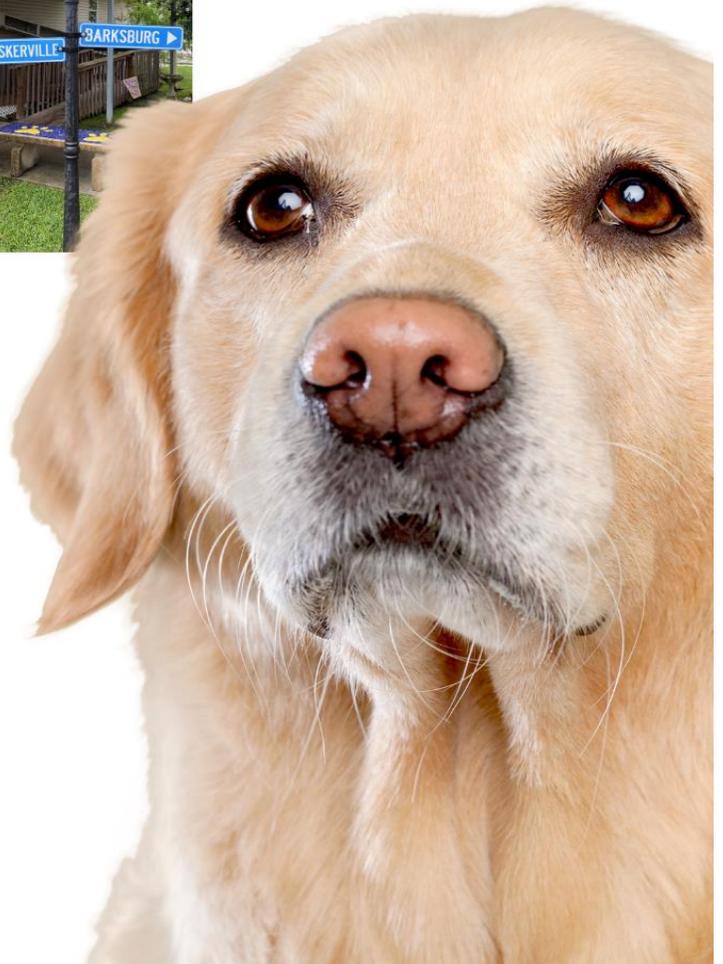

SUGAR LAND ANIMAL SERVICES



FOSTER HANDBOOK AND GUIDELINES



December 2021

Foster Program Policies and Procedures

Understanding Your Manual

This handbook summarizes many of Sugar Land Animal Services (SLAS) policies and procedures, including the ones that you, as a Foster Parent, must follow. A Foster Parent's failure to comply with the policies and procedures contained in this handbook may result in a termination of the relationship between a Foster Parent and SLAS. All SLAS staff members are responsible for administering the policies described in this handbook. We are happy to provide further information or clarification on this Handbook if needed. Please note that SLAS may modify, rescind, delete, or add to the provisions of this handbook at any time. If any changes are made, SLAS will notify Foster Parent(s) as soon as possible via the email provided on the application.

Fostering Program Description

A foster home is a temporary living arrangement for animals in our Foster Program through placement with individuals, known as Foster Parents, in the Sugar Land community. As a Foster Parent with SLAS, you are a volunteer and part of a massive life-saving mission to help prevent animal homelessness and overpopulation. The animals in our Foster Program need a temporary place to recover from medical procedures, relax away from the stress of the shelter, grow large enough to enter our adoption program, wait their turn to be transported to a shelter in another area, or mature as a pet. We see you as a part of our team and with that we have expectations that must be met to ensure a positive fostering process.

Housing Requirements

When fostering a pet for SLAS, you are expected to provide a secure and caring housing environment. Cats and kittens must always be housed indoors while in the foster program, unless specific arrangements have been made with the Foster Team. Puppies under 6 months of age should not go to outside public areas until they have received at least 2 rounds of booster vaccinations.

All dogs should be on leash when outside of your secure, fenced yard. They should not be housed outside in your yard when you are not home. Adult foster dogs should not be given free access to a "doggie door" or any other access door to the outside when you are not at home. SLAS will lend you a kennel to house your foster pet indoors when you are away from the home. This kennel is the property of SLAS and must be returned to SLAS at the end of the fostering period.

Legal Guardianship of Animals

All animals in the foster program are the legal property of SLAS until adoption paperwork has been fully processed.

Health and Temperament

SLAS does not guarantee any health or temperament of an animal entering your care. By taking an animal into your home, you are acknowledging that you will accept the risk of taking an animal home with unknown or limited history. All known medical and behavioral information will be provided at the time of pick up. It is the responsibility of the Foster Parent to ensure they are following the proper protocols for keeping their foster pet and family safe.

Conflicts of Interest

As a supporter of and volunteer for SLAS, a Foster Parent should avoid any outside activity that could negatively affect the independence and objectivity of your judgment, interfere with timely and effective performance of your duties and responsibilities, discredit SLAS, or conflict/appear to conflict with SLAS' best interest. The success of SLAS rests on its reputation and the goodwill of the community. Unless expressly authorized, no

outside activity should involve the use of SLAS assets, funds, materials, facilities, or time or services of other SLAS affiliates. Violations of this policy may result in release from the Foster Parent's relationship with SLAS. If a Foster Parent is asked to take part in an activity that conflicts with the vision and philosophies of SLAS, or if a potential or actual conflict of interest arises, please reach out to a SLAS management.

Adoption Prices and Receiving Payment

If an animal has been identified as having an adoption fee associated with them, the adoption process will need to be carried out at the main facility. Payment must be given directly to a SLAS employee. A Foster Parent shall never collect money on behalf of SLAS or solicit money from potential adopters for any reason.

Suspected Mistreatment of a Foster Pet

If there is suspected mistreatment of a foster pet, SLAS will take appropriate measures to investigate. If you are found to have mistreated an animal, either as a Foster Parent or before joining the program, you will be immediately suspended while we investigate and possibly terminated from our Foster Program. Incidents that occur within the Sugar Land city limits will be investigated for possible criminal animal cruelty charges.

Contacting the Team

We understand that having a new foster pet can raise a lot of questions. We want to be able to assist you with anything that might occur. We ask that you follow the appropriate channels to ensure that your questions are being answered in a timely manner. The best way to contact the Foster Team is through email at shelteroperations@sugarlandtx.gov. We ask that you use email for any non-emergency questions only. This could include medical questions that are not life-threatening, questions that pertain to behavior, placement/offsite opportunities, adoption, or any other foster pet related questions that you do not see the answer to in the manual.

We will reply to non-emergency emails as quickly as possible, but we cannot guarantee that it will be immediate. Feel free to reach out again if you do not hear from us within 72 hours. After hours, this number can also direct you to who to contact in case of an emergency.

Foster Program Phone Line (281) 275-2364

Lost Foster Pet

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, your foster pet may escape from you or your home. If this should happen, please call and email the SLAS Foster Team immediately with the following information:

- The animal's ID# (EX: A1234567) and Name (this can be found on your foster pet's paperwork or emails)
- Last known location
- Date and time of escape
- What the situation was when escape occurred (opening the front door, walking the foster pet, etc.)

We suggest that you place ads on local lost and found websites, Facebook pages (including your personal page) and NextDoor.

Should the animal be picked up by an Animal Services Officer of SLAS, the Foster Team will be notified and will contact you immediately. The Foster Team can request that an officer be sent out to survey the area. Always keep the Foster Team informed with any updates by phone or email.

Deceased Foster Animal

It is never easy to lose an animal and it affects each of us differently and personally. As a Foster Parent, it is

important not to blame yourself for any loss that may occur. Please understand that sometimes we are operating against unknown illnesses or, especially in the case of neonatal animals and other fragile populations. Due to this, we understand that accidents or a decline in health can occur. Remember that everything you do for these animals is in the efforts to create a positive outcome and to save a life. SLAS is always here to assist you in case an animal in your care passes.

