

# Dog-saving Foster Care Guide



DEAR FOSTER FAMILY,

You are about to embark on a memorable live-saving adventure! Thank you for opening your home and heart to your foster dog.

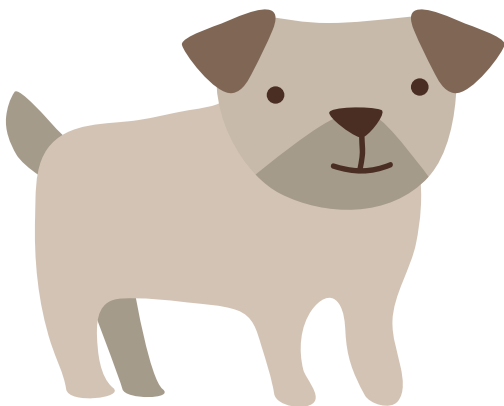
Fostering dogs is a rewarding process that saves thousands of lives in our community each year, and we could not do it without you! In this manual, you will find helpful tips to ensure success. Puppies usually require consistent love and attention that is difficult to provide in a shelter environment. These puppies are typically only placed in foster homes until they are big enough to undergo spay/neuter surgery. We encourage fosters to take more than one puppy at a time to help promote socialization and normal behavioral growth. When puppies are unable to have appropriate social interaction with other puppies, it can stunt proper socialization and lead to behavioral problems.

Multiple puppies are not only fun, they can also self entertain!

There are several recommendations to be the perfect foster for certain pets. If the requirements included in the following section do not work well with your current schedule, please let us know. We can help you find a foster situation that will work best for you!

Sincerely,

El Paso Animal Services





# Contact Information

## **FOSTER COORDINATOR**

**Valentin Garcia**

Office: (915) 212-8732

Cell: (915) 478-7527

EPASFoster@elpasotexas.gov

**FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY**

After hours: On call between 7 pm & 11 am

## **Adoption/Foster Counselor**

**Francine Bautista**

Office: (915) 212-8732

**FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY**

After hours: On call between 7 pm & 11 am

## **Rescue Coordinator**

**Kyla Young**

Office: (915) 212-8727

Cell: (915) 478-8876

**FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY**

After hours: On call between 7 pm & 11 am

## **Community Programs Manager**

**Esty Molina**

Office: (915) 212-8729

Cell: (915) 218-8176

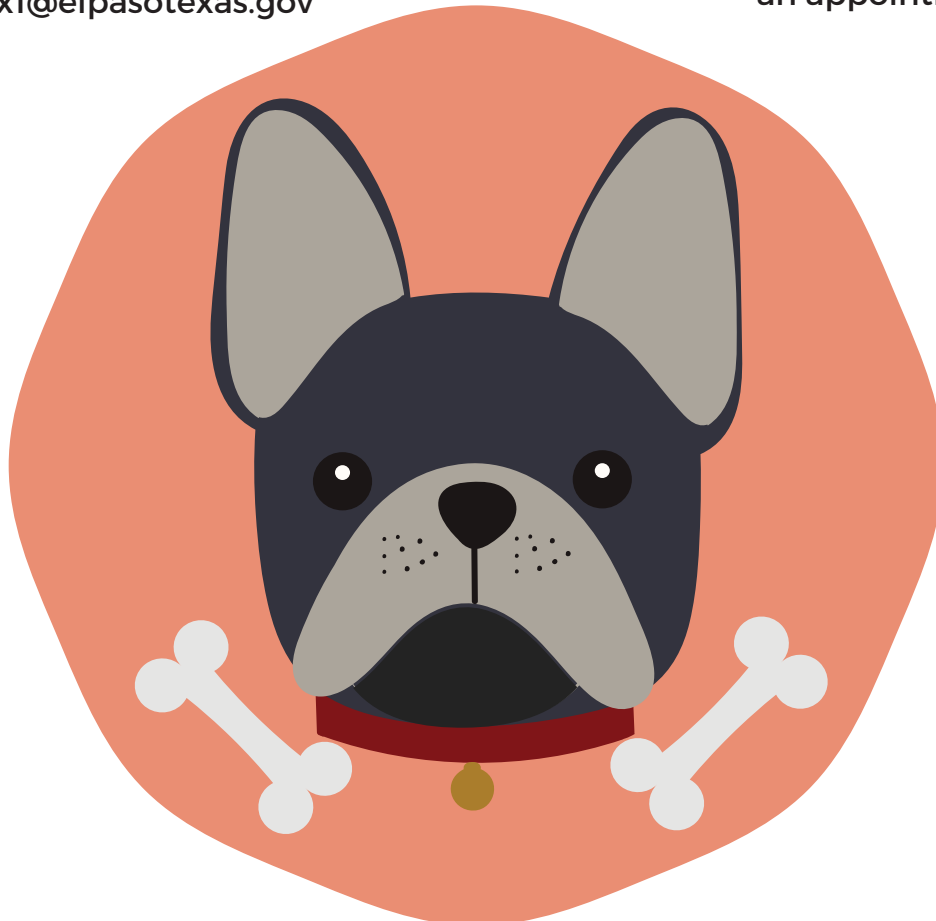
molinaex1@elpasotexas.gov

## **Vet Appointments:**

Monday- Sunday

**\*\*May Vary on Holidays or Special Events\*\***

Contact us to schedule  
an appointment.





