



Foster Caregiver Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome and thank you for participating in the Foster Care Program of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria! Our program was established in 2009 with ***the mission to inspire compassion for all living things, to provide shelter to animals in need, and to promote adoptions, animal welfare, and responsible pet ownership in our community.*** You are joining a team of compassionate individuals dedicated to increasing the adoption rate and saving lives of animals. Through your actions as a foster parent, your love of animals will make a difference in the welfare of animals in our community!

Caring for foster animals can be an extremely positive and rewarding experience. However, the role of a foster parent isn't always easy. Occasionally, unforeseen medical or behavioral problems arise. Foster parents must be responsible, observant, compassionate and patient. Direct supervision is provided by the Foster Program staff, and indirect supervision is provided by our Veterinary staff, our Behavioral staff, and our Directors.

Goal of the Foster Care Program

The goal of the Foster Care Program is to provide certain animals a temporary home and the extra care that they need to thrive.

- Raise the standard of health of ill and injured animals
- Ensure that all underage and underdeveloped animals can reach maturity
- Increase the adoptability of animals in need of socialization or training
- Increase the capacity of our shelter to care for animals in need throughout the community

Types of foster placements

We have several different types of foster cases that we place through our foster program at the AWLA. These include:

- Medical (minor and severe)
- Behavioral (minor and severe)
- Weaned underage/ underweight kittens and puppies
- Neonatal care
- Time/space
- Fospice
- Weekend stays
- Sleepovers
- Urban barn cat/ working cat
- Doggy day care centers

Note on Foster Sleepovers: By signing up you are committing to be at the shelter during your sign up time to pick up a dog chosen for you. Please note: sometimes we do not have appropriate matches. We will email you at least 30 minutes prior to pick up time if there is no dog available.

What do foster homes do?

Animal foster homes allow the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria to rescue homeless animals from a variety of situations by providing these animals with temporary care and shelter until they are ready for adoption. **Animal foster parents are asked to provide foster animals with plenty of love, adequate food and water, shelter from the elements, enrichment, and exercise. Administering medication may also be necessary.**

In addition to providing the basics, foster parents may also be asked to **transport** foster animals to veterinary appointments and adoption events. Animal foster homes play a crucial role in **rehabilitating** rescued animals. Foster parents are in a unique position to help abused or neglected animals learn how to love and trust again. Foster homes can help these animals **become more “adoptable”** by providing **socialization and basic training**. By teaching or re-teaching an animal how to live in a home setting, foster homes help increase the odds for a smooth and successful transition into a permanent adoptive home. In the case of **orphaned baby animals**, foster homes provide surrogate parenting and round-the-clock care for tiny animals that are too young to survive on their own. By providing orphaned animals with plenty of nutrition, love, and stimulation during their first eight weeks of life, foster homes help ensure their health and survival as adults. **Foster homes save lives!**

Commitment to a Foster Animal

Each foster care contract lasts **between less than 24 hours and up to 6 months, but most are 1 to 4 weeks**. The foster caregiver’s commitment and responsibilities will vary with the situation of each animal. Some animals require more time and energy than others due to their age, health or temperament.

Foster Caregiver Job Description

Objective

To provide a temporary, loving home for at-risk animals and prepare them for adoption.

Responsibilities

- Ensure the safety and comfort of all foster animals in your care
- Socialize, feed, medicate, groom, and train foster animals in your home in accordance with the

