



# THE ANTI-CRUELTY SOCIETY

A Commitment to Caring *Since 1899*

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**CLINIC PATIENT CARE MANUAL**

## 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's spay/neuter department. Clinic Patient Care volunteers provide attention, socialization, comfort, and care to sick and injured animals who are housed in the clinic holding rooms as well as those who are undergoing spay/neuter surgeries that day.

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 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.

Clinic Patient Care volunteer responsibilities include:

- 1) Reducing Animal Stress
- 2) Providing Staff Support
- 3) Tending to Basic Needs
- 4) Gathering Information

### **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.

Animals in the Clinic may be experiencing stress as a result of surgery, illness, or simply being confined to an unfamiliar environment. For this reason it is vital that volunteers follow the policies and procedures that are outlined in this manual. It is also important to read an animal's body language before handling them. If an animal 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 posture.

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

The Clinic serves animals undergoing spay/neuter surgeries, shelter animals and pets who 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 out-of-state transfers waiting for their physical exam. The Clinic has six to seven veterinarians on staff and additional vet technicians and assistants who provide treatments throughout the building.

The veterinary assistants feed 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 9:00 am and 7:00 pm
- Weekends between 9:30 am and 7:00 pm

### **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**

Volunteers work in a variety of spaces within the spay/neuter clinic area. Your program trainer will review each room with you as well as specific space protocols that you will need to follow.

If a cat has an Upper Respiratory Infection, or a dog has kennel cough, they will be housed in the clinic's isolation room. Volunteers should only enter these spaces if directed by staff since both illnesses are highly contagious. Volunteers should also remain aware of any signage that may be present on a room's door in case that space is under specialized quarantine.

As in the shelter, please be sure to read any kennel notes that are posted and any signs posted on any of the room doors. Any cages marked with "staff only," "wear gloves," "may bite," "hair loss," are strictly off-limits to volunteers. Please do not go into those cages or handle those animals in any way.

### **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 a clean volunteer apron or lab coat.
  - lab coats are provided in the Volunteer Services office.
  - When you are done with the lab coat please place it in the hamper within the Volunteer Services office for staff to properly disinfect and wash.
- Wear closed toe, rubber soled shoes. Sandals are not allowed.
- Wear your volunteer ID badge and make sure it is visible.

### **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 Clinic > Clinic 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 apron or lab coat in the dirty laundry hamper in the Volunteer Services office.
- 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.

# VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

## 1) Reduce Animal Stress

### The Importance of Stress Reduction

The general shelter environment is filled with stressors for both cats and dogs. Stress responses that are ongoing become problematic as they directly impact an animal's well-being and health, which is why regular socialization and environment management are so important. Reducing and minimizing stress in the shelter is the most critical component of maintaining an animal's wellness.

Different common shelter stressors include:

- **Sounds:** Common shelter noises like barking, kennels opening/closing create loud spaces
- **Smells:** Various smells from disinfectants and cleaning agents can cause irritation
- **Sights:** Due to their different vision acuity animals become stressed during rapid and sudden movements creating unexpected reactions
- **Vibrations:** Can be caused by cleaning hoses and general building use and cause stress
- **Pheromones:** Fear pheromones from neighboring animals amplify anxiety
- **Unfamiliarity:** Animals become stressed when their surroundings are unfamiliar or in a constant state of change.
- **Improper Handling:** Handling a cat or dog against their will or handling an animal brusquely

There's a variety of ways staff and volunteers can work together to reduce a cat or dog's stress levels during their stay in the clinic. These include:

- **Spot-cleaning:** Instead of doing several deep cleanings each day many departments now employ the use of regular spot-cleaning instead. Spot cleaning leaves cage accessories intact to provide animals with familiar smells within their surroundings. Only soiled items are removed from the kennel.
- **Regular Socialization:** 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 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. Volunteers can walk dogs, or spend time with them outside the cage (with vet or vet tech approval. Volunteers should make sure each animal has appropriate toys for mental stimulation. Additional enrichment and kennel-based exercise suggestions can be found later in this manual.
- **Provide a Hiding Spot:** All cats should be provided with some kind of hiding spot to help them alleviate stress. Dogs who are exhibiting signs of stress can have a towel placed over their cage to create added privacy.
- **Proper Handling:** Volunteers should carefully observe an animal's body language and cues to ensure the animal is not being stressed during handling. Cats in particular become stressed when being picked up so volunteers should use caution. Always use the minimum amount of force or restraint necessary. Handle animals gently and with patience. Speak to the animal with a soft, gently voice before reaching into a cage or carrier. For really scared animals ask for a staff member's assistance.

