

Tiny's Hope



FOSTER MANUAL



**HUMANE
SOCIETY**
OF BURNETT COUNTY

Foster Manual

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Dear Foster Parent(s),

It is with much gratitude that we welcome you to “Tiny’s Hope” Foster Parent Program at the Humane Society of Burnett County!

We believe that fostering an animal is one of the most selfless forms of volunteering. Foster Parents make the commitment to provide physical and emotional care to an animal they barely know, only to connect and perhaps attach, and let them move on to other opportunities.

For various reasons, not everyone has this calling, but for those who do, you are a very special group indeed. Fostering an animal is an undertaking that requires a great deal of responsibility, care, and compassion, and it is also one of the most rewarding ways to help homeless pets. Research has shown that fostered shelter animals are less likely to suffer from behavior and training problems, are less stressed, and easily adapt to life in their new, forever homes. HSBC takes pride in being a socially conscious shelter. This means that we never euthanize due to lack of space/resources, breed, or length of stay.

Our goal is to find the right home for each pet, and it's okay if that takes time! We would much rather be thorough and transparent with potential adopters as opposed to sugar-coating a behavior or medical issue.

On behalf of the entire HSBC staff, we thank you for taking the step to become a foster parent with us. Throughout this process, you will receive the ongoing education and support you will need every step of the way. We think you will find that by fostering you will learn and grow in ways you never thought possible. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be working with you!

Sincerely,

Brandi Marek, Foster Coordinator
HSBC Staff and Board of Directors

“TINY’S HOPE” Foster Program Overview

These guidelines represent a summary of important information for foster parents for The Humane Society of Burnett County. Our intention is that these guidelines and general rules help with the entire foster process. The shelter management, however, retains the right in it's sole discretion to add, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part at any time these guidelines, procedures, foster volunteer rules or benefits outlined in this guidance.

- We recognize this information is not all-inclusive. If you have a question about a particular provision, about any shelter position or guideline, or about the animal(s) you foster, please talk to the Foster Coordinator.
- The fosters’ roles are to provide temporary care and housing for animals in the shelter’s care. A home environment is crucial to the health and adoptability of many animals that have special needs when they arrive at the Shelter.
- Dogs (especially) who live in the shelter environment for 30+ days are particularly vulnerable to stress that could send them into a downward spiral. In many cases, certain behaviors (barrier reactivity, leash reactivity etc.) develop or become markedly worse during a dog’s shelter stay.

Our Mission



The story of Tiny, a Cataloula Leopard Dog who unfortunately developed aggressive behaviors after prolonged shelter life, has inspired this effort. After more than a year at the shelter, Tiny became more and more aggressive and eventually developed a biting history. Had a foster home been available for Tiny soon after his arrival at the shelter, his outcome might have been different. We dedicate this program in his memory, hoping to offer other animals the brighter future like Tiny and so many others, deserve.

Why are animals fostered?

HSBC's foster program helps prepare homeless animals for life in a permanent home by placing them in temporary, loving environments. Foster homes offer a safe and supportive space where animals can thrive until they are adopted into their forever families.

Some specific reasons an animal may enter foster care include:

- **State age requirements:** Wisconsin law requires that puppies and kittens be at least 8 weeks old before they can be adopted. Foster homes care for them until they reach this age.
- **Medical recovery:** Animals who are sick, injured, or recovering from surgery may need a quiet home environment and extra care to heal properly.
- **Shelter stress:** Older animals or those with sensitive temperaments may struggle in a shelter setting. Foster care allows them to feel more comfortable and secure while they wait for adoption.
- **Behavioral support:** Some animals arrive with behavioral challenges that need to be addressed before they are ready for a new home. Specialized foster homes can provide the time and attention needed to work on these behaviors.

HSBC's Foster Parent Role Description Purpose

HSBC's Foster Parents are trained, community volunteers who provide temporary care for animals that are not yet ready for adoption, or to get them ready for adoption. Animals deemed appropriate for the Foster Program can include animals less than 8 weeks of age, mothers and their offspring, behaviorally needy pets, and animals requiring specialized care after surgery or trauma. Foster Parents also provide vital information to shelter staff throughout the fostering process to ensure consistent, appropriate care to the animals, and to assist with the most appropriate adoption.

Foster parents have serious responsibilities to the animals entrusted to their care. Foster families are expected to provide a clean, safe environment for the animals being fostered. If, for any reason, the foster family believes it may not be able to fulfill its responsibilities for a foster assignment, please contact the Foster Coordinator immediately so other arrangements may be made for the animal.

