



THE ANTI-CRUELTY SOCIETY

A Commitment to Caring *Since 1899*



Volunteer Services Department

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PHYSICAL EXAM VOLUNTEER MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Physical Exam volunteer program!

As a Physical Examinations (PE) volunteer, you will have the opportunity to assist the veterinarians in the examination of animals who are new arrivals to The Anti-Cruelty Society. With your support our veterinary team can process more animals in less time, making each animal's stay at the shelter shorter. Your assistance helps us help more animals than ever before!

Program Objective

The purpose of the Physical Exam program is to bring vital assistance to the veterinarians who perform examinations on weekends. PE volunteers provide support to staff while acting as animal handlers during the exams themselves. In addition, volunteers help to gather important insights into an animal's behavior while helping each pet acclimate to the stressful shelter environment.

Physical Exam volunteer responsibilities include:

- 1) Provide Veterinarians with Support
- 2) Move Animals To & From Clinic
- 3) Handle Animals During Exams

Volunteer Training

Volunteers who express interest in volunteering for the Physical Examination program should have completed at least 25 hours in a Level 1 hands-on animal program prior to signing up for training. Your experience working with adoptable shelter animals will help prepare you for the advanced handling necessary to successfully work in the PE program.

Physical Examination Training Steps:

1. Schedule your Physical Exam volunteer training with Volunteer Services
2. Read the Physical Exam volunteer manual
3. Review the following videos, available on the [Volunteer Resources](#) page of The Anti-Cruelty Society website, to help you prepare for volunteering in this program:
 - [Body Language & Behavior - Cats](#)
 - [Body Language & Behavior - Dogs](#)
 - [DIY Leash Harness Tutorial](#)
 - [Properly Leashing a Large Dog](#)
 - [Leashing a Small Nervous Dog](#)
 - [Harnessing a Dog](#)
 - [Leashing a Rambunctious Dog](#)
 - [Zoonotic Diseases](#)
 - [Ectoparasites](#)
4. Attend In-Shelter PE training
5. Following your training session your Volunteer Trainer will schedule a solo session for you to complete. This last step in training will give you an opportunity to test drive the

program and see if it's a good fit. Following your solo session a member of the Volunteer Services team will contact you to see how the session went.

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.

Animals who are new arrivals may be experiencing stress as a result of their recent relinquishment or transfer from another organization. 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 new arrivals may need a longer time period to adjust to the shelter environment – which is why it's incredibly important that volunteers pay attention to an animal's overall body language.

Adhering to the program procedures will assist you with your PE 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. Failure to follow volunteer guidelines may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Ask Questions

If you have any questions while volunteering, it is important to ask. If unsure of a policy or procedure ask a staff member or other volunteer for help. A lot is covered during the training process and you will learn more with each time you volunteer, it is important to know and learn the correct answers so no mistakes are made and incorrect information is not provided to others.

Please contact the Volunteer Services department or your PE trainer if you encounter a situation needing clarification or resolution.

GETTING STARTED

When You Can Volunteer

PE volunteer shifts take place on Saturday and Sundays from 10am- 2pm.

During the week specific hours are determined by the veterinarian's availability and this is difficult to predict in advance. The best plan is to come in and let the vet know you are available to do PEs and proceed to work in another volunteer program that you have already trained for. Please be aware that there will be weekdays that PEs are not performed due to the availability of the veterinarians.

Where You Can Volunteer

PE volunteers work throughout the clinic and holding rooms. When you arrive to begin your PE shift, meet fellow volunteers and the veterinarian in the pharmacy area of the clinic. The

veterinarian will give you further instruction on which animals he/she wants to work with that day.

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.

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 if you want an added layer of protection.
 - 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.

Safety

If at any time an animal is showing signs of aggression or excessive fear and you are not comfortable, do not attempt to get the animal out of their kennel. Notify the vet and let him or her determine if the animal needs more time to adjust to the shelter environment prior to their PE.

If at any time an animal bites you, you must report the bite immediately to the veterinarian or manager on duty.

Before you Volunteer:

PE volunteers are required to pre-schedule their shifts using the volunteer scheduling tool at www.myvolunteerpage.com. Ideally there should be no less than 2, and no more than 3 PE volunteers for any given shift.

If you must cancel a shift that you have already signed up for, please remove your name from the schedule as soon as possible so that other volunteers will have the opportunity to sign up and the shift can be adequately covered. If your availability only allows you to come in on a specific day, and that day already has 3 volunteers scheduled, consider signing up for another upcoming weekend or your Level 1 program.

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.
- Introduce yourself at the beginning of your shift to other volunteers, clinic and shelter staff whom you speak and work with. There are a large number of volunteers, introducing yourself will help everyone get to know one another.

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. Log your hours under Clinic> Clinic Patient Care.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

1) Provide Veterinarian Support

Physical Examination volunteers' main responsibility is to provide veterinarians with the support they need to effectively and efficiently perform physical examinations on as many new arrivals as possible.

