



Lehigh County Humane Society  
Volunteer Handbook

# Welcome to the Lehigh County Human Society (“LCHS”)

This Handbook is designed to acquaint you with LCHS and provide you with information about working conditions, employees, volunteer expectations and some of the policies that govern our volunteers.

## **Our Mission**

To provide a safe haven for ALL animals in the Lehigh Valley. To be the leading advocate for breeds such as Pitbulls that often are left behind or ignored by other shelters. To provide state of the art medical care for all animals and to offer financial assistance to those pet owners that cannot afford services at for profit veterinary clinics. To match responsible pet seekers with their next best friend in order to find the perfect home for the animals in our care.

## **Vision Statement**

We strive to become the best animal welfare organization in the Lehigh Valley. We seek to break down any and all financial barriers for those who seek to become forever companions for the animals in our care. We will work to reduce the number of homeless animals in the Lehigh Valley by educating the community, offering low cost medical services and through our adoption processes. We will continue to support prosecution of any and all reported animal cruelty cases and rescue and rehabilitate all animals that suffer from cruelty situations.

## **Managed Admission Shelter**

The terms “kill” vs. “no kill”, when used to describe an animal shelter or rescue group are falling out of common usage. The LCHS is a managed admission facility which means we take in as many animals as we can humanely care for. We do not euthanize animals for space! We believe that our mission statement and vision statement clearly and honestly represent who we are and what type of organization we strive to become.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The Lehigh County Humane Society is concerned with the welfare of all animals – in our community and around the world. On a day to day basis, we are responsible for:

- The sheltering and care of unwanted, homeless, lost, abandoned, and abused animals
- The education of the public regarding proper animal care, responsible pet ownership, and respect for all living things
- The enforcement of the anti-cruelty laws of the state
- The responsible placement of adopted animals or the return of lost animals to their proper owners
- The humane disposition of unadoptable, sick, and injured animals
- The promotion of animal protection legislation and other activities which will better the quality of life for all creatures

Some important things we do for the citizens and animals of the Lehigh Valley

- Provide food, medical care and a safe haven for abandoned and owner relinquished animals
- Rescue sick or injured animals – 24 hours each day – 7 days each week
- Find life-long, loving homes through our adoption program
- Reduce pet overpopulation through our low-cost spay and neuter program
- Present professionally designed educational programs throughout the community
- Sponsor regularly scheduled low-cost vaccination clinics
- Reunite lost pets with their human companies
- Provide dog license which must be purchased yearly
- Work in partnership with other humane agencies to re-home homeless animals

LCHS can only do the work we do for animals with the help of the over 600 volunteers who donate their time, expertise, and love every single day. We welcome volunteers to help us make Pennsylvania the most humane state in the nation!

Whether it's **animal care** or **dog walking, event support, clerical, fundraising, weeding, adoption promotion**, or any other of the many volunteer opportunities we have to offer, every volunteer job is part of our success.

The LCHS values our volunteers, members, and supporters as important contributors to the work we do and it is thanks to the generously donated time and assistance of volunteers that we can offer many high quality programs and services to Lehigh County pets and residents! We have a variety of volunteer opportunities at the shelter, in the community, and from home! Everyone plays an important role in making sure all animals have a loving, safe home to call their own – thank you for becoming involved!

## **THE VOLUNTEER PROCESS – GETTING STARTED**

The first step to volunteer is to fill out the on line application. The application contains information about the types of opportunities we have available that you can do to help animals in need. Volunteers with interests & availability that match openings will be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator & all volunteer applications are held on file for 3 months.

As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 – Paper Volunteer Applications are no longer accepted and all volunteer applications must be submitted through the online application form.

- A \$10 application fee will be due upon volunteer orientation registration. This fee covers the cost of the orientation and the LCHS volunteer T-shirt. One application fee per individual applicant. Business and school groups are exempt from this fee. The application fee applies to all individual applicants. All application fields must be completed. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
- The \$10 application fee is only for those wishing to become regular volunteers. Those in need of completing community service hours for school or court ordered will not be required to pay the \$10 orientation registration fee. (Court Ordered Community Service and Community Service applications are exempt from this fee.)

If you have questions or need additional information about volunteering for the Lehigh County Humane Society, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Stephanie Skyriotis, at [stephanie@lehighhumane.org](mailto:stephanie@lehighhumane.org)

\*For those required to complete COURT ORDERED Community Service, you will need to complete the [Court Ordered Community Service Application](#) which differs from the LCHS Volunteer Application above. After submitting your community service application, it will be reviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator and if an appropriate opportunity is available, you will be contacted and informed on when you can expect to start your required hours.

## **Qualifications**

### **You must be 14 or older to volunteer**

- You must attend a volunteer orientation. If you are under 18, your parent or legal guardian must attend the registration with you.
- Sign an application and waiver while at orientation. If you are under the age of 18, your parent or legal guardian must ALSO sign the youth waiver release form.
- If you are under the age of 18, your parent or legal guardian must be present and by your side **at all times** while volunteering.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Dog walkers/Enrichment Volunteer**

Dog walkers- Ensure to get the dogs outside, so they get plenty of exercise and so they do not have accidents inside the kennel which causes them anxiety. Enrichment Volunteers ensure dogs are exercised in our play yard and provide enrichment opportunities.

