



**HUMANE**  
DUBUQUE REGIONAL  
**SOCIETY**  
COMMUNITY OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE



# New Volunteer Handbook

## **Mission**

Support, enrich, and connect animals in need to the people that love and care for them.

## **Vision**

The Dubuque Regional Humane Society envisions a community where all animals are treated with respect and compassion, and companion animals have a permanent and loving home.

## **Visiting Hours**

**Monday** – Closed to public  
**Tuesday - Friday:** 12pm - 6pm  
**Saturday:** 11am - 5pm  
**Sunday:** 1pm - 4pm

**4242 Chavenelle Road, Dubuque, IA 52002**  
**563.582.6766**

# Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the  
Dubuque Regional Humane Society!

*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they  
just have the heart.”~Elizabeth Andrew*

## Who Can Volunteer?

- Those 16 years of age and older who meet ALL independent volunteering criteria are able to volunteer with the DRHS independently
- Individuals unable to meet independent volunteering criteria & those ages 12-15 can join if supervised by parent/guardian (18+) who has also attended orientation and trainings
- Volunteer supervisors & volunteers should be a 1:1 ratio unless otherwise approved

## Independent Volunteering Criteria

For the safety and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and animals at DRHS, all volunteers age 16+ serving independently or supervising others must possess several key abilities.

### **Volunteers must:**

- Complete the online application, liability waiver AND orientation process before serving; **this includes parents, guardians, mentors, and direct care service providers**
- Enter building through the front door and leave the building at time of close unless otherwise approved by staff (use of side door if closed to public)
- Be responsible for transportation to or from the DRHS or any DRHS event
- Follow, respect, and adhere to shelter policies and procedures, as well as human/animal populations, stances on wildlife, humane euthanasia, and other animal welfare issues
- Read and adhere to all signs posted around the shelter
- Complete tasks independently with little to no supervision
- Communicate issues or concerns likely to affect your volunteer duties; ask for support when needed
- Respectfully accept feedback, direction, and supervision from staff and other volunteers
- Interact respectfully, professionally, and calmly with volunteers, staff, and the public
- Serve a minimum of 1 hour per month to maintain their active status

# Independent Volunteering Criteria (Continued)

## **Volunteers must:**

- Adhere to Volunteer Dress Code:
  - Wear close-toed, non-slip shoes at all times
  - Name badge must be worn and clearly visible at all times
  - Present a positive appearance (no obscene/offensive tattoos or clothing)
  - Wear jewelry at your own risk while volunteering; keep in mind the safety of animals, self, and others. Be sure items do not interfere with productivity
- Be comfortable in a loud, odorous environment with potential of getting clothes dirty
- Withstand possible exposure to zoonotic diseases, such as ringworm and mange
- Carry out the duties listed in your volunteer position description
- Immediately report to management any hazards, bites, scratches, or incidents
- Refer all challenging inquiries to staff members; **NEVER offer training/medical advice**
- Refrain from entering 'Staff Only' areas unless otherwise instructed by staff
- Respectfully uphold and positively represent the DRHS mission, in and out of the facility
- Be punctual, accountable, and responsible for your performance
- Refrain from using your cell phone while performing volunteer service
- Logos and trademarks may not be used without DRHS's consent
- Give notice if you wish to leave the organization

***If volunteers are found to be out of compliance with any policies or procedures, volunteers may be dismissed from the volunteer program. Volunteers or the DRHS may terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time.***

## **Scheduling and Recording Service**

- Schedule all volunteer service at least 24 hours in advance through the sign-up calendar on your volunteer portal (log-in for portal can be found at <https://www.dbqhumane.org/volunteer>)
- Email Volunteer Coordinator if you have questions at [volunteer@dbqhumane.org](mailto:volunteer@dbqhumane.org)
- Record volunteer hours accurately and appropriately; grants and funding are awarded based on program strength and hours volunteers provide the DRHS

## **Recording Service:**

- Volunteers will sign in on the computer located in the volunteer lounge using your unique PIN (located on the back of your name badge)
- Follow prompts and allocate your hours to the correct service task
- Sign out before leaving your shift

# **DRHS Programs & Services**

## **Adoptions**

The DRHS cares for thousands of animals each year. Adoption fees vary based on species and age. To adopt, a prospective adopter will fill out an adoption application, which is screened by staff. All cats and dogs adopted from the DRHS are spayed/neutered, current on vaccinations, and microchipped.