Contact Information:

Please contact the Foster Coordinator any day of the week between 8:00am and 8:00pm with questions, concerns, or to schedule foster animal veterinary appointments or other checkups. Call/Text/Email.

Foster Coordinator: Brandi Marek

Direct Phone: 715-557-1896

7 Days a Week: 8AM-8PM

On the days the foster coordinator is not here please call:

Peggy Tolbert @ 715-222-9375

(You will be notified via your preferred contact method if the Foster Coordinator is unavailable and for how long)

After-hours Medical Emergency

Emergency On-Call Cell Phone: 715-557-1896

(After hours & holidays)


Leave a voicemail or send a **text** if there is no answer, and you will receive a prompt reply.

In the event of any questions, comments, updates or general inquiries, you can email us @ fostercare.hsbc@gmail.com

Cut Below for a Quick Reference Card

 Brandi Marek, Foster Coordinator

Back Up Contact: Peggy Tolbert

 715-557-1896 (Call/Text)

715-222-9375

 fostercare.hsbc@gmail.com

After 8 PM or holidays:715-557-1896

 Available 7 Days/Week: 8AM–8PM.

Leave a Voicemail or send a text for
for a prompt reply

Qualifications

- Must be over 18 years of age or older to participate in the Foster Program and can assume responsibility for the care of the animal(s).
- Have the consent of all adults living in your household. (Have the consent of your landlord if renting)
- Household pets must be current on vaccines.
- Have a securely fenced yard to foster dogs, or be willing to leash walk your foster dog(s) at all times.
- Foster Felines must be kept indoors at all times.
- Understand that any veterinary care sought outside of HSBC for your foster animal(s) that has not be **pre-approved** by HSBC staff, will not be reimbursed.
- Understand that HSBC is not responsible for any damage, injury, or illness to animals or humans caused by a foster animal in your care.
- Understand that HSBC remains the legal custodian of the animals; and that in rare cases animals can't be adopted out due to extreme behavior or health complications.
- Have the facilities (use of spare rooms, etc.) and willingness to isolate foster animals from your own animals as needed
- Maturity, stability, confidence, common sense.
- Interest in animals and meeting their physical and emotional needs.
- Appreciate that the foster process is not trial for adoption; it is a commitment to care for and prepare animals for adoption by others.
- Ability to work with all Shelter staff in a sensitive, positive and objective manner.
- Good verbal and written communication skills to convey questions and concerns about the animal(s) in their care.
- Able to use email/phone calls/text messages with Foster Staff to receive general information and communicate about animals in a timely manner.
- Access to safe/secure/reliable transportation to transport foster animals to and from the shelter. Public transportation, bicycles and motorcycles are not adequate for foster animals.
- Ability to pass an initial screening interview and yearly home visit per state
- Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) Program requirements and Shelter policies.
- Be willing to be adoption ambassadors and attend adoption events as scheduled.

Duties

- Provide the appropriate physical and emotional care as outlined by
- Veterinary, Health Care and Foster Program staff.
- Work with the Foster Staff and other Shelter staff as needed for the animals' care and support.
- Convey any and all concerns about an animal(s) status to Foster Coordinator via telephone, email or scheduled meetings in a timely manner throughout the fostering period.
- Follow the instructions of Shelter Staff and Management. Although other, perhaps contradictory, options may be found from other sources (your veterinarian, the internet, and other shelters), Shelter instructions will be followed unless shelter Staff agrees to the requested change.
- Keep all medical/veterinary appointments as scheduled.
- Return the animal(s) and any supplies back to the shelter at the end of the fostering period in a timely manner as instructed by Foster Coordinator.
- Training, support and supervision from Foster Coordinator staff throughout the entirety of each fostering assignment.
- The opportunity to learn about the physical and emotional health of sheltered animals.
- To be the eyes and ears of Shelter staff to best advocate for the most appropriate services for animals in foster care.
- The opportunity to expand your own skills and abilities.
- The satisfaction of assisting homeless animals with their medical and behavioral management, which leads to success in finding their forever home.

Responsibilities to the Foster Program Coordinator

- Maintain open and consistent communication with Foster Coordinator in regard to the overall status (physical/emotional/behavioral) of the foster animal(s) throughout their time in foster care. Email is the most effective way of sharing this information; however, phone calls/texts and/or scheduled meetings are valuable as well. Pictures are also always appreciated!
- Keep Foster Coordinator informed of any status changes (physical/emotional/behavioral) of the foster animal(s) in a timely manner.
- This includes bites and injuries to people or animals that occur within the foster home.

