

Sioux Falls Area Humane Society  
**Volunteer Manual**



*Providing A Safe Haven and Human Voice for All Animals in Need.*

Updated June 2017

# **WELCOME**

## **to the Sioux Falls Area Humane Society Volunteer Program!**

Every day, volunteers help improve the lives of the animals and they are essential to our shelter which cares for nearly 10,000 animals a year. Below you will find information about our volunteer program and how to become a volunteer!

The dream of all who work at the shelter is to work ourselves out of a job. We want kennels emptied into loving homes and for there not to be a need for a shelter. While that will likely not come true, we still work every day to find homes for every single adoptable pet. So how can you help? Can you foster a litter of kittens? Can you sponsor a spay/neuter surgery? Can you donate food or other wish list items? Do you have an extra half hour a few days a month to come and show some love to the animals? We need community support to continue our mission, and we need the people and funding to provide resources to the growing number of animals who are in need of medical and behavioral support.

### **Have a question while you are volunteering?**

Any staff member can assist you should you need help or have a question while volunteering.

### **Suggestion, comment or concern?**

Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.



## General Policies & Requirements

- **You must be at least 16 years of age or older.** Under the age of 16? Look into our Jr Volunteer program or Kids Club! Both are great opportunities to get involved until you are older!
- **Attend volunteer orientation.** We ask every volunteer to attend an orientation so that you can get a tour of the facility, know who to talk to if you have any issues and learn more about our procedures that help keep everyone safe every day, including the animals!
- **Commitment.** We ask our volunteers for the giving of at least 4 hours a month, but we understand if you cannot give more than an hour or two. We appreciate every minute you spend helping us help the animals. We will always welcome you back, should you need a break from volunteering for any reason, we just ask that you let us know you're on a bit of a hiatus. If we have not heard from you or seen you pop in to say hello for 6 months, a new orientation will need to be completed before you may resume.
- **Supplies & Cost.** You will be provided a name badge at no cost, which you will be required to wear while you are volunteering. If you would like to purchase a volunteer t-shirt, they are available from the front office!
- **Court Ordered Volunteering.** Due to liability issues, the Sioux Falls Area Humane Society does not have a program for court-ordered community service
- **Waiver.** Each volunteer must have a completed and signed volunteer application and waiver on file.
- **Restricted Areas.** Any volunteer found in a restricted area without permission may be removed from the program.
- **Violations.** Any violation of policies, requirements or procedures may result in termination from the program.
- **Tetanus shots.** Volunteers are encouraged to make sure both their tetanus shots and their pets vaccinations are up-to-date before volunteering at the shelter.
- **Animals.** Volunteers may not place any pets on "hold" or asked to be contacted before an animal is euthanized. Volunteers must also remember their confidentiality clause in the application and not release any information outside of the shelter staff about any animal that is not currently up for adoption. Volunteers are also not permitted to speak to any media entities without prior permission from the executive director.
- **Laws.** All shelter volunteers must comply with city and state animal cruelty laws and ordinances. Any violation can result in removal from the program.

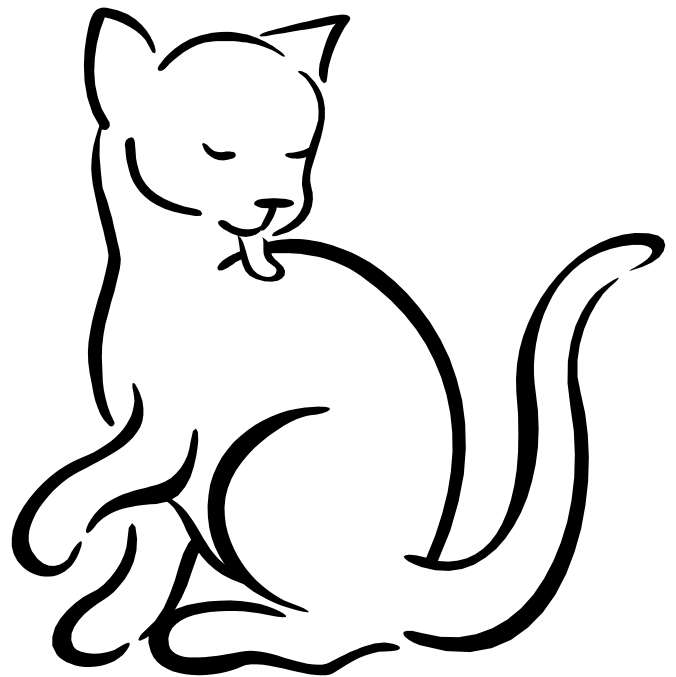
**Our vision is a world where every animal is wanted, cared for, and loved. You are the voices that can tell the truth of our shelter. We are a locally-led, non-profit, and private organization that focuses on the happiness and health of animals. Many people out there are miss-informed on the work that we do here, we are actively trying to change that image. We value the human-animal bond. Our commitment as an organization is to encourage that bond in safe, loving, healthy pet ownership through compassionate care practices and advocacy for the welfare of all animals.**