If an Animal Passes in Foster:

1. Make sure the animal has passed. In some cases, especially with neonates, a very cold, hypoglycemic kitten/puppy can appear to be deceased but may not be.
2. Contact the Foster Team immediately through phone. The Team will provide directions.
3. Wrap the animal in a cloth and place it inside of a zip lock bag or a bag that is size appropriate.
4. With a Sharpie, write the animal's name and A# on the outside of the bag. This is very important as all deceased animals must be accurately reported in SLAS records.
5. If you are not immediately able to bring the animal to SLAS, or it is overnight, the animal may be stored in its appropriately sized bag in a freezer until you are able to do so.

Should you wish to cremate your Foster Pet, communicate this to the SLAS Team. While we cannot offer that service at our facility, we do understand if you wish to seek this option privately at your own cost. Prior to cremation, the remains must be brought to SLAS in order to verify identity.

Returns to the Facility

There are multiple reasons why your Foster Pet will need to return to SLAS. If you need to return your foster pet and it is not a critical emergency, we ask that you schedule an appointment.

If you are having an emergency and need to return your foster pet immediately, you can contact the foster office.

Getting Started as a Foster Parent

Commitments as a Foster Parent range from just a couple of days to several months, so you can choose an option that fits your lifestyle. The first step to becoming a Foster Parent begins with creating an account with a communication platform called Better Impact. From there, you'll find valuable information that guides you as to the best ways of communicating with the Foster Team, as well as important guides to connect you to our Facebook Page, and other informational platforms.

Selecting a Foster Pet

While most pets located at SLAS are eligible for fostering opportunities, we look to our Foster Parents to assist us with those who need fostering the most. The pets that we believe need you the most include:

- Nursing mom and babies
- Orphaned underage and neonatal pets who are too young to be adopted
- Pets identified as needing additional medical support
- Shy or nervous pets that need a home to decompress
- Medium to large adult dogs

If a pet catches your eye (or you're just interested in more information about one) you can schedule an appointment to talk with one of our Foster Team members by emailing shelteroperations@sugarlandtx.gov. Our Foster Team will be more than happy to provide you the information you require to make a final decision regarding if this is the right pet for you.

If you do not find a match right away, you can still either make an appointment, or keep an eye out on our Trello adoption board for a pet that you're interested in!

Foster Pet Isolation

When you take a foster pet from SLAS, we recommend that you keep them separated from your personal pets for at least 72 hours. This is recommended for the safety and protection of your personal pets. We can give no guarantees about the health and behavior of a pet coming from our facility into your home. Pets are fully vetted upon intake when arriving to SLAS, but it is always a good idea to be on the safe side when it comes to your personal pets. Please note that some diseases will not always appear within the first 24-48 hours of arrival to the shelter, or your home, and can incubate in the body for longer than that time frame. An enclosed area or separate room with no carpet will often work best for your foster pet during the isolation period (such as your laundry room or an unoccupied bathroom).

Pre-Treating Your Dwellings and Yard

Texas is home to several very common viruses carried by wildlife and domestic pets that are found on most ground surfaces in our backyards. The warm climate, minimal freezes, and rainy springtime can allow highly contagious illnesses, such as Parvovirus and Distemper, to have longer gestation times outdoors than other states. Even if your backyard is fully fenced, wildlife can spread viruses through possible contaminants in your yard.

You can pre-treat hard surfaces, such as your patio or deck, with a bleach to water mixture of 1:10 (of 5.25% - 6.15% household bleach) on any surface. With this pre-treatment, you should be able to safely let underage puppies out onto these locations. Puppies under 6 months of age should not go out onto the grass or dirt that you cannot pre-treat until they have had 2 rounds of booster vaccinations. Adult dogs that have been vaccinated are much less susceptible to contract these viruses and, in most cases, can go out into your fully contained yard onto the grass or dirt without the need for pre-treatment. We do always recommend pre-treating your dwellings if you are unsure of the tenant history.

Prepping for First Day: Items and Expectations

Here is a good list of items for you to have the first time you ever bring home a new foster pet:

BASICS ITEMS

- Species appropriate food (Look for brands with ingredients that you recognize)
- Pet stain and odor remover with enzyme destroyers
- Grooming brushes
- Water and food bowls
- Bedding, blankets, and towels
- Crate, carrier and/or baby gate
- Shampoo/conditioner
- 10-16ft leash for unsecured yards

FUN AND GAMES

- Food dispensing toys
- Toys to relieve boredom
- Training treats to learn new things!

DOGS SPECIFIC ITEMS

- 4-6 ft leash for walking
- Poop bags
- Long-lasting durable chews
-

CAT SPECIFIC ITEMS

- Litter box and scooper
- Litter (non-clumping)
- Scratching posts of different varieties

Decompression Period

Remember that this is more than likely a confusing time for your new foster pet. They have just left the chaotic environment of the shelter and are bound to be feeling a little overwhelmed. It can be tempting to bring them with you to shop or visit friends or go out to eat, but your foster pet should go straight to your home and be allowed to settle in before taking them anywhere. It can take days to several months for an animal to become comfortable in your home and with your routine. Be patient and allow for them to have some time to decompress.

You should plan to create a quiet space for your foster pet with a crate setup that is “den like” or give them a room such as an unoccupied bathroom. If the foster pet you bring home appears stressed out or shut down, allow them to have a space that is entirely their own. Allow your foster pet to relax before immediately subjecting them to social situations.

For dogs, when you first arrive home, walk them around outside on their leash to allow for a chance to go to the bathroom. Keeping them on leash at first can be helpful, especially when entering a new environment with so many smells and potentially scary new sounds. A leash will keep them from running away from you or chasing objects that could be potentially harmful. Once you’re inside the house, it might take a bit of time for your new foster pet to relax. The more you can relax into a routine, the more your foster pet will, too.

For cats, starting with a small space can make them feel much more comfortable about their new dwellings. Often, they will want a place to hide and make sure the environment is safe to move in. Allow them to have a space that belongs to them without intrusion from other pets. As they begin to get more comfortable, you can allow them to have more free roaming time.

Please also note that all animals are individuals; they all have different adjustment and decompression periods.

Important Medical Information

SLAS can make no guarantees about the health of an animal entering your home. During pick up, a Foster Team member will review your foster pet's medical notes and do a quick visual observation for any obvious signs of illness or injury. You will also be given a copy of the most current medical records of the foster pet, as well as any medication that they might be on. Please speak to a Foster Team member directly with any questions regarding your foster pet's medical history.

Mandatory Vaccinations and Preventatives

All animals are given the following when they enter the facility:

- DA2PP Vaccine – given every three weeks until the pet is over four months OR two vaccinations have
- FVRCP Vaccine – given every three weeks until the pet is over four months old OR two vaccines have
- Microchip –registered to SLAS until adoption has been processed
- Rabies Vaccine – will receive if the animal is over three months
- Dewormer
- Species appropriate flea/tick prevention

Additional treatments prior to fostering:

- Rabies vaccine
- Heartworm Test – if over six months Heartworm Prevention
- FeLV/FIV Test - if over six months
- Scheduling Spay and Neuter Surgery (If you have a foster pet that is over 8 weeks of age and 2 lbs., a surgery will be scheduled before the pet is picked up.)