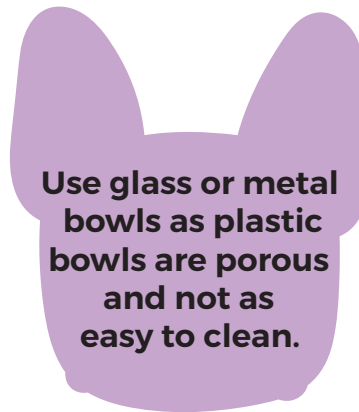
# Guide for Dog Foster Homes



## Preparing the Room

Before you bring home your dog(s), make sure that you have a suitable place for them to stay. A bathroom often works well. The puppy room should adhere to the following guidelines:

- A space where temperature can be controlled.
- The space has been disinfected by using a mild bleach solution (1 part bleach to 32 parts water).
- Separate from other household pets.
- Can withstand doggy messes: urine, feces, vomit, spilled water or food, etc.
- No breakable items.
- Electrical outlets and wires are blocked.
- No small items.
- Secured windows (closed or with a secure screen).
- Secured appliances (toilet lids closed).



## Dog Foster Time Commitments

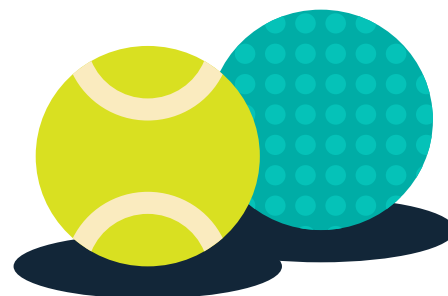
TYPE OF FOSTER	DURATION OF FOSTER	DAILY COMMITMENT
Neonate Puppies	6-8 weeks	8 hours
Mom with Puppies	2-8 weeks	3 hours
Weaned Puppies	1-3 weeks	3-6 hours
Sick / Injured Dogs	1 week-months	2-3 hours



# Get Set!

## Dogs

- We encourage your foster dog(s) be kept indoors in a crate when unattended or a separate room/office.
- Dogs should be on a leash at all times when outdoors unless in a private and secure fenced in area. Recommended fence height is six feet.
- Foster dog/puppies are not permitted to go to dog parks.
  - Dog parks can be extremely dangerous environments; there are no lifeguards or professionals at a dog park when conflicts arise.
  - Not every dog is safe.
  - While dogs are social animals, they are individuals and do not like every dog they meet.
  - Dogs have a variety of play styles and these play styles can be conflicting and instigate fights.



### Tips + Tails

**Household poisonous plants include: Lillies, Sago Palms, Corn Plant, Aloe Plant, and Asparagus Fern.**

**Supervise your foster dog when around children and other animals.**

## Puppies

- Indoors - kitchen or bathroom. Baby gate or corral provided upon request and availability.
- Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and should not be isolated.
- Outdoors - only if supervised by an adult. Puppies younger than 5 months should NEVER go to off-leash areas because they are not fully vaccinated.
- Dogs and puppies over 5 months should be on a leash at all times.
- Puppies under 5 months can be on leash in your backyard to learn what a leash is.
- Puppies should not be exposed to other dogs or places frequented by other dogs due to the risk of diseases such as parvovirus.

## Tips for Foster Parents

- 🦴 Check in regularly with your Foster Coordinator.
- 🦴 Ask for advice if your puppy/dog has stopped eating.
- 🦴 If your dog seems sick, check immediately for hydration. They should be drinking water, urinating, have elastic skin, and a moist mouth.
- 🦴 Wash your hands and change your shirt after handling sick animals to prevent the spread of illness.
- 🦴 Never let your dog run loose outside; guard against escapes.
- 🦴 Do not leave your foster unattended with any resident animals.
- 🦴 Feed your foster dog separately from other pets in your home.

# Setting Up Your Foster Pet For Success

## Bringing a Shelter Dog Home

Decompression: <http://bit.ly/334FKms>

Setting Up: <http://bit.ly/2Zoa1KT>

Dog Body Language: <http://bit.ly/2Ox5vsF>

## Introductions

Dog/Dog Introductions: <http://bit.ly/2yr1s69>

Dog/Cat Introductions: <http://bit.ly/334dcty>

Managing a Multi-Dog Home: <http://bit.ly/30ZbqrM>

## Training

Crate Training: <http://bit.ly/336oBcr>

Potty Training: <http://bit.ly/2YBNOlh>

Loose-Leash Training: <http://bit.ly/2YyFGI8>

Basic Commands/Tricks: <http://bit.ly/2K9oZOk>

## Behavior

Separation Anxiety: <http://bit.ly/2YvvOPr>

Resource Guarding: <http://bit.ly/2KcK0I6>

Barking: <http://bit.ly/2LQA4HF>

Destructive Chewing: <http://bit.ly/2KdjtKN>

Helping Fearful Dogs: <http://bit.ly/2GFTF97>

## Grooming

Nail Clipping: <http://bit.ly/2YcJWlw>

## Cleaning

Cleaning & Disinfecting Foster Homes: <http://bit.ly/2ZmgZA8>

**To find your Foster Guides,  
Foster Orientations & Trainings,  
Decompression Checklists and  
more, visit our website  
[ElPasoAnimalServices.org/  
fosterresources](http://ElPasoAnimalServices.org/fosterresources)**



## Allergies

Dogs, like people, can have allergic reactions to medication. Most medications are not given first at the vet office. If some sudden, adverse reaction happens after giving a new medication, such as wheezing or eyes being more inflamed, do not give any more medication and call your Foster Coordinator.

## Spay/Neuter

Spay and neuter surgeries are generally done at our shelter and your Foster Coordinator will advise as to when to return animal to shelter for procedure.

