



Cumberland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center
782 East Lane Rd | Crossville, TN 38571

Volunteer Job Description (Unpaid)

PURPOSE

Under supervision, to serve as a valuable member of a staff support team in an adoption center facility that has responsibilities for ensuring a quality stay for cats and dogs awaiting new homes; to provide staff with information related to individual animals' developing or long-term and chronic health conditions and behaviors, as observed; to assist the public with general information about the shelter's hours and days of operation, respond to questions about general characteristics and traits of animals at the adoption facility; and to perform designated tasks of a volunteer in a specific, assigned area, according to the volunteer's interests and skills, and to grow in knowledge and support of the shelter's adoption program over time with experience.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Dog Socializer/Walker — Provides shelter dogs with mental and physical stimulation and basic behavior training; leashes and removes dogs individually from assigned kennels for outdoor walks and exercise; moves dogs individually to the visitor's room for one on one play, toys, and petting; returns dogs individually to assigned kennels; spot cleans kennels; observes dog's behaviors when alone and when around other volunteers and the public; makes notes and informs staff verbally or in writing as to any behavioral issues such as signs of aggression, cowering, nipping, and signs of new or reopened wounds, illness, lethargy and similar conditions; and immediately alerts staff if a dog bites the volunteer, other people or other animals.

Dog Bather/Groomer — Provides minor grooming including brushing and bathing and nail trims; leashes and remove dogs individually from assigned kennels and walks them to the bathing sink in the kennel area; assists dog into the bath; uses dog or puppy shampoo to bathe the dog; removes and disposes of ticks or fleas when found; towel dries, brushes or combs dogs to improve the appearance of their coats and to improve their comfort; clips nails; and returns clean animals to their assigned kennels; makes notes and informs staff verbally or in writing of unusual bumps, cuts, wounds and behavioral issues observed in the dog during the bathing routine; immediately alerts staff if a dog bites the volunteer, other people or other animals; returns cleaning/bathing items to proper shelves, puts used towels into laundry hamper or washing machine, and returns the bathing area to a clean, dry state.

Cat Socializer/Groomer — Enters one of four cat rooms for assigned day and engages animals by touching, combing, petting and using soft voice tones to stimulate their interest; assesses animals' condition individually for any signs of illness, lethargy, diarrhea, vomiting, aggression, passivity or fear; massages animals to gauge their desire for human interaction; informs staff verbally or in writing of any concerns involving individual cats; clips nails; immediately alerts staff if a cat bites the volunteer, other people, or other animals; may discuss with staff if a cat requires bath and, if appropriate, uses cat or kitten shampoos on site to bathe the animal in the sink located in the cat section; removes and disposes of ticks or fleas when found; towel dries, brushes or combs cats to improve the appearance of their coats and to improve their comfort; returns cleaning/bathing items to proper shelves, puts used towels into laundry hamper or washing machine, and returns the bathing area to a clean, dry state; may scoop the litter pan of the assigned room, as needed, depositing the waste in an approved receptacle and placing the scooper in an approved bucket with bleach/water as trained.

Laundry/Pet Dishes/Litter Pans — Loads towels, bedding into washing machine and adds recommended amount of laundry soap and bleach; operates the machine to ensure the load is sanitized; places sanitized laundry into dryer and sets for the appropriate amount of time to ensure articles are completely dry; folds and places cleaned towels and bedding on appropriate shelves for later use; makes notes and advises staff when specific, needed supplies are running low; loads laundry room sink with pet dishes for cleansing, adding soap and bleach as trained; washes pet dishes and then lets them soak for a prescribed time in bleach to achieve required state of cleanliness; wipes down sink area to return to a clean state; empties and scrapes cat litter pans to remove all debris before placing in the cat room sink and adding soap and bleach; washes the pans and then allows them to soak for a prescribed time in bleach; wipes down sink area and returns area to a clean and dry state.

Kennel Cleaning — Uses approved techniques, cleaners, and equipment, as trained, to remove animal waste and wash down dog kennels each day; ensures each kennel has a clean bowl with fresh water to start the day.

Cat Rooms/Condo Cleaning — On a daily basis, wipes down the inside of the cage on the floor and cat shelf of each condo with approved cleaners taking care to wipe down each of the door frames; scoops each litter pan with a separate scoop and places the scoops in approved bleach/water buckets as trained; wipes down edges of litter pans and changes out the entire litter pan for a new one as needed; wipes down cat room walls and nesting boxes; washes windows as needed; sweeps and washes the floor with approved cleaners; ensures each condo or cat room being cleaned has a clean dish with fresh water to start the day. Deep cleaning requires removing the large condo by rolling it outside to be sprayed with appropriate cleaners and scrubbed with wash cloths, rinsed, towel dried and returned to the large cat condo room. Individual condos in the remaining cat rooms may be disassembled for cleaning and sanitizing and returned to the appropriate rooms once they have dried.

Local Animal Transport — On an intermittent basis, as needed, uses own vehicle and picks up county animals from the intake facility or adoption center for transport to a local veterinarian's office or to another rescue group; may pick up animals at local vet's office for return to the animal shelter following their surgeries or medical procedures.

