



# THE ANTI-CRUELTY SOCIETY

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A Commitment to Caring *Since 1899*

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Welcome to the Clinic Patient Care Volunteer Program!**

As a volunteer in the Clinic Patient Care (CPC) program, you will have many opportunities to assist in caring for sick and injured animals, as well as those who will soon be or have recently had surgery. Knowing that you played an important role in caring, rehabilitating, and comforting such animals can be very rewarding.

As a volunteer in this program, you will have an opportunity to make the shelter experience better for the pets in our charge while also preparing them for the adoption rooms.

### **Program Objective**

The purpose of the Clinic Patient Care program is to bring vital assistance to the staff and animals who are in the clinic department. Clinic Patient Care volunteers provide attention, socialization, comfort, and care to sick and injured animals who are housed in the clinic holding rooms.

You will be socializing animals who are in treatment for various medical reasons using our targeted enrichment procedures. By providing these pets with daily enrichment, the Clinic Clinic Patient Care volunteers help to meet the psychological and emotional needs of clinic animals. Enrichment is focused on providing daily care and experiences that help prevent or relieve some of the stress, boredom, frustration and related behavioral deterioration that a pet may experience upon confinement in a clinical environment.

### **Importance of Following Procedure and Policy**

As a volunteer it is important that you follow all procedures and policies. These have been compiled from the knowledge and experiences of other volunteers and staff, and have been created in an effort to protect the animals, volunteers, staff, and public while at The Anti-Cruelty Society.

Adhering to these procedures will assist you with your Clinic Patient Care volunteer responsibilities and experience. If at any time you have any questions, issues or concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Volunteer Services Department.

As volunteers in this program you will be taught various enrichment techniques. These tools will make each animal you work with feel more comfortable in the shelter environment by alleviating everyday stressors (cats meowing, dogs barking, cages slamming, cleaning tools etc.)

### **About the Anti-Cruelty Society Clinic**

The Clinic serves animals that have been adopted and are ill or injured. The Clinic also serves animals that live in low-income or unemployed households, were in the adoption room and became ill, or are strays waiting for their physical exam.

Currently, the Clinic has three rooms in which you will work: the Dog Room, Cat Room, and Spay/Neuter Overflow Room. The Dog Room is the larger of the two rooms and contains cages 1-25. The Cat Room is the smaller room and contains cages 26-42. The Spay/Neuter Overflow Room is located on the second level of the shelter between the laundry room and the field services garage.

If a cat or dog has URI or kennel cough, it will be housed in the other species' room so it won't infect its neighbors. A third room of cages is located across the hall from the existing dog and cat rooms. This room is for spay/neuter surgery animals only and you will not work in this room.

The Clinic has six or seven veterinarians on staff and additional vet technicians and assistants who provide treatments throughout the building.

Clinic animals that have communicable diseases are usually kept in isolation rooms on the second floor and in the basement. Often cats with upper respiratory infection (URI) are kept in the Dog Room and small dogs or puppies with kennel cough are kept in the Cat Room so as to not cross contaminate other animals.

The veterinary assistants feed and treat the animals twice daily: in the mornings until 11:00 am and in the afternoons from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM (5:00 PM on weekends).

In addition to treatments, the Clinic staff also perform surgery, conduct spay and neuter operations, give physical exams to shelter animals, and give outpatient exams for low income families, adopters, and foster parents.

## Getting Started

### When You Can Volunteer

Clinic Patient Care volunteers may be in the shelter 7 days a week

- Weekdays between 9:00am and 7pm
- Weekends between 9:30am and 7pm

### Holidays

The Anti-Cruelty Society is closed for public adoptions on all major holidays. Rehab and Clinic staff always need assistance on these days, so please consider volunteering if you can.

### Where You Can Volunteer

Clinic Patient Care volunteers will spend the majority of their time working with pets within the Clinic.

### Working with Anti-Cruelty Society Staff and Other Volunteers

When you enter the clinic rooms introduce yourself as a volunteer to the staff members and other volunteers in the room.

Anti-Cruelty Society staff members are in the room to tend to the pets and provide vital medical assistance. If you should ever have a question about a procedure or policy please direct it to the staff member on hand.