## Vaccination & Worming

Your dog has most likely been vaccinated for Distemper and Parvo.

Rabies vaccinations are given in limited circumstances. Contact your Foster Coordinator for more information.

If you're fostering a puppy, you need to return the pup to the shelter for boosters.

- 6 weeks: DHLPP
- 8 weeks: DHLPP
- 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 weeks: DHLPP-P
- Annual boosters recommended

Your foster dog might have had one dose of wormer upon arrival to the shelter. If you see worms in the dog's stool, return to the shelter for more wormer. You will be instructed on the correct dosage and frequency.



These tips can help keep your home free of infection:  
**[www.aspcapro.org/infection-control-foster-homes](http://www.aspcapro.org/infection-control-foster-homes)**



Learn about household toxins that cause seizures:  
**[www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-poison-control/most-common-causes-seizures-dogs](http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-poison-control/most-common-causes-seizures-dogs)**

Based on material generously shared by Seattle Animal Shelter  
**[ASPCapro.org/ambassadors](http://ASPCapro.org/ambassadors)**

# Behavior

## Housetraining

Be patient with your foster dog. Even housetrained adult dogs will make mistakes, especially if they've been at the shelter for a long time and have been eliminating in their kennel. If there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some foster dogs may "mark". This action should be redirected immediately, use a calm "Oops" then escort him outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) on the areas where he will not smell and mark that area again.

You can begin to housetrain a puppy at 8 weeks of age. Even if you bring home an adult dog that is housebroken, you will want to follow these guidelines until your foster dog adjusts to his new situation and to your schedule.



Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate, it could be the backyard, side yard, or an indoor spot such as a potty pad, litter system or one you have designed. Then, take them there every time with a spoken command (such as “do your business”). Take them out when they wake up, after they eat or drink, after a play session, or at least every 2 hours. Puppies should go out every 45 minutes until you learn their pattern.

Stand with them for 5 minutes. If they eliminate, reward them (with treats, praise, a favorite game and your own special happy dance). If they don't go in 5 minutes, take them back inside and try every 15 minutes until they go. Every time they go, make sure you reward them!

A puppy should never have access to the entire house and kept in a crate or x-pen. Puppies should only be taken out when they are able to be supervised at all times.

Supervise the puppy closely while you're inside. If they start to sniff the floor, or even squats to go, interrupt with a calm “Oops,” scoop them up quickly and take them to the approved spot and praise when they finish. If they eliminate in the house while you're not paying attention, don't correct them, it's not their fault. Clean it up and go back to your schedule. Use an odor neutralizer to get rid of the smell. Never put a dog's face in their mess or yell at him; they won't understand you, and you will only be teaching them fear to potty in front of you.

### **Tips + Tails**

#### **Bladder Control:**

- Take puppy outside every hour per month of age
- Every two hours until 16 weeks of age

#### **HELPFUL LINKS**

<https://www.dogstardaily.com/files/BEFORE%20You%20Get%20Your%20Puppy.pdf>

[https://www.dogstardaily.com/files/downloads/AFTER\\_You\\_Get\\_Your\\_Puppy.pdf](https://www.dogstardaily.com/files/downloads/AFTER_You_Get_Your_Puppy.pdf)

## **Attention and Playtime**

Gentle and calming human contact is important for dogs. Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies. Be sure to give your foster dog several minutes of playtime periodically throughout the day.

Do not allow children to behave with the foster dog in a manner you would not want the child to behave with a younger sibling. Teach children to leave a dog alone when they are eating, chewing and sleeping. Never allow a child to remove a toy or any other prized possession from a dog.

Do not play tug of war or wrestle with your foster. If you have a shy or fearful dog, do not throw a toy toward the dog, they may think you are throwing things at them and become more fearful. After you finish playing, put the toys away so that you are controlling playtime. When you are giving the dog a toy or treat, have them sit before giving it to them. That way they have to work to get the toy/treat, making it a reward.

## **Crate Training**

Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs. They calm them and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking and housetraining mistakes. Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old, plus one. For example, a 4 month old pup should not be crated for longer than 5 hours.

How long an adult dog can be crated will depend on many factors. For example, if your foster dog was left outside, he has never been required to hold it for any period of time. It will take time for this dog to learn to hold it, and you will need to start slowly. Older dogs and dogs with some medical conditions may only be able to successfully hold it for short periods of time. Rigorous exercise should be given before and after any long periods in the crate, and good chew toys should be in the crate at all times. You may want to crate your new foster dog for the first few nights in your bedroom, most of them feel more secure in their crate and it protects your house from accidents.

Crates should never be used as a means of punishment; they are not to be used for keeping puppies under 6 months out of mischief all day either. Crates should be thought of as dog playrooms, just like child playrooms with games and toys. It should be a place dogs like to be and feel safe and secure.

## **Behavior Issues**

Many of the behaviors that we find problematic, such as barking, whining, digging, chewing, scavenging and hunting other animals, are really just normal dog behaviors and can be explained as “dogs being dogs.” The easiest way to coexist with our canine companions is to provide more appropriate outlets for these behaviors.

If your foster dog is exhibiting any behavioral issues, ask yourself the questions below:

- Is my foster dog getting enough exercise?
- Are they being left alone for long periods of time?
- Are they getting enough attention and playtime?
- Am I reinforcing bad behavior? (Ex. verbally scolding when they want attention, engaging with the dog when they use bad manners for attention).
- Does my foster dog have a safe place that is dog-proofed with appropriate chew toys, or am I leaving my own belongings within reach?
- Am I providing specific outlets based on his natural instincts and drives?