AWLA Foster Program guidelines

- Isolate foster animals from resident animals if needed / unless stated otherwise
- Regularly observe, record, and report the health status of foster animals in your care
- Regularly communicate the status of foster animals to the Foster Program staff
- Schedule appointments for animal pick-ups, drop offs, and medical exams
- Ensure your resident pets are current on their vaccinations as recommended by your vet
- Review and follow pet restrictions set by our landlord, HOA, or apartment complex
- Transport foster animals for the purpose of pick-ups, vaccinations, examinations, approved veterinary care, and upon completion of the term of the individual foster contract or upon the request of the AWLA
- Return foster animals to the AWLA in the event of an unforeseen emergency or if you should leave town
- Give at least ONE week's notice that you need to move your foster animal to a new foster or return them to the shelter, exceptions made for emergencies
- Maintain a positive and professional relationship with the AWLA staff, volunteers, and other foster caregivers. Please bring any issues to the Foster Program staff
- Willingness to abide by the standards of care set forth by the AWLA
- Willingness to complete all training required by the AWLA

What are the requirements to become a foster?

The AWLA is always looking for new foster parents! **The only general requirements are that you are 18 years of age or older, love animals, and have the time and resources to provide a foster animal with adequate care.** Other requirements will vary depending upon the specific needs of a given foster animal. The AWLA makes every effort to match foster parents with an appropriate foster animal.

Foster Caregiver Training

- Successfully complete a foster caregiver application
- Complete prospective foster orientation
- Complete specific training classes as required (eg. neonatal training if fostering orphaned kittens/puppies under 6-8 weeks of age)

Sanitize Your Home Between Foster Animals

In order to prevent disease and parasite infestations in your home you must thoroughly clean areas where the foster animal has stayed before taking in another foster animal. The room must be cleaned prior to a new foster animal's arrival.

- Wash bedding in hot water, detergent, and bleach
- Discard non-washable toys
- Disinfect all washable surfaces with a mild bleach and water solution (ratio of 1:32 bleach/water or 4 oz. of bleach per gallon of water)

- o Bleach solutions should be prepared on an “as needed” basis because they lose their strength after 24 hours
- o Bleach is inactive in the presence of organic matter so clean up dirt, fur, feces, etc. before using the bleach
- o The bleach solution must stay in contact with the surface being sanitized for at least 10 minutes to be effective
- o Rinse thoroughly with water after contact with the bleach
- Soak all rubber/hard material toys in bleach water for 20 minutes and scrub and bleach crates, carriers, scoops, food and water bowls and litter boxes. All items should be rinsed thoroughly with water after contact with bleach.
- Vacuum all carpeted areas
- Clean any urine or feces soiled areas with an enzyme cleaner to avoid residual odor
- Regularly clean up all waste in the yard to decrease the risk of spreading disease

Foster Program Contact Information

AWLA Foster Program	(703) 746-5580 (direct) foster@alexandriaanimals.org
Foster Hotline - for URGENT MATTERS ONLY	(571) 620-2851 (mobile - text or call)
Animal Welfare League of Alexandria Shelter Front Desk	(703) 746-4774

Email is the best way to communicate non-urgent information.

Please email the Foster Program staff with routine questions, concerns, requests for supplies, and to schedule foster animal returns, foster animal pick-ups, or non-emergency appointments. The Foster Program staff will strive to respond within one to two business days, but sometimes replies may be delayed during large animal intakes or high volumes of urgent foster issues needing to be addressed. We will do our best to be prompt!

★ Text messages and calls to the Foster Hotline are the best way to communicate emergencies and urgent information. Please don't use this for non-urgent information!

Please text or call the Foster Program staff for urgent concerns that need to be addressed within 24 hours. If your call is directed to voicemail, **please leave a detailed message including your name, the name of your foster animal, phone number, and a description of the urgent situation.** The

Foster Program staff will return your call or text as soon as possible. The Foster Program staff strive to be available to respond to emergencies every day of the week and after hours.

★ **If you need assistance with an emergency and you cannot reach the Foster Program staff, please call the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria’s main number during shelter hours.**

★ **If your foster animal is in need of emergency vet care, it is after shelter hours, and you are unable to reach the Foster Program staff, please take your foster animal to an approved AWLA veterinarian immediately (VCA SouthPaws).**

Emergency Contact Information and Protocols

What constitutes an emergency?

