weakened immune systems. PAWS Chicago cannot be responsible for the health of your resident pets, so we strongly recommend that your foster kittens remain isolated from household pets, unless we advise you otherwise.
- If you are fostering a kitten, **please keep your kitten confined to your home.**

j. Can I adopt my foster?

Yes! In most circumstances, you are able to adopt your foster animal(s). If this isn't the case, you will be notified in advance. If you are interested in adopting, **please let our foster coordinator know by the end of the foster period**, if not earlier. We will arrange for your foster to be spayed/neutered and medically cleared for adoption before you complete the adoption process.

k. Can a friend or family member adopt my foster?

Any friends or family interested in adopting will need to visit the appropriate Adoption Center (Lincoln Park or North Shore) the day the animal is available for adoption. We will coordinate with you on timing to be sure you know approximately when the animal is going arrive. Everyone in the household must be there at the time of the adoption and our standard adoption fees and instructions will apply.

l. What does PAWS provide? What do I need to provide?

We will provide you with a carrier, food and any medications needed. We will also provide instructions on how to administer medications. We ask that you provide food bowls, toys and lots of time and TLC!

m. Can I foster if I have other pets?

Yes. However, in many cases, especially with sick or injured animals, you must have the ability to isolate the foster animal in a separate room or section of your home to avoid exposure of an illness to your pet or disrupt the healing time of your foster. A spare room can be perfect for a cat or kitten.

Welcome

Thank you for becoming a part of
PAWS Chicago's Foster Program!

PAWS Chicago's Foster Program enables us to take in more animals each year than could be housed at our shelter alone. Because of your dedication and commitment as a Foster Parent, we are able to give homeless animals the second chance at life they deserve.

Every animal at PAWS Chicago needs a clean bill of health before he or she can be adopted. A shelter environment can harbor germs and illnesses and it is for this reason that we require kittens under the age of six months to spend at least two weeks in foster care while they receive vaccinations and are treated for any other health issues. Without your dedication, these young animals would remain in the shelter with other sick cats which would greatly hinder their recovery rate.

As a foster parent, you will provide love, attention, food and water to a homeless animal. Depending on the animal's health, you may be asked to administer medications recommended by our veterinary team.

We will work with you to ensure that you are comfortable administering any necessary medications and address any concerns you may have. By fostering a sick animal, you are greatly increasing their chances for living a long and healthy life.

Other very young animals may require bottle or syringe feeding in order to survive. Caring for orphaned kittens or a mother and her litter can be very time consuming. We value your dedication and appreciate your willingness to make this life-saving commitment to these animals.

Some of our homeless animals have lived on the streets and will greatly benefit from a foster home. Many of these types of shelter animals need to learn to rebuild trust in people after being given up or abandoned. Your role as their foster parent will help to socialize these animals. Your devotion will help a cat or kitten become a more attractive candidate for a potential adopter.



PAWS CHICAGO CAT FOSTER AGREEMENT

Thank you for your interest in sharing your home as a PAWS Chicago foster parent! Depending upon your availability and experience, you may be asked to provide care to a sick or injured animal, to house an animal until space becomes available at the Medical Center or Adoption Centers, to foster young animals, to support individualized training plans based on the needs of an animal, or to provide respite care to an animal that may be depressed or traumatized by the many changes and losses in her/his life. As a PAWS Chicago foster parent, you will always be provided with information concerning the unique circumstances of each potential foster situation so that you can decide if the fit is right for you.

To help you better understand your role as a PAWS Chicago foster parent, the following constitutes an agreement between you and PAWS Chicago. Please be sure that you understand this agreement in its entirety, and don't hesitate to ask your PAWS Chicago representative regarding any questions you may have.

- On behalf of PAWS Chicago, I agree to provide foster care to the PAWS animal(s) I pick-up on future dates and will promptly return the animal(s) to the location and date/time specified by the PAWS Chicago Foster Team. I understand that any changes to these dates/times can occur only with the express agreement of PAWS Chicago and myself and that newly agreed upon dates/times will be emailed by the PAWS Chicago Foster Team.
- I understand and agree that the PAWS animal(s) entrusted to me will be cared for in my home at the address that I have provided to PAWS Chicago. I understand and agree that I will not move my PAWS animals to any other physical location (in or outside the state of Illinois) without the express written agreement and approval of my PAWS Chicago representative.
- I understand that I am operating as a foster home affiliated with PAWS Chicago and that under the Animal Welfare act, I am required to allow for the Department of Agriculture to inspect my home at the address noted in the PAWS online database, should they deem it necessary. PAWS Chicago shall be responsible for the records and have the obligation of stewardship for animals in the foster home with which it affiliates.
- I understand and agree that I may be required to transport or make arrangements to transport my PAWS animal(s) to various appointments. If I do not appear at more than 2 events or scheduled appointments to which I committed, PAWS Chicago has the right to end this agreement and reclaim the animal.
- I understand and agree that PAWS Chicago maintains legal ownership of the PAWS animal(s) in my care, regardless of the length of time I provide foster care to the PAWS Chicago animals in my home.
- I understand and agree that I have no authority to offer my PAWS animal(s) to any person for adoption or sale. I understand and agree that I will direct any potential adopters to the PAWS Chicago Adoption Center (1997 N. Clybourn Ave.).
- I understand and agree that I will be present for any appointments scheduled for my PAWS animal(s), medical or otherwise, unless giving prior advanced notice of cancellation or a need to re-schedule.
- I understand and agree that I am responsible for always keeping the PAWS animal(s) on a leash and with me when in public. I also understand and agree that I am not to take my PAWS animal(s) to dog parks, dog beaches, or daycare/boarding facilities and that I am to avoid interaction with dogs/ other animals or individuals with whom I am not familiar. I understand and agree to always keep Foster cats and kittens as indoor animals with no exceptions. I further understand that I'm agreeing to these stipulations to protect my PAWS Foster animal(s) and community animals from getting lost or from potential injury, illness, or behavioral unknowns.
- I understand that I must use the handling equipment (e.g., leash, collar, etc.) provided by PAWS for the animal(s) I am fostering and not substitute my own equipment. I further understand and agree to contact PAWS immediately for replacement handling equipment should existing equipment break, malfunction or show signs of wear and tear. I understand that this is to protect the PAWS animal(s) and the community.
- I understand and agree that PAWS Chicago cannot guarantee that the PAWS animal(s) is/are housebroken/ litterbox trained. PAWS Chicago will not be financially responsible for any damage done by the PAWS animal(s).

