

Santa Fe Animal Shelter New Hope Foster Program

New Hope fosters are an exceptionally dedicated community of volunteers who take the SFAS mission to *heart* and into the *home*. This growing community is diverse, dynamic, and impactful. *Welcome to it.*



H O M E

Revised March 2023

Love is not a location



shelter outside the shelter

Fosters engage our community's most vulnerable animals, give them the best possible start, a place to trust

time to heal.

Fosters engage SFAS as their own community asset, helping it operate more efficiently so it can help more animals. They save lives.

You save lives.

newhope@sffhumanesociety.org

Foster handbook

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Welcome to Team Foster

Getting started

Aside from having a little extra room in their home and a lot of extra room in their heart, fosters agree to certain basic requirements and understandings.

All SFAS volunteers including fosters must register, maintain current information, and log their hours in our volunteer management database, Volunteer Impact. They agree to abide by the [Volunteer Code of Ethics](#) and accept the [Terms of Volunteer Agreement](#) as listed in the [Volunteer Handbook](#). These documents can be found for future reference on your Volunteer Impact profile, along with the [Volunteer Release of Liability](#), which is a prerequisite to registration and a continuing volunteering relationship.

New Hope fosters will also be asked to sign a Foster Handoff Contract upon receiving an animal to take home. Details of all agreements and the content of this handbook are subject to revision.

In addition, volunteers including fosters are expected to become certified by [Fear Free Shelters](#), a free, self-paced educational course that is described a little later on, and should enhance your experience with the shelter and your foster animals.

While we intend for this manual to be informative, we realize it cannot be comprehensive or anticipate every situation—when we think we've seen it all, we know we're in for the next big surprise!

New Hope staff is always your best source of information at newhope@sfhumanesociety.org. The Document Library of your [Volunteer Impact profile](#) will host a range of online resources to serve as education and self-help.

This handbook is primarily a guide for engaging with the shelter and navigating its resources while providing a basic framework for a productive and gratifying foster experience.

Basic expectations

The sole purpose of the program is to care for our animals. Fosters are at least 18 years, participate at their own risk, and agree to:

- keep contact and emergency contact info updated, log volunteer hours regularly, and abide by all SFAS volunteer and program-specific onboarding, training, and record-keeping requirements
- provide adequate food, water, shelter, enrichment, and appropriate housing and medical care in keeping with SFAS guidance
- spend quality time with the animal(s), understanding that socialization is a crucial function of the foster placement
- promptly notify SFAS of any signs of illness, behavioral issues or concerns, or changes in condition
- bring the animal for regularly scheduled vaccines and exams and urgent health checks, all to be coordinated by New Hope staff
- ensure household pets are current on all vaccinations and parasite control and do not have any conditions that will increase their likelihood of illness or injury
- obtain care for the animals from our shelter clinic only, except for after-hours emergencies to be triaged by Vidaah Pet Chat (see page 10 for details and procedures).
- acknowledge that animals can be messy and sometimes even destructive and the shelter is not responsible for damage to property
- acknowledge that animals can harbor disease or parasites and the shelter is not responsible for spread to people, pets, or property
- acknowledge that the shelter cannot predict an animal's behavior outside the shelter, and is not responsible for adverse events
- adhere to all state and local animal laws
- promptly notify New Hope if the animal becomes lost
- promptly notify New Hope if the animal bites someone
- only use positive, humane methods of training and handling; never use prong, choke or shock collars or other dominance-theory or punishment-based training methods or equipment, or engage in any training that involves punishment, pain, or fear
- never leave the animal outside unattended and never tie the animal up
- commit to the duration of the foster placement period, and communicate in a timely manner with New Hope staff when life situations affect completion of the foster arrangement
- return the animal and all borrowed supplies at the end of the foster period as scheduled or immediately upon SFAS' request
- abide by regular shelter policies and procedures should you or a friend become interested in adopting the foster animal

Is it a match?

Choosing a foster animal

Upon becoming approved as a foster, you will receive periodic emails highlighting animals in need, plus important program updates and news. We try to include as much detail as possible about the type of care an animal needs and for how long, but New Hope staff is always your best resource for specific information.