An emergency is any situation in which a foster animal’s life is in danger. The following examples are of emergency situations.

- **Illness or Trauma** – Indications of severe illness include difficulty breathing, lethargy, severe vomiting and/or diarrhea, or signs of pain
- **Lost foster animal**
- **Deceased animal**

Emergency Medical Protocol

If an emergency occurs with your foster, please contact the Foster Program staff ASAP. Once contacted the decision will be made by appropriate parties that there is a true emergency with your foster animal, you will be asked to bring your foster to the shelter if our shelter veterinarian is available or receive authorization to take your foster animal to VCA SouthPaws. The Foster Program staff will contact the clinic prior to your arrival to give the authorization for treatment.

If your foster animal is in need of emergency vet care, it is after shelter hours, and you are unable to reach the Foster Program staff, please take your foster animal to an approved AWLA vet clinic immediately.

Please note that if you decide to take the foster animal to a veterinary facility during the shelter’s normal business hours without prior approval from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, AWLA will not be responsible for any of the costs incurred.

Unless otherwise directed, when approval is given for emergency medical care, please take your foster animal to:

**VCA SouthPaws
8500 Arlington Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 752-9100**

*****Please remember to bring your Emergency Service Authorization form and your foster animal's medical records with you!*****

Lost Foster Animal Protocol

If your foster animal escapes and becomes lost, please contact the Foster Program staff or the Front Desk immediately. We will help you connect you with animal services and work with you to find them.

Deceased Foster Animal Protocol

In some cases, sick or weak animals may die while in foster care. If your foster animal passes away, please contact the Foster Program staff as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide detailed information as to what happened around the time of the death so that we can determine if other foster animals in your care may be at risk. You will be asked to bring the body back to AWLA and a necropsy may be performed to help us determine possible cause of death.

Reporting a Bite Incident

Before dogs three months of age or older into foster care, they receive a brief handleability observation at the time of full physical exams at AWLA. Any concerning behavior will be noted and disclosed to the foster. However, this is just a snapshot of their behavior and even the calmest animals can show signs of aggression in stressful situations; i.e. traveling, new human and pet interactions, or new environment.

If your foster animal starts showing signs of aggression, please immediately contact the Foster Program staff to arrange for further evaluation and help from our behavior and training department.

Pet bites and deep scratches need to be taken VERY seriously. It is very important that if anyone in your household, including your private pet, has been bitten by your foster animal or if your foster animal has been bitten by another pet or wildlife that you contact us. We may need to have your foster animal returned to AWLA for mandatory quarantine for the safety of the foster caregiver and the animal. This is Virginia Commonwealth law, and not an AWLA-specific policy.

Types of Foster Appointments

Picking Up Foster Animals

The Foster Program staff will contact potential foster parents by phone or email when an animal is in need of foster care. If you are ready to pick-up a foster animal, or will be in the near future, you can sign up on our “Fosters on Deck”. You will also receive a bi-weekly foster email called “The AWLA Foster Dish” highlighting animals in need of foster care. The first foster caregiver who responds and accepts the foster assignment will receive the animal(s) to foster. If you are contacted, please respond as quickly as you can, even if you are not available for the assignment. You always have the option to decline a foster assignment for any reason. Once you agree to foster an animal, you are **responsible for arranging a pick-up time within 24 to 48 hours**. If a foster responds promptly and can pick up the animal ASAP, then they will be selected to foster.

AWLA will provide you with the basic supplies required for the animal(s) that you are fostering. **You will be responsible for returning any remaining supplies (cleaned) at the conclusion of each fostering assignment.** If you are able to donate or supply your foster animals with any supplies, please inform the Foster Program staff.

You will receive a packet including medical records, emergency contact information, and an emergency authorization form. You may also receive a vaccination schedule, flea/heartworm preventive chart, progress report and home report depending on the animal. We will also provide any medications, dispensers, instructions and a medication chart if applicable. Age appropriate animals will be provided with collars and ID tags. Please make sure that collars stay on the animal at all times.