Responsibilities to the Foster Program Coordinator (Continued)

- Follow instructions of the Foster Coordinator. Other, and perhaps contradictory, options may be identified from other sources (i.e. the internet, your veterinarian, other foster programs or shelters), The Shelter instructions shall be followed unless Foster Coordinator agrees to the requested change.
- Keep Foster Coordinator informed of changes in or to your foster home, including changes in physical address/email addresses, telephone numbers, vacation notifications, resident animals, etc.
- Keep medical/veterinary appointments, as scheduled, being mindful of timeliness to minimize ripple effect upon subsequent appointments, supporting health care staff, pre-arranged treatment preparation, etc.
- Cooperate with Shelter staff in the return of the animal(s) to the Shelter and in the adoption of the animal(s) into a forever home.
- Comply with Wisconsin State and Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) regulations, including cooperating to arrange for and participate in the required initial and yearly foster home checks.

Training

HSBC is proud to offer trainings to assist and support our fosters. We will provide resources to take home, online course suggestions, and weekly zoom call trainings if needed. When needed we can offer one-on-one training sessions for animals and fosters in need of extra support while in foster care.

All fosters must agree to use fear-free methods and rewards-based training on our animals. HSBC forbids the use of any training tools that involve pain, intimidation, forceful manipulation, or physical correction techniques.

Animal Proofing Your Home

Animals are curious creatures, many of whom are capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your foster animal in his or her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, we recommend that you animal proof your home.

- All cleaning supplies and medications should be kept out of the reach of jumping and climbing cats and dogs.
- Please remove all recreational drugs and have them locked away in a safe place where the animals won't be able to reach.
- Place all small chewable items out of reach.
- Put all socks, shoes etc. away- they are tempting to chew.

Animal Proofing Your Home (Continued)

- Block off all small areas and hiding places.
- Trash cans should be kept covered.
- Wires and mini blind cords should be placed out of reach.
- Drapery and shower curtains should be placed out of reach.
- Count your foster animals when opening and closing interior/exterior doors.
- Keep household plants out of reach and supervise your animals outside.
- Make sure foster dogs don't jump the fence before leaving him or her unsupervised in the yard.
- Protect your home from being damaged by using sheets, tarps, newspapers to protect carpet and floors. Any unprotected surface can potentially be damaged.

Picking Up Your Foster Animal

When an animal needs foster care, the foster coordinator and facility staff will contact a list of potential foster parents by phone or email. The first foster caregiver who responds to the request and accepts the foster assignment will receive the animal. You always have the option to decline a foster assignment for any reason.

When your offer to foster is accepted, you will schedule a time with the Foster Coordinator, to pick up your assigned pet(s) along with any medications or other special items it may need.

Bringing Your New Foster Animal Home

- Ideally, set up the area where your foster animal will be staying before you bring your foster home.
- New foster animals should be kept separate from your existing companion animals of the same species for a period of 7-10 days. (If applicable) This quarantine period is to protect your own animals and should be strictly observed.
- Cats and kittens do very well in a kitty condo, crate, bathroom or spare bedroom.
- Introduce your foster animal to one room of the house at first. Try to have homecoming be a quiet experience for the animal.
- Cats and Kittens need a cozy, secure place with a bed to snuggle up in. The bed can simply be a low box with a blanket in it. Always provide your foster feline with a hiding spot.
- Show each cat and kitten where the litter box is located.

Bringing Your New Foster Animal Home (Continued)

- Dogs and puppies should have a crate.
- Allow your new foster quiet time to adjust to the new environment

Caring for Your Foster Animal

Although you will care for the foster animal at your home, the animal may need to periodically return to the Shelter for additional care. This may include vaccinations, surgery, or other needs. You and the Foster Coordinator will schedule these appointments in advance at a time that works for you and the Shelter schedule.

*As you start to learn about the animal in your foster care, please email the foster coordinator a pet summary and some photos of the animal in the home. The information and photo may be used on the Shelter website to help potential adopters.

Provided Supplies (See Supply List Provided)

- Dry Food (If applicable)
- Wet Food (If applicable/available)
- Clumping and/or Non-Clumping Litter
- Kitten/puppy milk replacement
- Medications and other veterinary care
- Carrier (for kittens or puppies) and collars/tags (for dogs)
- Crates (as needed or requested)
- Bedding (as needed or requested)
- Clean bowls (as needed or requested)

Responsibilities of Foster Parent

- Provide food. (AM and PM, or more frequently if specified)
- Provide fresh water daily.
- Provide enrichment and toys.
- Clean area where animal urinates and defecates; check for any problems. (blood in urine, loose stools, and vomit)
- Groom coat as needed.
- Examine paws.
- Check for health issues. Contact Foster Coordinator if anything is abnormal.
- Socialize and play with animal.