### **What to Wear While Volunteering**

When you are volunteering the following dress code must be adhered to:

- Wear an Anti-Cruelty Society volunteer T-shirt or any the Society logo top.
- Wear long pants (not shorts).
- Wear closed toe, rubber soled shoes. Sandals are not allowed.
- Wear your volunteer ID badge

Once you are in the Clinic:

- Put on a gown, scrub top or lab jacket.
- Be sure you ID badge is visible.
- If available, clean lab coats are provided.
  - Use as many clean garments as you need.
  - When you are done with the clothes please bring them directly downstairs to the laundry area (located at the bottom of the stairs in the garage). It is important to place the dirty clothes in “dirty clothes” pile. To avoid spreading disease and germs to other animals, it is important **not** to mix clean and dirty clothes.

### **Before you Volunteer:**

Volunteers are encouraged to set a consistent day in which to perform their CPC duties. This not only helps other volunteers with their scheduling but also allows you to connect with a specific group of staff on your chosen day. Volunteers are not required to come in weekly – but whatever schedule you set should be booked on the Volunteer Schedule under “Patient Care.”

### **When You Arrive:**

- Sign in at the front desk.
- Store personal items and collect supplies in the Volunteer Office.
- After locating your badge and supplies you are ready to begin. Supplies may include hand sanitizer, dog waste bags and disposable toys.
- Head to the clinic and check in with the veterinary assistant assigned to the rooms. Be sure to let them know how long you will be staying for your shift. Whenever In the Clinic area always look through the door’s window before entering a room. This will alert you to any loose animals, dogs tied out or people working just on the other side of the door.

### **Before Leaving:**

- Notify staff and other volunteers in the clinic that you are leaving. This way personnel knows how many people are currently in the rooms and that you are no longer available to assist them with the animals.
- Place your soiled gown or scrub top in the dirty laundry by the washer.
- Log your hours in your Volunteer Profile. Using a volunteer computer, open a browser window and go to the following website: [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com). Log your hours under Clinic> Clinic Patient Care.

## Clinic Patient Care I Responsibilities

### Provide Clinic Staff Support

Clinic Patient Care volunteers act as an extra set of eyes and hands for the clinic staff and patients.

- While working with the animals, volunteers maintain logs summarizing observations of stool, urine, sneezing, eating, and the like for staff use.
- Volunteers should immediately report observations that may impact treatment, such as vomiting, blood in stool, injuries, sneezing (for surgery cats), anomalous behavior, etc.
- Upon request and as directed, volunteers assist staff in handling patients.
- Volunteers may assist in the collection of stool samples, as needed and directed by staff.
- Volunteers walk dogs and play-exercise cats recovering from injuries, as directed.

### Caretaking

Clinic Patient Care volunteers help make the animal's environment clean and comfortable by assisting in their routine care. Volunteers are responsible for completing the following:

- Clean / refresh litter boxes.
- Replace soiled liner paper.
- Clean cages with bleach water.
- Provide clean bedding/towels and toys.
- Provide fresh water (except NPO patients - check with vet techs).
- Groom, where appropriate, including brushing, trimming claws (for cats), etc.
- Walk housebroken dogs in the courtyard (with approval).
- Help transfer animals to Cat/Dog Adopts (with approval), including filling out required transfer papers and, as needed, setting up cages in Adopts.

### Socializing

The clinic animals need socialization just like the animals elsewhere in the shelter, but often don't get enough. This can be a very important role for Clinic Patient Care volunteers, particularly for long-term patients, but also shy cats or dogs heading for adoption.

- Volunteers should spend face time socializing in cage with cats, both while cleaning their cages and also separate from cleaning.
- CPC volunteers can walk dogs, or spend time with them outside the cage (with vet or vet tech approval).
- Volunteers Make sure each animal has appropriate toys for mental stimulation.

## Program Guidelines

### Checking in with Staff

All Clinic Patient Care volunteers are **required** to check-in with staff before engaging in any activities with the cats and dogs.

In order to prevent the accidental spread of highly contagious diseases and to protect you from working with animals that are in no condition to be touched, **it is critical that you take your directions from the Clinic staff regarding which animals you can interact with. Do not work with animals that you have not received permission to interact with.**

The clinic staff will alert you to the following:

- Animals who are in the Clinic for a long time and are showing signs of depression.
- Puppies and kittens that are in cages alone.
- Cats with upper respiratory infections (“URI”). Cats with URI can become congested and if they cannot smell their food, sometimes they will not eat their food. Spending time working with these animals is especially important for their health and well-being.

