



Animal Shelter and Animal Control

325 Billy Sunday Road • Ames, IA 50010 • 515-239-5530
AmesAnimalShelter@cityofames.org • www.AmesAnimalShelter.org

Fostering Needs

Animals need to be fostered for a wide variety of reasons. The following are the most common reasons animals need fostered.

(Again, while this list can apply to all species, the majority of these situations will be for cats)

Moms with Babies/Pregnant Moms

Timeframe to Foster: 8+ weeks old

Babies stay in their foster home until they are at least 8 weeks old, and 2+lbs. Moms generally return for adoption once babies are weaned between 4-6 weeks old.

Daily Care Needed: Moms and babies are typically easy because mom does the work! Your job is to give her a safe space to raise her babies, and to interact with the kittens daily to socialized with people. You should plan to spend 2-3 hours per day caring for them.

Orphans 0+ Weeks Old

Time Frame to Foster: 8+ weeks

Babies stay in their foster home until they are at least 8 weeks old and 2+lbs.

Daily Care Needed: Orphaned babies are the most challenging foster, but absolutely the most rewarding. It is typically a GREAT foster option for those who are home all day and looking for a project. Babies less than 4 weeks old are bottle fed every 2-3 hours during the day and every 4-5 hours overnight. They must be stimulated to urinate and defecate as they don't mama to do it for them. You should plan to spend 5-6 hours a day caring for them. This commitment does decrease after they are 4 weeks old and eating on their own.

Gruel Babies 4+ Weeks Old

Foster Time Frame: 4+ weeks

Babies stay in their foster home until they are at least 8 weeks old, and 2+lbs.

Daily Care Needed: These are babies who are working on weaning off milk to a normal kitten diet. They can be alone for 4-5 hours at a time. They use the litter box on their own but may still be messy when they're eating or using the box. They're just learning how to be independent cats!

Weaned Babies 6+ Weeks Old

Foster Time Frame: 2+ weeks

Babies stay in their foster home until they are at least 8 weeks old, and 2+lbs.

Daily Care Needed: These guys are eating normal kitten canned food and dry kibble and are just finishing up growing until they're big enough for adoption. The most important thing for these guys is to socialize with them constantly, getting them used to new experiences all the time. The more socialized a kitten is, the more adoptable they are! You should plan to spend at least 2-3 hours per day caring for them.



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FelV Positive Cats

Foster Time Frame: Ongoing until adoption date

Daily Care Needed: FeLV positive cats require no special daily care compared to most adult cats. The most important reason for them to be in a foster home is because they are immunocompromised. FeLV positive cats can share the virus with other cats through mutual grooming or sharing bowls, so they should only go to a foster home with other FeLV positive cats. The virus cannot spread to other species.

Senior Animals

Timeframe to Foster: Ongoing until adoption date

Daily Care Needed: Senior animals have a hard time adjusting to the shelter. Many have lived in the same home their entire lives. Getting them into a foster home while they wait to find a home is much kinder to them than having them live in a cage.

Ringworm Positive Animals

Foster Time Frame: Ongoing until ringworm has resolved. This typically takes 4-8 weeks.

Daily Care Needed: Ringworm is a fungus that causes fur loss and itchy lesions in animals. It can be transmitted to humans or other animals, especially those who are immunocompromised. Foster families will keep them in a bathroom that is easy to clean. The animal needs daily medications. You should plan to spend 2-3 hours daily caring for them.

Socialization

Foster Time Frame: 2+ Weeks

Animals in foster homes for socialization will typically only stay for 2 weeks in each foster home, unless another foster home is unavailable for a short period of time. By moving them every 2 weeks, we increase the possibility of successfully socializing them with humans

Daily Care Needed: The most critical task a foster parent has when caring for an under socialized animal is to build a positive association with humans. These are animals who have experienced some sort of trauma or were not raised in a home as a pet. You should plan to spend at least 2-3 days with your foster animal when you are socializing with them and add on more and more time as much as you are able and they tolerate.

Babysitter

Foster Time Frame: 1-2 Weeks

Babysitters give other foster families a break if they are planning to be out of time, need a reprieve from their care duties, or otherwise need a small break.

Daily Care Needed: Babysitters provide a short relief for other foster parents who take their fosters back within a relatively short time frame. We typically say if a foster parent cannot reclaim their fosters within two weeks, the fosters will be permanently transferred to another foster parent.