



**HAVEN
HUMANE
SOCIETY**



Foster Packet

**Caring for Your Foster Puppies,
Kittens & Their Mothers**

[HavenHumane.org](https://www.HavenHumane.org)

Thank You

for Fostering an Animal in Need!

Fostering puppies, kittens, and their mothers is a rewarding experience that plays a crucial role in their development and future well-being. The time, care, and attention you provide in your home will help these vulnerable little ones grow strong, healthy, and socialized, ensuring they are ready to thrive in their forever homes.

From feeding and socializing to monitoring their health, your involvement creates the foundation for their future success, giving them the best chance at a happy, loving life with a family of their own.

At Haven Humane Society, we are committed to providing you with the support and resources you need to make your fostering journey a fulfilling and successful one. We will ensure that you have all the supplies and tools to give your fosters the best start.

Please help us meet our monthly donor goal by becoming a Haven Hero at HavenHumane.org today!





Quick Resources

Foster Care Coordinator:

(530) 241-1653, ext. 202
adoptions@havenhumane.org

Kitten Nursery:

(530) 241-1653, ext. 229

**Haven Humane Veterinary
Hospital:** (530) 241-1658

Animal Regulations:

(530) 241-2550

Kitten Lady Website:



**Haven Humane Fosters
Facebook Group:**



Preparing For Your Fosters

Bringing kittens or puppies into your home as a foster is an exciting experience, as you provide them with the care and environment they need to grow and thrive until they are ready for adoption.

Ensure You Have All The Supplies

- Blankets
- Heating pad with no auto-off function
- Small plush toys/puppy safe chew toys
- Formula/wet food/dry food
- Small digital scale
- Shallow litter box & pellet litter
- Puppy pads
- Miracle Nipples and syringes
- Tissues/fragrance free baby wipes
- Shallow food dishes

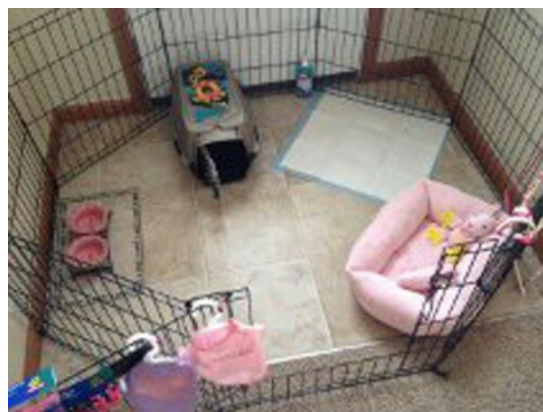
Setting Up A Safe Space

Neonate fosters can be placed in a tote or small box lined with soft bedding, along with a heating pad to provide warmth. Small toys can also be included for stimulation. Make sure food and water are placed away from the litter box/potty area to maintain cleanliness.

As the puppies and kittens grow, transition them to a covered playpen or a larger, secure area where they can explore safely.

“Baby proof” the space by removing items they could chew or swallow and making sure windows are securely closed. Keep the room free from other pets to avoid stress and ensure the environment remains warm, quiet, and safe for the animals’ development.

It’s important to remember that foster puppies, kittens, and their mothers **must** be kept indoors. They cannot be kept in crates outside, sheds, or other outdoor spaces. Keeping them inside ensures they are safe, and secure and can develop properly in a controlled environment.



Development Timelines

Kittens and puppies have similar developmental stages.

Kittens

0-1 Weeks

- umbilical cord attached, eyes closed, ears folded
- can't regulate body temperature

2-4 Weeks

- eyes open, ears unfolded
- wobbly on their feet
- discovering litter box by 3 weeks old

4-6 Weeks

- teeth emerging
- confidently walking
- slowly weaning onto wet food

6-8 Weeks

- transitioning to adult eye-color
- coordinated and playful
- once 2lbs, 8 weeks, and healthy, kittens are ready for new homes!

