

Volunteer Orientation Manual



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July 2010

Welcome to the Allen County Animal Rescue Facility!

We are pleased to welcome you to our volunteer program.
This orientation manual is designed to inform you about WHO we are, WHAT we do,
and show how
YOU can help.

As you can see, this is a **very large** manual. Orientation will give you a brief overview of what we do and cover most of the important safety information, but please plan to read this manual thoroughly before you volunteer for the first time.

As you are probably aware, our community produces far more pets each year than it can reasonably accommodate. Without the shelter, these animals would be left on the streets to die of starvation, disease, accidents and violence.

At ACARF, we work hard to promote responsible pet ownership and humane care for animals that are homeless or unwanted. We also strive to eliminate cruelty and neglect within our community through education, counseling, and intervention.

We can't do this job alone! We are so glad you have chosen to volunteer your time and donate your love to the animals here at the shelter.

Volunteers are welcome any time the shelter is open to the public. There's no need to sign up if you'd like to come in to see the animals.

When you are ready to volunteer the first time, return your completed volunteer profile form (with signed release) to the front desk staff.

We hope you have a *pawsitively* great time!

Our Mission

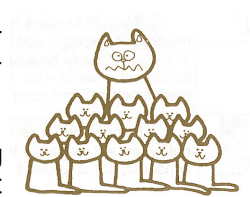
**The mission of the Allen County Animal Rescue Facility
is to provide a safe and caregiving environment where
animals can reside and eventually
become adoptable.**

The Pet Overpopulation Problem

Did you know?

- In 10 years, two cats and all of their offspring could produce 80,000,000 cats!
- Twelve to fourteen MILLION unwanted companion animals are euthanized in shelters and pounds each year. This figure does not take into account the number of companion animals that suffer and die alone on the streets.
- Every hour in the United States, only 415 people and 5,500 cats and dogs are born.

The best way to help control the cat and dog population is to **spay and neuter companion animals**. It is the shelter's strong belief that all animals that do not belong to a licensed breeder or participate in dog shows should be spayed or neutered.



People who want their children to see the “miracle” of birth should instead bring them to the shelter to see how many cats and kittens are without homes for that same reason.

Adoptions

The primary goal of ACARF is to place animals into humane, loving, permanent homes!

Because the adoption process can be complicated and may change from time to time, make sure that you ask the public to direct their questions about adopting a pet from the shelter to our staff!

Individuals who are interested in adopting animals follow this process:

- Tour the shelter and note which animals they might be interested in adopting
- Ask the front desk staff if any of the animals they are interested in have pending adoption application (This is a first-come, first-served shelter, so the first person to submit an application on a pet has the right to adopt or decline that pet before anyone else.
- Meet with a staff member or volunteer to view the animal and learn about it. Staff or volunteers listen to the potential adopter to make sure a good match can be made.
- Visit with the pet either indoors or outside.
- Complete an Adoption Application. Staff ensure that:
 - The adopters are able to have a pet in their home
 - Current pets are up to date on their rabies vaccinations
 - Current pets will get along with the new pet with “pet meets” and special temperament testing.

We strive to make matches between adoptable pets and adopters, but reserve the right to refuse adoption to anyone.

State law requires that all cats and dogs adopted from a shelter, rescue, or pound be spayed or neutered.

Responsibilities and Rewards

What do we ask of volunteers?

- Attend and complete Volunteer Orientation
- Receive training to do specialized jobs
- Support our philosophies and policies when representing the shelter
- Provide kind, humane treatment to all sheltered animals
- Be honest and realistic with yourself and with us concerning your needs, interests, and availability
- Please consider volunteering to be a serious commitment.

What do volunteers get in return?