## General Guidelines

- **Parking.** Please park in the South half of the parking lot, leaving the North half that is closer to the building for customers to park.
- **Scheduling.** You do not need to fill out a schedule or call ahead to volunteer. Any little bit you can help is appreciated. You can come in whatever time increments your personal schedule allows. We just ask that it equals 4 hours at the end of the month.
- **Time Sheets.** Be sure to fill out your time sheet each time you come in to volunteer. Hours are tallied at the end of each month and you will need to start a new time sheet at the beginning of each month.
- **Dress Code.** *Wearing your name badge while volunteering is required.* Washable clothes are essential. Please remember you are representing SFAHS. We ask that you use your own judgment and refrain from wearing inappropriate clothing. Volunteer t-shirts or other SFAHS t-shirts are available for purchase at the shelter should you wish to wear one of those while you volunteer.
- **Courteous and Kind.** Be sure to be courteous and kind to customers, using proper language and polite manners. Swear words and inappropriate talk are not allowed and could result in removal from the volunteer program.
- **Restricted Areas.** The back office, city annex building, quarantine rooms, cat intake and rooms with posted restricted or staff only signs are restricted to staff members only unless you've received direct permission from the executive director or kennel manager.
- **Dog Kennels.** NEVER sit in the dog kennels with a dog. This is an invasion of the small amount of space they do have at the shelter and may react unpredictably to this invasion.
- **Stray animals.** Volunteers may not have any access or contact with stray animals or animals that are not up for adoption. You can recognize who is up for adoption as they will be the only animals in the adoptable hallways and will have a pink or blue card on their kennels.
- **Proper handling.** Be sure to maintain proper handling guidelines with all pets. (See Handling Guidelines). It is especially crucial to make sure you are using sanitizer between visiting with each pet. For the pets' health, please do not go from kennel to kennel allowing dogs to lick your hand or scratching cats from kennel to kennel through the doors.
- **Staff.** Please remember the shelter staff works very hard and have a lot of training and experience with the animals at the shelter. Many days, if not most, are very stressful and emotional for the staff. Please be respectful and courteous. If you do not understand how or why something is done, please politely ask them to explain further or have them direct you to someone who can better answer your questions.
- **Policies.** The SFAHS has certain policies in place that must be followed. If you do not agree with those policies and find yourself unable to follow them, we will understand and respect your choices. You can choose to not volunteer in certain areas, but we ask that you are not disruptive to the policies in place or you may be removed from the SFAHS volunteer program.
- **Feedback.** The volunteer programs are built to benefit the shelter, pets and all those who come through our doors. Ideas and input are always welcome. Should you have any input or ideas, please write them down and submit them to the volunteer coordinator. We will do our best to address your feedback in a timely manner, but please remember we work with a limited staff and have lots to accomplish each day. There are also some ideas or input that we will simply not be able to make a reality due to budget limitations, staffing limitations or legal reasons. Please understand that all feedback, ideas and input are carefully considered and discussed.

## Volunteer Programs

- **Shelter Crew** - Help with all aspects of the shelter including cleaning, giving toys and treats, walking, cuddling, and more!
- **Morning Dog Walking** - These walkers come in starting at 7am and help us take everyone for their morning walk before they get their breakfast, as we are cleaning their kennels and moving them to new ones.
- **Small Animal Socialization** - Work with the small animals so they stay socialized while at the shelter.
- **Cat Cuddling & Socialization** - Work with the cats so they stay socialized while at the shelter.
- **Dog Walking & Training** - Work with the dogs so they stay socialized and help with their training and manners while at the shelter.
- **Bath Buddies** - This position requires an extra training session with our head volunteer groomer. Bath Buddies are trained to help with basic grooming including baths & brushing.
- **Matchmakers** - Help pre-screened adopters find the perfect animal for their home!
- **Event Hoppers** - Help with event prep including mailings, donations and distribution of marketing materials.
- **Shelter Ambassadors** - Help with annual public events! These include Paws to Celebrate, Bark in the Park, Cruisin' for Critters Poker Run, Fore the Animals Golf Tournament, and more!



## Shelter Crew

### Objective

Help with all aspects of the shelter including cleaning, laundry, giving toys and treats, organizing, walking & cuddling

### Qualifications

- 16 years of age or older
- Physically able to handle dogs and lift up to 50 lbs.
- Patient when working with unruly animals.
- Not afraid of getting dirty.

### Required Training

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Dog Walkers Training
- Read Volunteer Handbook
- Cat Cuddling Training

### Upon arriving to volunteer

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge

### You are required to:

- Handle only the dogs that you are physically capable of maintaining full control.
- Keep your distance from other dogs – at least 10 feet.
- Report any scratch or bite.
- Report any *attempted* nip or bite, or any other sign of aggression.
- Walk only the dogs that are available for adoption. They are easily identifiable with PINK or BLUE kennel cards.
- Report any signs of illness such as vomiting, coughing, diarrhea, missing hair, irritated skin, lumps & bumps etc. by filling out a pink Health Care Concern card. Failure to do so may prevent the Humane Society from providing appropriate care to the dog/puppy.
- Return dog to its' original kennel. If it is dirty, you should either inform staff on your way OUT (with the dog), or clean it yourself. If a dog is returned to the wrong kennel, you may cause cross contamination, confused identification or make it appear to staff that we have less kennel space than what we actually do, which may prevent new dogs from being put up for adoption.
- Use proper procedures when cleaning in garage or in laundry area.
- Do not give unauthorized treats or toys that are not allowed to animals.