All animals will have had a physical examination and if your animal is of age and health, it will come fully vaccinated, dewormed, flea and tick treated, rabies vaccinated, and microchipped. Should this not be possible due to a medical or behavioral reason, you will be informed. Please note kittens and puppies under a certain age will have not received certain vaccinations or testing.

Returning Foster Animals

When nearing the completion of each foster assignment, **Foster Program staff will contact you to schedule or confirm an appointment to return the foster animals** to the shelter. When returning the foster animals, it is important that **all medications and supplies are returned to the Foster Program staff**. In addition, caregivers may provide a Report Card or write a description of their foster(s) for display and forward any photos that may help get the animal adopted. All materials may be submitted to the Foster Program staff. **This helps us maintain continuity of care and helps speed up the adoption process.**

Bonding with a foster animal, seeing the animal grow and thrive under your care and then passing the animal back to the shelter and on to an adoptive home is immensely rewarding and can be very

emotional. It can be sad to see a foster animal leave your home and return to the shelter, but our Adoptions staff will do their best to find an appropriate, permanent home for all of your foster animals. You can also check in with the Foster Program staff for updates. They will be happy to let you know how your fosters are doing and if they have been adopted yet.

Routine Medical Appointments

All routine foster medical appointments take place at the shelter. Your foster animal's vaccination requirements will be explained to you when you pick up your animal. Foster Program staff will send you email reminders when your foster animals are due for vaccinations and recheck appointments with our shelter veterinarian.

Routine foster medical appointments include:

- Physical exams
- Vaccinations and deworming
- Preventatives
- Nail trims

Non-routine Medical Appointments

All non-routine appointments can be scheduled by the Foster Program staff and the Veterinary staff as needed, and are based on our shelter veterinarian's availability. We will send you email reminders or reach out to you by phone when your foster animals are due for exams and recheck appointments with our shelter veterinarian.

Examples of non-routine foster medical appointments include:

- Upper respiratory infections
- Diarrhea and blood in stool
- Post-surgery rechecks
- Blood glucose curve checks
- Bloodwork and diagnostics
- Heartworm treatments

Our shelter veterinarian is generally available in the morning to afternoon, Monday to Friday. This means many of our non-routine medical appointments will be drop off appointments. In these cases, you would drop your foster animal off in the morning and pick them back up in the evening that same day. The Foster Program staff will work to schedule these appointments.

PLEASE NOTE! If you take a foster animal to a vet clinic without prior authorization from the AWLA, you will not be reimbursed for your expenses.

Scheduling Spay/Neuter Drop Off Appointments

Foster kittens and puppies are ready to be spayed and neutered once they meet all of the following criteria:

- They weigh at least 2.5 pounds
- They are over 8 weeks old
- Males have both their testicles descended
- They are healthy and medically cleared for surgery

Once your foster animal is cleared for spay/neuter surgery, we will schedule a time for you to drop them back off at the shelter. From there, they will be spayed/ neutered and made available for adoption at the shelter (unless other special arrangements have been made with the Foster Program staff prior to their surgeries). Please be patient - we do not perform surgeries on site, therefore we need to schedule surgeries with clinics and sometimes do not know the exact date of surgery until the week of the appointment.

On Arrival

To make sure the AWLA staff can assist you best possible we ask that you check-in at the front desk. Front desk staff will notify the Foster Program staff that you are here!

If we are assisting another foster animal/foster caregiver when you arrive, we will ask that you wait until your scheduled time. We want to make sure that everyone gets their allotted time! **We ask that all foster caregivers arrive on time so no other foster caregiver will be inconvenienced by delays!**

Traveling With Your Foster

Some of our foster animals are in a foster home due to a medical or behavioral problem. That being said, taking your foster animal out of your home for anything more than a walk, a visit to the veterinarian or to AWLA can be unsafe. Taking your foster animal on vacation or a day trip is appropriate only after prior approval from the Foster Program staff. If you have any questions about travel or vacation with your foster animal, please contact the Foster Program staff as soon as possible.

