

VOLUNTEER

Do small things with great love.



Volunteer Handbook

SPCA of Northeastern North Carolina

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- WELCOME -

Thank you for giving your time as a volunteer to help change the life of an animal in need.

The SPCA recognizes the value of your time and the importance of you being happy and fulfilled in the volunteer work that you perform. We have multiple opportunities in which you can participate which are outlined later in this handbook.

We accept volunteers ages 16-17, with Parent/Guardian Signature, and ages 18 and up.

The goal of this handbook is to make you feel comfortable with our organization. We believe you will enjoy your time as a volunteer and meet fellow volunteers with whom you share similar interests. We ask that you read this handbook carefully and refer to it whenever you have questions. This is for your safety, the animal's safety, and the safety of shelter staff.

- SPCA of NENC Mission Statement -

The purpose of this Society is the prevention of cruelty to animals, the relief of suffering among animals, and the extension of humane education.

Our Mission is to provide a clean, healthy, and loving environment, food, shelter, and temporary housing for lost, stray, or unwanted animals, and make every attempt to reunite these animals with their families or to adopt them to good homes.

We promote public health and safety by promoting rabies and other vaccinations and by working with Animal Control to confine stray, feral, aggressive, and unvaccinated dogs and cats.

The SPCA educates the community about animal welfare issues and the importance of good pet care. We also promote the spay/neuter of companion cats and dogs for the animals' own health and to curb the overpopulation of cats and dogs in our community.

- Hours of Operation -

The shelter is open to the public 6 days a week. Our hours are 11:00am-3:30pm every day except Tuesday when we are closed to the public for Training and Maintenance.

Volunteers can come in as early as 8:00am any day of the week including Tuesdays.

Keys to Successful Volunteering

- Familiarize yourself with, and adhere to SPCA of NENC Policies
- Familiarize yourself with the facilities so you can direct visitors to the appropriate animal areas (Dog Kennel, Cat Hall, Yellow/Green Room, Acquaintance rooms)
- Discuss behavioral observations of the animals you are working with if there are concerns
- Report any signs of illness in an animal to a staff member
- Sanitize your hands in between handling or touching each cat to protect the animals against the spread of disease
- Enjoy the animals; they enjoy you!

General Rules and Policies for Volunteers

1. All Volunteers must go through orientation, receive a volunteer handbook, and sign the volunteer waiver before beginning services.
2. Volunteers must sign in at the computer in the main lobby.
3. Volunteers are required to wear appropriate footwear (closed toe shoes only. No flip flops, sandals, etc.)
4. Volunteers must store personal items in your car or leave at home since there is no other secure area to store them. There is a filing cabinet you can use that is shared by other volunteers and community service but the SPCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.
5. Volunteers are asked to commit to 6 hours a month onsite at the shelter.
6. Animals are to be treated kindly, gently, and professionally always.
7. Volunteers are not permitted in the shelter offices or break room.
8. Volunteers are not permitted to use cell phones when they are walking dogs.
9. As a volunteer of the SPCA, you are expected to abide by the policies and procedures of the SPCA thereby presenting a positive image of the SPCA to the public.
10. If you agree to participate in an activity or event, you are expected to adhere to that commitment. If you cannot make a scheduled time, please inform the shelter immediately.
11. Volunteers shall always conduct themselves in a professional manner and abide by the SPCA's policies and procedures for conduct on the work site.
12. Volunteers shall comply with appropriate supervision, written or verbal instructions on the performance of duties, and access levels as defined by each position description.

General Rules and Policies for Volunteers Cont.

13. Volunteers shall only handle those animals permitted by SPCA Staff.
14. Any volunteer bitten or scratched by any animal in the shelter shall report the bite to a staff member immediately so that proper rabies prevention protocols may be followed.
15. All volunteers shall maintain the confidentiality of SPCA activities. Volunteers may not discuss any of the civil or criminal transactions which take place at the shelter. These transactions include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Summons information
 - ii. Animal Impoundment
 - iii. Prior Animal Owners' Information
 - iv. Complainant Information
 - v. Court Cases
- b. All requests received by a volunteer for any such information shall immediately be directed to the Shelter Manager.
16. All volunteers are also expected to maintain confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes information to may involve board members, other volunteers, adopters, or potential adopters and/or the overall business of the SPCA.
17. Any contact with the media must be brought to the attention of the Shelter Manager or to a board member. Media includes anything printed, broadcast, or televised about the SPCA.