As Needed Duties:

- Weigh animals every other day for very young, or as specified for older animals.
- Look inside mouth at gums and teeth.
- Keep written record of the foster's weight, food intake, and medications given. (Kitchen scales work great for kittens and small breed puppies)
- Clean bedding
- Trim nails (We will do them at the shelter for free for animals in foster) Some animals may require moderate sedation, or need to be brought in to the vet.
- Keep all scheduled vaccines appointments which can be found on your
- "Foster Animal Bio Form", and check in regularly with the Foster Coordinator.
- Check food/litter and all other supplies and call HSBC if you need more. (Please allow minimum 72 hours notice)

Foster Animal Bite Protocol

Please follow this protocol if your foster pet bites you, a member of your household, or anyone else.

If a bite occurs:

1. Immediately remove the foster pet to a safe environment, i.e., a crate or other option that both prevents further injury to the person and provides a calm environment for the animal.
2. Report the incident immediately to the Foster Program Coordinator.
3. Do not show up unannounced to the shelter with your foster pet. Please contact the Foster Coordinator and/or contact the Emergency Foster Line.

A bite does not necessarily require the animal to return to the shelter.

If the bite resulted in an injury follow these additional steps:

1. Assess the injured party's need for medical care.
2. If the bite broke the skin (deep scratch, puncture wound, bleeding), it is **required** the foster parent must contact the foster coordinator.

Bite Assessment/Wound Care:

1. Rinse the wound in running water for several minutes and use soap.
2. If the person is undecided if medical attention is needed, here are some guidelines:
 - a. Did the bite break the skin?
 - a. If no, no further action is required.
 - b. If yes, see below depending on the type of wound:
3. Scratches: Watch for signs of possible infection - swelling, redness, abnormal discharge. If any of those symptoms occurs, seek medical attention.
4. Punctures: The person bitten may need oral antibiotics. Please seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY to prevent sepsis, loss of function, or even death.
5. Bleeding: Apply pressure directly to the wound to try to stop the bleeding. Bites are a very dangerous issue and must be reported immediately per HSBC policy. Not doing so can be cause for removal from the foster program.

In addition, reporting a bite and the circumstances surrounding a bite enables the HSBC team to potentially develop a more customized plan for your foster pet.

HSBC IS NOT liable for any damages relating to a bite or responsible for any medical bill or other cost associated with a bite (including any injury to another animal). However, we can often provide suggestions on what to do after a bite occurs. If you choose not to seek medical help, HSBC IS NOT liable for any resulting consequences.

Cleaning Procedures

As you set up your foster area, keep in mind the fact that animals are messy especially kittens and puppies. You will spend a significant part of the foster period just mopping up messes. Obviously, cleanup is quicker, easier and more effective in an area with washable walls and a tile or vinyl floor than in one with flocked wallpaper, thick carpeting, heavy drapes, and upholstered furniture, so choose your foster area carefully. This will protect your companion animals and any future foster animals.

Routine Cleaning

Take the foster animals out of the room while cleaning and only use a gentle soap. A small amount of bleach may be used as needed. Do not use any cleaners– the animals can ingest them off of surfaces or while they are grooming themselves. While you have the foster animals, a good thorough soap and water cleaning of your foster area and the items in it will go a long way towards keeping your foster animals healthy and free of disease.

Cleaning Procedures

- Clean food and water dishes daily – if the animals are ill, use the dishwasher “Sani-cycle” or soak dishes in a weak bleach solution after washing and rinse thoroughly. (Follow bleach sanitation protocols)
- Check bedding in the sleeping area and wash (no fabric softener) as needed.
- Wash any toys
- Anything your foster animal has come in contact with should be cleaned daily or weekly. Keeping your foster area clean serves several purposes:
 - It minimizes damage to your home
 - It keeps foster animals cleaner and more comfortable
 - It decreases objectionable odors
 - It reduces the spread of disease



Health Issues

All foster animals MUST see an HSBC veterinarian. You cannot take the foster animals to your personal veterinarian without prior approval from the Foster Coordinator.

Many of the diseases that we deal with in a shelter environment have an incubation period. Your foster animal may have been infected with a disease before they came to the shelter and/or before going to foster, but will not show symptoms until after you have brought them home. Below are some symptoms to look for.