Email us with questions and to discuss placement of a particular foster animal. With potentially hundreds of animals out to foster at one time, email is much easier for us to track and reference than a phone call:

newhope@sffhumanesociety.org

New Hope prioritizes urgency of cases by factors like age, bottle feeding status, medical need, potential behavioral decline, and our facility's current capacity for care. In addition to matching animals to an ideal home environment, a quick placement and commitment to a specific length of stay are often important considerations. Determination about the appropriateness of any placement is always at the discretion of New Hope.

Never to be replaced

Your pets should be current on vaccinations and given extra attention when you bring home a foster. It can take time for pets to get used to the idea of a new resident in the home. Watch for changes in habits and behavior and use your Volunteer Impact document library or ask us for tips on introducing a new animal into your home.

Our fosters with children are also very careful about how they introduce foster pets to their little ones, including conversations about what to expect and firm guidance on how and when to interact with the animal.

Remember, puppies and kittens who are in foster care because of their young age or vaccination status need to be kept entirely isolated from your household pets, as do some medical recovery patients.

Foster friend on board

Taking them home

Once you have found a new heart to open your home to, it's time to come get them and all the stuff they need. New Hope staff is here to make it a smooth transition—and you can help!

Pickup appointments

So much in shelter life is unpredictable. Arranging an appointment to pick up animals or supplies keeps operations running smoothly so we can help more animals and engage more fosters. It will also give us time to answer your questions. Again, email is best for scheduling.

Most foster handoffs will occur in the Lapidus Adoptions Center lobby (far left entrance of main campus building complex). When scheduling your appointment, we will let you know about any alternative pickup location. Occasionally medical animals will be more easily loaded near the shelter clinic receiving door behind the main complex. Some dogs will be housed at the Roddy Rehab Center up the hill behind the main campus.

We ask fosters to do extraordinary things, and the least we can do is supply some things. We provide as needed:

- Food and bowls
- Stainless steel litter boxes (unlike plastic, can be disinfected between kittens)
- Puppy pads
- Non-clumping litter (clumping litter can cause bowel obstruction in kittens who ingest it)
- Blankets and towels
- Medical and nursing supplies
- Milk replacer formula
- Warming discs
- Carriers
- Wire kennels
- X-pens

Need to restock?

If you run out of anything or need something else, please email to schedule pickup.

Please return all supplies upon return of the animal.

It gets easier

Returning your foster animal

Your heart led you to fostering, so it can be sad to return an animal that's been in your care, especially when you've watched it grow or get healthier and more confident.

While your foster goes on to their forever family, you will always have a place in their forever story. And we have many more animals who need your help. The more you foster, the easier it can be to conclude the placement, and we're not just saying that because we need your help (we do). Fosters tell us so.

Return appointments

Please email New Hope to schedule a time and date to return the animal and their supplies.

Photos and adoptions notes

We are grateful for good close-up photos of your foster animal (landscape orientation, no people in the shot) and any notes on personality and behavior that can help us market the animal for an ideal adoptive placement. Please send by email.

Naming animals

We encourage fosters to give unnamed animals a name. Email us with your animal's A number and proposed name (especially important with several animals in the same home, and when they look alike!). We appreciate your creativity and familiarity with the animal, and your names assist us in identifying individuals while they progress through the shelter. However, we can't guarantee a name won't change by the time adoptions status is achieved.

Sometimes it's just love

Foster fails, futures, and fortunes

Foster placements are meant to be temporary. Sometimes, though, the connection just can't be denied. A foster fail brings no judgment—adopt, don't shop, right? We hope you will still have some room in your heart and your home for future fosters! That way, your *fail* becomes our continuing *fortune*.

Please let us know the moment you know you want to adopt and we will help you understand the process. And if you have identified a community member who would be a beautiful fit for your foster animal, that person will also need to go through the proper channels.

Let's see this through

Fosters as adoption counselors

As if housing and seeing a foster animal through its various challenges weren't enough of a full-circle journey, many fosters act as adoption counselors in the community, market their foster animal, and commit to caring for it up until they achieve an adoption outcome.

Ask New Hope for resources on how to market your foster pet to find their forever person. We can never have enough among these dedicated ranks.

Gimme shelter

Housing your animal

All foster animals are given a physical exam in the shelter to identify signs of illness. Some illnesses do not present symptoms right away, however, and may be contagious to your resident animals. Fosters must keep their own pets current on vaccinations and take some basic precautions to keep all animals safe.