Sick or Injured Foster Pets

The symptoms listed below are not always indicative of an issue, but you should schedule a medical appointment if you notice any of the following:

Ears

- Dark, flaky debris, especially in cats
- Dark, waxy discharge accompanied by yeasty smell
- Painful when rubbed or cleaned
- Consistent scratching at ear

Nose

- Yellow, green or heavy oozing discharge
- Excessive sneezing with discharge

Eyes

- Yellow or green discharge
- Uneven pupils
- Swollen or bloodshot eyes, including 3rd eyelid

Stomach (Internal)

- Loss of appetite past two meals

- Multiple Vomiting episodes – either heavy gagging with bile or phlegm

Mouth

- Trouble eating or chewing
- Pale gums
- Ulcers or lacerations on gums or lips

Fecal/Urination Issues

- No bowel movement for more than 48 hours
- No urination for more than 24 hours, especially in male cats

Gait

- Sudden lameness that does not improve with rest within a day
- Animal exhibits pain or stiffness upon walking or handling

Deciphering Your Foster Pet's Fecal Matter

It might not be the most pleasant, but we can often find out an ailment from the consistency of your foster's bowel movements. There are several typical causes of diarrhea in our shelter animals. The most common reason why an animal might have diarrhea is due to a change in diet, such as changing brands or adding an extra stinky treat. Changes in diet are sometimes necessary to ensure a consistency to an appropriate food. If you find your foster has a sensitive tummy, or is prone to gas/diarrhea, you can always add a small amount of pumpkin or plain yogurt to their food. The best way to alleviate diarrhea is to keep your foster on a consistent diet. Some mild diarrhea will usually clear up on its own. However, if you find that your fosters are consistently having diarrhea for several days, there could be another issue going on. Below is a diarrhea chart that will help guide you in what you can do to help your foster pet and when it is time to bring them in for a medical appointment. Please contact your Foster Team member if the diarrhea remains after a few days. We will ask that you collect a sample in a Ziploc bag with the animal ID and name written in black sharpie marker on the outside. Staff will run a fecal test to hopefully identify the source of tummy issues.

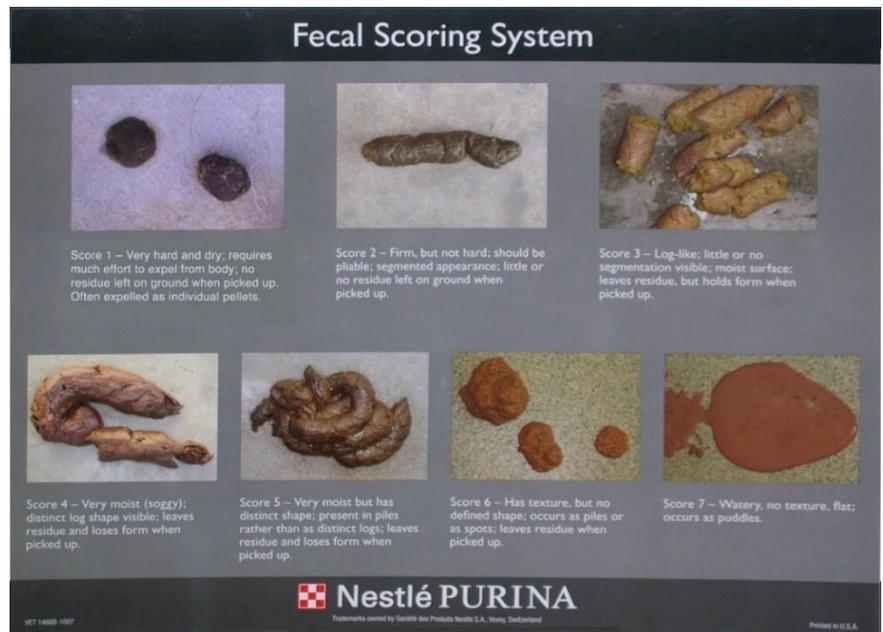
Additional reasons we see diarrhea might be:

- Stress/excitement
- Coccidia or other parasites
- Viral (corona, panleukopenia, etc.)
- Failure to properly keep animal and/or living space free from filth

The Importance of Cleanliness:

Keeping the animal's body and living space clean is crucial to having a healthy and successful experience.

- Make sure the animal's face, mouth and genital areas are always clean from food and/or organic matter
- If you are fostering an animal that uses a litter box, the litter must be scooped daily and replaced with fresh non-clumping litter. The litter pan must be cleaned as well
- Remove ALL organic matter before cleaning/bleaching any area
- Consider yourself 100% contaminated if you came in contact with a contagious disease
- Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated animals should not be allowed to interact unless discussed with the Foster Team



The faster we can identify the causes and type of poop in an animal, the quicker we can get a treatment plan in action. Just when we think an animal might have a parasite infestation, we could be looking in the wrong direction! It is crucial to keep in mind that there are various reasons for diarrhea, and it is important to be able to understand the root cause.

In the Home with a Foster

Feeding Guidelines

Be sure to have the appropriate food for the arrival of your foster pet. The best types of food and treats are not the most expensive but have ingredients that you recognize and are free of dyes, parabens, and fillers (ex. Corn). You should never give your foster pet food intended for people, nor should you feed them scraps off your plate. Certain types of human food can be toxic to animals and cause symptoms from allergic reactions, lethargy, organ failure, and even death.



Dog Parks, Public Outings and Leash Etiquette

There is a saying that “a tired dog is a good dog” and that is actually very true! Dogs are like humans in that they’re happy when their physical and mental state is healthy. Giving a dog mental and physical exercise sets them up for success and understanding a dog’s age, temperament, energy level and overall health will help you in creating a satisfied pooch. When you bring home an animal that has an immeasurable amount of energy, take advantage of it! Taking a dog for a walk (or a run) not only exercises and tires them out, it creates a bonding experience for you and the animal.

Knowing the how to act in the public setting will set you and your foster pet up for success. We encourage you to exercise your foster pet, but we want you to be smart and considerate of others while you do. As the Foster Parent, you are always required to keep your foster dog on a leash in any public area. Foster dogs are not allowed to go to off-leash dog parks. As fun as dog parks may seem, they can be a very high stress environment for any animal. When you are in public with your foster dog, understand the pet’s limitations and be able to recognize the signs of what makes the animal uncomfortable. See the provided infographic for more information on reading body language. Along those lines, it is incredibly inappropriate to allow a foster dog to run up on other animals, even while on the leash. Not only does this set up a meeting for failure, as outlined in the dog to dog meet and greet sections, but it might not be a welcome greeting by the other animal. Retractable leashes should not be used as they do not hold enough control if your animal becomes frightened or over-aroused.

Remember that you are your foster pet’s ambassador and showcasing your foster pet is very important in finding their new home! Allowing your foster pet to be a rude and intrusive dog does not show off their best qualities, nor does it help them find a home. If you are struggling to have a nice outing with your foster, we recommend checking out the walking equipment and Common Behavioral Tips section to see if this alleviates behavioral concerns.

Walking Equipment

Whether you are struggling with a dog who pulls, barks, or tries to flee, having the appropriate walking equipment can make your outings go from annoying to enjoyable. Please let SLAS know if you need assistance in selecting equipment best suited to your Foster Pet.

Marketing Your Foster

When your Foster Pet is 6 weeks old and the appropriate weight, pending any medical or behavioral concerns, they will become available for adoption on our SLAS website. Even though they are visible, Foster Parents are strongly encouraged to let others know that their foster pet is available for adoption using resources such as friends, family, work colleagues and social media networks like Facebook, Instagram, and NextDoor. Have fun and be creative while keeping in mind SLAS conduct guidelines!

If you're struggling with receiving interest about your foster pet, double check that they have a photo that shows off their personality, and a biography that tells a bit more about them. Updated photos and videos of your foster pet should be sent to shelteroperations@sugarlandtx.gov to be incorporated into the online profiles. Make sure to include the Foster Pet's name and Animal ID. Here are some additional tips for marketing your foster pet:

Photographs

A good photo is Bright. Clear. Happy. Photographs can be the key to your foster pet's adoption. Getting photos that are well-lit, in focus and that give the viewer a window into a pet's personality can be tricky, but we have some ideas that can make this much easier for you.

Always Have Your Camera Handy

Without a camera handy, you may not be able to capture those intimate moments that will help your pet make an emotional connection, like when your foster cat is finally comfortable enough to rest their head in your lap, or when your own dog and your foster dog curl up together on the couch. Here are some examples:

Take Photos with People and/or Other Animals

Photographs taken with people and/or other animals are great because they not only feature the pet, they give information as well. A photo of two dogs together looking happy tells potential adopters, "This dog is good with (at least some) other dogs." A photo of a cat and a small child implies that the cat is safe with children. Keep this in mind when creating marketing material for your foster pet.

