



## FOSTERING WITH STRONG HEARTS

Thank you so much for becoming a foster carer and joining our team. Fostering is very rewarding and one of the most crucial roles for many homeless animals. Fostering does save lives and you will be supported throughout your entire fostering journey.

As a foster carer you will need to provide a warm, nurturing environment in which our kittens and cats thrive in to prepare themselves for a home. You supply a safe, stable, loving environment. We provide you with what you need, including food (if required) and cover all veterinary costs.

Many of our requirements are legal obligations - **under the companion animals act and prevention of cruelty to animals legislation** - so please follow our instructions and rules.

While fostering we request that you do not foster with any other rescue groups or bring any other strays into your care. We have a high standard of vet care and we can't have SH cats or kittens at risk of infection from a new cat or kitten being brought in.

### Ways you can help

- Strong communication with core team members on health, weight, concerns and if you need support
- Looking for fantastic photo opportunities and forwarding them on to assist with adoption process (cuter the photo easier to rehome)
- Ensure your foster cannot escape. Cats **can escape through fly screen** please ensure all windows are secure and fly screen not accessible
- Please use this website to ensure you do not expose your fosters to anything toxic in your household (especially some indoor plants and chemicals) [CAT POISONS](#)

### Types of foster cats

We have all aspects of carers and it is important to choose the right fit for you and your situation:

- Kittens – fat camp
- Spicy cats who need rehabilitation (*you will be provided additional support and a care plan to follow*)
- Adults

- Pregnant & lactating queens
- Neonatal
- Injured and/or sick

You will have direct contact with our foster coordinators & within a support group chat where we have qualified and experienced team members who can help to answer any questions. This is a supportive and non-judgmental group of animal lovers who appreciate you and are there to help.

We can usually give you an estimated timeline of how long a cat or kittens will be in your care, with the exception of behavioural or palliative but also even with kittens circumstances can change with illness, infections and so on. If you are no longer able to continue to foster, let us know as soon as possible and we can source out another carer.

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## ISOLATION

This is one of the most important questions we ask, we are a rescue group so the cats and kittens we take in will need a period of isolation, especially if you have existing cats/pets. During the 14 day isolation period your foster cat/kittens will be isolated from your household pets, furniture and carpets (if possible).

Two most common diseases in rescue are ringworm and cat flu.

**Ringworm** - is a contagious fungal infection which starts as hair loss, often in a circular pattern, it then becomes crusty (often on the face and/or tail but can be elsewhere on the body)

**cat flu** - symptoms are watery eyes, sneezing and/or nasal discharge.

If you notice any of these symptoms please contact your foster care coordinator or let a team member know in the group chat. We try to reduce the spread of any infections, parasites and/or diseases.

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## TRAVEL

It is important that you can drive and have access to a car so you are able to drive to our main vets in Cranbourne. This is in case of an emergency so you can get them to the vet quickly. You may also be required to take your foster animals for their desexing and pick up same day. They must be in an enclosed and secure cat carrier whenever leaving your house.

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## SUPPLIES

To foster you will need

- Bedding
- Toys
- Enclosed cat carrier
- Kitty litter tray / kitty litter - **the crystals can be toxic to kittens if they eat them so please avoid them.**
- We highly suggest using a crate or tent if fostering scared, shut down or small kittens

### Food/diet - we recommend

- Kitten dry or wet food (royal canin, blackhawk or science diet)
- Adult Dry or wet food (royal canin, blackhawk or science diet)

Remember kittens and cats are carnivores and lactose intolerant - diet can contribute to many health issues such as runny poo, vomiting, being lethargic and weight loss. If you are confused, wondering if something is okay to be feeding your fosters or noticing any health problems please contact your foster coordinator :)

*If you need these supplies provided please ask your foster coordinator. All the supplies you can provide yourself is a huge financial help to the rescue.*

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**All kittens and cats will be flea/worm treated prior to coming to you. If your fosters require further treatment you will be provided with it.**

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#### **How to start fostering:**

Once you have advised that you are able to foster a cat or kittens, we will load you up with the supplies needed for the duration of the care and when your fosters are ready for collection you will be given the day and time for pickup, we will work with you for a convenient time.

When collecting you will be given a feline passport, this piece of paper is extremely important and will have valuable information on it regarding your foster plus any medication that needs to be given. You will be asked to complete the foster carers section and send a photo through the group chat once settled at home.

