



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Ryan Parks, Volunteer Coordinator

ryan@animaladoption.com, AACNJ.org, (856)435-9116

On behalf of all of us here at AAC, **thank you for volunteering!**

Revised 01/2017

DISCLAIMER

Purpose of Volunteer Policies

Volunteer policies are provided to offer guidance and direction to volunteers and staff engaged in the Animal Adoption Center’s volunteer programs. These policies are intended to clarify the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. Volunteers are not employees of the Animal Adoption Center. The Animal Adoption Center (AAC) reserves the right to change any volunteer program or policies at any time, as well as any individual volunteer’s status. Although they are valued and important, it’s worth noting that AAC volunteers serve at the convenience of management.

Scope of Policies and Procedures

Unless specifically stated, the volunteer program policies and procedures apply to all AAC volunteers, at all sites of operation.

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Welcome!

Volunteering at the Animal Adoption Center

Welcome to the Animal Adoption Center team! Your belief in supporting the homeless pets in our care will positively affect their journey to their forever homes. Simple actions we take for granted in our homes, such as walks, cuddles, treats, and play time are in high demand at our shelter. In short, your job is to help keep our pets clean, happy, and socialized.

Pets find homes, sick and injured pets recover, dogs and cats get to play, and lives are changed for the better as a direct result of your efforts!

How can I help?

Volunteers are essential to providing AAC pets with enrichment opportunities, a clean facility, and helping at offsite outings! We need all the help we can to make the lives of the pets better during their time here at AAC.

- Dog walking and socialization
- Cat socialization and play
- Volunteering at offsite events
- Helping to maintain clean kennels
- Refilling water bowls
- Creating kennel enrichment toys for dogs and cats
- Bathing, grooming, and brushing pets
- Organizing and hosting fundraisers for the shelter at the *volunteer coordinator's* or *executive director's* discretion

Do you have other ideas? We're always open to new ways to help out our pets! Run your ideas by a staff member - we'll help you help us!

How old do I have to be to volunteer?

We do not have age requirements, however we do have some stipulations for volunteers under the age of 18. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian's signature on all applicable volunteer documents and waivers. Volunteers under the age of 18 must also be accompanied or supervised by a parent, guardian, or adult while volunteering.

Volunteers under the age of 18 may not handle a dog unless it is in an enclosed play yard on AAC property. Minor volunteers must be of appropriate strength to handle a dog.

Volunteer Programs

Ryan Parks, our volunteer coordinator, is here to support all volunteers during their efforts at AAC. We have a wide range of volunteers who have all come together to support a common belief - that the homeless pets in our care deserve love, attention, and happiness during our efforts to find them forever homes. You're part of the team now, and we're here to help you find your place on that team.

Events Team

Volunteers who wish to extend their volunteer service to off-site events are welcome to join us at outreach & adoption events. During these events you are able to take a pet out for a few hours to help them get exposure outside of the shelter so they have the opportunity to meet potential forever families. To sign up, you can use your *Volgistics* log-in to schedule yourself, or email Ryan Parks directly at ryan@animaladoption.com

Pet Pals

The Pet Pal program is a great opportunity to provide enrichment and socialization with specific dogs or cats that may need extra attention. To be considered a *Pet Pal*, you would come in on a regular basis to provide your assigned pet with exercise, socialization, and help them get exposure (such as taking photos of them, taking them to outreach events, and many other methods). The purpose of being a pet pal is to make individual pets more adoptable by going the extra mile to give them love, attention, and exposure.

Volunteer Mentoring (Trial program in 2017)

Our volunteers are all here because we share a common goal, and having volunteers with different experiences coming together to help one another can make achieving our goals *tremendously* easier. This year we will be starting a new program that will allow volunteers to work side-by-side and help one another.

We know that, as a new volunteer, it can be overwhelming to take in all of the information you need during the orientation. Your first few days helping at the shelter can be intimidating. The volunteer mentoring program will help you communicate with other volunteers, and set up times to shadow an experienced volunteer at the shelter. This can help volunteers quickly learn the best and proper ways to help with our dogs and cats. Our volunteer program has a lot of great potential if we stay connected with one another to share knowledge and experience!

Kennel Rosters

In the dog kennel and in the cat kennel, our staff provides a roster of all of the pets here at the shelter. Each pet has a color designation that serves the purpose of guiding each volunteer to a pet that they can interact with.

