



**Want to feel happier this Christmas?**

**Fostering provides care for pets and support for animal shelters**

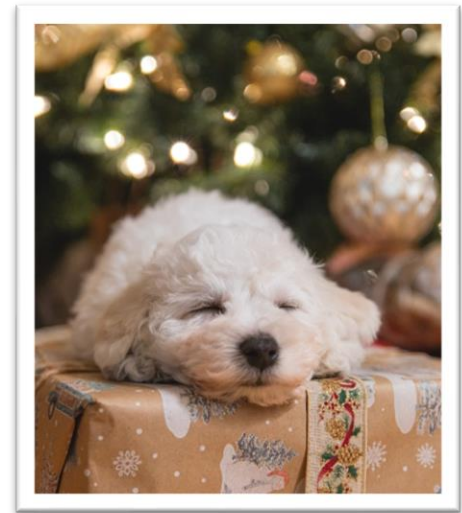
A carefully considered puppy or kitten can be a perfect gift for Christmas, but not every family is ready for a long-term commitment. The sad reality is that cost-of-living pressures and housing shortage are leading to the surrender of thousands of animals to shelters that are already over capacity.

To help ease increasing pressure on animal shelters, national animal welfare charity [Companion Animal Network Australia](#) (Australia CAN or CANA) is advocating for the fostering of animals from shelters or rescue groups over the holidays.

CANA comprises [six member agencies](#) and promotes responsible pet ownership through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives.

“Shelters all need help over Christmas time as their current foster carers go on holidays and have to return the pets to the shelters while they are away,” said Trish Ennis, CEO of CANA.

“Fostering an animal is a great way to help shelters increase the chance of them being adopted. And it’s emotionally rewarding – doing good makes you feel good.”



*Credit Andrew Te (Unsplash)*

Volunteer foster carers take on the temporary responsibility for general care and socialisation of dogs and cats in their own homes until they are ready to be adopted.

“Fostering not only provides invaluable care and support for most-in-need animals, but also supports shelters and rescue groups in giving orphaned animals the best possible chance at finding a loving, permanent home,” said Ms Ennis.

CANA’s members have foster care programs that offer food, bedding, litter trays, bowls and toys as well unlimited advice and support and all veterinary care.

Melissa Penn, President of CANA and Managing Director of the **Sydney Dogs and Cats Home** in NSW, said the shelter needs foster carers for cats and dogs, particularly large dogs.

“We remove as many obstacles as we can to help people become foster carers. It’s about finding the right animal to go with the right family and home,” she said.

In Victoria, **Lort Smith Animal Hospital** also needs foster carers for larger breed dogs as well as animals needing care post-surgery.

“Christmas is always a busy time with the shelter hitting peak kitten season. Our animals needing foster carers can more than triple during this period,” said Amanda Doolan, the shelter’s Adoption Centre Manager.

“We have so many wonderful stories about our foster carers, from those adopting whole litters of kittens to animals making miraculous recoveries whether behavioural or medical. The healing effects of being in a home with a foster carer as opposed to a shelter are priceless.”

Another CANA member, **Dogs’ Homes of Tasmania**, are in dire need of foster carers for dogs, particularly Greyhounds, puppies and those stressed and with medical and behavioural issues.

“Our commitment to the well-being of our dogs extends beyond our shelters, and foster carers play a pivotal role in providing love and respite,” said Mark Wild, CEO of DHoT.

“While we currently have 33 active foster carers, the demand is significant, especially in our northern Homes where only three carers are available. Unfortunately, we lack carers for nursing mums or critical medical/behavioural cases across the state. With just two carers able to take litters statewide, the need is urgent.

“Many dogs, facing challenges in the shelter, require a haven for recovery. It's not only about the unwell; even long-term residents benefit from a break away from the shelter environment. The support of a foster carer can truly make a life-changing difference for these dogs in need.”

If you are considering fostering, contact your local animal shelter now in time to take your foster pet home for Christmas!

Links to CANA member foster programs:

- [Animal Welfare League Queensland](#)
- [Lort Smith Animal Hospital](#) (VIC)
- [Sydney Dogs and Cats Home](#)
- [Dogs’ Homes of Tasmania](#)
- [Saving Animals From Euthanasia \(SAFE Inc\)](#) (WA)
- [Animal Welfare League South Australia](#)

**## END ##**

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### **PHOTOS**

## About Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN)

Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN) is a registered charity representing the companion animal welfare work of our six member agencies across the country, including Animal Welfare League QLD, Animal Welfare League SA, Lort Smith (VIC), Sydney Dogs and Cats Home, Dogs' Homes of Tasmania and Saving Animals From Euthanasia Inc (WA).

Together, our members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year. Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, we celebrate the human-animal bond and promote responsible pet ownership.

We use our national voice to campaign for the humane treatment of all companion animals and we rally support for programmes that deliver high welfare standards. Australia CAN celebrates the human-animal bond and promotes responsible pet ownership through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, including the [Rent with Pets](#) and [Pets in Aged Care](#) programs.

To discover more, visit [www.australiacan.org.au](http://www.australiacan.org.au)