



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Mission Statement

The mission of our no-kill animal shelter is to find safe, loving homes for abused, abandoned, and homeless animals in the Allegheny-Kiski Valley and to educate the public about responsible pet ownership.

Vision Statement

To always be a trusted and caring no-kill animal shelter that the community looks to for animal rescue, education, and resources.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Phone Number: 724-339-7388

Address: 730 Church St., New Kensington, PA 15068

Website: www.animalprotectors.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/animalprotectorsofav

Instagram: @animalprotectorsshelter

PUBLIC ADOPTION HOURS

Tuesday through Friday 11:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday and Sunday 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Closed on Monday

VOLUNTEER AND SHELTER OPERATION HOURS

Daily from 7:00 am - 7:30 pm

NO-KILL SHELTER

While Animal Protectors is a no-kill shelter, there are times when we are faced with the decision to euthanize an animal. Typically, there are two reasons why we make a decision to euthanize: sickness and extreme behavior problems. Euthanizing an animal is not something the Leadership Team takes lightly. It is an extremely difficult decision. Please understand we do everything possible before the decision is made to euthanize an animal. We count on the expertise of highly qualified veterinarians and animal behaviorists/trainers to help us make this difficult decision. While you may not agree with our decisions, we ask that you support them.

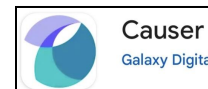
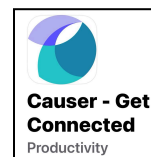
VOLUNTEER CONTACT & PLATFORM INFORMATION

Volunteer Email: Volunteer@animalprotectors.net

Volunteer Facebook: Search for “Volunteers of Animal Protectors” and request to join!

Volunteer App: *Get Connected* (“Causer - Get Connected” or “Causer” in the App Store)

Volunteer *Get Connected* Website: animalprotectors.galaxydigital.com



Note: Animal Protectors of Allegheny Valley reserves the right to ask a Volunteer to leave at any time if the Volunteer refuses to follow the policies and procedures outlined throughout this handbook.

THE VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

Volunteering is a Commitment to an organization or a cause that you truly believe in. We highly value your efforts and enthusiasm to Volunteer at Animal Protectors. We wouldn't be able to continue the work we do without our dedicated Volunteers.

Our Volunteers play an important role in the lives of our animals during their time with us - both inside and outside the shelter. Our Volunteers can also make a meaningful difference in each other's lives. When you choose to Volunteer at Animal Protectors, we kindly ask that you **Commit** to following the Policies and Procedures as outlined throughout the Volunteer Handbook.

Please review the Volunteer Opportunities section of this handbook and match the Volunteer tasks that best fit your capabilities, time, skills, and interests. **If you have comments, questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our Volunteer Coordinator.**

THE VOLUNTEER HUB

Our Volunteer Hub, located right in the front lobby, is the go-to spot for all things volunteer-related! This welcoming space was created to give our amazing Volunteers easy access to the resources and answers they need. It's a central place to store personal belongings, grab your name tag, review simple FAQs, and find helpful information to make your shift run smoothly. Whether you're brand new or a seasoned Volunteer, the Volunteer Hub is designed to support you, keep you organized, and help you feel right at home from the moment you walk in.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR TO VOLUNTEER?

Volunteer t-shirts are available at the shelter. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to receive one.

Personalized name tags will be available at the Volunteer Hub and must be worn at all times while volunteering at the shelter. Wear comfortable clothes that you don't mind getting dirty or ruined. Some cleaning products can stain or ruin clothing and shoes. The dog walking area gets muddy, dogs may jump on you with dirty paws. Dogs are walked in all weather conditions, consider the weather when preparing to take dogs outside.

When volunteering at one of our events, please dress accordingly and ask the Event Coordinator if you should wear your volunteer t-shirt. You can also buy Animal Protectors' merchandise from our store!

For your safety:

- Wear closed toe shoes that are comfortable to walk in. Flip flops, heels and open-toed shoes are NOT allowed at the shelter.
- No long necklaces, lanyards, or dangling jewelry when handling dogs.

For your home pet's safety:

It is HIGHLY recommended that you change your clothes either before you leave the shelter or as soon as you get home. Although rare, infectious agents can be transported on your clothes to your own animals.

INTERACTION WITH THE SHELTER STAFF AND THE PUBLIC

Our shelter is operated by a small, dedicated team of staff members who work hard to care for our animals. Please respect their time and workspace and treat them with kindness. Maintaining good and open communication with shelter staff is of great importance. Our staff are very helpful and knowledgeable about our animals. If you have any questions, feel free to ask them.