Take Photos of Dogs Outdoors

Studies have shown that photographs of dogs taken outside can help dogs get adopted more quickly. Outside, the options for nice-looking backgrounds are unlimited, and dogs' stress levels may be lower, enabling you to get better photos.

Take Multiple Photos

One foster explains, “I am an awful photographer. This is easily combated by taking one million rapid fire photos at once. Odds are you’ll snap something to work with.” Whether you’re an ace photographer or not, taking multiple photos increases the chances of coming up with something good!

Make Sure the Pet Is Looking into the Camera

The eyes are the window to the soul, so it follows that eye contact is helpful in establishing an emotional connection, even if it’s just from a photograph.

Use Photos to Showcase Personality

We want potential adopters to get a feel for our foster pets’ personalities, so use photos in a way that does just that. Take photos that capture an aspect of a pet’s personality. When viewed together, one gets a more accurate picture of who they are.

Videos

Great videos can give the best idea of who your foster is. Videos have the power to make a connection before an official meet-and-greet happens. Make your video 30 seconds or less. Attention spans are short, so make sure your video is fast-paced and succinct.

Getting Your Foster Adopted

Is My Foster Pet Ready for Adoption?

SLAS does not place a waiting period on pets eligible for adoption beyond the ordinance requirements for stray hold timeframes. In addition, SLAS does not automatically withhold a pet’s visibility when first transitioning into a foster’s home.

Foster pets will begin to show on the SLAS website immediately and will be available for adoption when they are

- Determined to be medically and/or behaviorally sound
- At least 6 weeks of age
- Be at an appropriate weight

My Pet is Available for Adoption – Now What?

When a Foster Pet is on the SLAS Website, staff will begin to receive inquiries through the City’s email address. Your information is never provided to anyone inquiring about your Foster Pet.

After staff receives an inquiry, you will be contacted to schedule a time to bring in the Foster Pet to meet the potential adopter. Failure to respond to staff requests will affect your ability to continue fostering with SLAS.

What if I feel it’s Not a Good Match?

First, it’s important to stop and take a look at why we might be feeling that this match isn’t a good fit. Often, we hear the term, “gut feeling” regarding why an individual isn’t the person that you believe should adopt a particular pet. While this isn’t to say completely disregard any concerns, the reality is that our “gut instinct” can be a funny thing. Here are some things to ask yourself if you find you’re uncomfortable over a decision:

- Did this person already return a pet, and you believe they are being irresponsible?
- Does the worry you have about this adopter stem from their home location or description?
- Are you worried that this person is too young or too elderly to be able to properly care for this pet?
- Do you feel like this person is unable to afford the care or supplies needed for a pet?

We encourage you to bring your concerns to SLAS management. However, we require all staff, volunteers and foster parents, to practice objectivity and refrain from negative assumptions based on internal bias for what the “ideal home” may look like.

Adoption

Until the animal has been fully processed in the SLAS system, meaning the adopter has signed all paperwork, the animal is still the property of SLAS. This means that the animal cannot go to any other household.

Common Behavioral Tips for Dogs

Teaching Your Foster New Tricks

Positive reinforcement training is a wonderful and positive way to not only teach your foster pet basic helpful home-living behaviors (such as sit, down, and off) but also a way for you to bond with your foster pet!

The basics of positive reinforcement training involve using reinforcements, or things a pet wants, to encourage the behavior we're asking for. Reinforcements can include treats (in moderation) and human interactions such as petting and praising to encourage good behavior. Praise and reinforce the behaviors you DO want - ignore the behaviors you don't. You do not punish by hitting, pushing, or striking your pet. These types of corrections have been scientifically proven to not only not work long term in building good behavior in pets and can also cause unwanted aggressive behaviors to appear or increase.

Puppies and Socialization

When we hear the word “socialization” we tend to recognize the need for introducing a pup to other dogs and people. However, it's important we choose appropriately. Puppies, especially the very young, would do best to interact with other young puppies and well-socialized adult dogs. Dog parks are NOT an appropriate setting for puppy socialization as there are unknown factors and far too much unpredictability. We also want to be careful about the people we introduce to our young puppy (or those who introduce themselves without asking). Make sure you pay attention to how the person is interacting with your dog AND the signals your dog is giving. It is okay to remove your pup from a situation when they seem uncomfortable.

LOCATION

For puppies UNDER 4 months, even if pup is up to date on all their vaccinations, their immune systems are still developing and so they are still at risk for contracting potentially life-threatening diseases like Parvovirus and Distemper Virus. You want to avoid high traffic areas like parks and pet stores, but neighbors' and friends' homes and yards are perfectly safe if all resident dogs are up to date on their vaccinations.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Never force a pup to approach anyone or anything, let them explore on their own terms! If a pup encounters a novelty and their initial response is wariness, praise them when they overcome it. Not only will they realize there's nothing so scary about it after all, but mom/dad LOVES it when they walk on this stuff! Toss treats around the scarier objects and let your puppy go at their own pace.

We recommend following the Rule of 12 for any dog entering the home.

Rule of 12 Positive Paws Dog Training ©2002 - Margaret Hughes

By the time a puppy is 12 weeks old, it should have:

- Experienced 12 different surfaces: wood, wood chips, carpet tile, cement, linoleum, grass, wet grass, dirt, mud, puddles, grates, uneven surfaces, on a table, on a chair, etc.
- Played with 12 different objects: fuzzy toys, big & small balls, hard toys, funny sounding toys, wooden items, paper or cardboard items, milk jugs, (all under supervision) etc.
- Experienced 12 different locations: front yard, other people's homes, school yard, lake, pond, river, basement, elevator, car, moving car, garage, laundry room, hardware store, pet store, stairs, etc.
- Met and played with 12 new people: (outside of family) include children, adults (male and female) elderly adults, people in wheelchairs, walkers, people with canes and umbrellas, crutches, hats, sunglasses, men with deep voices, people of different ethnicities, etc.
- Exposed to 12 different noises: (always keep positive and watch puppy's comfort level-we don't want the puppy scared) garage door opening, doorbell, children playing, babies screaming, big trucks, Harley motorcycles, skateboards, washing machine, shopping carts, clapping, pan dropping, vacuums, lawnmowers, etc.
- Exposed to 12 fast moving objects: (do not allow to chase) skateboards, roller-blades, bikes, motorcycles, cars, people running, cats running, scooters, children running, squirrels, etc.

And, if your puppy is over 12 weeks old, continue with the above until you have given him experience with all the above.

The Do's and Don't's of Dog Training

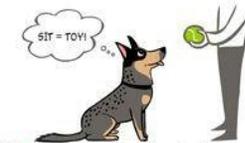
DO's



DO use rewards like treats to train your dog so your dog will enjoy training.



DO use comfortable, dog friendly equipment so that your dog feels relaxed and happy.



DO have your dog work for valued resources like meals, walks and toys so your dog looks to you for guidance.



DO build a cooperative relationship based on mutual respect, communication and trust so both you and your dog enjoy being with one another.

DON'T's



DON'T use force or punishment when working with your dog or your dog will not think training is fun and will be afraid of you.



DON'T use aversive equipment like choke collars, prong collars or shock collars or training will be painful and scary for your dog.



DON'T use confrontational methods that may frighten your dog or worse, cause your dog to react aggressively.



DON'T use methods or equipment that are uncomfortable, painful, forceful, scary or intimidating to your dog. Positive reinforcement training is so much more fun for both the dog and owner.



EAST BAY DOG TRAINERS
www.eastbaydogtrainers.org

Keep in mind that you are not trying to overwhelm your puppy with new experiences - quantity is not better than quality. Make sure your puppy is confident, well rested, and having a good time whenever you introduce them to something new. Do not overdo it either. Puppies get tired very quickly, and most importantly give your dog lots of downtime after a new experience to recuperate and rest in a safe, quiet place.