Individual housing needs will vary, and the New Hope team will provide specific guidance regarding each animal's requirements, which can include isolation away from household pets. Housing foster animals, especially those with special needs, solely in areas that feature hard surfaces like tile rather than carpet facilitates more-effective cleaning of messes and sanitizing between foster animal placements. *Foster felines must always be kept indoors.*

Under-vaccinated foster animals

Since little ones are so vulnerable, young puppies and kittens will need to be housed completely isolated from your own pets – even vaccinated animals can pass on pathogens that won't make them sick, but can infect those that are more susceptible.

Ill, injured, or surgery-recovery foster animals

Animals who are under the weather will feel more comfortable in a cozy, loving foster home. Requirements for isolation or exercise restriction may inform how and where you decide to house an animal. Ask New Hope!

Animals with behavioral needs

For animals needing special attention due to behavioral issues, New Hope will detail any specific housing needs.

Nursing families

Nursing mothers will usually take on the responsibility of feeding, cleaning, and warming their kittens or puppies. Families should be housed in a warm, draft-free room with plenty of bedding on hard surfaces that can be easily cleaned. They should be totally isolated from household pets so they can feel secure, eat and rest well, and form the

secure bonds that will help the little ones achieve optimal development. While keeping isolation in mind, choose a space that offers easy access for you to give food, collect dishes, clean as needed, and observe and socialize with the family. In addition to bonding with Mom, babies who learn to love the company of humans will have better adoption prospects. And although Mother knows best, it's also important to keep a close eye on the family's activities and progress so you can catch any health issues or problems with nursing early on.

Canine families

Fosters are sometimes surprised to learn that nursing dog families must stay indoors only for the entirety of the nursing period – even Mama! This is because soil-borne pathogens can travel on Mom's paws back to the under-vaccinated puppies. Even if no one's ever gotten sick with parvo on your property, for instance, the virus can still live on the ground for many years undetected.

Nursing canine families should have a cozy nest that allows Mom enough room to move around the little ones without stepping on them. A wading pool lined with blankets is one idea to keep baby puppies from rolling or wandering away. A commercially available whelping box is another option if you have one, or a large, low-profile plastic storage bin with sides high enough to contain the pups, but not so high that Mama can't get in and out. There should be some room around the nest area so the mother can stretch her legs and take a break.

Bottle-fed orphans

Neonatal kittens and puppies are unable to regulate their body temperature and should be housed in a small space such as a travel crate lined with blankets that contains a warming device. Older bottle feeders should be contained in an X-pen or small space like a bathroom, utility room, or partitioned kitchen area with bedding and enough room to exercise and explore, but not enough to get into trouble. Kittens should have access to a litter box starting at three weeks of age.

Think of your own comfort and convenience, too. Can the babies be housed near a rocking chair or comfortable sofa for feeding sessions and near all the equipment needed to store, mix, and warm formula, clean bottles, and rewarm warming devices?

Proof and prep

Keeping animals safe in your home

Accidents do happen, but some simple housekeeping measures can help keep everyone safe.

- Use childproof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets.
- Keep medications, cleaners, chemicals and laundry supplies on high shelves.
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet.
- Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes next to cabinets or behind washer/dryer units.
- Make sure cats or kittens haven't jumped into the dryer or dishwasher before you turn it on...this does happen.
- Keep foods out of reach, including food wrappers.
- Keep toilet lids closed to prevent drowning.
- Keep animals away from pools and bathtubs.
- Keep dangling wires from lamps, electronics, and phones out of reach.
- Put children's toys away.
- Put away knick knacks that you wouldn't want knocked over.
- Move houseplants out of reach, including hanging plants that can be reached from nearby surfaces.
- Put away all sewing and craft notions, including thread, yarn, and pins.
- Secure aquariums or cages that house small animals to keep them safe from foster animals.
- Make sure all heating and air vents have a cover.
- When windows are open, make sure animals can't get through the screens.
- Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors. Draw strings and buttons pose a danger to foster animals.
- Keep all medications, lotions and cosmetics off accessible surfaces, such as a bedside table.
- Foster animals should never be housed in a garage unless approved by New Hope staff.

