



Hawkesbury City Council

attachment 2
to
item 106

Hawkesbury Companion Animal
Shelter Volunteer
Handbook

date of meeting: 25 June 2019
location: council chambers
time: 6:30 p.m.

Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

Volunteer Handbook





This document contains important information.
If you do not understand it, contact the
Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.



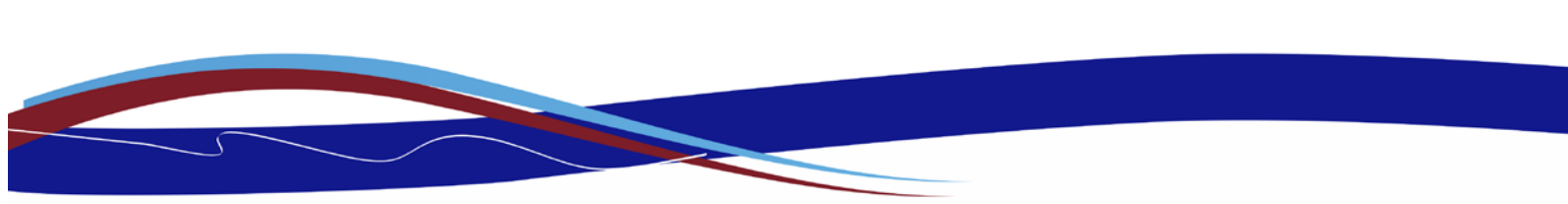
Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

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2pm-4:30pm
Saturday 9:30am-11:30am
Sunday 7am-9am
Public Holidays 7am-9am



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Introduction

Hawkesbury City Council welcomes you as an Animal Shelter Volunteer.

Congratulations on being chosen as a volunteer. We hope your experience as a volunteer is a valuable, fulfilling and rewarding one that brings additional care to the animals.

This handbook is designed to help you settle in quickly and easily and become familiar with your surroundings, our policies and procedures, our services and other useful information.

Please retain this document for your future reference.

Animal Care and Wellbeing Program – Statement of Purpose

The Animal Care and Wellbeing Program is designed to enhance the quality of life for Hawkesbury City Council's animals at the Companion Animal Shelter (the Shelter). At any one time, there could be as many as 27 impounded dogs and 41 sale dogs. The cattery houses up to 60 cats and kittens.

The animals are behaviourally assessed, vet checked and selected for the sale program or given to rescue groups. Before being re-homed, the animals reside at the Shelter and are housed in kennels. These animals need to be exercised (walked) daily to ensure they remain happy and healthy.

The volunteers only carry out work that is over and above tasks undertaken by staff, prior to the animals being re-homed. The tasks to be carried out by volunteers include:

- Walking, grooming and washing dogs available for adoption
- Socialising and grooming cats
- Assisting staff with cooling the dogs
- Refer customers to staff to manage potential sales.
- Support customer and dog interaction by vacating the runs

Expectations

This handbook is designed to ensure that all volunteers have the knowledge necessary to meet the expectations required of them as outlined below:

- Operate under the program's guidelines.
- Adhere to Council's policies and procedures.
- Work in a safe manner.
- Recognise the significance of the role played by the volunteer.
- Understand how much Council appreciates the work of the volunteer.



Volunteer Screening Procedure

- All volunteers will be interviewed before being allowed to become a volunteer and will be required to undergo reference checks.

Duties of Volunteers

Job Description

Each potential animal volunteer will be provided with a copy of the job description which outlines the duties of the volunteer position. All volunteers should be aware that they should act in a professional and responsible manner at all times by:

- never walking an animal they are not 100 per cent confident handling
- never walking more than one animal at a time
- referring customers to staff for service
- reporting any concerns about the safety or welfare of the animal to the Animal Shelter Team Leader
- abiding by Council policies and procedures.

Volunteer Rights

Volunteers can expect:

- to receive training
- a clear job description that outlines what is expected of you and to whom you are responsible
- information about Council policies and procedures
- insurance cover by Council
- to be recognised and thanked for contributing your valuable time and assistance.

Volunteer Responsibilities

You in return will agree to commit to the following:

- Be loyal to Council by upholding its values and standards and performing your duties according to its policies and philosophies.
- Undertake training provided to help you perform your activities more effectively.
- Outline clearly any tasks which you do not feel comfortable with so they can be reallocated.
- Provide constructive feedback and suggestions to Council's Volunteer Coordinator and staff so the volunteer program can continually be improved.
- Be supportive and encouraging to other volunteers.
- Be fair to yourself and to Council's Shelter by not becoming over-committed.



Termination

A volunteer's service will be discontinued if:

- Council receives notice from the volunteer of their resignation
- Council considers the volunteer has acted contrary to the Volunteer Code of Conduct or Council's Code of Conduct, the Volunteer Handbook or Council policies and procedures.

Grievance Procedure

Should you be unhappy about any aspect of your treatment by staff, and your efforts to resolve the matter directly with the parties involved have not been successful, you are invited to make a complaint to Council's Volunteer Coordinator. If after making the complaint, you are not satisfied with the outcome, contact Council's Manager Regulatory Services. A complaint will receive a reply and a resolution within twenty one working days.

Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination

Volunteer workers have responsibilities under Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Legislation.