### You are HIGHLY ENCOURAGED to:

- Wipe dog off if wet from rain (this decreases excess water in kennel – which poses the risk of slips/injuries to dog.)
- YOU MAY REFILL WATER – DO NOT REFILL FOOD! The staff feeds the animals, if anyone refills the food dishes – it may appear the dog is not eating which would indicate illness.
- Help organized blankets or food hallways.
- Help with walk-thru inspections to ensure that adoption floors are clean and kennels are in order.

### Important Safety Guidelines

- Always use a leash. NEVER move a dog by the collar. Doing so may trigger aggression.
- Never scruff a dog to discipline or for any other reason.
- Approach each kennel in a soft and gentle manner, rather than rushed and abrupt. Standing slightly sideways is less intimidating to a dog, than if you are fully facing them.
- Squat slightly in front of the dog, rather than bending OVER the dog. Be aware of where your face is.
- NEVER sit inside a kennel with a dog, or get in the kennel to get the dog out, especially with the door closed. This is for your own safety and so that the dog doesn't feel cornered and react.
- Open kennel enough to reach into it. Use one of your feet as a wedge to prevent the dog from over-anxiously pouncing out before you're ready.
- Do not lift objects that are too heavy for you, to prevent injury.
- Do not place blankets or objects in laundry without shaking out or checking blankets.

- Make sure any toys given to the dogs are not easily destroyed or ingested. This will cause harm to these animals.

This is only a brief overview of safety guidelines. Keep in mind that common sense must always prevail. The pursuit of reducing the environmental stress for each animal is of utmost importance.

**Volunteer Time Opportunities:**

Saturday - Wednesday: 7am – 6pm    Thursday & Friday:        7am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## CAT CUDDLING AND SOCIALIZATION

### Objective

Reduce stress for cats awaiting adoption. To better socialize those cats that may be a little less outgoing. To obtain information about stray cats or about cats which we have little information on.

### Qualifications

- Understanding the “psychology” of cats.
- Enjoys spending time with cats.
- Able to take cats out of cages and handle them comfortably and correctly.
- Comfortable with reading kennel cards.

**Required Training** - New Volunteer Orientation, Read Volunteer Handbook, Matchmakers Training

### Upon arriving to volunteer

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge
- Grab a brush or kitty treats if desired

### You are required to:

- Use hand sanitizer between handling animals.
- Report any scratch or bite which has broken skin.
- Report any *attempted* nip or bite, or any other sign of aggression.
- Report any signs of illness such as vomiting, coughing, diarrhea, missing hair, irritated skin, lumps & bumps etc. on a Health Care Concern card. Failure to do so may prevent the Humane Society from providing appropriate care.
- Clean get acquainted rooms in between customers to reduce spread of potential disease/illness.
- Ensure kennel ties have been replaced in between customers or your visits with cats.
- Assist customers who want to visit with a cat. Help answer their questions to the best of your ability – if you don't know an answer, don't assume – refer the customer to the front office.

## Handling Cats

### Kittens:

Kittens are fun to play with and handling them frequently teaches them to accept people. Do not play roughly with them; bad habits are hard to break and they will adopt out easier if they don't bite or scratch prospective owners. You won't need to use the hand sanitizer between kittens kept in the same cage, but be sure to use it when going from cage to cage.

### Adult Cats:

1. An adult cat is a fully developed individual and a real creature of habit. The adult cats, especially when first brought in, need reassurance and loving, not rough play. They will frequently be upset and frightened, often hiding in their litter box or in the back of the cage. Petting them will reassure them of their safety.
2. When approaching a cat that you are unfamiliar with, let the cat dictate what happens. Introduce yourself to the cat slowly, letting it smell your hand first. Use slow movements until you and the cat are familiar with one another. Some may allow you to pet them right away, a few may not. Some may even allow you to bring them out of the cage. Allow the cat to dictate the degree of socialization.
3. Watch for signs of illness. Obvious constipation or loose bowels, sores, etc. should be reported to the staff at the front desk. Frequent signs of aggression should also be reported to staff at the front desk. Watch for the difference between aggression, being scared, over stimulated, playing rough, etc.
4. If you want to brush a cat, brushes can be obtained from the cabinet in the East corner of the adoption room.
5. If a cat needs water, you may use the sink room in the cat adoption room to refill the water. **YOU MAY REFILL WATER – DO NOT REFILL FOOD!** The staff feeds the animals, if anyone refills the food dishes – it may appear the cat is not eating which would indicate illness.