### **Kennel Assistant**

Assist staff with morning cleanings within the dog kennels. This rewarding position is an essential part of caring for the shelter dogs.

### **Tic & Tuna Laundromutt**

Bath and groom animals for hygiene and appearance purposes so they can look beautiful and ready to find their furever home.

### **Cat Care Assistant**

Assist with morning cleanings within the Large Cat room, provide hands on care for our felines by cleaning cages, litterboxes, feeding and placing a toy in each cage.

**Feline Friend**

Spend time socializing/reading to the shelter cats in the Cat Community rooms and getting to know their purr-sonalities.

**Helping Hands**

Help us meet the needs of daily operations in our shelter. Assist with laundry, dishes, cleaning and sorting donations is a GREAT way to give back.

**Office Work Assistant**

Prepare mailings, assist with data entry and other clerical duties as needed.

**Community Engagement**

Assist staff with fun community events, fundraising and Humane education.

## **Policies and Procedures for Volunteers**

**Importance of Volunteers**

Our organization could not exist without volunteers. Volunteers are an important part of our team and are essential to providing the best possible care for our animals. Volunteers who work directly with animals can increase an animal's chance of adoption by providing additional human contact, thus making them more sociable, content and happy. Volunteers can help rebuild the lost trust in humans that many of our animals have experienced. Volunteers also help us to inform the public of the mission, values and objectives of LCHS.

As a volunteer you have the **responsibility** to:

- Meet your time commitments or provide adequate notice so that other arrangements can be made
- Be trusted with confidential information that might be necessary to do your work
- Perform assigned work to the best of your ability
- Follow organizational policies and procedures
- Be open-minded and respectful of all people
- Accept reasonable tasks with a positive attitude
- Maintain a positive attitude toward LCHS at all times

As a volunteer you will:

- Know that your efforts contribute to the organization's mission
- Receive the necessary orientation, training and supervision
- Learn how to improve your skills in the work you are doing
- Be treated with respect
- Be appreciated for your work you have done
- Be encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions

## **Attendance**

Volunteer sessions should be scheduled however, if you volunteer regularly for a designated shift, please be punctual and reliable. If you are unable to fulfill your commitment, please contact the volunteer coordinator.

## **Waiver and Release Form**

An appropriate waiver and release form must be signed before you begin volunteering. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have their waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian before beginning volunteer work. You must be at least 14 years of age to volunteer at the LCHS.

## **Accidents or Injuries**

Any accident or injury that occurs while at the LCHS must be reported to a member of the staff management team and to the volunteer coordinator immediately (within 10 minutes after the injury occurs). Bites and scratches are considered injuries and must be treated immediately. When working with animals, there is a potential risk of injury, however LCHS is not liable and you **are not** covered under our insurance policy.

## **Proper Dress**

Volunteers are asked to represent LCHS in a professional and appropriate manner. A volunteer T shirt must be worn while volunteering at an off site event.

## **Volunteer Personal Property**

LCHS is not responsible for loss or damage in any way of personal items. Volunteers are advised not to bring cash, valuables or any other personal belongings with them.

## **Cross Contamination**

Wash or sanitize your hands before and after contact with each and every animal. An animal that may look healthy could have recently gotten over or may be coming down with an illness.

## **Cell Phones**

There should be no cell phone use while volunteering at LCHS.

## **Unauthorized Areas**

Volunteers are not allowed in any unauthorized area at any time. This includes quarantine, isolation and the medical center areas unless trained and assigned to those areas.

## **Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment**

LCHS 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, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as a harasser. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters
- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, note, or invitations
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements

If you experience or witness sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, report it immediately to a member of the management team and to the volunteer coordinator.

All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly and discreetly investigated. To the extent possible, your confidentiality and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment must immediately advise the Shelter Director and CEO so it can be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Mistreatment of Animals**

There will be no mistreatment of animals. If a volunteer is found to be mistreating any animal in any way, the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

## **Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Use**

LCHS will not tolerate the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs while you are volunteering. Use of these substances can adversely affect the health, welfare and safety of the animals in our care.

## **Termination and Resignation**

As a volunteer, you are under no contractual obligation to continue services at LCHS. Should you decide to resign please notify the volunteer coordinator of your decision. Under certain circumstances some volunteers may have their volunteer privileges terminated. Some of those reasons may include:

- Distribution of any defamatory or slanderous comments about LCHS (including, but not limited to emails, Facebook, Twitter or other social media sites, and verbally)
- Abuse of animals
- Sexual harassment of any kind
- Not adhering to our drug, tobacco and alcohol policy
- Utilizing LCHS property for any illegal purpose
- Theft
- Frequent no shows
- Non compliance with rules of LCHS or failing to follow staff instructions or safety rules

## **Your promise to the Resident Animals of LCHS**

To always treat every animal with kindness, love and respect.

To report any illness or injury of an animal to a staff member immediately.

I have read and understand the on line LCHS Volunteer Handbook

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
LCHS Representative & Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date