#### **Photographing your fosters**

Look for photo opportunities when possible. A good photo is the difference between a kitten or cat staying in care for weeks. Photos with good lighting that really capture the cuteness, quirks and personality of your foster will really help with their adoption.

#### **Communication**

Communication is super important when fostering. Questions are fantastic! There is no such thing as a silly question. If you are concerned, have any questions please reach out to your foster coordinator or write it in the support group chat.

Each Sunday we will require an update on your foster cat, including photos. This is just so we can ensure everyone is supported and every cat is receiving what they need. It is also a legal obligation. If contact isn't made on Sunday a core team member will contact you personally.

The passport must be up to date and taken on every vet visit, if you misplace it please let us know and we can send you the link to start a new one.

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#### ***When to contact us immediately?***

- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Any weight loss
- If kitten become lethargic, cool or warm to the touch
- Not eating
- Not toileting

- Any unusual behaviour, anything that concerns you concerns us. It is always best practice to reach out immediately if you have even the slightest of concerns.

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### ***What to do if you have an emergency?***

Contact a core team member on their mobile number or through the foster facebook chat.

You can also contact below for support - please leave a voice message if we do not answer as sometimes we do not answer unknown numbers.

<b>Michayla Rogers</b>	0479 103 713
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### ***What if you cannot get in contact with a team member?***

Head directly to Meow Veterinary Hospital - 8725 0727 - 7/1050 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne West Vic. (hours are 9am-5pm Monday-Friday - closed on the weekend).

If you cannot get hold of a core team member or Meow vet and your experiencing an emergency please take your foster cat or kitten to your closest emergency vet.

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### ***Your kittens are ready for desexing?***

Your kittens will be pre booked for desexing as we work on an estimated time from their Sunday weekly weights. Kittens must be 1kg, when 800grams we will look to book them in two weeks time. We work closely with our carers to ensure desex drop off and pick up are convenient, this may not always be possible but we certainly try. Drop off can be arranged between **4:30-5pm the night before (NEED TO CHECK IF WE CAN DO THIS)** or between 8-9am the morning of. If dropping off in the morning all kittens must be fasted from 7pm the night before. Pick up is usually between 3:30pm-5pm the same day. The vet team will go through the entire aftercare with you and any questions please do not hesitate to contact a team member.

### ***Why do the kittens come back into your care after desexing?***

Kittens recover quicker in familiar surroundings plus you carers know these kittens well, you will recognize if something isn't quite right during their recovery. For the next 24 hours after pickup it is best to keep kittens crated or in a tent, they are kept quiet (if possible) and alleviate jumping, especially with females. Your male kitten will recover quicker than the females. For the next 24-48 hours your kittens/cat maybe quiet, a little lethargic this will be due to the vaccination and anaesthesia, if during this time you are concerned about anything reach out immediately - concerns including - **extremely lethargic, vomiting, diarrhoea, and blood or oozing fluid from scar, any unusual behaviour** - we definitely prefer you to be over cautious then under.

### ***Foster failing - wanting to adopt you foster?***

If you do fall completely in love with one of your foster cats please let your coordinator or a team member know as soon as possible. The adoption fee for kittens up to 1 year old is \$350, adults over 1 is \$200. This is to help go towards vetwork, supplies and the runnings of the rescue. Like you, the

entire team is a volunteer run organisation that relies solely on adoption fees and donations to continue saving lives.

***Adoption process.***

Once your cat has been fully vetted we will start the adoption process - we will reach out and ask that you send us all the adorable pictures that you have and a few words explaining the personality and the best suitable home for each individual kitten. They all have their own personalities and requirements and it is crucial we know so we can find them the perfect match.

**Meet and greets**

Using the details and photos you provide we will set up profiles and start looking for suitable and beautiful homes. Once a successful application is submitted a thorough phone interview will take place, if this is successful a coordinator will reach out to you to organise a meet and greet. If the meet and greet goes well the adoption can take place on the day. You will need to tell your coordinator how the meet and greet goes. If successful your coordinator will send through the account details to the adopter and email through all vet paperwork (desexing certificate, vaccination history, microchip details and change of owner forms.

Saying goodbye is bittersweet, however it is important to remember that your goodbye is their hello to a long and beautiful life in a loving home, and then you have space to save another life. Adopting saves one life, fostering saves hundreds.

**Thank you so much for joining our team, we really appreciate you for the selfless work you are doing. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us. You are amazing, you are saving little lives that meow :)**