Symptoms

Call **IMMEDIATELY** for the following symptoms (if it is after hours, call the emergency line and we will guide you):

- Vomiting blood
- Severe diarrhea, especially in combination with vomiting
- Excessive blood/mucous in diarrhea (especially in puppies)
- Labored breathing
- Unconsciousness, seizures, uneven pupil dilation, or fainting
- Severe lethargy or dehydration
- Broken bones

Other Symptoms

Call during regular operating hours:

- Vomiting – less than five times
- Dehydration – To check for dehydration, lift the skin between the animal's shoulders and drop it back into place. If the skin drops back slowly or bunches up, the animal may be dehydrated. Pale, Dry/Sticky gums are another sign of dehydration.
- Diarrhea – Although common with young animals, if left unchecked it can lead to death. **Fecal Collection- must be fresh fecal, put into an airtight bag, or cup inside an airtight bag, and placed in the FRIDGE (not freezer) with the date, and name of the animal(s).**
- Fever (102.5 or higher)
- Lethargy – or other behavior changes
- Weight loss – if an animal is eating normally and/or failure to gain in a young animal
- Loss of Appetite – for more than two days in adult animals or for more than two feedings in very young animals
- Trouble eating or mouth pain
- Excessive drinking – for more than 2 days in adult animals or for more than three feedings in very young animals
- Increased urination, difficult urination, or inability to urinate – watch for sudden accidents in the house, straining, bloody, or discolored urine.
- Sneezing – with or without nasal discharge for more than one day
- Eye problems – squinting, redness, swelling, or discharge
- Ear problems – head shaking, scratching at ears, or ear discharge/odor
- Coughing – for more than one day
- Hair loss – with or without scabs, scales, crusts, scratching.

Poison Control for Dogs & Cats

People Food

Safe*

- Apples
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Bread
- Broccoli (cooked)
- Cantaloupe
- Carrots (cooked)
- Chicken & turkey (cooked)
- Eggs (cooked)
- Green beans (cooked)
- Milk/cheese (if pet is not lactose intolerant)
- Oatmeal (cooked)
- Peas (cooked)
- Pumpkin (cooked)
- Salmon (cooked)



Unsafe

- Alcohol
- Avocado
- Chocolate, coffee & caffeine
- Citrus
- Coconut & coconut oil
- Grapes & raisins
- Macadamia nuts
- Milk/cheese (if pet is lactose intolerant)
- Nuts
- Onions, garlic & chives
- Raw/undercooked meat, eggs & bones
- Salt & salty snack foods
- Xylitol
- Yeast dough

Common Houseplants

Safe

- African violet
- Air plant
- Bamboo
- Boston fern
- Cast iron plant
- Christmas cactus
- Haworthia
- Herbs (basil, sage, & thyme)
- Palms (**NOT sago palm**)
- Phalaenopsis orchids
- Spider plant
- Wax plant



Unsafe

- Aloe vera
- Asparagus fern
- Corn plant
- Cyclamen
- Dieffenbachia
- Elephant ear
- English ivy
- Herbs (lavender, oregano)
- Jade
- Lilies
- Philodendron
- Sago palm

General Care

- Bringing your Fosters in for Vaccines/Deworming/Flea & Tick medication.
- Your foster animal's next vaccination date will be listed on your Foster Animal Bio Form given to you at the time of pick up. If your foster animal requires a vaccination booster while in your care, you will need to bring them to the shelter. Contact the Foster Coordinator to arrange an approximate date/time for vaccinations.



Return and Adoption

Foster parents are encouraged to help find a new forever home for their foster animals. HSBC's ultimate goal is to have healthy animals adopted out of foster homes to clear space in the shelter for more adoptable animals. Foster parents are also encouraged to provide a write-up about the animal for display on the animal's kennel and online PetFinder description. The write-up can be clever (but always honest and positive) and should contain information about the animal's personality and behavior. You are welcome to create a kennel card for your fosters, but please also email the text to the Foster Coordinator or HSBC staff, so it can easily be added to the animal's profile. The text may be edited for grammar, spelling, and word choice, but we will do our best to keep it as close to the original as possible!

Returning Foster Animals

- If you are not adopting your foster animals and your foster animals are ready to return to the shelter for adoption, vaccinations, spay/neuter surgeries etc., please contact the Foster Coordinator or the Foster Coordinator will contact you to schedule a time.

