

Brevard County Animal Care and Adoption Centers

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Volunteer Manual

Guidelines and Information for Volunteers

Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement is dedicated to serving and protecting the public and to promoting a safer community through responsible animal ownership and humane care.

Welcome to the Brevard County Animal Services Volunteer program. We recognize the importance of volunteers dedicated to the care and placement of unwanted animals within the community and beyond. Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer. Participation in the Volunteer Program supports Animal Services in the operation of the Animal Care Centers and the ultimate goal of humane treatment and adoption of animals. We are glad that you choose to volunteer with us. We stress the importance of animal welfare and we are hopeful that your participation will be rewarding!

Our Services

The services of Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement (“BASE”) impact the entire community by:

- Rescuing animals in distress
- Promoting spay/neuter surgery to prevent overpopulation
- Humanely capturing nuisance or dangerous animals
- Helping people find lost pets
- Providing care to strays and finding homes for as many as possible
- Humanely euthanizing animals that cannot be adopted
- Investigating animal abuse and cruelty complaints
- Enforcing animal control ordinances
- Educating the public about responsible pet ownership

VOLUNTEERING

Application

All Volunteers must complete the Brevard County Animal Care and Adoption Center volunteer application form. A waiver must be signed that includes the name and address of the person to reach in case of an emergency involving the volunteer.

All volunteers must be at least 16 years old to volunteer at the center. However, volunteer opportunities are available for younger people provided a parent or guardian is also a volunteer. Within two weeks of receiving your application, the Kennel Supervisor will contact you for an interview. We expect all volunteers to participate in our orientation and training programs as part of their volunteer experience.

Orientation

All volunteers will complete an orientation at The Animal Care and Adoption Center before they begin volunteering. The Volunteer Coordinator will schedule a date and time for your orientation.

Volunteer Policies

Volunteers form an integral part of the Animal Care and Adoption Centers. Volunteers and staff form a partnership bound by a common love of animals.

The staff will work hard to make this a meaningful and satisfying experience for volunteers. Volunteers will be able to learn more about animals through hands-on experiences with them and special training relevant to animal care. And most importantly, volunteers can be sure that they are contributing to the health and welfare of animals in an incredibly important way.

In turn, the Animal Care and Adoption Centers staff asks that volunteers commit themselves to promoting the center's many services in the best manner possible.

Professionalism

Volunteers must remember that everything they do at the centers reflects on the organization. The rule of thumb is to treat everyone with courtesy and respect and behave as if the volunteer position were your profession.

The centers rely on volunteers to honor their commitments to the staff, the animals and the customers - **don't promise** to do something for them that cannot be done.

Dedication to The Animal Center

- While volunteers may not totally agree with all of the policies in place at the Animal Care and Adoption Centers, volunteers must agree to fully respect and support them.
- As required by county ordinance and state statute, animals adopted from a shelter must be spayed or neutered.
- Animals will be humanely euthanized if they are deemed unadoptable for health or behavioral reasons or in some cases if there is no more space or time that the Center can house them.
- Aggressive animals cannot be adopted from the centers.
- Our Adoption Application and Adoption Contract are primarily used as an educational tool for potential adopters to consider the long-term commitment of pet ownership. An employee of the Animal Care and Adoption Center must approve the Adoption Application.

Opinion and Emotion vs. Policy and Fact

As a volunteer, you have two important distinctions to make:

Opinion vs. Policy
Emotions vs. Fact

These are important because they can mean the difference between the success of the Animal Care and Adoption Center's credibility as an organization or its failure.

The job of dealing with animals is often charged with emotion. Unfortunately, emotion, coupled with opinion, can often become a real problem. Volunteers who offer opinions instead of hard facts do so with good intentions. Unfortunately, despite the best of intentions, these opinions frequently do not benefit the animal.

Never be embarrassed to say, "I don't know". Put the burden on the manager or animal center employee. Professional staff members are available to our customers to answer questions and handle problems. Everyone keeps a list of resources and phone numbers close by.

Why are we telling you this? Passing on misinformation has been a severe problem with volunteers at other shelters. We don't want this to become a problem here.

Therefore, we cannot impress upon you the importance of checking with reliable sources before you act or offer any information. Remember, erroneous information not only causes damage to the credibility of the organization, but it could also result in harm to the animals in our care and custody through poor or erroneous information.

