



Cat Adoption Team
14175 SW Galbreath Dr. Sherwood, OR 97140
503.925.8903
www.catadoptionteam.org

Cat Adoption Team

Maternity Foster Home Guidelines

Thank you for opening your home to a "family" in need. We hope that this experience will be as rewarding for you as it is beneficial to the health and well being of mom and her kittens. The majority of births and newborn litters are trouble-free and require only your quiet supervision; the information here will help you prepare for any complications that can, although rarely do, arise. If you have any questions or concerns not addressed in these guidelines, please call your Mentor. Keep in mind that these are only guidelines and are not meant to replace expert advice.

A cat can be in heat from 6-20 days. Pregnancy can be diagnosed by a veterinarian between 20-30 days after mating. The typical gestation period for a cat is 63 days. A cat may gain 2-3 pounds during pregnancy, depending on how many kittens she is carrying. She will require more and more food as her pregnancy progresses, and we recommend that you feed a high-quality kitten food (Authority Brand from PetsMart, Science Diet, Iams, Nutro, etc.) and provide her with constant access to food before, during, and after the birth of her kittens.

Preparing For the Birth

It is imperative that you have a quiet, out of the way place in your home that will be warm, safe and available for the entire time you are fostering. This means that this space will only be used for Mom and her kittens for the time you have them in your care. Inaccessibility to other family pets like dogs, or your resident cats, must be strictly enforced. This is absolutely necessary for the health and safety of not only the litter, but also your resident animals as well.

New mother cats have been known to resort to abandonment or even cannibalism if they feel that other animals or people threaten the well-being of their babies. This is especially true with mothers who are not well socialized.

New kittens are very susceptible to disease and can pick up illnesses from your seemingly healthy pets. Also, the stress of pregnancy and birth can cause the Mom cat to become ill from something that has been laying dormant in her system, so do not put your resident pets at risk by exposing them.

A kittening or nesting box must be provided for the expectant mother. This can usually be a cardboard box without a lid and a hole cut out of the side for the Mom cat to enter and exit. Fill it with clean towels and let her make her own nest. After the birth, you must change these towels, immediately and then on a frequent basis, as they will become soiled - so don't use the "good" towels.



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Provide a litter box, food and water. During the last week or so of pregnancy, and during the nursing weeks, dry and moist kitten food should be fed to the Mom cat. Kitten food is recommended for lactating females as it has extra calories and nutrients and will help support Mom cat during this very exhausting time in her life. Let Mom eat as much as she wants—after all, she is feeding a brood herself!

The shelter strives to feed a premium diet (Science Diet, Iams, Nutro, Etc.) to provide the best support for the mother cat, the best start for the babies, and an easier transition to the diet they will be fed when they return to the shelter.

The Birth

A week or less before the event, Mom cat may start to move about furtively, root about in the nest and may possibly attempt to escape the room you have designated for her in hopes of finding a linen closet or soft bedspread for her delivery. Be sure to keep your eye on her to ensure she stays in her room!

About 24 hours before delivery, you may notice her belly drop to form a “pear” shape and her nipples start to swell. A small amount of discharge from the vagina is also normal. Some moms-to-be will give you clues that it is time—others will not. Some will not eat until the deliveries are finished and some will snack in between. Some will be vocal while delivering and some will be silent. Some will want you in the room, others will not. Let Mom tell you what she needs. After all, having kittens is a natural and normal experience and cats have been doing it for thousands of years!

Most feline births are routine and trouble free, so try not to disturb her during the process. Make sure she has access to food and water and replace her regular litter with shredded paper in the litter box before delivery begins. She will start mild labor, straining a few hours before the first kitten is born. If, however, she has been heavily straining, for an hour or so, without producing a kitten, or three or more hours pass between kittens, call your mentor.

Occasionally, first time Moms will not quite “get it.” If this is the case and she delivers a kitten and just walks away, she might not realize that it is alive and needs her care. The membrane covering the kitten’s face must be removed immediately so it can breathe. If Mom doesn’t do this, gently tear open the sac covering its head so it can breathe. After the first kitten, Mom usually figures it out and carries on as she should. Most Moms will eat the afterbirth as it contains nutrients and hormones she will need to recover from the birth. She will also bite through the umbilical cord and clean the babies.

After the delivery of the litter is finished, try to observe the family to make sure that the kittens are nursing and that Mom is not bleeding excessively from the vagina. If things are not as they



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should be, call your mentor. Once the blessed event is concluded, and Mom and kittens are resting comfortably, replace the soiled towels with clean ones and let the new family rest in peace and quiet. Empty the paper out of the litter box and replace with regular kitty litter.

Be careful! Mother cats can be very protective of their young and become overly aggressive toward resident pets. This means watchful attention when entering or leaving the area you have set aside for mom and her babies.

