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## Canine Distemper Agreement for Foster Homes

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### Canine Distemper Virus Agreement for Fosters

Canine Distemper virus (CDV) falls under the umbrella of contagious diseases known as Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC), sometimes called “Kennel Cough”. Distemper is sometimes accompanied by other respiratory infections such as Bordetella, Influenza, and Mycoplasma. Primarily spread through respiratory secretions, the virus can attack multiple parts of the body including the gastrointestinal tract, and central nervous system. CDV mainly affects dogs, ferrets, and raccoons, and cannot be spread to cats or people. The good news is, the Distemper vaccine is very effective at preventing this virus, and many dogs with mild to moderate cases of Distemper can make a full recovery with supportive care.

A dog you are agreeing to care for has either been exposed or diagnosed with CDV. We have treated the worst phase of the illness in our hospital, so now we are relying on you to help isolate this dog in your home until he/she is no longer shedding the virus. CDV can last for up to 3 months in the body. It is easily passed like a cold through respiratory secretions and aerosolization, but is also eliminated in urine and feces. Fortunately, Distemper does not survive well in the environment and begins to die off within minutes of drying. Contaminated surfaces are easily disinfected with common household cleaners. Other adult dogs who are fully vaccinated are usually very well protected from Distemper virus. A foster home is ideal for a dog undergoing treatment of this condition due to the mental and behavioral effects of being kenneled in shelter isolation for a prolonged period of time. Providing a foster home saves lives by giving Distemper pups a chance, and also helps to conserve space and resources for other animals in the shelter, while minimizing the risk of infection to our vulnerable shelter population.

#### **Common Symptoms of Distemper Virus may include:**

- Cough/chest congestion, snotty nose/nasal discharge, nasal congestion, pneumonia
- Not eating/loss of interest in food, vomiting
- Extreme lethargy or fatigue
- Diarrhea (sometimes bloody)
- Eye discharge/decreased tear production/squinting/not wanting to open eyes/crust around the eyes
- Fever
- Neurologic signs such as seizures or twitching

\*\*Twitching - Twitching can be considered a separate symptom since it can be semi-permanent. A twitch that is changing, worsening, or new should be considered a new symptom. If a rhythmic, unchanging Distemper twitch is present, it may be a longer term, residual symptom of the virus.



## Treatment and Observation

Although there is no cure for CDV, we can treat the individual symptoms it may cause. Our goal is to treat all the symptoms in our shelter until the dog is stable to transfer into a foster home. By the time we are ready to send a Distemper dog to foster, they should be experiencing minimal to no symptoms of the virus. Once the dog is completely free of symptoms, we will begin scheduled testing by collecting swabs of the back of the throat, nose and eyes. This will continue up to once weekly, until we have two negative results. It is not uncommon for test results to remain positive well after the dog stops showing symptoms because this virus can linger in the system for several months. If we can provide a good quality of life throughout the entire treatment process, recovered dogs have an excellent prognosis once the virus has left the body. Any and all health concerns for this animal should be communicated to our foster department and veterinary team, then we will schedule an appointment to have the dog examined at our hospital. To minimize accidental viral spread, we ask that you call ahead to arrange any appointments on site. Upon arrival, you will be admitted into the back parking lot and a member of our veterinary team will direct you to our isolation ward where your foster dog will be seen.

Ideally, the foster home should not have other dogs. If this is not possible, then the foster home can have their own dogs if they are adults over 2 years old and have received multiple Distemper vaccines, including a recent one within the past 3 years. The foster home should not have any puppies or other foster or rescue dogs. In order to help us properly care for this animal and minimize risk to other animals, we ask that you acknowledge each criteria with your initials:

\_\_\_\_\_ This foster dog should not come into contact with any dog that you are not 100% sure is fully vaccinated for Distemper. A fully-vaccinated dog is a dog who has received at least 2 DHPP, DHLPP, or DAPP vaccines, one of which was given within the last 3 years and at the age of 4 months or older.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will check with my regular veterinarian to make sure any resident dog(s) meet these criteria before taking home a Distemper foster dog. In addition to being fully vaccinated, make sure that any resident dog(s) are healthy and not on any medications that may compromise their immune system.

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep a minimum of 10ft distance from other dogs at all times and prevent fence communication in yards.

\_\_\_\_\_ No water or food bowls are left outside at any time for other wildlife or dogs to access.

\_\_\_\_\_ This dog will not be allowed to drink from any community water bowls/sources at parks, other public places, puddles, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ No dogs come into the foster dog's house that are not fully vaccinated (see above).

\_\_\_\_\_ This dog does not visit any public places like restaurants, parks, friend's houses, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that working with animals, especially those with CDV, comes with risks to both humans and other animals. I assume those risks and expressly waive in full and release SDHS, including its employees, volunteers, officers and directors, from all claims, demands, actions or suits of any kind, including but not limited to any claim for compensatory or punitive damages, attorneys' fees, or costs, and all other matters raised by, arising from or in any manner related to fostering an SDHS animal.



Foster Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Foster Name (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[SDHS Distemper Agreement for Fosters - Fillable PDF.pdf](#)