Code of Conduct

Volunteer Conduct with Other Volunteers

1. Volunteers shall treat each other with courtesy and answer questions and inquiries in a professional, caring, and informative manner.
2. All volunteers shall cooperate with other volunteers in the proper performance of their duties for the good of SPCA and the welfare of the animals.
3. It shall be the duty of all volunteers to advise the shelter manager or front desk staff of any violation of policy or procedure by any other volunteer.

Staff Conduct with Volunteers

The volunteer program is designed to allow SPCA to benefit from the services of citizens who wish to contribute to the welfare of animals and other citizens. It allows SPCA to achieve goals that would not be possible through the sole use of the staff.

1. Staff shall treat volunteers with courtesy and answer their questions and inquiries in a professional, caring, and informative manner.
2. All staff shall cooperate with volunteers in the proper performance of their duties for the good of the SPCA and the welfare of the animals.
3. It shall be the duty of all staff to advise the shelter manager of any violation of policy or procedure by any volunteer.

Volunteer Conduct with Staff

1. Volunteers shall treat staff with courtesy and not impede or otherwise interfere with their assigned duties.
2. Volunteers shall understand decisions regarding animals, their treatment, placement, or other lawful disposition shall be the sole responsibility of SPCA.
3. Volunteers shall support the mission, goals, policies, and procedures of SPCA
 - a. Volunteers shall avoid contradicting staff in the presence of the public.
 - b. Volunteers shall avoid questioning policies and procedures, disagreeing with these, or otherwise indicating nonsupport of these in the presence of the public.
 - c. Volunteers shall not encourage or otherwise ask staff to violate statutes, ordinances, regulations, or policies and procedures of the SPCA.
 - d. Volunteers are encouraged to present questions, concerns or suggestions to the Shelter Manager, or front desk staff.

Injuries

If you are injured while volunteering at the SPCA, report the injury immediately to a staff member who will ask you to complete an incident report. You may be referred to seek medical attention from your own doctor. First aid kits are in the shelter break room for minor scrapes and cuts. If needed, staff will provide you with this kit.

It is especially important to report all animal related injuries and or bites immediately. Appropriate quarantine procedures for the animals will need to be followed.

Conflict Resolution

We believe that the best way to handle any misunderstanding is to communicate honestly about it as soon as it happens. That is why we have an open-door policy at the SPCA. This brings the volunteer concerns to the attention of the people who can best address them.

We believe good communication among all volunteers will help prevent most concerns from arising, if you have a question or concern, please speak to the Director of Shelter Services about your concerns.

Corrective Action Process

The SPCA of NENC reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's connection with the organization at any time. However, the Shelter Manager may provide verbal counseling and/or a written warning prior to termination but is not required to do so.

- Verbal Counseling - When a performance problem is first identified or inappropriate behavior is displayed, it should be brought to the attention of the volunteer as soon as possible. Informal discussion between the Director of Shelter Services and the volunteer will often suffice as the corrective action needed for the infraction.

Termination

If the volunteer's performance continues to deteriorate or corrective action is not adhered to the Director of Shelter Services will prepare and deliver to the volunteer the reason for termination action. Possible reasons may include:

- It becomes apparent that the individual no longer meets the needs of the SPCA.
- Failure to adhere to volunteer handbook guidelines
- Conduct on duty which would be detrimental to the organization and/or the animals
- Theft of property or funds
- Any abuse or mistreatment of animals
- Releasing of confidential information
- Gross misconduct or insubordination

If you would not like to volunteer with the SPCA anymore, please contact the Director of Shelter Services as soon as possible.

