

McHENRY COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

A Division of

*McHenry County
Department of Health*

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



01/19/2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome!	Pg 3
Volunteer Policies	Pg 4
Bill of Rights	Pg 7
FAQs	Pg 8
General Guidelines	Pg 10
Volunteer Positions	Pg 13
Position Descriptions	Pg 14
Agreement	Pg 17
Application	Pg 18
Time Sheet	Pg 20
Waiver	Pg 21
Acknowledgement	Pg 22

MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Welcome, New Volunteer!

We are pleased that you have chosen McHenry County Animal Control and Adoption Center to donate your precious time and talents. It is through our valuable staff and volunteers that we are able to provide quality services and support to the animals entrusted in our care.

McHenry County Animal Control and Adoption Center welcomes volunteers who support our mission to –

- **protect** the residents of McHenry County from hazards, nuisances or diseases caused or transmitted by animals
- **educate** the public about responsible pet ownership
- **shelter** lost, abandoned and unwanted animals
- **protect** animals from abuse, neglect, inhumane treatment and health hazards
- **reunite** lost pets and their families
- **adopt** animals into loving and responsible homes
- **prevent** the birth of unwanted animals
- **humanely** euthanizing animals due to reasons of health, age or temperament

We want each volunteer to feel that they are part of our team – as important to the success of our program as our employees. Your suggestions and ideas are important to us and we welcome them. Please feel free to contact the Volunteer Coordinator to assist you in making your experience at McHenry County Animal Control and Adoption Center a meaningful one.

Every effort is made to accommodate a volunteer's desire for placement in our program. If, at any time, you would like to make a change in your commitment to the volunteer program, do not hesitate to let us know.

Thank you again for your interest and your dedication.

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Volunteers are an integral and important part of the McHenry County Animal Control (MCAC) shelter. Your service to the animals in our care and the shelter's staff members are invaluable. Volunteering is a serious commitment. In order to work well with employees and to promote the shelter in the best possible manner, we ask that you adhere to the following policies and procedures.

A. Responsibilities and Dedication to the MCAC Shelter

- a. Volunteers are governed by the ordinary and reasonable rules of good conduct and behavior and, as such, will not commit any act that would bring reproach or discredit upon the MCAC shelter. At no time will any volunteer serve as a spokesperson or representative for the MCAC shelter.
- b. Volunteers must support MCAC shelter's policies inside and outside the shelter and are restricted to specific duties and responsibilities.

B. Professional Attitude

- a. Volunteers agree to conduct themselves in a professional manner (courteous, friendly and helpful) with the animals, staff, other volunteers and the public.
- b. Volunteers who work in direct contact with animals must exhibit a willingness to learn about animals and how to properly interact with them. They must be able to react quickly to avoid any mishaps between animals and people.

C. Application Process

- a. MCAC will review applications and interview the candidates. Each qualified candidate will be given training on how to handle impounded animals in order to limit the risk of injury to individuals or the animals. Training will be provided by MCAC staff as needed.
- b. Volunteers must participate in an orientation session with an MCAC staff member prior to any interaction with impounded animals. During the volunteer orientation session, MCAC staff will demonstrate the following:
 - i. Sign in and out on the proper form
 - ii. Review the impound log which shows when an animal is approved for handling/socializing
 - iii. Review of the Volunteer Policies

D. Attendance

- a. Each volunteer has made an individual commitment and a specific obligation, consisting of certain shifts and number of hours. Once you have agreed to be

available for a particular shift and duty, we count on you. In the event you are unable to be at your assigned shift, please call the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible so we may arrange for a replacement.

- b. In the event of sickness, we would like you to call us at 815-459-6222. Leave a message if you do not get an answer.
- c. For vacations, we ask that you provide a minimum two weeks notice. Mark any planned vacation on the volunteer calendar and notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any vacation dates.
- d. After three unexcused absences, your volunteer services may be terminated.
- e. All volunteers must enter/exit through the front door and sign in/out on the volunteer log.
- f. If you are interested in volunteering weekends or holidays, please see the Volunteer Coordinator.

E. Accidents and Injuries

- a. Volunteers must carry their own personal liability insurance coverage in the event that any injury occurs on the job. Volunteers are not covered by worker's compensation. Any volunteer who uses their own vehicle to run errands or to transport animals or equipment must be covered by automobile insurance.
- b. A tetanus shot is recommended if you have not had one in the last 6 years because your position involves direct contact with animals.
- c. An annual Tuberculosis (TB) test will be provided by McHenry County Department of Health.

