

# **DROWZYDAWG RESCUE**

## **Volunteer Orientation Handbook**

Read this orientation handbook before deciding to fill out your volunteer application.

This handbook will give you the basic knowledge you need to get started on volunteering with DrowzyDawg Rescue.

## **DrowzyDawg Rescue**

(DDR) actively participates in activities of companion animal rescue, rehabilitation and adoption.

- No certain number of hours for volunteering is guaranteed to any volunteer. The DDR Volunteer Program is designed to help DDR and not to accommodate with fulfilling required hours.

## **Volunteer Program Purpose**

The volunteer program exists within DDR to help elevate the work associated with maintaining a loving, healthy and humane life for the animals in shelter and in the public that are cared for by DDR.

## **Goals of DrowzyDawg Rescue Volunteer Program:**

- To provide a framework of policies, procedures and standards for the recruitment, training, evaluation and recognition of DDR volunteers.
- To provide an orientation and training to volunteers to ensure that each person has adequate knowledge and skills to make positive experiences for our animals and volunteers alike.
- To provide volunteers a means to support DDR and its animals in the way they feel most comfortable, through direct services (exercising dogs and socializing cats) or indirect services (fundraising and sanitation).
- To increase community and individual awareness of animal issues, such as overpopulation and responsible pet ownership, by forming and maintaining a large group of volunteers committed to the common goals of DDR.

## **Objectives & Expectations of Volunteers:**

- To develop a knowledge of the humane and ethical treatment of animals.
- To directly or indirectly help with the care and socialization of animals.
- To help create a positive attitude toward the necessity of spaying and neutering through education services and public relations.

- To abide by the policies and procedures of DDR thereby presenting a positive image of DDR to the public.
- To support DDR programs and services.

### **Volunteers Can Expect:**

- To be treated fairly with consideration and respect by other volunteers of DDR and to be given appreciation and encouragement of their volunteer work.
- To have the opportunity to share ideas, thoughts and suggestions openly and honestly with the Volunteer Coordinator.
- To participate in orientations and on the job training to gain knowledge of DDR programs, services and the care and welfare of animals.

### **Volunteer Code of Conduct**

- Show genuine interest in the vision & mission of DDR.
- Be present and on time for commitments made. The animals and other volunteers rely on you to honor your scheduled shift times.
- Maintain a neat and clean appearance.
- Familiarize yourself with and adhere to DDR policies and procedures.
- Accept supervision and training and ask clarifying questions about that which you do not understand.
- Demonstrate loyalty and respect for DDR programs, services, and volunteer staff.
- Bring any concerns to the attention of the Supervisor.
- Relate observed animal behavior to the DDR staff.
- Be sympathetic to the animals and fellow animal lovers at DDR.
- Clean up after yourself and keep work areas tidy.
- Refrain from sharing negative opinions about any animals at DDR.
- Respect the confidentiality of volunteer, client, and pet owner information.

- Do not talk to the public on behalf of DDR staff unless given verbal or written consent.
- Do not remove any animals from the shelter without expressed permission of a DDR supervisor.
- Do not bring your pet to the shelter during volunteering unless given permission by a DDR supervisor.
- Do not advocate to the public for animals at DDR that are not available for adoption.
- Do not go into restricted areas unless you have been asked to do so by a DDR staff member.

## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Volunteer Qualifications:**

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, must enjoy working with and show a genuine concern for the welfare of animals, and have a willingness to work hard, get dirty, and pitch in wherever help is needed if physically able. Volunteers must have the ability to meet assignments promptly, reliably and with flexibility. Volunteers who work in direct contact with animals must exhibit a willingness to learn about animals and how to properly interact with them.

***The ideal volunteer is self-motivated, mature, sensitive, dependable and a team player.***

**Volunteer Requirements:** Volunteers must complete a basic orientation session before reporting to their first shelter assignment or shelter sponsored event. Volunteers must be able to perform the tasks they have signed up for. Volunteers should check with their doctor if they have any health questions or concerns related to volunteering and working with animals.

**Hours of Operation:** Although there is staff in the shelter to care for the animals every day, we are a privately run shelter and therefore open only by appointment.

\*All volunteer hours must be pre-scheduled.

