

# Animal Adoption Welcome Packet



1900 Hidden Rock Lane  
Maidens, VA 23102  
804-556-5302

# Congratulations on your new family member!

## Dear Adopting Family,

We are so happy that you have chosen to take a four-legged companion home from the Goochland County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center! While your new family member spent time at the shelter, the staff and volunteers had the pleasure of caring for and socializing with him/her. The medical team ensured s/he is up to date on vaccines, testing, and spay or neuter if appropriate. It will take more time, but it is such a joy to see the animals who come into the shelter's care learn to trust and love their new family.

While there will be an adjustment period, please know that in addition to the information provided in this package and on the website, there are local training resources available. And even though the medical staff has examined your animal, it is important that you have your new pet examined by your veterinarian who will be invaluable throughout this transition period and the animal's entire life.

We here at Goochland Pet Lovers work tirelessly to financially support the medical care the animals at the shelter receive as well as paying for the Hill's Feeding Program, microchips and spay and neuter costs. We ensure the Goochland community is thriving with good animal care through our Good Neighbor Outreach program where we provide free preventive vet care to income-qualified Goochland and Powhatan residents. We also work with all third graders in the Goochland Public School System through our Teaching Kindness Animal Welfare program.

If you would like to learn more or get involved with **Goochland Pet Lovers**, please visit our website at **[goochlandpetlovers.com](http://goochlandpetlovers.com)** or call **804.556.LOVE (5683)**.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers at Goochland Pet Lovers, congratulations on the new addition to your family!



**Lori Elliott, DVM**  
GPL Board Chair



# General Information

## Adoptions

**Dogs: \$90**

**Cats: \$75**

When you adopt from Goochland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center, your adoption fee covers:

- Spay or neuter
- Age-appropriate vaccinations
- Rabies vaccine, if older than 12 weeks
- Heartworm test for dogs
- FeLV/FIV test for cats
- Heartworm treatment for dogs if heartworm positive



## Lost Pets

In almost all circumstances, Animal Protection is the first entity notified when a lost or stray pet is found. Please be sure to file a lost report with us in the event that your beloved pet goes missing. Below are the fees for reclaiming lost pets at the Goochland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center.

**\$20 Reclamation Fee** unless the pet was wearing its county license or was reported missing.

**\$15 per day** after pet's first two days housed in our facility (added to the above fee)

**Example:** A four-day holding period at the shelter will be a \$50 fee

## Local Ordinances

**Art. 3 Sec. 3-84** The owner of any dog four months or older shall pay a license tax as follows:

- Lifetime Dog License - \$10
- Multi-dog License (Up to 20 dogs) - \$25
- Multi-dog License (Up to 50 dogs) - \$50

**Art. 2 Sec. 3-27** All dogs and cats are required to have a rabies vaccination by a licensed vet upon reaching four months of age.

**Art. 3 Sec. 3-54** It shall be unlawful for any dog over the age of four months to run at large without a county dog license attached to its collar.

**Art. 3 Sec. 3-53** It shall be unlawful for any dog to run at large in the county during the period of April 1 - May 31. It shall be unlawful for any dog to run at large on county-owned property at any time during the year.

# Helpful Tips For New Cat Owners

We know how exciting it is to bring home a new pet! We also know you may have questions about how best to support your new kitty while they acclimate to your home. On this page, you will find some helpful tips and things to look out for.

## Have Patience

It is important to remember that your new cat has been through a lot of changes recently. Your pet will be getting used to a new home and a new family—remember to take things slow. It may be best to start the cat out in a small, quiet room, especially if he is scared or unsure. Be sure to place a litter box, food, water, bed, and scratching post in the room. It may take him a few weeks, or longer, to fully settle in to his new environment.

## The 3 Day, 3 Week, 3 Month Rule of Adopting a Cat

### IN THE FIRST 3 DAYS, YOUR CAT

Might feel overwhelmed

May feel scared and uncertain

May not want to eat or drink

Might want to hide

May not feel comfortable being themselves



### AFTER 3 WEEKS, YOUR CAT

May start to settle in  
May be getting used to the environment

May be getting into a routine

Might start to feel comfortable being themselves



### AFTER 3 MONTHS, YOUR CAT

May be completely comfortable

Might have built complete trust with you

May feel completely secure

May be set in a routine



## Introductions

A slow approach is best when introducing your cat to other pets in the home.

For a cat to cat introduction, try keeping them in separate rooms until they get used to the new sounds and smells. Feed them separately, and slowly start to allow supervised play.

For a cat to dog introduction, a see-through divider (ex. baby gate) is a great tool. Allow the pets to see each other without allowing contact. Be sure to keep your dog leashed if he needs to be lead away from the divider.

