

FT BREWERY



BARC
ANIMAL SHELTER
& ADOPTIONS

FOSTER HANDBOOK



Welcome to the BARC Foster Family!

We are so thrilled that you have taken home a foster! The first part of your foster experience is to carefully review this plan for important information regarding caring for, marketing, and adopting your foster pet!

Foster Office Hours: Daily, 10am-5pm

BARCFoster@houstontx.gov

832.395.9076 or 832.395.9031

Medical questions & concerns

BARCMedical@houstontx.gov

832.395.9053

Medical emergencies:

Surgery complications, extreme lethargy, allergic reactions, distemper
2700 Evella 8am-4pm, no appointment needed

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Making a Difference for Shelter Pets Together

BARC takes in an average of 26,000 animals each year from the Houston community. Yet our capacity as a shelter is less than 500 pets! In order to help as many pets as possible find loving homes, we need amazing volunteers like you to open your heart and your homes to BARC pets!

Our foster program has something for everyone. We firmly believe that nearly every pet in a shelter would thrive better in a foster home, where they can enjoy a snuggly bed and plenty of TLC! Whether you love to nurture sick and injured puppies, get your kicks from coaxing a shy cat out from under the bed, or enjoy taking big dogs out for runs in the park, not to mention we also offer short term and long-term foster's as well because anything helps! We are incredibly grateful for your contributions to the foster program!

In an average year, we place over 2,400 pets into foster homes and ultimately, into their forever homes! How about that for an impact!?

As our community's needs shift with the economy, the climate, and the health of our city, BARC is adapting too! We are actively seeking even MORE foster homes for the pets who come to our shelter and exploring new ways to help pets avoid entering the shelter system in the first place. Your support is vital as we work to meet the evolving needs of our community's animals!

As you embark on your foster adventure, whether it's your first or fortieth time, please know that we at BARC deeply appreciate you and your heart of service! It's important to remember that the world is full of amazing humans who may want to adopt your foster pet—people who may not look, think, or sound like you. Embracing this diversity helps ensure that every pet finds the perfect home!

Fostering with BARC gives us a very special way to connect with a variety of people. As a foster for BARC, we will treat you with respect and expect you to do the same. We also hope that you will be kind and understanding with your fellow humans (even if you prefer your foster pet instead!).

Thank you for joining our team and helping to make Houston a better place for pets and their people! Your dedication makes a real difference in the lives of the animals and the community. We're thrilled to have you with us!

BARC's Expectations of You

- You can foster a pet for as long as 6 months or for as little as one night. While the typical foster stay is less than 2 months, each pet's needs vary based on factors like health, age, and behavior. We also understand that fosters need flexibility!
- Aim to find a forever home for your foster pet. Market your foster within your circle and social network, attend BARC foster networking or adoption events, respond to adoption inquiries we send you. The more you share your adoptable pet with friends, family, and on social media, the quicker they'll find their forever home!
- You must care for your foster pet as if it's your own, ensuring they are kept in a climate-controlled environment and provided with fresh food and water daily. Your care is essential to their well-being while they await adoption!
- Ensure that all personal animals are current on vaccines. **BARC cannot cover the cost of treating your own animals if they become ill.**
- Cats/kittens are indoor-only fosters. Adult dogs may go outside for recreation but must remain inside temperature-controlled environments otherwise.
- You must be willing to answer adopter emails within 48 hours and set up virtual or in-person meet-and-greets.
- Report any new personal pet additions. As the City of Houston Municipal shelter, the BARC Foster program is required to follow CoH ordinance regardless of your personal address (Ordinance number 2022-44, Section 6-76). You can only have a maximum 3 dogs and/or 3 cats in the household to be able to remain a BARC Foster for the respective categories of Dogs and Cats.
- Litters will count as one, but Fosters may not foster more than 1 litter at a time for health and safety.
- For adult pets, foster parent must wait 2 weeks before requesting to foster another pet, if still within city ordinance and can safely isolate for recommended time.
- You must have reliable transportation to get to BARC for foster medical appointments and adopter meet-and-greets.
- Foster dogs must receive monthly heartworm and flea prevention through BARC (free), or proof must be emailed in of prevention given at home.
- In the event, we do not have the specific supplies you need, you may purchase on your own. BARC would not be able to reimburse outside expenses. We do our best to help with supplies with our donation-based Foster Pantry.
- Adhere to BARC Open Adoptions. We ask that you treat everyone fairly to give your foster pet the best chance of being adopted.
- Foster failing is allowed! 😊 If you fall in love with your foster and meet the adoption qualifications, you're welcome to adopt them!
- **Pets may not be kept or given away. All transfers of ownership must go through BARC. Please contact BARCFoster@houstontx.gov.**