Puppies

0-1 Weeks

- umbilical cord attached, eyes closed, ears folded
- can't regulate body temperature

2-4 Weeks

- eyes open, ears unfolded
- wobbly on their feet
- aware of environment & siblings

4-6 Weeks

- walking, going to bathroom on their own, begin weaning
- learning social skills

6-8 Weeks

- basic training can begin
- consuming solid food
- once 8 weeks, 5lbs, and healthy, puppies are ready for their new homes!

Basic Care Tips

Heating

Keeping puppies and kittens warm is **crucial** for their health and survival, especially for small litters or single animals. Since they cannot regulate their body temperature, they rely on external heat sources to stay warm. Use a heating pad with **no auto-off function** to ensure consistent warmth. It's important to only heat part of the space, allowing the puppies or kittens to move away if they become too warm.

Bathroom Needs

Puppies and kittens under three weeks of age cannot eliminate their urine or feces on their own and will need help from their foster parent. If the mother is present, she will naturally stimulate her babies to eliminate. To assist with stimulation, gently rub the genital area with a soft tissue or baby wipe before each feeding, until they eliminate.



Cleaning

Keeping your fosters clean is essential for their health and well-being. For simple clean-ups, a warm washcloth can be used to gently wipe them.

If the puppies or kittens have fleas, you can give them a quick bath using warm water and a small amount of unscented dish soap, like Dawn. After the bath, use a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. It's critical that the babies do not stay wet for long, so dry them quickly with a towel and return them to their warm area. You can also use a blow dryer on the lowest setting from a safe distance.

Feeding

Feeding your foster animal will depend on their age and weight. Newborn puppies and kittens will rely on formula around the clock, typically every 2-3 hours. As they grow, the feeding frequency will decrease, and they will begin transitioning to "gruel"—a mixture of wet food and formula. Once they are fully weaned and their teeth have emerged, you can begin transitioning them to a mix of wet and dry food. For more detailed information on feeding schedules and amounts, please refer to the page on feeding in this manual.

Weighing

Use a digital scale to weigh them at the same time every day, ideally before feeding. Tracking their weight consistently helps you monitor their progress and identify any potential health concerns early. Be sure to record the weights in a journal.

Feeding

Proper nutrition, along with consistent feeding schedules, supports their overall well-being and helps prevent health issues. Remember to stimulate and weigh your foster babies before each feeding if they are under three weeks old.

Type of Food

Feeding your foster puppies and kittens the appropriate type of food is crucial to their health and development.

Kittens should **never** be fed milk—cow’s milk is not suitable and can cause digestive issues. Un-weaned puppies and kittens should always be fed the proper formula, whether in powder or liquid form, to ensure they receive the correct balance of nutrients.

Once they are weaned, puppies and kittens should be fed wet food until their teeth are fully emerged, after which you can begin transitioning to a mix of wet and dry food. Haven Humane will provide all necessary food and supplies for feedings.

Preparing Formula

When preparing formula, always follow the directions on the packaging for the correct ratio of powder to water. Once made, formula can be stored in the refrigerator for up to **24 hours**. Only heat enough formula for each feeding—reheating formula can cause **harmful bacteria** to develop. Discard any leftover formula after each feeding to ensure your foster babies' safety and health.

Weaning

Weaning typically begins around four weeks of age. At this stage, you can introduce a mixture of warm formula or water and warmed wet food. It may take several days for the puppies or kittens to show interest or understand how to eat the gruel.

If they’re not eating, continue bottle feeding and try again the next day. Once they begin to eat the gruel, gradually reduce the formula or water in the mixture each day. You can begin offering dry food alongside wet food.



Feeding Newborns

Bottle Feeding Steps

- **Prepare the formula according to the packaging with warm water. Make sure all your feeding supplies are clean.**
- Warm the formula by placing bottle/syringe in a hot cup of water to bring it to the temperature of your skin.
- **Feed one baby at a time by placing them on their belly on a flat, warm surface such as a towel.**
- Never feed a puppy or kitten on their back. This can cause them to aspirate, which occurs when liquid enters the lungs.
- **Hold the kitten's head and body steady with your non-dominant hand, placing one finger on the throat to allow you to feel for swallowing.**
- Gently introduce the tip of the nipple into the mouth with the dominant hand.
- **The baby should latch onto the nipple-allow them to drink at their own pace.**
- Lift the bottle slightly to avoid the baby swallowing too much air.
- **The baby should drink until they are full or until they have consumed a reasonable volume based on their weight.**
- Track their feeding amounts and times to ensure they are eating enough.