Adoption from Foster Care

Getting your foster adopted!

As a foster caregiver, you are your foster animal's biggest fan and their biggest adoption advocate! We ask our foster caregivers to provide us with updated information about their foster animal's personality,

send **updated pictures and videos of your foster animals, and our complete foster report cards** so that we can promote them for adoption on our website and social media. Every animal should have a report card from their foster home!

The foster report cards can be found here:

- ★ **Cats/Kittens:** <https://goo.gl/forms/Tgiu1YFa1e2h00qj2>
- ★ **Dogs/Puppies:** <https://goo.gl/forms/O0yd0SrenSVsVS933>
- ★ **Small Animals:** <https://goo.gl/forms/c6AexoV5icayfH5t1>

Once your foster animal is cleared for adoption, we can post them to our website, advertise them at the shelter, and provide you with strategies to help them get adopted! Some animals will already be available when they are sent to a foster home - the Foster Program staff will let you know if that's the case! Adoptable foster dogs will be sent home with "Adopt Me" vests for walks. We also encourage you to hand out adoption business cards and post "Adopt me" information on social media. Weekend stays at the shelter may also be appropriate for foster animals in need of extra public exposure.

The Adoptions department will also reach out to you if a potential adopter would like to meet your foster animal. Please reply promptly to the Adoptions staff so that we can schedule a meet and greet with the potential adopter at the shelter or in your home (whatever works best for you). We ask you about your adoption inquiry preferences ahead of time before making your foster animal available to adopters.

If you have a relative or friend who is interested in adopting one of your foster animals, please contact the Adoptions and Foster Program staff. Foster caregivers may refer potential adopters to the shelter to complete an adoption application. Any potential adopter must meet the requirements of the AWLA for adoption of a shelter animal, and must apply for adoption through the Adoptions department. **No animal may go to a potential adopter's home until the adoption is made official with the AWLA. A foster caregiver may not place a foster animal in a new home. All adoptions must be approved by an AWLA staff member.**

Adopting your Foster Animal

Sometimes your foster is "the one"! If you decide that you would like to adopt your foster animal(s), you will have first priority to adopt them unless our staff have given you other instructions! You must meet the AWLA's requirements for adoption and you must proceed with the adoption process through our Adoptions team. You can reach them at 703-746-4774 or adoptions@alexandriaanimals.org.

Foster-to-Adopt Policy

Once you commit to adopt a shelter animal the foster placement is called *Foster-To-Adopt (FTA)*, as the intention of the placement is to eventually complete an adoption once the animal is ready! FTAs are often due to medical reasons, where an animal may be waiting for surgery/recovering from surgery, and/or heartworm treatment. **AWLA will provide the FTA animal(s) any medication required and at**

cost prices for Heartworm and Flea/Tick preventatives for the animal(s) (mandatory at time of FTA agreement) until the completion of the adoption. After the time of adoption, you will be responsible to acquire and give the preventatives to your pet. We will also ensure that any animal over 12 weeks of age has a **collar, leash, AWLA tag, and carrier/crate** when applicable when going home with you. For animals that are in foster care for FTA purposes, AWLA will not provide food (unless prescription diet in which case we will offer you at cost prices until the time of adoption), or any other supplies such as bowls, toys, beds etc. **However, you will be given a little baggie of food to help you transition your foster animal to the diet of your choice!**

Adoption consults are always completed before the foster orientation. Unless medically indicated, FTAs maximum duration will be 7 days and once confirming an FTA, the foster animal needs to be picked up within 24 hours. If you have an FTA for up to 7 days; any and all vaccinations plus preventatives that were due during that period will be given upon completion of adoption at the AWLA shelter. Thereafter it is the owner's responsibility to keep vaccines and preventatives up to date at their veterinarian of choice.