Dog Color Designations

Brown: All volunteers who have been through orientation can interact with these dogs.

Volunteers who have taught how to walk dogs may take these dogs out of the kennel.

Blue: Volunteers who are efficient at handling dogs, and are completely comfortable with our rules and procedures, may ask the volunteer coordinator for permission to walk these dogs. Once you are given permission to walk *blue* dogs, you may continue to do so.

Black: Volunteers are not permitted *at any time* to walk dogs designated as *black* on the dog roster. These dogs are still completing the intake process, and must go through their medical and behavioral evaluations.

Red: This is a very rare color designation to see on the dog roster. However, if you do see this color, they are to be handled by *staff only*. No volunteers, no matter their experience level, are permitted to interact with these dogs.

Cat Color Designations

Green: All volunteers who have completed orientation can handle these cats.

Blue: These cats may be difficult to handle. Volunteers should be completely comfortable with our rules and procedures, and must be confident and competent with our cats. Volunteers may handle these cats with permission from the volunteer coordinator or feline care manager.

Black: Volunteers are not permitted to handle cats designated as *black* without permission from a staff member, or specifically instructed to handle them. These cats are new, and are still being monitored and evaluated.

Red: These cats are to be handled by *staff only* or experienced volunteers who have been clearly given permission to handle them.

All volunteers are encouraged, and expected, to use the kennel rosters as a form of communication between yourself, the staff, and other volunteers. Please pay attention to all signs or instructions written on the boards.

Important Things to Know

After completing the orientation, AAC volunteers are expected to maintain a level of independency while assisting at the shelter. Please familiarize yourself with and abide by all AAC policies and procedures as presented during orientation and training. Review any written materials provided by AAC, including all signs, posters, or memos posted in the shelter.

General Information

Please be mindful of staff time and responsibilities, and do not unnecessarily disrupt their work. Remember that we are always here to answer questions and assist you if needed, but may have issues that require our immediate attention.

Please be respectful to all volunteers, staff members, adopters, and to the public. This rule is vital to our shelter and how we operate. Negative or disruptive behavior can be detrimental to our shelter's mission and customer service. We are all on the same team, and should act as such.

Volunteers are expected to refer potential adopters, supporters, or volunteers to a staff member if they have any questions about our policies or adoptable pets. This is to ensure that they are receiving accurate and up-to-date information.

What should I wear?

Proper clothing is required while working with our pets. This rule is in effect for your own safety while assisting in our kennel and with our pets. Apparel such as flip-flops, shorts, and other clothing that expose skin to potential scratches are not recommended. Excessively short, tight, loose, and revealing items are prohibited – including dangling jewelry and offensive language or logos.

Recording Volunteer Service

Volunteers must track their volunteer service using Volgistics (our volunteer database). All volunteers are provided with a pin number at the end of the volunteer orientation, and will be taught how to sign-in to the system. For several reasons, including emergency planning, all volunteers must sign in and out when entering and leaving the building.

Emergency Action Plan

The map of evacuation routes and instructions for evacuation are posted next to every exterior exit in the building. Please make yourself familiar with their content, and be prepared to act accordingly in the event of an emergency. A copy of the shelter's full Emergency Action Plan is available for review in the reception area.

Evaluations

Everyone will have the opportunity to advance as a volunteer at the coordinator's discretion. As volunteers become familiar with our facility and policies, they may be trained for tasks such as walking dogs, and taking pets to offsite events. New volunteers are considered probationary until they have reached 10 hours of service. Furthermore, volunteers must track their service hours in Volgistics to advance as a volunteer. Contact the *volunteer coordinator* for training.

Restricted Areas

Certain areas at the shelter are labeled as staff only for safety and security reasons. These areas may contain medical supplies or shelter documents. Volunteers are restricted from staff only areas unless specifically instructed to enter.

Volunteers are not permitted behind the front desk, or into the office, unless asked to do so. Entering the medical room is prohibited unless accompanied by a staff member. Furthermore, volunteers are not permitted inside of the dog kennel food room at any time.