Returning Foster Animals (Continued)

- **Please return all foster supplies at this time.** Animals returning from foster do require an exam before they can be made available, so please don't panic if your animal is not immediately on the adoption floor or website!
- If you need to return your foster animals before the scheduled spay/neuter return date, please contact the foster coordinator immediately, so a replacement foster can be arranged if needed.
- Foster parents need to understand that returning their foster animal to HSBC can be a very emotional time, even under the best of circumstances. When polled, foster parents overwhelmingly said their least favorite part of the foster program was returning the animal and not knowing if the animal was adopted, and to whom. If applicable, the Foster Coordinator will keep you up to date on the animal(s).
- All staff at HSBC understand the mixed feelings foster parents have when returning their animal(s) to the shelter. Many staff members are also foster parents and have experienced these same emotions. Do not hesitate to speak of your feelings. You are never alone! Every effort will be made to place your foster animal in the ideal home. You are always welcome to call or visit HSBC to find out the status of the animal. Privacy laws prohibit the shelter from disclosing the names of foster animals' adopters.
- Know someone interested in one of your animals? Foster parents should call the shelter to inform the Foster Coordinator that their animal has had an adoption application request. HSBC staff trust the opinions and judgment of the foster parents but reserve the right to approve or deny applications. The foster coordinator will let you know if the application has been approved for a pre-adoption hold (there is no fee associated with this hold) or if a hold on an animal has been released.
- If an application comes in for an animal in foster care, the Foster Coordinator will work on coordinating a time for the animal and interested party to meet. Sometimes foster parents are okay contacting the interested party themselves and if you are, please let the foster coordinator know! Otherwise please wait to hear from the foster coordinator.
- If you would like to oversee the meet and greet, you are welcome to come in and assist with adopters questions, comments or concerns.

Post-Foster Cleaning Recommendations:

All bedding used during the foster animal's stay should be washed on the hot/sanitize cycle with bleach and without fabric softener.

Food and Water dishes need to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized

- The dishwasher is perfectly acceptable if dishwasher safe

Litter boxes should be emptied completely and then soaked in 1% bleach for 10 minutes to fully sanitize. They should then be washed and thoroughly rinsed.

- After bleaching, the dishwasher is also okay if the litter box is dishwasher safe

Entire foster area should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

- Hard floors and walls should be thoroughly disinfected with household cleaners and/or a 1% bleach solution and then thoroughly rinsed and dried.
- Carpet should be covered by a non-porous barrier and/or thick bedding during an animal's stay and should also be thoroughly vacuumed once the animal leaves.
- Any other surface they have been in contact with should also be thoroughly cleaned as above.

Toys should be soaked in a 1% bleach solution for 10 minutes and then thoroughly rinsed and dried.

- If appropriate, they may also be run through the washer on hot/sanitize with bleach

Adoption Ambassador Program

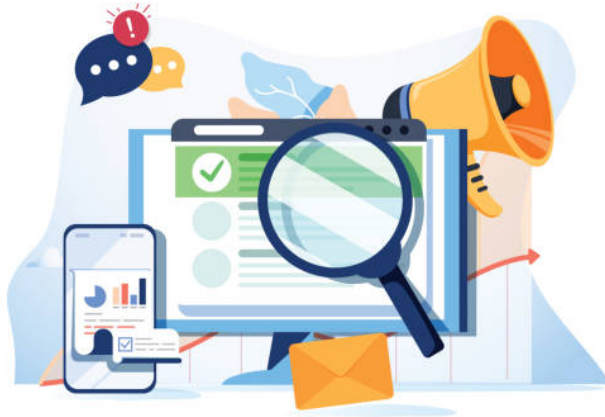
- If you, the foster parent, want to adopt your foster animal, you will need to inform the Foster Coordinator so we can place a hold on the animal for you. No dog/family meets are required for animals that have been in your home already.
- You will need to fill out an adoption application for our records. While we try to accommodate everyone, applications are processed on a first come first served basis. Occasionally there will be pre-existing holds on an animal before they enter into foster care. These are usually the finder (if the animal was a stray) or occasionally a staff member. We will inform you of any existing holds on animals at the time of pick up.

Adoption Ambassador Program



Adoption Ambassador Program

- The Adoption Ambassador Program at The Humane Society of Burnett County (HSBC) is designed to increase adoptions, reduce stress on the shelter animals and allow more space in the shelter to save lives. Through the program, foster parents can adopt out their foster animals directly from their home and potential adopters might never have to set a foot inside HSBC.
- Foster parents often say that this is one of the most rewarding parts of fostering their shelter animals.
- Foster dogs will be sent home with their tags when they are in public.
- We ask that adoption ambassadors be actively searching for homes for their foster animals. This involves lots of interpersonal communication! The more outgoing you can be while advocating for your foster animal, the faster your animal will be adopted.



Advertise! Advertise! Advertise!

