



Title: **Requesting Medical Services to Prepare an Animal for Foster Care**

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Author: Jackie Hathaway, DVM

Owner: Suzanne Nelson, DVM

Approver(s): Lauren Lipsey  
*approved at 2017-12-11 11:46 (UTC -0500)*

Joshua Woolsey, DVM  
*approved at 2018-01-04 13:46 (UTC -0500)*

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## 1. Purpose and Scope

It is important to have a predictable and reliable process in place to ensure efficient communication between the foster and medical department in order to medically prepare animals to enter foster care. A systematic process will enable medical staff to structure their day to allow for timely completion of requested services. This in turn will allow foster staff to place animals from our most vulnerable populations of animals as quickly as possible into foster homes. These processes will maximize staff time and prevent staff from being pulled away from their duties at random times throughout the day in order to prepare an animal to enter foster care. Utilizing Petpoint will allow documentation, tracking, accurate record keeping, and accountability between departments for requesting and completing needed medical services.

## 2. Procedure

### Timing of Requests

#### ***Completing Exams and Medical Supply Prep***

The foster department will schedule *exams* and *medical supply prep* in Petpoint by **noon**. The medical department is responsible for completing these medical services by **3pm**.

\*If a requested service is entered after noon it will be completed the following day by 3pm. i.e. service is requested at 5pm on 5/1, it will be completed by 3pm on 5/2

#### ***Completing DVM exams and instructions for medical care***

The foster department will schedule DVM exams and instructions for medical care in Petpoint by **noon**. The medical department is responsible for completing these medical services by **3pm the following day**.

\*If a requested service is entered after **noon** it will be completed by **3pm the day after the following day**. i.e. service requested at 5pm on 5/1, it will be completed by 3pm on 5/3.

### Types of Requests

#### ***Exams***

General exams will typically be requested to complete vaccines, tests, and implant a microchip when they are not already scheduled in PetPoint.

#### *Commonly Requested Tests/Procedures*

- SNAP canine heartworm test
- SNAP feline triple test
- Microchip implant

#### *Commonly Requested Vaccines/Treatments*

- Rabies vaccine
- FVRCP
- DAPPV

#### ***DVM Exam***

If there are unresolved medical concerns with an animal the foster department will request a DVM exam. Examples include:

- A treatment plan

- A check up on identified medical issues
- A check up on newly identified medical issues
- A check up on progress of treatment
- Interpretation of diagnostics

### ***Instructions for Medical Care***

Instructions for medical care are needed for three reasons: (1) to allow the foster parent to make an informed decision about their ability to provide the care an animal will need, (2) to determine if the foster program and foster vet tech have the capacity to support the animal's medical needs outside of the shelter environment and, (3) so the foster parent has written instructions on how to provide medical care. The foster department will request instructions for medical care.

Instructions should address the following topics:

#### *What's wrong?*

- A laymen's description of all the animal's medical issues.

#### *Medications*

- Include the medications, any special food, or supplements the animal has been prescribed
- Instructions for giving medication that are written in laymen's terms (i.e. one strip in both eyes every 12 hours for 14 days).

#### *When should the medical issue be resolved?*

- Provide information describing how long it should take for symptoms to resolve, heal, and improve.

#### *How to tell if the animal's condition is improving or declining*

- The medical department should provide guidance on: (1) what progress will look like for the treatment plan in place and (2) red flag symptoms associated with medical issue or the treatment being provided and indicators that the treatment plan is not working.

#### *How to Provide Care*

- In laymen's terms, step by step instructions on what the foster will need to do address the animals medical needs

#### *When does the animal need to be seen again?*

- Provide information about when the medical staff will need to see the animal for follow up. For example if an animal is in foster for an amputation it is likely that there will only need to be one follow up for suture removal. With cases like this, provide a date range the animal will need to come in for suture removal (i.e. 9/1-9/5). If the animal is being treated for an ongoing issue like recovery from an orthopedic surgery give a schedule. For example, "Fluffy will need to be seen every 2 weeks for 10 weeks. We'll see fluffy back the weeks of: 3/5, 3/19, 3/26, 4/9, and 4/23. Please note the week of 3/26 Fluffy will need to be seen for x-rays."

### ***Foster Supply Prep***

In order to ensure the foster parent has all needed medication, supplies, and supplements to care for the animal being discharged, as soon as a foster match has been confirmed, the foster department will request that the medical department prepare all the medical supplies needed to care for the animal while in foster care.

#### *Medications*

- Provide enough medication so that the foster parent is able to deliver all needed medication for the duration of the prescription without having to request a refill.

- Provide clear and obvious instructions should the medication require special handling (i.e. temperature or light sensitive).
- All medication should have a prescription label with usage instructions.

#### Supplies

- If consumable supplies (i.e. oral syringes) are needed to administer medication/treatment provide the foster with a generous supply
- Provide all needed supplies to administer medication/treatment. For example if an animal will need fluid therapy the foster should be sent home with a bag of the fluids, needles, and syringes.

#### Prescription Food

- If the animal will need to be on the food long term, like for allergies, provide the foster with enough food for a month.
- If the animal is on a prescription food short term, provide the foster with enough food to provide coverage for the symptoms being addressed by the food. For example if an animal is experiencing inappetence provide enough food for 5-7 days.

#### Status of Requests

The foster department will enter any medical service requests as "*pending*" to indicate that these services will need to be *priority*. Should a needed service already be scheduled, the foster department should change the status from "scheduled" to "pending"

### 3. Attachment

No attachments.

### 4. References

[WI-5 Scheduling Exams for Animal Medical Evaluation](#) and [SOP-137 Preparing for an animal to go into foster care](#)