

Front Street Animal Shelter Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers Save Lives



City of
SACRAMENTO
Front Street Animal Shelter

Front Street Animal Shelter Volunteer Department

2127 Front Street

Sacramento, CA 95818

916-808-8166

jwagaman@cityofsacramento.org

Pledge to our Volunteers

The staff at the Front Street Animal Shelter recognizes that you, our volunteers, are the true heart and soul of our organization. It would be impossible to accomplish our mission of saving lives without the sacrifices you make on our animals' behalf. Your complete unselfishness in giving your time, talents and treasures is beyond compare and truly makes our organization's programs successful.

The Front Street Animal Shelter is dedicated to creating a pleasant, helpful, and fun environment in which our volunteers are utilized at all levels of the agency. We strongly encourage you, our volunteers, to challenge yourselves and develop to your full potential. We are further committed to actively recruiting volunteers that reflect the cultural diversity and needs of our community. In addition, we will participate in ongoing, reciprocal exchanges of information and ideas with our volunteers in order to actively increase the level of quality services that save lives, increase public awareness, and educate our community.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the Front Street Animal Shelter!

Sincerely,



Janice Wagaman
Volunteer Coordinator
916-808-8166
jwagaman@cityofsacramento.org

Volunteer Expectations

Customer Service Expectations:

The Front Street Animal Shelter maintains a policy of respecting customers and their situations, serving them in a nonbiased and sensitive manner. As a volunteer, we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

- Treat all customers, staff and fellow volunteers with respect
- Keep an open mind. Refrain from judging a customer, staff member, or fellow volunteer based on the position they are in or the hardships they are experiencing.
- Make an effort to be conscious and aware of your verbal, physical and facial expressions. These expressions can be taken the wrong way and have a damaging effect on the people we interact with.
- Treat customers, staff, and fellow volunteers the way you would want to be treated
- Refrain from using harsh, vulgar or offensive language
- Refrain from using confrontational expressions or reactions
- Refrain from scolding customers, staff or fellow volunteers

Taking the time to review the guidelines listed above and upholding our sensitivity policy, helps promote a safe and welcoming environment for all individuals receiving services at Front Street Animal Shelter.

Animal Interaction Expectations:

The Front Street Animal Shelter maintains a policy of treating all animals humanely and with respect. As a volunteer we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

- Treat all animals with respect
- Take the appropriate training before engaging with the shelter animals
- Only work with animals that you are physically able to handle
- Understand that the sole purpose of interacting with the animals is to increase their chances for adoption
- Educate visitors on proper animal care and interactions, as needed

Volunteer Safety Information

Your safety as a volunteer at Front Street Animal Shelter (FSAS) is extremely important. In the event of an emergency, FSAS staff members will give direction to all customers and volunteers. **As an FSAS volunteer, you acknowledge that you are responsible for your own safety and take responsibility for your own actions. You also agree to follow and uphold the following guidelines:**

- Always take responsibility for yourself first. FSAS staff will take action to ensure that all animals and volunteers are safe.
- Always sign in and out each day. During a disaster, the supervisor on duty will facilitate an evacuation, taking the daily sign-in log with them. This is how all individuals will be accounted for once safely away from the disaster.

Facility Safety:

- Identify and familiarize yourself with all emergency exits
- Keep Paths Clear – Do not block paths and/or doorways. Blocking paths and/or doorways can be a tripping hazard and/or cause injury to FSAS staff, volunteers or customers. It is important to keep paths and doorways clear in case of emergency for an evacuation and emergency crews.
- Let your FSAS staff supervisor or a fellow volunteer know when you are leaving the program area
- Communicate any accident or injury to the FSAS staff supervisor immediately. Staff will address the situation to solve the problem. As a volunteer, you are covered under the City of Sacramento Worker's Compensation Program. Not identifying an accident can make matters worse and cause subsequent injury to yourself or another individual.

Personal Safety:

- Always wear a volunteer apron and name badge during your volunteer experience
- Follow proper lifting procedures and do not lift anything that is too heavy for you to move. Ask your FSAS staff supervisor for an explanation of lifting procedures. If you are asked to move anything of substantial weight and feel comfortable doing so, bend your knees into a squatting position and lift with your legs. Do not bend at the waist and lift with your back as this is the primary cause of many back injuries. If you are uncomfortable lifting any item, please let your FSAS staff supervisor know.
- Communicate any serious medical conditions you may have to the FSAS staff supervisor
- Always wear closed-toed shoes and dress appropriately for the volunteer activity

Animal Safety:

- Volunteers are not allowed to work with our animals until they have taken the appropriate training classes. Once training is complete, please use caution when dealing with animals to ensure you are not taking on an animal you are unable to handle.
- Volunteers are not allowed to interact with the animals in the Reception building, Stray buildings, Quarantine or Isolation areas.
- Communicate any injury caused by an animal to the supervisor on duty
- Always wear closed-toed shoes and dress appropriately for the volunteer activity

Threats, Violence or Suspicious Activity:

- No volunteers should confront anyone acting threatening or suspicious. Notify an FSAS staff member immediately, and prompt, appropriate action will be taken.
- When leaving the premises, if you notice anyone threatening or suspicious near the facility, go back inside the building to notify an FSAS staff member
- If you see or hear anything suspicious, notify an FSAS staff member immediately

Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Standards of Conduct:

By accepting to volunteer with us, you have a responsibility to the Front Street Animal Shelter and to your fellow volunteers to adhere to certain guidelines for conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone. Generally speaking, we expect each person to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious expectations are noted below. Your adherence to these guidelines will be to your benefit as well as the benefit of our organization. If you have any questions concerning any volunteer or safety rule, please see your volunteer coordinator for explanation.

- 1) FSAS reserves the right to refuse volunteer opportunities to any individual or group. FSAS also reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's service at any time and for any reason.
- 2) All volunteers at FSAS must attend an official volunteer orientation and Shelter Basics 101 class before beginning their volunteer experience.
- 3) FSAS volunteers receive no goods or monetary compensation for services rendered.
- 4) FSAS does not accept walk in volunteers. Volunteers must agree not to arrive at FSAS without having scheduled a volunteer shift and will not bring anyone to FSAS who has not been previously trained or scheduled.
- 5) FSAS youth volunteers between the age of 12 and 15 must be accompanied by an adult at all times and/or be part of an organized group with adequate supervision.
- 6) All youth volunteers under the age of 18 must obtain and have on file written parental or guardian permission to volunteer at FSAS.
- 7) Volunteers act as representatives of FSAS and are expected to approach the needs of our animals and customers with compassion, sensitivity, and without judgment.
- 8) Any questions regarding volunteer service may be addressed to the appropriate FSAS staff member. If a volunteer feels uncomfortable doing so, questions or concerns may be addressed to the Volunteer Coordinator. All questions and/or concerns will be promptly investigated. If this does not generate a satisfactory response, volunteers have the option of expressing their concerns to the Shelter Manager.
- 9) Volunteers are required to record their volunteer time during each visit, and for volunteer activities performed off-site. This information will be used by FSAS for statistical and fundraising purposes, and is very important!
- 10) Volunteers are to wear appropriate attire when volunteering in all programs. Volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes and long pants when on-site for safety purposes. Please remember volunteers are representatives of the agency, and therefore dress appropriately. Please do not wear torn or dirty clothing, clothing with inappropriate slogans or graphics, or clothing that is revealing or immodest in any way. Please- no bare midriffs or low cut shirts!
- 11) Volunteers are to notify the appropriate FSAS staff member if a change is to be made in their volunteer schedule. Volunteers must also notify the Volunteer Coordinator in the event they choose to resign from volunteer service at FSAS.
- 12) FSAS is committed to providing an environment free of harassment. Harassment of any kind, including harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, gender age, mental and/or physical disability, medical condition, national origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected under federal or state law or local ordinance will not be tolerated at FSAS.
- 13) FSAS is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items. FSAS recommends leaving personal or valuable items at home when volunteering.
- 14) No volunteer may represent FSAS to the media without prior consent.
- 15) Volunteers agree and understand that any work performed will be provided on a voluntary basis and that there is no expectation of payment or other compensation for performing such work. Volunteers also agree and understand that

a volunteer position does not constitute an employee-employer relationship with the City of Sacramento and that volunteers serve at the discretion of the City Manager or designee.

- 16) Individuals with criminal records involving violence or abuse, drugs, crimes against children, cruelty to animals, or assault may not volunteer for FSAS.
- 17) Volunteers accept personal responsibility for their actions and understand that failure to abide by these policies and procedures may result in termination of volunteer services.
- 18) All volunteers, parents/guardians and FSAS staff will practice the following appropriate conduct:
 - a. Volunteers will maintain a positive attitude
 - b. Volunteers will treat FSAS staff, fellow volunteers and customers with dignity.
 - c. Volunteers will treat equipment and facilities with respect.
 - d. Volunteers will know and follow the rules for the activities in which they are participating.
 - e. Volunteers will not knowingly engage in unsafe activities.
 - f. Volunteers will always treat the animals with respect.
- 19) Volunteers will not use or consume alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs or drugs not prescribed to them at any time during or prior to their volunteer activities at FSAS.
- 20) Volunteers are responsible for their own safety and well-being while volunteering at FSAS or any event related to FSAS. Volunteers are covered under the City of Sacramento's Worker's Compensation Program in the event of an injury from rendering a volunteer service. Any injury or incident must be reported to the supervisor immediately. Volunteers agree to pay for any medical, dental, surgical, or hospital diagnosis, treatment or care rendered for any non-industrial injuries. Foster-care activities are not covered under the City of Sacramento's Worker's Compensation Program.