- I understand and agree that I am responsible for cleaning up after my PAWS animal(s) while not on my own property.
- PAWS Chicago will not be financially responsible for any damage done or injuries caused by the PAWS animals(s) while in foster care. I further understand and agree to hold harmless, defend and indemnify PAWS Chicago for any liability resulting from my fostering of this animal, and further understand that these duties (to hold harmless, defend and indemnify) apply whether the liability is alleged to have arisen from my actions, the actions of another, or the actions of PAWS Chicago.
- I understand and agree that I am responsible for providing basic care items as outlined by the PAWS Chicago Foster Team and ensure the PAWS animal(s) are living in a clean and safe environment.
- I understand and agree to not take PAWS Foster animals(s) on public transportation, and that I will secure the animal in a carrier/crate as provided for by the PAWS Chicago staff for any type of transport. If PAWS Chicago has loaned me a carrier, I will return it when I return the animals(s).
- I understand and agree that I will administer any and all medications and dietary supplements to my PAWS animal(s), as directed by my PAWS Chicago representative or the attending PAWS veterinarian. I understand that I am not responsible for purchasing said medications and supplements. I understand and agree that I will not administer any medications, supplements, or treatments to my PAWS animal(s), except those which are prescribed or recommended by the PAWS veterinarian or my PAWS Chicago representative.
- I understand and agree that I will contact PAWS Chicago immediately should I suspect that my PAWS animal(s) requires medical attention.
 - If the situation is not life-threatening, I will contact the Medical Center (3516 W. 26th St.) to arrange an appointment during office hours (8:00 am – 6:00 pm, 7 days a week). Phone number is **773-475-9464**.
 - If a life-threatening emergency occurs outside of office hours, I will first call the **24-Hour Emergency Line at (773) 354-6520** for instructions and then proceed as directed by a PAWS Chicago representative. I understand I may be required to transport my PAWS animal(s) to a PAWS Chicago approved emergency hospital to receive emergency care. I understand that I am not financially responsible for medical care provided to my PAWS animal(s) at the Medical Center or if authorized to seek treatment at an approved hospital. However, I also understand that if I seek treatment for my PAWS animal(s) at any medical facility, **without the approval** of PAWS Chicago, I will not be reimbursed for my expenses.
- I understand and agree that I am responsible for maintaining routine phone/email contact with my PAWS Chicago representative, and for responding to phone calls from my PAWS Chicago representative in a timely fashion, for the express purpose of sharing information regarding the adjustment, health, and behavior of my PAWS animal(s) while in my care.
- I understand and agree that, if for any reason, I can no longer meet the terms of this agreement, I will notify my PAWS Chicago representative immediately in order that alternate plans can be made for my PAWS animal(s).
- I understand and agree that, if for any reason, my PAWS Chicago representative determines that this foster arrangement should end prior to the predetermined date, he/she has the authority to remove my PAWS animal(s) from my home immediately.
- I understand and agree that PAWS Chicago cannot guarantee the health of its animals and will not be able to pay for veterinary expenses of my own pets if they were to become ill from exposure to a PAWS Chicago animal or otherwise.
- I understand and agree that due to recent changes in the law, liability extends to persons who are not “legal owners” but also “owners” who are providing care, custody and/or control to the animal (i.e., foster parents) as defined by the Illinois Animal Control Act and the Chicago Municipal Code.
- I understand and agree that, as a PAWS Chicago foster parent, I am responsible for the wellbeing of a precious PAWS Chicago animal life and that I take this responsibility seriously.

- I understand and agree that while it is possible for me to adopt my foster animal(s) at the end of the foster period, the main focus of fostering is to provide care for the animals until they can be transferred to the Adoption Center. I understand that being a PAWS Chicago foster parent does not guarantee that I will be allowed to adopt this animal(s) at the end of the foster period. I understand that if decide I am interested in adopting the animal(s), I will be required to cooperate with the same interview process, application process, and adoption fee that any other PAWS Adopter would go through. I understand that PAWS Chicago retains the right to deny my adoption application.
- I understand that if I am in a foster-to-adopt situation I must formally notify a member of the PAWS Chicago Foster Team with my adoption decision prior to the animal(s) final appointment, knowing that it may not guarantee I can adopt the PAWS Chicago foster animal(s) in my care. I must then contact the proper representative at the PAWS Chicago Adoption Center to finalize the adoption.
- I recognize and understand the inherent risks associated with the care of foster animals, including but not limited to the possibility of any injury to person(s) and/or property which I may suffer as a result of the unpredictable nature and/or provocation of animals. I understand the purpose of fostering a PAWS animal is to support the PAWS organization and its mission and not to promote or solicit PAWS Chicago in any way for my individual or business interests.
- I understand that while providing care for a PAWS Chicago foster animal, I will not foster for another organization, shelter, or rescue. If I am fostering a non-PAWS Chicago animal, I will immediately notify the PAWS Chicago Foster Team. I understand that this is to protect the medical health of the Foster animals, as not all organizations have the same protocols.

