



## **Fredericksburg SPCA Volunteer Handbook**

Last updated: July 2019

Thank you for choosing to volunteer at the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA. Volunteers are a critical component to nearly every process in our shelter, serving a larger role in our day to day operations. We could do not this without you – YOU are helping to save lives for the homeless animals of Fredericksburg and beyond. We are grateful for your involvement.

### **WHO WE ARE**

The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA is a non-profit, life saving humane organization dedicated to the principle that every life is unique and worthy of protection. As a local leader in humane care and education, our mission is to tackle the problem of pet overpopulation through education, adoption, rehabilitation and spay/neuter. The organization saves the lives of many homeless animals each year and cares for approximately 400 cats and dogs daily. The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA is not affiliated with any other animal welfare organization. We are an independent, life saving organization that must raise 100 percent of our annual budget. We receive no funds from federal, state or surrounding counties. We also receive no funds from large, well known animal groups such as the Humane Society of the United States, the American Society for the Prevent of Cruelty to Animals or the American Humane Society.

### **WHY WE ARE DIFFERENT**

Public animal control agencies are legally charged with enforcing animal control laws protecting animals from abuse or neglect. They respond to citizens' complaints about animals and impound stray animals. They are responsible for investigating instances of animal abuse or cruelty and are supported entirely by government funds. Private humane organizations receive no government funds and carry no legal authority. The role of a private humane organization, such as the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA, is to provide resources to save healthy, treatable animals from death, to treat animals with compassion and understanding, and to have people have happier, more fulfilling relationships with their animal.

## **WHAT IS “LIVE AND LET THRIVE”?**

By “life saving”, we mean that once we admit an animal into our care, we treat that animal no differently than we would expect a loving pet owner to do. We do not take the life of any animal in our care for reasons of length of stay or our shelter capacity. If it is determined that an animal in our care requires veterinary care, we provide that care so as to return that pet to a healthy and manageable state. We only euthanize an animal if the animal is too sick or injured to recover to a life of quality and is suffering or if an animal is so behaviorally aggressive as to present a material danger to human safety.

## **OUR SHELTER HOURS OF OPERATION**

We are open seven days a week from: 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. however volunteers may come in between 9am and 7pm.

## **ADOPT**

### **OVERVIEW**

You must be 18 years and older to adopt an animal. Adoption applications can be filled out and submitted in person at our shelter. Applications are processed in the order that they are received and an application will not be processed until the applicant has met with the animal. Animals are available for visiting Thursday through Monday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. While visiting, we encourage you to ask any questions you may have with staff members or volunteers, as our goal is to help you find the right match for your family. The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA thanks you for considering one of the many animals in need of a new home.

### **ADOPTION FEES**

**Adult dogs:** \$150

**Puppies:** \$250 (age 6 months and under)

**Adult cats:** \$100

**Kittens:** \$125 (age 9 months and under)

**Senior animals (7+ years):** \$60

Our adoption fee includes the animal’s spay/neuter surgery, microchip and registration, age- appropriate vaccines, age-appropriate blood testing (6 months and older), flea/tick/heartworm treatments and deworming. As a non-profit organization, our adoption fees help us to offset some of these costs.

## **DONATE**

Help us fully realize our vision of giving the neediest animals of Greater Fredericksburg another chance at life by making your gift today. The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA is a 501(c)3 organization and your gift of monetary or in-kind donations is tax deductible.

**For more information, please contact Erica Levin, our Director of Development, at [elevin@fredspca.org](mailto:elevin@fredspca.org).**

## **FOSTER**

We are always in need of foster homes for the animals in our care. Our goal is to house over 60% of our animals in foster care, as it reduces illness and stress. There are many different animals that are perfect foster candidates; this could mean caring for a kitten with an upper respiratory infection, giving TLC to a dog with a broken leg, giving a long-time resident a break from shelter life or simply providing a temporary home for an animal that needs time to grow. Foster parents are provided with all food, supplies and medication needed. All we ask in return is that the animals are loved and nurtured while in your care.

