



Volunteer Orientation Handbook

Greensburg Decatur County Animal Shelter

1635 W. Park Rd. Greensburg, IN 47240

812-663-9081

gdcas@decaturcounty.in.gov

HOURS

Sunday – Closed

Monday – Closed

Tuesday through Friday 12 - 4

Saturday – 11 – 2

MISSION STATEMENT

“To provide a safe haven for animals while humanely enforcing responsible pet ownership, a concern for animal welfare and their environment, and a commitment to make a difference through education.”

Welcome to the Greensburg Decatur County Animal Shelter (GDCAS)!

We appreciate your interest in volunteering your time and energy to help us advance animal welfare in Decatur County. Together, we can accomplish our goal of being a model animal shelter.

This volunteer handbook will introduce you to our mission, vision and community services and explain some important rules for our volunteers. While this information will get you started on volunteering with us, some volunteer positions require more training and time than others.

We respect your time and skills and strive to make your experience with us productive and rewarding. We encourage regular participation and dependability in all our volunteers. We utilize Signupgenius.com to schedule volunteers, as well as notices on Facebook when urgent needs arise. Please understand that when you sign up to volunteer in a specific time slot, we are depending on your help at that time.

MISSION AND GOALS

The Greensburg/Decatur County Animal Shelter prevents cruelty to animals by operating an animal shelter for homeless, abandoned and unwanted animals; by operating an adoption center for healthy animals; by investigating cruelty and abuse cases; and by educating the public in animal ownership responsibility.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteering at GDCAS requires responsible and caring people committed to our mission and procedures. We welcome your help and want your experience with us to be satisfying and rewarding. GDCAS has procedures and guidelines for volunteers in order to create a seamless working relationship for volunteers, staff and most importantly our animals.

Guidelines:

- Volunteer Agreement/Waiver containing release of liability must be signed by all volunteers and/or parent/guardian.

- We encourage you to ask staff if you have any questions. Please follow staff directions. Address problems, questions or suggestions with the shelter director.
- **Information regarding the animals in our care must be held in strict confidence for their protection. Volunteers must not disclose information about the animals' history, records, or the clients we serve. Please refer questions to the staff members. Remember, not all animals here are available for adoption.**
- Although we appreciate extra hands, we cannot allow volunteers to bring along a friend or family member with them to volunteer unless they have completed the GDCAS volunteer waiver, received and reviewed the orientation handbook and been properly trained for their assigned task(s).
- Community Service volunteers are accepted on an individual basis. Approval from the Shelter Director must be obtained prior to starting community service at the GDCSA.
- All volunteers understand and agree that:
 - Inappropriate language will not be tolerated
 - Using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited while volunteering at the GDCAS or any sponsored event.
 - No flip flops or open toes shoes are permitted in the kennels
 - Appropriate attire is required: long pants, shirt with sleeves and shoes or boots. No shorts, sleeveless/tank tops. No offensive or obscene graphics on clothing.
 - Any bite, either to an animal or person, must be reported to a staff member. (A "bite" is defined as damage from an animal's teeth that breaks the skin.)
 - Will NOT attempt to disrupt or break up ANY fight between animals.
 - Immediately get a staff member if fighting occurs.
 - Will NOT handle any animal whose cage is marked by a "DO NOT TOUCH" sign.
 - Report any abusive behavior in the shelter (towards individuals or animals) to the Shelter Director.
 - Verbal or physical abuse to shelter volunteers, staff or animals will not be tolerated.
 - Volunteer involvement may be terminated at any time at the discretion of shelter staff.
 - Services in a volunteer capacity are performed without any expressed or implied promise of a salary, employment benefits, or reimbursement of any kind.
- Volunteer Agreement/Waivers expire after one year. Annual renewal is required to continue volunteer status.
- Volunteers may discontinue or change status by notifying the Shelter Manager
- Follow guidelines and procedures set forth in this manual.
- Volunteers should support the GDCAS and its mission 100%.

A note for volunteers under 18:

There are some restrictions for minors. Every minor must have a signed volunteer form on file before interacting with animals. Any minor under the age of 15 **MUST BE ACCOMPANIED** by a parent or guardian. While dealing with dogs, you must get permission from a staff member before walking a dog and an adult must always be in control of that dog. Unless you are fulfilling service hours for school, we expect you to arrive at the shelter ready to work at your assigned time.

Procedures

- **Volunteers must be working with an Employee of the Shelter at all times.**
- Please observe all signs/warnings on cages and kennels.
- **DO NOT interact with any animal that has a warning sign.**
- Please report any animal that shows signs of illness.
- If you are injured while volunteering, you must report it to the shelter manager immediately.
- Please refer to our volunteer sheets hanging in each of the rooms to assure all of the items are attended to.

Media Relations

- Volunteers are prohibited to post to social media or speak to them on behalf of the GDCAS.
- Always refer questions from the media to the shelter director.

Guidelines for working with the public

- Volunteers always represent the GDCAS.
- There is no such thing as a “personal opinion” on an animal welfare issue while volunteering.
- The public will interpret your opinion as the official policy of GDCAS.
- People will naturally have questions. No one is expected to be an authority on everything.
- When asked questions regarding GDCAS policies and practices, get the question and contact information, and give it to the shelter director immediately.
- If an angry or disrespectful person, who has an issue with GDCAS confronts you, respond calmly. Notify the shelter director immediately.