Each veterinarian that you will be working with has a different method and style of conducting PEs. For this reason it's important for volunteers to listen to each vet's specific instructions, even if they vary from those of a different veterinarian. If in doubt about a specific procedure or method, ask that day's veterinarian for clarification.

2) Bring Animals To & From the Clinic

PE volunteers spend a good portion of their shift moving animals from holding rooms to the clinic and back. PE volunteers should familiarize themselves with the layout of the building and location of the various animal holding spaces.

Volunteers should note that there are elevators available throughout the building which you are welcome to use when transporting animals to and from the clinic space. Do note that some of the publically accessible elevators may be turned off during your shift for security reasons. If in doubt of the best route to take between the clinic and a holding room ask the veterinarian or an experience PE volunteer.

Animal Locations

Dogs and cats ready for PE may be located in any of the following areas: The Adoption Center, Holding rooms and Cat or Dog Rehab. Be sure to ask the veterinarian which area he or she would like you transport animals from. Dogs are examined in the clinic's pharmacy area, while cats are primarily examined in the Cat Holding kitchen which is between Cat Holding 1 and 2.

Determining When an Animal is Eligible for PE

The veterinarian, and/or volunteers in conjunction with the veterinarian, will determine which animals are ready for their PE. An animal must be eating regularly, having normal urine and stool and not be vomiting prior to PE. In most instances, the veterinarian or an experienced volunteer will have indicated which animals are ready. If you are unsure of which animals are ready please ask the veterinarian or another volunteer for assistance.

Moving an Animal to the Clinic

Once you have located a dog or cat who is ready for their exam, place a “PE in Progress” card in their kennel card holder in place of the kennel card which you will take with you. This will alert staff to hold this kennel open for the return of the animal and avoid any confusion as to where the pet may be. Cats should be placed in carriers when being transported between rooms. Dogs should be leashed at all times. Once the animal is secured proceed to the pharmacy area in the clinic. If a dog is uncomfortable using the stairs, use the elevator instead.

For safety and to help minimize the spread of disease, **do not allow dogs to make contact with other dogs** when walking them through the building. Ask a staff member or volunteer to shorten the leash to prevent the dogs from touching one another as you walk past. All dogs need to be leashed even if you intend to carry them.

Dogs urinate and defecate all the time around the shelter, clinic and in their cage. If this happens while you have a dog out finish what you are doing and come back to make sure someone has cleaned up the mess. This helps us maintain a clean, safe environment for both people and animals.

PE volunteers should also note that the shelter may be open to the public during the hours PE's are conducted and animals are routinely moved through public areas. Volunteers should never allow visitors to meet or handle an animal that is being transferred to or from the clinic. Until the exam is complete and the test results are in, it may not be known if the animal will be available for adoption. If it does not pass the exam, it may be euthanized.

Moving the Animal from the Clinic

Volunteers should take the kennel card and a “Waiting for Test Results” sign from the veterinarian, who will inform the volunteer if the animal will go back to the kennel they came from or to an open kennel in one of the adoption rooms.

When returning a cat or dog to their original kennel, make sure it is the same kennel they were originally taken from. This will help to limit the spread of illness. PE volunteers will rarely bring cats to the cat adoption room. Staff will transfer them to the appropriate area once test results are recorded and space becomes available.

If a dog will be going to an adoption room locate an available kennel of appropriate size. An available kennel will not already have a kennel card on it (check both sides) and should have been cleaned and sanitized by shelter staff. Note the kennel number and tell the vet the number

so the animal's new location can be updated in the computer system. Place the kennel card in the plastic card holder with the "Waiting for Test Results" sign in front of the card so it can be seen easily. Obtain a bowl for water and fill it. Puppies and small dogs should be placed in smaller cages lined with newspapers.

3) Handle Animals During Exams

Responsibilities During a Cat's Physical Exam

Cat physical exams are conducted in the Cat Holding kitchen which is located between the cat holding 1 and 2. Take a cat from their cage along with the kennel card and bring both to the kitchen. Cats should be lifted from their cage by holding on to the scruff or back of their neck and beneath the cat to support its weight. Never lift a cat by its scruff.

Hand the kennel card to the vet for review and place the cat on the scale for a weight and then onto the exam table. The vet will perform a visual and tactile exam and listen to the cat's heart. While the vet is listening to the heart, try to stop the cat from purring if necessary. Techniques to stopping a cat's purring include, briefly plugging a nostril(s), waving a cotton ball soaked with alcohol or turning on water.

If no serious problems have been detected, blood will be drawn for a feline leukemia test and a rabies vaccination will be administered. Scruff and place the cat on its side on the table with one hand. Stretch the cat up and outward, to keep the front paws away from the vet. With your other hand, hold the cat's upper back leg and tail and press into the middle of the cat's thigh on the lower leg with your pinkie finger (*see images 4-6 above*). This occludes the vein for the vet to draw blood. Following the blood draw, the rear leg vein needs to be held off at the puncture site for at least 30 seconds if possible as it may continue to bleed, especially in kittens.