If no one is in the Clinic dog or cat rooms, (this is common between 11 AM and 3 PM) then go to the pre-op/post-op area (the room where the gowns are kept) and ask anyone which vet tech is assigned to the dog and cat room. Explain that you are a Clinic Patient Care Volunteer and that you need someone to tell you which animals you may interact with.

- **Under no circumstances are you to attempt to remove any matting on an animal with scissors or any cutting instrument.** If you are concerned that an animal is uncomfortable due to matting, please advise a staff member so that they can evaluate the situation and assist in making the animal more comfortable.
- In addition, please be sure to read any notes that are posted on any of the cages in the Clinic, and any signs posted on any of the ward doors in Rehab. Any cages marked with “staff only”, “wear gloves,” “may bite”, “hair loss”, etc. are strictly off-limits to volunteers. Please do not go into those cages or handle those animals in any way.
- Animals in the Clinic may be experiencing stress as a result of surgery, illness, or simply being confined to an unfamiliar environment. It is important to read an animal’s body language before handling them. If it growls, bats at you, or exhibits other aggressive behavior, it is best to leave that animal alone to avoid an incident that could lead to injury and/or potential euthanasia of the animal. Some hospitalized animals may not be social, so pay particular attention to their tail, ears, and tongue color. The animal will use each to provide you with signs of its socialization.

### Gathering Daily Information

Clinic Patient Care volunteers are required to fill out the “Daily Information Form” when working with the animals. This form helps to record each animal patient’s daily condition. A copy of this form can be found at the end of this manual.

The form is located in the Clinic dog room in the back of the plastic file box (located on the food cart). Fill out the top of the volunteer form with your name and whether you are volunteering in the “a.m.” or “p.m.” Use this form to record information about the animals you visit. In the Clinic, each animal is known by its cage number and you will record your observations by referring to the animal’s cage number. You will record:

- If an animal sneezes.
- If an animal has urinated or defecated.
  - If so, remove the soiled papers or change the litter box.
  - If upon cleaning a litter box or removing soiled papers from a cage, you note anything of concern (i.e., blood in the stool, etc.), please do not dispose of the soiled papers or litter box. Notify a vet assistant or veterinarian in the event a stool sample needs to be taken. If a vet assistant or veterinarian is not available, do not remove the litter box or stool from the cage in order that a sample can be taken when someone is available.
- Other observations such as drooling, discharge from the eyes, favoring a limb, aggressiveness, etc.

The information you record is very important. For example, the information that an animal has sneezed helps the staff determine which animals are ready to be transferred to the adoption rooms and which animals are showing new symptoms.

When you are ready to leave for the day, please leave your completed volunteer form near the vet tech treatment sheets located in the dog room.

### **Walking Dogs**

If you receive permission to walk a dog in the courtyard prevent contact between your dog and all other dogs. This reduces exposure to infectious disease and discourages aggressive behavior. Clean up after your dog if it defecates. Don’t forget to record the stool on the volunteer form when you return to the Clinic.

Some dogs that are not allowed out to the courtyard may be walked or tied out in the Dog Room. If you get permission, put a leash on the dog (leashes are on the wall by the door) and keep the dog under your control and **away from the other caged dogs**. You may play with toys, offer the dog a bowl of water (only if it has a water bowl already), visit etc. (although this may be difficult if the room is busy in the mornings). This gives the dog a chance to move around out of the cage and to interact with you. Toys are stored on the food cart, bottom shelf in the Dog Room.