## Important Cat Handling / Safety Guidelines

- Never scruff a cat or kitten. Staff have been properly trained to do this, but do not scruff them. If you are having issues with a cat ask someone to get staff for you, or if the cat is in a get acquainted room, leave them there and ask staff for assistance quickly.



- If the cat you are handling becomes upset, LET GO. Fighting to continue holding it will assure you will be scratched or even bitten. Leave cat in room. GET STAFF to help you return cat to its kennel. If there are customers in the room, ask one to go to the front office and send someone back, so you may supervise cat, and assure another customer does not try to handle it.
- Do not attempt to handle cats that are growling, hissing, hiding in their litter box, or staring (often without blinking) with dilated pupils. Advise staff of this behavior. The cat may recently have been moved, or may have developed a behavior problem that is unsafe to all that may come in contact with it. If it is a result of a recent move to the adoption room, staff may give you a “Stressed” sign to place on the animal’s kennel.
- NEVER stand around holding a cat in front of other occupied kennels. This scenario has been the cause scratches to volunteers. If you are volunteering during a time when there are customers around, and the visiting rooms are not available for you to use, bring a chair into the room and have a seat with the cat. If there is a lot of activity in the room, it is wise to visit with the cat while it is still in its kennel.

## **Volunteer Time Opportunities**

Saturday - Wednesday: 11am – 6pm

Thursday & Friday: 11am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DOG WALKING & TRAINING**

### **Objective**

To provide an opportunity for the dog to relieve itself outside, exercise and socialize. Spend time with dogs that have little or no information about them – and collect personality clues you observe. Also taking this time to help train the dogs with manners.

### **Qualifications**

- 16 years of age or older
- Physically able to handle dogs of many sizes
- Patient when working with unruly dogs
- LOVE DOGS!
- Not afraid of getting dirty.

### **Required Training**

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Dog Walkers Training
- Read Volunteer Handbook

### **Upon arriving to volunteer**

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge
- Grab poop-bags
- Grab a leash
- Check “I was last walked” whiteboard

### **You are required to:**

- Ensure collar is properly fitted. Two fingers should fit between the collar and neck; make sure it is not too loose.
- Clean up after dog.
- Log each walk on the “I was last walked” whiteboards.
- Handle only the dogs that you are physically capable of maintaining full control.
- Keep your distance from other dogs – at least 10 feet.
- Prevent dogs from urinating on car tires or other property. Try to move off of sod lawn area of lawn to prevent excessive urine burns.
- Report any scratch or bite.
- Report any *attempted* nip or bite, or any other sign of aggression.
- Walk only the dogs that are available for adoption. They are easily identifiable with PINK or BLUE kennel cards.
- Report any signs of illness such as vomiting, coughing, diarrhea, missing hair, irritated skin, lumps & bumps etc. by filling out a pink Health Care Concern card. Failure to do so may prevent the Humane Society from providing appropriate care to the dog/puppy.
- Return dog to its’ original kennel. If it is dirty, you should either inform staff on your way OUT (with the dog), or clean it yourself. If a dog is returned to the wrong kennel, you may cause cross contamination, confused identification or make it appear to staff that we have less kennel space than what we actually do, which may prevent new dogs from being put up for adoption.
- USE EXTREME CAUTION when walking through doorways, to prevent injuries to dogs’ paws. TAKE YOUR TIME opening doors!

### **You are HIGHLY ENCOURAGED to:**

- Observe the dog you are walking and document personality clues and obedience skills – if the dog you are walking has little or no information provided. Be OBJECTIVE. State only the things you can see, such as “walks with a loose lead” or “knows sit and shake”. NEVER write assumed information such as “good with kids” etc. If the dog was a stray, we do not know its’ history, upbringing, past experiences or tolerance level of various aspects.
- NEVER sit inside a kennel with a dog, or get in the kennel to get the dog out, especially with the door closed. This is for your own safety and so that the dog doesn’t feel cornered and react.
- You may brush a dog that needs some grooming. Dispose of the hair puffs – do not leave them on the ground outside.

- Use the exercise yard to allow the dog to burn off pent up energy and have some fun! If you take toys out there – bring them back when you are finished. (Poop-Scoop ordinance highly enforced in exercise yard as well)
- Remove ticks from dog, or at least inform staff.
- Wipe dog off if wet from rain (this decreases excess water in kennel – which poses the risk of slips/injuries to dog.)
- YOU MAY REFILL WATER – DO NOT REFILL FOOD! The staff feeds the animals, if anyone refills the food dishes – it may appear the dog is not eating which would indicate illness.

