

## FINDER TO FOSTER PROGRAM

### I. PRINCIPLE AND PURPOSE

This program will alleviate the number of dogs and cats at the shelter by allowing them to stay with their finders through the WCRAS Foster Program for the duration of the animal's stray hold and up to their surgery date. Studies have shown lost animals are usually found within a couple of miles of their home and animals that stay in their neighborhoods, rather than going to a shelter, are reunited faster.

### II. MATERIALS

Any handouts to further inform a foster parent and any donated supplies the foster may be able to use.

### III. PROCEDURE

1. If a dog or cat comes into the shelter with a microchip or tag, all attempts to contact the family to reunite outside the shelter will be exhausted before intaking the animal.
2. If unsuccessful with making contact with the family, staff will proceed with the intake process.
3. Any staff member performing a lost animal intake at the shelter will ask the finder if they are willing to hold on to the animal(s) for the length of their stray hold and up to the animal's surgery date. (possibly 3 – 7 days) until the family is found or the stray hold period has expired or the animal's surgery date has arrived.

*If the Finder agrees...*

4. Services staff will have the finder fill out a Foster Application and enter the finder information in PetPoint and add a Foster Association to the person profile. The association can be set to expire at the determined end time of the foster period.
5. Staff will alert a Health Technician that this animal is in need of a Finder to Foster work-up. The Health Technician should prioritize this work-up before any non-emergency task.
  - a. Work-up includes:
    - i. Microchip (unless already chipped or too young)
    - ii. Dewormer
    - iii. Intake vaccinations relevant to species and age
    - iv. Heartworm test for canines (unless too young/or H5)
    - v. FELV test for felines (unless too young/or H5)
6. Before leaving the shelter, the animal's PetPoint record should include: color, size, age, sex, alteration, weight, identification (microchip, tags, etc.) and a clear photo, **but preferably multiple photos.**

7. If the animal is unaltered, the end of the stray hold or a surgery date will be set as the return date. If the animal is altered, the end of the stray hold will be set as the return date.
8. In PetPoint, the animal's Stage will be Stray Hold and the animal's location will be Foster – One Time.
9. Memos should be noted of the finder's attempts to locate the animal's family including social media posts, talking to neighbors, etc. when communicated to Services staff or the Foster/Volunteer Coordinator.
10. The finder will sign the Foster Agreement and Foster Waiver.
11. If needed, shelter staff will provide donated supplies to the Foster when available.
12. Services staff will email the Foster/Volunteer Coordinator the P number and name of the Foster, the agreed upon time of fostering, and their adoption intent.

#### Foster Waiver

- The foster understands that the animal in their care is property of the Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter.
  - The foster understands staff has not evaluated the foster animal and is not responsible for damage/injury.
  - If the owner of the animal steps forward, the foster will direct them to shelter staff for information and to schedule a reunion. The foster cannot give the animal in their care to anyone else, unless directed by the Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter.
  - The foster agrees to return the animal in their care to the Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter for whatever reason the shelter staff deems necessary.
13. If a family steps forward claiming an animal in a Finder to Foster home, staff will acquire the identifying documents and any associated fees with the family either in person or via email/website before the family meets with the finder. Shelter staff will help organize a meeting between the family and finder. REMINDER: Shelter staff CANNOT give out personal information without the consent of the individual.
  14. If the foster does not return the animal at the designated time, the communication process before marking the animal as stolen will begin. The Foster/Volunteer Coordinator with the assistance of other staff members will attempt to communicate with the foster via phone call, text message, email, and snail mail. All of the communication should be listed in PetPoint under the individual's P number. If the foster does not return the animal at the requested time following the snail mail, the animal will be marked as either Lost/Stolen or Adopted/Stolen (if the animal is already altered). The person will be marked with

Do Not Adopt and Do Not Foster associations. A memo stating why the person cannot adopt or foster will be added in PetPoint. This individual cannot adopt or foster from the shelter without the approval of the Director, Operations Manager, or Administrative Manager and after the matter is resolved.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Shelter Director

Date: \_\_\_\_\_