



LINCOLN COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES
JANA AVILES, DIRECTOR

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LCAS Volunteer Handbook

About Us:

Lincoln County Animal Services is committed to saving the lives of as many animals as possible, while having a lasting positive effect on the people and animals in our community. Our goal is to maintain a live release rate of 90% and above for all animals that come into our care. We are responsible for all Animal Sheltering and Animal Control activities in Lincoln County. We are one of the few municipal shelters in the state that maintains a live release rate above 90%.

Lincoln County Animal Services' success is due in large part to the wonderful volunteers who help care for, socialize, promote, and train our animals daily.

Waiver:

All volunteers are required to sign a liability waiver prior to engaging in activities at Lincoln County Animal Services.

Staff Contact/Volunteer Coordinator:

The volunteer program is overseen by the Lincoln County Animal Services Volunteer Coordinator, Monica Meredith. Monica can be reached via email at monica.meredith@lincolncountync.gov or by phone at (980) 429-0043. Any volunteer questions or concerns should be directed to her.

Hours of Operation:

Lincoln County Animal Services is open to the public during the hours listed below.

Volunteers normally visit during the public operating hours. If you would be interested in coming in outside of public hours, please email the Volunteer Coordinator. In cases of inclement weather or staff training days, we will post on our shelter Facebook page.

- Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10 am-5 pm
- Tuesday, Thursday: 11 am-7 pm
- Saturday 12 pm – 5 pm

Volunteer Opportunities and Scheduling:

All volunteer hours are by appointment only. We ask that you please sign-up for a 2-hour time slot minimum unless otherwise approved by the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers will be required to donate a minimum of 4 hours a month to remain an active volunteer. If you are unable to keep your volunteer time slot, please cancel your appointment in the volunteer management software or email the volunteer coordinator. Please attempt to give a 24hr notice if you are planning to cancel your volunteer appointment.

Volunteer scheduling will take place through our volunteer software, Civic Champs. All volunteers who have completed their application, waiver and background check will be sent an invitation to download the app onto their phones and set up an account. The platform can also be used from an internet browser on a laptop for volunteers who would rather use a laptop or home computer.

Information and instructions for the Civic Champs app are included in your Orientation Packet. Please let us know if you are unable to download the app or create an account.

If you do not have a computer or internet access, please email Monica at monica.meredith@lincolncountync.gov or call (980) 429-0043 to schedule your volunteer hours.

Volunteer Opportunities and their descriptions have been included in your Orientation Packet.

General Volunteer Guidelines

Age Requirement

Due to safety concerns, the minimum age requirement to volunteer is 18 years or older for solo volunteers. If accompanied by a parent or guardian, volunteers need to be over 12 years of age and have a waiver signed by the parent or guardian. The accompanying parent/ guardian must also complete and sign a waiver for him or herself.

Sign-in / Sign-out

Signing in and out using our volunteer management software, Civic Champs, is of the utmost importance because it allows us to track the number of volunteer hours donated. The tracking of the volunteer program allows us to potentially gain more funding to grow the program, which will only enrich the lives of the animals in our care. If you do not have the app, please see the volunteer coordinator upon arrival and you will be manually signed in.

Dress Code

Volunteers should wear casual, comfortable clothing that can get wet, dirty, stained, or torn. T-shirts, jeans, sneakers, and athletic wear are appropriate. Closed-toed, non-slip footwear is required. Flip flops, sandals, shorts and clothes that reveal undergarments are not permitted. Volunteers who are not appropriately dressed will not be permitted to volunteer. Rain/rubber boots are recommended during rainy weather. Clothing should be appropriate for a family environment and the season. Keep jewelry to a minimum, for your safety.

General Conduct

Volunteers are welcome to help caretakers when assisting the public; however, if a citizen asks you a question about an animal's background, health, or temperament, or they have a question regarding the adoption process or questions about LCAS policies and procedures, please refer the question to the Caretaker or any LCAS employee. When dealing with people, both the public and staff, please be polite, courteous, and helpful. The Volunteer Coordinator is your supervisor; however, the staff person(s) you are working with will be available to help you help them. They are responsible for getting the tools you need to do your job, but please follow their directions and be respectful of the decisions they make. If you have any comments, concerns or questions about operations please bring them to the Volunteer Coordinator's attention and they will provide you with an answer in a timely manner.