The Kennel Manager, Shelter Administrator and designated staff are the only people who may authorize adoptions, animal surrenders or veterinary care for the animals. If you encounter any visitors requesting these services, please seek a staff member right away.

If you experience any issues or conflicts with a staff member or another volunteer, please report the situation promptly to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Please treat all visitors with respect. If you are unsure about a visitor or a situation, report it to staff immediately for assistance.

SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT

As a volunteer, you are required to sign a social media code of conduct agreement (part of the volunteer consent form). We encourage volunteers to share our social media posts to get the word out about adoptable animals, special events, and fundraisers. Dogs and cats are adoptable once listed on PetFinder.

Volunteers are encouraged to add value to the Animal Protectors social media outlets and to post positive information, pictures and video on personal pages. When posting to both your personal page and Animal Protectors' page, keep the three R's of social media in mind:

Representing: You are representing Animal Protectors and should do so in a positive way.

Responsibility: You are responsible for posting accurate and ethical information.

Respectful: You are required to show respect for your fellow volunteers, our staff, and the community.

Volunteers are NOT permitted to:

- Post obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful or embarrassing material about Animal Protectors or another individual involved at the shelter to any Animal Protectors social media site. Volunteers are strongly discouraged from posting the above-mentioned information on personal pages as these comments are public and can prove damaging to Animal Protectors.
- Post confidential information regarding another volunteer, staff, or animal (including posting of animals that are not yet available for adoption).

CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES

Please keep in mind that ALL information shared between staff and volunteers is confidential. The cats and dogs arrive at the shelter due to varying circumstances. It is imperative that every volunteer keep any information they may learn about an animal as confidential if it is part of a criminal investigation. It's best not to assume anything about an animal or owner until the staff have time to verify any ownership and make contact with said owner as is required by law. Sometimes an animal is lost and comes to our shelter in poor condition; until we know more details, we cannot assume that an animal has been mistreated.

Volunteers **CANNOT** post any animals to social media that are not available for adoption. If an animal is posted on the Animal Protectors website or PetFinder, then it is considered eligible for adoption and photos are permitted.

CONTROLLING DISEASE

Preventing the spread of disease within the shelter is VERY important in keeping our animals healthy and available for adoption. Following these guidelines is essential:

- Read signs: Signs will alert you to any illness outbreak (i.e., ringworm, kennel cough, upper respiratory infections, etc.) and provide instructions on the proper steps to prevent the spread.
- Handwashing:
 - Wash your hands between dog kennels at a minimum.
 - Wash your hands when entering and exiting Cat Med and Dog Med.
 - When handling sick animals, we require that you wash your hands between each animal.
- No sharing of toys, blankets, etc. between dogs or cats in kennels.
- Dogs in the isolation area (Kennel A) are only to be walked out the side door by staff and outside the donation door. This is where they will be going to the bathroom until they are medically cleared to move back into our two main kennels "B" and "C".
- Cat Medical and Dog Medical is a staff only area with ONLY approved volunteers allowed access.
- Keep the grounds/floors clean by:
 - picking up feces after the dog you are walking, and picking up toys from yards after taking them out of the toy box.
 - cleaning any mud off your shoes when re-entering the shelter and any mud in the hallways.
 - cleaning and sanitizing any vomit or hair balls. Keep floors clean by sweeping any litter spills.
 - cleaning any liquid spills promptly.
- Report to staff any medical issues you may see; blood in stool, vomiting, deep cuts or scrapes or any parasites in stool.

Protect animals at home from any diseases that could be spread from the shelter to your home. If there is an outbreak of a disease at the shelter, make sure you bring a change of clothes to put on before you re-enter your own home, change or remove your shoes and always wash your hands thoroughly.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES OVERVIEW

Cat Care & Enrichment

Goal: To ensure all cats are well cared for and socialized

Duties: Volunteers scoop litter boxes, give fresh water and food as directed by staff, keep kennels tidy and floor areas clean and organized. Maintain Free Roam and attached rooms presentable for potential adopters. Volunteers also provide enrichment by playing with the cats with toys, and provide hands-on socialization through physical interaction and grooming.

Time commitment: Shifts are 2-3 hours

Time available: Shelter Operation Hours

Qualifications: Must be at least 10 years old and be comfortable around cats of different sizes and temperaments. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all Animal Protectors' safety and animal regulations.

Cleaning

Goal: To assist the staff with general cleaning, laundry and dishwashing

Duties: Basic duties include sweeping/mopping floors, dusting/wiping counter tops, wiping benches in the kennel area, cleaning windows, washing/drying and putting away laundry, washing dishes and enrichment equipment.

