

# REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

S.O.P. # G-1

SUBJECT: Volunteer Program

DATE: December 10, 2008  
Amended: July 25, 2017

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and information for volunteers supporting the Regional Animal Shelter (R.A.S.) operation and special projects.

## II. POLICY

The volunteer program will be administered by the R.A.S. Manager and R.A.S. Employees; and staffed by individuals desiring to perform such a service. It will be the policy of R.A.S. to utilize qualified individuals for all possible tasks or functions, except those which legal requirements and/or elements of danger make such involvement impractical. Therefore, certain guidelines have been developed to ensure security, confidentiality, and safety.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. Qualifications for Volunteers

1. The volunteer program is designed to meet the needs of R.A.S. Volunteers must be willing and able to support the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the R.A.S.
2. Volunteers must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.
3. Younger individuals may volunteer with constant parental supervision with approval of the R.A.S. Manager.
4. Volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application listing personal information, skills, hours/days available, emergency contacts, etc.
5. Volunteers must submit a liability agreement, acknowledgement, and release form. Volunteers under eighteen (18) years of age must have parental signature on the release form, giving permission for the individual

to perform volunteer work.

6. Volunteers must indicate by signature that they have received a copy of the Volunteer Handbook and the policy governing volunteers.
7. Volunteers shall sign a statement attesting that they have never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect, or abandonment.
8. Volunteers shall have his/her own dogs and cats, 4 months old or older, vaccinated against rabies; and have current dog license from the county in which the volunteer lives.
9. Volunteers serve at the pleasure of R.A.S. and the Manager.

B. Placement of Volunteers

1. All entry-level volunteers will be paired with a staff member.
2. All entry-level volunteers will have the position of Animal Care Assistant or Office Assistant as their first assignment.
3. Future volunteer assignments will be based upon an application and selection process determined by the needs of R.A.S. and individual qualifications.
4. Volunteers must satisfactorily complete the specific training requirements of the assigned volunteer position.

C. Work-Schedule of Volunteers

1. The schedule for volunteers will remain flexible to accommodate regular employment and other commitments.
2. Volunteers must sign in and record their hours on a volunteer time sheet each time they provide volunteer service.

D. General Rules and Policies for Volunteers

1. Volunteers shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and abide by department policies and procedures for conduct in the workplace.
2. Volunteers must dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers working in the Shelter must wear long pants and

closed shoes for safety purposes.

3. Volunteers are representatives of R.A.S. and like paid employees are responsible for presenting a good image to the citizens and other community members who visit the shelter and therefore, must maintain a neat, clean appearance.
4. Volunteers shall maintain the confidentiality of R.A.S. activities. Volunteers may not discuss any of the civil or criminal transactions that take place at the shelter. These transactions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Animal impoundment
  - b. Prior animal owner's information
  - c. Complainant information
  - d. Criminal history
  - e. Court cases
5. All requests received by a volunteer for any such information shall immediately be directed to the R.A.S. Manager or designee.
6. Volunteers shall have access to all public areas of the R.A.S. Access to any other area of the R.A.S. shall be defined by the volunteer's current position description.
7. Volunteers shall comply with appropriate supervision and access levels as defined by each position description.
8. Volunteers shall only be permitted in the R.A.S. or on its grounds when a staff member is present.

#### E. Duties

Volunteer duties are defined by the position description for that job title. It is possible however for volunteers to hold more than one position.

#### F. Staff Conduct with Volunteers

The volunteer program is designed to allow the R.A.S. to benefit from the service of citizens who wish to make a contribution to the welfare of animals

and to the community. It allows the R.A.S. to achieve goals that would not be possible through the sole use of staff.

1. Staff shall treat volunteers with courtesy and answer their questions and inquiries in a professional, caring, and informative manner.
2. All staff shall cooperate with volunteers in the proper performance of their duties for the good of the R.A.S. and the welfare of the animals.
3. It shall be the duty of all staff to advise the R.A.S. Manager of any violation of policy or procedure by any volunteer.