**For more information, please contact Ashley Ogle, our Foster Coordinator, at [foster@fredspca.org](mailto:foster@fredspca.org).**

## **VOLUNTEER**

The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA is in need of volunteers to help with a wide variety of tasks including, but not limited to, the following:

### Daily Operations

- Basic animal care
- Deep cleaning
- Donation sorting
- Van maintenance
- Kitchen support
- Laundry
- Administrative help

### Play yards

- Rotate toys and activities (pool, sand pit, etc)
- Poop scoop
- Showing pets
- Adoption counseling and completing adoptions
- Sorting foster supply returns on surgery days

### Animal Handling

- Socializing with cats
- Cat scholar
- Dog handler
- Dog scholar

### Outreach

- Adoption Events
- Transports
- Compassionate Care Camp
- Youth Programs
- Tours
- Phone support (check voicemails and help answer calls)

### Special Events

- Fur Ball
- ARF
- Rescue Run
- SPCA Open House

The above list should give you a general idea of what we are most in need of help with. If you can think of a job we would need help with, that we currently do not offer please let us know so that we can continue improving our program.

Volunteers must be 16 years of age or older to volunteer independently. Additionally, the age requirement to work with the dogs and cats in our care is 18 years or older. Youth under the age of 16 may volunteer for most jobs if they are under the supervision of an approved parent or guardian.

There is a volunteer fee of \$20 for each new volunteer. Once you pay this fee you will get your volunteer t-shirt that you are required to wear when volunteering. It is important that our staff and members of our community are able to identify our volunteers.

### **GETTING STARTED**

- Attend a new volunteer orientation (this includes a tour of the building)
- Look at Give Pulse under events for volunteer opportunities to sign up for.
- Check the daily volunteer checklist on the door of the Volunteer Coordinator if you are looking for things to do around the facility. This will help guide you on tasks that are a priority that day.
- We do ask that you volunteer at least 2 hours each month in order to remain an active volunteer.

### **GIVE PULSE**

The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA uses Give Pulse to keep track of volunteer information and data, volunteer hours and provide a user friendly portal to sign up for different events. In addition, there is a “documents tab” that you may use to view different important documents that you must read before coming in to volunteer. Every volunteer, age 16 years of age and older, will need to create an account. There are tutorials available on the website if needed.

### **TRACKING VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Volunteers are **REQUIRED** to record their volunteer hours as “impacts” on their Give Pulse account. The impacts will then be approved by an admin on the Fredericksburg SPCA page. If you are unable to log your hours as impacts on the Give Pulse page please record your hours on the door of the volunteer office and then schedule a time to meet with the Volunteer Coordinator to go over how to log your hours in Give Pulse. It is

**very** important that you keep track of your volunteer hours so that the Fredericksburg SPCA can apply for grants and report this information to our Board of Directors.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers represent the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA both on and off site and are trusted with the care and handling of the animals in our care. Our goal in training and supporting you as a volunteer is to ensure that you will be an effective member of our team, including:

- Compassionate and skillful with animals
- Provide a safe environment for the animals in our care
- Willing to learn and improve
- Understanding and supporting the mission and vision of the Fredericksburg SPCA
- Flexible, understanding, respectful and kind to all volunteers, staff and members of the public that you may interact with
- Understand that we only allow **positive reinforcement** with ALL of our animals

As a way of saying thank you to our volunteers, we will be offering a 50% off discount on adoptions to any volunteer that has completed 100 hours of volunteer service or more.

## **DUTIES**

Please do not take responsibility for duties you have not been trained to assume. If you are asked to do something with which you are uncomfortable, you may decline. Please ask a staff member if you are ever unsure of the correct policy or procedure.

## **UNAUTHORIZED AREAS**

Due to safety issues, volunteers are not permitted in any unauthorized, or “staff only” areas, without prior permission. If in doubt, please ask. Being in an authorized area without prior approval is prohibited and you may be dismissed.

