Potsdam Humane Society

Volunteer Handbook

Contact Information

265-3199
17 Madrid Ave.
Potsdam, NY 13676

potsdamhumanesociety@verizon.net
www.potsdamhumanesociety.org

Hours of Operation

Adoption Hours:
Monday-Friday 1pm-5pm
Saturday 12Noon-4:00PM
CLOSED Sundays

Volunteer Hours:
Monday-Saturday 8:00AM-4:30PM
Saturday 8:00AM-4:00PM

Note: Hours may be abbreviated on holidays
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Potsdam Humane Society
Mission Statement
Founded in 1957, the Potsdam Humane Society (PHS)* has been providing love and humane care for unwanted, abandoned and sick animals in Potsdam and surrounding areas for more than 50 years.

With the support of the Potsdam community and thirteen surrounding townships, PHS delivers services and protection to over 1,200 cats, dogs and other animals each year. The compassionate, humane care you help us provide also makes our community better, as the kindness we extend to animals reflects back into our own lives.

PHS aspires to find a home for all animals that find their way to our doorstep, and to ensure that none of them will ever lose their lives due to lack of space or the resources to care for them. We welcome your support and assistance in achieving these goals, and in continuing a 50-year tradition of humane and compassionate care for the animals we share our lives with, here in our own hometown area.

PHS is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization under New York State law. The IRS has designated it as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations to PHS are tax-deductible.

Potsdam Humane Society Staff

Alysia Wells Maynard - Licensed Vet Tech
Regina Caswell - Licensed Vet Tech
Bonnie Peryer - Reception/Clerical
Shelter Support Staff:
   George Rose, Jessica Slapar, Chad Zeller, Sharon Ober, James Sullivan, Michelle Korbel,
   James Miller, Stacie Purves
Potsdam Humane Society Policy, Services and Programs
(2011-2012)

It is the policy of PHS that all animals in our care receive the following:

- Medical & Behavioral Evaluation
- Age appropriate inoculations, including rabies vaccinations
- Spay and neuter
- Behavioral Modification, as needed
- Flea, tick and ear mite treatment, deworming and canine heart worm testing & preventative
- Nail clipping & grooming
- For canine licensing purposes, town clerks will be notified of all claims and adoptions related to their townships
- Micro chipping

Programs & Services:

- Compliance with Agriculture & Markets Laws pertaining to strays, bite quarantine, dangerous dogs and licensing
- Owner surrenders for residents of contracted towns as space allows
- Pre & Post- Adoptive Services
- Animal Behavior Consultations
- Spay and Neuter Assistance
- Community Service & Volunteer Opportunities
- Public School & Community Education programs
- Foster Program
- Project S.N.I.P. – a low cost feline spay and neuter program

Community Partnerships:

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
North Country Animal Cruelty Advisory Committee
St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
Potsdam Chamber of Commerce
American Humane Association
Youth Advocate Program
Boy Scouts
St. Lawrence Co. Probation
Canton Central School SAIL Program
Humane Society of the United States
Office of the Aging
Community Performance Series
Girl Scouts
4-H
Volunteer Policies and Procedures

The Potsdam Humane Society relies on volunteer support in almost every aspect of our operations. From walking dogs to socializing sick cats to fundraising and data entry, volunteers are an integral part of our shelter.

**Age Requirement:**

All volunteers at the Potsdam Humane Society must be 16 years of age. No exceptions to this policy will be made. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times while volunteering including at orientations and trainings. Youth 16-18 years old may volunteer, on their own, with parental consent.

**Training:**

All volunteers must attend a general volunteer orientation and subsequent program specific training session. No volunteer may handle animals until they are approved and trained on shelter protocol.

**Dress Code:**

All volunteers must be in compliance with the dress code while working at the shelter and at any event where you will have direct contact with animals. The dress code is as follows:
- Long Pants preferred
- Close-toed Shoes...NO SANDALS
- T-shirt or long-sleeved length shirt
- No Jewelry preferred

**Commitment:**

All volunteers are asked to commit to an average of 2 hours per week. However, different programs have different need and we understand if this is not realistic for your volunteer position. With the exception of Foster Care volunteers, those who do not log hours for 3 months straight will be considered “inactive” and will be required to re-train as a volunteer.

**Communication:**

Each volunteer program utilizes the PHS Facebook group for communication among volunteers and staff members. This is a great way to get to know what is happening at the shelter and provide access to volunteer opportunity postings and events. Participation in the Facebook group is not mandatory but is highly recommended for all volunteers.

