

## Home for the Holidays – Information and FAQ

Thank you for your interest in participating for Home for the Holidays! We would love to see all of our shelter animals in permanent or temporary homes over the holidays, and will need your help to do so! In this document, you will find some helpful information to decide if this event is right for your family and help you prepare for your new foster(s).

**What:** We will be seeking foster families for any shelter animals not yet adopted over the holidays! This will include cats, dogs, rabbits, and other small animals!

**When:** Foster families will pick up animals on the afternoon of Sunday 12/23 and return them on or after Wednesday 1/2

**Why:** Not only will this event provide a temporary home for foster animals over the holidays, it will also be a great experience for us to learn more about the animals in a home environment and provide valuable information to their new adopters! Foster families are encouraged to take photos, advertise their foster pets to friends/family, and assist TAHS in finding them permanent homes!

How can I prepare?

- Start preparing your foster area:
  - o TAHS recommends that cats and kittens are housed predominantly in a single room, separated from resident pets. Since this foster period will be short term, we recommend housing foster cats separately and avoid introductions to reduce stress for foster and resident cats.
  - o TAHS recommends that dogs and puppies are crated when home alone and unsupervised. This will reduce the risk of damage to your home or belongings, and keep foster dogs safely separated from resident pets when alone. Consider where you would keep your foster dog separated if they did not get along with resident pets.
- Make sure your resident pets are current on vaccinations and heartworm/flea preventatives.
- Pet-proof your home:
  - o Do you have a Christmas tree or decorations? If so, they will likely be very appealing for a new pet to investigate! Although your pets may be able to be trusted with these items, consider putting away or removing any sentimental or breakable items that could be targeted by a curious houseguest.
  - o While you're going to be preparing delicious foods, make sure that your counters, tables, trash can, and other areas that could be accessible to a foster pet does not contain harmful or toxic items such as chocolate, cooked bones, etc.
  - o Poinsettias and lilies are beautiful, but can be highly toxic!
  - o Find a way to conceal, block, or cover cords that may be attached to decorations but looks suspiciously like it could be something fun to chew on!
- Gather supplies:
  - o TAHS will provide food for your foster pets. We will do our best to supply other items as needed such as blankets, toys, dishes, carriers, and crates. However, with a large volume of animals heading to foster, we cannot guarantee that we will have all of these items on hand. Consider asking a friend or neighbor if you can borrow a large dog crate that is not in use, or checking out a thrift store for blankets or dishes.

- Make sure all family members are in agreement with the expectations of fostering, and on board with fostering a pet from Sunday December 23 until at least Wednesday January 2.
  - o TAHS will be closed 12/24, 12/25, 12/31 and 1/1 and we may not be able to accommodate early returns if it is not a true emergency. Make a plan for how you can keep foster and resident pets separated if they do not get along.
- You will receive emails with any changes or new information closer to the date.

How will we choose our foster pet?

- Because we will likely do many adoptions the week before Christmas and we will still be accepting new transfers and surrenders, we will have no way of knowing which animals will be available for fostering starting 12/23. We can do our best to help match you with an animal based on ages of children at home, type of resident pets at home, and energy level. However, we cannot guarantee accommodations for the age or size of foster animals. Many of our animals are transferred with unknown histories, and we will likely not know how our pets will do with children or resident pets. Please bring young children with you to meet a potential foster pet at the time of pick up.
- You will have a short window of time upon arrival to meet with and choose a potential foster pet on 12/23. However, keep in mind that there will be multiple adopters and foster families here at the same time, and we cannot guarantee you will receive your first choice.
- If you would like to save time, TAHS can select a foster pet for you.

What can we expect on the day of pick up?

- We are expecting a large volume of adopters and foster families on Sunday 12/23, and limited staff and volunteers to assist. It will likely be very busy! We will do our best to streamline the process, but please expect that there will likely be a wait to be helped - leave plenty of time for your foster pick up.
- You can come anytime between 3-5pm to pick up your foster pet. We will do our best to help families in the order that they arrive. Make sure you check in when you arrive before looking around.
- We will be doing “group pick ups” meaning that we will go over foster paperwork in groups to speed up the process. If you have specific questions about set up, housing, or introductions to children/resident pets, please email your questions a few days in advance. If you would like to request to borrow supplies, please email in advance as well. If you are taking an animal with special medical considerations or medication, we will make sure to go over that with you individually at the time of pick up.
- If we receive the adopter and foster turnout we are hoping for, we will hopefully have an empty or almost empty shelter! If you arrive and there are no more animals available for foster or none that will be a good fit for your family, please feel free to give us a high five and marvel at all of our empty cages! We have plenty of foster opportunities year round!
- You will be emailed sometime between 12/26 – 12/28 to set up your return appointment for your foster pet after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

For additional questions, please email Kristen at [foster@toledohumane.org](mailto:foster@toledohumane.org). Please keep in mind that we will receive a higher volume of calls/emails regarding this event, but she will do her best to respond in a timely manner.