Prohibited Behaviors: The Front Street Animal Shelter maintains a safe and inclusive environment for volunteers, staff, and customers. Volunteers will not be considered employees of the City of Sacramento. All volunteers serve the City of Sacramento at will, and either the City of Sacramento or the volunteer may terminate the arrangement without notice or consideration. Behaviors that are unacceptable for volunteers include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Abuse, neglect, or cruelty to any animal, whether or not that animal resides at the shelter
- Reporting for a volunteer assignment under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment or materials
- Falsifying statements on the application or during the interview process
- Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts
- Abuse or mistreatment of volunteers, staff, or customers
- Releasing confidential information
- Unwillingness to support and further the mission of our organization

Employee/Volunteer Policies for Personal Use of Social Media

City employees shall not post comments or photos directly related to their position as a member of the City of Sacramento on personal and social networking websites (e.g. MySpace.com, Facebook.com), if the activity could bring discredit or embarrassment to the City. If a City employee uses social media for personal purposes and comments or provides opinions on official City business, they must have a disclaimer stating that their opinions and views are their own and do not reflect the opinions and views of the City of Sacramento.

Taking the time to review the policies and procedures listed above and abiding by them during all volunteer opportunities helps to promote a safe and enjoyable environment for all volunteers at the Front Street Animal Shelter. After you have read the Volunteer Policies and Procedures, please sign the agreement form in your Volunteer Orientation Packet. Failure to sign the agreement will prevent an individual from volunteering at FSAS.

Thank you for being safe and adhering to the policies set forth by the Front Street Animal Shelter.

Online Volunteer System

The Front Street Animal Shelter uses the MyVolunteerPage program. **As an FSAS volunteer, you are expected to use the scheduling, training, and hours log appropriately.**

To register as a volunteer:

- Go to our website www.sacpetsearch.com
- Click on the Volunteer tab on the left
- Click on Become A Volunteer
- Click on Sign Up
- Create a user name & password
- Complete your volunteer profile

To access the volunteer system:

- Go to our website www.sacpetsearch.com
- Click on the Volunteer tab on the left
- Click on “Registered Volunteers Sign In Here”
- Click on Log In and use the username and password you created when you completed your online application. If you forget your username or password, please email me at jwagaman@cityofsacramento.org and I will send you the information. DO NOT create an additional profile!

To sign up for shifts/training opportunities:

- Log in to your volunteer profile
- Click on the Sign Up tab
- Click on the activity or training opportunity you are interested in
- Check the box next to the date you would like to attend
- Click SAVE!
- Only opportunities that you are qualified to participate in will be available for you to sign up
- We ask that you sign up for the shifts that you want to work so we will know who is coming in when

To update your profile:

- Log in to your volunteer profile.
- Click on the My Profile tab.
- Click on the Qualifications tab.
- Update the trainings you have taken
- Update other information as needed – basic info, additional info, interests, availability, and goals

To log your hours:

- Log in to your volunteer profile
- Click on the Hours Log tab
- Select the appropriate activity
- Select the appropriate date
- Enter the hours you worked on that activity
- Enter your accomplishments as indicated

To access the MyVolunteerPage system on your smart phone, go to MyVolunteerPage.mobi.

SHELTER TEENS PROGRAM

Purpose: To allow 12-15 year olds to participate in volunteering at the City Shelter without an accompanying adult.

Activities: Teens will do any assigned chores to support staff and the animals within the limits set by the Shelter, including creating bulletin boards, crafts, stuffing kongs, helping with laundry and dishes, learning to help the public, participating in off-site events, and socializing animals. They will learn proper animal care and ways to reduce the number of animals in shelters.

Meeting Times: We meet Saturdays from 1-3 pm

Numbers: Space is limited, so please sign up online!

Teens agree to:

*come regularly for a minimum of 4 months. (Most community service requirements are for 30 hours.) Signatures verifying community service hours will be done at end of 30 service hours or the end of the school semester.

*contact Vicki if unable to attend. Upon the 3rd unexplained absence, the teen will no longer be a participant. **Vicki Oberg, voberg@comcast.net, home 916-338-1605, cell 916-396-3484.**

*wear appropriate clothing including long pants, closed-toed shoes, modest necklines, and covered midriffs.

*turn off cell phones while participating.

*follow the directions of leaders and staff.

*to keep their volunteer profile up to date, sign up for activities and teen program shifts, and log their hours in the online volunteer system.