Responsibilities include:

- treating all people with respect
- accepting others' rights to different ideas
- not harassing others by offending, humiliating or intimidating (this includes sexual and racial harassment)
- not unlawfully discriminating against others.

Under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* it is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of:

- sex
- race
- age
- marital status
- parental status
- pregnancy or breast feeding
- impairment
- religion
- political belief or activity
- trade union activity
- lawful sexual activity



Safety Procedures

Workplace Health and Safety

Council is committed to the safety of its people. To meet this commitment, Council will, as far as practicably possible, ensure that all employees, volunteers and customers are safe from injury and personal risk while at work or when using Council services.

Continual audits of our management systems and practices will identify our successes and opportunities for improvement. In addition, Council will assess the overall effectiveness of its policies and procedures against appropriate performance criteria and make the necessary improvement to our risk management system.

Safety procedures will be implemented, maintained and reviewed in consultation with our employees, volunteers and others directly affected by our operations.

Council's employees, including volunteers, will be trained in accordance with our standard safe work procedures and workplace health and safety directives.

Duties and Obligations

It is the duty and obligation of every person employed by or volunteering for Council to identify and report hazards within their workplaces, to work safely and to promote Council's safety policy. All levels of management, together with staff and volunteers, will be responsible for identifying hazards, implementing controls to minimise risks, monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of Workplace Health and Safety.

Accidents and Incidents

If you have any type of accident, or suffer an injury of any kind when you are performing your duties as a volunteer with Council, you must report this by completing an accident report form (available at the Shelter) as soon as possible.

Shelter Site Induction


After volunteers have attended the WH&S induction, they are required to attend a Shelter Induction Program. This induction covers Council policies & procedures, WH&S site induction, equipment and general information for the volunteers prior to starting volunteering.

Dealing with Difficult People

Volunteers faced with an angry or dissatisfied customer should immediately refer the customer to Council's Volunteer Coordinator or staff member. In the course of referring the customer, try to remember the following key points:

Listen: Be understanding and attentive and do not attempt to defend the issue which has caused the anger, whatever your own personal view.

Empathise: Without necessarily agreeing or apologising, be empathetic to the point of view of the customer. It is useful to say such things as "I understand what you are upset about".
Be soothing.



Confirm and follow up: Write down the complaint as expressed by the customer and repeat (read) it back to the customer. Let the customer know what action you will take as a result of their complaint, eg “I have written down your complaint and I will report it. You will receive a written response to your concerns.”

Handling Dangerous Situations

If you are confronted with a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation, for example abuse or violence or threats of violence, or any situation which may likely result in harm to yourself or to others, take the following action:

- Phone the Police on 000.
- Advise Council's Volunteer Coordinator.

At no time should you place yourself at risk.

Your own safety should be your priority at all times. If it is the safest course of action you should leave the area and seek help.

If you are unable to remove yourself from immediate danger, listen to the aggressive person and try to be sympathetic and calming in your response. If possible try to establish a clear description of the aggressive person so this can be reported to police.


Volunteer Code Of Conduct - *(Please refer to separate document and notes below).*

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to inform volunteers of the standards of conduct required. Volunteers are expected to act honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith at all times when carrying out their duties and in their relationships or interactions with other people.

Expected Behaviours

At all times, we expect volunteers to:

- carry out duties and responsibilities in a safe, efficient and competent way
- maintain a good standard of dress (ie neat and presentable, and reflective of Work Health & Safety guidelines)
- comply with lawful and / or reasonable direction, instructions and policies
- respect the access to information and only use information for the purposes for which it is intended
- only use property or funds for authorised purposes
- maintain the confidentiality of any information obtained while volunteering
- observe safety procedures
- keep yourself and others safe at all times
- notify the Shelter about hazards or potential hazards in the working environment
- notify the Shelter about any accident, incident or damage to property
- not create any liability for Council
- not act in any way that may bring the Shelter or Council into disrepute (including the use of email, social media and other internet sites engaging with media)

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- not make public comment on Council affairs without the approval of the General Manager or relevant Director. Public comment includes interviews with the media, public speaking engagements, and expressing views in letters to the media or in notices, articles posted on social media sites or any other medium
 - not seek or accept offers, gifts, rewards or benefits
 - engage in any activity that may cause physical or mental harm of another person / animal
 - not be affected by alcohol, medication or non-prescription drugs while volunteering
 - not provide false or misleading statements, declarations or claims
 - not falsify or change documents / records
 - not engage in any activity that may damage the Shelter
 - not engage in criminal activity while at the Shelter.

Conflicts of Interest

Volunteers should avoid situations that may lead to conflicts of interest by:

- Consulting with Council's Volunteer Coordinator before undertaking other roles in organisations whose goals, purposes or activities conflict with Council / Shelter
- Making sure your other commitments do not conflict with the performance of your duties at the Shelter
- Advising Council's Volunteer Coordinator if a conflict exists, occurs or could possibly occur

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Code of Conduct may lead to a notification of unacceptable behaviour and a warning or the immediate end to your services as a volunteer. Repeated breaches of the Code of Conduct will lead to the immediate end of your services as a volunteer.

Declaration

I have read and understand the information in this document, and I agree to follow the Code of Conduct during my time as a volunteer.

Name

Signature

Date