Time Commitment: Shifts are 2-3 hours

Time Available: Shelter Operation Hours

Qualifications: Must be at least 10 years old. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all of Animal Protectors' safety and animal handling regulations.

Dog Walking and Enrichment

Goal: The goal of the Dog Walking volunteer is to increase socialization, outside time, and daily exercise. Enrichment may be done in the designated 2nd floor room or inside the kennel.

Duties: Basic duties include potty breaks, exercise, helping staff with morning cleaning, hands-on socialization, enrichment, and observation of the dog to report any medical or behavior problems.

Time Commitment: Shifts are 2-3 hours

Time Availability: Shelter Operation Hours

Qualifications: Must be at least 18 years old. Must be comfortable around different sizes and breeds of dogs. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all of Animal Protectors' safety and animal handling regulations.

Doggy Day Out (DDO)

Goal: The goal of Doggy Day Out is to give our residents, especially the long term ones, some time outside of the shelter. This gives us a great idea of what they'll tolerate and what their level of socialization is.

Duties: Socialize, get a pup cup, go for a nice hike, stay for a sleepover or just a ride in the car.

Time Commitment: At least 30 minutes per dog

Time Available: Shelter Operation Hours

Qualifications: Must be at least 18 years old. Must be comfortable around different sizes and breeds of dogs. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all of Animal Protectors' safety and animal handling regulations.

Note: For Doggy Day Outs we require you meet the dog, with staff present, prior to taking out for the day. This is important to go over all behaviors so you know how to properly handle the dogs, and in the case you are approached by the public about possibly adopting the dog. You can schedule a DDO on the *Get Connected* app or website. If you have been volunteering and know the dog you want to take out already, you can let a staff member know ahead of time or stop by the day of. We suggest confirming ahead of time as we schedule surgeries, meet and greets, etc, so the dog you had in mind might not be available that day. When you come to pick up the dog of choice you will sign a Hold Harmless agreement (liability waiver) and we will take a copy of your ID.

Foster Care

Goal: To provide a temporary home for animals that need rehabilitation from injuries or surgery, animals who are pregnant or who just gave birth, very young pups and kittens who do not have a mother to care for them, or animals who need a shelter break.

Duties: Duties include providing basic needs such as food, exercise, and socialization on a daily basis. Administer medication according to the veterinarian's directions. Take animals to the Animal Protectors for checkups and immunizations as approved by leadership. The shelter covers all costs of food, medications, and supplies. Give lots of love!

Time Commitment: Puppies and kittens return to the shelter for adoption when they are about 7 weeks old. If an animal is at your house to recover from an injury or surgery, the length of time will depend on the recovery progress.

Time Available: When you are approved to be a foster parent you will be put on a list and called when needed. You can decide if you have the time.

Qualifications: Must be at least 21 years old. Approval of a foster application. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all of Animal Protectors' safety and animal handling regulations.

Fundraising, Community Engagement and Events

Goal: To assist with raising funds for the shelter through special events, raffle sales and smaller events throughout the community and participate in Engagement/Outreach events as needed.

Duties: Basic duties for special events include planning, advertising, soliciting donations, setting up/decorating, and working the events. Volunteers can also chair committees for fundraisers and offer ideas for new fundraisers. Experienced dog and cat handlers can be asked to take animals.

Time Commitment: As needed per event

Time Available: The time for special events will vary depending on the event

Training: Completion of Volunteer Orientation and coordination with our Development Committee

Qualifications: Must be at least 10 years old. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.

Maintenance Repairs and Grounds

Goal: To maintain the shelter and grounds in good working condition as problems arise. Maintain the campus gardens and do minor maintenance and repairs.

Duties: Basic duties include minor repairs to the facilities and gardening and weeding.

Time Commitment: As needed for maintenance repairs

Time Available: As needed

Training: Completion of Volunteer Orientation and discussing with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Qualifications: Must be at least 18 years old. Must have knowledge of the repair taken on. Must be able to work independently and adhere to all of Animal Protector's safety and animal handling regulations.

Office and Administrative Work

Goal: The goal of the Office Volunteer is to assist the staff during public adoption hours.

Duties: Basic duties include greeting visitors, answering the phone and returning messages, accepting and putting away donations, adoption and foster applications, or assisting with other office duties.

Time Commitment: Shifts are 2 or 3 hours

Time Availability: Shelter Operation Hours

Training: Completion of Volunteer Orientation and office training

Qualifications: Must be 18 years old. Must have good communication skills and enjoy working with the public. Must have good organizational skills.

Bring Your Talents. Find Your Purpose. Change Lives.