- **A Pet's Perspective:** Another useful tool to volunteers and staff is visualizing an animal's experience from their perspective. If an cat or dog seems stressed, attempt to identify the source of their anxiety by taking inventory of sounds, vibrations, smells, sights and room temperature.

## 2) Provide Staff Support

Clinic Patient Care volunteers act as an extra set of eyes and hands for the clinic staff and patients. Staff rely on volunteer help to maintain a healthy living environment for animals living in the clinic long-term.

Ways in which volunteers provide staff support include:

- Volunteers maintain logs summarizing observations of stool, urine, sneezing, and eating for staff reference.
- 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 exercise cats recovering from injuries, as directed.

Additional tasks that volunteers can help with include:

- Refreshing empty cages of dogs and cats who are currently undergoing surgery so that the animals are not returned to a soiled cage.
- Restocking the newspapers in the cat and dog rooms.
- Placing dirty water bowls in dishwasher for disinfection.
- Cleaning empty cages in the dog room.
- Emptying the trash and transporting upstairs using the lift. Areas such as the pre/post operative rooms can be very busy at times so please use your best judgment.
- Refilling towel bins and litter as needed.
- 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.
- Refreshing the towel supply so there is an ample supply for both volunteers and staff.

## 3) Tend to Basic Needs

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 when necessary:

- Cleaning and refreshing litter boxes.
- Replacing soiled liner paper.
- Spot-cleaning cages with provided disinfectant.
- Providing each animal with clean bedding,/towels and toys.
- Providing fresh water to animals (except to spay/neuter patients - check with vet techs if unsure).
  - 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.
- Grooming dogs, brushing cats and trimming cat claws.
- Walk housebroken dogs in the courtyard (with approval).
- Help transfer animals to Cat and Dog Adopts (with approval), including filling out required transfer papers.

#### 4) Gather Information

Clinic Patient Care volunteers are required to fill out the “Daily Information Form” during each visit. 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 each individual room in an accordion style filer. 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.

## GENERAL CLINIC POLICIES

### Cleaning Kennels

One of the most practical ways in which a volunteer can assist staff is by helping to spot-clean or refresh kennels. Below are the basic guidelines for how to correctly clean in the clinic.

If you would like to assist the staff in cage cleaning please use the provided spray bottle with the pre-mixed solution. Wear gloves when using this disinfectant and wash your skin well afterwards. When spot-cleaning it is important to minimize handling and keep animals in their cages to reduce stress.

### How to Spot Clean

- Use one hand to occupy or block the pet’s passage and the other hand to remove soiled items (litter pan, bedding, water bowl, toys, etc).
  - If you’re working with a large or rambunctious dog, connect with staff on where to safely house the dog while spot-cleaning their cage.
- For cats: Using the cage liners or newspaper, sweep all debris into the litter pan, then close the cage door.

- For dogs: Refresh the cage liner or newspaper if soiled.
- Check off treatment (or observation sheets) and share any significant findings with staff
- Rinse water bowl and have items ready to put back in cage
- Place clean paper, blankets, water bowl and litter pan in cage. If you removed toys from any cage, that toy must be placed back with that cat. If you forget who the toy belonged to it must be properly disinfected before being given to another animal.
- Close cage door, disinfect gloved hands, and move onto next cage.

**Cage Set-Up:** To maintain consistency throughout the clinic, and to provide animals with as comfortable a space as possible, please follow these guidelines for how to set-up each animal's kennel:

- Left side: The animal's "living room" to include food and water bowls, toys and bedding. If available, a hiding space for the cat.
- Right side: The animal's "bathroom." For cats this should include their litter box.

**Refreshing Kennels:** If a cat's litter box needs changing ask the vet tech if you may change it before proceeding.

- 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.

If you want to change the newspaper in a dog's cage ask a vet assistant first in case a fecal sample is needed. Then, record the stool type on the volunteer form. If there are urine stains on the paper, record them on the volunteer form as well.

**Additional Cleaning Notes:** Note that if an animal has excessively soiled their kennel with vomit, feces or discharge a thorough cleaning will be necessary. Check in with a staff member before beginning such an intensive cleaning. If staff give you permission, place the cat in a carrier from Intake, or a dog into a separate run, and wipe their cage with one part bleach to 10 parts cool water. Paper the cage, refresh water bowl and return kennel accessories. Place used cat carriers into the dunk tank in the Intake department before re-use.

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 disinfecting it. 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.

Be sure that each animal's cage is securely latched when you close the door. In the event an animal gets out of the cage, make every attempt to immediately retrieve them (if safe and appropriate) and place them back in their 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. Intake staff are specially trained to do so.