Feeding When Mother is Present

If your foster's mother is present, she will handle most of the feeding, nursing her babies every 2-4 hours. However, if you notice any baby isn't gaining weight or seems weak or lethargic, they may not be getting enough milk. In this case, you'll need to step in and supplement with formula.

Aspiration

If milk comes out of your foster's nose, it is aspirating. They are pretty good at clearing milk from their lungs on their own. Set the foster down and allow it to begin breathing normally, which should take a few seconds. Note on their feeding chart when this happens.

If your foster is not recovering from aspiration, please call our veterinary hospital.



Bottle Feeding Tips



This video from the Kitten Lady will show you how to properly bottle feed kittens and puppies.



Is your foster being fussy? Watch this video from the Kitten Lady as she discusses tips for tricky bottle babies.

Feeding Charts

Kitten & Young Puppies Feeding Chart

AGE	WEIGHT	AMOUNT PER FEEDING	SCHEDULE
0-1 week	50-150 grams	2-6 ml	Every 2 hours
1-2 weeks	150-250 grams	6-10 ml	Every 2-3 hours
2-3 weeks	250-350 grams	10-14 ml	Every 3-4 hours
3-4 weeks	350-450 grams	14-18 ml	Every 4-5 hours
4-5 weeks	450-550 grams	18-22 ml	Every 5-6 hours
5-8 weeks	550-850 grams	(weaning; offer ample wet food)	Every 6 hours

Larger/Older Puppy Feeding Charts*

DAILY FEEDING GUIDE			
Weight of Dog	Less than 4 months	4 to 9 months	10 to 12 months
	Can(s)	Can(s)	Can(s)
2 lb (0.9 kg)	3/8	1/3	1/4
5 lb (2.3 kg)	3/4	2/3	1/2
8 lb (3.6 kg)	1	1	3/4

Weight of Dog	DAILY FEEDING GUIDE					
	Less than 4 months and Pregnant Dogs (weeks 7 - 9)		4 to 9 months and Pregnant Dogs (weeks 5 - 6)		10 to 12 months and Pregnant Dogs (weeks 1 - 4)	
	Cup(s)	Grams	Cup(s)	Grams	Cup(s)	Grams
2 lb (0.9 kg)	1/2	50	3/8	40	1/3	35
5 lb (2.3 kg)	1	100	7/8	90	2/3	70
8 lb (3.6 kg)	1 3/8	140	1 1/4	130	1	100
10 lb (4.5 kg)	1 2/3	170	1 3/8	140	1 1/8	115
20 lb (9.1 kg)	2 3/4	280	2 1/3	240	2	205
40 lb (18 kg)	4 3/4	485	4	410	3 1/4	330

Puppy weights can vary significantly depending on breed, with larger breeds gaining more weight than smaller ones. Puppies should gain about 10% of their body weight each day.

*These feeding guides are based on Science Diet Puppy food provided by Haven Humane

Potty Training

Beginning to potty train your fosters will give them a great head start for their new homes. Kittens and puppies have different needs when it comes to training, but with a few simple steps, you can help set them up for success.

Kittens

Litter Box

Use a litter box with no lid and low sides for easy access. If you have a larger litter, provide multiple boxes to give everyone enough space.

Location

Place the litter box in a quiet, easily accessible spot, away from food and water bowls. Keep it out of reach of other pets, like dogs, to ensure the kittens feel safe and comfortable using it.

Scoop 2x

Thoroughly scoop the box twice a day. Once a week, dump and clean the box with soap and water (do not use lemon scented or strong scented soap).

Type

Our kittens will come with pellet litter, which is gentle on their tiny paws and helps control odors while being easy to clean.

Puppies

Breaks

Take your puppies outside every 2-3 hours (in your own backyard), especially after meals, naps, and playtime. Keep a consistent schedule.

Praise

Immediately reward your puppy with treats or praise when they go potty outside!