Animals Ineligible for Foster Program

- Animals marked Rescue Only
- Animals whose behavior may pose a danger to the public safety, including foster parents
- Animals whose extensive medical issues are not able to be treated by BARC
- Adoptable healthy puppies or kittens of who have been in the shelter less than 15 days
- Healthy dogs under 30 lbs. who have been in the shelter less than 15 days

Foster Timeline

First 30 Days

- **First 5 Days:** Send new photos, videos, a bio, and personality traits (e.g., loves belly rubs, afraid of the vacuum, house-trained) to **BARCfoster@houstontx.gov**. BARC will upload these to the website to help attract adopters. (Check the website the next day to ensure the updates are live!)
- **After 3 Weeks:** Send updated photos and personality traits to **BARCfoster@houstontx.gov** to refresh your foster's online presence.
- **Surgery:** If pet is of age and weight, spay neuter is mandatory within first 30 days.

1-4 Months

Marketing & Event Attendance: Keep promoting your foster through photos, social media, and adoption event attendance to increase visibility.

After 4 Months

Contact BARC to discuss additional promotional efforts, such as extra social media boosts or events or reduction in adoption fee.

6 Months

Final Foster Follow-Up: Connect with your coordinator to develop a plan to either return your foster or adopt them. After 6 months in foster care, BARC reserves the right to adopt out the foster pet to the foster responsible if there's no response/follow up from the foster. If this occurs, BARC will no longer be responsible for any medical costs or expenses related to the pet and attempts to make foster wellness appointments will be cancelled.

Grounds for Termination

At times, it may no longer be safe or beneficial to maintain a relationship with a foster family. BARC reserves the right to end the foster relationship and/or reclaim the foster pet if reasonable efforts to educate and communicate have failed. Below are the immediate grounds for termination, but BARC Foster Coordinator has the discretion to terminate fosters if a situation goes against live release or public safety. Please note that Animal bite does not automatically result in termination. BARC will work with animal enforcement to ensure the safety of both the foster family and the pet.

Explicit grounds for termination:

- **Non-responsiveness:** If a foster is unresponsive for more than 60 days, the relationship may be terminated.
- **Inappropriate, cruel, or neglectful treatment of a Foster Pet:** BARC will take appropriate measures to investigate if mistreatment is suspected. If a foster parent is found to have mistreated an animal, either currently or before joining the program, they will be suspended immediately during the investigation and possibly terminated. A Foster Team member will reach out if concerns arise.
- **Threats:** Physical or verbal threats toward BARC staff, adopters, volunteers, or violence/neglect towards a foster pet will result in immediate termination.
- **Dishonesty:** Lying, stealing, or lack of transparency regarding the foster pet's whereabouts or living conditions.
- **Poor Condition of Returned Pets:** Pets repeatedly returned to BARC in a sub-optimal body condition.
- **Failure to Return Pets:** Refusing to return a foster pet in a timely manner for return to owner, adoptions, or transfer purposes.
- **Involvement of Animal Enforcement:** If an animal enforcement officer must conduct a wellness check or pick up the pet.
- **Breeding Restrictions:** Foster pets cannot be kept with unfixed animals of the opposite sex. Breeding of foster animals is prohibited.
- **Frequent Returns:** Continuously returning pets to BARC due to incompatibilities arising from inadequate introductions to personal pets/family OR returning often for personal reasons. BARC has limited kennel space and we are unable to function as a boarding facility for foster pets if travel arises for fosters. Because our intake fluctuates, any time an animal comes into the shelter it may be at risk for euthanasia due to space, especially if other factors are present such as behavior or medical issues.

