



Volunteer Manual and Guidelines for Persons Supporting Knox County Dog Shelter Operations and Special Projects

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Overview of Knox County Dog Shelter

The mission of the Knox County Dog Shelter is to provide our citizens with efficient and cost-effective animal control services by active enforcement of state laws, in addition to shelter, adopting, and if necessary, humanely euthanizing animals in its care. Knox County Dog Shelter personnel and volunteers are dedicated to the promotion of public safety, responsible pet ownership, spay/neutering, and the humane treatment of all animals. Additionally, Knox County Dog Shelter works with all approved rescue organizations and Humane Societies to aid in pet adoptions.

Knox County Dog Shelter is a county managed facility. It employs four full-time employees and three part time employees to help police control the growing population of domestic animals in Knox County. We strive to serve the public and their companion animals as our first priority.

Knox County Dog Shelter recognizes the importance of volunteers dedicated to the care and placement of animals within the community. Participation in the volunteer program supports the Knox County Dog Shelter's mission and the ultimate goal of humane treatment for all animals.

Knox County Dog Shelter's is open to the public, Monday thru Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Knox County Dog Shelter has two separate kennels, the public adoption kennel and the isolation kennel. The public adoption kennel is used to house dogs that have been deemed suitable for adoption.

The isolation kennel is used to house all new intakes. All dogs will be housed for redemption purposes in compliance with 955.16 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The isolation kennel is also utilized to house any dogs that may require special needs for various reasons (temperament, medical, quarantine, evidence). For these reasons and so that the dogs are held from public viewing for the purposes of redemption, the isolation kennel will remain accessible only to county employees and approved volunteers.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Knox County Dog Shelter is dedicated to effectively and sufficiently utilizing volunteer resources, including training, time, and supervision, to promote the Knox County Dog Shelter's mission and objectives.

A training and orientation course will be held as needed. The course is intended to help volunteers learn more about the mission and operations of the Knox County Dog Shelter and to better help the dogs get socialization, training, and ultimately become a more adoptable dog.

The course will include information such as: shelter operations; dog walking techniques and protocol; kennel cleaning; feeding and treats for dogs; animal health and welfare; code of conduct; and definitions and requirements as listed in the Ohio Revised Code.

Volunteer Management Guidelines

1. To be considered for a Volunteer position through the Knox County Dog Shelter, individuals must:
 - a. Be at least 18 years of age or accompanied by a legal guardian.
 - b. Complete and submit a KCDS volunteer application.
 - c. Participate in an interview with Volunteer Coordinator
 - d. Provide proper background information, including but not limited to: previous experience in public service; criminal record; animal care experience; have his/her dogs and/or cats 4 months or older vaccinated against rabies; and have a current license for dogs owned.
 - e. Have no prior animal cruelty convictions or crimes of violence.
 - f. No conflict of interest with any activity or program of the Knox County Dog Shelter, whether personal, philosophical, or financial.
2. After the initial screening as detailed above, the Volunteer Coordinator and Dog Warden will approve or deny the volunteer application. If the application is approved, the volunteer will be scheduled for training and orientation.

3. In order to maintain a high-quality volunteer program, the Dog Warden and Volunteer Coordinator have the discretion to deny any volunteer application.
4. All volunteers must satisfactorily complete the training and orientation program.
5. All volunteers will receive a copy of the Volunteer Manual and must complete the Volunteer Acknowledgement form, which is included in this manual. The volunteer is responsible for understanding his/her duties, the information provided in this manual, and the general management of the Knox County Dog Shelter. If a volunteer does not understand this information, it is his/her responsibility to seek further instruction or clarification.
6. The Volunteer Coordinator, or designee, will provide proper supervision of all volunteers and is responsible for all volunteers at the facility. Any concerns should be addressed to the coordinator verbally or in writing.
7. In situations where corrective action may be taken, the volunteer will be given either a verbal or written warning. Any further actions may result in the suspension or dismissal of the volunteer, depending on circumstances. Grounds for dismissal of the volunteer may include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of drugs or alcohol; theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of clients, animals, other volunteers or employees; and failure to abide by the established guidelines.
8. Volunteers are responsible for maintain the confidentiality of all propriety or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes information that may involve a paid employee, volunteer, client or other person involving the overall business or mission of the shelter.
9. All volunteers are responsible for completing a personal record of attendance. Volunteers shall sign in at the beginning of his/her shift and sign out at the end.