**Bleach Safety:** Bleach must be applied to a clean surface to be effective. Household bleach should be freshly dilute 1:32 (1/2 cup per gallon). Correct dilution is very important. Too weak of a solution makes

it ineffective at disinfection while too strong of a mix is overly corrosive and can be dangerous to both animals and people. For this reason it is important to check in with a staff member before mixing any solution that may contain bleach. Also note that bleach and watchdog should never be mixed. Do not use containers that contained watchdog for mixing bleach solution.

### **Basic 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)

Volunteers are asked to follow the basic hygiene guidelines below to prevent the spread of germs and pathogens throughout the clinic and beyond.

- **Thorough hand washing:** Volunteers should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and hot water after every animal encounter or after handling something that came in contact with an animal. Rubbing your hands together for at least 10 seconds, and then putting on a new pair of gloves, is a good basic practice. The longer your contact time with soap, the more thorough the hand washing.
- **Minimize Clothing Contact:** If you are working with a dog or cat that sneezes and sprays mucus on your gown, apron or lab coat, change in to a clean top before working with another animal.
- **Protecting Personal Pets:** 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 volunteers bring a change of clothes to the Society and change here before leaving. Other volunteers keep a bag at their door and use it to stow shoes and clothes as they return home. In addition to bringing a change of clothes volunteers should also ensure their personal pets are up-to-date on all their vaccinations before you begin volunteering anywhere in the organization.
- **Segregating Supplies:** Many diseases and parasites are passed through stool which is why proper supply segregation is important. 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. Please minimize the transfer of items from room to room to help reduce the spread of infections. Some transfer of supplies such as litter may be unavoidable.

### **Feeding Animals**

Volunteers are asked not to feed clinic animals unless special permission is obtained. 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.

**Social Eaters:** There may be cats in the clinic rooms who are stressed and will not eat when alone. To identify a social eater look into the kennels to see which cats have not touched their food. Then, follow the classical conditioning steps as outlined above to socialize these cats in-cage to encourage them to eat. Do not introduce any new food into the kennel, unless explicitly directed to do so by staff.

Some cats will eat more of their servings of moist cat food if you "mound" the leftover moist food back into the center of the food tray. With your fingers or a spoon, simply scoop the leftover food back into the center of the food tray. Not only do the cats eat more, but you are having a social interaction with them.

## ADDITIONAL 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.
- Animals who are strictly off limits due to health or behavior.

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 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 are checking in for the day.

### Socialization Activities

Volunteers should strive to perform enrichment activities with dogs and cats who are being housed in the clinic to provide mental stimulation for these pets. Focus on giving the animals attention in their cage when possible.

**Working with Shy Cats:** There is bound to be a time when a cat is not comfortable within or exiting their cage. In this case, there are several things that you can do to make the cat more at ease.

First, turn sideways and stand or crouch by the cage. Being sideways ensures you will not end up leaning into the cage which could overwhelm the cat. You may extend your hand toward the cat, but should stop two or three inches away. This is an invitation to the cat and will let you know if the cat is interested in meeting you.

- If the cat leans forward to sniff and doesn't move away, it is likely fine for you to gently pet the top of the cat's head, scratch its chin or softly rub its cheek. If the cat enjoys this, you can pull

his/her hand back a few inches to attempt to lure the cat forward for more attention. If the cat comes forward or becomes more active in the cage, you should spend another minute petting and talking to the cat.

- If the cat retreats, you shouldn't reach farther back to pet the cat, but wiggle your fingers and encourage the cat to return to the front of the cage for more attention. Also, watch for signs that indicate the cat is becoming over-stimulated and stop petting if need be.
- If the cat does not accept the invitation for attention, entice the cat to play using a straw, pipe cleaner or pencil (move it slowly back and forth on or under the paper or blanket a few inches away from the cat; if the cat watches it but doesn't paw at it, move the item up the wall of the cage or across the top of the cat's hiding box if it is under one). You may use a wand toy to use, but begin with the stick end and not the toy end. Again, if the cat seems to be interested but isn't playing, offer the toy end (a Cat Charmer is often the most successful toy) but move it above and do not flick or throw the toy at the cat.

Please do not remove a shy cat and do not succumb to pressure from staff or volunteers to remove a shy cat that is not ready to come out of their cage. Forcing a cat in this situation will only make it more fearful and more difficult for personnel and future visitors.

**Reward Training Out of Kennel with Dogs:** When removing a dog for a walk or for out of kennel socialization, be sure to follow the following steps to reinforce polite behavior. Remember that clinic dogs are eventually transferred to the adoption room, and that you have an opportunity to work on their etiquette while they are undergoing treatment.