☐ Check here to indicate that you have read and agree to the terms and conditions laid out in this agreemen.

Foster's Name (please print)

Phone Number

Email

Foster's Signature

Date

a. Things You'll Need:

Litter box, litter scoop, non-clumping litter, food bowls, towels for bedding, toys.

b. Providing a Safe Space

Choose a room in your home that can be easily temperature controlled (no drafts or open windows!). The room should also be able to withstand messy kittens and playful cats who may knock over a food dish, spill their water or kick litter out of the box or pan. We highly recommend that your cat safe haven have floors that are easy to wipe up and mop. Bathrooms are often the best choice — just don't forget to put down the toilet seat!

c. Kitten Proofing

Kittens and cats are curious, playful and often mischievous. Don't be surprised if they try to get into everything! **Don't leave anything out that your foster pet can chew, swallow or break** (electrical cords, hair ties, glassware, etc). Look for places where your foster can hide and be sure to block access to those areas. One thing to try is to lie down on the floor and look at your safe space from your new foster's point of view.

d. Setting up Your Foster's Space

This where your foster will be spending the majority of his time. This is the place where your foster pet will eat, drink, eliminate, sleep and play.

1. **Eat:** You will need three bowls – one for wet food, one for dry food, and one for water. The more kittens you have, the more bowls you will need so that everyone can have access to their food! They will need access to fresh food and clean water multiple times a day.
2. **Sleep:** Old towels make the best bedding! We suggest making a nice, warm sleeping area by using a cat carrier or tipped over box.
3. **Eliminate:** Place a litter box with non-clumping litter far away from your cat/kittens' food as possible.
4. **Play:** Disposable and easily sanitized toys are a must! We also encourage cardboard scratchers or a scratching post.

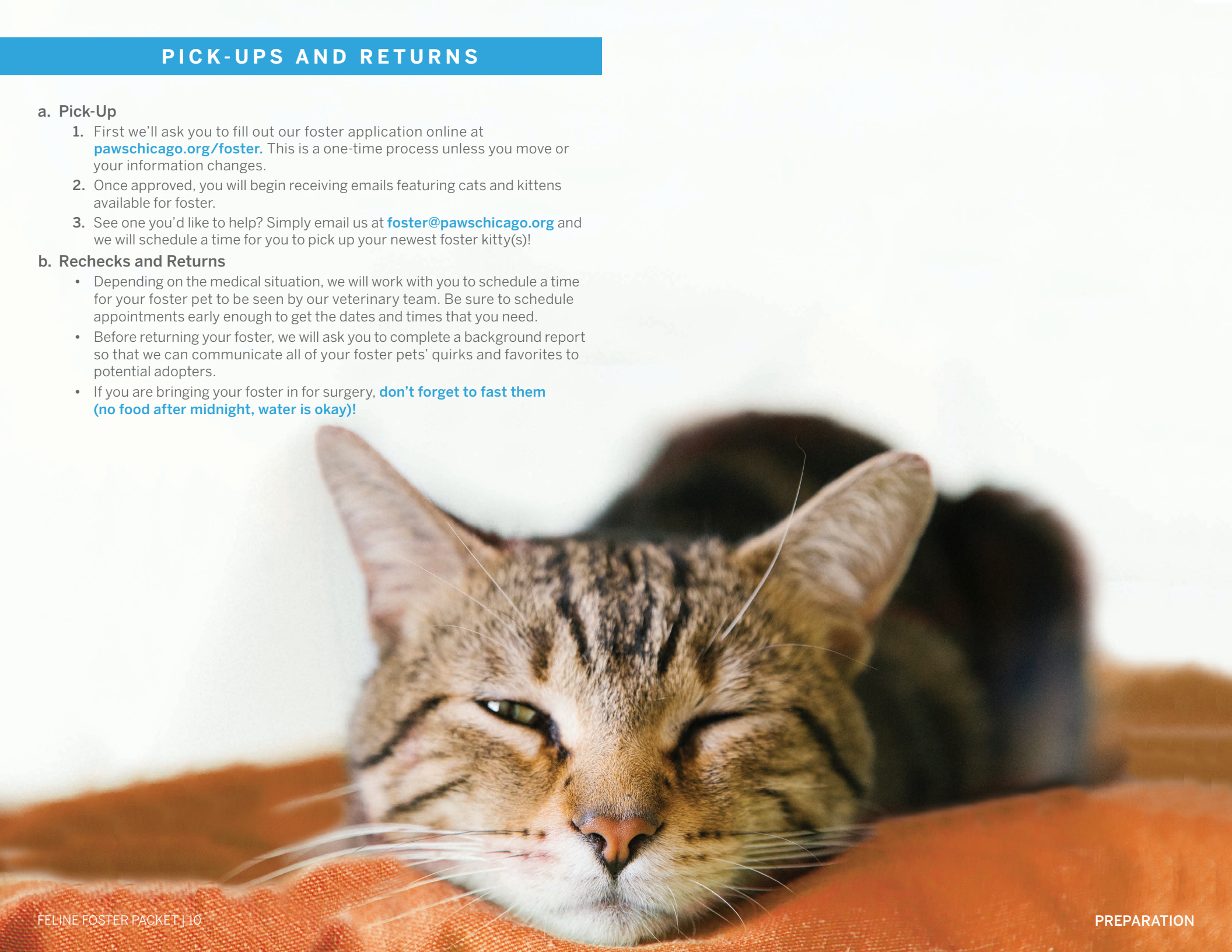
PICK-UPS AND RETURNS

a. Pick-Up

1. First we'll ask you to fill out our foster application online at pawschicago.org/foster. This is a one-time process unless you move or your information changes.
2. Once approved, you will begin receiving emails featuring cats and kittens available for foster.
3. See one you'd like to help? Simply email us at foster@pawschicago.org and we will schedule a time for you to pick up your newest foster kitty(s)!