### **Important Dog Handling / Safety Guidelines**

- Always use a leash. NEVER move a dog by the collar. Doing so may trigger aggression.
- Never scruff a dog to discipline or for any other reason.
- Move swiftly through kennel room. It is incredibly stressful for kennelled dogs to see other dogs walking past. Some dogs may react with a barrier aggression, which may result in “fence fighting”. Should this occur, continue walking pulling only with the leash. NEVER put your hands near the dogs face, or you are asking to be bit. This includes grabbing the collar.
- KEEP YOUR FACE OUT OF DOGS FACES! Direct eye contact is threatening to dogs. Some breeds are more sensitive to this than others. Though the humane society does NOT place animals with known aggressive behavior up for adoption, animals can be unpredictable, especially in the high-stress life of living in a shelter.
- Use caution if the dog you’re planning to walk next is EATING. If when you open the kennel door to leash it, he/she hovers over their food or begins eating faster, they perceive you as a threat to something they value, that being food. Move on to the next dog, and return when this dog has finished their meal. Report this information to the front office, so they may advise the new owners, in case there are small children in the home.
- Approach each kennel in a soft and gentle manner, rather than rushed and abrupt. Standing slightly sideways is less intimidating to a dog, then if you are fully facing them.
- Squat slightly in front of the dog, rather than bending OVER the dog. Be aware of where your face is.
- NEVER sit inside a kennel with a dog, or get in the kennel to get the dog out, especially with the door closed. This is for your own safety and so that the dog doesn’t feel cornered and react.
- Open kennel enough to reach into it. Use one of your feet as a wedge to prevent the dog from over-anxiously pouncing out before you’re ready.
- If the dog you are walking is barking growling etc. at other dogs outside, make a point to move along, and not try to have a conversation with someone. The dog you have is upset, and probably stressing out the dog it is barking at.

This is only a brief overview of safety guidelines. Keep in mind that common sense must always prevail. The pursuit of reducing the environmental stress for each animal is of utmost importance.

### **Volunteer Time Opportunities:**

Saturday - Wednesday: 7am – 6pm  
 Thursday & Friday: 7am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## **“BATH AND BRUSH BUDDIES” (GROOMING)**

### **Objective**

Increase self-confidence of the dogs, make them look and smell better so potential adopters want to take them out of their kennels! Customers don't want to play with the “dirty-stinky dogs”, so improve their chances of getting noticed by cleaning them up!

### **Qualifications**

- 16 years of age or older
- Physically able to lift dogs of various sizes
- Gentle – understanding that not all dogs are accustomed to being groomed
- Not afraid to get wet and/or dirty

### **Required Training**

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Bath and Brush Buddies Grooming Training
- Dog Walkers Training
- Read Volunteer Handbook

### **Upon Arriving to volunteer**

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge
- Check “Needs Some Grooming” board outside grooming room for special grooming requests
- Pass through kennels, choose the dogs which are most soiled... these are the ones customers will overlook.

### **You are required to:**

- Handle only those dogs you are physically capable of maintaining full control of.
- Thoroughly clean grooming room when you are finished for the day
- Report any scratch or bite which has broken skin and report any *attempted* nip or bite, or any other sign of aggression.
- Report any signs of illness such as vomiting, coughing, diarrhea, missing hair, irritated skin, lumps & bumps etc. Failure to do so may prevent the Humane Society from providing appropriate care.
- Put a bandana on the dog after its bath!

### **Basic Instructions**

- Choose appropriate shampoo, addressed during training
- Brush/comb dog before bathing. Remove knots and mats before getting wet – otherwise they will get worse and pull on skin.
- If needed, leash pet up to tub using available tie hooks.
- Use lukewarm water.
- Keep shampoo out of eyes and ears. Have washcloth available to wipe out if needed.
- Mineral oil should be use if dog has fleas. Fleas will run up into eyes when dog gets wet, and the mineral oil will smother them.
- Scrub down pet starting with head and moving back toward tail, concentrating on pet's rear end, under legs and groin area (fleas favorite hide outs).
- Rinse pet thoroughly starting from head to tail.
- Dry thoroughly so dog does not get chilled, or cause an injury due to a slip in its kennel.

### **Important Dog Handling / Safety Guidelines**

- SEE ALL OF DOG WALKERS HANDLING / SAFETY GUIDELINES.
- UTILIZE LOOPS PROVIDED IN TUB AND ON GROOMING TABLE to limit dog's range of motion.

### **Volunteer Time Opportunities:**

Saturday – Wednesday: 10am – 5pm Thursday & Friday: 10am – 6pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## SMALL ANIMAL SOCIALIZATION

### Objective

Help socialize or keep small animals socialized so they are easier to adopt out. To obtain information about stray animals in which we have little information on.

### Qualifications

- Understanding of small animals
- Enjoys spending time with small animals
- Able to take small animals out of cages and handle them comfortably and correctly.
- Comfortable with reading kennel cards.

**Required Training** - New Volunteer Orientation, Read Volunteer Handbook, Matchmakers Training, Small Animal Training

### Upon arriving to volunteer

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge

### You are required to:

- Use hand sanitizer between handling animals.
- Report any scratch or bite which has broken skin.
- Report any *attempted* nip or bite, or any other sign of aggression.
- Report any signs of illness such as vomiting, coughing, diarrhea, missing hair, irritated skin, lumps & bumps etc. on a Health Care Concern card. Failure to do so may prevent the Humane Society from providing appropriate care.
- Ensure kennel ties have been replaced in between customers or your visits with the small animals.
- Assist customers who want to visit with an animal. Help answer their questions to the best of your ability – if you don't know an answer, don't assume – refer the customer to the front office.
- Do not handle any small animal you are not comfortable with.