**Volunteer Hours:**
With the exception of foster care volunteers, all volunteers are required to log their time at the front desk when they arrive and upon leaving the facility. Volunteer hours are calculated in order to apply for grants and fund our Shelter programs, ultimately helping to save more animal lives.

_Scheduling:_

Most volunteer programs require volunteers to sign up for specific shifts. This can be done in person or by calling the shelter at 265-3199. Drop-in volunteers will be assigned duties on an as needed basis.

_Parking:_

We ask that volunteers please park in the larger parking areas to the right of the shelter as you enter in order to keep the front spaces available to adopters. Volunteers must enter through the main entrance in front.

  Please note: The main adoption doors are only unlocked after 9am

_Personal Belongings:_

It is recommended that volunteers do not bring any personal belongings into the shelter that cannot be kept on their person at all times.

_Visitors and Personal Guests:_

Only PHS approved volunteers may handle animals at the shelter. Any guests wishing to shadow a volunteer must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or Lead Veterinary Technician and will not be able to interact with the animals.

_Bite/Scratch Reporting:_

It is the policy of the Potsdam Humane Society and Public Health of New York State that all bites or scratches that break the skin, whether intentional or not, must be reported immediately upon injury. If a cat or dog bites or scratches and breaks the skin, please report directly to our receiving department to fill out the appropriate information. The injured area should be immediately washed with soap and water, and the volunteer should seek appropriate medical care from their primary care physician, if needed.

_Confidentiality:_

As a volunteer, you may have access to information and documents that may be confidential including donor information, adoption records etc. All volunteers must sign a confidentiality agreement in which the divulging of confidential information may result in termination from the volunteer program. Additionally, volunteers
may also have access to information about animals that are not yet approved for adoption. Volunteers may not disclose to members of the public any information on animals that are not yet available for adoption.

**Sexual Harassment/Discrimination:**

The Potsdam Humane Society is committed to providing a harassment-free workplace for both staff and volunteers. PHS will not tolerate any speech or conduct that is intended to, or has the effect of, intimidating, abusing or harassing any employee or volunteer because of his or her race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy applies to any person associated with the shelter.

**Drug and Alcohol Abuse:**

The Potsdam Humane Society is committed to maintaining a safe and productive working environment for all individuals. The use of drugs or alcohol by individuals associated with the PHS could create a serious threat to safe and productive operations. Therefore, to protect the health and safety of fellow volunteers, employees, the general public, and to safeguard shelter property and community image, the shelter has adopted the following Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy. Volunteers who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination from the volunteer program.

The Potsdam Humane Society prohibits the manufacture, distribution, possession, concealment, use, sale, purchase, transfer of or being under the influence of alcohol, inhalants, illegal drugs or controlled substances while on the job, including meal and break periods, on shelter premises, including parking lots, in shelter vehicles or while on shelter business, whether on or off shelter premises.

**Grievance Process:**

The purpose of the grievance process is to maintain an atmosphere of open, two-way communications between staff and volunteers, to foster an environment of trust and to resolve volunteer issues and concerns in a timely manner. You are encouraged to raise concerns directly to the Volunteer Services Coordinator as soon as possible after the event that causes the concerns.

**Volunteer Pet Adoptions:**

Adoptions for volunteers will be handled exactly like any other adoption for a Potsdam Humane Society customer. All adoptions will be treated equally whether an individual is a customer or a volunteer. All adopters must go through the application process and pay the adoption fee.

**Transmission of Disease:**

While volunteering at the Potsdam Humane Society volunteers may come into contact with diseases communicable to humans and/or to household pets. All volunteers should take care to change and wash any clothes and shoes worn after
returning home from the shelter so as not to spread disease to personal pets. Any volunteer approved to work with sick animals should be properly protecting themselves from disease, particularly those transmitted to humans. PHS recommends that personal pets of volunteers remain current on all veterinarian recommended vaccinations.

*Tax Deductions:*

Volunteers may be eligible to claim deductions on their tax returns for travel time to and from volunteer assignments. Please check with your tax professional for more information.

*Volunteer Inactivity:*

Excluding foster volunteers, volunteers will be considered “inactive” when they have not reported to a volunteer position for more than three months. Once deemed inactive, in order to return as a volunteer you will need to contact the shelter and possibly re-train.

**Thank you for choosing the Potsdam Humane Society.**

**Revised 3/2013**