Grounds for Breaches of Foster Contract

Breaching a BARC foster agreement can include actions listed below or any other violation of the terms set in the agreement. When you breach this contract, it may result in the termination of your foster relationship with BARC **AND** the adoption of the foster pet to you, if it cannot be reclaimed. If this is the case, BARC will no longer be responsible for any medical costs or expenses related to the pet.

- **Rehoming without approval:** Giving the foster pet to someone else without getting prior approval from BARC.
- **Non-responsiveness:** If a foster is unresponsive for more than 60 days.
- **Failure to Return Pets:** Refusing to return a foster pet in a timely manner for return to owner, adoptions, or transfer purposes.
- After 6 months in foster care, BARC reserves the right to adopt out the foster pet if there's no response/follow up from the foster.

Getting Ready for Your Foster

Supplies

BARC will provide a starter kit with basic supplies you need to foster your new friend as long as we have them available. Our Foster Pantry is stocked solely by donations from the public. Donations are always accepted and much appreciated on behalf of your foster animal.

Supplies provided by BARC Foster Pantry (if available)

- Dry food (Canned food if available) for all fosters
- Crate/Kennel can be used for confining dogs as well as a suitable living space for a litter of kittens when set up with food/water and litter pan. (crate loan agreement required)
- Collars
- Leashes
- Medical care/Necessary medications
- Litter
- For kittens and puppies: powdered kitten milk, canned kitten food, bottle, nipple, disposable litter box, heating pad
- Emotional and physical support by BARC staff and mentors

Recommended supplies to have on hand

- Baby gate/partition to keep your new pet safely separated from resident pets
- Heating Pad / Snuggle Safe heating disk (for underage pets)
- Age appropriate toys
- Front clip harness (PetSafe Easy Walk harness is great)
- Training treats (e.g. Zukes or other meaty treats)

At home Requirements

This setup will help your foster settle in quickly!

- **Create a quiet, comfortable space:** Set up a cozy bed in a low-traffic area to help your foster feel safe. Your home is completely new to your foster pet; **please be patient**, provide a quiet space of their own, and use lots of treats and praise! No prong, choke, or shock collars are permitted.
- **Provide appropriate toys:** For dogs, opt for soft or chew toys; for cats, consider interactive toys like feather wands or plush toys.
- **Litter box or potty area:** Ensure easy access to a litter box for cats or a potty area for dogs.
- **Food and water:** Place fresh food and water in an accessible, quiet spot.

Safety

Safety first: **Never leave your foster dog unattended** with your resident dog(s) or children. Always feed them separately to avoid any potential conflicts.

Remove any small objects, cords, or items that could be harmful if chewed or swallowed. Items that are most attractive to animals are often the very things that pose the greatest danger. Puppy- and kitten-proof your home by checking for hazards such as string, ribbon, yarn, rubber bands, plastic milk jug rings, paper clips, pins, needles, or any other small objects that could be chewed or ingested. Safety first!

Soft toys for pets should be machine washable. Be sure to check toy labels for child safety. A stuffed toy labeled "safe for children under 3 years old" cannot contain dangerous fillings, such as nutshells or polystyrene beads. While safe stuffing is better, remember that even it is not digestible, so always supervise your pet with their toys. Rigid toys may not be as appealing to cats as they are to dogs, so choose toys that match your foster's preferences.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH6HdpinGr_YQ4U7I1FwtaQa3r1IID2LL

Health

- **Keep your new foster friend separate** from your other pets for 14 days to limit disease risk, but at least a minimum of 3 days. **BARC is not responsible for illness in other pets due to exposure to a foster and will not reimburse vet expenses.**
- **Sick or injured fosters** must be kept separate from other pets for the entire duration of their treatment. We also recommend waiting a few extra days after treatment to ensure your foster is fully clear of any infections before allowing interaction with other pets. This helps protect the health of all animals in your home.

REMEMBER: BARC shelter staff has evaluated this pet's behavior to the best of their abilities, but BARC cannot guarantee the behavior or health of any animal placed in foster care.

Travel

Foster pets cannot be taken outside of Houston without prior consent from the foster coordinator. Contact BARCFoster@houstontx.gov at least 72 hours before travel.