Mouthing/Play Biting

Aside from chewing, a common way in which dogs utilize their mouths is in play. It's very natural and (to a certain extent) acceptable for dogs to use their mouths when playing with one another. It's up to us humans to teach them that doing so is not acceptable when engaging with people. Here's how:

1. Redirect: As with chewing, you want to teach your dog what IS allowed. So always have toys nearby. When it comes to mild mouthing, simply engage them with a toy and continue playtime. You will probably have to repeat this several times even within the same stretch of playtime to help your dog understand.
2. Remove all attention: If your pup isn't responding after several attempts to redirect, and/or the mouthing/play bites become more intense, say "no" or "eh eh" and then immediately walk away. Don't talk to them further, don't interact with them in any way. Simply remove yourself from them. To your pup, suddenly the game has stopped. With enough repetitions, they'll come to understand that being mouthy is what causes the fun to go away. Following this, if you catch your pup go to a toy or politely (not jumping or mouthing) approach you, you can give them lots of praise and re-engage them in playtime. (Note: Ignoring is also a great tactic for attention-seeking barking).
3. Teach a calming cue: You can teach your dog a cue called "touch" or "target" to redirect and calm them.

Chewing

Dogs interact with the world with their mouths. They don't have hands and opposable thumbs. Using their mouths is how they eat, play, explore, pick things up, etc. Not only is chewing natural for dogs, but it has health benefits as well (so long as they're chewing the right things). Then how do we make sure they don't chew what they shouldn't?

Management: Your dog can't chew on what it can't reach. Keep shoes, kids' toys, remotes and other curious and chewable items out of your dog's reach. If you need to cook dinner, make a phone call, or get involved in some other task that takes your attention away from your dog, have a dog-proof area. This can be a penned-off area or even the dog's crate. It's not a punishment, so make sure your dog has plenty of positive things to keep them occupied. (One of the many benefits of crate training is to prevent destructive behaviors like chewing.)

Redirect: If all we did was prevent and correct, we wouldn't give our dogs a clear message. We want to teach them what they ARE allowed to chew on. If you catch your dog chewing on something they shouldn't, interrupt them with a neutral (non-praise, but also non-punishment) noise that gets their attention. A mild "eh eh" or "no" or a light clap of your hands are a couple ideas. Offer them an appropriate toy or chew instead as a means of redirecting the chewing behavior. While your dog is in the process of learning, offer lots of praise any time your dog picks up something they can chew.

Exercise: There is an adage that "a tired dog is a good dog". Sometimes a dog chews for no other reason than they are bored (as one might chew on the cap of a pen in a dull meeting). It's important to make sure your dog has not only plenty of physical stimulation, but mental stimulation as well. Mental stimulation can include training games, puzzle toys, even a Kong stuffed with tasty treats. A dog can run around the yard for an hour and still have stores of energy (or at least enough for chewing!), but put that same dog in front of a puzzle toy that takes them fifteen minutes and suddenly you have one pooped pup!

Jumping Up

Puppy jumping is usually greeted with enthusiasm and affection. Then one day that same behavior is greeted with irritation or worse—all because the puppy grew up.

Never reward any dog for jumping. In fact, we want to engage them as little as possible. They jump for attention, and even a stern “no” or “eh eh” is attention. And many dogs consider pushing them away to be play. Here are a few ways to effectively deter jumping behavior:

- Teach an incompatible behavior: A dog can't jump if they're expected to do something that requires all four paws on the ground (what we call having four on the floor). Give your dog a solid foundation of sit. If your dog wants your attention, they must sit for it. They only get attention as long as they have all four on the floor.
- The moment they jump up...
 - Remove all attention: Again, this means not even scolding them. Stand up and either a.) turn around and walk away, or b.) walk “through” (or past) them and keep walking.
 - Make a game of it: If turning away from and walking “through” the jumping aren't enough to get the message across, try this game. Tether your dog to a piece of heavy furniture or another stable object/fixture. Have one individual, either a family member or a guest, approach at a time. If the dog keeps all four on the floor, they get attention and affection. The moment they jump up, the person walks away out of the reach of the tether. This way the dog can't pursue attention. This is especially useful when managing an excitable, jumpy pup when guests are over. Just make sure your guests know the rules of the game! (Note: This technique is also useful for dogs who get mouthy out of excitement).
 - Use a leash: If your pup is prone to jumping, have always them wear a lightweight leash. We call this a “dragging leash” or “drag line.” When your pup starts to jump, tack the leash to the floor with your foot. The length between your foot and their collar should be enough that, if they have four on the floor, there is no tension; but as soon as they jump up, there is automatic and immediate pressure. This gives the dog instant feedback that jumping up is a.) unsuccessful and b.) uncomfortable.

With enough repetition of both these steps, your pup will pick up on the pattern: four on the floor = attention; jumping = no attention. To dogs, it's really that simple. As your dog begins to show an understanding and offers a sit in a situation where they would usually jump, lavish them with praise and other rewards.

House Training

Whether you're bringing home a brand-new puppy or an adult dog who's lived in a home before, expect messes. Even a full-grown dog who is fully house trained will need to adjust to their new home and new routine, and sometimes there might be an accident or two. The basics for potty training puppies and adults, whether previously house trained or not, are generally the same. There are some key points to keep in mind during this process that are almost universally applicable:

Holding it period

Every dog has their time limit. Puppies under six months are typically unable to hold it in for more than a few hours. Prepare for this! Hire a dog sitter or walker to come once or twice a day while you're at work. A healthy adult dog, even among smaller breeds, should have no trouble holding it for 8-10 hours in a crate or overnight. There are, of course, always exceptions.

Frequent Outings are Necessary

To avoid accidents, you will want to make sure your pup has plenty of opportunities to go outside. You also want to give them ample time. Walk them for at least 15 minutes to encourage them and give them plenty of time to go. When they do go outside, you want to reward and praise this wanted behavior.

Reward the Wins!

It's vital to successful housetraining that we NEVER scold a dog for going potty inside, even—especially—when we catch them in the act. Often, the dog won't understand that you are scolding them for going inside. They are more likely to think you are scolding them for going at all, and as a result they will want to hide from you to do their business. This means sneaking off to quiet, isolated corners of the home or behind furniture, and no one wants to play "Find the Smell!" Instead, our focus should be on praising and treating every time the pup goes outside.

Prevention & redirection

If you are still in the process of housetraining, make sure you always have eyes on your pup. The second they start to go, quickly walk them outside. Remain neutral until they're outside, and as soon as they start to finish their business out there you can reward! If you are preoccupied with other tasks, limit their access. Use a crate or exercise pen to keep them from going wherever they please.

If you're having difficulty with frequent inappropriate urination or bowel movements, please make an appointment with SLAS to rule out possible medical causes.

How to Leave your Foster Alone

While SLAS does their best to give you as much information as we have on each pet we send home, for many pets at the shelter we simply do not have extensive background information. Because of this, we recommend housing your pet in a secure manner whenever you need to leave home. SLAS cannot guarantee that a foster pet is house trained or will not chew on furniture and belongings when you are not home supervising. If needed, we can provide a crate for your foster pet. See the below section on crate training for more information.

Crate Training

Dogs are, by nature, denning animals. This doesn't mean every dog will take to the crate with ease, but it does mean you shouldn't feel guilty about crating your pup. For a puppy, a warm crate can work as an aid to house-training and a temporary play-pen when they can't be directly supervised. Crates can offer a safe space all to their own for recuperation, whether it's from an injury or simply just to get away from the kids. *As long as we aren't using crating for punishment*, it can also help correct some undesirable behaviors, such as destructive chewing. More importantly, crates can help prevent problem behaviors before they even start by helping establish a routine for your dog. It's completely reasonable to crate our pups for up to 8-9 hours each day, so long as we set them up for success with the crate. The most fundamental and vital thing to remember about crate training is the crate is never a punishment.

How to Acclimate to a Crate:

Encourage your dog to investigate the crate. Toss some treats or a favorite toy in to begin the positive association. Work on this until your dog goes in and out of the crate without displaying any nervous body language. This could take a few minutes or several days

Food is an excellent training aid. Even if your dog isn't highly food motivated, we can still use this basic necessity to our advantage.