**Time Commitment and Scheduling:** Volunteer commitments are essential to our success whether walking dogs at the shelter or volunteering at an event. Once you have agreed

and committed to a task or shelter sponsored event, we count on you to be there. If you are unable to show up for the shift or event, please contact the shelter as soon as possible.

**Volunteer Hours:** The Volunteer Program for DDR is designed to help DDR and provide community outreach. Therefore, while help is welcomed, and often needed, we cannot guarantee any specific number of hours requested by applicants, and will schedule volunteers based on the shelter's needs and availability.

**Sign In & Out:** It is very important for all volunteers to sign in and out for their volunteering. This is helpful for record keeping, scheduling, as well as the volunteer having a record of the # of hours they have donated.

**Taking a Break:** Volunteers may take breaks during volunteer shifts, after informing the volunteer coordinator and signing out if required.

**Dress Code at DDR:** For volunteer safety, the following items may not be worn while volunteering; shorts, slip-on shoes (flip-flops, clogs, etc.) or open-toe shoes. We strongly recommend that volunteers do not wear hoop earrings and long necklaces as these can cause injury to you or the animal that you are handling.

**Storage of Personal Items:** Please only bring the items you need for your volunteering. DDR is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

**Cell Phone Use:** Cell phone use must be limited to emergencies only. This includes calls and text messaging. Volunteers are not of assistance to DDR staff and animals if they are preoccupied with their personal electronic devices. Please ask for a break if you need/want to spend time on your phone.

**Earbuds/Headphones:** For everyone's safety, volunteers may only wear one ear bud/headphone and keep the other free to hear the people and animals in your surroundings.

**Volunteers Taking Photos:** Volunteers may take photos in the shelter only after given permission from a DDR supervisor.

**Confidentiality:** Any personal information about staff, volunteers, clients, and pet owners, including names, addresses, phone numbers, etc., is confidential and should never be discussed with anyone other than DDR staff.

**Professional Conduct:** When interacting with customers, staff and fellow volunteers, volunteers should be kind, well-mannered, and helpful. DDR is committed to a safe and friendly work environment.

**Harassment:** DDR maintains its policy forbidding and disciplining any form of harassment to DDR visitors, volunteers, and staff members. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to report any possible harassment they encounter or experience to the volunteer coordinator or a DDR supervisor.

**Animal Handling:** Only handle animals that you have been given permission and training to handle. When handling any animal, use the least amount of restraint necessary and treat them with respect and care at all times.

**Reporting an Accident or Incident:** All animal- and non-animal related accidents, injuries, illnesses, and near misses must be reported to the volunteer coordinator immediately.

**Drug and Alcohol Use:** Volunteers may not report to volunteering tasks under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs. Volunteers need to be educated on the effects of their prescription/non-prescription medications and how it may impair their ability to perform volunteer work safely.

**Smoking:** To protect the animals, staff, and volunteers, smoking is not allowed in or at the DDR facility or during outside volunteer duties including dog walks.

**Misappropriation of Supplies:** Removal of DDR property without the expressed permission of the volunteer coordinator is not allowed.

**Conflict Resolution and Communication:** DDR operates under an open door policy. Please address all conflicts, concerns and questions to the Volunteer Coordinator and we will help you resolve any issues that may arise.

**Resignation:** If you will not be able to continue your volunteer activities, please advise the volunteer coordinator so they can adjust the volunteer schedule. Feedback on your experience as a DDR Volunteer is encouraged.

## **Safe Animal Handling**

Every volunteer in DDR will be exposed to cats, dogs, and other animals they may have to handle at some point. It is important that you know how to handle them safely and humanely.

### **~ DOG HANDLING & CARE**

While some of the dogs that come to DDR will be happy-go-lucky and easy to manage, some will not. Some may be terrified by their new surroundings, in pain from injuries or illness, or have trauma related to previous human encounters. All of these issues can cause a dog to react negatively towards a person or other animal. Many times their reaction to you cannot be known until you actually place your hands on the dog. We ask that you

approach every dog with caution and be aware that a dog's reaction to you can change in an instant.