BARC has limited kennel space and we are unable to function as a boarding facility for foster pets if the need for travel arises for fosters. Because we are a high volume municipal shelter, any time an animal comes into the shelter it may be at risk for euthanasia due to space, especially if other factors are present such as behavior or medical issues. Foster pets will not be held here during your travel, and there is a possibility that the pet may be humanely euthanized.

Plan ahead to ensure the best outcome for your foster pet. Consider alternatives such as arranging for pet care with friends or family or reach out to us to see if we can help you get the pet re fostered out well in advance of travel.

Returning a Foster Pet Previously on the Euthanasia List

If a foster pet, previously placed on the euthanasia list, is returned to the shelter, they will be placed back on the list due to space limitations if their behavior or medical issues have not resolved.

We encourage fosters to reach out for assistance if they are facing challenges with their foster pet. Our team is available to offer guidance and support to help make fostering a positive experience for both you and the animal.

QUICK LINKS

Foster Returns

- If you need to return your pet for a **non-emergency** reason, please book an appointment using the following link: [BARC Return Appointment](#).
- **If a pet bites or scratches and draws blood**, please report the incident immediately by calling 3-1-1 to notify Animal Enforcement. Additionally, email your BARC foster coordinator at BARCFoster@houstontx.gov to inform them of the situation.

Vaccinations/ Sick appointments

- All non-urgent appointments for sick foster pets require scheduling. Please book an appointment at this link: [Sick Foster Appointment](#).
- For booster vaccines and medication refills, please schedule your appointment here: [Schedule Booster Appointment](#).

Foster Fast Facts

- **Dog Parks:** Foster dogs **cannot** go to dog parks but can meet other dogs on leash or in a yard.
- **Puppy Meet and Greets:** Puppies need at least two rounds of vaccinations (three weeks apart) before going to public places. Please keep puppies off the ground through 5 months of age or ensure to bathe after public meet and greets.
- **Disease Precaution:** It's recommended to keep your foster pet separate from your other pets for 14 days to limit disease risk, but at least a minimum of 3 days. **BARC is not responsible for illness in other pets due to exposure to a foster and will not reimburse vet expenses.**
- **3/3/3 rule:** This rule helps us understand a dog's adjustment period in a new home:
 - **First 3 days:** The dog may feel scared or overwhelmed and might not act like themselves.
 - **First 3 weeks:** They start getting used to the routine and their personality begins to show.

- **First 3 months:** The dog feels settled, trusts their new family, and their true personality emerges.

Creating a Bio and Updating Photo

Please provide detailed bios for your foster pets. BARC reserves the right to make edits for clarity or formatting as needed. These engaging bios should not only convey the pet's personality but also help potential adopters envision their lives with these lovable companions!

Include Animal ID in All Communications

Make sure to always include your foster pet's Animal ID in any emails, photos, or marketing materials.

Example Bios for Foster Pets:

1. Trix A1821965:
After some time in foster care, TRIX, a feline warrior with a heart of gold, roamed the alleyways at night to protect the innocent. One day her secret lair was discovered, so she journeyed to the shelter to seek refuge. Trix has been training daily, purring tales of valor, awaiting a family to join her next quest. Now, she's ready, her eyes shining with promise, her whiskers twitching for adventure, and her heart open for love. Adopt her, and let the saga continue!
2. Snoopy A1821964:
Meet Snoopy, this lovable guy's primary mission is to please, and he excels at it! Just call his name from anywhere in the house, and watch him dash over with that giant, goofy smile. He's the perfect blend of companionship and independence, understanding when you need space but always ready to snuggle up. His two modes are "overjoyed" and "asleep," and that infectious smile follows him into both states. Whether he's splooting on the couch or bursting with energy to play, Snoopy is the best kind of companion.
3. Snow A1821942:
Hello, I'm Snow! I'm a little puppy with a big heart. I love to make friends and I'm always ready to share a laugh or two. My favorite game is fetch - I could play it all day! I'm also a quick learner. I've mastered 'sit', 'stay', and 'paw' already. When it's time to rest, I'm the perfect cuddle buddy. I promise to keep you warm and make you smile. I may be young, but I'm full of love to give. I'm looking for a forever home where I can continue to grow and learn. If you're looking for a sweet, friendly, and smart companion, then I'm your pup!!

