Bringing a New Cat Home

# **Before Adopting:**

* Gather all needed supplies: a sturdy cat carrier, wet and dry cat food (grain free is ideal), bowls for food and water, litter box, litter, scooper, scratching post/cardboard scratchers, toys, catnip, and beds or blankets.
* Cat/kitten proof your home!
* Set up a separate room (“safe room”) to keep your new cat/kitten in. Cats are very territorial and are very sensitive when moved to a new environment. The separate room will provide the cat with quiet and safety that he/she needs while becoming familiar with the scents and sounds of your home.
* The separate room should be set up with food, water, litterbox, and toys. Placing a piece of clothing that smells like you is also a good way for the cat/kitten to get to know your scent.

# **The First Day (Adoption Day!):**

* Bring the carrier into the separate room and make sure the door to the room is shut.   Open the carrier and let the cat/kitten come out on its own. Shyer cats/kittens may immediately run to find a place to hide. It’s okay. That’s a normal behavior.
* Visit your cat/kitten frequently for short periods of time. Visiting can mean petting or playing, or just sitting in the room and speaking softly to them. If the cat/kitten is shy, go at the cat/kitten’s pace. Keep in mind that a nervous cat/kitten may growl, hiss, twitch its tails or pull its ears back.

# **Other Helpful Pointers for Adjusting a Cat/Kitten:**

* Newly adopted cats/kittens may not eat much for the first 24 to 48 hours and may experience temporary diarrhea from stress. If your cat has not eaten in 48 hours, try some extra tasty treats such as canned tuna or salmon.
* If your new companion is an adult, you can use a store-bought product called FELIWAY. FELIWAY imitates natural cat pheromones and helps a new cat feel more comfortable. FELIWAY comes in a spray and diffuser form.
* When you and your new cat/kitten have established a trusting relationship, the cat is ready to begin exploring the house. Be sure to begin this process when you are home to supervise. Close most of the doors so the cat begins its orientation in stages. Too many new spaces at once can be stressful and frightening.
* Be patient! Some cats/kittens get acclimated to their new home and owner within two to four days. Sometimes the acclimation period may take longer.