Harbor Fosters

**What is a Harbor Foster?**

The Harbor program is for people who need temporary housing for their animal(s) and the purpose of the program is for the owner to be reunited with their pets after the emergency situation. This could be for various reasons, including but not limited to, escaping a domestic violence situation, being in the hospital, or natural disaster. As a general policy, we offer two weeks for housing their animal at the shelter. Being in the shelter for long periods can be stressful so if someone needs more time than we try to find a foster parent who can take them. As you can imagine, 2 weeks is often not enough time for someone to make much difference in their circumstances, so fostering a Harbor animal will often be the difference between a human and their companion animal being able to remain together, and the animal having to be surrendered to the shelter.

**How long would a Harbor animal need fostering?**

We do try to find out as much information from the owner as possible about when they will be able to return to pick up their animal and relay that information. Sometimes this is not possible because of extenuating circumstances and in these cases we will update you as soon as we find out more. It could be anywhere from a few days to a couple of months.

**Are there any differences behaviorally or medically?**

As with any foster animal, our Behavior Team offers behavior support. We do not perform a behavior assessment so we have limited knowledge on how the animal is behaviorally, this includes how they interact with other animals. We do ask the owner to fill out a questionnaire about their animal(s) and we will relay information given to us but depending on how they are brought to us, we may not have any information on them.

**What kind of support can I expect from the shelter?**

We provide the same level of support to our Harbor Fosters as we do any other HSHV foster home.

We do not perform an official behavior assessment, so we may have limited knowledge on how the animal might behave in your home, including how they interact with other animals. We do ask the owner to fill out a questionnaire about their animal(s) and we will relay information given to us. Depending on the owner’s circumstances, we may not have those profiles before we are seeking a foster home. Our Behavior Team is here to provide support, if you need it.

HSHV’s Shelter Medical Team provides support and treatment for all foster animals. Harbor animals receive an initial health check by our Intake Staff and veterinarian and we make sure that they are sterilized, up to date on distemper and rabies vaccines prior to sending the animal out to foster. Animals will also be given flea preventative and general dewormers. We cannot always detect underlying health issues in the initial exams so as with any other animal, there is the possibility of issues surfacing after they’ve been sent home. You may be asked to bring the animal in for an exam.

As with any foster animal, if at any time you determine yours is not a good home for the animal you have taken, we will take the animal back as soon as possible.