In case of emergency

After-hours health concerns

Urgent situations have a habit of happening at inconvenient times. To provide as much convenience and peace of mind to our fosters as possible, we've partnered with on-call veterinary triage service Vidaah. Vets offering at least five years of clinical experience are only 60 seconds away by web chat in the case of an after-hours emergency.

During regular business hours from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. New Hope is your care coordination team. In an emergency during these times, email newhope@sffhumanesociety.org and leave a detailed voicemail at 505-983-4309 x1270. Staff will set you up with next steps, which can include an urgent appointment at our shelter clinic.

Outside of regular business hours and on Thanksgiving and Christmas, one of Vidaah's on-call vets will assess the nature of the illness or injury and advise whether intake at an emergency veterinary clinic will be necessary.

Registering for Vidaah (it's free!): Before an emergency even happens, fosters should use [this link to register](#).

Chat with a Vidaah vet. If you feel your foster pet is experiencing an emergency:

1. Log into app.vidaah.vet with your username and password.
2. Select the animal who needs veterinary support
3. Click "Start Chat." You may be asked to upload photos or videos.
4. Follow the vet's instructions and contact New Hope the following morning.

If you have been advised to seek immediate medical care for your foster pet you will need to proceed to [Roadrunner Veterinary Emergency Hospital](#) at 5 Camino Karsten in Algodones. 505.384.6420

Do not take your animal to an outside clinic unless the vet service classifies the issue as an emergency and advises you to seek immediate medical care. Without this direction you will be responsible for any charges the visit incurs.

Get a fresh start

Cleaning between foster animals

The joys of fostering last a lifetime, and it's a special foster who opens their home to life after furry life. Some spiffing up between foster animals will help keep your home ready for the next foster placement.

Basic cleaning protocol

- Clean everything that can safely be bleached with one part bleach to 32 parts water.
- Dishwashers and clothes washers work great for sterilizing toys and bedding.
- Throw away any toys that cannot be bleached, such as feathered toys

Specific cleaning protocols

Certain veterinary health conditions may require specific cleaning techniques and intensive sanitizing. Our shelter medical staff keeps up to date with the newest science. New Hope works with our shelter clinic to develop cleaning protocols that can be completed at home to address environmental considerations in dealing with illnesses like panleukopenia, parvo, and ringworm. As always, New Hope remains your best source of current information.

Environmental testing

We want you to enjoy the rewards of fostering time and time again. In the case of certain veterinary health issues, we might ask a foster to perform some simple test sampling of the housing area. If a cat or kitten tests positive for ringworm when returning from foster, for instance, we will provide cleaning advice plus supplies and instructions to test for evidence of persistent ringworm contamination in various areas over time. When a foster home is deemed clear, we can resume foster placements.

Quarantine and stand-by status

Keeping foster homes available helps the shelter better achieve our mission and engage the community's needs. However, special circumstances occasionally arise that require a foster to stand by pending environmental testing,

completion of a successful cleaning protocol, or passage of a specific quarantine period.

While it's not the best news for us or a foster to learn there might be unresolved issues regarding infectious disease in a home, our—and, we know, *your*—priority is the health of our shelter animals. Thank you for your cooperation and patience!

Special medical foster home status

Sometimes instead of working to clear a specific pathogen from the home once it is identified in an animal, a special foster will make their home available to other animals in recovery from that same infection.

We have had kittens “break” with panleukopenia in a foster home, but then the foster offered their home for recovery of the surviving kittens from the group and even other future panleuk felines!

Such generous folks learn to employ additional medical interventions for these animals. They not only give the patients a chance at recovery, but help keep our medical isolation areas under capacity and prevent continued community spread in the shelter.

Who's afraid of some training?

Achieving a Fear Free Shelter

FEAR FREE
SHELTERS 
GRADUATE

Training is not just for our furry friends, but for us too! That's why we're pleased to offer Fear Free Shelters certification to increase confidence and communication skills for SFAS staff and now all volunteers, including fosters.

Fosters "shelter outside the shelter," after all, and understanding Fear Free concepts can lead to a more fulfilling, productive experience to help individual animals and SFAS as an organization to achieve its mission

It's free of charge, too!

Fear Free Shelters is a self-paced educational program designed to improve the experience of animals during their shelter stay. All of our volunteers and staff are required to complete this training.