F. Proper Dress

- a. Volunteers are as much a representative as our paid staff. As such, your appearance and conduct will reflect MCAC. Appropriate clothes for working with animals should be worn (jeans are acceptable). Clothes should be neat, clean and presentable to the public. Volunteers with inappropriate attire (shorts, sandals, etc) will be prohibited from handling animals and may be excused from their shift.
- b. Volunteers are required to wear nametags while on duty at MCAC. If you cannot find your nametag, you will be issued a blank nametag which reads "Volunteer" until another nametag can be printed for you.

G. Smoking

- a. Smoking is not permitted in any area of the shelter.

- b. Smoking is only permitted outside the back of the shelter in the designated area.
- c. No smoking while walking or handling animals.

H. Visitors

- a. Volunteers may not bring visitors, friends or family with them when scheduled to work. Visitors are only permitted in the public areas.
- b. No visitors are permitted in the building after hours.
- c. Volunteers are treated as the general public when not working.
- d. An adult must supervise all minors in the building.
- e. Personal phone calls to or from the shelter are discouraged.

I. Volunteer Adoptions

- a. Working so closely with the animals can be an emotional experience. In order to reduce impulse adoptions, staff and volunteers are required to wait 3 months before adopting a new pet. Exceptions can be made via the Program Supervisor.

J. Resignation

- a. We ask you give at least 2 weeks notice. Schedule an exit interview with the Volunteer Coordinator.

K. Reason for Dismissal

- a. Failure to follow established policies and procedures
- b. Inhumane treatment to any animal
- c. Insubordination, which is outright refusal to follow appropriate directions and obey legitimate orders of supervisors
- d. Threats, intimidation, coercion or interference with other volunteers or employees on the shelter property
- e. Rude to staff, other volunteers or the public
- f. Failure to report an accident
- g. Use, sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol
- h. Theft or other dishonest acts

Volunteer Bill of Rights

Volunteers have the right to:

- Be treated as an equal – not just as “free help”
- A suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, life experience, education and employment background
- Know as much about MCAC as possible, its policies, its people and its programs
- Effective training for volunteer positions
- Train for more advanced positions, when appropriate, while performing current duties
- Sound guidance by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient and thoughtful and who has the time to invest in volunteer concerns
- Be heard – to have a part in planning and to feel free to make suggestions
- Recognition and appreciation for work completed at the shelter
- Work in a satisfying and challenging position at the animal shelter
- Adopt new pets through the MCAC adoption program after the first 3 months of service

NOTE: All volunteers who accept the benefits of the Volunteer Bill of Rights must also accept the responsibilities and obligations of our Volunteer Program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Volunteer Qualifications –

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age and enjoy working with all types of people. They must show a genuine concern for the welfare of animals. A willingness to work hard, get dirty and pitch in whenever needed. The ideal volunteer is self-motivated, mature, sensitive, dependable and a team player. He or she must have the ability to meet assignments promptly, reliably and with flexibility.

Volunteers who work in direct contact with animals must exhibit a willingness to learn about animals and how to properly interact with them. They must be able to react quickly to avoid any mishaps between animals and people.

What we ask of our volunteers –

- Complete a volunteer application
- Schedule an interview with the Volunteer Coordinator
- Attend an orientation session; two training courses
- Support our philosophies and policies inside and outside the shelter
- Be honest and realistic with yourself and us concerning your needs, wishes and availability

What our volunteers receive in return –

- Learn about animals through working directly with them and through a variety of educational opportunities
- An opportunity to develop new skills or polish old ones
- Support and feedback from a professional staff
- A chance to meet others who share your interests

Your first day of volunteering –

We will schedule an orientation session. If you decide to join us, a second training session will be scheduled with one of our staff members. You will be issued a badge and shown

where to sign in upon arrival. We cannot be responsible for lost or misplaced valuables so we ask that you leave them at home for safekeeping. Casual attire is preferred – something which is easy to clean and that you will not be concerned if it becomes soiled.

Your duties –

Volunteers typically serve the adoption program and may perform the following tasks:

- Assist members of the public in selecting an animal and showing them the animal in the Adoption Room.
- Assist members of the public with the adoption application process, answering questions about the adoption process and review the completed application.
- Process the adoption application by contacting references, veterinarians, etc. and approving or disapproving the application.
- Coordinate with MCAC staff on completing the adoption.
- Transport animals.
- Groom, bathe, socialize and exercise adoption animals (requires animal handling experience).