Tips for Writing Great Bios

Use a site like [Rescue Writer™ by PetSmart Charities](#) or Guidelines for Effective Foster Marketing (via [Maddie's Fund](#)) for inspiration.

- **Focus on Personality:** Highlight quirky traits and behaviors that make your foster unique.

- **Tell a Story:** Share a personal anecdote to illustrate their character and how they've changed over time.
- **Use Humor and Warmth:** A lighthearted tone can make the bio more engaging.
- **Be Descriptive:** Use vivid language to paint a picture of their demeanor and how they interact with people and other pets.

Great Foster Photography in Five Steps

These tips for foster photography are great to showcase pets in their best light! Capturing their personality and unique traits can really make a difference in attracting potential adopters. Here's a quick summary of the key points:

1. **Always have your camera ready** – spontaneous moments can make the best shots!
2. **Take multiple photos** – the more you shoot, the better your chances of getting the perfect one.
3. **Outdoor photos** – natural light and playful outdoor settings can highlight the dog's energy and beauty.
4. **Include people and pets** – showing social interactions helps prospective adopters see the foster pet's compatibility with others.
5. **Focus on the eyes** – eye contact in photos creates emotional connections with potential adopters.

These steps can help foster pets find their forever homes even faster!

Example Pictures of Foster pets!



Our Open Adoptions Philosophy

BARC promotes open adoptions, meaning that potential adopters aren't limited by strict criteria but should be engaged in meaningful conversation to assess suitability and provide education,

fostering a better understanding of responsible pet ownership. This approach encourages a more personal connection between foster pets and potential adopters, increasing the likelihood of finding the right forever homes.

Our commitment to inclusivity means we embrace all potential adopters, irrespective of appearance, race, religion, age, ability, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by anti-discrimination laws. We believe that everyone should have an equal opportunity to welcome a pet into their lives and share the joy of a lifelong bond.

We're dedicated to finding loving homes for our pets and recognize that many living situations can be successful environments. An adopter won't be denied simply for living in an apartment or having other pets, provided the animals can get along. Dogs don't need a yard to be happy; regular exercise through walks, park visits, and playtime is often sufficient. We also consider any special needs a foster pet may have and work with adopters to ensure a good match. Open communication is key, and our priority is always the safety and well-being of the animals and adopters.

We also encourage adopters to stay connected with us after adoption, so they feel comfortable reaching out for guidance, as our ultimate goal is a successful, lifelong match.

- **Communication is Key:**
 - Engage with potential adopters through open-ended questions and friendly conversation.
 - Listen respectfully to their experiences and concerns.
 - Understand that there may be misconceptions (e.g., declawing cats, dogs belong outdoors) that can be clarified through education. Our approach is nonjudgmental; if an adopter is open to learning, we encourage fostering a positive and educational discussion.
- **Flexibility in Adoption:**
 - Families do not need to meet specific standards to adopt.
 - Our focus is on compatibility between the adopter and the pet's needs. For instance, if your foster pet has a lot of energy, is the adopter willing and able to provide sufficient exercise and mental stimulation?
 - A pet can thrive in various settings as long as their needs are met. We encourage fosters to share honest insights about the pet's temperament and preferences to help adopters make a confident, informed choice.
- **Educate About Best Practices:** Educate potential adopters about any misconceptions about responsible pet ownership. These misconceptions should not prevent an adoption, if we can educate. BARC does not support declawing. Suggest alternatives like scratching posts or 'soft paws' nail caps.
- **No Intrusive Checks:** BARC does not conduct home visits or background checks, and you shouldn't invade potential adopter's privacy, either. Instead, rely on your interaction and conversation to gauge if it's a good match.
- **Assessing Compatibility** Consider if the family can provide the items below. If they meet these criteria, they would be a suitable adopter!
 - Appropriate veterinary care.
 - Companionship and fulfillment of the pet's physical and mental needs.

Adoption Denial Policy for Dogs and Cats

The purpose of this policy is to keep our pets safe and healthy by clearly stating when we might deny an adoption. We want the process to be fair and open and we will only deny an adoption if the pet could be harmed, neglected, or put in an unsafe home.