- Learn about animals through direct volunteer work and a variety of educational opportunities
- Receive on-the-job or special training relevant to your volunteer job
- Choose from and experience a variety of animal related job opportunities
- Explore new career opportunities
- Develop new skills and “polish up” old ones
- Meet others who share your interests



Safety & Hygiene

For your own safety, we ask that you please stay out of all designated RESTRICTED AREAS. The Holding Area, Stray Area, Isolation and Quarantine Areas, as well as the area behind the front desk, are all OFF LIMITS to volunteers. You are not permitted in any of these areas.

Tetanus shots are required and can be obtained from your family physician or the local Health Department.

Please keep in mind that there are more than **100 diseases** which are transmissible between animals and humans. (EWW!) To cut down on the risk of encountering one of these diseases, we require volunteers protect themselves and practice good personal hygiene while working around the animals:

- Wear appropriate clothing! Long pants and closed-toe shoes are a must!
- Avoid contact with animals' bodily fluids (even little puppy and kitty kisses). Wear examination gloves if you think you may contact these fluids.
- Wash your hands after touching each animal—either with soap and water or with sanitizing gel.
- Be sure to thoroughly wash your hands before handling food.
- **Also keep the health of your own pets in mind.** Wash carefully and change any clothes that the sheltered pets came into contact with—even if they didn't appear to be ill—before handling your own pets at home.

Safety in the Kennel

Never run when working at the shelter.

When working with pets outside, walk the dog—don't let the dog walk YOU. If you walk carefully and slowly, you're protecting yourself and the dog from injury while teaching them how to act properly on a leash. Make sure you pick a dog that you can control on a leash. When you begin volunteering, start working with dogs *smaller* than those you are used to until you know your own abilities and you're comfortable.

Read and follow directions on all posted signs. There are different signs in each area of the shelter, so make sure to check each new area for signs. Even if you see someone else ignoring them, make sure you protect YOURSELF by following the rules!

Do not let pets that do not live together touch each other. This can spread illness and may start a fight! Keep this in mind when working with all of our pets and also when taking dogs outside. Do not let two dogs from different kennels touch each other on leash or play in the same yard together.

Never let puppies, kittens/cats, or handheld animals on the floor—they can pick up germs that could make them sick.

If you see a fight between animals at any time, let staff know immediately! If the fight is outside in a fenced area or in a kennel, make sure the gate is closed and find a staff member. Never try to break up a fight yourself.

Many of our pets have not yet had rabies vaccinations. To protect the public, be sure to keep the animals on our property while walking them.



Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Training

Volunteer Orientation is just an overview of what the shelter does and how you can help. Volunteer Training is more specialized, focused training designed to prepare you to work within the shelter. Occasionally you may have to retrain in an area, but please don't be discouraged. We strive to teach you the best way to take care of our animals and our building.

Appearance and Dress Code

Dress comfortably. Pants or jeans and closed-toe shoes are required (no shorts, sandals, or flip flops—sorry!). If you are not wearing appropriate clothing, you will be asked to change before you volunteer.

We use bleach throughout the shelter, which can really damage clothing and footwear, so neat OLDER clothes are recommended.

Personal Belongings

We cannot protect your personal belongings while you volunteer, so it is best if any personal items are left at home or in your vehicle. Coats and winter clothing must be kept in the conference room. ACARF is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property.

Personal Conduct

As a volunteer, you represent ACARF. We ask you to conduct yourself in a polite and responsible manner. Please speak quietly, walk (not run) in all areas of the shelter, and be respectful to all staff, volunteers, and guests of the shelter.

Any information you hear is to be considered confidential, whether it concerns volunteers, animals, staff, or the public

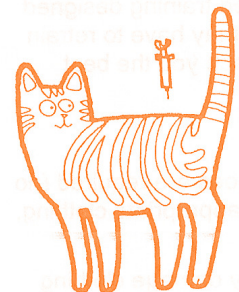
All animals must be treated humanely

Yelling, hitting, kicking or hurting any animal in any way **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. When abuse or negligence is observed, the volunteer is dismissed and asked not to return. If you observe someone else doing this, please let the staff know right away!