Zoonotic Diseases

Zoonotic diseases are those that can be transmitted from animals to humans and may be introduced or present within the shelter at any time. Potential agents of zoonotic disease transmission include fungi, bacteria, viruses, parasites and arthropods. The most important means to preventing disease transmission include: washing hands frequently, especially before eating or smoking, wearing long-pants and closed toed shoes, wear gloves when handling litter pans, food or water dishes or when cleaning up feces, urine or vomit and staying up-to-date with tetanus vaccinations. Persons with suppressed immune systems or other medical conditions may be more susceptible to zoonotic disease. If you have questions or concerns, we urge you to speak with your physician about your risks.

Incident & Accident Reporting

All injuries and accidents must be reported to the volunteer coordinator, kennel manager, or the executive director so that the appropriate incident forms may be completed, including insurance documents and bite reports to be filed with the Health Department. Failure to report an injury or accident may result in loss or suspension of your volunteer status. If you are bitten or scratched, wash the injured area with soap and water immediately and contact a staff member. Please contact your physician with any medical concerns.

General Conduct

Respectful Behavior

As a member of the AAC team, you are a representative of the Animal Adoption Center brand and image and are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner. You must be respectful and courteous in your interactions with the public and staff. Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior, harassment of any kind, threats, disparaging remarks, discrimination, or vulgar language will not be tolerated. You may be asked to cease your volunteer work as a result of such conduct. This expectation of conduct applies to online and written material as well as interactions with staff, volunteers and members of the public.

Tolerance Policy

AAC's clientele is widely diverse in race, language, socio-economic status, education, background, and other factors. AAC maintains a policy of treating all clients with respect and accepts that most people love their pets, even if they do not have the same resources to care for them as other owners might. As an AAC volunteer, you will be asked to set aside negative assumptions, for example, about owners of unaltered pets or whose pets are not living in conditions or cared for in ways that are unfamiliar to you. The assumption that owners of unaltered pets or those whose pets are living in what you feel are less than ideal conditions are irresponsible or uncaring is generally inaccurate.

Confidentiality and Privacy Policy

AAC volunteers may have access to confidential information (e.g., name, address, financial information) about the organization's clients, donors, fellow volunteers, and families that adopt pets through our organization. It is of the utmost importance to AAC that this information is maintained at the highest degree of confidence, and that it is accessed only on a need-to-know basis. For that reason, unauthorized use of confidential information may result in loss or suspension of volunteer status.

Tobacco-Free Workplace

The AAC is dedicated to providing a healthy and comfortable work environment for our employees, volunteers, and visitors. Smoking is not permitted in any company building or vehicle. Smoking is prohibited while handling pets. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, clients, and visitors. Smoking is permitted in the designated smoking area.

Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace

In order to provide a safe, healthy, and encouraging work environment for our employees, volunteers, and visitors, the use, possession, trade, or sale of alcohol, illegal drugs, or intoxicants is prohibited.

Veterinary Drugs

The AAC utilizes federally controlled substances for certain veterinary procedures. Any unauthorized possession, use, or theft of those substances is grounds for loss or suspension of volunteer status.

Behaviors That Will Result in Termination of Your Volunteer Status

There are certain behaviors or actions that *will* result in the immediate termination of a volunteer for reasons of personal and pet safety, confidentiality, and maintaining a positive image. In short, we ask that volunteers keep themselves, and the pets, safe during their service, and respect the privacy and reputation of the shelter and all people involved in AAC business. There are no exemptions to the following rules.

- Causing injury, distress, or death by inappropriate handling of a pet;
- Disregarding safety or security policies and procedures;
- A negative or unhelpful demeanor;
- Disregarding shelter staff's directions or requirements, or interfering with staff / shelter operations.
- Theft or removal of AAC property (including sheltered pets);
- Unauthorized possession of weapons on AAC premises or while on AAC business offsite;
- Violating the client confidentiality policy;
- Acting on behalf of the organization without authorization;
- Attempting to diagnose or treat an AAC shelter pet in opposition to staff directives;
- Contacting staff members outside of business hours;
- Contacting board members without notifying AAC staff, or without the board member's permission.

The work we do here requires cooperation, enthusiasm, and good cheer. Our mission is most successful when supported by selfless, hardworking, and humble individuals who are here for the benefit of the pets. If you're volunteering to agitate for change, forward a personal agenda, or concern yourself with one (or one type) of pet to the exclusion of others or the shelter's mission, this may not be the correct program for you. Remember, we are all part of a team with a common goal of enriching the lives of adoptable pets, and helping them find forever homes.