Risk of Harm, Abuse, or Incompatibility

We will deny an adoption if there's a real risk that the pet could be hurt, neglected, or not cared for properly. This includes a history of mistreatment or unresolved behavioral issues with the applicant's current pets that could endanger the foster pet. We will also deny an adoption if the foster pet's behavior or special needs make them incompatible with the adopter's household or existing pets.

Inaccurate Information

We may have to deny an adoption if the information provided isn't fully accurate or complete. It's important to be honest about things like other pets at home or living conditions, so we can make sure the pet is a good fit for the potential family.

Key Points to Remember:

- You cannot deny or delay an adoption request because you are considering adoption.
- Until the adoption is finalized, all potential adopters should be treated equally, and their applications must be processed in line with BARC's adoption procedures.
- All adoption requests must be communicated to BARC promptly.
- If you are interested in adopting your foster pet, notify BARC to begin the adoption process.
- Follow our Open Adoptions Philosophy. Our goal is to ensure every pet has the opportunity to find their forever home as quickly and smoothly as possible.

Our Process to Adopt

NOTE: If your pet is **underage or underweight** for spay/neuter, it may qualify for an Early Adoption. See the Neonate Foster Addendum section of this plan for details. Email BARCFoster@houstontx.gov to confirm!

1. **Adopter inquiries** will be sent to you via email. Please respond within 48 hours.
2. **Meet & greets** may be done at a local park OR via video conference. At this time, adopters do not need to physically meet the pet to be approved to adopt. Adopter sleepovers are not permitted. Never give your foster pet to an adopter without verifying that the adopter has the BARC adoption receipt.
 - a. **Have multiple potential adopters?** We cannot hold pets for potential adopters, so if someone is unable to meet the pet at the proposed time, you are welcome to move on to the next potential adopter.

3. **Find an adopter you love?** Email BARCFoster@houstontx.gov their name and follow the steps below! No one will be allowed to adopt without your communication via email, phone, or in person notification. Your approval/denial needs to be based on Open Adoptions Philosophy.
 - a. **Fall in love with your foster?** Please email BARCFoster@houstontx.gov then come to BARC within 1 week to complete the adoption! Otherwise, your pet will remain available online to adopters. BARC adoption fees and rules apply. Ensure you communicate your plans to adopt with any pending adopters that have reached out.
4. **Plan for Handoff.** Plan to hand off the pet to the adopter after they have completed the adoption paperwork at BARC. Ensure that both you and the adopter are clear on the handoff logistics. Fosters are not required to be at BARC when adopter completes application.
5. **BARC is open** Tuesday-Sunday at 3300 Carr St. from 12PM - 5 PM (For more information, visit [BARC Adoption Information](#)).

Found a great adopter yourself?

1. **Notify BARC as soon as possible:** Email BARCFoster@houstontx.gov with the following information: The family's name and email address. Specify which family member will be responsible for completing the adoption paperwork.
2. **Follow the rest of the steps above.**

Addendum 1: Neonate Fosters

Medical & Adoption Milestones

- **Two-three (2-3) weeks old**
 - Schedule dewormer and re-weigh if not dewormed at BARC previously
<https://barchouston.as.me/FosterClinic>
- **Six (6) weeks old** (or 3 weeks after initial FVRCP or DA2PP vaccine):
 - Schedule 1st booster <https://barchouston.as.me/FosterClinic>
 - At 6 weeks, your puppy or kitten would be getting cleared for surgery.
Surgery Requirements for Puppies 6+ weeks 3+ Lbs.
Surgery Requirements for Kittens 6+ weeks 2+ Lbs
- **Nine (9) weeks old** (or 1.75 pounds):
 - Email BARCFoster@houston.tx.gov with a new photo and short bio for each pet. **We will make the pet available for adopters at this time**
 - Schedule 3rd booster if not yet 2 pounds
<https://barchouston.as.me/FosterClinic> (boosters are done at time of surgery otherwise)
 - Schedule spay/neuter via email at BARCFoster@houston.tx.gov.
- **Nine (9) weeks old or altered:**
 - Return pet to BARC for Adoption via intake appointment
 - Email BARCFoster@houston.tx.gov with a new photo and short bio of each pet.