### **Approaching Dogs**

Dog bites do happen. As a volunteer in an animal shelter, you are at risk of being bitten. Volunteers should take every precaution to avoid and prevent dog bites. Here are some precautions to use:

- Approach dogs slowly, calmly, and use a soothing voice, looking at them but not in their eyes.
- Try not to tower over the dog or use a high pitched tone with new dogs.
- Ask or call for help if you feel you are at risk.
- Keep in mind that some dogs give no signs of aggression, before they bite.
- If a dog is giving "unwelcoming" signals (stiff body or trembling, cowering, head low, a hard stare or wide eyes, growling, lunging, showing teeth, etc.) immediately stop what you are doing and back away.
- Do NOT turn your back on an angry dog; back away from them slowly instead.
- Keep all dogs on a leash or confined to their dog kennel.
- Whenever possible, do not walk dogs past each other if you are unsure of their reactions to other dogs on leash.
- If you think a dog is going to bite, try to put something between you and the dog, such as a chair, fence, or even a jacket.
- Should a dogfight start while you are handling a dog, if possible and safe, try to separate the dogs by pulling with the leash. NEVER get between fighting dogs or try to physically stop a fight. Go and get help from one of the DDR staff immediately.

### **Dog Walking: By appointment**

#### **Preparation:**

- Volunteers must have a valid driver's license on file before taking a dog on a walk.
- A DDR staff member will get an adoption dog ready for you to walk.

- All dogs must go out on leash, with a martingale collar and tags, a head halter if the dog pulls, and an “Adopt Me” vest if not pending adoption yet.
- Grab dog waste bags before walks and dispose of them in designated containers after use.

### **During the Walk:**

- Volunteers may take dogs on “away walks” to a trail or park, with prior permission, or they may walk dogs on the path inside the shelter fence.
- Do not allow dogs to eat, drink or roll on anything from the ground.
- ALWAYS keep the dog’s leash and collar on them during walks.
- Please be courteous to private homes and properties by keeping the dog out of yards and driveways.
- Encourage good behaviors when out on walks by:
  - Keeping the dog at a heeling length
  - Having the dog sit at cross walks and when encountering other dogs.
  - Dogs should not be encouraged or allowed to bite their leashes, even during play, as this may lead to dog-on-human bites and is destructive to the leash.

### **~ CAT HANDLING & CARE**

While some of the cats that come to our shelter will be very friendly and easy to manage, some will not. Some may be terrified by their new surroundings, in pain from injuries or illness, or have trauma related to previous human encounters. All of these issues can cause a cat to react negatively towards a person or other animal. Many times their reaction to you cannot be known until you actually place your hands on the cat or in its area. We ask that you approach every cat with caution and be aware that a cat's reaction, just like a dog, can change in an instant.

### **Approaching Cats**

Cat bites and scratches do happen. As a volunteer in an animal rescue, you are at risk of being bitten or scratched. Volunteers should take every precaution to avoid and prevent cat bites and scratches. Here are some precautions to use:

- Do not attempt to handle a cat that has shown any aggression or fear such hissing, swatting, biting, tail-twitching, or its ears lying flat back.



- Report any bites or scratches immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator or Kennel Supervisor.

### **Cat Socializing**

Our shelter cats long for love and attention. You can help us and the cats by spending quality time with them. This special one-on-one time allows for play, brushing, and positive reinforcement. Key points to remember while visiting the cats:

- Only visit with cats that you have been instructed to visit with.
- Visiting takes place in designated rooms only. Only DDR staff can transport animals through the building.
- Use hand sanitizer before and after visiting a room. If needed shoe covers are provided.
- Stay calm and quiet - we don't want to add stress to our cats' lives.
- Use cat toys appropriately and do not use your hands, sleeves, or other clothing for cats to play with.
- Inform staff of unusual animal behavior or potential medical problems you notice.
- If a cat gets loose, try to close off any nearby doors to prevent it from getting away farther. Do not try to catch a running cat (this could result in an injury to you and/or the cat). Immediately get staff assistance to confine the cat to its room again.
- Do not get in the middle of cat fights. Let a staff member know if any take place. An injury may have occurred that only one of our vet techs can determine.