Volunteer Positions

- **Dog Handler/Walker** - These positions are needed daily. Volunteers walk/exercise and socialize the dogs. Volunteers must be familiar with the dog walking protocols listed in this handbook. Dog walkers/handlers are also needed at offsite adoption events.
- **Kennel Assistant** - These positions are needed daily. Volunteers will assist staff in cleaning the kennels and small dog cages to get the shelter ready to open to the public. This happens between the hours of 8 am to 11 am. Volunteers must be familiar with the cleaning protocols listed in this handbook.
- **Cat Assistant** - These positions are needed daily. Volunteers will assist staff in cleaning the cat cages and the 2 cat apartments to get the shelter ready to open to the public. This happens between the hours of 8 am to 11 am. Volunteers must be familiar with the cleaning protocols listed in this handbook.
- **Foster Care** - (as needed) - These positions are for individuals who can welcome an animal into their home on a temporary basis. These animals are sick, injured, or otherwise not suitable to live at the shelter. Foster care may also be needed when the shelter is at capacity or natural disasters. Additional foster application must be completed. Our foster application can be found at www.spcaofnenc.org. Weekly updates on fostered animals must be provided to the shelter.
- **Socializing Cats** - This position is available to all volunteers. The cats enjoy people visiting them and playing with them.
- **General Cleaning** - This position is available throughout the day. Volunteers can do dishes, laundry; sweep the floors and other general cleaning.
- **Enrichment** - This position is available to all volunteers. This is providing items for the cats and dogs to keep their minds busy. Enrichment items can be found in the food room at the shelter.

Cleaning Protocol - Cats

During training you will be with a staff member or senior Volunteer until you can do it without supervision.

1. To start, you will find the Cat Cart (with all the supplies that are needed to clean the cat cages) in the back hallway at the end of the Cat Hall. The cart is stocked with Adult and Kitten food, rags, gloves, bowls, bedding, toys, watering can, bleach spray bottle, and a cleaning solution bucket.
2. You are to wear gloves for each cage. After cleaning EACH CAGE you are to change gloves.
3. Working around the cats, make sure their bowls are clean and give fresh water and food.
4. Scoop the litter pan if not dirty, if dirty then dump completely and add new pellets (one scoop).
5. Next use a rag with disinfectant on it to clean the cage door, shelf, floor, and walls.
6. Place rag in dirty bin (use a new rag for EACH cage), return bedding, bowls, litter pan and toys to the cage, making sure the door is latched after you finish.

Cleaning Protocol - Dogs

When cleaning the inside of the kennels:

1. Start by closing all the guillotines, making sure the dogs are on the outside of the kennel (ask for help or use treats). Do this for all kennels with a dog in them.
2. Open the cage door and remove bedding and toys; placing them in the dirty bin.
3. Place the bed on the wall and scoop any poop and debris out of the kennel (fluff from toys or loose food/treats).
4. Remove the drain cover (white square in floor) and the silver dome inside it. Leave the strainer in the drain.
5. Remove bowls from their holders. Dump any water out. If there is food, move it to a dry area. Leave empty bowls in the cage.
6. Using the water hose, rinse out each cage, then using the pump sprayer (sanitizer), spray the kennels (floor, walls, doors, bowls) and let sit 10 minutes.
7. Next use a scrub brush and bucket (filled with water and dawn soap) to scrub the kennel floors, walls, doors.
8. Rinse each kennel (walls, floor, beds, doors and bowls), filling the water bowls with fresh water.
9. Once each kennel is rinsed, remove the strainers from each drain and discard any hair/food/trash in it. Place the strainer back in the drain, returning the silver dome and white drain cover.
10. Using a towel, dry each kennel floor, bed and empty food bowl.
11. Add a blanket or sheet to each bed, along with a toy and a treat if you would like.
12. Close the kennel door and make sure it is latched. Then open the guillotine slowly and let the dog back inside, closing the guillotine door behind the dog.
13. Then take the supplies to the outside of the kennel and repeat the cleaning process as you did inside.
14. When cleaning the outside, make sure to use a squeegee to remove excess water, clean the drain, and add fresh water to water buckets.
15. Once finished, make sure doors are latched. Then go back inside and open the guillotine, leaving it open for indoor/outdoor access.

