



Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter Volunteer Manual

749 East Main St

Branford, CT 06405

www.branfordanimalshelter.org

203-315-4125 – Fax 203-315-3851

Director: Laura Burban

Supervisor: Wendy Joyce

Assistant Animal Control Officers:

Pam Medlyn

Eve Vandewarker

Dawn Buffone

Hours of Operation:

9am-5pm - Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday

9am-3pm - Monday

9am-7pm - Thursday

*Please note that even though we are scheduled to be open we may be out on a call and unavailable.

Shelter Operations Manual and Welcome Packet

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer!

The Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter has been helping homeless pets across the shoreline and beyond since 2003. Hundreds of animals come through our doors each year and it takes a lot of time, rehabilitation and vet care to place them into new homes.

With such great support from our Towns of Branford and North Branford, our Dedicated Staff and Our terrific Volunteer base, we provide some of the best animal control & shelter services available in the State.

We are so much more than a traditional shelter! We offer many programs and services to educate, inform and inspire people to take responsible care of their pets and to treat them with the kindness they deserve. With the support from people from all over Connecticut and beyond, we are helping to create a better community for all.

Some of the programs we currently provide are:

- Humane Education through schools, seminars and special needs groups
- Internships for Both High School and College Students looking to gain experience working hands on with animals, learning about investigations and providing services to enhance both public and animal safety
- Rehabilitation to the most abused, neglected and sickly animals
- Adoption counseling and basic training for new adopters
- Lost & Found Community Internet Board-Website
- Low or No Cost Rabies and Microchipping Clinics
- Pet Food Pantry for people going through hardships
- Education through orientation provided on a bi-weekly basis with Volunteer Coordinators
- Outreach Programs with MANY Off site Adoption Events and FUNDRAISERS!
- Therapy Dogs to our Adult Day Care and Assisted Living Residents
- Community Resource Guidance
- Seniors matching seniors program
- Animal Camp For Children

Because of our amazing staff, volunteer base and community support we continue to rehabilitate more animals, upgrade our programs and provide more support to our community.

Thank you,

The Staff

Mission Statement



Our mission is to protect both the public and the animals, provide excellent animal care, find good homes for our animal guests, to promote responsible pet guardianship, to work to end the overpopulation of feral cats in our community, and to run a well-organized, efficient shelter with rehabilitation through education philosophy.

RESCUE REHABILITATE REHOME

WHAT WE DO FOR OUR DOGS, CATS, AND CRITTERS IF APPLICABLE:

VACCINES

DISEASE TESTING

SPAY /NEUTER

MEDICAL CARE

MICROCHIPPING OF DOGS

SOCIALIZATION

EXERCISE

HEARTWORM TESTING FOR DOGS

OBEDIENCE TRAINING FOR DOGS

FELINE LEUKEMIA AND AIDS TESTING

Volunteer Policies and Guidelines:

DCAS depends on their volunteers to be on time and efficient during their volunteer hours. We appreciate your support and the animals depend on you to help our operation to run effectively.

Time Commitment:

DCAS requires a minimum of four hours of service per month. For volunteers interested in only fundraising or off site adoption events please see the Director for additional information. The four hours per month that are required are expected to be on a set schedule for the first six months. This means as an example every other Friday 3pm-5pm (for a six month time frame).

CURRENTLY WE ARE ONLY ACCEPTING NEW VOLUNTEERS on MONDAY – FRIDAY- We do have limited availability for help on Saturday and Sunday but only 8:30am-noon. (The help on the weekends is strictly for cleaning).

If you are not able to complete a six month schedule you will not be accepted as a volunteer at this time.

Volunteers interested in a Summer Program or School Program please meet with the Director.

We do not accept Court Mandated Community Service Volunteers, nor will we sign off on their paperwork.

Inactiveness:

Volunteers who miss one month of volunteering will be required to wait until the next orientation to sign up again. They will be required to go through all of the training protocols necessary.

Dress Code:

All volunteers are required to wear their volunteer T-Shirt every time they volunteer.

If you wish to handle dogs and have completed and passed the Dog Handling class you will be required to pay a \$15.00 fee to obtain your leash which is a part of your uniform requirements.

All volunteers are required to wear long pants while volunteering at the shelter and sneakers.

ANY OTHER OUTFIT IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE AND YOU WILL BE DISMISSED!

Volunteer Conduct and Responsibilities for children volunteers

Please note that the staff and the Director are employed by the Town and ultimately have final say over animal care, decisions and concerns. And while we may value your input, you do not have the ability to make any decisions as a Coordinator or a volunteer as to what ultimately suits the animals, the shelter and the public. Please also note, that while you are in this building your actions reflect on the Town, The Director and the Staff. It is a privilege to volunteer here, not a right. Please keep that in mind and act accordingly.

Our top concern is to protect the public (and that includes you as volunteers) and to protect the safety of the animals, please keep that in mind when you are volunteering here.

For Parents: If your child is under 13 years old you need to stay with them at all times in whatever area of the shelter they are in. Should your child be over the age of 13 years old we may grant you the right to sit in the lobby or in your vehicle; However, that decision is ultimately made by staff.

Children 16 years and older may be left at shelter to perform volunteer activities but parents or guardians must be available to pick them up at a moment's notice if staff is called out into the field for a complaint. Please note there are times where the shelter will be completely shut down to deal with cruelty or other cases.