Crating

When you're not able to supervise, crate your puppy—most puppies won't soil their crate, which helps them hold it until they're let outside.

Pee pads

If you can't take your puppy outside every 2-3 hours, consider setting up a designated indoor potty area, like a puppy pad or artificial grass mat.

Accidents Happen!

Accidents happen—be patient and **don't scold**. Scolding can cause fear and confusion, making training harder. Instead, use positive reinforcement to reward the right behavior and build trust as your foster learns!

Socializing

Socializing your foster puppies and kittens is key to helping them develop good manners and learn how to interact confidently with people, other animals, and new environments!

Meeting New People

Start with calm, gentle introductions in a quiet environment to avoid overwhelming them. Allow the animals to approach the new person at their own pace, and encourage positive interactions with treats and praise. Gradually increase the number of people they meet, making sure each introduction is positive and stress-free. The more positive experiences they have with new people, the more confident and well-adjusted they'll become!



Toys

Toys are a great way to engage your foster puppies and kittens and help them develop good play habits. Offer a variety of safe, age-appropriate toys to keep them entertained and mentally stimulated. When they start to nip or bite your hands, immediately redirect them to a toy instead—this teaches them that hands aren't for biting.

New Environments

Gently introduce your foster to different settings, sounds, and sights. Take them on short trips around the house, to explore different rooms. New experiences, like hearing a vacuum or other loud appliances, help prevent fearfulness as they grow. Puppies and kittens should never be taken outside.

Meeting Resident Pets

1. Quarantine



Before introducing your foster to your resident animals, it's important to keep them separated for at least **10 days**. This ensures they aren't carrying any contagious diseases or parasites that could spread to your other pets, as some illnesses may not show symptoms right away.

2. Start with Scent



Before the face-to-face introduction, allow your pets and fosters to get used to each other's scent by swapping bedding, toys, or using a cloth to rub both animals and place it with the other. This helps them become familiar with each other in a low-pressure way.

3. Supervise



Introduce the animals in a neutral space, away from areas where your resident pets may feel territorial. Always **keep animals under supervision**. Start slowly, letting them observe from a distance before getting closer. Watch for signs of stress or aggression (like growling or raised fur) and separate them if needed. Reward positive interactions with praise and treats.

Introducing Mom



If the foster has a mother, introductions should be done carefully, as she may be protective. Start by introducing the mother to your resident pets first, giving her time to adjust. Ensure she has a safe, secure space and allow her babies to interact only when she's comfortable. If she's stressed, give her more time before proceeding.

Benefits



Allowing your foster to interact with resident animals helps teach important social skills, like play, body language, and boundaries, while also getting them used to different species.

Puppies learn proper play and communication from other dogs and can also become comfortable around cats, while kittens learn feline behaviors and get accustomed to dogs.

These interactions help make them well-rounded, confident, and adaptable to any home, increasing their chances of a successful adoption.

Medical Protocols

Picking Up Your Fosters

In most cases, your fosters will receive their first exam, vaccines, and weigh-in while you are completing your foster care paper work. You will receive a schedule of dates (about every three weeks) to return with your fosters to get their boosters and check their development at our adoption center.

Before leaving with your foster animal, please make sure you have checked-in with your foster care coordinator and all paperwork is completed.

Veterinary Appointments

When you arrive for your appointments, be sure to sign in at the front desk. If your foster animal is deemed ready for adoption during an appointment, you may be asked to leave your foster animal at the shelter to be adopted. Please check in with your foster care coordinator anytime you visit the shelter.

Haven Humane Society provides all vaccinations, medications, and treatment for our foster animals at no cost to the foster parent. Please note that all medical decisions regarding your fosters are made at the discretion of our veterinarian. This includes decisions related to treatments, surgeries, medications, and any other medical care required.