## Enrichment

The key to a happy, healthy cat is regular enrichment and allowing them to engage in their innate behaviors. Make meal-time fun by using puzzles or hunting games. Allow your cat to watch fish or birds on TV or on the computer to keep boredom at bay. Toys such as wand toys or catnip toys are also a great way to provide enrichment for your kitty. You can also get creative and DIY your own toys using toilet paper rolls with feathers.

# New Cat Shopping List

- Cat Food
- Litter Box & Scoop
- Cat Litter
- Cat Carrier
- Scratching Post/Cardboard Scratcher
- Cat Toys or Enrichment Items
- Microchip
- Food and Water Bowls
- Veterinary Wellness Check
- Flea & Tick Preventative (if outdoor)

Necessities



Helpful Items



- Collar with Identification Tag
- Nail Clippers
- Cat Brush
- Feline Dental Kit

## Natural Instincts

Cats mark their territory, stretch, and maintain their nails by scratching. Provide a scratching post to encourage scratching away from your furniture.

## Training

Learning to use a litterbox typically happens fairly quickly. You should have two litter boxes for the first cat and one additional box for every additional cat in the house.

## Boundaries

Having a routine and establishing boundaries is important in helping your cat understand what is expected. This will provide a sense of security for your pet. Make sure he has a space he can retreat to when needed (ex. bed or perch).

## Health

It is important to familiarize yourself with the signs of good health in your pet. This can help you identify when a visit to the vet is needed. It is important to contact your veterinarian if you notice any change in your pet's behavior or health.

**EYES** Should be clear and bright, no discoloration, cloudiness, or tearing. Clean any discharge with a warm moistened cotton ball.

**EARS** Should be free of odor and discharge. Ask your vet to show you the proper way to clean your cat's ears with a cotton ball and water.

**MOUTH** Gums should be pink with no swelling or redness. Your cat shouldn't have bad breath or tartar build-up.

**NOSE** Should be free of any discharge.

**COAT** Should be smooth and shiny - free of lumps, tumors, fleas, and ticks. Normal coats are not greasy and have no dandruff.

**LEGS** Check your cat's legs for any swollen areas, paws for lodged objects, and the condition of their nails.



# FeLV & FIV

If you adopted an FeLV or FIV positive cat from the Goochland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center, our adoption staff would have counseled you. However, education is always a positive start to make sure your new cat stays healthy and prevent it for cats who are not positive.

## Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

### What is FIV?

FIV is a slow-progressing virus that can compromise a cat's immune system, reducing its ability to fight off illness. The virus is so slow to progress that it may not even affect a cat in its lifetime.

### How is it transmitted?

FIV is typically transmitted through a deep, penetrating bite (from cat to cat). The virus in the saliva is injected into the non-FIV cat. Dogs and humans cannot contract the illness.

### How do we care for cats with FIV?

FIV cats have the same needs as non-FIV cats. It is important to stay up-to-date with routine veterinary visits as well as keeping your FIV cat indoors both due to their weakened immune system and to prevent spread to other outdoor cats.

### How long can an FIV cat live?

Several studies have shown that cats with FIV can live long and normal lives with routine and preventative veterinary care.

## Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)

### What is FeLV?

Feline leukemia is a virus that can suppress a cat's immune system and impair their ability to fight off other pathogens. It can lead to other health problems.

### How is it transmitted?

Higher volumes of the virus are found in saliva. It can also be found in the blood, urine, and feces of infected cats. Most often the virus is spread by using shared food and water bowls or by one cat biting or licking another.

### How do we care for cats with FeLV?

Most care of FeLV infected cats involves supportive care with regular trips to the vet, prompt dental care, and a low-stress home. Keeping them indoors is also important to reduce the spread.

### How long can an FeLV cat live?

It can be difficult to predict the life expectancy of a cat with FeLV and many are able to live normally for many years. The most important thing is to keep them happy and healthy.



# Litter Box Training

## Litter Box Training

Most cats are familiar with and have an instinct to use the litter box. However, with a new cat, you will want them to know where the litter box is. If you notice your cat urinating or defecating outside of the litter box, please have them evaluated by a veterinarian. While sometimes behavioral, it can be a sign of serious medical issues.

- Some cats can be picky when it comes to litter. It's a safe bet to start with clumping clay litter. It should be 3-4 inches deep.
- If you want to introduce a new litter such as crystals or pellets, begin by placing some of the new litter on the bottom and the current litter on top. Once your kitty has adjusted, you can switch to the new litter.
- Cats like a CLEAN litter box! If the litter box is not cleaned regularly, they will use the bathroom outside of it. Scoop the litter box at least once daily and fully empty and wash with mild dishwashing liquid at least once a week.
- Use one litter box per cat in the household, plus one extra. These litter boxes should be in separate rooms.
- When litter box training, accidents are likely to happen. Don't punish or scold your kitten. Clean the mess with an enzymatic cleaner and keep reinforcing the training. Some kittens will take to it right away and some can take a month to learn.
- When you do see your new kitten using the box, reinforce the behavior with treats and praise!