The goal is a common vocabulary for understanding animals' needs and empowering people to better address and discuss them. Fear Free is also an approach to interpersonal communications between humans. [More information and registration is available here.](#)

Dispatches from the field

Reporting on your foster animal

One important benefit of a New Hope placement is the information a foster provides about an animal. Medically concerning information should be reported immediately, but behavior and personality notes require a bit more nuanced observation. In the Document Library inside your profile in Volunteer Impact you will find an objective language and notetaking guide to help you effectively report on behavior.

Who are you?

Despite our best efforts, the shelter is still a stressful environment and we can't know how an animal will behave in a home setting. We rely on foster reports to help us understand who an animal is outside our four noisy walls. Your observations will help us craft a marketing profile for your foster animal to secure an appropriate forever home.

Think of it like a personal ad. Does your foster like long walks in the sunset? Rides in the countryside? Getting cozy on the couch for a romantic comedy? Is Fido a sociable dog park type or does Fifi prefer her quiet time and solitude? What kind of treats get that tail wagging?

Before your foster animal's scheduled return appointment, send your observations and some good, landscape-orientation photos with no people in them to newhope@sfhumanesociety.

Fosters can send us notes as soon as they begin to get a good sense of their animal's personality so we can support their adoption marketing efforts and keep their foster animal's profile updated on our website listings.

Honestly, we enjoy getting photos and updates on how it's going any time you can send them!

Putting the time in

Logging hours

Volunteers like fosters donate their time, which we know is precious. Logging their hours is one important way to track their impact. Volunteer Impact makes it easy! [Here's the help article](#) if you ever need it, or simply ask New Hope! These screenshots demonstrate how to log hours in the web version (left) and in the mobile app. A foster hours allotment chart follows on the next page.

The screenshot shows the web interface for the SFAS Volunteer Program. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the text "SFAS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM" and the tagline "Support Animals • Save Lives • Spread Compassion". Below this is a menu with options: HOME, OPPORTUNITIES, SCHEDULE, HOURS, and CONTACT. The "HOURS" tab is selected. The main content area is titled "Hours" and includes a "Log Out" link. A red banner at the top of the form says "Log Hours". Below this, there is a dropdown menu for "Please select an organization to log hours for" with "Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society" selected. The "Activity" section has a "Show these activities" toggle set to "Active". A dropdown menu for "Date Volunteered" is open, showing a list of activities including "New Hope Foster", "Feline Socializer", "Feline Socializer Training", "Guinea Pig Socializer", "Hounds Around Town", "Humane Education", "K-9 Enrichment", "K-9 Socializer", "K-9 Walker - AM Shift", "K-9 Walker - PM Shift", "K-9 Walker/Socializer Training", "Mobile Adoptions", "New Hope Foster", and "Nose Work". A "Save and Log" button is visible on the left side of the activity list.

The screenshot shows the mobile app interface for the SFAS Volunteer Program. At the top, there is a header with the text "SFAS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM" and the tagline "Support Animals • Save Lives • Spread Compassion". Below this is a navigation bar with a menu icon on the left and a back arrow on the right. The main content area is titled "Log Hours". There is a search bar with the text "Search All Activities" and a search input field containing "New Hope Foster". Below the search bar are two red buttons: "Include inactive activities in search" and "Switch to Recent Activities". The "Date Volunteered" section has a date input field containing "03/06/2023". The "Hours" section has a numeric input field containing "4". The "Minutes" section has a numeric input field containing "0". At the bottom, there are two red buttons: "Log Hours" and "Save and Log Another".



Foster hours allotment chart

Please use this guide when logging your foster hours.

The number is not per animal per day in the same category, but in total. If you have one bottle feeder kitten or five, the time will be 8 hours per day, not 40.

However, if you have multiple fosters from different categories, such as a foster dog along with a rabbit (housed separately, thank you very much), you can add the two together for a total of 6 hours per day.

Critters, Birds & Reptiles: 0.5 hours

Rabbits: 2 hours

Adult dog: 4 hours

Adult cat: 4 hours

Puppies or kittens: 4 hours

Nursing mother with litter: 4 hours

Neonatal puppies & kittens: 8 hours

Who's a good girl?

Oh, behave!

Some individual animals simply do not succeed in the shelter environment, and for them, a foster home serves as an essential behavioral intervention.

Your mission, should you accept it

Animals who have exhibited kennel stress need a shelter break of at least 14 days to allow cortisol levels to begin to drop. After that time, a foster should be able to help us understand if an animal's behavior is more personality than environmental adaptation.