b. Rechecks and Returns

- Depending on the medical situation, we will work with you to schedule a time for your foster pet to be seen by our veterinary team. Be sure to schedule appointments early enough to get the dates and times that you need.
- Before returning your foster, we will ask you to complete a background report so that we can communicate all of your foster pets' quirks and favorites to potential adopters.
- If you are bringing your foster in for surgery, **don't forget to fast them (no food after midnight, water is okay)!**



a. Monitoring Your Foster's Health

It is crucial that you monitor your foster feline's appetite, attitude and appearance every day. **We encourage our foster parents to keep a log of their foster pet.** If something seems off or different, it's easy to go back and review your log to see when the problem began.

b. Weighing Kittens

We ask that you weigh your kitten(s) at the same time each day and keep track of any gains or losses. **Ideally, kittens gain 0.25–0.5oz per day.** If your kitten is not eating for 24 hours or is losing weight, please contact our foster team immediately for next steps. It's likely that we may need you to bring your kittens in for a medical check immediately.

c. Feeding

- Please feed your foster kittens the food that PAWS Chicago provides. Digestive systems can be irritated by the introduction of new or different foods. If your fosters are refusing to eat the foods that they're given, please contact us at fosters@pawschicago.org. We will help you determine your next steps.

DAILY ROUTINE

a. Feeding

- Kittens should be fed at least twice daily, **three times is preferable.**
- Wash wet food dishes between each serving.
- Monitor appetites

b. Cleaning Schedule

- Scoop the litter box in the morning and evening
- Note stool consistency (**refer to stool chart on page 17**).

c. Health Check

- Look over your foster pet every day for any changes or potential medical concerns
- Check over his or her body and fur
- Weigh kittens
- Note your foster's energy level

d. Enrichment

- All foster cats crave playtime. **We recommend two play sessions per day** with interactive toys like wand toys.
- Always discourage play with hands which can lead to bites down the road.
- Change your foster environment daily by adding new objects and toys.

e. Socialization

- **Please visit your foster at least 2-3 times per day** for at least 20 minutes per visit.
- Encourage affectionate behavior with food treats or play sessions.
- Kittens should meet new people **as often as possible.**

a. Litter Boxes

Litter box habits should be established early and reinforced throughout a cat's life. A couple of tips:

1. Keep kittens confined to a small territory and keep new cats confined for the first couple of days. The younger the kittens, the smaller the space should be. If they are allowed to have more space, **there should be at least one litterbox in each room.**
2. Return kittens or adults with litter box problems to their litterbox regularly. **Do not force them to stay in the litterbox,** just gently place her near or in the box every 15–20 minutes as a reminder.
3. Clean all “accidents” well with enzyme cleaners (such as Nature's Miracle).
4. **Never yell at or otherwise punish a cat/kitten for urinating or defecating outside the box.**
5. One or two litterbox misses are acceptable, but if a cat/kitten is having repeated problems with litterbox usage, **please contact your foster team!**

b. Discipline

- Prevention is the best way to handle most undesirable behaviors is to prevent them. Kittens (5 weeks – 2 years) are at the most playful and curious stages of their lives. This curious stage helps them to become confident, well socialized adult cats. In most cases, **it's better to distract a kitten from an inappropriate behavior and direct them to appropriate play.** Distracting a kitten beforehand requires constant vigilance, but it lowers the risk that a kitten may view the distraction as a reward. You can do this by getting their attention with noise, toys or treats. Another way to address inappropriate behavior is to modify the environment. This involves removing any stimulus that may get the cat/kitten into trouble.
- **We do not condone any type of physical punishment.** That approach is detrimental to the cat and can actually cause worse behaviors to manifest.

c. Scratching

This is a natural behavior that releases endorphins and helps your cat relax. **Never discourage scratching with punishment.** If you foster is scratching something inappropriate, distract them with a toy or a noise. Cardboard scratchers can be made more enticing using catnip and playing around and over the scratcher. **Don't forget to change cardboard scratchers between fosters!**

d. New Environments

If your kittens are comfortable in the safe room and you have the ability to kitten-proof other spaces in your home, feel free to do so! You can open up other rooms in your home and allow kittens to explore new spaces while having treats and interactive play available will create a positive association with these novel experiences. Keep the sessions brief and return the kitten to the safe room if they seem overwhelmed.

e. New People

Many times foster kittens only get exposed to their foster parents, but ideally, they would be exposed to various people. **We highly encourage you to invite a small number of friends over for kitten playdates!** Who doesn't love visiting with cuddly playful kittens? Keep in mind:

- Every experience is a good one! Petting should always be gentle and hands should never be used as toys!
- Allowing responsible and well behaved children to interact with your foster is always helpful when your foster is looking for his forever home. If a kitten seems hesitant or fearful, it's best and safest to give the child other ways to interact with the kitten that are positive and safe, such as using interactive toys or hand-feeding treats.

Play Time!

Playtime is very important to developing a normal, appropriate behavior. Cats and kittens need toys to play with so that they can occupy their minds and get exercise. Your foster needs two types of toys:

Solo Toys:

Solo toys should be easy to clean and impossible for the kittens to consume. Ping-Pong balls, toilet paper tubes and wine corks are great examples of solo toys. These toys can be left for the kittens to play with even when you aren't there.

Interactive Toys:

Interactive toys should be used with direct supervision. Interactive toys include anything with string or parts (like buttons or feathers) that can come off that the kitten can eat. These toys are great for teaching your foster appropriate play, but if you aren't looking, a kitten could eat parts of the toy or get tangled in them.