Dog Walking Protocol

Walking dogs seems like simple stuff, right? Not Quite. While walking your own dog may be simple, walking dogs in a shelter environment can be quite different. Make sure to wear shoes such as work or athletic shoes (no open toes, flip flops, etc.).

- Dogs are always to be leashed, leashes are hanging in the main building behind the front desk, or in the main dog kennels in the laundry room.
- Pick up waste/poop bags before you walk a dog, they are in the front lobby under the sign in computer in a red bin.
- Walk only dogs you are always able to keep under your control (When unsure – **ASK STAFF!**)

Dog Walking Protocol Cont.

When removing dogs from their kennels:

1. Always take dogs from the outside of the kennels and take note the kennel number or the dog's name on the cage card.
2. Move your hand to the kennel door, letting the dog sniff your hand
3. Check to make sure there are no other dogs around
4. Turn your body sideways to kennel door and have your leash ready in hand with the slip leash open enough to get over the dogs' head
 - You can also open the kennel door inward and get into the kennel with the dog to make sure you can get the dog on leash safely
5. Leave your kennel door open so you know where the dog goes when you return from your walk, in case you forget their name or number. If you forget where the dog goes, find a staff member and we will assist in getting the dog up safely.

Once you have the dog out:

1. Walk away from the kennels and other dogs. Some dogs are reactive to other dogs and will want to go after them. Stay 20 feet apart from other dogs unless the dogs are housed together.
2. Walk to the grass area and then to the double gate at the end of the dog kennels.
 - a. The double gate latch is complicated. You lift the latch and push open the right gate. Do not pull the gate towards you, as it will not open much. Once outside the gate make sure it is latched back.
3. Walk the dogs in the field, in the front grass area or down the street. Do not walk dogs on other properties (non-shelter area).
 - a. If down the street, make sure you are aware of any cars and pavement temperatures.
4. Make sure you are always aware of other volunteers, staff, and other dogs near you.
5. Dog walkers should maintain control over dogs and work on basic commands (sit, stay)
6. Clean up after your dog if safety permits* with plastic bag/poop bag and discard in brown dumpster.
 - a. *if you cannot prevent a dog from pulling/jumping you may not be able to do anything other than hang on to leash. So just pick up the poop once you have finished the walk.

Returning dog to kennel:

1. Pay attention at the double gate to make sure there is no one else coming out or going in.
2. Go back to the kennel, where you left the door open, if multiple doors are open, find the correct cage card for that dog. **If the door is closed**, make sure there is not a dog in that kennel on accident.
3. Place your dog back in the kennel, going inside the kennel with the dog if you need to.
4. Close the door behind you and make sure it is latched.
5. Flip the card on the outside of the dog's kennel to "I have been walked."

REMEMBER:

- Report any injuries or illness to the front desk staff immediately - regardless of cause.
- You are responsible for the animal you are walking. Never put yourself, the dog, or others in an unsafe situation.
- No cell phone conversations while walking dogs. Accidents can happen in seconds.
- Shelter staff will determine if a dog is eligible to be walked.
- Do not pull or drag a dog. Always maintain control over the dog and feel free to ask for assistance.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not allow dogs to jump on cars, either in the front parking lot or the side of the building.
- If your dog's kennel is dirty and it needs to be cleaned, seek a staff member to clean it while you are walking the dog.
- If the dog's water bowl is empty it can be filled with a watering can found inside the main dog kennel.
- In the event of an emergency, yell for help and remain calm.
- In the event a dog fight happens, **DO NOT** try to break them up! Run and find shelter staff as quickly as possible.
- Walkers are needed most around 10am for the morning potty walk and afternoon walks can be done around 1pm.
- **DO NOT** hand your dog over to a visitor who is interested in adopting. Send visitors to the front desk for assistance.

END OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK