

FOSTER HOME PROGRAM

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NOAH
Nemasket Orphaned Animal
Haven





NOAH – Foster Home Based Rescue

- Our rescue houses animals in Foster Homes
- **Foster Homes**
 - Socialize and evaluate animals before adoption
 - Provide basic care and love
 - Handle basic medical items like worming, flea treatment, antibiotics, etc. Food and meds provided by the group





NOAH – Foster Home Based Rescue

- Special Needs Foster Homes

- All basic care plus special medications, subq fluids, insulin shots, etc., for care of diabetics, FELV, heart conditions, and cerebral hyperplasia kittens.
- Also neonatal emergency care.





NOAH – Foster Home Based Rescue

- Foster Care People expect:
 - Support from the group including food, medicine, advice, and help for vacations
 - Some level of defined time length that animal will be housed
 - Clear policies and guidelines



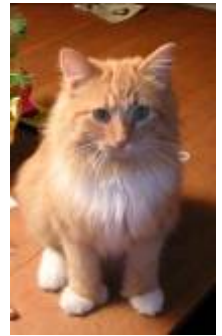


NOAH – Foster Home Based Rescue

- Rescue Group expects:
 - Honoring the Foster Care contract
 - Some level of commitment to the organization
 - Adherence to the training guidelines for care
 - Good level of care for the animal
 - The goal is a permanent home for the animal



Foster Home Guidelines



- All owned animals in house medically up-to-date
- Fostered animal(s) kept separate from owned animals
- Foster for only one rescue group at a time
- Commit to spending time with animal(s)
- Commit to reporting animal(s) progress



Foster Home Guidelines

- Volunteer spirit honored by encouraging feedback. Also, out of pocket costs to volunteer minimized
- Medical decision responsibility clearly defined by Rescue Group
- Adoption procedure clearly defined by Rescue Group (including adopting a fostered animal)





Finding Foster Homes

- Create a brochure
- Display brochures/flyers in animal friendly locations.
- Recruit from your adopters/happy tale list
- Use media to recruit (local newspaper, cable and radio spots)
- Utilize Petfinder volunteer base and Craigs list volunteer section



Foster Home Screening

- Foster Care application - formal and thorough just like your adoption application
- Create a formal Foster Care agreement
- Check references and verify owned animal medical information
- Do a home visit
- Create a training program and require it!



Foster Home Training

- Rescue Philosophy
 - No kill rescue
 - Behavior and medical issues
- Sanitation
 - Importance of a clean environment
 - Cleaning solutions – do's and don'ts
 - Cleaning after an outbreak of disease



Foster Home Training

- **Basic feeding techniques**
 - Bottle feeding
 - Weighing
- **Basic medical care**
 - Warming
 - Hydration
 - Worming
- **What to watch for tips**



Medical Issues and Decisions



- **A sick animal in a Foster Care Home presents a dilemma for the Rescue Group**
 - Competent assessment of the animal
 - Care for the animal
 - Exposure of other foster animals in that home
 - Attachment of the Foster Care volunteer
 - Contact with the vets
 - Weighing life and death options

Medical Issues and Decisions



- Written policy in the Foster Care agreement covering medical care, decisions and, authorizing veterinary visits
- NOAH has a very strict policy
 - No vet care without consulting one of the Rescue Team
 - If a team member is not available, only stabilization is authorized until the Team is reached
 - Any unauthorized medical care will be the responsibility of the Foster Care volunteer



Adoption Procedures

- **Rescue Group Adoption Models**
 1. Adoptions done by Foster Care people from their homes
 2. Adoptions done at a location where Foster Care people bring the animals for the day
 3. Adoptions done by a team at a permanent Adoption location. (NOAH adopts through PetSmart using our Adoption counselors. Little interaction between adoptees and our Foster Care volunteers)





Adoption Procedures

- Foster Care home adopting an animal they fostered
 1. Charge a fee to cover the medical cost
 2. Encouraged or discouraged?
 - If the Foster adopts to the exclusion of time and space to foster, then Rescue Group suffers
 - If the Foster can't adopt, then they suffer



Foster Home Retention

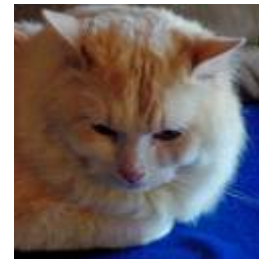
- **Make volunteers feel appreciated:**
 - Support them
 - Be available
 - Offer options when you observe stress or burnout
- Offer opportunities to participate in other aspects of the organization



Foster Home Retention

- Common Pitfalls

- Too many animals for too long
- Losing an animal
- Unauthorized emergency vet care
- Unrealistic expectation that the Rescue Group can "save the whole world."



Conclusions

- Foster Care is a critical piece of any Rescue Group
- Needs board level support and active involvement
- Very demanding emotionally and time wise
- It is extremely rewarding volunteer work



Ask NOAH about the Massachusetts
Animal Friendly License Plate!