Always have toys available to play with when you are visiting with your foster. Discourage kittens from biting hands or feet and/or using body parts as toys.

f. Playful Attacks

Playful attacks, such as nipping, are not accompanied by vocalization or hissing and growling. A natural reaction to being grabbed or bitten, even playfully, is to swat at the cat. **Do not do this.** Physical punishment may cause your cat either to fear you or engage in even rougher play. The best deterrent is your voice – a loud and shrill “Eek!” followed by a sharp “No!” can be very effective with some cats. The next step is to shun the cat for the next **10 minutes**. This means paying absolutely no attention to the cat.

Don't lecture, scold, or pick the cat up and move him to a different room.

Any attention at this point can be considered reinforcing, so totally ignore the cat. This is how a kitten learns to inhibit her biting when playing with another kitten. If one becomes too rough, the victim will squeal and run away. The aggressor will watch her playmate run away and wonder what happened. Eventually he learns that if he wants to extend her play session, which he wants to do, then he has to play in a more gentle way. **This training method works if you are patient and persistent.**

g. Purring that Results in a Bite

Purring that results in a bite can be caused by the following:

1. Your cat is sleeping in your lap, wakes suddenly and is momentarily disorientated by its surrounding and being confined. After he jumps down, he may look confused and begin to groom himself to calm down.
2. Sensitive or nervous cats can be over stimulated by prolonged petting. There are usually warning signs — restlessness, tail twitching, flattened ears, or a head turned toward the hand. You should stop petting the cat before this point is reached. At this time, a small food treat could be given. **Never physically punish the cat for biting as it may cause him to become defensive and to seriously retaliate.**
3. Petting the sensitive stomach area causes a natural defense reaction which includes wrapping its paws around the person's wrist, holding on, and biting.

VACCINES

Foster kittens will need routine visits with our veterinarians regardless of their health. Kittens need to be vaccinated every two to four weeks. Please check with your foster coordinator to find out when they need to be brought in for their next vaccine. **We are unable to send appointment reminders so please keep track of important dates!**

PREPARING FOR YOUR NEXT FOSTER!

Cats and kittens might leave behind germs that can jeopardize your next foster pet. For this reason, we ask that you follow specific cleaning protocol before bringing your next foster home:

- i. Remove anything that your foster slept on or played with.
- ii. Scrub everything that your foster could have touched with diluted bleach solution. Don't forget to scrub the walls too!
- iii. Food and water dishes can be washed in the dishwasher or soaked in diluted bleach for 10 minutes.
- iv. Clean all toys and litter boxes with diluted bleach as well.
- v. Wash all bedding in hot water and dry on a hot setting.
- vi. **Throw away anything that cannot be bleached.**

Diluted Bleach Solution



¼ Cups Chlorine Bleach

2¼ Cups Warm Water



MOMS AND KITTENS

Caring for a mom and her kittens is a very rewarding experience. And the best part is — mom does it all! She cleans up after her babies, keeps them warm and maintains their feeding schedule.

a. Caring for the Mother

More than anything else, a mother cat needs a calm, quiet environment to raise her family. If the mother cat is healthy, chances are, she will be able to take care of her babies without much assistance from you. Your goal as the foster parent is to make sure she stays healthy and serve as a back-up if there is a part of parenting she cannot do on her own.

b. Give the Family Space

Even the sweetest cats can be protective of their babies, so give the mom time to trust you. For the first couple days, only visit the family a few times to ensure the babies are nursing and the mom appears healthy. Once you have earned the mother's trust, you can start interacting with her babies.

c. Alleviate Stress — Keep the Family in Your Home

The more stress the mom endures, the less she will be able to do for her babies. This includes feeding them and caring for them properly. To minimize stress on the mother, never take the family out of your home or your designated foster space. Ask that only the people directly involved in her foster care interact with the family.

Daily Baby Check:

What to Monitor	Positive Signs	Negative Signs	How to Minimize the Negative
Weight (take and record daily)	Weight increases	Weight stays constant for more than 3 days or decreases in 24 hours	Increase food intake by feeding the baby more often and/or provide more food during each feeding
Urination and Defecation	Stomach is soft to touch	Stomach is firm to touch	Stimulate urination and defecation by wiping the genitals and the anal glands with warm, damp cloth until the animal alleviates itself
Energy Level	Energy level stays constant or increases. (If already sick, energy level must increase.)	Energy level decreases. (If already sick, energy level must not stay constant or decrease)	N/A
Congestion	Congestion decreases	Congestion increases	Use humidifier or steam of the shower to clear up congestion
Eye and Nasal Discharge	Discharge decreases	Discharge increases	Wipe eyes and nose with a warm, damp cloth two or more times a day as needed

Daily Mother Check:

What you should pay attention to and how you can help.

What to Monitor	Positive Signs	Negative Signs	How to Minimize the Negative
Weight (no noticeable weight loss)	Weight stays constant or increases	Weight decreases	Increase food intake by feeding more often and/or providing more food during each feeding. Also consider heating up food, adding water to food, or trying a different brand of food.
Firmness of Mammary Glands	Mammary glands are soft to the touch	Mammary glands are firm to the touch	N/A
Energy Level	Energy level stays constant or increases. (If already sick, energy level must increase)	Energy level decreases. (If already sick, energy level must not stay constant or decrease)	N/A
Congestion	Congestion decreases	Congestion increases	Use a humidifier or steam from the shower to clear up congestion
Eye and Nasal Discharge	Discharge decreases	Discharge increases	Wipe eyes and nose with a warm, damp cloth two or more times a day as needed

If negative signs are seen, please email us at foster@pawschicago.org.

Caring for Kittens

To help the mother care for her kittens, keep an eye on them regularly and make sure to jump in when the mother is not able to do it all.