Communication is important –

Volunteers are most productive when they enjoy what they are doing. If an assignment is not suitable for you, please discuss the matter with the Volunteer Coordinator who will facilitate a change of assignment.

All injuries must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator or the front office staff so it can be documented. A first aid kit is readily available.

General Guidelines

The following guidelines are important to both the efficient operation of McHenry County Animal Control and Adoption Center (MCAC) and the safety and well being of our valued volunteers. Please respect these rules and contact any staff member if you have any questions.

Courtesy – Courtesy is of utmost importance. A person's impression of MCAC will be based on their visit to our facility. We want that impression to be a positive one. This includes the cleanliness of our facility, the health and appearance of our animals and, most of all, our attitude and sincere desire to assist them. The more people are impressed with our operation, the better chance we have of adopting out more animals.

Confidentiality – Other than the information supplied on a cage card, any further details about an animal are to be given by staff members and experienced volunteers only. Please send the adoption applicant to the front desk for further information.

Solicitation – It is against Department of Health policy to allow solicitation of any kind, at any time. This includes distribution of material of any kind, whether for the sale of merchandise or subscriptions, or on behalf of any club, society, labor union, political party, school, church or agency.

Cleanliness – Hands must be washed prior to and between handling any impounded animal. This step helps reduce the risk of transmitting diseases from one animal to another.

Adoptions – Adoption applications must be started one half hour prior to closing time (4pm weekdays, 2pm on Saturdays). If someone is interested in interacting with an animal, send the potential adopter to the front desk. The person will be asked to complete a thorough profile which will be reviewed by a staff member. This staff member will arrange the showing of an animal if the profile is accepted. Potential adopters should spend time alone

with the animal. Do not push or rush this very important decision. We are striving to have the best possible match between the companion animal and the adopter.

Volunteers must stay on the adoption side of the facility at all times. Please note there is an EMPLOYEES ONLY sign on the door to the west wing which is accessible only upon authorization by a staff member.

Touching cages – Oftentimes, the public will ignore our requests and signs about touching our animals (putting fingers in the cages). If you witness this, please ask them politely to not touch the animals. This is done to reduce the risk of unknowingly spreading an infection to other animals, in addition to discouraging the animal to nip at fingers. If they would like to see the animal close up, a showing can be arranged.

Animal Body Language – Please read carefully the section entitled “Canine/Feline Body Language”. It is essential for all volunteers to understand the body language of dogs and cats because this is their method of communicating with us, as well as with each other. If you have any concerns about the behavior of any animal, contact a kennel staff person immediately. Remember, you are not required to interact with every animal. If you are uncomfortable with an animal in any way, please do not interact with it. Look for “staff only” signs located on animal cages. This may indicate that we are unsure of that animal’s behavior or it may have an illness we think could be contagious to other animals and handling it could spread the infection. It is for your safety and the safety of all our animals.

Disease Prevention – To prevent the spread of disease and to ensure the good health of the animals in your care, please follow these procedures:

- Animals are not permitted to run loose. A leash must be attached to all dogs removed from the kennel or cage. There are designated exercise areas that should be utilized for good exercise.
- Very strict cleaning methods must be followed. If you are unsure of a cleaning procedure, please see a staff member.
- Feeding guidelines have been set up and must be followed.

- Clean hands after touching each animal and between rooms.
- All kennels must be kept clean and dry. No food, fecal matter or dust on the floors of the kennels.
- If you notice an animal is not eating or seems sick, bring it to the attention of your Supervisor.
- By law, you must report any animal bite. If you are uncomfortable handling an animal, please get assistance from a staff member.
- All dogs must be supervised while outside in the fenced area.
- Emotional reactions must be expressed in a professional manner. Any concerns, questions or problems should be taken to your Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Euthanasia – The term “euthanasia” comes from the Greek word meaning “a well death”. It is very important that volunteers understand our policies regarding euthanasia and are trained to answer questions that may be asked by visitors or the public. Volunteers must understand that euthanasia is a sad fact of life at any animal shelter. When euthanasia is necessary, members of MCAC very kindly and caringly carry it out through lethal injection.

Tidbits to remember – Only MCAC policies are to be given to the public (never your own personal opinion). Only handle one animal at a time. Never try to sell an animal. If the home is inappropriate for that animal, the person may feel misled. Never talk as if a person has already been approved for adoption. Never misrepresent an animal.

Recognition – The Department of Health recognizes the contribution made by volunteers on an ongoing basis. Formal recognition awards are presented at an Annual Spirit of Public Health Month Celebration, usually in April.