Inappropriate/Unprofessional Behavior

As a volunteer representing Lincoln County Animal Services, your conduct and interactions with the animals, staff, other volunteers, and the public is expected to be professional and courteous. You must follow the rules and guidelines of Lincoln County Animal Services. Failure to follow these expectations may result in actions, up to and including termination from the program. Behavior such as arguing or yelling with another individual or animal; hitting or engaging in rough play with our pets; the use of profane language; continually not following the rules; creating an atmosphere of disharmony by engaging in gossip and/or making nonfactual statements about shelter operations, staff or other volunteers is inappropriate behavior and could be grounds for dismissal. Volunteers experiencing problems with customers, staff or other volunteers should contact the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for all volunteers and will work to alleviate any conflicts in a timely and effective manner. If the Volunteer Coordinator is unable to resolve the conflict, the issue(s) will be discussed with the Operations Manager and Director, if necessary, to determine a grievance procedure.

Personal Belongings

Volunteers can store belongings in the lockers located in the back of the shelter. Volunteers are also welcome to use the bathroom and change clothes if needed in that particular area. Volunteers are welcome to bring locks in order to secure the locker during the duration of their volunteer appointment.

Smoking, Vaping, and Alcohol

The use of tobacco products or vaping is only permitted in designated areas. All cigarette butts must be disposed of appropriately and not littered on the parking areas or grounds. Volunteers under 21 are not permitted to use tobacco or vape products on county property. Alcohol is prohibited on county property.

Use of Facility

Volunteers are welcome to use the refrigerator, microwave oven, and breakroom space. The staff break room is located in the front office beside the Operations Manager's office. Lincoln County Animal Services is not responsible for any personal items left in the facility. A vending machine for soda and water, and snacks is available in the breakroom as well. Water fountains are located in the front office beside the break room as well as at the end of the hallway connecting to the Dog Holding area.

Communications and Social Media

Social Media

The use of social media presents a great opportunity, as well as risk, to any individual, organization, business, or government agency that chooses to engage in it. Lincoln County Animal Services uses [Facebook](#) to share information about available pets, adoption specials, our programs, success stories from adopters, and any pertinent information we feel is of value. We encourage you to like our [Facebook](#). We respectfully request volunteers to keep comments appropriate, and relevant to the subject, and to refrain from making negative comments about LCAS, our community/rescue partners, and/or policies.

If you take any photos or videos of an animal that you think can highlight the animal to help promote adoption or rescue, please share them! You can email them to the volunteer coordinator directly and we can post them on social media.

Volunteer Communications

If at any time you are no longer able to volunteer with us or do not wish to receive emails, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator to be removed. If you have any questions about the operations or policies of Lincoln County Animal Services, please bring your questions to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator has an open-door policy and welcomes volunteers to communicate when they have ideas, suggestions, problems, or concerns. You may call, email or stop by her office during business hours.

Handling Animals

Primary volunteer opportunities revolve around our animals and socializing them. See below for important information regarding handling of both dogs and cats. Prior to handling animals, volunteers are required to be completely familiar with our procedures through completion of non-interactive and supervised interaction opportunities. Staff members will assist in choosing which animals may be safely handled by volunteers.

Dog Handling

Please use common sense when handling the animals. Always pay attention to what you are doing and what is going on around you! When walking your dog past other kenneled dogs, keep your leash short and pay attention to your dog. It is okay to let dogs sniff each other, but be sure to keep slack in the leash while doing so. Tension will translate through the leash, causing a greater chance of conflict. If a dog begins to show signs of aggression toward another dog, DO NOT put your hand between them to break them apart. Instead, immediately pull the dogs apart using the leash.

Keep in mind many of these dogs have probably had very little, if any, obedience and leash training. Some of these animals have been kenneled for a while. Make sure you are always prepared for a potentially high energy leveled dog- it is better to be over prepared than under prepared. When removing dogs from their kennels and walking them, please use the slip leads found in the volunteer area.