## **Rehoming by Appointment**

Rehoming by appointment gives us an opportunity to meet with previous owners, gathering medical and behavioral information, providing resources, and offering alternatives to rehoming.

## **Lost and Found Animals**

The DRHS returns hundreds of lost animals to their owners each year. This is mainly due to rabies tags and the DRHS policy to microchip every cat or dog adopted out. The DRHS creates lost reports for those who call in with a lost pet. The DRHS is contracted with the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County, Grant County and Jo Daviess County to house stray animals.

## **Pet Pantry**

Financial difficulties due to job loss or change in family status are among the top reasons why owners rehome their pets. The DRHS continually strives to find ways to keep pets with their families. All pet food and cat litter donated to the shelter supports our Pet Pantry program, allowing community members to receive assistance.

## **Discount Adoption Programs**

We are a proud partner with our local Veterans Freedom Center, which enables us to offer our “Vets Need Pets” program. The program offers veterans \$50 off a cat or dog adoption with their military ID. The DRHS also offers a variety of adoption specials throughout the year to provide discounted adoption fees.

## **Hadley's Dog Park**

Hadley's Dog Park is the first and only private, member-only dog park in the Dubuque Community. The park is open year-round and features over an acre of green space allowing dogs to run, play, and socialize. The park is located on Kinsey's Campus at the Dubuque Regional Humane Society and membership fees help thousands of shelter animals find forever homes every year.

# **Incoming Animals**

The DRHS has an open admission philosophy and therefore accepts all animals in our jurisdiction regardless of health, age, breed, or temperament. The DRHS only performs humane euthanasia for animals too ill or injured for treatment or those animals who pose a major health or safety risk to potential adopters.

## **Stray Animals**

Stray animals are housed in areas not accessible to the public. Stray animals are held for several days, giving owners ample time to claim them before being evaluated and prepared for adoption.

## **Rehomed Animals**

Community members may call our shelter to schedule an appointment with our Community Care Representatives to discuss their situation, receive alternatives to rehoming, and ultimately offer the DRHS vital animal information to find success in their future home.

## **Transported Animals**

The DRHS may work with different national animal welfare organizations to transfer animals in or out, so they may have a greater opportunity to find loving homes.

Some animals in the building may not be available for adoption. These include animals with any infectious disease, or animals whose temperament has not been tested. We cannot predict when or if these animals will become available. Please be aware of all signage on cages that indicate what animals are restricted. If a prospective adopter should show interest in one of these animals please direct them to the front desk.



# Volunteer Opportunities

The DRHS has a variety of volunteer opportunities spanning every department including animal care & enrichment, front desk assistance, maintenance, community events, fundraising, marketing, bookkeeping, etc. Volunteers are able to help out in every capacity at DRHS. Key opportunities are listed below.

## Shelter Crew

All new volunteers start off as Shelter Crew members. **Shelter Crew volunteers do not have any animal contact.** The initial 3 hours (minimum) following orientation are to familiarize volunteers with our organization, staff, and the animal cleaning procedures of the DRHS. Volunteers should be willing to learn from and work hand-in-hand with staff, have strong initiative and perseverance, and have the long-term goal of helping promote the health and wellbeing of all animals in the care of the DRHS.

### **Duties:**

Volunteers will be under light supervision while completing the “Shelter Crew” hours from both staff and other volunteers. Once these 3 hours have been completed, volunteers will become eligible to partake in additional volunteer opportunities (i.e. handling animals, helping in the clinic).

### **Laundry, Grounds, Shelter Training**

- Wash/fold/put away laundry, throw away damaged bedding and toys, sweep/mop laundry room
- Scoop outside play yard, replace waste station garbage, wash scoops
- Sweep/Mop hallways, wash glass doors and windows, wash baseboards and walls throughout building
- Office assistance as needed: stuffing letters, assembling adoption packets, etc.