Found an Adopter for Your Unaltered Kitten or Puppy?

Your pet **must** be over 1.75 pounds before it can go to an adopter. The foster family **must** live within our foster boundaries. To check address, visit http://www.houston.tx.gov/barc/foster_a_pet.html and ensure they live within Houston or expanded purple boundary.

Early Adoption process:

1. Email BARCFoster@houston.tx.gov with the adopter's name and email address. Make sure to ask which family member will be the one completing the adoption paperwork.
2. The adopter must complete the Early Adoption Application : Nintex Automation Cloud (workflowcloud.com)
3. BARC will email you and the new Adopter next steps once Application has been processed.
4. Verify with adopter or contact us at 832-395-9204 to verify the adoption has been completed prior to handing off your foster pet.

This is done remotely. Payment and microchipping will occur at time of surgery. It is the responsibility of the adopter to follow up with BARC to schedule surgery at BARCEarlyAdopt@houston.tx.gov.

Addendum 2: Preparing Your Pet for TV and Interviews

Sometimes, our staff may reach out and see if anyone would like to join our team for media interviews. Below are some quick tips to help you and your pet prepare for a smooth and successful interview, whether in-studio, at an offsite event, or at the shelter.

Before the Interview: Preparing Your Foster Pet

1. **Groom Your Pet:** Brush them and clean their eyes, ears, and paws. A well-groomed pet makes a great impression!
2. **Exercise & Potty Break:** A tired pet is a calm pet. Make sure they have had plenty of exercise and a bathroom break before the interview.
3. **Practice with Distractions:** Get your pet used to different environments, sounds, and people. Bring them to new locations ahead of time if possible.
4. **Know Their Cues:** If your pet shows signs of stress (panting, pacing, or barking), you'll be prepared to soothe or remove them if necessary.

What to Bring: Essential Supplies

- **Leash and Collar:** Ensure it is snug but comfortable.
- **Bandana/Scarf:** Consider adding a BARC bandana or fun scarf to give your pet some personality on camera!
- **Treats:** Use as positive reinforcement to keep their attention or help with training on set.
- **Portable Water Bowl & Food:** Bring water and a small snack for longer interviews.
- **Calming Spray:** A pet-safe spray can help relax your foster animal in unfamiliar settings.
- **Pee Pads & Clean-Up Kit:** Be prepared for accidents. Bring waste bags, wipes, and paper towels for quick clean-ups.
- **Comfort Toy/Blanket:** Bring a favorite toy or blanket for a sense of security.

Talking Points: Preparing for the Camera

If you're comfortable being on camera, here are some tips to help you prepare:

1. **Share Their Story:** Explain how you met your foster, their journey so far, and what makes them special.
2. **Adoption Info:** Highlight why adopting a shelter pet, like your foster, is important. Include details on how potential adopters can meet or learn more about them.
3. **Behavior & Training:** Mention any training progress or key behaviors your foster has developed in your care. Highlight your foster's specific traits and likes!

4. **Promote BARC Programs:** Feel free to mention BARC's other programs, such as fostering, volunteering, adopting, or the need for supplies.
 5. **Keep It Simple:** Remember to focus on a few key points. Be concise and positive!
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Tips for On-Site & Offsite Adoption Events with Media

- **Stay Calm:** Your pet will take cues from your energy. Stay calm and relaxed.
 - **Positioning:** Stand or sit where the camera can capture both you and your pet.
 - **Pet's Comfort:** Make sure your foster feels safe. If they need a break, take them for a short walk away from the crowd or cameras.
 - **Keep it Fun:** Encourage light-hearted and playful interactions to showcase your foster's personality.
 - **Be Ready for Questions:** Reporters may ask about the pet's personality, medical history, or any challenges they've overcome. BARC staff will always be available to assist with any tough questions, so don't feel pressured to answer anything you don't feel comfortable addressing or know the answer to.
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For In-Studio Interviews

- **Arrive Early:** This will give your foster time to adjust to the studio environment.
 - **Mind Studio Equipment:** Keep your pet away from cables and fragile equipment.
 - **Plan for Breaks:** In between segments, give your pet water and a treat to stay relaxed.
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Thank you for helping make your foster a media star and giving them the best chance at finding their forever home!

