



# Volunteer Manual

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# Welcome to Clarington Animal Shelter

Welcome to the Team!

It is with great pleasure to welcome you to our team of dedicated and passionate staff and volunteers. The Clarington Animal Shelter is a municipally owned and operated shelter. Our Animal Services Officers are friendly, caring individuals who are committed to making companion animals valued members of our community. It is through our team that we continue to educate our community on responsible pet ownership and promote adoptions to improve pet's quality of life.

The volunteer program at Clarington Animal Shelter offers a variety of opportunities to continue to improve adoptions and animal care. Through the course of your volunteer experience you will be able to learn new skills, create new friendships and build many human animal bonds.

Sincerely,  
The Staff at Clarington Animal Shelter

## **Volunteering at Clarington Animal Shelter**

Clarington Animal Shelter provides shelter and care to approximately 500 animals every year. The Shelter staff continuously strives to provide the best care possible. A Veterinarian is worked with on a regular basis and is scheduled for visits as required.

Your contribution as a volunteer will be an invaluable part of the Shelter's goals of enhancing the quality of life for animals. In addition to learning new skills and forming new relationships, you may:

- Foster an animal that has special needs. Many kittens are born and brought into Shelter. As kittens are more susceptible to disease, their life expectancy is lengthened when in a home environment.
- Take a dog for a walk. What dog wouldn't love to walk around all day?
- Socialize a cat or dog. Many animals brought into our care have had little or poor interactions with people or other pets. Having additional assistance with socializing increases the potential for re-homing.

## **General Volunteer Guidelines**

### **Definition of a “Volunteer”**

A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Clarington Animal Shelter. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by the Shelter prior to performing any task.

### **Role of Volunteer**

Volunteers are an integral part of our team and are essential in assisting with additional care for animals brought into our Shelter. Volunteers work directly to improve and promote animal adoptions, are a source for a nurturing atmosphere for animals requiring constant care, and provide additional socialization and exercise for animals.

### **Relationships with Staff**

Volunteers and Staff are equal partners in achieving the Shelter’s goals, with varying roles. Volunteers enhance the work of staff to achieve higher levels of care. This partnership is essential and each party must be respectful of and understand the abilities and roles each play. The day to day operations of the facility is the responsibility of the Animal Services Manager, who directs all staff and program volunteers. Volunteers shall follow all departmental policies and procedures as established by the Manager, or designate.

### **Rights of Volunteers**

While participating in Clarington’s Animal Services Volunteer Program each volunteer has the right to:

- Volunteer in a safe and healthy environment;
- Receive guidance and direction on tasks to be accomplished;
- Be trained for the position;
- Have access to the Municipality of Clarington policies and procedures relevant to duties being performed;
- Be exposed to varying experiences;
- Be heard and make suggestions; and
- Be recognized

## **Responsibilities of Volunteers**

To ensure the health and safety of our volunteers and animals, volunteers shall be responsible for:

- Work in a safe manner consistent with policies and procedures;
- Be reliable and committed;
- Respect and be courteous of the public, staff and peers;
- Follow and practice policies and procedures set out by the Shelter;
- Promote adoptions, improve quality of care and enhance lives of all animals in a humane and respectful manner;
- Treat all information as confidential;
- Be willing to learn, train and receive evaluation;
- Ask questions when unsure; and
- Only perform authorized tasks

## **Clarington Animal Shelter's Right and Responsibilities**

To ensure the success of the Clarington Animal Services Volunteer Program, Clarington Animal Shelter staff may:

- Assign and make volunteer positions;
- Review performance and evaluate suitability for volunteer roles;
- Expect volunteers to be reliable, punctual and perform tasks to best of their ability;
- Expect volunteers to abide by policies and procedures set out by the Shelter;
- Expect volunteers to act in a professional manner with public, staff and peers; and
- Release volunteers at the Municipality's discretion

To ensure health and safety of volunteers and animals Clarington Animal Shelter will:

- Provide training and direction;
- Provide a safe and healthy atmosphere free of harassment and violence;
- Make available policies and procedures;
- Supervise and support Volunteers in their role;
- Educate on risks and dangers within shelter atmosphere; and
- Ensure the rights of workers under the CUPE Local 74 and Municipality of Clarington Collective Agreement

### **Bites/Scratches/Injuries**

Volunteers are to interact with approved animals as determined by staff; as the safety of our volunteers is paramount. Even when following safe handling techniques and procedures there is a risk of being bitten, scratched or injured. Any bites, scratches or injuries shall be reported to Shelter Staff. Thoroughly wash and rinse any area that has been scratched or bitten and monitor for infection. All bites or scratches that have broken skin need to be reported to Durham Region Health Unit and a mandatory quarantine is placed on the animal.