- The fastest way to get your foster animal adopted into their forever home is to get them seen! Many foster parents take their foster dogs with them everywhere they go. Walks in public parks, dog parks, weekly visits to dog friendly businesses/places, and hikes are all great places to get your foster dog seen!
- Some animals can't be taken out into public places (cats, kittens, sick or injured dogs). We strongly encourage foster parents to take advantage of all of the wonders technology can do! Word of mouth is a great way to spread word that you have adoptable foster animals looking for homes along with Social Media.

Advertise! Advertise! Advertise! (Continued)

- Friends and family can be your biggest asset! Foster parents can also email pictures and descriptions of their foster animals to the Foster Coordinator so we can post them to our Social Media and Petfinder pages.
- When showing your foster animal to a potential adopter it is important to be open and honest about the animal's great qualities and not so great qualities. You are playing matchmaker, and wonderful matches don't occur if both parties are not honest. Most potential adopters know what behaviors they are willing to work on and what they are not.

Adoption Questions

Dogs

1. How active is the family?
2. Are there any breed specific laws where they live?
3. Do they have any other animals?
4. Do they have a fence? What is the height? Are they willing to walk the dog on-leash if they do not have a fence?
5. Where will the dog stay when alone? If outside, do they have insulated shelter, water, and shade?

6. How do they plan to correct any unwanted behavior?

Cats

1. Do they have dogs or other cats?
2. Will the cat be indoors?
3. Does anyone in the family have an allergy that would cause the cat to need to be returned to the shelter?

Foster parents can also observe the potential adopters to judge if it is a good match with their foster animal. Some things to watch for include:

- How does the potential adopter interact with the animal? Is he/she respectful of the animal's boundaries?
- Does the animal seem fearful?
- How do the children respond to the animal? Are they respectful/ appropriate?
- Is the potential adopter respectful towards you? Does the potential adopter give lots of vague answers?
- If your foster animal does not listen to a command, does the potential adopter yell or scream, or adopt a threatening position to get the animal to obey?

If everything is going well and you believe that your foster animal and the adopter are a good match, we can begin the adoption process. We will entrust your opinion to help with this!

Adoption Process

- Please make sure that the adopter answers every question (if filling out a paper form)– the more detailed they are, the better!
- If approved by the HSBC Staff, and your foster animal has been spayed/neutered, microchipped and have had a CVI (dogs only) they are ready to go home and you can move on to the next step. If your foster animal has not been spayed or neutered, the animal will be issued a voucher, and the voucher is only good at a HSBC Veterinarian. The animal must remain with you until he has been spayed/neutered and microchipped.
- Once the adoption application has been completed, review it. Ensure that all questions have been answered honestly and that there are no contradictions between what was said aloud to you and what was written. If you have any extra questions for your potential adopter, now is the time to ask!
- This paperwork is reviewed and a background check is completed strictly involving HSBC Staff. If References checkout, the background check passes and the appropriate paperwork has been initialed and signed, then the adopter gets 2 copies of medical records, the animals' microchip paperwork (which is registered to them automatically during this process) and a copy of our contract, along with some adjustment tips and how to ease the animals' transition.
- After these have been completed, it is time for payment. Prices vary per age of the animal(s), if they're sponsored or partially sponsored, or adoption events offer a reduced price.
- Please do not send your foster animal home until payment has been received. Always call to confirm that the adopter has paid at the shelter or the Foster Coordinator will follow up with you.



•Once the adopter has paid, your foster animal is ready to go to their forever home! Give the adopter their copy of the adoption contract and the animal's folder (given to you after the animal has been spayed/neutered, or upon pick-up if the animal was previously altered).

This folder should contain:

- Microchip tag/stickers
- CVI (Certified Veterinarian Inspection) Dogs only.
- Rabies certificate (if animal is old enough to have received their vaccination)
- Rabies tag (dogs only)
- Vaccination history (will also include revaccination dates)
- 3,3,3 Adjustment/training paperwork.

If you notice anything missing from the folder, please call the shelter during regular business hours or have the adopter stop by the shelter to pick up any missing paperwork. We can mail out missing paperwork, so if they can't stop by please have them call us!

Troubleshooting

Sometimes potential adopters are not a good match for the animal they're interested in adopting. This can be for a variety of different reasons. Not every home will be absolutely perfect, but if you don't feel like the home is a good fit for your foster animal you do not have to approve the adoption application. We trust our foster parents and adoption ambassadors to choose the right adopters for their foster animals. Foster parents know their foster animals better than most of our staff because they live with them and have a better idea of what kind of home the animal will need.

How do I say no?