Foster — When approved, picks up one or more orphaned, injured, or un-weaned animals at the intake facility and transports to one's own home for foster care; provides a safe indoor place and sufficient time for the animal(s) to gain weight for spay/neuter surgery, recover from surgery, nurse its kittens or

puppies prior to adoption or transport, or complete one or more courses of antibiotic treatment (provided); at own expense provides all elements of care for foster animals including bedding, food, fresh water, indoor litter box and litter; provides outdoor walks for animal(s) to relieve themselves comfortably; weighs animals as appropriate to ensure they are thriving; feeds, cleans, grooms, medicates, vaccinates and socializes animal(s); keeps staff informed as to the animal(s) condition, progress, problems, or issues; transports animal(s) to shelter for needed medical treatments; coordinates with staff as to the date the animal(s) will be returned to the shelter for further evaluation, adoption, or other intervention.

Adoption Counselor — Not presently being utilized; If deemed appropriate at some future time, the shelter director may authorize volunteers to be trained to serve as an adoption counselor. Such counselors assist prospective families and individuals to identify what type of pet may be best suited for their living situation and desires, working also to achieve an arrangement that will meet the animal(s) known needs.

MARGINAL FUNCTIONS

Lifting 25 lb bags of cat litter; lifting 55 lb bags of dog food

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Physical Demands:

- Willingness to get dirty
- Possess physical strength and ability to handle rambunctious, fast-moving animals
- Ability to maintain control of dogs that may exceed 70 lbs.
- You may get seriously scratched or bitten and you **MUST** report it to staff each time
- You may not appear for your assignment under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, nor any prescribed medication that has the potential to affect your ability to drive safely to and from your volunteer assignment or function around animals at the shelter

Mental Demands:

- Patience and understanding with all people and all animals that you may come into contact with during your assignment
- Emotionally equipped to handle crowded and changing conditions, noises, and smells
- The ability to work independently and in a team environment and adhere to all *Cumberland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center* safety and handling regulations
- The ability to adapt to the needs of unsocialized or scared animals
- The ability to focus on only the needs of the shelter animals while at the shelter
- Have an understanding of the necessity for euthanasia in certain situations, and show respect to the shelter staff directly involved in the process of euthanasia
- The ability to accept that some animals will be euthanized for reasons that you may not be able to control or that you may not agree with, and to accept that some foster animals will not reach proper weight for spay/neuter.

Knowledge of:

- Common behavioral traits of cats and dogs that obviously show when they are happy, relaxed, stressed, ill, or showing signs of aggression.
- Proper techniques for safely maneuvering animals into and out of rooms, kennels, buildings, and around other animals and new people with whom they are not familiar.

Skill to:

- Safely interact with animals to protect them and other people when they may be scared, nervous, or showing signs of insecurity or aggression when introduced to new situations
- Be alert to the sights and sounds of the shelter environment
- Recognize when to obtain staff involvement, such as the need to separate fighting animals
- Communicate effectively—verbally and in writing

Ability to:

- Follow all written and oral directions
- Prepare detailed, legible notes detailing animal(s) behaviors and conditions, noting date/time, animal's name and specific issues
- Comply with established and new policies and procedures, codes, and manuals
- Maintain professional demeanor in a sometimes stressful/hectic environment
- Seek clarification of policies and procedures as appropriate
- Accept staff's clarifying responses without the need to criticize or second-guess policy decisions and guidelines
- Make and meet a commitment to one assigned area for a period of no more than two days per week as scheduled, for a period of at least 6 months
- Provide friendly and knowledgeable customer service
- Answer basic questions from the public about adoption center policies and procedures
- Deliver individualized attention to cats and dogs and minimize their stress in an adoption center environment, therefore promoting their well-being and adoptability
- Scoop and properly dispose of animal(s) feces
- Properly and regularly wash and sanitize hands, work areas, and tools used in assigned area(s) to maintain an environment that is healthy for both people and animals
- Lift and carry donated items and incoming bags and boxes of dog food, cat food, litter, bedding, crates, and carriers from the entryway of the facility to a storage room or area
- Meet timeline requirements for submitting required paperwork related to the area of assignment(s) (Ex: proof of auto insurance for transporters)
- Use safe animal handling techniques and protocols to remove animals from kennels and to separate dogs that are housed together in kennels in preparation for feeding times
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with staff and other volunteers

For Foster Volunteers:

- Be willing to take animals that may be sick, injured, or have behavior issues into your home
- Be able to make the commitment to provide specialized care if needed for short or extended periods

- Be able to work independently, but follow exact instructions
- Own your own home or have **written** permission to foster from your landlord
- Be at least 18 years of age, or work under a parent/guardian that has approved the foster in your home
- Be able to administer oral and/or topical medications including antibiotics, wormers, and vaccines as directed

EXPERIENCE

No previous animal shelter experience is required for the volunteer program. Experience working with cats and dogs is highly desirable and the nature and length of such experience will be considered in identifying those best suited to participate as *Cumberland County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center* volunteers.