AWLA's Euthanasia Policy

We ask that all fosters and volunteers acknowledge their understanding of our euthanasia policy before becoming involved with AWLA. We are available to talk to you about this, or any, of our policies if you have questions or concerns.

The decision to euthanize an animal in AWLA's care is never made lightly. Decisions to euthanize are made after considering two very important aspects of an animal's future: their own quality of life, and any behaviors that may make them a threat to public safety.

AWLA takes our responsibility to our animals' lives very seriously, and when we euthanize, it is because our experience tells us that euthanasia is the safest and most humane outcome for the animal in question. AWLA may decide to euthanize if there is no alternative option (i.e. rescue, sanctuary, consultation with veterinary or behavioral specialists) available. In some cases, it is more humane to provide an animal with a peaceful death than to attempt to prolong a life of negative experiences such as pain, stress, fear, or aggression.

In the interest of transparency and education surrounding our decision making process, volunteers and fosters are entitled to know the status of animals in our care.

Remember that for every animal that AWLA cannot adopt out, there are many, many more that are living happily in their new homes due to the tireless work of AWLA staff and volunteers.

Summary of Policies and Procedures

We require your cooperation with the following in order to provide maximum service to all of our foster caregivers and to ensure the safety and health of our foster animals:

1. In the event of an after-hours emergency, please call AWLA's Foster Hotline at the number provided on the Foster Program Contact Information sheet.
 - a. Please contact the Foster Program staff immediately if your foster animal is sick or injured.
 - b. Please notify AWLA immediately if your foster animal is lost.
 - c. Please notify AWLA immediately if your foster animal dies in your care.
 - d. Please notify AWLA immediately if there is a bite incident.
2. Please make an appointment for picking up and returning foster animals. Please contact the Foster Program staff or call the front desk if you are prevented from completing these appointments. Please note that we require one week notice if you must return a foster animal to the shelter, unless there is an emergency.
3. Please follow the AWLA's instructions for care, treatment, and transportation of your foster animal. If you feel that you can't administer medications - please alert AWLA immediately.
4. Routine exams take place at the AWLA shelter. If you take a foster animal to a veterinarian without prior authorization from the AWLA, you will not be reimbursed for your expenses.
5. If you leave town or are unable to care for your foster animal(s) for any reason, you must return the animal(s) to the AWLA. Please inform the Foster Program staff as soon as you are aware of such a situation so that we can plan and provide for their care. Please note in non-emergencies we require one week's notice.
6. All foster dogs over 12 weeks of age must wear a collar and identification tag at all times.
7. Cats and kittens must be kept indoors only except during transport in a secured carrier.
8. Cats, kittens, and puppies must be confined in a carrier while in vehicles and while being carried to and from vehicles.
9. Adult dogs must wear a collar and leash while outside and while traveling in vehicles.
10. Adult dogs should be crated in home when left alone, unless otherwise stated.
11. Puppies that have not completed their vaccination series must be kept separate from other animals and may not interact with other dogs during walks.
12. Foster dogs and puppies may not visit dog parks.
13. The responsibility of adopting out foster animals rests solely with the AWLA.
14. You are required to inform the Foster Program staff of any changes in your address, telephone numbers, or email address.
15. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Foster Program staff. If you have immediate concerns and Foster Program staff is unavailable, please contact the Front Desk.



Foster Caregiver Agreement (revised 2/14/18)

Thank you for agreeing to be a foster parent. We appreciate the love, time, and commitment you make to the animals you foster. Please initial next to each statement to indicate that you have read and agree to follow each.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Alt Phone): _____

Email Address: _____

I, _____, agree to the following statements and voluntarily enter into this Foster Caregiver Agreement to serve as a foster caregiver for Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA).

_____ I agree to comply with all federal, state and local laws that pertain to companion/domestic animals and pet ownership in the jurisdiction where I reside.