Company and Personal Property

Equipment provided by AAC should not be taken for personal use or removed from the AAC, unless approved for use in off-site volunteer activities. Use caution and safeguard any personal belongings brought to AAC or off-site locations. The AAC cannot reimburse you for lost or stolen property.

Workplace Harassment Policy

AAC intends to provide a professional environment that is pleasant, welcoming, and free from intimidation, hostility, or other offenses. Unlawful harassment of any sort will not be tolerated, particularly against employees or volunteers in protected classes. These classes include, but are not necessarily limited to race, color, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status; veteran status, or any other protected status defined by law.

Any volunteer that becomes aware of an incident of harassment must report it to an AAC staff member, who will report it to management. AAC management, once aware of any incidents of harassment, will take prompt and appropriate action, up to and including suspension or termination of volunteer status.

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What is Harassment?

Unlawful workplace harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to, words, signs, offensive jokes, cartoons, pictures, posters, e-mail jokes or statements, pranks, intimidation, physical assaults or contact, or violence. Harassment is not always sexual in nature. It may also take the form of other vocal activity including derogatory statements not directed to the targeted individual but taking place within their hearing. Other prohibited conduct includes written material such as notes, photographs, cartoons, articles of a harassing or offensive nature, and taking retaliatory action against an employee or volunteers for discussing or making a harassment complaint.

Working with AAC

News Media Requests

AAC is occasionally in the news, and sometime representatives from the media will ask volunteers for interviews or information while they are on duty. Volunteers should inform the media representative that they are a volunteer and cannot speak on behalf of the agency. Volunteers should direct any media requests to a staff member. The term “media” includes all TV, radio, print, film, video, internet, or other outlets, as well as reporters, producers, photographers, and anyone else associated with these media.

Brand Use & Social Media

AAC understands that many of its volunteers have personal blogs, Facebook accounts and other social media profiles or accounts. To ensure information is not misinterpreted as official AAC communications, please do not use the AAC’s logo as a part of an identity photo for any social media account, website, blog or other communications. Likewise, please do not use the AAC’s name in or as a part of personal email addresses created by email services, as this may be misinterpreted as an official AAC email communication by the receiver. The AAC name and logo may only accompany official AAC communications, unless permission is granted by AAC.

Representation of AAC

Volunteers should take care not to present themselves as representatives of the AAC and may not enter or make any contractual or financial agreements on behalf of AAC. Volunteers are not permitted to use AAC's logo or name on electronic or printed materials without permission. Furthermore, volunteers are not permitted to create a partnership or coalition on behalf of our shelter without permission. All public statements, whether written or verbal, that are representing AAC must be made by a staff member. Finally, volunteers are prohibited from lobbying individuals, organizations, or government bodies on behalf of AAC.

Photographs & Video

Periodically, volunteers are asked to be included in photographs and/or video for marketing purposes; permission for the use of your image is implied as part of your volunteer agreement.

End of Assignment

We hope that you find your volunteer experience rewarding and enjoyable, and that you will remain with us in support of the adoptable shelter pets here at AAC. If you do find it necessary to resign your volunteer assignment, please contact Ryan Parks (ryan@animaladoption.com), our Volunteer Coordinator. We understand that the ability to volunteer changes throughout a person's lifetime, and we promise not to make you feel badly about moving on! Additionally, we may ask you for a brief exit interview before you go – your feedback helps us to improve the volunteer experience.