If you are having problems with an animal that you think requires intervention, be sure to let staff know. We have trainers available to work with the animal and we would be happy to teach you positive behavioral training methods. Positive training methods cause changes in behavior that are more likely to survive in the pet's new home than those caused by the use of punishment.

Smoking/Drugs/Alcohol

Our shelter is a smoke-free facility. If you are under the age of 18, you are **NOT** permitted to smoke on shelter property. If you are over 18, we ask that you either smoke in your vehicle or at the designated areas outside. Smoking in the exercise yards with dogs is forbidden to protect the health of the animals.



Volunteers **WILL NOT** have on their person, use, or show evidence of using, alcohol or drugs while on the premises. If drug or alcohol use is suspected, you will be asked to leave.

Volunteer Hours and Timekeeping

Volunteers are responsible for signing in and out on their personal log sheet (located at the front counter). Please don't forget to report your daily hours. Hours volunteered outside the shelter are important to keep track of, too, so don't forget to log them. It is important to the shelter to know how much you're helping!

After signing in, please check with the front desk for your assignment.



Off-Site Events

Off-site events can be signed up for either by calling the shelter or by signing up when volunteering. You must obtain your own transportation to and from these events. Remember to be courteous and respectful to the public and the hosts at these events.

If you sign up to work at an event, it is extremely important that you attend in a timely manner. If you can't make it, let the Volunteer Coordinator know one or two days in advance so someone can be found to take your place.

Please remember that we **depend** on volunteers for these events. If you sign up for an off-site event and you do not show without contacting the shelter or the Volunteer Coordinator, we will be letting down our sponsors and the public and that gives our shelter a bad reputation.

Communication

Email is the most efficient way for us to communicate with all of our volunteers. If you do use email, please include your address on your profile form. We use email to send announcements of upcoming events so volunteers can be recruited that match their interests, send announcements for upcoming shelter events, and even send personal messages.

ACARF will NEVER sell your information and you can unsubscribe to email announcements and recruitments at any time.

Grievances

If you should ever experience any problems while volunteering at the shelter, please alert the Volunteer Coordinator or the Executive Director at once. We ask that you speak to one of these individuals about your grievances and do not take them outside the shelter.

Volunteer Rules

1. **Wear appropriate clothes (long pants and closed-toe shoes) to protect yourself.** If you are not wearing appropriate clothing, you cannot volunteer—even with someone who IS wearing appropriate clothing.
2. Look at the signs on each animal's cage **BEFORE** you touch them
3. **To stop the spread of infectious disease and save lives:**
 - * Kittens, puppies, cats, and handheld pets **cannot** Come in contact with bare floor
 - * Do not let animals from separate cages come into contact with one another (e.g., play together, lick each other, touch noses, etc.) When you're walking through the shelter, keep the animal close to you so they cannot make contact with the dogs in other kennels.
 - * **Sanitize or wash your hands** between touching animals in separate cages.
4. **NEVER** try to break up a fight between animals. If you see a fight, alert a staff member *immediately*.
5. **Any mistreatment of animals will not be tolerated.**
6. **Do not enter "staff only" areas without permission.** This includes the office areas which are off limits to everyone except office staff. Please remember that all of our volunteers MUST attend a volunteer orientation before working at the shelter. If you have friends who would like to help, ask them to first attend an orientation before coming out to help at the shelter.

Junior Volunteers and their Parents

1. Youth must be 11 years of age or older to volunteer.
2. **Junior Volunteers** (age 11-15)
 - * Cannot volunteer MORE than two hours per day, but may volunteer less
3. Cannot handle adult animals—only puppies and kittens under six months of age. Remember to check the animal's age AND their intake date on the card.


How can I tell how OLD the pet is?

Always be sure to check the pet's card BEFORE you handle them to see how old they are.

To find out the age of the pet, add the age the pet was when they came to the shelter to the number of months that have passed.