### Handling Small Animals

6. Each small animal will require different needs for their species. If you are unfamiliar with a species and what it needs, ask the front office or kennel staff to assist you in learning more about them. They will do their best to help you.
7. Use slow movements when trying to socialize any small animal.
8. Watch for signs of illness. Obvious constipation or loose bowels, sores, etc. should be reported to the staff at the front desk. Frequent signs of aggression should also be reported to staff at the front desk. Watch for the difference between aggression, being scared, over stimulated, playing rough, etc.
9. If a small animal needs water, you may refill the water. YOU MAY REFILL WATER – DO NOT REFILL FOOD! The staff feeds the animals, if anyone refills the food dishes – it may appear the cat is not eating which would indicate illness.

### Important Small Animal Handling / Safety Guidelines

- Never scruff a small animal.
- If the animal you are handling becomes upset, LET GO. Fighting to continue holding it will assure you will be scratched or even bitten. Leave room and GET STAFF to help you return the animal to its kennel. If there are customers in the room, ask one to go to the front office and send someone back, so you may supervise, and assure another customer does not try to handle it.

### Volunteer Time Opportunities

Saturday - Wednesday: 11am – 6pm

Thursday & Friday: 11am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## **“MATCHMAKERS” (ADOPTION ASSISTING)**

### **Objective**

A customer service volunteer assists in the first stage of the adoption process. The volunteers' main objective is to help the customer make the most informed decision on a pet they are thinking about adopting. Helping a customer find their “match” is important and rewarding!

### **Qualifications**

- Friendly & outgoing, yet not intimidating
- Comfortable with getting pets into and out of kennels
- Able to read and interpret kennel cards
- Familiar with shelter policies and philosophies.

**Required Training:** New Volunteer Orientation, Matchmakers Training, Read Volunteer Handbook

### **Customer Service Responsibilities**

- The volunteer will assist customers with getting a pet out of and back into its kennel.
- Answer customer questions.
- Be careful not to apply any pressure to customers about adopting a pet. Give them time.
- Keep customers and their children's fingers out of the kennels to prevent avoidable spread of disease.
- Use disinfectant between handling of EVERY pet, and make sure that customers do the same.
- Do not deal with angry customers – please refer them to staff.
- Check water for the pets. Fill as needed.
- Offer a get acquainted room to customers looking at pets.
- Direct customers to deposit the dogs' waste in the trash can located on the East Side of the building.
- Wipe down get acquainted rooms in between pets.
- Mop “accident puddles” in halls or find a staff to tell about the accident.
- Make sure customers are not sitting or getting in kennels with dogs to get them out. This is dangerous and should not be done by volunteers or customers. Politely show them how to properly take out a dog or guide them to a get acquainted room where they can spend time indoors with the dog.
- Must know adoption requirements such as requirement of spay or neuter etc.
- Once a customer has interacted with the pet (which is REQUIRED before an adoption will be approved) the volunteer should advise the customer to take the kennel card to the front office to complete the adoption.
- If you have any concerns about conversation matter that you hear from customers, please report it to staff.

### **Volunteer Time Opportunities**

Saturday – Wednesday, 11am-6pm    Thursday & Friday, 11am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## Event Hoppers

### Objective

Help with event prep including mailings, donations and distribution of marketing materials.

### Qualifications

- 16 years of age or older
- Outgoing personality
- Have a valid driver's license or dependable transportation

### Required Training

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Read Volunteer Handbook
- Event Hopper Training

### Upon arriving to volunteer

- Sign-In on Time Sheet & Wear Name Badge

### Tasks

- Help with event mailings. This may or may not be limited to folding letters, applying labels, sealing envelopes, running bulk mail to post office.
- Help with event preparations. This may or may not be limited to rolling t-shirts, distributing posters, running errands to off-site locations, making handmade signage.
- Donation pickup. This may or may not be limited to collecting donations given by local businesses for upcoming events.
- Distribution of marketing materials. This may or may not be limited to helping pass out marketing materials for upcoming events at local businesses.

### Important Guidelines

- Always drive to and from locations safely. The shelter is not liable for any accidents or injuries that may occur while running errands while performing volunteer duties.
- Be courteous and friendly to any and all business-owners you may encounter.
- Do not deal with any upset business owners. Refer them back to the Special Events Coordinator.

This is only a brief overview of guidelines. Keep in mind that common sense must always prevail.

### Volunteer Time Opportunities:

Saturday - Wednesday: 7am – 6pm

Thursday & Friday: 7am – 7pm

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

## Shelter Ambassadors

### Objective

Help make annual events a success by volunteering at the events and interacting with the public on behalf of SFAHS.