We don't expect foster parents to be miracle workers. If your foster dog requires more attention, exercise or training than you can provide, talk to your Coordinator; another foster home might be the best for both you and the dog. Regardless of the issue, we don't condone punishment, which will not address the cause of the behavior and in fact it may worsen behavior that's motivated by fear or anxiety.

Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs who aren't currently fearful. People often believe their dog makes the connection to discipline because they run and hide or “look guilty.” But dogs display submissive postures like cowering, running away or hiding when they feel threatened by an angry tone of voice, body posture, or facial expression. Your dog doesn't know what he's done wrong; he only knows that you're upset. Punishment after the fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may provoke other undesirable behaviors, too.

# Puppy Development

In the first two weeks of life, puppies are helpless and vulnerable. They are still developing basic reflexes, their hearing and vision are still not fully developed, and they are unable to properly control their body temperatures. They should therefore be confined to a “nursery” area. Puppies should not be allowed to mingle with your own pets.

During the first 1-3 weeks of life puppies do not urinate or defecate on their own and require stimulation for elimination. Gently rub a warm cloth or cotton pad on the puppy’s genital area and anus. This should be done before or after feeding.

Keeping the puppies clean from food and feces is vital for their health. If you notice your puppy has food, urine or feces on him or her, gently wipe the puppy down with a warm damp cloth or baby wipe. Be sure to dry the puppy well afterwards so that they do not become chilled.

**Bathe your foster with Dawn® Dish Detergent Original Formula. Be sure to dry your puppy after their bath using a towel or blow dryer.**

**Puppies are chewers! Be sure to remove all electrical cords and small objects.**



## Contact

Contact Meryem  
Office: (915) 212-8718  
Cell: (915) 218-1108  
[martinezMH@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:martinezMH@elpasotexas.gov)  
for behavioral issues.



# Minimum Feeding Requirements for Puppies— Based on Weight

5g of food per 100g of body weight

Weight Before Feeding	Weight After Feeding	Amount of Food Consumed
60	63	3
80	84	4
100	105	5
120	126	6
140	147	7
160	168	8
180	189	9
200	210	10
220	231	11
240	252	12
260	273	13
280	294	14
300	315	15
320	336	16
340	357	17
360	378	18
380	399	19
400	420	20
420	441	21
440	462	22
460	483	23
480	504	24
500	525	25
520	546	26
540	567	27
560	588	28
580	609	29
600	630	30
620	651	31
640	672	32
660	693	33
680	714	34
700	735	35

Feed bottle babies as much as they will take on their own from the bottle; syringe feed when they do not eat enough on their own.

When bottle babies have been syringe fed previously, try to bottle feed them first, the syringe feed if they won't eat from the bottle.

When gruel (mixture of wet food and formula) puppies have been syringe fed previously, see if they will eat on their own from a bowl/tray/bin. If not, then syringe feed them. Be sure to chart their weights accurately.

If gruel puppies lose weight from previous feedings, but have been eating on their own, syringe feed the required amount. Be sure to accurately record beginning and ending weights.

If the puppy eats on its own from a bowl/bin/tray, be sure to record the beginning and ending weights accurately.

**WEIGH ~ FEED ~ WEIGH**

# Neonatal Puppy Feeding Log

Example of Neonatal Puppy Feeding & Weight Log

NAME/ID	PUPPY 1	PUPPY 2	PUPPY 3	PUPPY 4	PUPPY 5	PUPPY 6
Date						
Weight						
Attitude						
FEEDING 1						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						
FEEDING 2						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						
FEEDING 3						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						
FEEDING 4						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						
FEEDING 5						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						
FEEDING 6						
Milk volume						
Stool/urine						

NOTES:

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# Puppy Expectations & Care by Age

WEEKS	FEEDING	DEVELOPMENT
<b>0-1</b>	Bottle feed 5g per every 100 grams of body weight. Refer to the Minimum Feeding Requirements table for more information. If there is a Mom dog, make sure that all kittens are nursing. Puppies can nurse from mom for up to 45 minutes at a time. A lot of crying or activity could indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply.	At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Puppies should be kept warm as chilling is the number-one danger to newborn puppies.
<b>1-2</b>	Bottle feed 5g per every 100 grams of body weight. Refer to the Minimum Feeding Requirements table for more information. Puppies will need to be fed every 2-4 hours.	Healthy puppies should be round and warm. When you pick up a puppy, they should wiggle energetically and healthy puppies seldomly cry. The puppy's ear canal should open between 5-8 days. Eyes will open between 8-14 days.
<b>2-3</b>	Bottle feed 5g per every 100 grams of body weight. Refer to the Minimum Feeding Requirements table for more information. Puppies will need to be fed every 2-4 hours.	Puppies begin to crawl around and they should almost be standing. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails and paws before their teeth come in. They should be teething at this point.
<b>3-4</b>	Bottle feed 5g per every 100 grams of body weight. Refer to the Minimum Feeding Requirements table for more information. Puppies will need to be fed every 3-4 hours. Puppies may start lapping from a bowl.	Puppies will be able to see well and their eyes will look and function like adult dog eyes. Puppies will start cleaning themselves. If they have mom, she will continue to do the most serious cleaning. Puppies are now in their socialization stage. If they have siblings, allow them to play at will.
<b>4-5</b>	Puppies will begin to eat gruel—refer to the Weaning section for more information. Feed gruel 4 times a day.	Begin housebreaking t 4 weeks. This can be done on a puppy pad or in a secured fenced in area of your home. After each feeding, place them on the pad/outside for them to use the bathroom. They might not remember to do this every time.
<b>5-6</b>	Feed gruel 4 times a day. Introduce dry food and water. Thicken the gruel gradually by reducing the amount of water mixed with it. For reluctant eaters, try mixing puppy formula into the gruel. If mom is present, continue weaning.	Puppies can start to wander around the room, under supervision. Be sure to have plenty of toys around so they may explore and become familiar with a variety of surfaces and textures. (See <b>Socialization</b> section.)
<b>6-7</b>	Puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed at least 3 times a day. Puppies may not eat much at a single sitting, they usually like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.	Puppies are able to wash themselves and play games with each other/you. Some puppies may be food possessive. Leave out multiple bowls if fostering multiple puppies. Do not use adverse or punishing correction techniques. Be sure to take the puppies to their pads outside after feeding, during play sessions and after naps.
<b>7-8</b>	Leave a bowl of dry food 3-4 times a day and water for puppies to use at will. DO NOT feed puppies table scraps.	Continue playing and socializing with the puppies. You can also begin teaching them basic commands such as sit, stay, roll over, laydown.
<b>8+</b>	Leave a bowl of dry food 3-4 times a day and water for puppies to use at will. DO NOT feed puppies table scraps.	When they reach this point, they are ready for adoption and for spay/neuter. Fill out a pet bio and submit pictures and videos to help them get adopted. Refer to <b>Help Them Find A Home</b> for more info.