Injuries suffered during the performance of your duties with the Shelter shall be reported to **staff immediately**. If required, first aid or medical treatment shall be received.

An Injury Report form shall be filled out for all bites or injuries.

### **Shelter Disease Prevention**

Volunteers will only enter approved areas as determined by staff. If volunteers are entering restricted areas all disease prevention policies shall be adhered to.

The most common transmission of infection in shelters is between foot paths and human contact. Volunteers shall ensure that hands or points of contact shall be washed or sanitized prior to handling another animal. Any carriers or blankets shall only be used once per animal.

There is a heightened risk of disease within a shelter, and therefore it is imperative that all volunteers follow all policies on disease prevention.

## **Dog walking**

As a volunteer socializing and walking dogs it is important to be focused and aware of changes in a dog's behaviour. As little history is known about the dogs within the Shelter's care, you must be aware that sudden changes in surroundings or encounters with unfamiliar people can significantly affect a dog's behaviour. All volunteers will be directed to which dogs may be handled and areas they may be taken. If there are any concerns with a dog's behaviour volunteers will be notified. Only volunteers with experience and training will be permitted to handle dogs that may need training. If for any reason a volunteer does not feel comfortable handling a specific dog, their concerns shall be communicated to the Shelter Staff so alternate arrangements may be made.

At no time shall dogs be unleashed or permitted in leash-free parks. A collar with appropriate tag will be worn to readily identify a dog.

## **Cat Socialization**

Staff will direct volunteers to which animals may be handled. Some cats will have had minimal contact and patience will be required by volunteers. It is important to watch for any warning signs that a cat may become agitated. A cat showing any signs of agitation shall be left as to not cause any added stress.

Removing cats from cages must be done with care and caution. When removing cats, ensure they are lifted and supported as to not cause injury to the cat or yourself. It is always recommended to have a carrier available if moving a cat from room to room.

## **Foster Care**

As a foster volunteer, animals with special needs will enter into your home. Animals that come into our care require a varying range of special needs. At times these animals may require continuous care and a watchful eye. As a foster, exceptional skills or experience are needed to ensure that the health of the animal does not become further compromised.

Foster parents are an integral part of a successful rehabilitation for shelter animals. It requires extreme dedication and compassion, and at times it can be difficult as bonds are always formed between the foster and the animal, making good-byes difficult.

A home visit will be conducted by an Animal Services Officer to ensure conditions will be met for the safety of the animal. Any owned animals must have current vaccinations and Rabies shots. All fostered animals will be kept in compliance with Clarington's Responsible Pet By-laws.

Medications, feed and day-to-day items will be supplied by the Shelter. Any additional purchases for the foster animal will be at the foster's expense. If items are required, the Animal Services Manager must pre-approve the expenditure, if there is an expectation of reimbursement. Any Veterinarian care will be confirmed prior to the foster attending a clinic. The Shelter follows strict policies on veterinarian care and fosters must abide by these policies. Any un-approved veterinarian visits shall result in the foster being responsible for the costs.

### **General Orientation and Training**

As a volunteer you will be required to assist in promoting adoptions, educating residents and being an ambassador of the Clarington Animal Shelter. Educating yourself on Clarington's adoption policies and by-laws will assist you through your day to day duties.

Clarington is committed to ensuring the safety of all animals, staff and volunteers. Adhering to Clarington's internal policies and procedures will assist in the daily operations of the organization in a safe environment.

To successfully be accepted as a volunteer, a mandatory orientation will be required. In addition to general orientation, further training will be required for more specific duties based on a volunteer's ability and experience.