

Fostering an Animal Who is On “Watch”

Our foster volunteers provide wonderful support for our animals, including those who are on “watch” for developing a contagious, and possibly serious, illness. When volunteers foster these animals, there are several policies and procedures that are designed to help keep everyone safe and healthy.

What is a “watch” animal?

Animals who are placed in foster on “watch” are those who have have been exposed to a contagious and potentially serious illness. Most often, the exposure has come from a littermate who has tested positive and has been in close contact with the animal. Animals who are fostered as “watch” are typically not showing any symptoms, but need to be monitored closely in case they develop symptoms of the disease. The two most common illnesses that will require foster under these conditions are Parvovirus (dogs) and Panleukopenia (cats). These animals are typically placed in foster for roughly a week.

Fostering a “Watch” Animal

Some diseases (such as Parvo and Panleuk) can stay in an environment for several years, if not properly disinfected, and in turn be transmitted to other animals. In order for our foster animals to stay healthy the following precautions need to be taken:

- Animals must be contained to one space and are not able to interact with other animals in the home.
- Animals cannot go outdoors for any reason.
- The area in which they are being cared for must be easily disinfected. The area or room cannot contain:
 - Carpet
 - Rugs
 - Furniture with any type of upholstery
 - Any other items that are porous and cannot be thrown out

To help ensure safety, our foster team will talk with you and review these protocols prior to picking up the animal going to foster.

If the foster animal shows symptoms of an illness and tests positive for that illness, the foster volunteer will be responsible for thoroughly cleaning the area in which you kept the foster animal. This process will be outlined for foster volunteers by our staff and supplies will be given to foster volunteers. This process will include:

- Cleaning the room thoroughly three times, using HSHV materials and protocols
- Discarding any items that the foster animal came into contact with

We're sorry - if for any reason the foster volunteer is unable to follow this cleaning protocol or it is discovered that the area they were housed in did not follow policy (such as having carpet), then the foster volunteer will no longer be able to foster kittens or puppies permanently.