Sometimes even more time is needed, especially if an animal has been a long-time shelter resident or has exhibited high levels of fear, anxiety, or stress (FAS is a foundational concept of Fear Free training).

For many of our adult dogs who need help managing their FAS we often seek a foster who will work with us to secure an adoption outcome. This type of placement provides continuity for an animal who may have been through a lot of transitions already. It gives the pet time to settle down in a home setting before moving on to its forever home. Not to mention, fosters help the shelter engage the needs of dogs in the community by providing additional kennel space and helping us work within an important shelter metric known as *capacity for care*.

Houston, we have a problem

If you're seeing a behavior you're not sure how to manage, email newhope@sffhumanesociety.org. SFAS is fortunate among shelters to have a dedicated and talented behavior team who work with our shelter dogs. New Hope is also fortunate to be able to lean on them for advice to help with sticky foster situations.

Should I stay or should I go?

As with all other shelter departments, New Hope makes the best decisions it can with the information it has on hand. We do our best to offer a clear description of an animal's behavior as it has been observed in the shelter or reported by previous guardians. However we simply don't know how an animal will act in a home environment.

We also do the best we can to supply a foster with behavior management techniques and make the most appropriate foster matches possible. (Did you know your Volunteer Impact profile offers a treasure trove of behavior resources?) Occasionally, though, an animal is simply "too much" for a particular foster home setting or a foster's skillset to manage.

If after giving it a go and trying our suggestions you feel you need to return your foster animal earlier than anticipated, we'll not judge! As always, schedule a return through newhope@sffhumanesociety.org and either before or soon after bringing the animal back provide us with your detailed observations so we can better plan the animal's pathway through the shelter.

All is not lost—your observations are valuable insights we would not have had without your efforts.

A hard reality

Failure to thrive

The softest part of your heart brings you to fostering, so it can be hard to deal with the worst case scenario, especially with the youngest fosters. The truth is, the first eight weeks of life can be a perilous time. A cause may never be known, but the unexplained loss of a young life is sadly so common there is a term for it: fading kitten or puppy syndrome.

It seems unfair that at the same time we celebrate a new life we have to brace for the reality of it fading before our eyes. But nature is wise, and cats and dogs have many babies at one time to anticipate the loss of one or two. And fosters who have been at it for a while will likely have dealt with such a loss, or two or three.

It's sad for fosters and it never stops being sad for us here at the shelter. But we know, and we hope you know, that fostering is the way to say we gave an animal the best chance it ever would have had.

We don't judge our fosters for losing a little one. On the contrary, we are inspired every time you say yes despite the risk. You take care of our most vulnerable, and in so doing show us the bravery that is the essence of your own vulnerability. Thank you.

If your foster animal dies during the night, gently place him or her in a plastic bag to store in the freezer until you can bring them to the shelter in the morning. Please email newhope@sffhumanesociety.org or call 505-983-4309 x1270 so we know to expect you.

Drawing blood

Reporting a bite

Whether a love bite, a failed grab at a toy, redirection, frustration, overstimulation, or something perhaps more intentional, please let us know immediately any time a foster animal breaks human skin with its teeth, or even a single tooth, and even just a little. Vaccination status and the cause of the bite don't matter, according to law, which mandates a 10-day bite quarantine to observe for clinical signs of rabies. We'll ask you to complete a little paperwork and we'll craft an in-kennel enrichment plan to engage the animal's needs in the meantime.

Although we understand the impulse to keep an animal off quarantine, you won't be doing anyone any favors by not reporting the bite—we all have a responsibility to keep animals and the community safe.

Speak my language

Observe objectively

If you've worked with us for a while (thank you!), you may have noticed an example of subjective language in the above section. Can you spot it?

The word “intentional” implies we know an animal's motivation and the truth is, we simply don't. Fosters who provide notes on animal behavior offer a huge advantage in helping us market that animal for adoption. Objective language training, like [this tutorial from Maddie's Fund](#), helps volunteers and staff make sure they know what each other is saying and makes your foster observations even more powerful.

Taking care of you first

Compassion fatigue

When the flight attendant advises you to secure your own mask first, it's an acknowledgement that we can't take care of others if we don't take care of ourselves first. It's a good metaphor, but maybe we can attend to our needs before things rise to the level of an emergency.