G. Resignation/Termination of Volunteer

1. R.A.S. reserves the right to terminate any volunteer if:
  - a. It becomes apparent that the individual no longer meets the needs of the R.A.S.
  - b. The volunteer fails to abide by the rules and policies of the R.A.S.
  - c. The volunteer fails to follow instructions or otherwise impedes staff in the performance of their duties.
2. When a volunteer resigns or when he/she is terminated, the volunteer shall return any issued R.A.S. property to the R.A.S. Manager.
3. The R.A.S. Manager will conduct an exit interview with the volunteer after notification of a volunteer's intent to resign from the program. This interview will ascertain the volunteer's reasons for leaving the program and assist the R.A.S. Manager in improving the program when and where possible.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Animal Care Assistant**

Job Objective: To provide humane care for all Shelter animals.

Responsible to: Manager or Shelter Staff

Job Description: The duties of the Animal Care Assistants are varied and offer a great deal of contact with the animals. The primary duty of Animal Care Assistants is to make sure the animals are well cared for and comfortable. Responsibilities include:

- Cleaning cages and kennels.
- Providing food and water for the animals.
- Washing food and water bowls.
- Laundry, floor washing and general housekeeping.
- Other duties as assigned.

Experience necessary for this position includes volunteer orientation and animal handling training.

Qualifications and special skills required: Must have a deep love and respect for all animals. Must have the ability to remove animals from and return them to their cages and kennels. Must have the ability to follow exact instructions and work independently. Must have good physical endurance and willingness to do hard physical work.

Days and hours needed: Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Wednesday evenings until 6:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Holidays as scheduled

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Office Assistant**

Job Objective: To assist in the office and reception areas, receive animals and perform any other office duty as needed.

Responsible to: Manager or Shelter Staff

Job Description: Volunteers will follow up with citizens who have filed lost or found reports, follow up with adopters, check for potential matches in the adoption pet request file, pre-write adoption contracts for individuals finalizing adoptions, prepare adoption kits, and miscellaneous filing, copying and answering phones.

Qualifications and special skills required: Must have a deep love for all animals. Ability to work with the public courteously even under stressful situations; ability to follow directions; to communicate well; and to do a number of tasks at one time.

Experience necessary for this position includes customer service, volunteer orientation, and 2 to 4 hours hands-on training.

Days and hours needed: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Wednesday evening until 6:30 p.m.  
Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Adoption Counselor**

Job Objective: The goal of the R.A.S. adoption program is to promote successful adoptions of our placeable animals by matching the right animal to the right family. Volunteers in this position will assist to increase the number and quality of adoptions by helping people find the right pet.

Responsible to: Manager or Shelter Staff

Job Description:

- \* Explain the adoption procedures.
- \* Counsel potential adopters on expectations, animal behavior, care, etc.
- \* Assisting the public in selecting the appropriate pet for their lifestyle.
- \* Assist adopters with getting animals out for visitation/bonding, and answer questions.
- \* Review potential adopter's applications carefully to be sure they meet the R.A.S. adoption guidelines.
- \* Make sure adopters understand their responsibility of caring for an animal under State and County law.

Qualifications and special skills required: Must have a deep love and respect for all animals. Must have the ability to work well with the public – even under stressful situations; must communicate well; have the ability to follow directions and do many tasks at one time.

Experience necessary for this position includes customer service, volunteer orientation, animal handling training, and 2 to 4 hours hands-on training.

Days and hours needed: Monday through Friday 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Wednesday evening until 6:30 p.m.  
Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Animal Bather and Groomer**

Job Objective: To wash and groom Shelter animals. The better an animal looks and feels, the more adoptable it is. Washing an animal also gives it much needed extra one-on-one attention which can also help to make it more sociable.