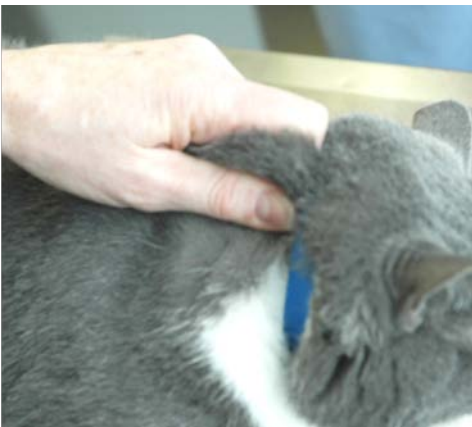


Image 4: "Scruffing" cat for restraint



Image 5: Volunteer (right) holding cat's foot and tail while applying pressure to hold off cat's vein



Image 6: Veterinarian (front) drawing blood as volunteer holds off vein and restrains cat

Responsibilities During a Dog's Physical Exam

When the vet is ready, enter the PE area, give the kennel card to the vet and walk the dog onto the scale for a weight.

When lifting a dog onto the examining table, place one arm under the dog's abdomen and the other under its neck. This places most of the dog's weight into your arms and prevents you from losing your grip should it start to wiggle. If a dog weighs more than you can comfortably lift, ask for assistance. Larger dogs will probably be examined at floor level. Ask for the vet's preference.

First, the veterinarian will perform a visual and tactile exam and listen to the heart. While using the stethoscope, volunteers should be silent. If the dog is panting, gently reach up and hold the mouth shut (because the heartbeat is difficult to hear when a dog pants).

Next, if no serious problems have been detected, it will be time to draw a blood sample for a heartworm test and administer vaccinations. Reach under the dog's neck with your right arm, taking hold of his head at the broadest part, near the ear. Draw your right hand up behind your neck, thereby anchoring your hand (encircling the dog's head and anchoring your grip will prevent the dog from being able to snap at either you or the vet). Lean over the dog's back with your upper body and reach over into his left elbow with your hand to hold off a vein. Reach gently into the inner part of the dog's elbow, press down firmly and rotate your hand outward.

During this entire process, keep your hands out of reach of the animal's mouth in case it should snap in response to pain and **if at anytime during this process, you feel yourself losing your grip on the dog, alert the vet immediately.** Do not let go of the dog without first warning everyone.

Once enough blood is drawn, the vet will instruct you to let go of your grip on the elbow, the needle will be withdrawn and with your thumb you will place pressure at the puncture point to prevent bleeding. If possible, try and apply pressure to this site for at least 30 seconds. If any bleeding does occur, you can clean up the dog's leg with a cotton ball and some hydrogen peroxide.

Next, the vet will administer a rabies vaccination during which you will repeat the head-lock restraint. The exam is then over. Lift the dog to the ground with one arm under the abdomen and the other under the neck and place him on the floor. For his safety, do not permit the dog to jump from the table.



Image 1: Head lock restraint for blood draw/vaccinations



Image 2: Volunteer (left) holding off a vein



Image 3: Veterinarian (front) drawing blood as volunteer holds off vein

CONCLUSION

Once you have completed your training for the Physical Exam volunteer program you are ready begin your work! Remember that you are required to pre-schedule your shifts in advance.

A lot of information was covered in this manual and in your training. Please do not hesitate to ask questions regarding policies and procedures pertaining to your volunteer experience. Volunteer Mentors and staff are available to help you when you need it!

Your efforts in the Physical Exam program significantly contribute to the successes The Anti-Cruelty Society continues to have with caring for companion animals.

The staff and animals thank you for all that you do!



FACES TO KNOW



Dr. Brian Dent
Clinic Medical Director
Veterinarian



Dr. John Shudell
Clinic Veterinarian



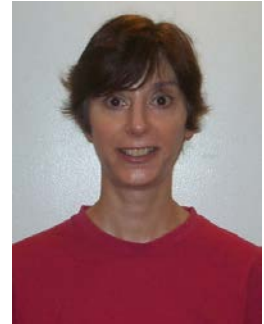
Angela John
Volunteer Trainer & Mentor



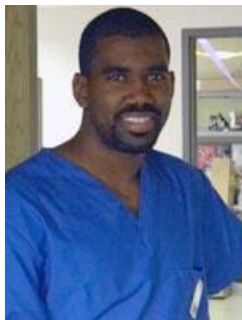
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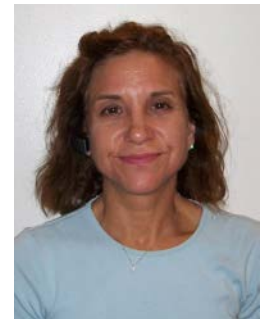
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