Help dogs practice appropriate behavior when people approach and open kennel doors by doing the following:

- Carry a leash each time you approach a kennel, whether or not you plan to use it, to aid in desensitization.
- Wait for the dog to sit (or stand calmly) before opening the kennel door. If the dog jumps up as you are lifting the door latch, stop and wait for calm, polite behavior before proceeding. Stop and wait (closing the kennel door if needed) as many times as necessary, every step of the way, until the dog remains calm while you open the door.
- Do not push the dog aside with your arm or leg.
- Do not open the door while they are jumping up, pushing to get past you, or barking.
- Wait for the dog to sit or stand calmly before interacting with them in any way. When they do exhibit polite behavior, reward with a "yes." Handle the leash, wait for calm, reward again. Close the kennel, and reward for continued polite behavior.
- Repeat this process multiple times in a session, waiting for politeness at EVERY STEP, without taking dog out of kennel.

Help dogs learn to exit their kennel calmly and politely.

- Follow all the above steps.
- Wait for polite behavior after the dog is leashed and before inviting dog to exit kennel. The extra time it takes to wait for polite behavior will pay off in the long run.
- Do not reward impolite behavior such as barking or jumping by allowing a dog to come out of the kennel when presenting these behaviors.
- Wait for some degree of politeness before moving forward through the doors and into the hallway.

Help dogs learn polite behavior on leash.

- Say “yes” when the dog offers any 'adoptable' behavior, such as eye contact, sit, loose leash, quiet, four paws on floor, or any other polite behavior.
- Use appropriate leash management and reinforcement to ensure success and prevent undesirable behavior (eg: stand on leash and reward four paws on the floor to prevent jumping).
- Remove and relocate a dog from any situation where they are too stimulated or distracted to experience success.

**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 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.

**Dealing with Leash Chewers:** Some dogs get overly excited when coming out of their kennels. In an effort to expend this excited energy dogs may begin to grab or chew on the leash. If a dog does this, do not stop and attempt to get the leash out of the dog's mouth or otherwise give the dog any attention. Often, as soon as you leave the adoption room and all of the stimulation it holds, the dog will drop the leash on their own. If the dog doesn't drop the leash, ask him to sit. If he knows what that means he will hopefully comply which will cause him to either drop the leash or, at least, have more self-control so you can then get the leash out of his mouth. Another option is to show the dog a toy and “trade” the leash for the toy.

If there is a dog that you know gets mouthy when coming out of the kennel then be prepared before taking him out. Have a toy (a tug toy or rope bone is ideal) handy. As soon as the leash is on the dog offer him the toy. Continue to hold one end as he bites the other and walk him straight out of the room.

**Difficulty Returning a Pet to their Kennel:** At times volunteers may encounter an animal who does not want to return to their kennel with ease. In such cases, volunteers are encouraged to try the tips below:

- Lure the animal into the kennel using a toy. Gently move the pet in the direction of the kennel. Once at the kennel toss the toy toward the back corner, allowing the pet to follow them. If it's a dog, use your body to block the kennel door and slowly slip the leash off.
- When all else fails ask for a staff member for assistance.

## Grooming Animals

Volunteers are encouraged to assist staff in providing basic grooming to animals being housed in the clinic. Do note that under no circumstance should a volunteer 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.

**Brushing:** When brushing or combing most animals you should move your tool in the same direction as the hair growth. When the cat or dog has long hair they need to be “back brushed.” To do this, brush with the hair, then against the hair, and then back with the hair. This way you can brush out mats and make sure they don’t have tangles.

Always remove the hair from the tools you’ve used and disinfect them when finished.

**Trimming Nails:** When working with a cat check to see if their nails need trimming. If you do not feel comfortable trimming a particular cat’s nails, but see that it is needed, notify another volunteer or staff member for assistance. In addition, only trim nails when it is quiet and calm in the room as cats can become easily stressed during times of high activity, making it difficult to trim.

Volunteers should make it daily practice to touch and handle cat’s paws. This will desensitize them to being touched – making nail trimmings much easier for volunteers, staff, and future adopters. Do not attempt to trim a dog’s nails. This is a tricky procedure, and if done incorrectly, it can injure the dog.

## 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.

## 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.

If you should have any questions regarding volunteering within the Clinic Patient Care program, please connect with a member of the Volunteer Services or Clinic team for assistance.

On behalf of the animals and staff, thank you for choosing to volunteer in the Clinic Patient Care Program! We are excited to have you on this special team!