### Qualifications

- 16 years of age or older
- Outgoing personality
- Have a valid driver's license or dependable transportation
- Dependable & Reliable

### Required Training

- New Volunteer Orientation
- Read Volunteer Handbook
- Some events may require a meeting prior to the actual event

### Upon arriving to volunteer

- Depending on the event, find the Special Events Coordinator and ask where you will be assigned.

### Tasks

- Set up and tear down. Be able to help set up the event and/or tear down after the event is over. This may or may not require transporting items back to the shelter after or before the event.
- Help with registration and check in at events. This may or may not require processing credit cards, customer service, reading spreadsheets, accepting cash or explaining the event.
- Floater. Float around the event and help answer any questions any patrons may have.
- Education & Overview. Have the knowledge and education about the SFAHS to be able to answer basic questions about the shelter.

### Important Guidelines

- Always drive to and from locations safety. The shelter is not liable for any accidents or injuries that may occur while running errands while performing volunteer duties.
- Be courteous and friendly to any and all patrons you may encounter.
- Do not deal with any upset patrons. Refer them back to the Special Events Coordinator, or whoever is in charge of the event.

This is only a brief overview of guidelines. Keep in mind that common sense must always prevail.

### Volunteer Time Opportunities Varies

I have read and understand the following information as to my responsibilities in this program. Should I feel uncertain of anything I am doing at any time, I understand that I am fully encouraged and welcome to approach staff with my questions!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_



# ANIMAL HANDLING GUIDELINES

- **Hygiene.** Hygiene is very important for the control of disease. Be aware of which animals you are working with and make sure to sanitize and/or wash your hands between each animal contact. Grooms must clean their brushes, combs and groom area thoroughly between animals.
- **Observe.** Observe what the animals are telling you by their body language and approach them accordingly. Remember that animals that have just arrived at the shelter or placed up for adoption can be very frightened. Please keep this in mind when handling them.
- **Behavior.** Some animals do not like being near other animals. Be aware of this when putting animals in a kennel or when removing them. Their card may state unknown with other animals if they came in with little information, so be extra careful and observe their behavior as you approach. Even if a card says an animal is good with other animals, the shelter can be a very stressful environment and they may still act out towards the other animals.
- **Read Cards.** Do not handle an animal who has a "CAUTION" or "STRESSED" sign on their kennel without prior permission. These signs are placed on kennels for a reason and those animals may just need a day or two to themselves without much contact.
- **Leash.** ALWAYS use a leash on a dog when taking it out of its kennel. This is to avoid fights and escapes. Only take on animals that you can handle. If a dog is dragging you down the hallway, it is not the dog you should be walking as this is dangerous for both you and the animal. You will be shown a makeshift harness you can make with any leash to gain more control over the dog without injuring them.
- **Cleaning.** If you have taken a dog to a play yard, please clean up after them with the provided scoops and waste baskets or with a waste bag at the volunteer sign-in.
- **Scruffing.** AVOID "scruffing" an animal. This is when you hold or pick up an animal by the loose skin on the back of the neck. On occasion, staff may need to "scruff" a dangerous or frightened animal, but have been trained to do so safely. Please do not attempt to scruff an animal yourself. Do not pick up an animal that is acting nervous or scared. If the animal allows you to pick them up, be sure its body is completely supported to avoid back injuries to the animal. Always hold the animal securely.
- **Questionable Animals.** Please do not handle any animal that you are questionable about or not confident in your ability to walk. If you need help with any animal, please get a staff member.
- **Kennels.** Always remember which animal you have taken out and their kennel. It is highly important that you return that animal back to the same kennel for many reasons.
- **Health & Behavior.** If you notice any signs of illness, injury or unusual behavior fill out the Health Concern form or Behavioral Concern form found near the time sheets. If there are none available, ask the front office staff for a form. Please fill these out completely including your name so staff can follow up with you should they have any further questions.
- **Bites & Scratches.** Alert staff immediately if an animal bites or scratches you. They will need to take a full report of any bites that occur.
- **Pets at home.** Be sure your pets at home are fully vaccinated. Take care to wash your hands when you are finished volunteering and to wash your shelter clothes when you get home. This will minimize the threat of passing contagious diseases on to your own pet.
- **Security.** You can help with the security around the animals and their future potential homes by notifying staff of questionable individuals or if you overhear anything questionable or alarming said by any patrons while at the shelter. There have been animals injured, harmed or stolen in the past, so anything you can do to help us make sure this doesn't happen again is greatly appreciated.
- **Proper Treatment.** The proper treatment of animals is essential. Animals are to be disciplined by vocal corrections ONLY. No physical discipline should EVER be used.
- **Loose Animals.** If any animal gets away from you immediately find a staff member and tell them "RED ROVER" followed by the animal name, dog or cat and location where it got loose. The staff will be paged and come to assist you in safely capturing the animal.

By following these handling guidelines, safety for both the volunteers and pets can be achieved.  
For questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the volunteer coordinator.

