

Volunteer Handbook

It is very important that volunteers follow the instructions of RTA staff members while working in the Adoption Center. RTA rules and procedures must be followed carefully both for the benefit of the animals and in maintaining our relationships in the community. Volunteers who do not follow RTA guidelines or staff instruction will be asked to leave.

Please remember that this is a place of business. Our ability to save animals depends on our ability to run the facility in a professional and business like manner.

Volunteer Requirements

Because of our liability insurance coverage, we do place some restrictions on who can be a volunteer.

All volunteers must complete the following steps before starting:

- Fill out volunteer application
- Sign volunteer waiver
- Read the Volunteer Handbook and understand all volunteer policies
- Schedule a time for your first “work” shift so that a staff member will have time to show you the ropes.

Volunteers under 18 must have a parent sign the consent form. Persons under the age of 16 who wish to volunteer must be accompanied by an adult over 18 at all times. Persons wishing to bring several children to “play” with the animals will need to call ahead and schedule a time when a staff member can be with them and their children.

Volunteer Conduct

As a representative of Rescue the Animals, SPCA, you are charged with conducting yourself in a professional manner and therefore being respectful and courteous in your interactions with the public and with staff. Sexual harassment, discrimination, vulgar language or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and you may be asked to cease your volunteer work as a result of such conduct.

If you have a complaint regarding a staff member, you must bring it to the attention of the Director, so we may resolve it. If you do not receive satisfaction when working with her, you may take your complaint to a member of our Board of Directors.

Rights and Responsibilities

Rescue The Animals volunteers can expect:

- Meaningful assignments that are beneficial to you and RTA.
- To be treated with respect and consideration by RTA staff.
- Sufficient training and supervision for various tasks
- To be recognized, both formally and informally for your contribution.
- To be involved in events sponsored by RTA.
- To be made aware of all information that directly affects your work

As a Volunteer you are responsible for:

- Performing all the duties of the volunteer position with a high level of integrity and professionalism.
- Honoring your time commitment
- Being considerate and cooperative when dealing with other volunteers, staff, animals, and customers.
- Follow all the written policies and procedures of RTA and notify staff when a question arises.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of privileged information relative to all areas of RTA, its staff, and volunteers.
- The appropriate care and security for the animals at all times.

Accidents & Injuries

Any accident or injury suffered by a volunteer must be reported immediately to the Director. Incidents must be reported no later than when the volunteer leaves the Adoption Center at the end of their work shift.

Dress Code

- All volunteers should practice common sense rules of neatness, good taste, and comfort.
- If possible, volunteers should wear a RTA t-shirt when volunteering. Our colors are purple and yellow, which would be preferable at public events.
- Volunteers should expect that clothing and/or shoes may become dirty and/or wet when working.
- Volunteers should wear comfortable, slip-resistant, closed-toe shoes when volunteering.
- If a name tag is provided, it should be worn when working.
- Volunteers may wish to avoid strongly scented perfumes or lotions when working around animals.

Drugs, Alcohol, & Weapons

Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons while volunteering is strictly forbidden.

Storage of Personal Items

Please do not bring personal items into the Adoption Center. We cannot be responsible for any personal items that are misplaced or stolen.

Personal Telephone Calls

Do Not use your cell phone when working at the front desk. If you receive a call on your cell phone, finish waiting on any customers and then move to another room to take your call.

RTA asks that you do not use Adoption Center telephones to receive or make personal calls while volunteering, unless in the case of an emergency.

Volunteer Hours:

Please record your hours on the volunteer clipboard located near the front desk. Each day you volunteer, sign in and record start and end times.

Some Basic Rules

- Nancy's Room, yard, lobby, and other areas where animals are shown to the public should be cleaned/tidied after each use.
- If a volunteer finds a dirtied cage/kennel, they are encouraged to clean it up.
- Do not give treats to any animals without prior permission. Permission should be obtained each day you wish to distribute treats.
- When grooming animals, please clean and disinfect tools (brushes, nail clippers, etc.) between each animal.
- Please return animals to the same kennel from which they came. Do not move animals and/or kennel cards to a different kennel unless asked to by an RTA staff member.
- Latex gloves are available for use whenever handling animal feces and urine or animals with unknown backgrounds; while using disinfectants or bleach; and while bathing or dipping animals.
- Always wash hands thoroughly after completing any of these tasks.
- Do not handle animals that are in isolation and/or heartworm wing unless asked to by RTA staff.
- Please do not take multiple animals out of different kennels unless you are aware of dog aggression issues.

Medical Conditions

Always immediately report any animal that seems to feel bad, has a cut, diarrhea, or any other medical condition. We check the animals several times each day, but things can change quickly or be overlooked. Anything unusual is very important to us.

Adoptions

RTA values our volunteers' opinions. If you feel that a potential adopter may not be an appropriate adopter for any reason, please alert the front desk immediately. Do this tactfully and not in front of the customer.

Termination

Failure to adhere to any of RTA's policies or procedures could result in termination. RTA reserves the right to terminate a volunteer at any time.

Safety:

- For the safety of the animals, please refrain from using a cell phone while walking dogs, handling animals, etc. If you have the need to use a cell phone, please do so when you are not directly handling animals.
- Volunteers should take the time to learn the correct and safe methods of performing their tasks. If you are unsure, ask a supervisor.
- Please do not attempt work for which you are not authorized or qualified to do.
- Always use good lifting techniques or seek assistance when handling large and/or heavy items.
- Report any unsafe conditions or equipment to a staff member immediately.
- Be extremely careful since there can be wet floors in nearly all parts of the facility.
- Realize that all animals when placed in kennels or cages can be aggressive when approached. When you sense that an animal is unhappy or does not want to be touched, DO NOT take them out of the kennel or cage even if someone wants to see them for adoption.
- Animals have good days and bad days just as we do. Always have a staff person check any animal that is not feeling well or that is aggressive.

Things You Should Not Do as a Volunteer

- Never give your personal opinion about anyone or any organization while helping customers. **No negative comments should ever be made about vets or other humane organizations or anyone else that either you or we deal with.**
- Never handle money. Always have a RTA staff member handle all transactions that involve
- money.
- Never give medical advice.
- Never allow any animal to leave the Adoption Center without staff approval.
- Never accept animals from the public without the approval in advance of the Director. A volunteer wishing to acquire an animal from the public must make arrangements to do this outside working hours.
- Never solicit or pass out any materials at the Adoption Center that are not RTA approved.
- Never do work in the facility that you have not been instructed to do or trained to do. We appreciate people who “pitch in,” but you need to double check before moving to a new task that you have not been assigned.

Information:

Adoption Center is located at 5933 South 1st, just west of Sam’s Club. **The adoption center is open Monday thru Saturday from 1pm to 5pm.**

New Mall Location: in same wing as movie theater. Open Friday 5-7, Sat & Sun 1-4.

Website is www.rescuethanimals.org

Email is rescuethanimalspca@yahoo.com and volunteer email is rescuethanimalsvolunteers@yahoo.com

Adoption center phone: 325-698-7722

Main Office phone: 325-695-7270

Mindi Qualls is our adoption center director.

As a volunteer, you can do “drop in” volunteering whenever we are open. However, there are lots of special events that we will need help for also. If you are interested in working in the mornings (mostly cleaning) we would love the help. Just let Mindi, Joy, or Sydney know the day before, so they can let you in the door.