



Lexington Animal Control Shelter Volunteer Manual

City of Lexington, Missouri

Revision date: 10/7/2019



Welcome!

Volunteers are essential to our mission, and we thank you for choosing us. We simply can't do it without the generous and faithful support of people like you.

This manual should answer most common questions and your Volunteer Training session should address any additional needs. Please know that your questions, comments or concerns are always welcome.

On behalf of everyone at the Lexington Animal Control Shelter, two-legged and four, we welcome you. We're very glad to have you.

Best,

Meghan Brown, Animal Control Officer

mbrown@lexingtonmopd.org

(660) 259-6321

Location, Contact, and Hours of Operation

The Animal Control Shelter is located on Riverfront Street in Lexington, Missouri.

The Animal Control Officer is Meghan Brown. To reach Meghan, contact her at (660) 259-6321 or e-mail her at mbrown@lexingtonmopd.org

Volunteers are needed 365 days a year, when animals are placed in the Lexington Animal Control Shelter. Feeding, cleaning, and walking times are generally 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Additional hours or adjustment to hours may be made due to weather or other needs as identified by the Animal Control Officer.

Volunteer Program Policies

Age Requirements

Children 11-17 – Children between the ages of 11 and 17 must work alongside their parents or another adult. Parents and children must complete all necessary training. Parents must be in charge of opening kennels, handling the animals, and holding the leash, as well as supervising their children. We ask that children remain outside the kennel area while parents get dogs out of kennels, as the dogs can be very excited and bouncy when we first get them out. Parents and children may socialize with shelter cats in the Indoor cat house. The parent in charge of the leash at all times. Parents must be mindful of pets who are timid or who have been marked with child restrictions. These pets are not appropriate candidates for youth enrichment. Children under 11 may not volunteer but may visit the shelter when supervised by a parent or guardian.

Ages 18 and older – Volunteers aged 18 and older may volunteer independently and must complete all necessary volunteer training. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian sign a release and waiver of liability prior to working in the shelter.

Certificate of Ability - Any volunteer or potential volunteer who is under the care of a doctor for either physical or psychological treatment may be asked to provide a certificate from the doctor as to their ability to satisfactorily or safely perform their volunteer duties. Volunteers under the course of treatment that might affect their volunteer work will not be accepted without written verification of suitability from their doctor.

Appropriate attire must be worn when working at the shelter or at offsite locations. This consists of practical, casual clothing including long pants or capri-style pants and closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes. No dangling or hoop jewelry or loose clothing that could catch on paws, claws, door handles, etc.

Health and Safety

Do not try to carry a load that is too heavy for you. Practice proper lifting procedures and ask for help when you need it.

During the summer months the heat index can be very high. If you are working outdoors please recognize your limitations. Bring a filled water bottle with you.

During winter months, the wind chill can be very low. If you are working outdoors, please recognize your limitations. Come in to rest and warm up.

Disease Control - Health and disease control procedures must be followed at all times. Diseases can spread easily when animals are closely confined. Be sure to properly sanitize your hands between handling each pet. Always clean up feces immediately. When cleaning, follow the procedures provided in training.

Accident Policy - Accidents that result in injury, including bites and scratches, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, must be reported to the Animal Control Officer as soon as possible. Such reports are necessary to help us monitor the health and well-being of our pets, and do not automatically mean any negative consequence for the animal. There is a first aid kits located in the shelter. Accident/incident reports can be obtained from the Animal Control Officer. A report must be filled out and signed by both the volunteer and another team member, if present. We ask that all volunteers have current immunization against tetanus. You are strongly advised to update your tetanus vaccination and keep it current while volunteering at the shelter.

As stated in the volunteer waiver you signed, you are assuming the risks of volunteering at the Lexington Animal Control Shelter. This includes work that may be hazardous to the volunteer, including, but not limited to dog and/or cat handling, lifting heavy objects, bending, standing for extended periods of time, exposure to cleaning chemicals and transportation to and from off-site events. In your waiver, you expressly and specifically assumed the risk of injury or harm in the activities and released the City of Lexington from all liability for injury, illness, death or property damage resulting from the activities on or offsite City of Lexington property.