# Neonate Feeding

## Type of Food

Never give a neonate puppy anything other than their specified formula! (No cow's milk!)

Puppies who are less than three to four weeks old are fed liquid or powder formula.

The powder formula must be mixed for feedings. It is important to closely follow mixing directions, one part powder into two parts warm water, as it can cause diarrhea or constipation if not done correctly. When mixing do not use a blender. Any reconstituted powder formula can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. After that point, it must be discarded.

## Feeding Etiquette

- Only use clean nipples and bottles!
- Feed puppies one at a time. Place them on a counter top and allow them to feed with four paws on the counter and with a level head. This simulates how they would nurse from a mom.
- Do not feed a puppy while they are on their back. This can cause formula to go down the wrong way and end up in the lungs.
- Gently open the pup's mouth with your finger and place the nipple on the tongue.
- Stroking puppy can help them to eat.
- Pull lightly on the bottle. This promotes strong sucking.
- Tilt the bottle up slightly. This prevents the puppy from inhaling too much air.
- Do not squeeze the bottle to force formula into the puppy's mouth. This can cause formula to move into the lungs.
- After feeding, burp your puppy by gently massaging their back.
- After feeding stimulate the pup to urinate and/or defecate. Stimulate them with a warm cloth if necessary.

### Tips + Tails

To warm nursing bottles, fill a coffee mug half way with hot water and place the bottle of formula into mug. After a minute or two, test formula by sprinkling a few drops on the back of your hand. Formula should be warm to the touch, but not hot.

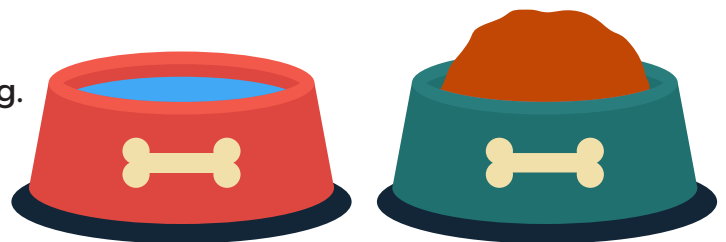
## Weaning

Weaning can occur at 4 to 5 weeks and should be conducted gradually. Create a gruel by mixing warmed canned food with water. Introduce them to solid food by offering warmed can food, mixed with a small amount of water into gruel, in a shallow dish. Begin by placing puppy to the side of the plate, they should start to eat, it may take a few tries for puppies to understand. If they are not interested, wait a few hours and then try again. After they have accepted the gruel, gradually thicken it by adding less water. Begin to also offer dry food on a free feeding basis.

If the mother is present she will usually begin weaning the puppies by discouraging them from nursing; however, some dogs will allow the nursing until the puppies are old enough for spay/neuter surgery. Some nursing activity is the canine equivalent of thumb-sucking, that is, for the comfort only. Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure the puppies are eating food and gaining weight.

## Amount of Food

Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding. Feed puppies until they are full but not bloated.



## Cleaning Equipment

Keeping the puppies' nursing bottles and supplies clean is vital as this will prevent diarrhea, vomiting, or infection. Cleaning the bottles and nursing nipples is quite easy. Using hot, soapy water, clean the bottle with a bottle brush. If you do not have a bottle brush, you may wash the bottle and nursing nipple in the dishwasher. You may place them in the silverware rack or in a dishwasher basket.

## Additional Feeding Considerations

The digestive system of puppies is fragile. Do not offer puppies treats. Only feed them the food provided by the Foster Coordinator.

If puppies are fighting over food, start to feed them separately. Contact the Foster Coordinator for support.

Never take food away from a puppy that is growling. Simply remove the other puppies and wait for the food bowl to be unattended.



# Fostering Moms

In some cases, moms are fostered together with her litter. There are a few things to keep in mind for this type of foster situation. Moms require a calm setting with privacy and minimal activity. Stress can cause moms to stop taking care of their puppies.