1. Start feeding your pup around the crate. Begin by setting the bowl in front of the crate and over the next several days (or longer, depending on the dog's comfort level) gradually move the bowl further into the crate. Do NOT work on closing the gate until your dog has eaten a few meals, while relaxed, when completely inside the crate.
2. Once they've reached this point, you can begin closing the door while they're eating. At first, open the door once they've finished. Lengthen this over several mealtimes until they can stay in the crate calmly for up to ten minutes after eating.
3. If at any point they begin to bark or cry or paw at the gate, DO NOT open the gate until they have stopped. Otherwise they will think complaining will make the gate open.

After you get to this point, you can start crating your pup outside of mealtimes. In the beginning, they should be able to see you while in the crate. Wait a minute or two (this doesn't have to be while you are standing right in front of the crate, so long as your pup can see you) and then let them out. Once you've worked up to at least thirty minutes of calm, you can start leaving the home for short periods of time with your pup crated.

Departures and Arrivals

Even if your pet loves their crate, they might whine a little when you first leave. Avoid an emotional departure, as it can increase the nervousness of your dog. By being a source of excitement, we reinforce that our being away was something to be upset about in the first place. As much as we want to see how excited our dog is when we come home, we can intensify their stress when we leave by making a big to-do of our comings and goings.

Exercise to Crate More Successfully

If your pet is tired, they'll be faster to lay down and go to sleep when you leave, versus anxiously waiting for you to return home. Giving them plenty of exercise before they are crated will help them relax.

Other Alternatives

We don't want to crate a dog for longer than they're used to. Realistically, many of us have full time jobs away from home and still want to prevent destructive behaviors and messes. There are ways to work around this reality without ruining progress with the crate. You can keep your pup in a bathroom or laundry room where they can't get into anything that might hurt them. Tiled and linoleum floors are also much easier to clean up than carpet. Another option is to buy a plastic playpen or metal x pen to keep them contained in a specific area of the house.

Resource Guarding

This is a broad-spectrum term that means showing possessive, or "guarding," behavior over any object. Guarding food and/or edible objects can be defined as "food guarding." When guarding behavior occurs towards a variety of objects, not specifically only food or toys, it may be referred to as "Generalized Guarding." An easy way to describe Resource Guarding with the public is that "the dog doesn't like to share." This behavior may present itself towards other animals, people or both. However, showing resource guarding towards one is not indicative of the other. EXAMPLE: A dog showing food guarding towards another animal in the household is not guaranteed to show guarding towards a human in the house. Never allow children to interact with your foster pet during feeding time. Contact SLAS management if you see Resource Guarding in your foster pet.

On-leash Reactivity

This is a behavior that occurs usually in the form of barking towards something while the dog is on leash. This is not necessarily an indicator of aggression, but more indicative of the dog feeling excitement, fear, arousal, and/or frustration towards said object or individual. When a dog is displaying on leash reactivity towards an individual, it is advised to not allow a dog to engage with them until they have shown more relaxed behavior. Environment can play a big factor in a dog's behavior on leash. If a dog displays this behavior in shelter environment, it does not necessarily mean they will display it while in a home. Some dogs display this behavior only when in close proximity to an individual or object, others at a greater distance. Providing the appropriate walking and handling equipment for your foster can provide greater control of a foster pet who is showing this behavior.

Separation Anxiety

Separation Anxiety is a complex issue that can have many levels and variables that compound it. Typically, a dog with separation anxiety will display a dramatic response within a short time of their person leaving. This can range in intensity, depending on the dog or the length of time that the dog is left alone. It is important to note that most symptoms of boredom share characteristics with minor separation anxiety, but dogs who are bored might display these behaviors less consistently. Addressing boredom first could eliminate the unwanted behavior. The most common of these behaviors are chewing or knocking down easily accessible items, and howling, barking and/or crying.

Depending on the severity, we are looking for an adopter and/or Foster Parent who either has a flexible schedule or is home most of the time/works from home. They should be willing and able to devote time to crate-training and working on the separation anxiety. We may need to counsel the adopter if they live in an apartment or are renting (due to possible noise complaints or destruction to rental property). Depending on severity, anti-anxiety medication and/or an indestructible crate may be recommended.

Dog to Dog Introductions

With all animals, we highly recommend following the isolation protocol before doing any introductions.

This is meant to be a guide for introducing two social dogs to each other. Do not use this procedure if either dog has had a history of dog aggression and/or displays On Leash Reactivity (OLR) or Barrier Reactivity (BR) to other dogs. This reactivity can manifest as barking, lunging and even fighting or biting and can be displayed while the dog is either on the end of a leash or behind a barrier (fence, gate, etc.). While OLR and BR are not indicators of canine aggression, it can cause on leash introductions to go poorly. If you are attempting to follow this procedure and either of the dogs seems uncomfortable or begins to display OLR or BR, please cease the introduction.

Information pulled from <http://www.ourpack.org/dogdogintros.html>

How We Set Dogs Up to Fail

Many dogs have forgotten or never learned at all how to properly greet other members of their own species. Dogs are mostly on leashes, behind fences, rushed into greetings by their well-meaning people, and kept from situations that would have otherwise helped them learn canine greeting etiquette. Leash reactivity is one of the biggest dog behavioral issues caused by us humans. Tight leashes can create frustration when your dog sees other dogs on the street. This can cause body language in your dog that may look offensive to other dogs. Other behavior often facilitated by humans – pulling, hard stares, and running up to other dogs head-on – can turn greetings sour.

Dogs aren't all that different from people – they have personal space just like we do – and may become offended when a stranger invades that space. Think of it this way: if I were to wave to you from a distance, that would be a nice gesture. If I were to rush up to you and wave my hand right in your face, that would be rude, intrusive and somewhat threatening. Dogs are constantly placed into situations in which they are forced to endure invasion of their space and are set up to fail at greetings. The sad thing is that the dogs get blamed for snappy behavior or are said to be “aggressive” in these situations. But it's a normal reaction for a dog to get cranky about another dog running up, acting rude and rushing a greeting (especially so when the dog is on its own territory).

Some considerations first, please!

Before you set up a new-dog introduction, consider your own dog's general attitude towards other dogs. If your dog has a solid history of playing well with properly matched playmates, then you have a better chance at success. Pairings of the opposite sex tend to be most successful. Some dogs are uncomfortable with or reactive to new dogs and need very slow introductions. Realize that, like humans, dogs don't necessarily like every single dog they meet, and some do best as an only dog. If your dog has a history of reacting negatively to the company of other dogs, then it is probably best to just have them as an only dog.

Successful Introductions Lead to Successful Integration!

It is a must to properly introduce your current dog to a new dog, especially if the new dog is meant to become part of your family. Do not just walk a new dog into your home with your current dog waiting inside. Your dog will naturally feel that the newcomer is an intruder, not a new friend. First impressions matter! Properly introduced dogs are more likely to become buddies. The goal is to emulate the natural greetings talked about above.

To properly introduce your dog to a new dog, you'll need two people, one person per dog, and some high-value treats. These can be pieces of chicken, hot dog or cheese, anything that will get the dog's attention and that it doesn't get normally. Start by walking the two dogs on leash in the same direction in neutral territory. If you find that they pull toward each other, stare at each other or are overly excited, then you're too close too soon. Put some distance between the dogs and have them just hang out for a bit at that distance before continuing to walk. Use your treats to reward your dog for remaining calm and focusing on you. This gives them something to do while they get used to each other's presence. Be patient and relax so the dogs can relax too.

As the dogs begin calming down in each other's presence, begin to move them closer to each other. At some point they should become more relaxed, and you can proceed with your walk. What you're looking for is calm, relaxed and confident behavior. Neither dog should be overly aroused, nervous, stiff, or fearful. (If the dogs don't seem to be able to relax and be friendly, it might be best to separate until you can speak to the Foster Team.)

If they are relaxed and nicely interested in each other, then go ahead and let them get close enough to sniff. As they sniff, watch carefully. Warning signs include stiffening, low growling, avoidance, or hard stares. If you see these behaviors, calmly move the dogs away from each other. Remember, some dogs don't like the company of other dogs and they should never be forced into a greeting. Some dogs may need more time or a few more intros to get used to another dog.