Alcohol and Drug Policy – The City of Lexington is committed to providing a safe, efficient and productive environment for all employees and volunteers. Using, possessing or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the facility poses serious safety and health risks. While on City of Lexington property and while conducting business related activities off premises, no volunteer may use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted at the facility only if it does not impair a volunteer's ability to perform essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals.

Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment – The City of Lexington is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, sexual preference, national origin, age, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated and are grounds for termination of the volunteer relationship.

If you experience or witness sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, report it to your Volunteer Manager immediately. If your Volunteer Manager is unavailable or you believe it would be inappropriate to contact that person, you should immediately contact the City Administrator. You can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation. All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly and discreetly investigated.

Smoking - Smoking is not permitted on City of Lexington property, including in vehicles parked in our parking lots. Smoking is never allowed while handling an animal! This includes while walking pets on or off City of Lexington property.

Grievances - All grievances should be brought to the attention of the Animal Control Officer or the City Administrator.

Non-Disclosure - The protection of confidential business information is vital to the interests and success of Lexington Animal Control. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Customer lists
- Adoption, volunteer and employment applications
- Customer preferences
- Marketing strategies
- Event plans
- Financial records
- Trade secrets or technical information
- Computer processes

Volunteers who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to termination of volunteer duties even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

Photo Release - Volunteers' photographs, images, or likeness may be used in Lexington Animal Control Shelter marketing and promotional materials.

Social Media Statement for Volunteers – Lexington Animal Control takes no position on your decision to start or maintain a blog or participate in other social networking activities. However, it is the right and duty of the organization to protect itself from unauthorized disclosure of information and conduct contrary to the mission. Lexington Animal Control Shelter’s social networking policy includes rules and guidelines for company-authorized social networking and personal social networking and applies to all staff and volunteers.

General Provisions

Blogging or other forms of social media or technology include but are not limited to video or wiki postings, sites such as Facebook and Twitter, chat rooms, personal blogs, or similar forms of online journals, diaries or personal newsletters not affiliated with the City of Lexington.

Unless specifically instructed, volunteers are not authorized and therefore restricted to speak on behalf of the City of Lexington or the Lexington Animal Control Shelter.

Volunteers may not use social media to represent the City of Lexington or the Lexington Animal Control Shelter. This includes posts or pictures that could reasonably be interpreted by the public or otherwise as negative, derogatory or damaging including but not limited to tagging the organization or its employees on such posts or pictures; posting such remarks as to damage the City of Lexington’s Animal Control Shelter reputation in the community or relationships both external and internal.

Volunteers may not publicly discuss clients, products, employees or any work-related matters, whether confidential or not, outside company-authorized communications. Volunteers are expected to protect the privacy of the City of Lexington and its employees, clients and volunteers and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and nonemployee information and any other proprietary and nonpublic information to which volunteers have access. Such information includes but is not limited to customer information, trade secrets, financial information and strategic business plans.

Animal abuse is a serious and criminal matter. Do not discuss cases where abuse or neglect may be suspected and do not refer to particular animals as having been abused or neglected.

Facebook - Volunteers may not use their personal or other Facebook accounts in any way prohibited as described above.

Volunteer Supervision - Volunteers must take direction from the team member that oversees the area in which they are assigned. Any concerns with assignments must be directed to the Animal Control Officer.

Disciplinary Action - Possible grounds for disciplinary action may include but are not limited to the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs, theft, misuse of equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of pets, customers, staff or other volunteers, failure to abide by policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance or failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties. Disciplinary action may include a private conversation, probation and/or dismissal.

Dismissal of Volunteers – volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and regulations of the City of Lexington Animal Control Shelter or who fail to satisfactorily perform volunteer duties may be subject to dismissal. The City of Lexington reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer without warning in the case of gross negligence or misconduct.

Volunteer Code of Ethics

As a volunteer representing the City of Lexington Animal Control Shelter, your conduct and interaction with team members, other volunteers and the public is expected to always be professional and courteous. By volunteering, you are making a commitment to our team and our pets to carry out, to the best of your abilities, the tasks you have pledged to perform.

The Volunteer Code of Ethics clarifies the expectations and principles for volunteers. Should a volunteer display unprofessional, dishonest or disrespectful behavior or exhibit a lack of self-discipline, the volunteer will be asked to leave the premises. Such behavior could be grounds for termination.