Volunteering Procedures

Sign In Please

Volunteers must sign in and must sign out in the volunteer logbook each time they volunteer and include the date and number of hours volunteered. Volunteers must wear their name badge while at the Center. Volunteers should turn in their name badge at the end of the shift.

Recording volunteer hours helps the Centers recognize service and provides the volunteer a record of community service hours for organizations that require them.

Attendance

Volunteers are encouraged to make a commitment to volunteer as often and as many hours as they can to assist the animals at the Animal Care Centers. The scheduling will be handled by the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers will be responsible for scheduling their time and showing up for work as scheduled. If the volunteer is unable to come on the days scheduled, they will need to contact the Volunteer Coordinator. If the volunteer misses (2) two consecutive times without

notifying the coordinator, their slot will be filled with another volunteer. Volunteers must commit to 4 hours every two weeks or 8 hours a month, to maintain active volunteer status.

Proper Attire

Volunteers should wear casual clothes that are appropriate both for working with animals and meeting the public. Jeans, regular walking shorts and surgical scrubs are most common. Volunteers are urged to remember that they represent the Brevard County Animal Care and Adoption Center and their professional appearance and conduct help form the public's overall impression of the organization. Volunteers may not wear short-shorts or revealing clothing. Volunteers may not wear T-shirts with inappropriate advertisements, logos or slogans that would be offensive to others.

Volunteers must always wear a name badge that indicates their position as a volunteer.

Non-slip shoes are required. Sandals or open-toed shoes are prohibited. They do not protect feet well enough. Bare feet are strictly prohibited! Jewelry and perfume should be of a limited nature. Working around animals that swing their paws can cause entanglements and some animals, especially cats, are allergic to some perfumes.

Some volunteers bring an extra set of work clothes. They can change out of their kennel work clothes before going home. This provides an extra level of protection for volunteers and their pets.

Also please remember to leave all valuables in a locked vehicle or at home. Brevard Animal Service and Enforcement will **not** be responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Accidents & Injuries

- All safety rules and procedures must be followed.
- Any safety equipment volunteers have been issued must be used.
- Volunteers must immediately report any accident or injury at the Center to a staff member, supervisor or manager.

Animal Bites

Bites are serious business. State law requires that if an animal bite breaks a person's skin, a bite report must be completed. If you are bitten or scratched while volunteering -no matter how minor it may appear- it must be reported to a staff member. The Center is responsible for the safety of volunteers and must fill out a bite report so the animal can be observed for rabies.

- A volunteer who neglects to report a bite they receive at the Animal Care and Adoption Center will have their volunteer privileges immediately revoked.
- Tetanus shots are recommended if this immunization is not up-to-date. Volunteers should check with their family doctor to see if a tetanus shot is needed before beginning to volunteer at the Adoption Center.

Restricted Areas

Some of the areas in the Animal Care and Adoption Centers are off-limits to volunteers because of disease control, animal comfort or the possible interference with Center operations. Volunteers may work in some of the following areas to assist with cleaning **only** when accompanied by an employee of the Animal Care Center.

- The Clinic/Surgical Suite used for health evaluations and spay/neuter surgery is off-limits to volunteers. This helps to reduce both the stress and anxiety for the animals and staff. Only the Staff Veterinarian may authorize a volunteer to assist in this area.
- The Isolation, Quarantine, and Stray Holding Areas are off-limits in order to reduce the potential of volunteers being put in dangerous situations.
- The Animal Intake Office is off-limits to all volunteers.

Telephone Calls

Volunteers may not make personal telephone calls while on duty unless it is an emergency.

Revocation of Volunteer Privileges

Violation of any policies and/or procedures set forth by Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement will be addressed by the Center's Supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteer privileges may be revoked at any time.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Animal Care Volunteer: This is a kennel-cleaning position.

Improvement Volunteer: This position offers volunteers the ability to work at beautifying and improving the efficiency of the Animal Care and Adoption Centers.

Clerical Assistant: This position assists with clerical duties.

Events Volunteer: This position assists with off site events that promote animal adoptions and

Provides education about the Animal Care and Adoption Centers.

Resource Volunteer: This position assists with finding new resources and ways to optimize services of the Animal Care and Adoption Centers.

Kennel Procedures

- In kennel operations, the health of the animal is of the utmost importance. Techniques must be followed to limit the potential spread of disease. Cross contamination can result in the loss of many animals that are in our care.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

For Volunteering