Responsible to: Manager or Shelter Staff

Job Description: Duties include:

- Washing dogs and cats.
- Brushing dogs and cats.
- Clipping nails on both cats and dogs.
- Cleaning ears for both dogs and cats.
- Cleaning up grooming area after use.

These volunteers will be using the tub area at the Shelter for bathing. Volunteers are responsible for removing the animal from its kennel, maintaining control over the animal during bathing and grooming and putting the animal back in its kennel upon completion. Volunteers in this position must be able to lift heavy animals.

Qualifications: Volunteers must be exceptionally responsible and have a deep love and respect for animals. Volunteers must be gentle and patient when working with animals and be able to follow exact instructions.

Experience necessary for this position includes volunteer orientation, animal handling training, and 2 hours hands-on training.

Days and hours needed: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Dog Exerciser**

Job Objective: To provide much needed one-on-one attention and exercise for Shelter dogs. The more attention and activity the dogs receive, the happier they become, which better their chances for adoption.

Responsible to: Manager or Shelter Staff

Job Description: Volunteers will take identified dogs for walks around the Shelter or play in the designated fenced-in area which serves to exercise, socialize and keep dogs in good mental health during their stay at the Shelter. Exercisers will be trained in acceptable methods of basic command training (sit, stay, down.) Dog exercisers are responsible for leashing the dog, removing the dog from its kennel, maintaining complete control over the dog for the entire walk and putting the dog back in its kennel.

Qualifications: Volunteers must be exceptionally responsible and have a deep love and respect for dogs. Volunteers must prove to be gentle and patient when working with dogs and be able to follow instructions.

Experience necessary for this position includes volunteer orientation, animal handling training, and 2 hours hands-on training.

Days and hours needed: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Cat Comforter**

**Job Objective:** Volunteer cat comforters are responsible for helping to improve the quality of life for adoptable cats at the Shelter. They can visit with the cats and kittens to help socialize, care, comfort, pet, brush, or simply provide some “lap time.” This can make them more calm and comfortable in their environment, which in turn makes them more adoptable. Cat comforters are responsible for removing the cat from its cage, safe handling of the cat and putting the cat back in its cage.

**Responsible to:** Manager or Shelter Staff

**Job Description:** Brushing and playing with the cats; showing the cats to potential adopters; providing food or water as necessary.

**Qualifications:** A deep love and respect for cats; ability to work well with the public; ability to follow instructions.

**Experience needed for this position** includes volunteer orientation and animal handling, specifically feline behavior training, and 2 hours hands-on training.

**Days and hours needed:** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

## **REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER**

### **Volunteer Program – Special Events Volunteer**

**Job Objective:** Volunteers will assist Shelter staff with various events sponsored by Regional Animal Shelter such as adopt-a-thons, rabies clinics and educational programs.

**Responsible to:** Manager or Shelter Staff

**Job Description:** Assisting with coordination of event; assisting on event day; assisting with a variety of duties related to each event.

**Qualifications:** Must have ability to follow through; must be able to follow direction; must be able to work independently.

**Experience needed for this position** includes animal handling training, and 2 hours hands-on training, volunteer orientation.

**Days and hours needed:** Varies with event.

# Regional Animal Shelter

## Volunteer Application Form

(Please print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Other) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time/place to reach you? \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the Regional Animal Shelter's Volunteer Program?

\_\_\_\_\_

### I. Skills and Interest

1. Educational background: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Current occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Hobbies, skills, interests: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Previous volunteer experience:

5. Have you had any formal training in animal care or animal welfare? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, please describe:

6. Volunteer goal:  School credit  Resume enhancement

Court ordered/community diversion  Socialization

Contribution to community  Seasonal

Animal care and handling experience

## II. Preferences in Volunteering

1. To help us match you with assignments you enjoy, please indicate the types of volunteer activities that interest you. (check all that apply):

- Animal Care Assistant       Office Assistant  
 Adoption Counselor       Animal Bather and Groomer  
 Dog Exerciser       Cat Comforter  
 Special Events Volunteer