- If you are uncomfortable telling the potential adopter "no" give them an adoption application to fill out and let them know that HSBC will be in contact with them to approve or deny their application.
- Please contact the Foster Coordinator during regular business hours and provide a copy of the completed adoption application so she can look it over and contact the adopter.
- You may also recommend that they visit the shelter to take a look at our other adoptable animals before making any decisions. If the potential adopter is not willing to wait, remind them that all applications must be approved by HSBC management before an adoption can be completed.

High-energy dogs

When adopting out high energy dogs, it's important to make sure that the potential adopter understands that high energy breeds need a lot of exercise and mental stimulation. Ask the potential adopter how they plan on exercising the dog or if they would be open to considering a training class. *The foster parent should also take living space into consideration. A family living in a condo or an apartment might not be the best fit for a husky or a border collie if the family does not live an active lifestyle. Conversely, a potential adopter that is looking for a dog to take on long hikes and runs with may not be the right fit for an older dog with hip problems.

I want this dog/cat now

As an adoption ambassador you will eventually run into a potential adopter who has their heart set on taking an animal (any animal) home that day. This is usually characterized by the "point and claim", in which the potential adopter takes one look at an animal and says "I want that one". They are usually in a rush and are unwilling to spend time meeting/greeting the animal or talking to you. They also do not want to wait for the animal to be altered if it has not been altered previously, and often do not want to schedule a time to introduce their dogs to the dog they are interested in. *Try to stay calm and in control of the meeting. Remind them that no animal can go home until they have been altered, and dogs cannot go home until they have met all of the dogs they are moving in with.

Do not let them pressure you into approving an adoption that you would not approve otherwise! Remind the potential adopter that there is an adoption process that everyone has to go through to make sure everyone is going to a great home that fits them. Suggest an alternate time to meet if they seem rushed or in a hurry to get somewhere else. If the dog/cat is not the right animal for them, recommend that they come to the shelter to look at the other animals HSBC has available. Some just need a gentle reminder that it's okay to wait- the right animal will come and it's not fair to the animal or to themselves to take home an animal just because he was the only one available.

If you are still having trouble getting the potential adopter to relax, you can ask them to leave politely. You can also have them fill out an application and let them know that a member of the shelter staff will contact them about the status of their application. If you choose the latter, please contact the Foster Coordinator and provide a copy of the adoption application and a description of your interaction with them.

I don't feel comfortable with strangers coming to my home

That's okay! As an adoption ambassador you are under NO obligation to allow strangers into your home. You can meet your potential adopters at the place of your choosing- public parks, a dog friendly business, etc. If you would like to meet at the shelter, please call ahead during regular business hours with a date and time so our staff can have a yard available for you. This can be more difficult with cats.

Do I have to give out my contact information?

NO! While it can be helpful and more time efficient for our adoption ambassadors to provide an email or number for interested parties to contact them through, the staff at HSBC is happy to facilitate contact between yourself and the interested party. Your personal information is just that, and unless we have your consent, your personal information will not be advertised at all.



Thank You, Foster Heroes

Thank you for opening your hearts and homes to animals in need. Your support means the world to us, and to them.

In Tiny's memory, and with your help, we are creating brighter futures for animals who deserve love, healing, and a second chance.

With sincere gratitude,

The Humane Society of Burnett County

**Dear Foster Family,
There I sat, alone and afraid,
You got a call and came right to my aid.
You bundled me up with blankets and love,
And when I needed it most, you gave me a hug.
I learned that the world was not all scary and cold,
That sometimes there is someone to have and to hold.
You taught me what love is, you helped me to mend,
You loved me and healed me and became my first friend.
And just when I thought you'd done all you could do,
There came along not one lesson, but two.
First you said, "Sweetheart you're ready to go,
I've done all I can and you've learned all I know."
Then you bundled me up with a blanket and kiss,
Along came a new family, they even have kids!
They took me to their home, forever to stay
At first I thought you had sent me away.
Then that second lesson became perfectly clear,
No matter how far, you will always be near.
And so foster family you know I've moved on,
I have a new home, with toys and a lawn.
But I'll never forget what I learned that first day,
You never really give your fosters away.
You gave me these thoughts to remember you by,
We may never meet again, and now I know why.
You'll remember I lived with you for a time,
I may not be yours, but you'll always be mine.
Thank you, Foster Parents!**

Know Someone Interested in being a Foster Parent?!

- Step 1: Fill out Online Application
- Step 2: Foster Coordinator will contact Interested Party
- Step 3: Schedule Home Inspection with Foster Coordinator
- Step 4: Pick up your Foster Animal(s)
- Step 5: Enjoy being a Foster Parent!