Before you open the kennel gate, have the leash ready, and be sure you are familiar with how our kennel doors open and close. To get a dog out, open the cage door a few inches while holding the loop of the slip lead down at the opening. When the dog's head comes through the loop, pull up on the leash and release the door to allow the dog to come out.

Play yards are located on the external sides of the Dog Adoption area and Dog Holding area. In the Dog Adoption area exits to the play yard are located at the ends of each row of kennels. In the Dog Holding area exits to the play yard are located on the dog kennel side which holds dogs that are in quarantine. Before entering play yards make sure the yard isn't already occupied with a staff member or volunteer with a dog. **IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO ALWAYS CHECK TO SEE IF THE PLAY YARD IS OCCUPIED SO THAT IT LIMITS ACCIDENTS OR POTENTIAL DOG FIGHTS!** Once you have placed the dog back into its kennel take a few minutes and make notes on your interaction with the dog as this will be valuable in helping get the dog adopted. Stationary supplies will be made available to all volunteers to keep notes on animals they have interacted with. Also, be sure to pick up any feces your dog deposits in the play yard using the equipment designated for that in the play yard. Picking up feces between dogs taken out in the yard helps prevent disease which keeps our population healthy.

You may encounter a little resistance when your companion realizes he or she is about to return to the kennel. Some dogs are happy to return to their temporary den, but for those who refuse to cooperate, try tossing a treat into the back of the cage, releasing the leash, and quickly closing the door. Another option is to enter the kennel with the dog, stand between the dog and the kennel door, close the door, remove the leash, open the door, and back out. Be sure that you remove the leash from the dog and return it to the bin in the volunteer room.

Cat Handling

We have a number of different cat rooms in our shelter and our goal is to get you familiar with each room and the needs of the cats in each of these different rooms.

Cat Adoption Room

- Generally houses cats that are ready for adoption to the public.
- After handling a cat please sanitize your hands before touching or removing another cat.

Cat Hold/Barn Cat

- Generally houses cats that have recently entered into our care or cats that need some extra resources before being transferred to the Adoption Room.
- Barn Cats are not permitted to be handled by volunteers.
- After handling a cat please sanitize your hands before touching or removing another cat.

Kitten Room

- Generally, houses kittens that are under 12 weeks of age.
- Due to kittens being more susceptible to illness in a shelter setting, sanitation is of the utmost importance.
- Kittens in the kitten room will follow the stoplight system of handling just as with the dogs.

Cat Nursery

- Generally houses adult cats that are nursing kittens, kittens that are under 8 weeks of age, or single kittens that enter into our care.
- Due to kittens being more susceptible to illness in a shelter setting, sanitation is of the utmost importance.
- Only experienced volunteers that have been approved by the volunteer coordinators are allowed to assist with Cat Nursery.

Cat Isolation

- Generally, houses cats and kittens that have illness and are needing to be separated from the general population of cats.
- Volunteers are not permitted to handle or care for the cats and kittens in Isolation.

Notifying Staff of Concerns Observed with an Animal

If you notice a behavior or medical concern with an animal, notify a staff member. Provide the animal's kennel number, the name of the animal, and a brief description of the nature of the problem. If there is an emergency, notify the nearest available staff member or the staff member at the front desk.

Safety

Accidents/Injuries

All injuries must be reported to LCAS staff and the appropriate paperwork completed. While volunteering, if you incur an injury that will need medical attention (such as a fall, cut, etc.), you must fill out an incident report. Always report a bite – whether accidental or not. If you are bitten by an animal and your skin is broken by the animal's teeth, you must report it to a staff member and complete a bite report. Wounds should be washed thoroughly with soap and water. Follow up with your regular healthcare provider if you require medical attention. A first aid kit is located at the front desk.

Zoonotic Diseases

Zoonotic Diseases are illnesses that can be transferred from animals to people. Please wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as recommended and wash your hands after handling animals.

If you are concerned about bringing any contagions home to your pets, we recommend changing your clothes/shoes and washing your hands with warm soapy water before interacting with your pets. Any further questions or concerns should be brought up to the volunteer coordinator.

If you have a fever over 100.4 or other symptoms of illness, such as cough, please stay home.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Volunteer Coordinator Signature: _____