## **OUTSIDE GUESTS**

While volunteering, **you may not bring members of your family or friends**, including children, with you unless they are also shelter volunteers without permission from the Volunteer Coordinator. Outside pets are not permitted in the building.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS**

You may put your things in the staff/volunteer break room in the cubies, however the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of a volunteers personal items.

## **ANIMAL CARE**

It is extremely important that you wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after touching each animal you handle. Some jobs may require gloves. Animals are very susceptible to illness in a shelter environment, even though they receive vaccinations when they enter this facility.

If you witness an animal show any of the following symptoms, please notify a staff member: diarrhea, vomiting, inactivity, blood, upper respiratory issues (coughing and/or sneezing), eye or nasal discharge, abnormal gait and loss of appetite.

If you notice any signs of illness or distress please email [volunteer@fredspca.org](mailto:volunteer@fredspca.org) so that the Volunteer Coordinator can make sure that the Animal Care Team is aware.

## **ANIMAL INTERACTION**

When handling animals at the shelter itself or at an adoption event it is important that the shelter dogs have no nose-to-nose contact with any other animals. It is hard to predict how animals will react to each other away from a controlled environment and we want our animals to be happy and safe.

If you would like to walk dogs around the shelter and take them outside to our play yards, there will be monthly dog handling courses available to train our volunteers how to: leash up a dog, read body language and interact with the animals in a safe way. You may only handle the dogs you have been trained for. Each dog that comes into our facility is color coded based on a number of criteria. It is important that you stay within the color you have been trained on for both the safety of yourself and the animals. When walking a dog through or around the building be sure that dog does not interact with any other animals. Some of our animals can be picky about who their friends are and the **only people allowed to do animal introductions (cat or dog) are our staff**. Failure to follow these important rules could result in termination of being a volunteer.

### **VOLUNTEER APPEARANCE AND ATTIRE**

Any time you are representing The Fredericksburg SPCA, you should be wearing a volunteer t-shirt. If you need another volunteer t-shirt, you can purchase one at the front desk during our open hours. Your general appearance should be neat and clean. Please be mindful when choosing your other attire. We ask that you wear non-slip, close-toed shoes. Additionally, large or dangling earrings and other jewelry, loose long hair and facial piercings can pose safety issues when dealing with animals and chemicals – please cover these or tie-back accordingly.

### **PERSONAL INTERACTION**

If any issue arises with a staff member, other volunteer or customer, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator immediately. If unavailable, please visit the front desk and ask for the Programs Director, Sarah Chiles. If you see other volunteers breaking volunteer guidelines, please let any staff member know as soon as possible. While volunteering on or off site, refrain from negative dialogue or gossip. It is important we provide a safe, positive and stress free environment for the staff, visitors and other volunteers.

### **ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

All volunteers are asked to report any accidents and injuries to the Volunteer Coordinator. In the event you are unable to find him or her, please visit the front desk and ask for the manager on duty. Accidents or injuries involving the animals in our care must be reported immediately so that we may file the proper paperwork.

In the event an animal were to bite or scratch and break skin, an animal in our care – by law – will be required to be quarantined for a period of 10 days. Again, it is crucial

volunteers report these types of incidents to a staff member immediately.

### **SHELTER PROPERTY**

Any documents or equipment received by a volunteer during his or her participation as a volunteer belong to the Fredericksburg SPCA and therefore are not to be copied or transmitted to other parties, and may not be used for non-shelter purposes without permission. Failure to follow may result in one written warning.

### **MEDIA**

Volunteers are not permitted to communicate with the media about any aspect of the shelter without permission from Fredericksburg Regional SPCA management. All media inquiries should be referred to the Executive Director or Deputy Director to ensure proper information about the organization is given to the public. This is to ensure a clear message is given.

In addition, all active volunteer must sign the social media policy, which provides clear guidelines when promoting anything relating to the Fredericksburg SPCA on social media.

### **CELL PHONES**

Cell phone use should be limited as not to distract from animal supervision or interfere with service to shelter customers, however it is important to keep a cellphone on you at all times in case of emergency.