For example, if the pet came in November 2009 and they were 4 months old then, how old are they in April 2010?

Five months have passed: December, January, February, March, April = 5

 Lawrence Humane Society, Inc. Serial # _____

DOG INTAKE INFORMATION

Date: _____ Time: _____

Name _____ named by owner _____

Owned _____ Stray _____

Lawrence: ACO _____ Citizen _____ LHS _____

Douglas County: Sheriff _____ Citizen _____ LHS _____

LHS: Injury _____ Shelter born _____ Stray _____ Cruelty _____

Place found: _____

Identifying information

Collar: No _____ Yes _____ Description _____

Tag: No _____ Yes _____ Description _____

Microchip: No _____ Yes _____ Number _____

Description

Age _____ Estimate _____ Known _____

Male _____ Neutered _____ Female _____ Spayed _____

Breed: _____ Eye color: _____

Color/Pattern: _____

Any white? No _____ Yes, where? _____

Coat: Short _____ Long _____ Smooth _____ Wavy _____ Curly _____

Wiry _____ Dense _____

Ears: Natural _____ Cropped _____ Tail: Natural _____ Docked _____

Serial # _____

The pet was 4 months old when it came in, so

4 months + 5 months = 9 months.

The pet is now 9 months old.

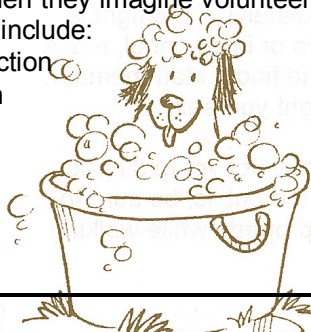
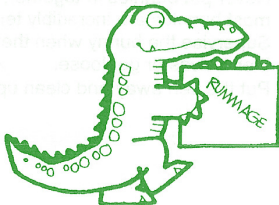
**Volunteers under the age of 16
ONLY work with pets six months
old and younger**

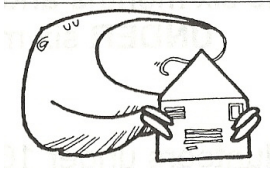


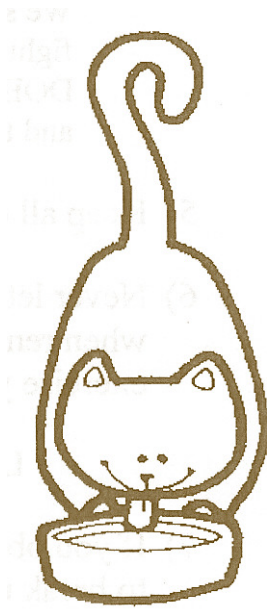
**Under 6 months old
Must stay in puppy pen**

**Over 6 months old
Can go into large exercise
yard**

Volunteer Opportunities

Animal Caretaker	<p>This is the position most people think of when they imagine volunteering at the humane society. Responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socializing pets with one-on-one interaction • Exercising pets to maintain good health • Grooming/Bathing • Training to ensure adoptability 
Pet Facilitator	<p>This job focuses on taking shelter pets to community outreach programs such as visiting nursing homes, children's story hours, and schools.</p> <p>Weekday availability and personal transportation required</p>
Community Adoptions	<p>Volunteers bring pets to off-site events to show to prospective adopters and take donations for the shelter. This is a great program to help animals in our shelter and find their Forever Homes!</p> <p>Personal transportation required.</p>
Fund Raising 	<p>This volunteer opportunity is one of the most appreciated! Help us raise money to help meet our annual budget so we can care for pets that need us!</p> <p>This volunteer opportunity requires commitment for the completion of the event.</p>
Hosts/Greeters	<p>Greet people entering the shelter and show them around. Take out animals for possible adopters and explain the process of adopting.</p> <p>Volunteers 16 years and younger may not take out adult animals.</p>