Volunteers and staff working in animal welfare bring their hearts to work, and that's a good thing. And serving in this capacity has the potential to reap intrinsic and extrinsic rewards—that is, it can help us feel good to do good. But when we don't fill our own cup by taking care of ourselves or by taking on too much, we simply won't have enough of anything to sustain ourselves, much less those around us.

Trauma expert Charles Figley characterizes compassion fatigue as “the cost of caring.” He describes it as “the deep physical, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion that can result from working day to day in an intense caregiving environment.” It can feel like irritability, anger, sadness, helplessness, or numbness. It can look like insomnia, withdrawal, self-medicating, an increase in interpersonal conflict...expressions as individual as we all are.

You might call it burnout. We call it serious. SFAS staff has training and resources that can help us navigate “the cost of caring.” Volunteers will find a resource list in their document library in Volunteer Impact. You can let us know how you're feeling if you're comfortable doing so. You can even step away for a while to catch your breath—we will support your decision, and will appreciate you letting us know.

SFAS is emphasizing self-care and compassion fatigue awareness among all its caregivers, whether staff or volunteers. If we can help in any way, we surely will. You help us in so many ways, after all, and we hope you will be part of the SFAS story for a long time. Take care.

Go fetch

Resources

Your Volunteer Impact profile will host a Document Library full of resources to address puppy and kitten care, bottle feeding, behavior issues, compassion fatigue and self-care, medical concerns, marketing your foster pet, training and educational opportunities, and much more. This library will grow and change as we find or create more appropriate offerings.

If you discover a resource that could help other fosters, send it our way at newhope@sffhumanesociety.org.

And the daily foster pitch emails from New Hope are more than your chance to learn about current animals in need—you'll also find shelter news and links to videos, webinars, and fact sheets to help you feel more confident as a foster and make the biggest difference.

Speaking of resources, our Amazon wishlist is another great way to contribute as a foster! Find out which supplies we need [here](#) and share the list with friends. Some items will always be on the list, like Kitten and Puppy Milk Replacer products, plus Royal Canin Mother & Babycat wet food.

What if?

Imagine a future where sheltering is done in the community.

What else could we use these buildings for?

They need you ... *We need you*

Fostering is a powerful direct action for improving the lives of animals, helping us achieve our mission, and making your community a better place.

Other ways to help us find our *What if*:

SUPPLY much-needed stuff from [our Amazon wishlist](#)

DONATE much-needed funds to help us dream bigger
donations@sfhumanesociety.org

DONATE your time in another capacity on campus or off
volunteercoordinator@sfhumanesociety.org

EVANGELIZE

Get your friends, family, and neighbors on board

HOPE with us.

It's better as a shared activity.

Contact

8 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week
newhope@sffhumanesociety.org
Call: (505) 983-4309, ext. 1270
Text: (505) 433-1389

Medical emergencies after hours - See last page of this manual

Appointments

Any animal pickup, vet visit, return, or supply pickup requires an appointment and will be coordinated by New Hope staff.

Vet checks, vaccines

New Hope staff will receive animals for most clinic appointments in the Adoptions Lobby unless other arrangements are made.

Foster animal handoffs and supply pickups

Enter the Lapides Adoption Center Lobby and ask for New Hope staff unless an alternate location has been scheduled.

Mission

Support animals • save lives • spread compassion

Home

is wherever a foster offers hope.

Foster Emergency Quick Guide - *print this page*

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. seven days

Call: 505.983.4309 x1270

Email: newhope@sfhumanesociety.org

Text: (505) 433-1389



5 p.m. - 8 a.m. seven days

and on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day

1. Log in to your Vidaah account* at app.vidaah.vet
2. Select the animal who needs veterinary support
3. Click “Start Chat”

ONLY if the Vidaah vet advises you to seek immediate emergency care:

proceed to Roadrunner Veterinary Emergency Hospital, 5 Camino Karsten, Algodones, NM

505.384.6420 roadrunnerveter.com



* Save time and use [this link to register](#) for a Vidaah account before an emergency even happens or scan the QR code

Do not take your animal to an outside clinic unless the vet service classifies the issue as an emergency and advises you to seek immediate medical care. Without this direction you will be responsible for any charges the visit incurs.