Signs of a difficult delivery

Most births proceed without incident, and your role as a foster parent is to quietly monitor the birthing process. However, call your lead mentor immediately if any of the following happens during delivery:

- The mother cat seems to be straining or having strong contractions for a period of 1 hour without delivering a kitten.
- You observe any excessive bleeding (more than approximately two teaspoons).
- There is unusual discharge from the vulva under the tail. Normal discharge is green; abnormal can be black, cloudy, or foul-smelling.
- The mother is not cleaning the kittens after delivery. If this occurs, use a piece of sterile gauze and remove any fluid from the nose and mouth. Then dry the kitten using a clean towel and a gentle rubbing action.
- A kitten is not breathing. If this occurs, turn the kitten on its back and cradle it in your cupped hands with its head at your fingertips. Raise your arms and swing the kitten downward in an arc several times to force the liquid from the lungs. Then, rub him vigorously with a towel for several minutes all over his body to stimulate breathing.
- Occasionally the umbilical cord will not separate from the mother and kitten. If this occurs, take a thread and tie a knot $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the kitten's belly and another knot 1" towards Mom, and then cut the cord with the scissors between the two knots. This will prevent bleeding if the cord tears. Don't be surprised if the cord retracts back inside Mom during a contraction. The cord and placenta will be delivered in time. Never pull on the cord to try and get it out.

Post-Natal Signs of Trouble

If all kittens and mom seem well, your only obligation to the mom and new kittens for the first week or so is watchful supervision. Contact your mentor immediately if you observe any of the following in the mother cat:

1. Acts lethargic, or as if she is in pain or continues to strain.
2. Ignores her kittens.
3. Continues bleeding from the vulva.



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4. Has painful, hard, or swollen mammary glands

Kittens should be nursing up to 3 times an hour. The mother cat should be grooming each kitten after feeding, and licking their bottoms to stimulate elimination. Contact your mentor if you observe any of the following in the kittens:

1. Constant crying and failure to stay at the nipple.
2. Refusal to nurse.
3. Feels cold to the touch.
4. Withdrawing from the other kittens.
5. Rejected or ignored by the mother.



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Foster Care Agreement – Please Read and Sign

1. I understand the goals and mission of the Cat Adoption Team and, as a CAT volunteer, agree to work toward these goals and to represent this mission within the community on behalf of the organization. My commitment includes abiding by CAT's foster care guidelines, as outlined in CAT's Foster Care Program Packet, which I have received. This includes, **but is not limited to:**
 - A commitment to keep my foster cat(s)/kitten(s) indoors and not expose them to other cats that have access to outdoors.
 - A commitment to follow CAT's instructions with regard to medical care.
 - A commitment to keep detailed, dated medical records (which will be made available for adopters), and ensure that an up to date copy is also on file at CAT's facility.
2. I understand that only CAT's Foster Care Coordinator, Executive Director, and CAT's Founder, Evan Kalik, has the authority to make exceptions/changes to program guidelines.
3. I understand that Cat Adoption Team is the sole guardian of cats/kittens in foster care and that fostered cats/kittens must be returned to CAT upon CAT's request. I understand that CAT has the right to terminate this foster care agreement and relationship at will.
4. I understand that if I, as a foster parent, want to adopt any of my foster cat(s)/kitten(s), I must go through the standard CAT process. I also understand that I cannot send any of my foster cat(s)/kitten(s) to an adoptive or *potential* adoptive home until the cat(s)/kitten(s) has been altered, the adoption process has been completed by a trained Adoption Counselor and the Foster Coordinator has been informed. Furthermore, I must have permission from the Foster Care Coordinator before sending my foster cat(s)/kitten(s) to another approved CAT foster home.
5. I understand that foster cat(s)/kitten(s) need to be taken to CAT's on-site Veterinary Hospital for any medical care (503-925-8903). CAT funds all medical care, and in the event of a medical emergency after hours or on the weekend approval is needed by the Foster Care Coordinator, Foster Mentor, CAT's on-site Vet or Vet-Tech, and **only** if the medical care is provided at a CAT-approved veterinary clinic or hospital. I understand that if I choose to take my foster cat(s)/kitten(s) to a non-approved veterinary clinic, or if I take my foster cat(s)/kitten(s) to an emergency veterinary hospital without prior approval, CAT will not reimburse me for the expenses incurred. These expenses, however, can be considered donations to CAT and are tax deductible. Furthermore any expenses incurred for supplies, such as cat litter, food, etc., are considered a donation and are also



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tax deductible. I also understand that such expenses cannot be applied toward adoption fees should I adopt a cat(s)/kitten(s).

- I understand that there is a possibility of health or injury risk when caring for cats. I also understand that pregnant women and people with suppressed immune systems need to be aware that a parasite sometimes found in feces could cause toxoplasmosis. Special care needs to be taken if such persons plan to come in contact with used litter pans. I will not hold Cat Adoption Team liable for any injury or illness, whether to the animals or humans in my home, which may result from my foster activities.
- I understand that if I need to leave town during my foster period that I will need to give a two-week notice when possible to the Foster Care Coordinator.