If the dogs remain relaxed and pleasantly interested in each other, one or both of them may gesture to play. Keep the leashes loose and let them interact on leash for a bit to make sure all goes well. If both dogs are still relaxed and showing loose, happy body language, you can drop the leashes and let them play while dragging their leashes in an enclosed area. Take away all food from this point forward – as it can be a trigger for an argument.

Watch the play for a while to be sure everyone is minding their manners: no rude behavior or pushy type of mounting behavior allowed initially. Every few minutes, before the dogs reach a state of high arousal or over-excitement, stop the play and get the dogs calm again or walk them. Then let the play resume. End the play on a good note; don't let them play into crankiness. With you as their leader to give them guidance and direction, the dogs will get to know each other and build a trusting bond.

The next step

After they have successfully played for some time, you can bring both dogs into your house or yard with their leashes dragging behind them. If the new dog is going to be a member of your family, it's best to crate the new dog often and not let it just roam around. Make sure that both dogs are fed in separate rooms or areas, and to not introduce high value objects like chewies, bones or toys too quickly.

What if it doesn't work out?

We understand that sometimes it's just not a good fit. We encourage following the steps outlined in this document or contacting the Foster Team for more tips and, if necessary, to arrange for the return of the foster pet.

Dog to Cat Introductions

The best long-term results for a dog and cat introduction are to take your time and go through a step by step process of slowly acclimating the animals. With all animals, we highly recommend following the isolation protocol before doing any introductions.

Necessary separation

The dog and cat/s should not meet or see each other for at least a day so that the dog has time to get used to the new house and the scent of the cat. To give your cats a break and for them to also acclimate to the smell of the new dog, you can rotate "free" time in the house by kenneling or putting your dog in a secured closed off room and then allowing the cats loose in the house. If you have multiple dogs, you should do this with them individually. Multiple dogs can overwhelm a cat and create a "pack mentality" in the dogs that could make introductions extremely difficult.

The Introduction

It is best for both animals to do several short 15-30 minute "introduction sessions" a day.

1. Grab some stinky treats, put your dog on leash and bring the cat into the same room using crate or baby gate to separate
2. Reward your dog with food for staying calm while the cat is visible across the room. Do not move the dog any closer until you're able to get your dog's attention in the presence of the cat
3. Reward the dog any time they look away from the cat and especially if the dog looks at you
4. If the dog lunges or gets over excited, say "no" or "uh-uh" and back away or put them up. Be sure to reward your dog if they choose a calmer behavior afterwards. Your dog can look at the cat but should be heavily rewarded for choosing to look away from the cat
5. If your dog is showing appropriate/ calm behaviors from across the room, begin to move closer and repeat the process. Only choose to move closer after your dog has successfully shown only positive behaviors at the previous distance 3 sessions in a row

If your dog is still showing too much interest or aggressive type behavior around the cat, keep separated and contact SLAS management.

Next steps:

Assuming your new dog is remaining calm around the cat and you have moved closer in proximity to the cat in the crate or on the other side of a baby gate, you will start these exercises over again with the cat out of the crate or baby gate.

1. Start with your dog on leash across the room with the cat loose on the other side. This will look different to your dog since the cat can move more freely and normally
2. A common trigger for dogs is when the cat runs across the room so be sure to heavily reward your dog if the cat does move quickly or jumps up on something and your dog remains calm
3. Work up to a closer proximity to the cat but not allowing the cat to approach the dog or for the dog to have access to the cat

Step four:

If the dog is doing well on leash and is responsive to you around the cat, you can try them loose. Keep a leash on your dog but allow it to drag on the ground beside them like an extended handle that you can step on or quickly pick up if you need to interrupt your dog. Allow your cat to give appropriate warnings like hissing or swatting to indicate that he needs space. Your dog should respond to this by moving away, reward him when he does this. If your dog does not understand the cat's warning or thinks that it is play, help your dog by calling or guiding him away by the dragging leash. Continue to reward your dog for relaxed behavior and for any time that your dog looks at the cat but chooses to look/move away.

Reminders:

- *Even dogs that respect cats indoors may chase or lunge toward cats outdoors so be very careful having your dog and cats in the backyard together.
- *New dogs and cats should not be left alone together for at least the first 6 months you have the dog. You are still getting to know your new dog and what he/she will do in every circumstance.
- *Every animal might have a different reaction to the other, so please be mindful and aware of your animal's comfort level.

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier

By Lili Chin www.doggiedrawings.net



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"
look away/head turn



STRESSED
yawn



STRESSED
nose lick



"PEACE!"
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED
scratching



STRESS RELEASE
shake off



RELAXED
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"
play bow



"READY!"
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS
head tilt



HAPPY
(or hot)



OVERJOYED
wiggly



"MMMM..."



"I LOVE YOU,
DON'T STOP"

How Kids SHOULD NOT Interact with Dogs

It's common sense. Just imagine how people should interact with each other.

Avoid taking people's food



Avoid bothering dogs when they are eating

Avoid stealing other people's toys



Avoid taking a dog's bones or toys

Avoid putting your face right up to someone else's face



Avoid putting your face right up to a dog's face

Avoid bothering when asleep



Avoid bothering animals when they are resting. Let sleeping dogs lie.

Avoid pestering



Avoid grabbing tail/ears

Avoid climbing on or trampling



Avoid climbing on or trampling

Avoid pinching



Avoid hugging. Most dogs dislike it.

Avoid screaming around



Avoid hollering and shouting. Use your "inside" voice instead.

Dr. Sophia Yin, DVM, MS
The Art and Science of Animal Behavior

For additional free dog bite prevention resources and more dog behavior books and products, visit www.drsophiayin.com.



Common Behavioral Tips for Cats

Cat to Cat Introductions

As a species, cats tend to need more time to adjust to changes in their environment, and, like us, they can vary in their social personalities. When introducing one cat to another, consider things such as energy level, history with other cats, and/or behavior when viewing another cat. None of this can ever predict 100% your cat's reaction when you bring home another pet, but it could give insight into how they might react when they smell or see another animal in your home. With all animals, we highly recommend following the isolation protocol before doing any introductions.

Step One: Separate at first for long term success

The first impression between two cats matter because it can set the mood for the entire relationship. We are not entirely different from cats in this regard. If the first time you meet someone they say something unpleasant to you, it can take some time to shake off the first interaction. To aid in a successful first meeting, it is best to separate your resident cat from the new can when first brought home to control the initial introduction.

While separated, the two cats should be able to smell and hear each other, but not see or touch to prevent any negative interactions. This can be done either by placing your new cat in a spare bedroom, laundry room, a walk-in closet, or even a bathroom. To prevent negative touch, a baby gate is highly recommended to place in front of any door, but also a towel underneath can substitute for this. During separation, each cat should be provided with their own necessary items (food and water, litter box, scratching post, bed and toys) to alleviate any stress.

After a few days, we recommend allowing the cats to rotate between the two rooms. This allows your new cat to be able to explore, but also lets your two cats separately investigate the other's smell. Play around with removing the barrier that has been preventing touch at this point and notice if either cat's reactions to each other under the door is positive.

Step Two: The View

Once you begin to see no aggression (swatting, growling, etc.) between the two cats under the door, you can begin to introduce the cats to the sight of each other. A tall baby gate can be extremely helpful here, or even to rotate time in an extra-large wire crate if you have an agile cat.

Step Three: Meeting and Friendship

After viewing each other without any direct swatting, you can open the door to allow for the cats to interact with each other. Do not force the cats to interact, allow them to approach each other on their own terms. It is normal during this time for cats to hiss at or low growl at each other. However, they should not charge at or bite each other. If this happens and the cats begin to fight, do not attempt to pick them up or grab them. Try to separate them by using your voice or something that you can put in between them. You can also prepare yourself with a spray bottle filled with water. Once separated in their own rooms, go back to Step Two or even Step One to work on a slower integration process.