## HUMANE SOCIETY FACTS & INFORMATION

- The Sioux Falls Area Humane Society cares for nearly 10,000 pets each year.
- The SFAHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and does not receive any funding from United Way or national animal welfare organization or humane society.
- There is currently a staff of approximately 50 full-time and part-time employees.
- We have a part-time veterinarian and 3 vet techs on staff to help with all the animal medical needs.
- The shelter is currently run by a 16-member Board of Directors
- The SFAHS actively advocates and lobbies for stiffened animal cruelty laws and punishments.
- The shelter has been in its current location since 2001. In 2012 the SFAHS underwent a remodel to expand the building to better fit the needs of the community.
- The SFAHS Humane Officers do not deal with any animal cases within city limits. Any animal questions or cases within city limits should be directed to the Sioux Falls Animal Control. The shelter does contract with the city to provide housing and care for the pets. These animals are housed in a separate building from the adoption center. The SFAHS Humane Officers do have jurisdiction in multiple counties that surround the Sioux Falls area.
- The Sioux Falls Area Humane Society is an open admission shelter meaning we do not refuse any animals that comes through our doors no matter age, size, breed or condition. We do our best to save every animal. We are a no-kill shelter in that we will not euthanize any animals for reasons of space, length of stay or breed. Euthanasia does happen at the shelter for those who bring their animals to the shelter and request euthanasia as well as animals that cannot be adopted out to the public due to severe aggression, untreatable medical conditions or animals that are in pain, suffering or dying.
- The shelter does not have open visitation. Anyone who comes to the adoption center and would like to visit the animals must be pre-screened to adopt or be a registered volunteer who has completed orientation. This was changed in April of 2016 to help reduce the amount of stress that animals go through on a daily basis with high-traffic without following the policies and procedures put in place to keep the animals happy and healthy.

# SHELTER ADOPTION GUIDELINES

- The Sioux Falls Area Humane Society reserves the right to refuse any adoption.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone inferring the animal will be used for breeding purposes.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone refusing to spay/neuter.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone who does not agree and comply with the adoption requirements of the SFAHS.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone who is hostile to the SFAHS or to its employees.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone who repeatedly shows himself to be an irresponsible pet owner such as:
  - adopting and returning numerous pets
  - bringing in animals with behavior problems that could have been easily corrected with proper training
  - bringing in litters of puppies and kittens and not spaying the parents
  - any other such circumstances the SFAHS may deem unacceptable
- No animal will be adopted for research purposes, fighting, human consumption, or training other animals such as rabbits for greyhounds, birds for hunting dogs, etc.
- Animals cannot be placed on a hold. Adoptions are first-come, first-served as long as it's a good fit.
- No animal will be adopted to anyone under the age of 18.
- No dog will be adopted out as an outside animal on a chain. The animal will need a kennel or fenced in area with proper shelter.
- No animal will be adopted out to anyone who has given false information on a previous adoption application.
- There is a three month waiting period for those individuals bringing an animal in and wishing to adopt another one, unless the reason for surrender is a severe behavior problem that cannot be corrected, a chronic health problem or age.
- No animal will be adopted out to anyone who has not fulfilled the terms of a previous adoption agreement.
- In the case of adopting to someone who rents, the landlord will need to be contacted for approval.
- No animals, either living or deceased, or animal parts will be donated or sold for research purposes or any type.
- Animals will not be adopted out to homes where there are unfixed animals, no matter if the species are the same or different.
- Vet references may be required for some special needs adoptions.
- Previous breed experience may be required for some adoptions.
- Animals will not be adopted out to homes where animals are not up-to-date on rabies. It is required by law for animals to be current on their rabies vaccine.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**As a volunteer at the Sioux Falls Area Humane Society, you are entrusted with some confidential information and are required to sign the confidentiality agreement in your original volunteer documents. The SFAHS often has stray animals in various parts of the building; most of these are restricted to staff only, and volunteers are not allowed in these areas for safety and liability reasons.**

**We understand that in most cases, someone may just be attempting to help another person with their animal, but under no circumstances is a volunteer allowed to speak out about any animals in restricted areas. While some of the animals in our custody are simply stray or lost pets, some are there for their safety. For this reason, volunteers are not allowed to confirm if an animal that appears to be someone's pet is at the shelter on social media, in person or in any other form. If you see someone post about a lost animal, encourage them to refer to our "Missing a Pet" information poster in the education tab or our website, or to call the SFAHS to learn about what to do in this situation.**

**Breaching the confidentiality clause of the volunteer agreement can be cause for immediate removal from the program.**

**Re-admittance to the volunteer program may be allowed on a case-by-case basis after the time frame of 1 year, which will be decided by an executive team.**

### **Shelter Hours**

#### **Adoption Center Hours**

Saturday - Wednesday  
11 am - 6 pm

Thursday & Friday  
11 am - 7 pm

#### **Volunteer Opportunities Hours Vary**

See Job Descriptions

#### **Animal Night Receiving**

Available After Hours

Sioux Falls Area Humane Society  
3720 E Benson Rd.  
Sioux Falls SD 57104  
Phone: 605.338.4441 ~ Fax: 605.332.9096  
[www.sfhumanesociety.com](http://www.sfhumanesociety.com)