Public Relations	Volunteers set up and staff booths at various special promotional weekends.
Office Help 	From time to time, we need help entering data into the computer, doing mass mailing, answer phones or making calls, and other office related tasks.
For Volunteers 16 years and older	
Junior Volunteer Supervising	This requires a minimum of 6-10 hours of training. Supervise on-site volunteers and work with them completing projects, animal care and training. You can also serve as a mentor for youth completing community service hours.
Basic Shelter Help	Help out with tasks large and small to improve the shelter and provide a great quality of life for our pets! Tasks include outdoor activities like sweeping sidewalks, weeding flower beds, building repairs and indoor activities like cleaning dishes, windows, floors, taking out trash, washing and folding laundry, and clean-up events.
For adults only	
Event Coordination	<p>We are always looking for extra help coordinating events to better advertise our sheltered pets. Event coordinators transport materials to off-site events and run adoption fairs, including answering questions and distributing information on behalf of ACARF.</p> <p>To be part of this program, the shelter asks for commitment for one event per month (usually on Saturdays) and you will need your own transportation.</p>
Maintenance	Lawn mowing, mulching, tree trimming, building repairs



Things to know when working with ***Kittens and Cats***

Please read and follow any signs that are on the doors of each kennel.

Never let kittens or cats from different kennels touch one another.

Letting unfamiliar animals touch one another can spread illness or cause fights between them. Some cats and kittens have also not been spayed or neutered yet, so letting unfamiliar kitties touch one another can result in a litter!

Remember to use hand sanitizer and/or wash your hands between touching animals to protect yourself and to avoid transmitting germs and disease.

Never let kittens and cats touch the floor.

Letting the cats and kittens down on the floor causes them to pick up bacteria and germs that are on the floor. When they clean themselves, they will ingest this and get sick.

If you want to play with kittens and cats, take them into the visiting rooms or let them sit on your laps. Ask staff members if you have any questions.

If you use any brushes or toys for cats, make sure to put them onto the cart in the cat room so they can be cleaned properly. This will help prevent the spread of disease between animals.

Don't go "treat crazy!" Those little faces can be hard to resist, but too many treats can cause diarrhea and upset tummy! Ask a staff member before you give treats.

If a cat ever gets loose while you are in the room, close the doors immediately before trying to catch the animal.

If you ever see anything unusual (like an animal has knocked over its water or has been sick), let a staff member know!

Cats from the cat room should stay in the cat room and kittens from the kitten room should stay in the kitten room to avoid spreading illness!

Things to know when working with **Dogs**

Always read and follow any signs that are on the doors of each kennel.

Be careful not to give the dog too many treats. This can cause diarrhea and upset stomach. A good rule of thumb is one or two small treats per dog per day.

Puppies under 5 months and younger should **ALWAYS** go into one of the small puppy pens. Adult dogs (6 months and older) should go into the much larger exercise yards. It is very easy to tell the two apart: puppy pens are small and the adult pens are large!

Puppies/dogs are separated by age to protect the health of the puppies—their immune systems cannot fight off the same illnesses that adult dogs can spread through contact. If an adult dog ever **DOES** go into one of the small pens, we can easily pick it up and move it to a different area and the ground can be treated.

Taking dogs in and out thru the front lobby can lead to a very muddy mess, a big traffic jam, and allowing dogs to jump on visitors. Please use other ingress/egress.

Keep all dogs on ACARF property when walking them

Never let dogs from different kennels touch one another. This includes inside the shelter when removing or returning dogs to their kennels, outside when walking, and in the exercise yards.

Letting unfamiliar dogs touch can spread illness, or cause fights or pregnancy.

If you observe a fight between dogs, be sure to let staff know **IMMEDIATELY**! Never try to break up a fight yourself—you could be injured or you may hurt one of the dogs.

Remember to use hand sanitizer and/or wash your hands between dogs.

If you ever notice anything unusual about a dog's health or behavior, please let a staff member know!

*Oh yes.
One more thing...*