## Bringing Mom Home

You will need a separate space for a mom with her litter. When you first bring them home, leave them alone in their new space. Mom will need some time, up to a few days, to adjust to her new space. Be sure to offer mom fresh food, water and a clean litter area.

## Socialization

Even adult dogs need socialization; however, proceed slowly with any adult dog that you do not know. Create situations for socialization but let her come to you. Stop the session if you notice any negative signs, such as swishing tail, ears laid back, head jerk towards you, tensing up, moving away, or growling. It is always best to move slowly and use caution when reaching into her area.

## Mom and Her Puppies

For the first few weeks, mom will do everything necessary to take care of her puppies. Puppies start nursing very soon after birth. Mom will also groom her puppies. Dogs should be left alone for the first two weeks except to feed and to go outside for potty breaks.

## Possible Issues with Mom Dogs

**Maternal neglect** – In some cases, about 8% of the time, puppies die from poor maternal care. There are a few causes of this. Some dogs lack maternal instincts and, in other cases, it is nature's way of handling sick or weak puppies. Environmental stress is an important factor, which is why it is important to create a calm environment for mom and the litter. As the foster parent, watch for signs of maternal neglect. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice the mom avoids feeding and grooming her puppies and ignores their cries.

**Maternal Aggression** – As mom protects her puppies, it is common for her to be aggressive towards humans or other animals. Do not try to introduce your household pets to your foster mom as this adds too much stress to the environment. If aggression becomes severe, call the Foster Coordinator.

### Tips + Tails

Be sure to keep mom & puppies separated from other pets in home. Mother dogs need a quiet area to raise their puppies.

# Fading Puppy Syndrome

Fading Puppy Syndrome is a life threatening emergency in which a Puppy, sometimes ones that were previously sick, “crashes” and begins to fade away. If not dealt with by a foster parent immediately, it can result in death. If you are fostering puppies 12 weeks or younger, it is a very good idea to familiarize yourself with this handout so you know what to do if it happens.

## SYMPTOMS

- Extreme Lethargy - not getting up, unable to stand, not responding when pet
  - Gasping for breath
  - Whimpering/Crying out

When this happens, it is vital that you take these immediate steps!  
FAS is caused by 2 things: Hypothermia (being too cold) and Hypoglycemia (not enough blood sugar). You must combat both of these things or the Puppy will die.

## TREATMENT

### Step 1- Get them warm:

Create the “burrito” towel. Immediately wrap the Puppy up in a towel like a burrito leaving their face exposed only. Their whole body, tail, ears, and paws should be in the towel, only nose and mouth exposed. Do not take the Puppy out of the towel to adjust them, check on them, etc. - this is very important! Every time you take them out you will make them cold again, even if it is only for a second.

You must apply an extra source of heat (listed below). The Puppy’s body can’t warm itself up with just a towel alone, you have to apply extra heat. Also, your body temperature is much lower than what a Puppy should be, so trying to warm them up with your body heat won’t work either.

If you have a heating pad - Then wrap a heating pad \*turned onto low\* around the towel - duct tape it or secure it around the towel so it stays wrapped around them. Don’t let the heating pad touch them directly, it can cause burns, make sure the ‘burrito’ towel is between their skin and the heating pad.

If you don’t have a heating pad - you can either

a) keep your dryer running full of towels. Grab a new hot one every 5 minutes and wrap this new hot towel around the “burrito” towel. After 5 minutes, trade that towel out for a new hot one. Don’t remove the “burrito” towel.

b) Fill 2 socks full of rice, tie the ends of them so it doesn’t spill out. Throw them in the microwave for 3 minutes. Keep them next to the Puppy on the outside of the burrito towel. Every 30 minutes reheat one sock and leave the other next to the Puppy so she doesn’t cool off.

# Fading Puppy Syndrome

## **Step 2- Get their blood sugar up:**

Once you get the heat on them, get a bowl or Tupperware and a few tablespoons sugar in some hot water. Stir it up so you get a sugar water solution- you don't want it super syrupy like pancake syrup, but you do want it to be as strong as possible while still pretty runny. Using a syringe or your finger give 3 drops every 3 minutes into the mouth. If they aren't swallowing, try not to get it down the throat, try to get it on the tongue or gums. Set an egg timer or use the stop watch on your cell phone to make sure you are doing it at least every 3 minutes. Every 5 minutes or 10 minutes will not work, it must be every 3 minutes.

## **Step 3 - Call the Foster Coordinator:**

Call the foster coordinator or emergency person on duty. Don't leave your Puppy to make this call or forget to do your sugar every 3 minutes. They won't have any extra advice for you that isn't in this handout, but they will need to be made aware of what is going on. Starting on an antibiotic is usually necessary as even subtle changes in gut bacteria can cause FPS

## **PROGNOSIS**

We generally have very good success with these puppies if you follow the above steps. We DO NOT recommend you rush them to the vet for many reasons:

You have the motivation to sit right there with them and make them your top priority. A vet clinic has many patients it is helping and can't give your Puppy the 100% undivided attention you can give them.

Your Puppy will continue to be cold/hypoglycemic on the way to the vet, in the waiting room, in the hospital while they try to determine what is wrong, etc. Most puppies won't last long enough for them to start the treatments there.

Keep in mind, it can sometimes take hours for them to come out of it and start acting normally again. Once they do come out of it, make sure you contact the foster coordinator to discuss what could have possibly caused them to fade in the first place and make sure we have the Puppy on all the right medical treatments for any illnesses they have that may have caused it. An exam may be necessary.