Using/Not Using the Litterbox

Most cats will instinctively gravitate towards using a litter box from an early age. However, inappropriate elimination outside of the litter box can occur for many reasons, creating stress between you and your new cat. Here are some important basics to know about the litter box, and tips for addressing inappropriate elimination.

1. Placement makes perfect! When you are placing the litter box, it should be in a location that can give your cat a bit of privacy. Avoid placing it next to your cat's food or water dish, and/or loud or suddenly startling noises (such as the washing machine or dishwasher). If you have adopted a young kitten, we recommend starting them off in a small room with their box until you see them consistently using it.
2. One box per cat, plus one. Have you ever had to share your bathroom with a less than ideal roommate? Your cat may enjoy the company of their fellow friends, but sharing their box is a different matter. To keep the peace, we recommend having one litter box per cat, plus one more. This means that in a house with two cats, we recommend at least 3 litter boxes in various locations of the house.
3. Keep the box clean. No one likes a filthy toilet, and your cat will agree. Solid waste and clump should be scooped daily, and a complete wash of the box should happen at least once a month.
4. The cat chooses the litter. We suggest using a litter that is plain and unscented, but the choice is ultimately up to your cat. If you have a cat that is used to a certain type of litter, we recommend sticking with it. Cats prefer a routine and stability and changing the type of litter can cause stress and inappropriate elimination.

If you are struggling with litter box issues, there could be several factors at play. We recommend doing the following:

1. Rule out illness. The first step to take if you notice your cat is not using their litter box is to discuss this with a veterinarian to rule out medical issues as the underlying cause. If observed, please contact SLAS to review possible medical causes.
2. Clean up all messes. Any area that has been soiled should be cleaned properly with an enzyme-based cleaner. Cleaners that have this will break down the urine/stool traces in areas that you might not be able to see, but the cats can smell.
3. Prevention & redirection: If you are still in the process of houstraining, or if you have already followed the above steps, make sure you limit the access of the house. This could mean a large crate or a small easily cleanable room (such as a bathroom or laundry room) to help re-train the cat to use the crate.

Managing Inappropriate Scratching

Cats like to scratch. They scratch during play. They scratch while stretching. They scratch to mark territory or as a threatening signal to other cats. And because cats' claws need regular sharpening, cats scratch on things to remove frayed, worn outer claws and expose new, sharper claws. All this scratching can cause a lot of damage to furniture, drapes and carpeting!

What to Do About Your Cat's Scratching Habits

The best tactic when dealing with scratching is not to try to stop your cat from scratching, but instead to teach where and what to scratch. An excellent approach is to provide appropriate scratching posts. The following steps will help you encourage your cat to scratch where you want them to:

- Provide a variety of scratching posts with different qualities and surfaces. Try giving your cat posts made of cardboard, carpeting, wood, sisal and upholstery. Once you figure out your cat's preference for scratching, provide additional posts of that kind in various locations. Keep in mind that all cats want a sturdy post that won't shift or collapse when used.
- Encourage your cat to investigate posts by scenting them with catnip, hanging toys on them and placing them in areas where they'll be inclined to climb on them.
- Discourage inappropriate scratching by removing or covering other desirable objects.
- Put plastic, double-sided sticky tape, sandpaper or upside-down vinyl carpet runner (knobby parts up) on furniture or on the floor where your cat would stand to scratch your furniture. Place scratching posts next to these objects, as "legal" alternatives.
- Clip your cat's nails regularly.

- Consider putting plastic caps on your cat's claws so that they'll do no damage if they scratch on something in your home. These special caps attach to claws with an adhesive. They're temporary, lasting four to six weeks.
- If you catch your cat in the act of scratching an inappropriate object, you can try startling by clapping your hands or squirting with water. Use this procedure only as a last resort, because your cat may associate you with the startling event (clapping or squirting) and learn to fear you.

What NOT to Do

- Do not hold your cat by the scratching post and force them to drag claws on it. This practice could seriously frighten your cat and teach them to avoid the scratching post completely.
- Do not throw away a favorite scratching post when it becomes unsightly. Cats prefer shredded and torn objects because they can really get their claws into the material. Used posts will also appeal to your cat because they smell and look familiar.

Is Declawing an Option?

Declawing is not an option for animals that are owned by SLAS. Cats have a normal and instinctive need to scratch, stretch, and climb on surfaces. These behaviors are instrumental in helping remove excess claw material and keeping a cat's nails clean and in good shape. While these behaviors may become destructive to furniture or household items, cats are unaware that this instinctive behavior may not coexist well with their owner's belongings. While the behavior might be normal to cats, the damage caused could be resulting in increased stress on the people in the home. To reduce this, you might consider the option of "declawing" to still allow your cat to perform this behavior while keeping your household items safe. Before you make this decision, we'd like to offer you some information about this procedure, while also providing you different options for your feline companion.

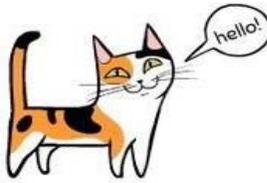
When we hear the term "declaw," it's not uncommon to imagine a more advanced type of manicure - an easy way to keep a cat's nails permanently trimmed at a more desirable length. However, the procedure to declaw a cat is far more severe and can cause negative long-lasting effects, both behaviorally and physically, that may result in diminishing the pet's quality of life.

Cats' nails are part of the last bone in their toes, and so the declawing procedure must involve an amputation (using scalpel blade or laser) to fully remove the claw and ligatures. Since a cat has nails on all ten of its toes, this also means that the cat will undergo ten amputations to ensure the nails are fully removed. For comparison to a human, it is comparable to cutting off fingers and toes at their last knuckle. The recovery from the procedure can also be extremely painful, as it requires cats to walk on the newly amputated digits. The associations of pain during this period can cause cats to avoid other "normal" activities more long term – such as using the litterbox. In general, declawing a cat to protect furniture or address playful scratching is discouraged. As an elective procedure, there is no benefit to the pet. Instead, we suggest addressing the concerns that are guiding the interest in "declawing" by providing alternative options areas for cats to use their claws, while deterring popular areas that they are drawn to scratching.

CAT LANGUAGE



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



TRUSTING



FRIENDLY, RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED, CAUTIOUS



PLAYFUL



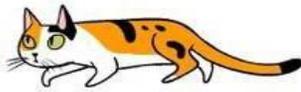
EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED



THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRITATED



DISGUSTED

Anti-Harassment Policy

SLAS has a commitment to maintain a workplace that is free of harassment, so our employees and guests can feel safe and happy. SLAS strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect.

In accordance with all federal, state, and local laws, SLAS expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, gender, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability or handicap, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, military or veteran's status, or any other protected classification.

SLAS expressly forbids and will not tolerate any actions (e.g., words, jokes, comments, or gestures) that unreasonably create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. SLAS will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate, or coerce an employee, co-worker, client, volunteer, or any person working for or on behalf of SLAS.

Anyone engaged in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to release from the Foster Program with SLAS. If a Foster Parent or other any other individual who is associated with the Foster Parent (i.e., babysitter or other adults in household, etc.) ("Foster Parent Affiliate") believes they are the victim of harassment or have witnessed harassment of any kind, immediately notify the SLAS staff contact. SLAS will not tolerate any retaliation, harassment, or intimidation of any SLAS employees or volunteer(s) who makes a complaint under this policy or who assists in a complaint investigation. Any retaliation, harassment, or intimidation by a Foster Parent will result in termination of the Foster Parent's Relationship with SLAS. Investigation of reports of harassment will be conducted, and these investigations will be kept as confidential as is legal and/or practical. Following the investigation, the Foster Parent who filed the complaint will be informed of the findings and the action taken. If, because of the investigation, SLAS determines that an employee of SLAS, a Foster Parent, an Affiliate, or volunteer has engaged in harassment or illegal discrimination in violation of this policy, SLAS will take appropriate corrective measures. Such action may range from counseling to immediate termination of employment or release from the Foster Parent's relationship with SLAS, or possible legal action.