The Mom's Role	What to do if the Mom is Not Able
Bathe the babies by licking them	Wipe the eyes and nose with a warm damp cloth to clean discharge
Stimulate the babies' urination and defecation by licking their genitals and anal glands	Wipe the genitals and anal glands with a warm damp cloth until they urinate and defecate
Nurse the babies every 3-4 hours	Bottle or syringe feed the babies every 3-4 hours

PROCEDURE FOR EMERGENCIES

A. The Vidaah Vet Chat is to be used only for **non business hours Medical Emergencies from 5:30pm-8:00am CT**

1. Log on to pawschicago.org/vidaah
2. Please enter the login and password information you created at the time you picked up your foster pet
3. Begin the chat with the Vidaah Vet
4. The Vet will provide you with information on how to handle the situation you are chatting about
5. If you have been advised to seek emergency medical care for your foster pet you will need to immediately proceed to one of the following hospitals for care:

Premier Veterinary Group – Chicago 3927 W Belmont Ave Chicago, IL

Veterinary Emergency Group – 755 W North Ave Chicago, IL

VCA Berwyn – 2845 S Harlem Ave Berwyn, IL

Blue Pearl – Northfield 820 W Frontage Rd, Northfield, IL

Blue Pearl – Skokie 3735 W Dempster St, Skokie, IL

Premier Veterinary Group – 1810 E Belvidere Rd, Grayslake, IL

Premier Veterinary Group – 13715 S Cicero Ave, Crestwood, IL

VCA Arboretum View – 2551 Warrenville Rd, Downers Grove, IL

VCA Aurora – 2600 W Galena, Aurora, IL

- Please do not proceed to any veterinary clinic unless the Vet service classifies the issue as an emergency and advises you to seek immediate medical care. Without this direction and authorization you will be responsible for any charges you incur during an unauthorized vet visit.
6. If the Vet service deems the issue critical vs. an emergency, please follow the medical advice given and then drop off your foster pet between 9am-10am the following morning to the Medical Center located at 3516 W 26th Street Chicago, IL. Please also email Foster@pawschicago.org to alert us that you will be dropping off your foster pet.
 7. If the Vet services deems this a possible medical concern please follow the medical advice given and email Foster@pawschicago.org for follow up the next day.

B. Emergencies and Medical Concerns **during the hours of 8:30am-5:00pm** should be reported to the foster team by emailing Foster@pawschicago.org. Subject line; Emergency * Foster Pet Name* or Medical Concern * Foster Pet Name*. Please Also call **773-475-9464** and leave a detailed voicemail.

- Please do not proceed to any veterinary clinic unless PAWS Foster/Medical Team classifies the issue as an emergency and advises you to seek immediate medical care. Without this direction and authorization you will be responsible for any charges you incur during an unauthorized vet visit.

If your foster pet is lost or missing please call **773-244-7022. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. Please note this is only to report a missing/lost foster pet, no other calls will be returned.**

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Emergency Health Concerns

The following are examples of life threatening emergencies:

- Ate a toxic substance (Ex. Prescription medication, household cleaner)
- No urination for 48+ hours
- Unable to stand/rise
- Dramatic drop in energy — lethargy
- Notable seizures
- Active bleeding (constant drip/flow) for 5+ minutes
- Any trauma — hit by a car, dropped, limp, stepped on, unconscious
- Difficulty in breathing/blocked airway/choking
- Labor: Kitten/puppy stuck in birth canal for >10 minutes or active contractions >4 hours with no puppy/kitten produced.

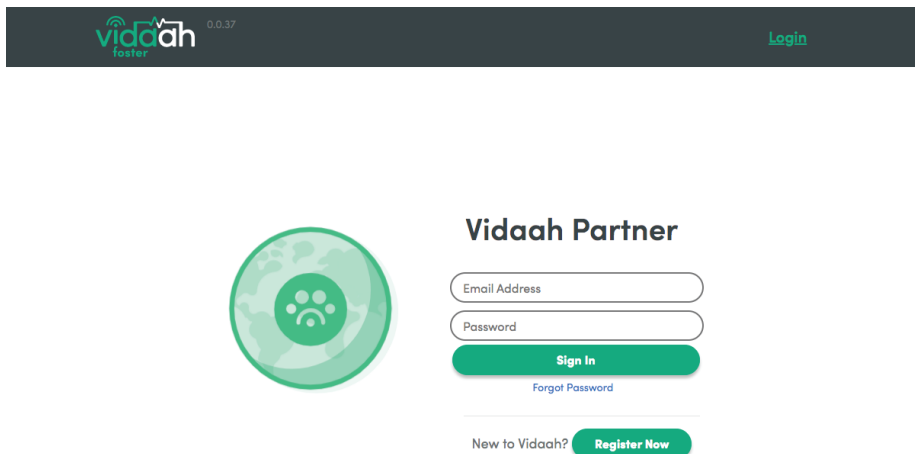
NON-Emergency Health Concerns

Please contact the foster department as instructed on the opposite side of this certificate

	Animal Needs to be Seen Soon (Not an Emergency)	Keep an Eye on It
Sneezing and/or Coughing	If not already on medication (must be frequent and for more than a couple days)	If it started within the last couple days and there is no eye or nasal discharge.
Sneezing and/or Coughing with Eye or Nasal Discharge	If not already on medication	If medication was started within the last week.
Limping	Continues beyond two days, may or may not be swollen	Infrequent limping that is only noticeable for a day or two.
Not Eating	If accompanied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop in energy • 24+ hours of anorexia • Vomiting or diarrhea • Sneezing or coughing • Refusing treats/goodies 	Still active, no other symptoms, less than 24 hours between meals.
Activity Level Drops	If accompanied with the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anorexia for two or more days • Sneezing and/or coughing • Vomiting and/or diarrhea 	No other symptoms, still eating, decreased activity for less than 24 hours
Diarrhea	If loose stools persist for two or more days or are accompanied with anorexia, vomiting, energy level drops.	Still eating and active.
Vomiting	Three or more times in a 48 hour period or are accompanied with anorexia, diarrhea, energy level drops.	Still eating and active.