10. Volunteers are prohibited from certain non-public areas (maintenance, medical, storage sheds, etc.) unless accompanied by an employee of Knox County Dog Shelter with the exception of preapproved volunteers
11. Volunteers are not permitted to handle animals that are designated as employee only.
12. Volunteers will not be permitted to handle animals off the premises of the Knox County Dog Shelter without approval from staff.
13. Volunteers are only permitted in the shelter or on the grounds when open to the public or during special functions.
14. Volunteers must comply with all requirements as set forth by the Knox County Dog Shelter.

Social Media Policy

In an effort to foster respect and trust among all persons who share an interest in animal welfare, volunteers are reminded to be careful of the information they disclose on the internet, including social media sites.

Knox County supports the free exchange of information and camaraderie among employees and volunteers on the internet. However, when electronic communication extends to persons revealing confidential or information meant to harm Knox County or its employees and volunteers, the person(s) who post such information or assists in posting such material may cause for removal from the program.

The following uses of social media to disclose information or material are prohibited:

1. Comments or displays about coworkers, supervisors or Knox County that are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassing, or a violation of Knox County's workplace policies against discrimination, harassment or hostility on account of age, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, military status or other protected class, status or characteristic.

2. Statements or uses of the shelter's logo which are slanderous or detrimental, including evidence of the misuse of Knox County's authority, information, insignia or equipment.
3. Unprofessional communication which could potentially result in a civil or criminal cause of action against Knox County. Unprofessional communication also includes that which Knox County could demonstrate has a substantial risk of negatively affecting the County's reputation, mission, or operations, such as slander, defamation or other legal cause of action.
4. Disclosure of confidential and/or proprietary information acquired in the course of volunteering. Confidential information includes not only information that would not be pursuant to a public records request, but also includes information which does not relate to an issue of public concern.
5. Comments or displays which impact employees' abilities to perform their job duties or Knox County's ability to maintain an efficient workplace.

Social media sites may be inspected by the Volunteer Coordinators or Dog Warden or for cause to determine potential policy violations. If an employee or volunteer believes that an online communication violates a County policy, he/she should immediately report the communication to the Dog Warden or the Volunteer Coordinator(s). Knox County may investigate the matter, determine whether such communication violates policy, and take appropriate action. This policy does not apply to communication protected by the United States or Ohio Constitutions.



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

How many animals for which do you care? Please List License numbers, if applicable, and dates of rabies vaccinations and other vaccinations/boosters.

Have you ever been convicted of any felonies or misdemeanors? (Yes or No)

If yes please describe nature of the offense. A conviction does not necessarily bar a person from volunteering.

REFERENCES: Please List 3 Non Family Members (Name, Address, and Phone Number)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT: (Name, Address, and Phone Number)

1. _____

Desired Area of Volunteering:

Information you wish to share:

Interview Notes **(For Staff and Volunteer Coordinator Use Only)**

Volunteer Acknowledgement

I, _____, have read, understand, and agree to the volunteer guidelines set forth in the Knox County Dog Shelter Manual. I fully understand and agree that I am providing my services in a volunteer capacity without and expressed or implied promise of salary or employment benefits. I agree to perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability and to adhere to the guidelines detailed in the Volunteer Manual. I further understand that my volunteer involvement may be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Volunteer Manual. I recognize that working with animals places me at physical risk, and I agree to assume that risk. I realize that although Knox County Dog Shelter has taken all reasonable measures to protect me, accidents and injuries may still occur. Therefore, I hereby completely release and entirely discharge Knox County Dog Shelter and its employees and volunteers from any and all claims and causes of action of negligence or gross negligence that I or another might have or being related to or arising from any injury or damage that I should sustain while assisting Knox County Dog Shelter or in connections with my volunteer work for Knox County Dog Shelter.

Further, I certify that I have never been convicted or committed animal cruelty, neglect, abandonment, or any violent crimes against animals or person in Ohio or any other state or country.

Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

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