Volunteer Positions

Cage Cleaning

Both dog and cat cages are cleaned daily. Very strict cleaning methods must be followed to prevent the spread of diseases. If a volunteer is interested in assisting with this job, kennel personnel will train them on the proper cleaning procedures.

Dog and Cat Socialization

All the dogs and cats on the adoption side are in need of daily attention. Some need proper socialization to help them adjust to their new surroundings. Walking/exercising the dogs in the designated outdoor runs is very beneficial for them and we encourage this needed activity if you are able to do it. The cats need petting and brushing and time out of their cage to exercise. We appreciate any TLC volunteers can give them.

Office Work

There is needed assistance in the office with filing and other paperwork. This will introduce you to the many different services performed by the staff at MCAC. If you are interested in helping with office work, please discuss with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Adoption Counselor

If you are familiar with dogs and know their personality and training requirements, you may wish to show dogs to potential adopters. Discuss with them the importance of the family decision to bring a new canine companion into their home, time to train and exercise the dog and the type of supervision needed with children. Discuss crate training and obedience training to ensure a long-term, positive relationship with the dog.

For cats, take the cat out of the cage and let the cat and potential adopter get to know each other in the visitation room. Discuss what is required to own a cat (litter box, food, scratching post, etc). Demonstrate nail clipping and grooming. Teach how to introduce a cat to another cat/dog to ensure a good relationship.

Read and understand MCAC adoption policies. Contact a MCAC staff person with any questions.

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Description:

Adoption Counselor

Summary

- Assist the public with adoptions
- Put together adoption profile packets
- Provide afternoon care for dogs and cats

Essential Responsibilities

- Prepare dog and cat profile packets
- Assist the public in viewing animals for adoption
- Educate the public on animals they are considering for adoption
- Report any animal temperament and health concerns to a staff member
- Clean an adoption cage if it's soiled during adoption time
- Assist public in pre-adoption process and expectations of adopter
- Follow up on phone calls after adoption
- Fax adoption list to area veterinarians
- Assist with lost/found pet searches (e.g., call to see if pets were found from lost book or owners found from found cards)
- Other functions are needed

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

- Knowledge of responsible pet ownership
- Maintain confidentiality
- Ability to work well with the public and respond in a professional and courteous manner
- Ability to follow written and verbal instructions
- Ability to use equipment and property safely, efficiently and responsibly
- Ability to exercise mature judgment and decision-making
- Ability to handle and care for animals humanely and safely
- Knowledge of animal breed and behavior

Work Environment

- Cooperative work environment with other volunteers, staff and the public
- Potential exposure to zoonotic diseases
- Subject to animal scratches and bites
- Physically demanding (lifting animals)
- Clothing appropriate to working with animals
- Supervises none

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Description

Special Relations Volunteer – Adoption Area

Summary

- Provide socialization to adoptable animals
- Maintain clean, comfortable and orderly environment for the animals

Essential Responsibilities

- Provide animals with positive interactions
- Brushing and exercising cats
- Walking and exercising dogs in designated outdoor runs
- Report any animal temperament or health concerns to staff member

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

- Knowledge of responsible pet ownership
- Maintain confidentiality
- Ability to work well with the public and respond in a professional and courteous manner
- Ability to follow written and verbal instructions
- Ability to use equipment and property safely, efficiently and responsibly
- Ability to exercise mature judgment and decision-making
- Ability to handle and care for animals humanely and safely
- Knowledge of animal breed and behavior

Work Environment

- Cooperative work environment with other volunteers, staff and the public
- Potential exposure to zoonotic diseases
- Subject to animal scratches and bites
- Physically demanding (lifting animals)
- Clothing appropriate to working with animals
- Supervises none

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Description

Office Volunteer

Summary

- Provide staff support in day-to-day operations

Essential Responsibilities

- Review the lost book on a daily basis; follow up with phone call to check status
- Contact individuals listed in found box (follow up on animals being held)
- Enter dog registration tags into computer
- File rabies certificates
- Prepare adoption folders
- Assist in tours

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Basic office skills – filing, usage of fax machine and photocopier, keyboarding
- Knowledge of responsible pet ownership
- Maintain confidentiality
- Ability to work well with the public and respond in a professional and courteous manner
- Ability to follow written and verbal instructions
- Ability to use equipment and property safely, efficiently and responsibly
- Ability to exercise mature judgment and decision-making
- Knowledge of animal breed and behavior

Work Environment

- Cooperative work environment with other volunteers, staff and the public
- Potential exposure to zoonotic diseases
- Subject to animal scratches and bites
- Physically demanding (lifting animals)
- Clothing appropriate to working with animals
- Supervises none

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I, the undersigned volunteer, desire to do voluntary work for the Animal Control Division of the McHenry County Department of Health, subject to the rules of the Animal Control Division, as modified from time to time, and under the direction and control of the Animal Control Division staff.