Signs of Illness

If you see any of the following symptoms in your foster animals, please contact the Foster Care Coordinator immediately:

- **Diarrhea:** Diarrhea can quickly lead to dehydration in young animals, which can be life-threatening. If it persists for more than 24 hours, contact our vet.
- **Worms in Stool:** Visible worms in the stool are a sign of parasitic infection, often requiring deworming medication.
- **Vomiting, Coughing, or Sneezing:** Occasional vomiting or sneezing can be normal, but if it's frequent or persistent, it could indicate an infection and should be checked by our vet.
- **Discharge from Eyes, Nose, or Ears:** Any color of discharge can signal an infection, such as a respiratory or ear infection, and should be evaluated by our vet.
- **Loss of Appetite or Lethargy:** A sudden lack of appetite or energy can be a sign of illness.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency with your foster animal, your first step is to contact our Veterinary Hospital or the Foster Care Coordinator as soon as possible for guidance. If the emergency occurs after hours, please contact Animal Regulations for assistance. It's important to note that if you take your foster animal to an outside veterinary facility without prior approval from Haven Humane Society, you will be responsible for all costs incurred.

Fading Syndrome

Fading Kitten/Puppy Syndrome (FKS) is a heartbreaking condition that can affect newborn puppies and kittens, often within the first few weeks of life.

What Does It Look Like?

- **Lack of weight gain or weight loss:** Even though they should be gaining weight daily, they may stop gaining or lose weight.
- **Lethargy:** They may become unusually weak, sleepy, or unresponsive.
- **Poor feeding:** They may not nurse effectively or refuse to feed altogether.
- **Crying or distress:** Fading babies may seem more vocal than usual, indicating discomfort or hunger.
- **Cold to the touch:** Their bodies may feel cooler than usual, as they struggle to regulate their temperature.


Why Does It Happen?

- **Underlying infections or viruses:** Infections, such as bacterial or viral illnesses, can make it difficult for young animals to thrive.
- **Congenital defects:** Some puppies and kittens may have internal issues or birth defects that cause them to struggle with growth and development.
- **Hypothermia:** Babies are extremely sensitive to temperature fluctuations, and even mild hypothermia can cause them to fade.
- **Poor nursing:** Sometimes, a kitten or puppy may not be able to nurse properly due to weakness, a lack of milk supply from the mother, or a misalignment in the way they latch.

What Should You Do?

- **Warmth:** Make sure they have a warm, safe place to rest.
- **Feeding:** Try offering formula or, if they are still nursing, assist them with feeding. Do **not** attempt to feed a **cold** puppy or kitten.
- **Karo Syrup:** If the puppy or kitten is weak and lethargic, gently rub a small amount of Karo syrup (corn syrup) on their gums. This can provide a quick source of energy and help raise their blood sugar levels.
- **Call For Assistance:** If you see a decline in their condition or they fail to improve with your efforts, immediately contact the Foster Coordinator.

You're Doing Your Best

Fading Syndrome can be heartbreaking, but please remember it's **not your fault**. Newborns are fragile, and sometimes, despite your best care, they just don't thrive. You're doing everything you can to help them, and your love makes all the difference. If you need support or have concerns, reach out to us—we're here to guide you. 

Ready For Adoption!

When Are They Ready for Adoption?

Kittens are typically ready for adoption when they weigh at least 2 pounds and are at least 8 weeks old. Puppies must be a healthy weight and at least 8 weeks old before they are eligible for adoption. They will return to the shelter for their spay or neuter surgery and then be made available for adoption.

Ongoing Foster Commitment for Puppies

If you're continuing to foster puppies after they're ready for adoption, we ask that you bring them to our PetSmart adoption kiosk **at least once a week** (Wednesday - Sunday). You can drop off and pick up your foster at either PetSmart or the shelter, depending on what's more convenient for you. If you'd like, you can stay at PetSmart to assist with getting them adopted! Please contact the Foster Care Coordinator prior, so proper accommodations can be made for your foster animal(s).



Marketing Your Fosters

You can send us photos and brief descriptions of your foster animal to help us showcase them to potential adopters. High-quality, well-lit photos of your foster pet in various settings—whether they're playing, cuddling, or interacting with people or other animals—really help highlight their personality and unique traits.

Descriptions that include details about their temperament, likes, dislikes, and any special quirks or training they may have received are also incredibly valuable.

We also encourage you to share your foster's profile on your own social media channels. By posting about them and sharing their story with your friends and family, you may be able to connect them with someone in your own circle who is looking to adopt.