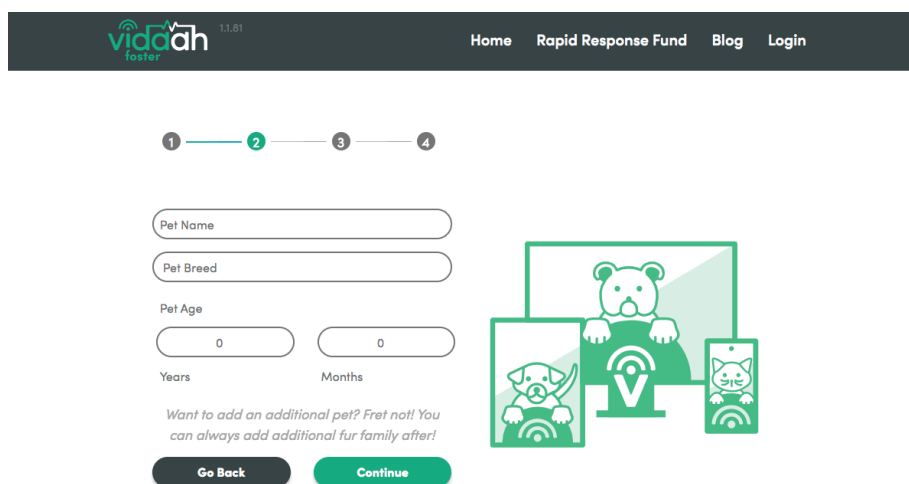
VIDAAH ACCOUNT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Log into your dashboard at pawschicago.org/vidaah



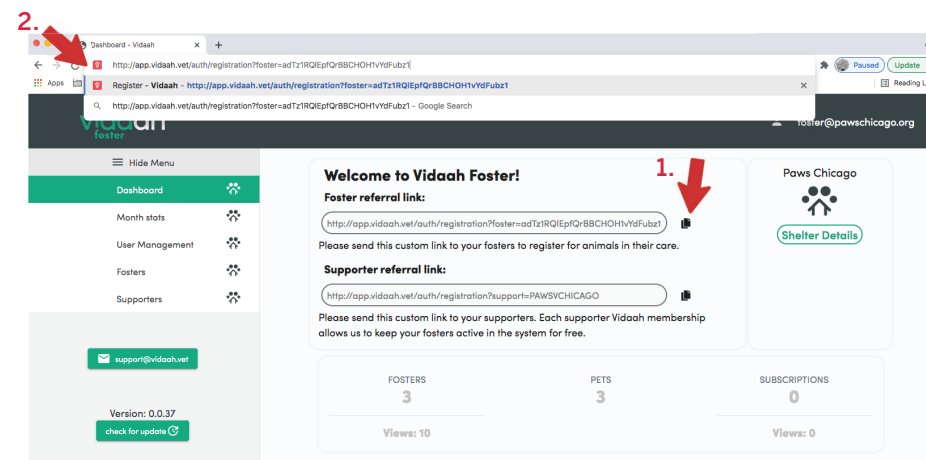
The image shows the 'Vidaah Partner' login interface. At the top, there's a header with the 'vidaaah foster' logo and a 'Login' link. The main area features a large green circular icon with a paw print. Below it, there are input fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password', followed by a green 'Sign In' button and a 'Forgot Password' link. At the bottom, there's a 'New to Vidaah?' section with a green 'Register Now' button.

3. Fill in your personal information: Once complete, an overview will be displayed, and corrections can be made. You have the option to “go back” to edit or click “complete” to move forward. Additional foster animals may also be added to your dashboard as needed.



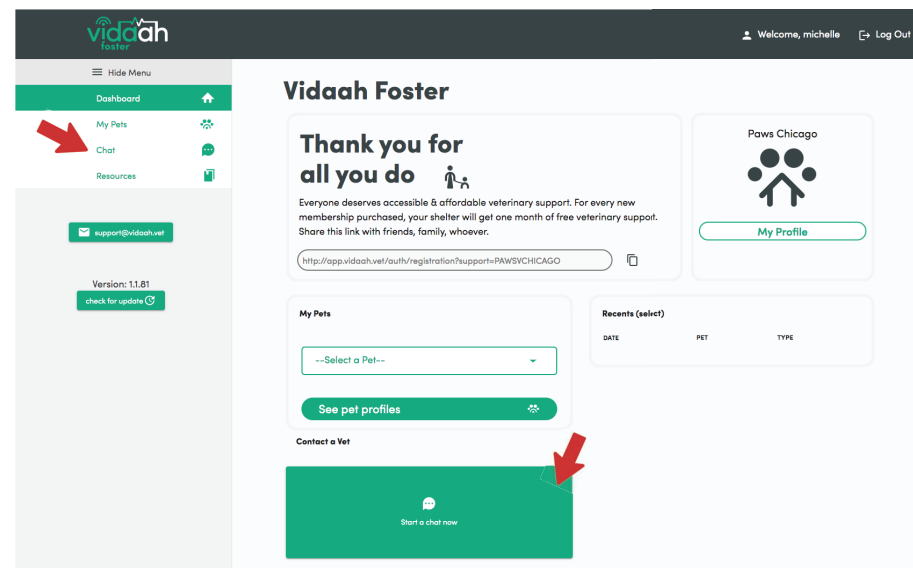
The image shows the 'Vidaah Foster' registration form. At the top, there's a header with the 'vidaaah foster' logo and navigation links: 'Home', 'Rapid Response Fund', 'Blog', and 'Login'. Below the header, there's a progress bar with four steps: 1, 2, 3, and 4. Step 2 is currently active. The form fields include 'Pet Name', 'Pet Breed', 'Pet Age' (with a dropdown for '0' and '1'), and 'Years' and 'Months' (with dropdowns for '0' and '1'). There's a green 'Continue' button and a 'Go Back' button. A note at the bottom says: 'Want to add an additional pet? Fret not! You can always add additional fur family after!'. There's also a green icon of a dog and a cat.