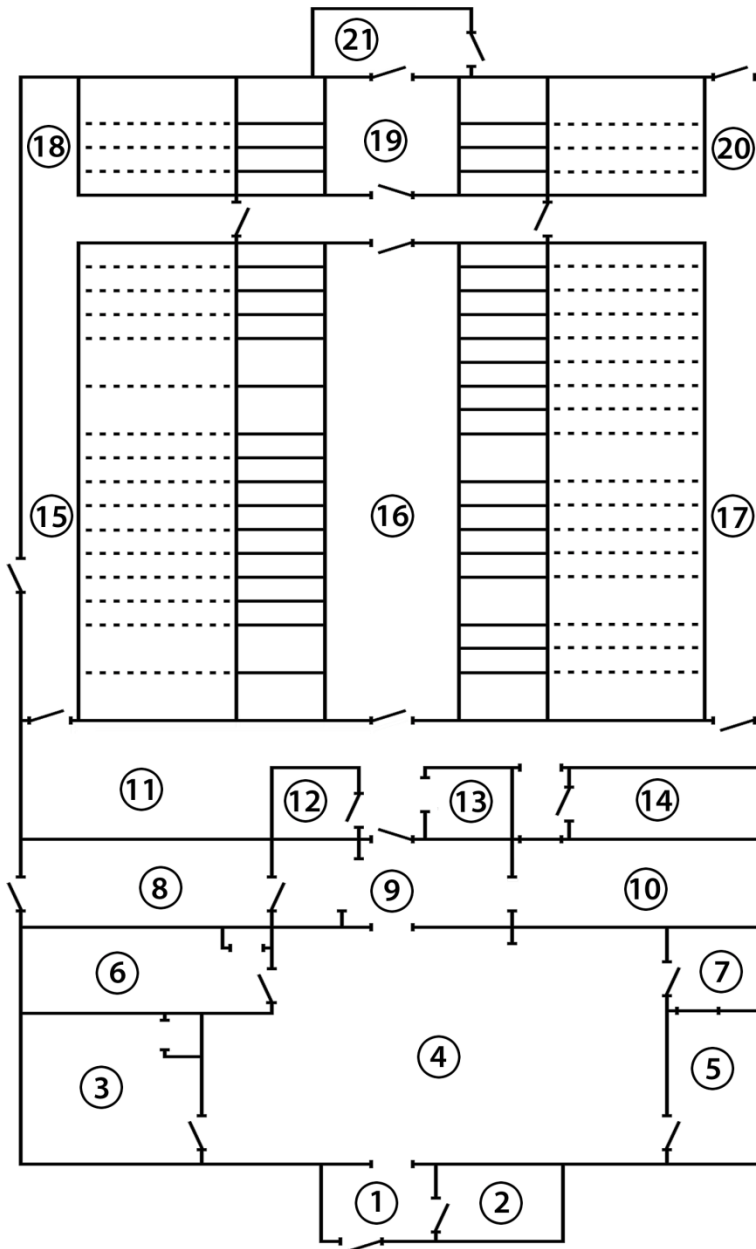
On what we anticipate to be very rare occasions, it may be necessary to coach, counsel, or ultimately ask volunteers to relinquish their status. In the case of the latter, it would only be for the benefit of the pets in our care, the remaining volunteers and staff, or the volunteer themselves.

Thank you for reviewing our program, and we hope to see you soon!



ANIMAL ADOPTION CENTER

501 N BERLIN RD LINDENWOLD, NJ 08021 ANIMALADOPTION.COM 856.435.9116



1. Entrance
2. Rest Room
3. Office
4. Lobby
5. Medical Room
6. Cat Room
7. Community Cat Room
8. Boiler Room
9. Linen Room
10. Laundry Room
11. Staff Room
12. Rest Room
13. Storage Room
14. Kitchen
15. Main Kennels South (Outside)
16. Main Kennels (Inside)
17. Main Kennels North (Outside)
18. VIP Kennels South (Outside)
19. VIP Kennels (Inside)
20. VIP Kennels North (Outside)
21. Utility Room

To Our Volunteers

It is our responsibility to make the health and safety of our pets and the people who interact with them our primary concern. As a volunteer and part of our team, you are expected to make this priority your own. These rules have been developed and must be followed to ensure the safety and well-being of the pets in our care. Please make yourself familiar with the following:

Kennel volunteers must be at least 18 years of age and of appropriate strength to manage any dog they might handle. The Kennel Manager has sole discretion in allowing volunteers to handle any individual dog or group of dogs at any time. Her word is final on this issue.

If you're not completely comfortable walking a particular dog, despite your level of experience or the dog's color designation, *do not take it out*.

Treats may be given to dogs in moderation. Volunteers may give a reasonable number of treats when interacting with a dog. Please be aware of signs on a dog's kennel, or on the kennel board, that may indicate if a dog *cannot* have a treats.

Volunteers cannot, under any circumstances, interact with a dog who has not been medically or behaviorally evaluated. Please refer to the *Kennel Roster* section of the handbook to learn how to identify these dogs.

While handling a dog, only volunteers or staff members are permitted to interact with that dog. If a customer wants to meet with the dog, it must be staff supervised.

