

Ten Lives Cat Rescue

Foster Cat/Kitten Care Programme: Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy

Effective 12th September 2024

Approved by Meg Murphy

Last Reviewed 12th September 2024

Next Review September 2025

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the necessary procedures for cleaning and disinfecting spaces where foster cats and/or kittens are kept. The goal is to maintain a safe, hygienic, and disease-free environment for the felines, foster caregivers, and any other individuals who may come into contact with the space.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all foster caregivers, volunteers and family members involved in the care of foster cats and kittens on behalf of Ten Lives Cat Rescue. It pertains to all areas where foster cats and kittens are housed, including but not limited to crates, cages, carriers, enclosures, rooms, and play areas.

3. Responsibilities

Foster Caregivers: Responsible for implementing this policy in their homes to ensure that the foster cat/kitten area is regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Foster Programme Management Team : Responsible for educating caregivers on the proper cleaning and disinfection procedures and providing necessary supplies or guidance.

Volunteers: Responsible for adhering to this policy when visiting or working in foster kitten spaces.

4. Definitions

Cleaning: The removal of dirt, debris, and organic matter using soap or detergent and water.

Disinfecting: The use of chemical agents to kill harmful microorganisms, such as viruses and bacteria, on surfaces after cleaning.

Foster Space: Any area where foster cats or kittens are kept, including play areas, sleeping areas, litter boxes, feeding stations, and surrounding surfaces.

5. Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines

5.1 General Cleaning Procedure (Daily)

1. Gather Supplies:

- Mild, unscented dish soap or pet-safe detergent
- Clean cloths, towels, or paper towels
- Fresh water

- Gloves (disposable or reusable)

2. Remove cats and kittens from the area:

- Place cats and kittens in a secure, clean, and separate space before beginning the cleaning process.

3. Remove all soiled items:

- Remove all used bedding, toys, and litter boxes from the area. Place washable items (e.g., bedding, blankets, toys) in a designated laundry basket.

4. Clean surfaces:

- Use soap and water or a diluted bleach spray (1:32 ratio) to clean all surfaces thoroughly, including floors, walls, litter box areas, and feeding stations. Pay extra attention to areas with visible dirt or organic matter.

5. Wipe dry:

- Dry all surfaces with clean towels or allow them to air dry.

5.2 Disinfecting Procedure (Every 2–3 Days or As Needed)

1. Select an Appropriate Disinfectant:

- Use a pet-safe disinfectant such as:
 - A diluted bleach solution (1:32 ratio of bleach to water)
 - Veterinary-grade disinfectants (e.g., Rescue, Safe4)
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution and contact time.

2. Disinfect High-Touch Surfaces:

- Apply the disinfectant to surfaces such as:
 - Litter boxes
 - Food and water bowls
 - Sleeping areas
 - Toys and play equipment
 - Floor areas where cats and kittens walk or play frequently

3. Allow Proper Contact Time:

- Let the disinfectant sit for the recommended amount of time (usually 5–10 minutes) to ensure it effectively kills germs.

4. Rinse and Dry:

- Rinse surfaces with clean water after disinfection if necessary (depending on the disinfectant used).

- Allow the surfaces to air dry or dry them with clean towels.

5.3 Cleaning and Disinfecting Litter Boxes (Daily)

1. Remove solid waste:

- Scoop solid waste from the litter box at least once daily and dispose of it properly.

2. Empty and clean:

- Empty the litter box completely every 1–2 days. Wash it with soap and water, then disinfect it as per the guidelines above.

3. Dry and refill:

- Allow the litter box to dry completely before refilling it with fresh litter.

5.4 Laundry guidelines (Weekly or as needed)

1. Use Hot Water and Pet-Safe Detergent:

- Wash bedding, blankets, and towels in hot water with a pet-safe, unscented detergent.

2. Disinfect Laundry:

- If necessary, add a disinfectant to the laundry cycle, such as bleach (if fabrics allow) or a veterinary-approved laundry sanitizer.

3. Line dry or dry on high heat:

- Use the dryer on a high heat setting to kill any remaining bacteria or viruses. However, be aware that some viruses such as FPV are more difficult to kill. We recommend either disposal of soiled items or setting them aside and storing them for one year after cleaning .

6. Special Considerations

6.1 Handling sick or quarantined cats and kittens

- For cats and kittens showing signs of illness (e.g., upper respiratory infections, gastrointestinal issues), increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting to reduce the risk of spreading disease.
- Use separate supplies (e.g., litter boxes, toys, bedding) for those affected to avoid cross-contamination.
- Disinfect these areas more frequently, ideally once per day.

6.2 Protective Equipment

- Always wear gloves when handling cleaning agents and when cleaning or disinfecting litter boxes or sick kitten areas.
- Wash hands thoroughly after cleaning, even if gloves were worn.
- Avoid using strong-smelling or scented cleaning products that could irritate the kittens' respiratory systems.
- Additional supplies of plastic aprons, overshoes, etc, to be available to fosterers on request.

6.3 Ventilation

- Ensure the area is well-ventilated when using disinfectants. Open windows or use fans to help circulate fresh air, but avoid direct drafts on the cats or kittens.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regular inspections of foster kitten spaces should be conducted by foster caregivers to ensure compliance with this policy.

- Foster programme management will periodically check with caregivers and provide support or additional training if needed.

8. Training and Education

All foster caregivers and volunteers involved in cat and kitten care will receive training on the cleaning and disinfecting procedures outlined in this policy. This includes proper use of cleaning supplies, safe handling of disinfectants, and procedures for maintaining a hygienic foster kitten environment. Brief details of cleaning procedures are included in the Volunteers Manual which accompanies the training process.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed based on new health guidelines or changes in best practices for foster kitten care.

Approved by:

Meg Murphy

Chairperson

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12th September 2024

Appendix

Recommended Cleaning Supplies:

- Pet-safe disinfectants (e.g., Rescue, Safe4)
- Bleach
- Unscented laundry detergent
- Disposable gloves
- Microfiber cloths and mop

- Waste disposal bags