If you find a potential adopter for your foster animal, please refer them to our Foster Care Coordinator so appropriate paperwork and interviews can be completed. Under no circumstances should a foster animal be transferred to their forever home without express approval from the Foster Care Coordinator.

“Our Time Together Is Already Over?”

Saying Goodbye

Saying goodbye to a foster pet is never easy. You've invested your time, energy, and love, and it's natural to feel a sense of loss when they leave for their forever home.

But remember, the love you've given them has made all the difference—**they've been given a second chance at a happy life because of you!** While it's hard to let go, take comfort in knowing that your foster is now in a loving, permanent home where they'll continue to thrive. You saved a life, and that's something truly special.

If you're feeling emotional after saying goodbye, it's okay to grieve. Acknowledge your feelings, but also celebrate the success. Every animal you foster is one less in need, and there will always be more animals to help. You are making a world of difference, one foster pet at a time.



Adopting Your Foster

If you've fallen in love with your foster pet and are considering adopting, that's wonderful! Adopting your foster is an incredibly rewarding experience, and you've already built a strong bond with them.

However, before making the decision to adopt, we ask that you take a step back and consider the long-term impact this decision may have, especially on your ability to continue fostering in the future. Fostering **saves lives**, and your role in helping our shelter is absolutely crucial, particularly when we are over capacity. Every time you take in a foster dog, you are giving another animal a chance at a new life. If you adopt your current foster, ask yourself: *Will you still be able to foster another life in need?*

If you do decide to adopt your foster, please let the Foster Care Coordinator know as soon as possible so that we can remove them from our adoption listings and ensure they're not advertised to potential adopters. We're excited for you to give your foster their forever home and we're here to support you through the adoption process!

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if I'm going on vacation?

If you're traveling, please also reach out to the Foster Care Coordinator as soon as possible.

We'll work with you to arrange care for your foster while you're away.

I have questions about my fosters behavior

If you have questions about your foster dog's behavior, feel free to contact our Animal Behaviorist at (530) 241-1653 ext. 209.

For any questions related to kittens or mommy cats, please reach out to our Kitten Nursery Coordinator at (530) 241-1653 ext. 229.

Can I take my fosters out in public?

Puppies and kittens should not be taken out in public. Since they are not yet fully vaccinated, they are at a higher risk of contracting illnesses that could be life-threatening.

If you're fostering a fully vaccinated, healthy mommy dog, you can take her out for short trips. It's a great way for her to get socialized and meet potential adopters.

What if I want to return my fosters?

If you're considering returning your fosters, please contact the Foster Care Coordinator. We'd love to help troubleshoot any issues and work with you before making a final decision.

If you do need to return your foster, they can be brought to the Morgan Adoption Center Monday through Saturday, from 11 am to 5 pm.

More Community Support

Stray Cat Services

We have free and reduced-price spay/neuters for stray cats in our community.

Vaccine Clinics

Every Wednesday, we hold low-cost Vaccine Clinics for the public.

Microchipping

We also offer discounted microchipping with no appointment necessary or at our Vaccine Clinics.



Please help us meet our monthly donor goal by becoming
a Haven Hero at HavenHumane.org

What is Haven Humane ?

Haven Humane Society is more than an animal shelter; we are a community-supported animal resource center providing compassion and care for all animals.

Since 1952, Haven Humane has offered lifesaving programs and services for animals and the people who love them in the greater Shasta County area. At our Anderson campus, we provide shelter, dedicated care, and new beginnings for thousands of our community's most vulnerable animals every year.

In addition to pet adoptions and fostering, we focus on programs and services aimed at helping people care for and keep their pets, such as free and low-cost spay/neuter and vaccines, a pet food pantry, and licensing services. In 2023, Haven Humane helped more than 7,000 animals through adoptions, rehabilitation, lost & found, veterinary services, Animal Regulations, and rescue.

Haven Humane is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Our tax ID number is 94-1634752.

Contact Us:

Office: Haven Humane Society
7449 Eastside Road
Anderson, CA 96007

Email: adoptions@havenhumane.org

Phone: (530) 241-1653



Thank You to Our Sponsors