### **DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND SMOKING**

While on Fredericksburg Regional SPCA premises and while representing the organization elsewhere, no volunteer may be under the influence of, use or distribute alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed medication is permitted while volunteering only if it does not impair the volunteer's ability to perform the essential functions of the job as to not endanger other people or animals. Smoking is not permitted on Fredericksburg Regional SPCA property.

## **TIME COMMITMENT AND SERVICE HOURS**

Volunteers are expected to volunteer for a minimum of 2 hours each month in order to stay active in our system. If you are having trouble signing up for jobs on Give Pulse, please see the Volunteer Coordinator for additional support.

In the event you are unable to meet your hour requirement for the month that is okay. Please alert the Volunteer Coordinator. If you wish to remove yourself from our volunteer program for any reason, please alert us so we can continue to keep our records up to date.

If you are completing service hours for school or another Fredericksburg Regional SPCA approved program, please see the Volunteer Coordinator to have your form or log signed. If the Volunteer Coordinator is not available, it is important he/she knows at least 2 business days in advance to alert another staff member to sign off on the hours.

## **COURT ORDERED COMMUNITY SERVICE**

We do offer Court Ordered Community Service opportunities however it must be approved by the Volunteer Coordinator prior to beginning your volunteer hours. There is a separate application that you MUST fill out and return to the Volunteer Coordinator. The form is on the website under "Volunteer". In addition, there is a \$40 fee that you must pay prior to your hours as well. You will then receive your SPCA Volunteer t shirt. Once you have completed your court issued hours, you must alert the Volunteer Coordinator with 7 days in advance to write and give you your verification letter stating the number of hours you have completed. Failure to submit the application and payment prior to your volunteer hours may result in a loss of recognition for those hours.

## **STAFF AND VOLUNTEER BREAK ROOM**

We have a break room for your use while you're volunteering on site, which is also shared by the rest of the Fredericksburg SPCA staff. Feel free to leave your personal items in there while you work in the cubbies. Please keep in mind that although this is a breakroom for volunteers, it is also for staff to have their lunch and decompress is needed. Make sure to keep your things tidy and give people space when needed. If any coats, sweaters, water bottles or other personal items are left in there for more than 7 days, they will be put in a lost and found bin.

## **VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER**

We send out a weekly volunteer e-newsletter each week and ask that all volunteers read it as it may contain information related to shelter policy and procedure changes, urgent volunteer needs and more – like upcoming events, our Volunteer of the Month and recently adopted dogs and cats.

## **REASONS FOR DISMISSAL**

The Fredericksburg Regional SPCA may immediately terminate volunteers who:

- Knowingly disregard our policies and procedures, to include any information in the volunteer handbook or in other volunteer related documents.
- Cause harm, or attempt to cause harm, to any of the animals in our care.
- Do not come in for three volunteer shifts - without notice given to the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Act in a disrespectful or inappropriate manner towards other volunteers, staff or members of the community visiting our facility.

When dismissal is being considered, the Volunteer Coordinator will review recommendations for dismissal with the Executive Director and Programs Director and, if founded, will notify the individual concerned of his or her decision.

## **STAFF**

Our shelter employs approximately 25 individuals – both full and part time – but our volunteers are just as much as part of the Fredericksburg Regional SPCA as any of our staff members. As of early 2018, our volunteer base exceeds 1,000 volunteer hours logged each month. That is the same as having an additional 25 full time employees helping out!

Staff members are here to answer any questions, comments or concerns you may have before, during or after your volunteer shifts. Your first point of contact is our Volunteer Coordinator, however, if you are unable to locate him or her, please see the staff

member assigned in the area you are working in. In the event of an emergency, please visit the front desk for immediate assistance.

## **CONTACT US**

### **Allie Names**

Volunteer Coordinator

[anames@fredspca.org](mailto:anames@fredspca.org)

### **Sarah Chiles**

Programs Director

[schiles@fredspca.org](mailto:schiles@fredspca.org)