Addendum 3: Marketing Your Foster Pet

Include Animal ID in All Communications

Make sure to always include your foster pet's Animal ID in any emails, photos, or marketing materials.

Tips to Market Your Foster

- **First 5 Days:** Send new photos, videos, bio, and personality traits (e.g. loves belly rubs, afraid of the vacuum, house-trained) to BARCfoster@houston.tx.gov. These will be uploaded to BARC's website to help attract adopters. (Check the site the next day to confirm that the updates are live!) for more information on great bios, jump to the BIO section below!
- **After 3 Weeks:** Send updated photos and personality traits to BARCFoster@houston.tx.gov to refresh your foster's online presence.
- **After 2 Months:** Contact BARC to explore additional ways to promote your foster, such as further training, medical care, or social media boosts.

Social media is Key

- **Post Regularly:** Share a post at least every 3 days using hashtags like #adoptable, #houstonpets, and #barchouston.
- **Creative Photos/Videos:** Use colorful backgrounds, fun outfits, or memes. Try using TikTok or Instagram Reels to showcase your foster's personality!

Additional marketing tips

- **Rescue Groups:** Reach out to breed-specific or general rescue groups (e.g., 3 Little Pitties, Red Collar Rescue, Best Friends Animal Society) and send pictures and a story about your foster. If a rescue expresses interest, they must contact BARC.AID@houston.tx.gov for approval.
- **Word of Mouth:** Advocate for your foster with friends, family, and coworkers to help them find their forever home.
- **Facebook Groups:** Join BARC Foster and BARC Houston Fosters & Volunteers on Facebook to ask questions, share updates, and even find a new foster if needed!
- **Avoid "STOP Language" in bios.** Do NOT mention negatives like "not potty trained" or "chews furniture" in your marketing. This type of information should only come up during adoption counseling. Keep the focus on casting the widest net possible to attract interest. All medical and behavioral challenges can be disclosed later in the adoption process.
- **Be Accessible!** Quick responses and ease of scheduling are key. The faster you connect a potential adopter with your foster (whether via Zoom or in-person), the more likely they'll stay interested. People may not be willing to work hard for an animal they haven't met, so bridge that gap by being available and accommodating. Once they meet your foster, they'll likely form an emotional connection.

- **Be Creative!** Try new approaches to market your foster! Think of cute quirks, funny stories, or unique skills your foster has learned. Personal anecdotes will help potential adopters imagine what living with your foster pet would be like. You never know—sending a story to a local news outlet or making a TikTok video could help them get noticed.
- **Be Everywhere!** Post on multiple platforms—the more places you feature your foster, the more likely you'll find their perfect match. Keep your posts engaging, and remember, the more eyes on your foster, the better.

Resources for Marketing and Photography

- [CellPhone PhotoGuide 1.pdf](#)
- [BARC pet marketing.pdf](#)
- [PhotographyBasicsPart3 GreatPhotosAnywhere 1.pdf](#)

Promoting Your Pet

Not getting traction with adopters through BARC's website? Check out some of these local Houston sites for an extra social media boost! Please keep in mind, these sites are not run by or affiliated with BARC. Please use caution and good judgement when sharing information and posting online.

[BARC Animals Available for Adoption](#)

[Dog's & Cats Adoption Houston Texas](#)

[Dogs for Adoption in TEXAS ONLY!](#)

[Fort Bend/Houston for Animals! Rescue, Foster, Adopt, Pet advice](#)

[Houston Area Dogs - Foster/Rescue/Community Outreach](#)

[Houston Pet Rehoming Classifieds](#)

[Houston Pets For Rehome & Pet Related Accessories](#)

[Houston Puppies and Dogs for Adoption](#)

[LOST FOUND & ADOPTABLE PETS \(Houston, Conroe, Katy, Woodlands, Kingwood\)](#)

[Rehoming pets Houston and surrounding areas](#)

[Texas Angel Paws-Rescue,Foster,Adopt](#)

Texas Animals in need of adopters, fosters, or forever homes

The Houston Animal Network