The shelter's liability insurance covers our dog walking activity up to 1000' away from the building (approx. 400 paces). That is the limit of your walking area. Additionally, we no longer walk dogs into the neighborhoods surrounding the shelter. Please walk the dogs on the road behind the shelter (Carlton Ave). This is the quietest area without an excess of cars, distractions, or foot traffic. This route cuts down on unavoidable interactions.

Last but not least, *always* be sure to clean up after the dogs you are handling. Whether it is in our park, on the road, or at an event, volunteers are required to clean up any messes that the pet may leave. Bags are available at the shelter by the exits, in the boiler room, or at the front desk. If all else fails, ask the *volunteer coordinator* for bags to clean up after the dogs. Scoopers are available in the park as well.

To Our Volunteers

It is our responsibility to make the health and safety of our pets and the people who interact with them our primary concern. As a volunteer and part of our team, you are expected to make this priority your own. These rules have been developed and must be followed to ensure the safety and well-being of the pets in our care. Please make yourself familiar with the following:

Do not pick up, move, or otherwise handle a cat you are not comfortable with, or who is expressing any visible negative reaction to being touched. If needed, find a staff member to assist.

A reasonable, healthy amount of treats can be given to the cats when you are interacting with them. Please be aware of signs that may indicate that a certain cat should *not* be given treats.

Do not let multiple cats out of their cages in the cat room for play groups without first checking with a staff member to make sure they all get along.

Be sure the doors to the community cat room remain closed. Make sure the cat kennel door is closed when there are cats exercising in the room.

Only allow staff or volunteers to interact with a cat that you are handling. All other interactions must be supervised by a staff member.

All customer inquiries must be referred to a staff member. This is to ensure that adopters are provided with accurate information. This will help place cats in a home that is best suited for them.

Report to a staff member anything unusual you notice about your cat as it may indicate a medical issue. Health concerns may be noted on the clipboards just outside the Medical Room.

The Feline Care Manager has the final say in any decisions regarding the care or handling of the cats, the status or privileges of any volunteer, or any issue regarding feline shelter operations. Staff members will respect your opinion and will take your advice into consideration, but staff decisions are final.



ANIMAL ADOPTION CENTER

501 N BERLIN RD LINDENWOLD, NJ 08021 ANIMALADOPTION.COM 856.435.9116

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

After reviewing this handbook, please read the following statements, sign below, and return one copy to the Volunteer Coordinator to be included in your file.

Understanding and Acknowledging Receipt of the AAC’s Volunteer Handbook: I have received a copy of AAC’s Volunteer Handbook. I acknowledge it is my duty to read and understand the contents of the handbook. I understand that the policies and benefits described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of AAC and at any time. I agree to maintain this Volunteer Handbook and attach any future additions or modifications hereto.

I further understand that all AAC volunteers, including myself, are here at the discretion of the AAC staff, managers, and Shelter Director. This means that the volunteer relationship can be terminated by me or AAC at any time, for any reason, without cause or prior notice. I understand that the policies and procedures of the AAC are not binding, do not constitute a contract of employment between AAC and its volunteers, and do not constitute any type of promise or agreement of any kind by AAC. I also understand that the information contained in this handbook may be revoked, withdrawn or changed by AAC at any time and are not intended to affect in any way either the right of AAC or of any volunteer to end the relationship at any time for any reason. AAC reserves the right to change the terms or conditions of volunteering without notice to, or consultation or agreement with, any participant.

I understand that this handbook supersedes all previous handbooks, manuals and other oral or written directives. I understand it is my responsibility to attach any revisions or changes to the content of this manual if provided by AAC staff.

Behaviors That Will Result in Loss or Suspension of Your Volunteer Status: I have read and understand the AAC’s list of inappropriate behaviors. I understand that my role as a volunteer can be ended or suspended at any time at the discretion of the AAC staff, managers, and Shelter Director.

Policies on Harassment and Tolerance: I have read and understand AAC’s policies on harassment and tolerance contained in this manual, and agree to abide and be governed by such policies and any revisions made to them.

Policies on Tobacco, Drugs, and Alcohol: I have read and understand AAC’s policies on tobacco, drugs, and agree to abide and be governed by such policies and any revisions made to them.

Policies on Dog and Cat Handling: I have read and understand AAC’s policies on dog and cat handling, and agree to abide and be governed by such policies and any revisions made to them.

Print Name	Signature	Date
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Please note: minor volunteers who are under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian signature on this form.