### **Community Outreach**

- Learn Pet Pantry process, accept/log/put away donations
- Assist at off-site outreach events and fundraisers

### **Canine Care**

- Restock food and supplies, clean food cart, sweep/mop canine areas, clean mop closets as needed, wash dishes, complete enrichment activities

### **Feline Familiarity**

- Restock food and supplies in front cats and back holding, clean food cart, sweep/mop feline adoption mall and back holding, wash dishes, complete enrichment activities

### **Trained Handler**

Trained Handlers assist staff in providing high-quality animal care and enrichment, while following all current procedures. Following completion of 'Shelter Crew' requirements, volunteers become eligible to attend a training session to learn about behavior, handling techniques, and basic obedience. These trainings are offered every couple of weeks and are in-person at the shelter

**Duties:** include all Shelter Crew duties, as well as:

- Socialize and exercise adoptable animals using consistent handling techniques
- Maintain sanitary kennel, building, and outdoor environment by cleaning up after animals
- Professional approach to interacting with staff, volunteers, guests and animals
- Model ideal conduct and handling techniques, assisting Shelter Crew volunteers

### **Customer Care Representative Volunteering (Front Desk)**

- Volunteers can assist in a variety of tasks; assembling informational materials for potential adopters, scanning documents, entering data, etc.
- Volunteers interested in helping at the front desk should reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@dbqhumane.org](mailto:volunteer@dbqhumane.org) so proper training can be scheduled

### **Animal Meets, Fundraisers, and Off-Site Events**

- Raise awareness, help fundraise, and offer DRHS services while aiding in finding forever homes for adoptable animals.
- Volunteers pick up/drop off booth items and adoptable animals (must be trained to do so), tend to adoptable animals during the event, and promote DRHS services by sharing the information in a personable and accurate manner

### **Foster Volunteer**

Some animals require individualized focus to care for specific needs until eligible for adoption. Animals requiring foster homes could orphaned kittens/puppies, nursing mothers, those recovering from surgery, or requiring additional emotional/behavioral support. The DRHS provides food/treats, bowls, kennels, litter & boxes, comfort items, medical treatment, and medications. Compassionate and dedicated candidates must complete a foster application, be approved by our Foster Coordinator and allow a home visit prior to bringing animals into your home.

**To learn more or apply to become a foster, visit our website at  
[www.dbqhumane.org/foster-program](http://www.dbqhumane.org/foster-program)**

# **Volunteer Rights & Resignation**

Despite disclaimers, your web interaction can result in negative public opinions about the DRHS, its partners, supports, and contributors. To keep the DRHS and animals in our care from adverse effects caused by statements or social media postings, please keep the following information in mind.

## **All volunteers have the right to:**

- A safe work environment
- Be respected and appreciated
- Receive proper training and orientation
- Ask questions, request additional information/training, make program suggestions
- A written copy of volunteer responsibilities, policies, and procedures
- Resign Respectfully

## **Your Legal Liability**

- Volunteers are legally liable for anything said, written, or presented online. Make any post clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the organization and simply as a member of the community
- Speak respectfully about the DRHS, our current and potential employees, visitors, partners, and competitors
- Do not share copyrighted materials or confidential or proprietary information about the DRHS including but not limited to trademarks, animals not available for adoption, disposition of any animals, sales, finances, employees, volunteers, adopters, organizational strategies, or any other information not publicly released by the DRHS
- Unfounded, misinformed, defamatory, or derogatory content; pornographic, harassing, or libelous statements can create a hostile work environment and are viewed unfavorably by DRHS which can result in volunteer termination
- The DRHS cannot be held liable for damaged, lost, or missing personal belongings

## **Resignation/Dismissal Policy**

- If you choose to leave the DRHS volunteer program, temporarily or permanently, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator
- Volunteers will be marked inactive if they do not meet the minimum 1 hour served per month
- If volunteers are found to be out of compliance with any policies or procedures, volunteers may be dismissed from the volunteer program
- Volunteers or the DRHS may terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

The Dubuque Regional Humane Society (DRHS) operates as a no-kill, open admission animal resource and adoption center. We never euthanize healthy, treatable animals for lack of space, length of stay, or any other reason not in their best interest. We strive to affirm that the Tri-State area is a compassionate, humane community.