I pledge to:

- Respect others even when I may not agree with them
- Display courtesy, sensitivity, consideration and compassion for people and animals
- Use good judgment in recognizing the scope of authority of team members
- Keep safety at the forefront of all volunteer activities
- Follow the guidelines presented to me during training and mentoring
- Respect and use equipment and supplies as they are intended
- Report all injuries immediately to a team member
- Perform all tasks to the best of my ability
- Ask for help when needed
- Recognize additional training is essential to maintain safe shelter practices and attend trainings and meetings as they are offered
- Recognize my limitations and those of others
- Set boundaries for myself – know my limits both physically and otherwise
- Hold myself accountable for the commitments I undertake
- Direct questions, comments, concerns to the appropriate party
- Listen to the needs of others
- Recognize I communicate both verbally and non-verbally
- Advise personnel of relevant information regarding the animals in our care and my involvement at the shelter
- Respect that the team and the animals count on me to honor my commitments
- Value my role in the maintenance and growth of the organization
- Strive to promote a positive environment
- Respect and support all people and animals

Scheduling Procedures

Scheduling volunteer hours is very flexible! The minimum commitment for volunteers is 4 hours per month for at least 2 months. Use the SignUp Genius link available on the City of Lexington website to sign up for your shifts. If you must cancel a shift, please notify the Animal Control Officer.

Please complete, sign, and return the last page of this document, the Release and Waiver of Liability, prior to volunteering. Thank you.



Release and Waiver of Liability



This Release and Waiver of Liability (the "Release") executed on _____ (DATE), by _____ (the "Volunteer") in favor of the City of Lexington employees and the Lexington Animal Control Officer.

The Volunteer or the parent/guardian of the participant hereby freely, voluntarily, and without duress executes the Release under the following terms:

RELEASE AND WAIVER. Volunteer or the parent/guardian does hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless the City of Lexington, and its employees, and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from Volunteer's Activities with Lexington Animal Control Shelter. Volunteer understands that this Release discharges the City of Lexington from any liability or claim that the volunteer may have against the City of Lexington with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from Volunteer's activities with the City of Lexington Animal Control Shelter, whether caused by negligence of the City of Lexington, or its employees. Volunteer also understands that the City of Lexington does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health or disability insurance in the event of injury or illness.

MEDICAL TREATMENT. Volunteer or the parent/guardian of the participant does hereby release and forever discharge the City of Lexington from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first aid, treatment, or service rendered in connection with the Volunteer's Activities with the City of Lexington Animal Control Shelter.

ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK. The Volunteer or the parent/guardian of the participant understands the Activities include work that may be hazardous to the Volunteer, including, but not limited to dog and/or cat handling, lifting heavy objects, bending, standing for extended periods of time, exposure to cleaning chemicals and transportation to and from off-site events. Volunteer hereby expressly and specifically assumes the risk of injury or harm in the Activities and releases the City of Lexington from all liability for injury, illness, death, or property damage resulting from the Activities on or offsite City of Lexington property.

INSURANCE. The Volunteer or the parent/guardian of the participant understands that, except as otherwise agreed to by the City of Lexington in writing; the City of Lexington does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance coverage for any Volunteer. Each Volunteer is expected and encouraged to obtain his or her own medical or health insurance coverage.

OTHER. Volunteer or the parent/guardian of the participant expressly agrees that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by laws of the State of Missouri, and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Missouri. Volunteer agrees that in the event that any clause or provision of the Release shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of this Release which shall continue to be enforceable.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE FORGOING VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT AND VOLUNTEER RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND THAT I WILL COMPLY WITH THE SAME.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE RECEIVED A LEXINGTON ANIMAL CONTROL VOLUNTEER MANUAL AND I AGREE TO FOLLOW THE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND CODE OF CONDUCT OUTLINED WITHIN. I UNDERSTAND THAT BY NOT FOLLOWING THE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND CODE OF CONDUCT, I MAY BE SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE TERMINATION.

Volunteer Signature _____ Date _____

Volunteer Printed Name _____

Parent/ Guardian Signature (For Volunteers under 18 years of age) _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

**THIS PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED BEFORE VOLUNTEERING AT THE
LEXINGTON ANIMAL CONTROL SHELTER**