

# VOLUNTEER INTEREST INFORMATION



*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world;  
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for The Washington County Humane Society. We are providing some preliminary information for you so that you can make an informed decision whether or not to volunteer.

Volunteers are a vital part of our ability to care for and re-home animals in the shelter. While we know prospective volunteers' passion for animals lead them to our doors, it is the responsibility of the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that volunteers are the right fit for our organization and that they are placed in positions that are fun, safe, fulfilling, and also fill the needs of our animals. Our Volunteer Program is not a good fit for all animal lovers.

### **Volunteer Criteria**

- Volunteers must be at least 14 years of age to be involved in our After School Program.
- Volunteers must attend a Volunteer Orientation (approx. 1 hour) and any required training for that position.
- WCHS does not offer court-ordered community service hours.
- Generally, WCHS requires a commitment of at least 6 months of service with a minimum of a 1 ½- 2-hour shift per week. However, if you are volunteering for special events or non-shelter related positions, that requirement is waived.
- Volunteers are expected to work all scheduled shifts and contact the Volunteer Coordinator if they are unable to come in.
- Review your ability to fulfill your commitment. Now may not be the time. Are you in the middle of soccer season? Moving? Have a lot of family commitments? We understand...life happens. And that's okay, but please don't commit until your schedule opens up. We get excited about new volunteers, and it can then be a letdown for us when you can't fulfill your volunteer responsibilities.

### **Volunteer Process**

For this reason, we ask that prospective volunteers follow the steps below:

- Read this Volunteer Interest Information form to determine if volunteer service at WCHS is something you want to pursue.
- If you meet the criteria listed, complete a Volunteer Application and sign the Liability Release. If you are under the age of 18, a parent or guardian needs to sign the Release.

- Set up an interview with our Volunteer Coordinator. This interview will highlight your areas of interest along with your experiences and abilities. This is all in an effort to provide for the animal's needs and fit volunteers with the assignments they will enjoy, succeed in, and ultimately, continue to volunteer for.
- The Volunteer Coordinator will set up a training schedule for you.
- Be aware that volunteers have many opportunities to vary their assignments. Additional duties may be allowed as volunteer skill level increase, interest change and opportunities arise. If at any time you truly do not enjoy your assignment, we are happy to discuss options that will again return your service to being fun and fulfilling.

**Volunteer Positions Available:**

- Adoption Counseling
- After School Program
- Animal Photography
- Animal Photography Assistance
- Bakers
- Cat Socializers (FIP)
- Cleaners
- Community Outreach
- Dog Walkers
- Foster Care
- Grounds Upkeep (Gardening Gurus)
- Pet-A-Pet Program
- Reading with Rover Program
- Small Animal Socializers
- Special Events

Again, thank you for stepping forward to serve the Washington County community through our shelter. You will be doing a great service to the animals and we hope that you become a part of our "family."

**WCHS CONTACT INFORMATION**

**WCHS Contact Information**

WCHS Main Line	262-677-4388	<a href="http://www.wchspets.org">www.wchspets.org</a>
Volunteer Coordinator	262-677-0731	<a href="mailto:volunteer@wchspets.org">volunteer@wchspets.org</a>

## **Essential Job Requirements for Volunteer Animal Care/Animal Handling Positions**

Volunteer animal care/handling positions are any that involve working with companion cats and dogs. In addition to the basic job description for each position, the following is meant to indicate the essential physical, mental and emotional requirements for each of these positions:

### **Essential Physical Requirements:**

- Quick reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously (example: open cage door while handling animal).
- High level of manual dexterity to leash/harness animals, handle small tools and to properly groom animals.
- Ability to walk unaided on uneven and/or sometimes slippery surfaces.
- Ability to bend and squat in order to leash/harness and pick up animal.
- Ability to stand for significant periods of time while walking dogs, assisting the public with visits, or cleaning cages/kennels.
- Average vision with or without correction devices.
- Average sense of smell and touch in order to assess body condition of animals, and to note signs of illness or injury.
- Ability to hear (with or without corrective device) if animal is growling or making sounds indicating fear or pain.
- Ability to speak and effectively communicate verbally as well as in written form.
- Ability to maneuver well in tight spaces and react and move quickly in order to prevent dogs or cats from escaping (example: ability to quickly pursue and retrieve any cats or dogs who have escaped from a kennel or cage).
- Ability to handle and restrain animals of small to large size (up to 100 pounds) with caution and care. This requires average vision, hearing, steadiness of hands and body, quick reflexes, physical strength, and mental alertness.
- Capturing of loose and escaped animals with quick and quiet movements, and ability to use both hands simultaneously for capture.
- Must not have strong allergies to dogs, cats or other companion animals that can't be managed by medication, or to chemicals used in grooming or cleaning.
- Ability to cope with a very loud environment due to animal noises.
- Must have the ability to judge an animal's reaction and to change voice to a soft or strong, authoritative tone in order to calm a dog's response or to give commands.
- Ability to reach cabinets and cages at least six feet in height, using a step stool as needed.
- Ability to push carts and barrels of laundry; load and unload washer and dryer; fold clean laundry and put away, reaching shelves from ground level up to six feet, using a step stool as needed.
- Ability to wash dishes and put away in cabinets and drawers from ground level up to eight feet in height with use of step stool as needed.
- Possess immune defenses adequate to tolerate potential exposure to zoonotic diseases such as ringworm and mange.

**Essential Mental Requirements:**

- Ability to understand, remember and follow instructions and procedures.
- High level reading, writing, spelling and communication skills (example: understand words such as quarantine, euthanize and other common industry related terms).
- Possess problem solving capability.
- Ability to observe and evaluate response to handling for "matchmaking" purposes, as well as health and behavioral problems that are revealed during contact/interaction with animals.
- Must be aware of potentially dangerous situations when working with the animals, must be able to remain calm with animals that are upset; behave sensitively and confidently; show good judgment and act appropriately in these situations.

**Essential Emotional Requirements:**

- Ability to cope with unexpected animal behavior without assistance.
- Ability to cope with a highly emotionally-charged environment with some animals that are homeless, abandoned and/or abused, as well as the reality that some of the animals in our care may be euthanized.
- Ability to understand shelter policies and positions regarding companion animals and other key animal welfare issues and an ability and willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when interacting with the public or otherwise representing WCHS.

**Level of supervision:**

- Once trained, must be able to work with minimal supervision, yet must recognize limitations in knowledge and abilities, and ask for help when needed.
- Should be able to work independently for long periods of time, as well as work within a group atmosphere with other volunteers or staff.

**Other:**

- A fairly high level of experience and familiarity with cats and dogs is desirable.
- All animal care positions may involve some cleaning, and can involve the use of hazardous chemicals.

**This information is for you to keep for your reference. Please complete the attached volunteer application and return the application to the WCHS volunteer coordinator. Please indicate any reasonable accommodation(s) you may need in order to meet the essential requirements of your volunteer position at WCHS on your volunteer application.**

Washington County Humane Society  
3650 State Road 60, Slinger, WI 53086  
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