## **Where does the DRHS receive funding?**

The DRHS is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We receive over 70% of funding through donations. The remaining funding is secured through sale of services, grants, special events, contracts for specific services, and to a lesser degree, adoption fees. We are not funded federally, by the state or county, and are not part of, governed by, nor do we report to any other national animal welfare organizations.

## **Does the DRHS only accept dogs and cats?**

The DRHS accepts and handles a wide variety of companion animals, in addition to dogs and cats. We frequently receive hamsters, Guinea pigs, rabbits, birds, ferrets, and rodents. We also accept reptiles, amphibians, etc. Sometimes the DRHS receives exotic animals we are unable to care for, in which case alternative rescue groups are contacted.

## **What are the Five Freedoms?**

Freedom from hunger and thirst by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor. Freedom from discomfort by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area. Freedom from pain, injury or disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment. Freedom to express normal behavior by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind. Freedom from fear and distress by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

## **Can I bring my family or friends to join while I volunteer?**

Volunteers are asked not to bring guests to volunteer unless they have also completed the application, liability waiver, and New Volunteer Orientation. There may be times where guests are invited - always check in with the Volunteer Coordinator if unsure.

## **More Questions?**

When in doubt, ask! We are happy to help. Visit our website at [dbqhumane.org](http://dbqhumane.org) or contact our Volunteer Coordinator at 563-239-9227 or [volunteer@dbqhumane.org](mailto:volunteer@dbqhumane.org).



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# New Volunteer Timeline

Fill out online  
application

Complete  
orientation\*

Sign liability waiver  
(must be handed  
in on first day of  
volunteering)

Once status is changed from  
'applicant' to 'active' by  
Volunteer Coordinator\*\*,  
schedule service and begin  
volunteering as Shelter Crew!

Begin service as a  
Trained Handler  
and work directly  
with animals!

Eligible to attend Trained  
Handler Certification  
(for dogs, cats, & critters)

3 hours (minimum) of  
completed Shelter Crew

\*Orientation process includes  
watching orientation video, reading  
Volunteer Handbook, and  
completing knowledge-check quiz

\*\*Volunteer Coordinator will review  
knowledge-check quiz results within  
3-5 business days and volunteer will  
receive a confirmation email

If you have questions,  
please reach out to the  
Volunteer Coordinator

### **Handbook Acknowledgment/ Receipt**

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions made to it. The Volunteer Handbook describes important information about the DRHS, and I understand that I should contact the Volunteer Coordinator regarding any unanswered questions. Accordingly, either I or the DRHS may terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time. This handbook and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of my service with the DRHS. I understand all policies and practices may be changed at any time. All changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

### **Release of Liability Waiver**

I hereby authorize the Dubuque Regional Humane Society (DRHS) to seek Emergency Medical Treatment in case of accident, injury or illness. I acknowledge my understanding that the handling of animals and other volunteer activities may place me in a hazardous situation and could result in injury and I assume that risk. I agree to hold harmless the DRHS and any employees and/or members of the Board of Directors of said agency from any liability whatsoever arising from my participation in the DRHS Volunteer Program. In consideration of being allowed to participate in the DRHS Volunteer Program, I hereby release the DRHS, its employees, officers and directors from any liability for injuries I might receive in my volunteer activities on behalf of the DRHS. I certify that the above information given is accurate and true. I understand that I must complete the Volunteer Orientation process and sign a Volunteer Agreement before I will be allowed to volunteer for the DRHS. As a volunteer of the DRHS, you may have access to confidential information, which is not generally known to or accessible by the public. Disclosure of confidential information is not permitted. This non-disclosure applies during and after your volunteer time with the DRHS. Any copying, reproducing or distributing of confidential information in any manner must be authorized by management. Confidential information remains the property of the DRHS. Understanding that public relations are an important part of a volunteer's activities on behalf of the DRHS, I hereby authorize the DRHS to use any photographs of me in its possession for public relation purposes.

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Volunteer Signature

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Date

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Volunteer Name (print)

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Guardian Signature (if volunteer is under the age of 18)

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Date

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Guardian Name (print)