Also keep in mind, even with all the love and attention and perfect treatment of this condition, some of them still won't make it. Cats get pregnant very easily, and have A LOT of Puppies, specifically because they are so fragile and die so easily. Try not to blame yourself during this difficult time and focus on all the Puppies you have personally saved by opening your home to foster Puppies. Remember, if it wasn't for you, every Puppy you've ever fostered would have been killed at the shelter and never given a chance at life.

## **YOUR FOSTER COORDINATOR:**

Valentin Garcia | (915) 478-7527

For other emergency on-call team members, check the Contact page of this guide.

# Maintaining Dog Health



**Normal Stool**



**Soft Stool**



**Diarrhea**

## Diarrhea

There are three types of stool: normal, soft and diarrhea. Normal stool is firm and has a definite shape. Soft stool is not firm but still has some shape. Diarrhea is liquid, with or without color to it. Diarrhea is common and can be caused by parasites, viruses, bacteria, food changes, stress, overfeeding and other issues.

Diarrhea must be monitored as it can quickly lead to dehydration. If the puppy is active, mild diarrhea that occurs for 24 hours is not a concern. Feed the dog less at a time but more often. If the diarrhea is severe, lasts more than 3-4 feedings or contains blood/ parasites, call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

## Parasites

Parasites are commonly found in the stool of puppies. Tapeworms may look like grains of rice. Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be seen in stool or vomit. If you notice worms, call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

## Vomiting

Vomiting is not serious unless it happens continuously or accompanied with diarrhea. It can lead to dehydration. If vomiting occurs 2-3 times in a row, call the Foster Coordinator right away.

## Eye Discharge

It is normal for dogs to have little pieces of crust in their eyes after waking up. If you see continuous yellow or green discharge, swollen or closed eyes call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck. You can use a warm, damp towel to wipe the affected eye(s).



## Ear Mites

Ear mites are parasites that live in the ear canal. You may notice a bald spot behind ears due to continuous scratching. They may also violently shake their head. The ears may smell bad and you may see brown discharge that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are contagious to other dogs and need to be treated. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice any of these symptoms.



**Ear Mites**

## Fleas

Dogs that have fleas will scratch themselves often. Topical and oral flea prevention are given to dogs over 4 weeks of age. Flea prevention for puppies under 4 weeks includes daily brushing with the flea comb and daily bedding changes. If you still notice signs of fleas, you can wash the puppy in a small amount of Dawn® dish soap followed by using a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. Be sure to thoroughly dry them following a bath. Baths should not be given more than once every 1-2 weeks. If you still notice signs of fleas, call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.



**Ring Worm**

## Ringworm

Ringworm is a contagious fungus that can spread to other animals and humans. A sign of ringworm is thinning hair or patches of hair loss. Ringworm is difficult to remove from your house. To help with prevention and to prevent spreading, maintain cleaning protocols and a good hand washing routine. Call the Foster Coordinator if you notice any hair loss.



**Mange**

## Mange

Mange is caused by parasites that infect the skin of dogs. Some forms of mange are contagious to other animals and humans. The symptoms include itching, hair loss and sores. Mange needs to be treated. If you notice these symptoms, call the Foster Coordinator for treatment.



## Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URI)

URIs are common and are caused by contagious viruses and bacteria. Signs to look for:

- Sneezing and discharge from eyes/nose
- Congested breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy (a lack of energy)
- Dehydration

If you notice any of these signs, please contact the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

## Parvovirus

Parvovirus is a deadly and contagious virus that attacks a dog's gastrointestinal tract. Once parvovirus is present in an environment it is difficult to remove. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated feces.

Signs to look for:

- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Fever
- Low body temperature
- Vomiting
- Severe diarrhea with or without blood



Learn more about Parvovirus:  
[www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-disease-management/canine-parvovirus-timeline](http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-disease-management/canine-parvovirus-timeline)

If you notice any of these signs, immediately contact the Foster Coordinator to schedule a recheck.

## Fading Puppies

Occasionally, a puppy that appeared healthy will suddenly stop thriving. They will stop growing, socializing and crawling. They will begin to lose weight and may cry continuously. When this happens, they fade quickly and, even with medical intervention, may not survive 48 hours.

Refer to the **Fading Puppy Syndrome** section for next steps if this happens.

## Distemper

Distemper is highly contagious and fatal disease that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated saliva, blood, or urine.

Signs to look for:

- Severe Upper Respiratory Infection (URI) or Pneumonia
- Lethargy
- Neurological signs such as seizure activity, convulsions, and partial or complete paralysis.



A humidifier in the dog's room will help with congestion.

# Veterinary Care

## Routine Veterinary Care

Veterinary Care for foster animals is provided by the El Paso Animal Shelter during normal business hours. The Foster Coordinator will work directly with the shelter veterinarians to manage the health and well-being of each foster pet or litter. After hours, the foster coordinator will take calls when emergencies arise. In the event of an emergency, the Foster Coordinator will contact the veterinarian on-call as to how to manage each particular case and, should after-hours treatment be needed, the Foster Coordinator will instruct the foster parent or family on the appropriate steps to take.

Animal Services has a policy that we will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by the Animal Services veterinary staff.



## Scheduling Rechecks



Foster animal(s) are required to return to the shelter every two weeks for vaccinations, deworming and general exams. All rechecks require an appointment made at the time of pick up or by calling (915) 212-8705.

Recheck times are as follows:  
Seven days a week, 1pm-5pm.

If for any reason you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment please contact the Foster Coordinator to reschedule.

## Vaccines



Puppies receive vaccinations every two weeks from the time they are 4 weeks of age until they are 16 weeks or unless otherwise directed by our veterinarians.