If someone is interested in adopting the animal, tell a shelter manager or vet assistant. You may also give the interested party the dog’s animal number that is clearly written on the band around its neck. You can suggest that they call the Society a half hour before adoption hours (11:30 a.m.) to check to see if the dog is on the adoption floor. Business cards are located at the front desk. You may also suggest that if they are serious about adopting the dog, that once the dog is placed on the adoption floor, that they arrive at the shelter as early as possible in order to begin the adoption process. Dogs will not be held, and adoptions are done on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Refreshing Kennels

Additional optional tasks which will be helpful to the vet assistants include:

- Refresh the empty cages of dogs and cats who are currently undergoing surgery so that the dogs are not returned to a soiled cage.
- Restock the newspapers in the cat and dog rooms (newspapers are outside Cat Adopts or in the garage.)
- Wash water bowls (in the dish pan by the little sink)\*
- Refill present water bowls. (Ask first if it's a puppy or kitten). If an animal does not have a water bowl in its cage, it is important that you check with a vet tech before placing one in the cage. Water is withheld from some animals due to impending surgery or other medical issues.
- Check to see that each cat that is spending the night has a towel or blanket.
- Distribute toys to the animals as appropriate (ask first, especially in the case of dogs).
- Clean empty cages in the dog room (ask which specific cage).
- Empty the trash. Areas such as the pre/post operative rooms can be very busy at times so please use your best judgment.
- Refill towel bins in the dog room.
- The late afternoon is also the best time to take dogs out to the courtyard (with permission) for some fresh air while their cages are being cleaned.

\* *Remember, many diseases and parasites are passed through stool.* Keep the cleaning cloths or bleach water for cages and litter boxes separate from the cloths and bleach water used for cleaning toys and bowls.

## Laundry

Volunteers should help with clinic laundry but should not spend their entire shift doing so. Remember that your priority is helping staff and animals!

- Dirty laundry may be brought back to the laundry room and loaded into the washer.
- Follow the directions on the front of the washer.
- Both washer and dryer settings should be set on 'hot.'
- Detergent is added automatically.
- Once washed, wet laundry can be loaded into the dryer.
- Both the washer and dryer run approximately 30 minutes. Heavier loads may require a 45 minute drying cycle.
- Press "Start" to begin the dryer cycle. Be sure to keep the laundry basket (which is usually labeled for PC) near the washer/dryer during cleaning so laundry from different programs does not get confused.
- Fold clean towels and put them in the basket in the pre-op/post op area; hang up clean gowns, scrub tops and lab jackets on the rod in the pre-op/post-op area.

- When the pre-op/post op area is busy, do the folding and hanging in the laundry area and then put the clean laundry away.

### Feeding Animals

Volunteers are not permitted to feed or treat any clinic animals for a variety of reasons. In the Clinic, feeding the animals is especially complex because some animals are on special diets while others are scheduled to have surgery and are not allowed any food or water. Only the Clinic staff may give the animals food, however, if you notice an animal's water bowl is empty, ask a vet assistant if it is okay to refill it.

Please note that although volunteers are not allowed to put food in the animals' cages, they are encouraged to spend time with those animals that are not eating due to stress or URI in an attempt to get them eat the food the vet techs have already placed in their cages. If unsure as to which animals need special attention, please check with a vet tech.

### Keep All Animals in their Cages

Focus on giving the animals attention in their cage. Be sure that the cage is **securely latched** when you close the cage. Pull on the door to ensure it is closed. In the event an animal gets out of the cage, make every attempt to immediately retrieve them (if safe and appropriate) and place it back in its cage. If you are unable to retrieve the animal, announce to others in the room that there is a loose cat or dog and make sure the door to the room you are working in is closed in order to contain the animal to one area. Contact a staff member to help you retrieve the loose animal. Receiving staff are specially trained to do so.

## Hygiene

### Volunteer Hygiene

*"Sanitation is very important in reducing the spread of disease among shelter animals. Anyone who handles or touches any animal or its environment has the potential to spread disease. Depending on the disease, infectious particles may be in the animal's fur, saliva, urine, feces, and vomit, in the air or on the surface of the cage. By touching any of the animals or the materials in its cage, these particles can remain on your skin or glove and be transmitted to another animal if the hands are not washed thoroughly and gloves are not changed between animals. In a shelter situation some of the diseases such as parvovirus can result in euthanasia or the death of an animal, anyone who improperly handles an animal may be contributing to a possible deadly outcome for the animal."* (Shelter Medicine)

**After you handle each animal, thoroughly wash your hands with soap and hot water, rubbing your hands together for at least 10 seconds, and wear a new pair of gloves with each animal.** The longer the contact time with soap, the more thorough the hand washing is." (Shelter Medicine) If it is treatment time or the Dog Room is otherwise busy, please use the sink in the Cat Room for hand washing. This will help to keep you out of the way of the veterinarians and vet techs who must be in the area by the Dog Room sink.