In consideration of the opportunity afforded me to participate in the actual Animal Control problems and situations, the educational and other benefits received by me, and in recognition of the possible danger that I may voluntarily subject myself to, I hereby knowingly, freely and voluntarily assume all reasonable and foreseeable risks related to the Animal Control Volunteer Program, and do hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless McHenry County Animal Control and McHenry County Department of Health and its agents, employees and volunteers, from and against, any and all claims, suits, actions, damages, expenses, judgments and costs, including reasonable attorneys fees, which may arise out of any injury or death of the undersigned's participation in the program and any activities related thereto. Further, I waive and release any and all rights against McHenry County Animal Control and McHenry County Department of Health and its agents, employees and volunteers that may arise out of any injury or death of the undersigned, which is, in any manner, connected with the undersigned's participation in the program and any activities related thereto.

I understand that at no time am I an employee or agent of McHenry County Animal Control, its agents, employees and volunteers, and that this agreement does not apply to the negligent acts of a third party. I also attest that I meet the requirement of being 18 years of age or older.

Signed this _____ day
of _____, _____

Volunteer's Signature

Volunteer's Name (printed)

Volunteer's Address

Witness

Volunteer's Contact Numbers

MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Volunteer Application

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Street Address _____ Date _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Why are you interested in becoming a volunteer at McHenry County Animal Control?

Please list any past and/or previous experience you have working with animals, including any volunteer positions you have held.

Are you allergic to anything? If yes, please specify.

Are there any medical and/or physical limitations in the type of volunteer work you can perform?

In case of emergency, whom should we contact?

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

Hours available for volunteering are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:00am-4:30pm, Wednesday 8:00am-6:30pm, Saturday and Sunday 8:00am-2:30pm.

Volunteers need to commit to a specific schedule.

Please indicate the day(s) and time(s) that would work in your schedule.

DAY

TIME

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Volunteer Activities

Please indicate which volunteer opportunities you are interested in participating in. You may choose more than one:

_____ Kennel and cage cleaning

_____ Dog and cat socialization

_____ Office work

_____ Adoption Counselor

Dog Walkers:

Only dogs designated for dog walking by MCAC staff will be permitted to leave the shelter for this exercise time.

Cat Caretakers:

Cats are never to leave the confines of the shelter during their exercise or socialization time spent with the cat caretaker.

Application modified 01/19/2012

MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Volunteer Time Sheet

Please complete this form each time you volunteer. Return this form at the end of each month to the Volunteer Coordinator.

MONTH: _____

VOLUNTEER NAME: _____

VOLUNTEER POSITION: _____

VOLUNTEER SIGNATURE: _____

Date	Time In	Time Out	Position Assignment

MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Waiver

McHenry County Animal Control feels it is important to have a tetanus vaccination before becoming a volunteer. To emphasize that importance, we ask you to read and sign the following waiver:

1. I understand that a tetanus shot is recommended if I have not had one in the last 6 years.
2. I understand that because I handle animals, it is important to discuss being vaccinated against tetanus with my physician.
3. I release McHenry County Animal Control, its agents, employees from all liability that may occur because of my not pursuing this matter further. I further understand that whatever decision I make is at my own risk.
4. I have read, understand and agreed to the above.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Coordinator

Date

MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Receipt and Acknowledgement of Volunteer Handbook

This Volunteer Handbook is an important document intended to serve as a guide to what is expected of you as a part of the McHenry County Department of Health organization, Animal Control Division. While we have intended to make this document comprehensive, it should be understood that individual circumstances may call for individual attention at the sole discretion of McHenry County Department of Health.

1. I have received and read a copy of the McHenry County Animal Control Volunteer Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies, rules and procedures outlined in the Volunteer Handbook. I further understand that the policies, rules and procedures described therein are subject to change at the sole discretion of the McHenry County Department of Health at any time.
2. Any information contained in either the Volunteer Handbook that is not clear to me has been clarified by the Volunteer Coordinator.
3. I understand that my volunteer service may be terminated, either by McHenry County Animal Control or myself, regardless of the length of my service.
4. I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and have received a copy of the McHenry County Animal Control Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Coordinator

Date