### **~ GENERAL: Feeding**

All dogs and cats are fed once or twice a day, as recommended by our veterinarian. Unless otherwise directed, volunteers are not to feed the dogs. You may however give the dog a shelter-provided or approved treat, unless there is a medical reason that the dog may not have them.

### **Reporting**

Please report any odd behaviors or changes in an animal's health to the Volunteer Coordinator or Kennel Supervisor.

### **Bites/Scratches**

Preventing bites is not only important to your health and well-being, but to the animal's as well. There is a difference between play-biting and aggressive biting. Even so, every bite

and scratch must be reported to staff as soon as it occurs; so it is in everyone's best interest to avoid bites altogether.

**If you are bitten:**

- Immediately secure the animal.
- Inform the Volunteer Coordinator or Kennel Supervisor immediately.
- Wash the wound completely and thoroughly with soap for a full five minutes.
- If there is bleeding apply pressure to the wound.
- Fill out an Incident Report Form. You will be asked to describe the circumstance of the bite.
- Depending on the severity of the bite you will be directed to see your doctor or go to the nearest medical clinic or emergency room.
- The Kennel Supervisor will evaluate the animal and situation to determine if further steps or actions need to be taken.

**Disease & Prevention**

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that humans contract from animals. The most effective means of preventing zoonosis is to:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap, especially after handling any animal and prior to eating or drinking.
- Wear gloves when cleaning (especially when cleaning up waste and litter).
- Immediately disinfect scratches and bite wounds.
- Let your physician know that you work closely with shelter animals.

Some of the illnesses that humans can catch from dogs and cats include:

- Giardiasis (Beaver Fever)
- Infections including Cat Scratch disease
- Rabies

You should not let this list alarm you, but rather remind you that you are volunteering in a hospital-like environment where these organisms often exist. Just as you can catch illnesses from dogs and cats, you can also unknowingly carry illnesses home to your pets.

The most effective means of preventing the spread of illness to your pets (or from your pets to our shelter animals) is to:

- Make sure that your own animals have all of their vaccinations up to date.
- Let your veterinarian know that you work with shelter animals.
- Change your shelter clothes before socializing with your animals at home, and vice versa.
- Check the soles of your shoes before leaving the shelter to ensure you are not tracking feces into your car and home.
- Even better, designate a pair of shoes to be your "shelter shoes" and take them off before entering your home.

### **Signs of Illness:**

Maintaining the health of our animals and helping prevent the spread of disease is everyone's job. If a shelter animal shows any signs of illness, read the kennel card to see if the symptom has already been noted and is being treated. If it has not, or if you notice that previously observed symptoms have gotten worse, immediately notify the shelter staff.

Watch for symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Eye discharge
- Nasal discharge
- Sneezing / coughing
- Anorexia (loss of appetite)
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Dehydration
- Abnormal gait or muscle control
- Excessive salivation
- Aggressive or unusual behavior

### **Other Volunteer Opportunities at DDR**

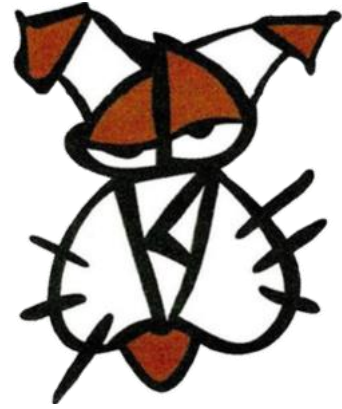
#### **Volunteer Dog Walkers:**

Regular exercise is important for dogs. A walker provides a dog at our shelter the opportunity to get out and stretch its legs, play and obtain a bit of training. Walkers may volunteer anytime during shelter business hours. By donating even a half hour once or twice a week, you can help make the stay of a shelter dog more enjoyable until a new home can be found. Dog walking takes place by appointment only.

#### **Kennel Assistant Volunteers:**

Kennel Assistant Volunteers help with the daily care of the animals in the shelter and maintaining shelter cleanliness which includes helping with dishes, laundry, sweeping, etc.

\*While volunteering as a Kennel Volunteer you may also do a dog walk or socialize cats between tasks!



**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the DrowzyDawg Rescue Volunteer Orientation Handbook; that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions; and I agree to abide by DDR policies and procedures when volunteering.

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_