_____ I certify that I have never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment. I will notify the League immediately, and resign my role as foster care provider, should my status in this regard ever change.

_____ I acknowledge that I have received, read, understand, and agree to follow the AWLA Foster Caregiver Handbook.

_____ I agree to receive and respond to calls, text messages, and emails concerning my foster animal(s) from the AWLA staff within 24 hours. I agree to follow AWLA's outlined procedure for emergency and after-hours matters.

_____ I agree to be the primary caretaker of any animals I foster and will not transfer this responsibility to anyone else without previous approval by the AWLA. I agree to immediately return my foster animal(s) to the AWLA if I become unable to care for the animal(s).

_____ I agree to provide my foster animal(s) with only the food and medical care that has been directed by or approved by the AWLA.

_____ I understand that if I use any outside veterinary service or other type of care to treat my foster animal(s) without previous written consent by the AWLA, I will be fully financially responsible for all charges from the service and must notify the AWLA immediately and arrange with the clinic to have all medical records sent to the AWLA at the time of treatment.

_____ I agree to notify Foster Care Staff of any changes in my foster animal's health or behavior (including signs of aggression).

_____ I acknowledge the animal(s) entrusted to me are property of the AWLA and that I must return the animal to the AWLA when requested and that the AWLA is responsible for making all decisions about the animal(s) including euthanasia.

_____ I understand that as an AWLA foster caregiver, I will be joining the AWLA team. I agree to represent the AWLA professionally and interact with AWLA staff, volunteers and customers in a positive manner.

_____ I agree to be prompt and reliable for AWLA trainings and appointments and will email the Foster Program Staff

if I will be late or need to reschedule.

_____ I agree to take photos and/or videos of my foster animal(s) at least once a week and share these with the foster care staff. I agree to release the rights to the AWLA of any photos and videos of my AWLA foster animal(s) that I share with the AWLA or post on social media.

_____ I understand that the AWLA makes no claims, representations, or warranties, either expressed or implied, as to the behavior or temperament, age, breed or health of animals I foster.

_____ I understand that it is my responsibility to talk with my (and my family's) health care providers and my pets' veterinarian before I begin fostering to determine if there are any precautions I need to take to protect the health of my family, my pets and myself.

_____ I acknowledge that the AWLA is not liable for any damages to person(s) or property caused by the animal(s) I foster.

_____ I understand that my foster animal(s) could have been exposed to the rabies virus before it arrived at the AWLA. I understand that all foster animals under the age of 12 weeks have not received their rabies vaccine, and that some foster animals may not be rabies vaccinated because of age/health status per the Shelter veterinarian. I agree to immediately notify AWLA Foster Care Staff of any bites or scratches caused by my foster animal to a person or animal in order to take the necessary steps to protect against rabies. I understand that rabies can be transmitted with even the smallest scratch or tooth puncture (including "play" nips or scratches from kittens and puppies) and that rabies is 100% fatal if not treated in time.

_____ I agree to immediately notify the AWLA if a foster animal dies in my care and I will return the remains to AWLA.

_____ I understand that the AWLA will process and approve any and all adoptions of my foster animal(s) and that I will keep the foster animal(s) in my home and not release my foster animal(s) until I receive confirmation of approval from the AWLA.

_____ I hereby unconditionally release and discharge the AWLA and the City of Alexandria, including their employees, officers, directors, agents, assigns, and successors, from any and all claims, obligations, and liabilities of every nature and kind whatsoever, relating to or arising out of my participation with the AWLA Foster Program.

_____ I acknowledge that violation of the above guidelines, inadequate performance, or unreliability may all lead to my dismissal from the foster program. I understand that the AWLA reserves the right to dismiss a foster caregiver for any reason.

By signing below, and initialing each section above, I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed, understood, and agree with all that is written.

Printed name of Foster Caregiver

Signature of Foster Caregiver

Date