Dogs and Puppies receive the DHPP Vaccine (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza). Animals 12 weeks and older receive a Rabies vaccine.

# Help Them Find a Home!

**You know your foster pet(s) best! Help them find a forever home without them having to come back to the shelter.**

Now that you know a little more about your foster pet, please fill out this quick questionnaire about them:

**<http://bit.ly/EPASFosterBio>**



**Learn how to market  
your foster pets**

<http://bit.ly/2SPvOZm>

**Toolkits to promote  
your foster pets**

<https://heartsspeak.org/edu/>

**Email photos and videos of your foster pet(s) to**

**[EPASContent@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:EPASContent@elpasotexas.gov)**

# The Finishing Line

## Spay/Neuter Surgery

During a scheduled visit, the Foster Coordinator or recheck staff may decide to accept the pet or litter back for adoption. If this is the case, surgery may be scheduled for a later day. If scheduled for a later day, you will continue foster care and bring the pet in on the morning of the scheduled surgery. Veterinarians use the following guidelines to determine when the foster animal is ready to be returned for surgery:

- Are the dogs old enough or did they gain enough weight for surgery?
- Are they successfully weaned from their mother?
- Have they been successfully socialized?
- Is your foster healthy and recovered fully from the illness or injury?
- Is there room on the adoption floor?

## The Day of Surgery

- Adult dogs – no breakfast but may have water
- Puppies – Feed a small breakfast (1-2 tablespoons of canned food) and offer water
- All pets should receive fresh water at all times, even the morning of surgery.

## Ready for Adoption!

### How do pets in foster care get adopted?

All foster parents are encouraged to promote the adoption of their foster pet to friends, family, and other potential adopters. We also encourage you to advertise your foster around the community to try to find someone to adopt them. We will even invite you out to our off-site adoption events.

This program allows us to have more space available for new animals entering the shelter. Additionally, animals adopted out of foster homes are less likely to be returned, and the animal is able to live in a home environment and never has to come back to the shelter!

Please feel free to utilize social media sources to promote the adoption of your foster. Examples would be to make a Facebook page for your foster and to cross-post your foster's story using email and social media.



### Photo Taking Tips

- 🦷 Know your pet! Get on their level
- 🦷 Have fun and be creative!
- 🦷 Be patient. Take a breaks.
- 🦷 Use the right lighting and setting

## Can't be an Adoption Ambassador?

If unable to secure an adopter outside of Animal Services, the foster parent will bring their pet in for rechecks as scheduled.

At each visit, the Foster Coordinator and veterinarian will evaluate the pet or litter's progress and, when fully treated or recovered, will accept the pet or litter back for surgery and adoption.

When your foster is transferred back to the shelter for adoption, we gladly welcome any information, written stories, pictures whether photographs or children's drawings that would describe your foster pet to a potential adopter.

Should you need to discontinue foster care for your foster pet prior to their full recovery, call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a time to bring the foster pet back to the shelter. The foster team at Animal Services will work hard to secure a new foster family for any foster returned.

## Can foster parents adopt their foster animal?

You bet! Foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster pet. Adoption fees will apply.





# Dog Health Cheat Sheet

## NON-EMERGENCIES

Monitor first.

If worsens, call the **Foster Coordinator**:

**Valentin Garcia**

Office: (915) 212-8732

Cell: (915) 478-7527

Fax: (915) 212-0324

EPASFoster@elpasotexas.gov

- Runny discharge from the eyes or nose
- Lack of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Diarrhea lasting more than 3 or 4 feedings
- Vomiting
- Weightloss
- Coughing and sneezing
- Lack of bowel movement for more than 24-36 hours or straining to urinate/defecate
- Swollen eyes or eyes held closed

## EMERGENCIES

Require Immediate Veterinary Attention

Business Hours: come straight to shelter

### After Hours:

#### Rescue Coordinator

**Kyla Young**

Office: (915) 212-8727

Cell: (915) 478-8876

EMERGENCIES: On-Call

#### Foster Coordinator

**Valentin Garcia**

Office: (915) 212-8732

Cell: (915) 478-7527

On-Call: 7 pm to 11 am

#### Adoptions/Foster Counselor

**Francine Bautista**

Office: (915) 212-8732

On Call: 7 pm to 11 am

- Continuous diarrhea longer than 24-36 hours
- Continuous vomiting longer than 12 hours
- Loss of appetite
- Bleeding of any kind (from nose or in urine/stool)
- Any trauma (hit by a car, dropped, limping, unconscious, etc)
- Difficulty breathing
- A dog that does not respond or has not eaten for more than a day
- Lethargy with or without fever

## Emergency Care

If you have questions about the health of your foster animal or if an emergency situation should arise **during regular hours of operation, please call (915) 212-8732**. If you do not speak to the Foster Coordinators, please come directly to the shelter. Our regular hours are 1pm-5pm, seven days a week. If your foster animal has an emergency that occurs **outside of the normal hours of operation, please call the Emergency After-hours phone number at (915) 218-8176**. The Foster Coordinator will contact the veterinarian on-call or the Director of Animal Services for a treatment plan. Should after-hours treatment be needed, the Foster Coordinator will instruct the foster family on the appropriate steps to take. **Animal Services must approve any and all treatments for foster pets.**



**If you have questions about Fostering,  
join our Foster Facebook Group!**

Search "Animal Services Foster Partners"



**<http://bit.ly/EPASFosterGroup>**





**Thank you for  
being a part of our  
Foster Family!**