



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 the vet techs 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. In the morning/early afternoon (9-1p) the volunteers assist the vet techs by cleaning out the cages/refreshing the animals' living quarters and recording their findings in the daily log. In the afternoon (after 1p) Clinic Patient Care volunteers provide attention, socialization and comfort 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) Socialize Pet Patients
- 2) Provide Staff Support

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

Beginner Clinic Patient Care Volunteers may volunteer in the clinic on the weekends. If you want to assist vet techs with cleaning cages plan to arrive at 9a. If you want to socialize the animals in the clinic plan to arrive after 1p.

Once you have contributed 25 volunteer hours on the weekend and are confident in performing Clinic Patient Care duties you may email The Volunteer Coordinator if you wish to transition to Advanced Clinic Patient Care and volunteer during the weekdays. You'll then be connected to a CPC Mentor whom can assist you should you need direction on these very busy weekday shifts.

Advanced Clinic Patient Care Volunteers may volunteer in the clinic during the week and/or on the weekends. Weekday hours are 9a-7p (9a-1p for cleaning cages and 1p-7p for socializing animals). Weekend hours are 9a-5p (9a-1p for cleaning cages and 1p-5p for socializing animals).

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. There are no surgeries on holidays so both beginner and advanced Clinic Patient Care volunteers can volunteer on holidays.

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 (URI), 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 other Society logo top.
- Wear long pants (not shorts).
- Wear a clean volunteer apron.
- 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 in the Volunteer Office.
- Put on your apron and volunteer badge.
- Head to the clinic and check in with the veterinary technician 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.
- 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 Clinic Staff Support

Clinic Patient Care volunteers act as an extra set of eyes and hands for the clinic staff and patients. From 9a-1p you can help make the animal's environment clean and comfortable by assisting vet techs in their routine care. Volunteers are responsible for completing the following:

Cleaning Kennels (9a-1p)

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. Wear gloves and be sure to change gloves between each cage. 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 With an Animal in the Cage:

Upon working with a cage note where items are placed and place everything back where you found it.

- Introduce yourself to the animal. 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 or tie the dog while spot-cleaning their cage.
- Gather information from each cage you interact with and use the form that is located in the cat holding room in a file holder (a copy of this form can be found at the end of this manual). Fill out the top of the volunteer form with your name and date. Record your observations by referring to the animal's cage number. Record if an animal is sneezing repeatedly and if it has urinated and/or defecated. If you notice 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. Record if the animal has an untouched food dish.
- Specifically for cats: pull out the litter box, record the appropriate information on the volunteer sheet and replace the newspaper liner and litter. If the pan is too soiled use a new pan. If no litter was used (only torn up pieces of newspaper) replace with the same.
- Specifically for dogs: Remove newspaper and note appropriate information on the volunteer sheet.
- Place clean paper (two layers), blankets/towel, water bowl and litter pan in cage. If you removed toys from any cage, that toy must be placed back with that animal. If you forget who the toy belonged to it must be properly disinfected before using again. Please be sure each animal has a toy, even if there wasn't one in the cage originally. If the cat had a box in the cage be sure to return it to the cage.
- Rinse water bowl and add fresh water (if there is no water bowl check with a vet tech before adding one).
- Close cage door, change gloves, and move onto next cage.

How to Prepare an Empty Cage for a New Arrival:

- Remove all contents of the cage including loose food.
- Spray all surfaces (walls, floor and ceiling) with Accel and wipe with a damp washcloth.
- Spray Accel onto washcloth and clean both sides of the cage doors, being sure to check each rung as food can get stuck there.
- While the cage is drying, mix a bleach solution of ½ cup bleach to one gallon of water.
- When the cage is dry, using a washcloth wipe all surfaces with the bleach solution. Let dry.
- Finally, wipe all surfaces with a damp washcloth (water only).
- When cage is dry add two layers of newspaper.

Also note that bleach and Accel should never be mixed. Do not use containers that contained Accel for mixing bleach solution.

Additional Cleaning Notes: Note that if an animal has a bit of vomit, blood or feces on the walls of the cage you can use a washcloth to clean it (if needed you may spray a washcloth with a bit of Accel). 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, or dog in a separate run, and wipe their cage with bleach and 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. If you place an animal in a different cage to clean their current cage you will have to clean the substitute cage once the animal is placed back in the original cage.

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 mixed with water or Accel. Be sure to rinse thoroughly. 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.

2) Socialize Pet Patients

Clinic animals need socialization just like animals elsewhere in the shelter. From 1p-7p you can spend time performing this needed task in the clinic:

- If they have not yet eaten spend time encouraging them to eat (see “feeding animals” in future pages of this manual for more info).
- Groom dogs and brush cats (see “grooming animals” in future pages of this manual for more info).
- Spend face time with each animal in the cage. Go slow, remembering that they are sick. Volunteers should carefully observe an animal’s body language and cues to ensure the animal is not being stressed while socializing. Cats in particular become stressed easily so volunteers should use caution. Handle animals gently and with patience. Speak to the animal with a soft, gentle voice before reaching into a cage. Animals recovering from surgery should be left alone.

For Cats:

- Do not take the cat out of the cage. Only socialize cats while they are in the cage.
- 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 your 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 or pipe cleaner (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, 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 cats from their cages. We don’t want to spread disease.

For Dogs:

- With dogs do not allow them to wander about the room. They may be taken via leash for a walk through the clinic if permission has been received from a vet tech or, if the shelter is not yet open to the public, in the courtyard (again – with permission from a vet tech). Prevent contact between your dog and all other dogs. This reduces the exposure to infectious diseases and discourages aggressive behavior. Clean up after your dog if it defecates. Be sure to record the stool information on the volunteer form when you return to the clinic.
- 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. When polite behavior is exhibited, reward with a “yes” and move forward through the doors to 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.
- Remove and relocate a dog from any situation where they are too stimulated or distracted to experience success.
- For dogs that are not allowed out to the courtyard they may be walked in the clinic hallways 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. 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.

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.

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. 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.

****It should be noted that we do not give treats to dogs in the clinic unless approved by a vet tech first.****

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.
- Emptying the trash and transporting both trash and laundry 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.

GENERAL CLINIC POLICIES

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.”

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 apron change into 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.

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. 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. For dry food try gently shaking the food dish to initiate interest in the food. Not only do they eat more, but you are having a social interaction with them. Do not introduce any new food into the kennel unless explicitly directed to do so by staff.

Grooming Animals

Volunteer 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 cats 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. You should also check with a vet tech first as an animals scheduled for spay/neuter will have their nails trimmed while under anesthesia. If you have received permission from a vet tech, 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.

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 11am and 3pm) then go to the pre-op/post-op area and ask 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. They will help you locate a vet tech so you can receive instruction.

Laundry/Trash

Volunteers should help with clinic laundry and trash 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 via the lift.
- If a washer is free go ahead and load the dirty laundry into it.
- Follow the directions on the front of the washer or ask a trained volunteer or staff member for instructions.
- Trash can be brought up at the same time the dirty laundry is brought up. Be sure to separate the laundry and trash and bring the cart back down to the clinic.

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!



Cage No.	Patient Care					VOLUNTEER SHEET				Comments	
	Stool					Urine		Sneezing			
	None	Normal	Soft Form	Cow Pie	Diarrhea	Yes	No	Yes	No		

Name: _____
Date: _____