

# PUPPY FOSTER CARE GUIDELINES

## FEEDING

- We recommend feeding your foster puppy four times a day.
- We feed our puppies dry food with several tablespoons of wet food mixed together, unless otherwise instructed.
- While in our care, puppies are fed appropriate food for their age, size and health.
- Follow the food chart on the food bag when determining the appropriate quantity of food to provide (pets on special diet may have other instructions from our veterinary services team).

## CLEANING

- If your foster puppy becomes dirty, you are welcome to bathe him or her.
- Wash him or her with warm water and puppy formula shampoo.
- Make sure to dry the puppy completely, as puppies become cold quite easily.
- Some dogs need to trust their handlers before jumping in the tub, so if your foster puppy freezes, gives you a “whale eye,” growls at any time or displays other behavior that makes you uncomfortable, please stop what you are doing and give the puppy a break from the situation.
- You may spot clean your foster puppy with a warm washcloth or contact the foster care coordinator if the puppy doesn’t want a bath but requires more thorough washing.
- **Do not wash puppies in flea shampoo. If you observe fleas on your puppy, please contact the foster care coordinator.**

## PLAY

- Foster pets should be kept separate from your own animals, unless we provide permission.
- Most puppies in foster care have not received a full series of vaccination boosters due to their young ages. **If your foster puppy is not fully vaccinated, do not let him or her meet any other dogs.** This is for the safety and health of the puppy and your own animals.
- If your own animal has already met your foster pet, and you have permission to have them interact, then supervised play time is welcome.
- There should be no unsupervised alone time between foster pets and owned animals.
- Please make sure the play area is set up in a way that you can easily separate the animals in case they have a disagreement.

## HOUSING

- Foster puppies should be limited to only a few rooms of your house. They can be free in these rooms while supervised if you don’t have other pets.
- When unsupervised or overnight or if your own dogs are in the same space and the puppy cannot interact with them, then please keep your foster puppy in a size-appropriate crate (which we are happy to provide).
- A kitchen, bathroom, spare room, laundry room, or climate-controlled garage can be used to keep the crate in overnight.
- Keep your foster pet in a room that can be easily cleaned, sanitized and/or disinfected after the foster period is over, in case of any illness or parasites.
- Clean and comfortable bedding should be kept where the puppy is sleeping.
- Inappropriate housing includes: outside kennel runs, outdoor dog house, shed, non-climate controlled garage, a screened-in porch, or a non-child proofed room.

## **SIGNS OF ILLNESS**

- Loss of appetite
- Lack of energy
- Blood in stool
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Sneezing
- Nasal or eye discharge
- Limping or favoring a limb
- Pale gums
- Fever

This handout provides recommended care guidelines for foster puppies. These guidelines are subject to change based upon specific information regarding the individual animal you are fostering. If you have any questions concerning your foster pet, contact the foster care coordinator at 804-521-1313 or [fostercare@richmondspca.org](mailto:fostercare@richmondspca.org). Thank you for your love of animals and for helping us save lives! You're a hero.