2. Are there specific tasks you are unable to perform due to physical limitations or personal preference?  No  Yes, explain:

3. Have you done any other volunteer work?:\_\_\_\_\_If so, please list:

4. Do you understand that some animals are euthanized at the facility?  
 No  Yes Will you have any problems volunteering knowing this?  No  Yes, explain:

## III. Availability

1. Days available:\_\_\_\_\_Times available:\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have reliable transportation for volunteer work?\_\_\_\_\_

3. Additional comments:\_\_\_\_\_

## IV. Background Verification

1. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense?  Yes  No  
Explain:\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever been charged with neglect, abuse, or assault?  
 Yes  No Explain:\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you ever worked or volunteered for an animal welfare organization such as S.P.C.A., P.E.T.A., Humane Society, etc.  
 Yes  No If yes, name of organization(s):\_\_\_\_\_

4. Please list two non-family references whom we might contact:

A: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

B: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please list all pets, livestock, or other animals that you or your household is responsible for:

**Required!**

Species/Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Rabies#: \_\_\_\_\_ License#: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add additional animals on the back of this page.

6. Our volunteer program requires the following screenings for all persons interested in volunteer positions. **(Does not apply for court ordered services.) Regional Animal Shelter requires all court ordered/community diversion services to provide documentation from the court referral source.**

Criminal Records Check:

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License #: \_\_\_\_\_

State of Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consent to the performance of the above screenings prior to placement?  Yes  No *Please note, your refusal to do so may exclude you from consideration for some or all types of volunteer activities with our organization.*

The following certification is required by the Code of Virginia 3.2-6548.

**I certify that I have never been convicted of any crime or misdemeanor involving animal cruelty, neglect, or abandonment.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## AGREEMENT, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AND GENERAL LIABILITY RELEASE

This agreement dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by and between the Regional Animal Shelter (hereinafter referred to as “RAS”), and the individual volunteer worker (hereinafter referred to as “Volunteer”), who’s name appears on the signature line below;

Whereas RAS and Volunteer each acknowledge and agree that there are certain inherent dangers and risks involved in the services provided at the Regional Animal Shelter, the parties do hereby agree to the following:

1. The parties acknowledge that the type of work performed at the shelter exposes the parties to the risk of zoonotic diseases, including but not limited to rabies infection. The parties further acknowledge that the RAS recommends to volunteers that pre-exposure rabies vaccination be obtained. The RAS cannot pay for the cost of the rabies vaccination. You, the Volunteer, should consult with your physician about receiving the rabies vaccination and its cost. The parties acknowledge that the volunteer cannot be mandated to have the rabies vaccination, but acknowledges that the RAS encourages the volunteer to have the rabies vaccination.
2. The parties acknowledge and agree that should the volunteer choose not to have the rabies vaccination performed, the volunteer does hereby release and waive all possible claims arising out of election to not receive the rabies vaccination, including but not limited to any and all medical bills, negligence claims, or any other legal actions arising out of refusal to obtain rabies vaccination.
3. The parties each acknowledge that there are other inherent risks in this line of work, including but not limited to bites, scratches and infection. **Volunteer is required to wear long pants and closed toe shoes while volunteering at the Shelter.** Volunteer does hereby release and waive any and all claims, including but not limited to legal and medical claims arising out of any such occurrence that results from volunteer work at or for the RAS.

It being the specific intent of this agreement, acknowledgement and release that in consideration of the services provided by the RAS and the opportunity for volunteer work with the RAS, that each volunteer will indemnify and hold harmless from any liability, actions, claims, and demands of every kind of nature whatsoever that the volunteer may have in connection with his/her participation, the County of King William, the King William County Board of Supervisors, the County of King & Queen, the King & Queen County Board of Supervisors, and all of their agents, employees, and staff.

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Volunteer Signature

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Manager, Regional Animal Shelter

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Print Name