2. Copy the foster referral link and paste it into your browser



The image shows the 'Vidaah Foster' dashboard. At the top, there's a header with the 'vidaaah foster' logo and a 'Login' link. The main area features a green sidebar with a 'Hide Menu' button and a list of items: 'Dashboard', 'Month stats', 'User Management', 'Fosters', and 'Supporters'. The 'Dashboard' item is selected. The main content area has a 'Welcome to Vidaah Foster!' message, a 'Foster referral link' field with a green 'Copy' button, and a 'Supporter referral link' field with a green 'Copy' button. There's also a 'Paws Chicago' section with a 'Shelter Details' button. At the bottom, there's a 'FOSTERS' section with a count of '3' and a 'PETS' section with a count of '3'. There's also a 'SUBSCRIPTIONS' section with a count of '0'.

4. When you are ready to chat with a vet, log in to Vidaah and click the “Chat” option on the left menu or bottom of the page. Select the foster animal you wish to speak to the vet about and click Start Chat, that’s it! You will be connected to the first available vet, anytime.



The image shows the 'Vidaah Foster' dashboard with the 'Chat' option highlighted in the sidebar. The sidebar has a 'Hide Menu' button and a list of items: 'Dashboard', 'My Pets', 'Chat', and 'Resources'. The 'Chat' item is selected. The main content area has a 'Thank you for all you do' message, a 'Paws Chicago' section with a 'My Profile' button, and a 'My Pets' section with a dropdown menu for 'Select a Pet' and a green 'See pet profiles' button. There's also a 'Recents (select)' section with a table of 'DATE', 'PET', and 'TYPE'. At the bottom, there's a 'Contact a Vet' section with a green 'Start a chat now' button.

SIGNS OF A SICK KITTEN/CAT

Healthy Cats

Adult cats can sleep a good portion of the day. Most adult cats will show some interest in play time, but definitely have their favorite games! Their eyes and nose should be generally free of discharge. The stool will be firm and well-shaped. They may sneeze occasionally. They may also scratch a little.

Healthy Kittens

Healthy kittens have a lot of energy and are awake more than adult cats. When they're awake they should be playful and spend only short amounts of time in your lap or being held. Just like adult cats, their eyes and nose should be generally free of any discharge. The stool will be firm and well-shaped. Kittens eat a lot. Kittens may sneeze occasionally. They may also scratch a little. These are normal kitten behaviors.

a. Diarrhea

Normal stool will be firm and well-shaped. **When you first notice soft stool, you should drop off a fecal sample.** If it continues or gets worse, make a medical appointment and bring a fecal sample with you to the appointment. Diarrhea is completely liquid. It may appear that the kitten is excreting plain water or there may be some color to it. Either way, make a medical appointment with our foster team (foster@pawschicago.org). Use the fecal chart (right) to describe the cat or kitten's feces.

b. URI

- i. **Feline Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)** is similar to a common cold in humans, but it's not transmissible from cat to human! It is especially common in cats who have been exposed to a lot of other cats, such as at an animal shelter. URI is very rarely fatal, and usually resolves within one to three weeks. Treatment generally consists of supportive care. In addition, antibiotics are sometimes given to treat possible bacterial infections.
- ii. **How should you care for a cat with URI?** Mild cases of URI can often be treated at home with supportive care. Provide the cat with a quiet, warm place to rest. Be sure the cat is eating. When cats get stuffy noses, they can't smell their food very well and may not want to eat. Offer smelly, wet food such as fish flavored canned cat food. Warming it up often helps.

Gently clean the cat's nose and eyes with a soft cloth moistened with warm water. If the cat is very congested, use a humidifier or put the cat in the bathroom and run hot water in the shower for a few minutes a couple of times a day. Moderate to severe congestion is often a sign of a secondary bacterial infection, so contact the foster coordinator to discuss treatment.

If any medicine has been prescribed, be sure and give the full course as directed, even if the symptoms seem to have gone away.

iii. **When should you contact the Foster Coordinator?** Every animal released from the shelter to a foster home has been examined by our vet before leaving the shelter. With rest and good care, many cats will recover from a mild URI in one or two weeks. However, sometimes cats need additional help.

iv. Contact foster@pawschicago.org if your foster cat/kitten is:

- Not eating for more than 24 hours.
- Not on medicine and experiencing green or yellow discharge from the nose or eyes (the shelter veterinarian may prescribe antibiotics for this). Gently clean the cat's nose and eyes with a soft cloth moistened with warm water.
- Difficulty breathing, especially panting or breathing through an open mouth.
- Depressed or unresponsive cat: a slight decrease in activity is expected, but contact the foster coordinator if the cat is much less active than usual or than you would expect.
- Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts more than 24 hours.
- Little or no improvement after a week of foster care.

Types of Stool



Type 1

Separate hard lumps



Type 2

Lumpy and sausage-like



Type 3

Sausage shape with cracks in the surface



Type 4

Like a smooth sausage/snake



Type 5

Soft blobs with clear-cut edges



Type 6

Mushy consistency with ragged edges



Type 7

Liquid consistency with no solid pieces