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
CAT Representative Present and signing	Date	
_____	_____	_____
Foster Care Coordinator	Date	
Name(s) of foster cat(s)/kitten(s) sent to foster on this date _____		
Baby bag # _____ Cage # _____		



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Foster Family Information Sheet

Thank you for volunteering as a foster family for the Cat Adoption Team (CAT). Please take a moment to answer the following questions, which will provide information that will help us place cats/kittens in appropriate foster homes.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

E-mail address _____ Cell phone _____

Best way to contact and best available hours _____

Are you currently fostering for another organization besides CAT? _____

Household Information

Number of adults in the household _____ Ages _____ Female _____ Male _____

Number of children in the household _____ Ages _____

Are there other cats in the household? _____ If yes, how many? _____

Are they up to date on all of their vaccines? _____

Are there dogs in the household? _____ If yes, how many? _____ Breed(s) _____

Are they up to date on all of their vaccines? _____

Please describe your household. For example, is it quiet; is there a lot of activity, etc.?



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General Fostering Information

Are you interested in fostering (check all that apply):

Long-term resident cats _____ Pregnant cats _____ Nursing cats/kittens _____

Cats with special needs _____ FIV+ or FELV+ cats _____ Orphaned kittens _____

Bottle-feeding orphaned kittens _____ Sick and/or injured cats _____

Do you have experience bottle-feeding kittens? _____

Are you interested in learning to bottle-feed? _____

Please list previous experience with those areas you checked: _____

Do you have experience socializing feral kittens? If so, briefly describe:

If fostering a cat and her kittens, or orphaned kittens, how long are you willing to do so?

Until kittens are 10 weeks old _____ As long as needed _____ Until they are adopted _____

Where will the cat(s) be housed? (We generally recommend an isolated space, such as a spare bedroom, den, laundry room, or bathroom - especially for pregnant or nursing cats.) _____

How many hours a day can you spend with the cat(s)? _____

Are you willing to (please check all that apply)

_____ Transport the cat(s) to our vet, located in Sherwood, as needed.

_____ Allow adoptive families to visit your home and meet the cat(s) for possible adoption.

_____ Take pictures and have those readily available to our web-site coordinator?

_____ Have a C.A.T. volunteer come to your home to take pictures of the cat(s)?

_____ Write a description about each cat?

_____ Give vaccines to cat(s) and/or kittens?

_____ Learn to administer vaccines?

Do you understand that in order to play an active role in the placement of the cat(s), you must work in collaboration with a qualified CAT adoption counselor to ensure that the new home meets our guidelines? _____



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CLASSIFIED ADS SHELTER SIGNUP LIBRARY STORE KIDS



www.petfinder.com

Petfinder is an online gallery of pets that are available for adoption. Users can search by location, age of pet, breed, etc. It's a handy tool for adopters and it is estimated that 1 out of 3 CAT visitors have already browsed Petfinder before visiting the shelter or outreach locations.

Kittens posted on Petfinder have the highest rate of pre-adopts simply because adopters are able to view them prior to their arrival at the shelter. Why is this important? If a kitten can be adopted directly from your home or on the day of their spay/neuter surgery, the time spent in close contact with other kittens is greatly diminished. Less contact equals less exposure to germs equals fewer URIs.

For adult fosters it is more critical as it is an easier way to communicate ongoing health issues and many people fall in love with a picture or story without the distraction of all the other cats surrounding them at the shelter.

How do you get your fosters posted on Petfinder? There are two options. If you have an *adult foster*, they may already be listed on Petfinder. As their advocate, please notify (insert name) of their status so she can make any necessary adjustments to their petfinder info. Her email is (insert email information).

If you have kittens, send pictures to (insert name) at (email address)
Group pictures, singles, or kitten with mom are all acceptable. Pictures are not posted until cats are 6 weeks old. Please indicate if you would like to receive email inquiries about the kittens, whether you will show them from your home, etc.

What kind of pictures? Digital only, jpg formats. Pictures should be less than 50kb which is pretty small. Try to crop just around the cat itself. You don't need posed shots but they do help. It's also great to show kitten with a resident dog or maybe being held by a child. Helps adopters immediately identify which animals as most compatible with their own families. We can post up to three pictures per cat/kitten.



FOSTER PARENTS

Finding adopters for your kittens

Are your little darlings ready to be adopted and you're not sure how to get them seen? Here's one way – our PetCo Outreach Program.

Contact Outreach coordinator:

Call (insert name and number) and arrange to have your litter seen at one of the following Petco's. It's that easy! You may stay if you like and talk to potential adopters about your litter, or leave and come back.

Please identify similar looking kittens by putting on their paper collars, and have a short bio ready. This will help the AC adopt out your kittens.

Location & times:

- Tualatin PetCo 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Tanasbourne PetCo 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Dates: Every Saturday for Tualatin and Tanasbourne

Requirements: Kittens must have their 1st set of shots on board for 10 days before going to an outreach location. If they are altered, they can be adopted onsite. If they are not yet altered, they can be pre-adopted and sent back home with you until their alter date.

PetSmarts: If the above locations aren't feasible for you, try contacting the individual coordinators for PetSmarts. (Tigard, Hillsboro, Clackamas, Wilsonville). Names and phone numbers are at the shelter. Available Saturday/Sunday from 12 – 4 p.m.

Petfinder: Take a digital picture and send to (insert name and email address)
72 dpi and 500x500 or 350x350