Contact with clothing should be minimized as much as possible. If you are working with a dog or cat that sneezes and sprays mucus on your gown, jacket or top, **change in to a clean gown or top before working with another animal.**

If you have animals at home, you may want to change into clean clothes and shoes before entering your home in order to prevent contaminating your animal. Some P C volunteers bring a change of clothes to the Society and change here before leaving. Other P C volunteers keep a bag at their door and use it to stow shoes and clothes as they return home.

### Sanitation around the Animal

If you want to change the papers in a dog's cage ask a vet assistant (in case a fecal sample is needed) record the stool type on the volunteer form. If there are urine stains on the paper, record them on the volunteer form too.

If a cat's litter box needs changing ask the vet tech if you may change it.

- Note the contents (stool type and or urine) on the volunteer form. Remember to notify a vet tech if there is any blood in the stool or if a fecal test has been requested.
- When changing a litter box, please note the contents of the litter box (whether paper, clay litter, or both) and replace with same. Most litter boxes get a single layer of newspaper on the bottom followed by either shredded newspaper or a single scoop of clay litter.
- Please minimize the transfer of items from the Dog Room to the Cat Room to help reduce the spread of Upper Respiratory infection. Some transfer of supplies such as litter may be unavoidable.

### Cleaning Cages

- When volunteering in the Clinic, if you would like to assist the staff in cage cleaning, please request a bucket of diluted bleach water. Wear gloves when using this disinfectant and wash your skin well afterwards.
  - Rinse your cleaning cloth between cages.
  - Because many diseases and parasites are passed through stool, **do not mix the cleaning cloths for cages and litter boxes with the used for cleaning toys and bowls.**
  - Clean all the surfaces of the cage using watchdog including the inside and outside of the cage door. Scrubbing pads are available to remove mucus that has dried on the cage walls.
  - When you are finished cleaning the cage, cover the bottom of the cage with a layer of clean newspapers.
  - When cleaning a cage, if an animal's toy falls from the cage onto the floor, do not put the toy back into the cage without being cleaned. The animal's toys can be cleaned using bleach or watchdog mixed with water in the silver dish pan next to the sink in the Dog Room. **DO NOT** use the bleach water used to clean cages on the animal's toys or water bowls.
  - Newspapers are kept in both the Cat Room and the Dog Room so, once again, if it's busy in the Dog Room, stay out of the staff's way and get your newspapers from the supply in the Cat Room.

## Additional Policies

### Euthanasia

One of the most difficult realities you will encounter at the shelter is your knowledge that the shelter performs euthanasia on some animals. The majority of the euthanasia performed occurs to animals undergoing tests and evaluations by the clinic and staff, prior to placement in the adoption rooms.

Clinic volunteers may be exposed to animals who are in the midst of treatment and have not yet been approved for adoption. Volunteers who join the Clinic Patient Care program should be advised that they may be working with animals who are not medically sound enough to be placed for adoption. In these circumstances The Anti-Cruelty Society may exhaust the following options when appropriate before euthanizing the animal:

- Placement in our cat or dog rehabilitation suites.
- Relocation to a foster home for the treatment of an illness and/or socialization.
- Placement with a rescue organization if available

If these options are not available, the shelter may decide to euthanize the animal in question.

### Reporting Bites & Scratches

You are required to tell a manager, veterinarian or vet assistant if you are injured while volunteering.

Any animal bite to a human requires immediate medical attention. Bacteria present in animals' mouths, such as Pasteurella, can enter the person's blood stream and cause serious damage if not treated. If you are bitten, cleanse the wound thoroughly with hot water and soap, immediately tell the Clinic Manager, and notify the Volunteer Manager; on weekends, tell a vet assistant.

If you are scratched by a cat or dog, thoroughly clean the area with hot water and soap. Then tell the Clinic Manager (on the weekends, tell a vet assistant) that you have been scratched.

## Conclusion

We greatly appreciate the attention, comfort, and care you will be giving the animals as well as for the assistance you will provide to the clinic staff. Both the animals and staff appreciate your efforts on their behalf.

**Thank You for choosing to volunteer in the Clinic Patient Care Program!**