When dealing with the public you should always be polite and courteous. It is the policy of DCAS to be free of discrimination and harassment, as well as one that promotes equal opportunity and equitable treatment. Any type of harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

Cell phone use is **not** permitted in the building. Please utilize personal phone calls outside of the shelter.

Violence in the Workplace:

DCAS does not tolerate physical, verbal, or visual harassment. We also do not tolerate violent, aggressive or threatening behavior.

Drug-Free and Smoke Free Workplace:

DCAS is a drug free and Smoke Free work place. DCAS will ensure that all volunteers perform their duties and responsibilities free of the influence of unlawful drugs and/or unimpaired by alcohol.

Off Limit Areas:

Certain areas of the shelter are off-limits to volunteers for the safety, unless specifically authorized to enter. These include the cat quarantine room, the dog quarantine room, behind the desk of the shelter staff, and the director's office. Volunteers are not to go into desks, paperwork, files and are prohibited from the use of the Town of Branford computers. Volunteers are NEVER allowed to answer shelter phones and are not to open the shelter doors if the ACO's locked it. No personal pets are allowed on shelter property or in the animal control facility unless they are hear for an adoption meeting.

Privacy, Social Media and Public Interactions:

Any information pertaining to ACO records and cases which you may become privileged to as a result of your being a volunteer. Under certain circumstances Animal Control will not be allowed to discuss cases that are under investigation or pending criminal court action. Volunteers are specifically prohibited from discussing any aspect of animal control cases with any representative of the

media. Pictures or videos of any animals involved with any cases are prohibited and will be a reason for permanent dismissal.

Volunteers are prohibited from giving recommendations to dog walkers, daycare facilities, trainers or any other animal care professionals to the public. Volunteers are not to promote any business of their own or to promote others while representing the shelter.

DCAS volunteers may from time to time learn of new kittens or puppies that are residing at the shelter or in foster rooms. You may not take photographs or market them to friends or family until given permission of animal control.

DCAS volunteers are not to comment on negative comments on social media regarding animal control issues in Branford, North Branford or any other town as well as controversial issues that could negatively impact DCAS.

Adoptions:

Volunteers may assist guests asking questions about adoptions but may not facilitate actual adoptions. Only ACO's may approve adoptions of any animals at the shelter.

Discipline:

DCAS volunteers who commit violations of our policy will be verbally warned once. Volunteers need to speak to the Director should they have any questions about why they have been verbally warned. A written dismissal will be given to volunteers that have been warned. Dismissal could come from not showing up on dates they are scheduled, abusive behavior, harassing behavior, etc.

Handling of Animals:

Animals that are found abandoned are held at the shelter for seven days to see if an owner comes forward. If no owner comes forward the animal will become available for adoption if we find it suitable to be adopted. After the animal is deemed adoptable, they will be spayed/neutered, vaccinated, microchipped (dogs), feline leukemia/aids tested, and de wormed. Owner released animals may be available immediately if they have the appropriate paperwork to show they are up to date on vaccinations. Any unauthorized handling of any of the shelter animals will be terms for dismissal without a warning.

Overview of Volunteer Roles:

All volunteers are expected to be independent meaning they do not rely on staff for handling

Dog Handling:

Volunteer's role and responsibilities include socialization, exercise, and basic training for the shelter dogs. Major responsibilities include independently moving dogs in and out of kennels, independently walking dogs and playing with dog's outdoors, using shelter equipment and appropriate handling, cleaning dog and cat cages, doing laundry, cleaning dog toys and teaching basic manners in accordance with shelter regulations.

Children 14 and older will be allowed to walk and handle dogs with their parent or guardians assistance. Younger volunteers that have previously been at shelter will be grandfathered in.

Volunteers may NOT feed dogs or give MEDICATIONS.

Commitment: Volunteers must attend the hour long orientation at DCAS shelter and pass a test before handling dogs . This test is multiple choice but may include other questions as well. This test is considered a pass/fail. If you fail, you will be required to complete another orientation. If you fail the second orientation test you will be excused from becoming a volunteer or you will be given the option to work with cats.

If you pass, you will be required to go through a four hour dog handling course which includes both a written and physical test. Please inquire about the dates available for the dog handling class. No volunteer may handle or clean dogs until they have passed both sessions. Once you have completed and passed this test with Stephanie Williams you will be provided your T-Shirt and Dog Leash. You will be required to pay a non-refundable \$15.00 fee for the dog leash which you must bring as part of your uniform every time you come to the facility.

Cat Handling:

Volunteer's roles and responsibilities include socialization, exercise and basic training for the shelters cats. Major responsibilities include cleaning cat cages, cleaning cat dishes, cleaning the cat room, cleaning cat toys and doing laundry.

Volunteers may NOT give cats MEDICATIONS

Commitment: Volunteers must attend an hour long orientation at DCAS shelter and pass a test before handling cats. This test is multiple choice but may include other questions as well. This test is considered a pass/fail. If you fail you will be required to complete another orientation. If you fail the second orientation test you will be excused from becoming a volunteer.

Critter Handling:

You must complete the cat handling test in order to work with critters.

Fundraising and other events:

Volunteers that are interested in working at off-site events should contact Laura Burban via email. lburban@branford-ct.gov. She will set up an individual appointment to meet with you to discuss your options. Please note you will be required to fill out volunteer application and potentially still go through an orientation.

I have received and read the Policy and Procedure of the DCAS.

Signature Page _____ Date _____

This page must be returned to DCAS Staff immediately after you have passed dog and or cat orientation and all applicable tests.