



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

March 27, 2023

Version 5

The Outer Banks SPCA, a 501(c) 3 tax-exempt corporation, proudly staffs and manages the Dare County Animal Shelter. Financial Information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement:

The Outer Banks Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OBXSPCA) is a community resource dedicated to domestic animal rescue, adoption, assistance, and education.

Our Vision Statement:

The OBXSPCA will promote innovative animal welfare, cultivate a responsible and humane animal care community, and find all adoptable animals' homes.

The OBXSPCA is an open-admission animal shelter dedicated to caring for the unhomed and surrendered animals of Dare County. As such, we take in approximately 2,000 dogs and cats each year. We never turn away a Dare County fur resident, whether they be sick, injured, aggressive, or behavior challenged. The OBXSPCA accepts owner surrenders, as well as lost, stolen, or stray animals.

The organization endorses the mission of supporting every healthy, treatable and behaviorally manageable animal in finding a second chance at love. The OBXSPCA is dedicated and determined to save every life we can through responsible animal care practices. We strive to maintain good health and a sound temperament in all our animals. The OBXSPCA provides behavioral education to new owners and employs proactive adoption programs to find animals a home as quickly and safely as possible.

The Outer Banks SPCA's goal is to save the lives of all healthy, treatable and manageable dogs, cats, and additional animals in need of assistance in our community. Our organization offers multiple levels of spay and neuter assistance to our community. We strive to educate, not to eliminate all of our potential adopters and implement progressive animal adoption programs in our ongoing effort to save more lives.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Office Hours

Saturday and Sunday: closed

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm (Naptime 1:00pm-2:00pm)

Adoption Hours

Sunday: closed

Monday - Friday 11:00am - 5:00pm (Naptime 1:00pm-2:00pm)

Saturday by Appointment only

****Owner surrenders are by appointment only**

SHELTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone

Office Number: 252-475-5620

Email:

General Information: info@obxspca.org

Volunteering: volunteer@obxspca.org

Website:

<https://www.obxspca.org/>

Mailing Address:

Outer Banks SPCA

PO Box 2477

Manteo, NC 27954

Physical Address:

378 Airport Road

Manteo, NC 27954

OBXSPCA OPERATION POLICIES

Violence in the Workplace

The OBXSPCA and the County of Dare are committed to providing a safe and productive work environment for its employees that is free from violence. There is a ZERO tolerance policy towards workplace violence.

For purposes of this policy, workplace violence includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, threats, physical attack, domestic violence or property damage and includes acts of violence committed by employees, clients, customers, relatives, acquaintances or strangers against anyone or shelter property or in the course of conducting shelter business. Possession of firearms or other weapons by volunteers is expressly prohibited.

All volunteers are responsible for helping to maintain a violence free workplace by cooperating with and respecting coworkers and others in the course of conducting shelter business. Any employee who witnesses or experiences an act or threat of violence should report this act or threat to the shelter Director, Volunteer Coordinator, and/or see a member of staff to get in contact with the aforementioned individuals. In accordance with this policy, all reported threats of violence will be investigated and, depending upon the outcome of the investigation, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The OBXSPCA and the County of Dare are committed to providing a safe and productive work environment for its employees that is free from the effects of alcohol and illegal drugs for its employees and volunteers.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol, or the consumption of alcohol in the workplace, and/or during work time is strictly prohibited on the premises. In addition, the Outer Banks SPCA prohibits the off-premise abuse, possession, use, distribution, manufacture or sale of illegal drugs, when such activities adversely affect job performance, safety or may be inconsistent with public service or detrimental to our operations. The off-premise use and or abuse of alcohol is prohibited when it affects job performance or safety.

Any volunteer involved in illegal drug activity or determined to be using, or possessing, or to be impaired by, illegal drugs or alcohol on County premises and/or during work time shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations of criminal drug statutes occurring in the workplace will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Community Events: Public relations for the OBXSPCA while outside of the shelter. This can include animal care while at events (walking, cuddle time, etc), supervising animal meet and greets with the public, discussing the mission and ways to support the OBXSPCA, answering questions related to the organization and its operations. Community events can also include fundraising activities. Raising community funds help provide animals with the “extras to make their stay with us as much like home as possible.

Dog Walker: Socializing and walking with dogs; engaging animals and working with their social skills improves temperament and potential adoptability. Dog walkers are also welcome to play with their pups in the outdoor play area directly in front of our facilities. DO NOT let dogs into the large, furthest play area, this is reserved for the county dog park and is not for OBXSPCA use.

Grooming: Involves washing, brushing, nail trimming, and associated aesthetic work with the animals to help them put their best foot forward when meeting families. The grooming salon is the second door on the left of the front office desk.

Housekeeping: Housekeeping helps day to day activities in the shelter run smoothly with all the hustle and bustle around the shelter. Housekeeping entails (but is not limited to) laundry duties, sweeping the front office area, wiping down windows, mopping floors, and taking out the trash. Cleaning materials, including rags, Windex, trash bags, and gloves is to the left of the front office desk. Brooms and dustpans can be found in the storage closet inside the laundry room and in the storage areas of Kennel 1 and Kennel 2. Please return any unused materials when finished with activities.

Litter Pickup: The OBXSPCA does its part for the environment (and wild animals) too. Litter pickup involves grabbing a trash bag and gloves (found in the storage closet to the left of the front office desk) and walking the shelter perimeter to pick up any litter that might have wandered out of the facility. Trash can be disposed of in our dumpster, located to the back left of our property.

Cat Squad: Those feline inclined can volunteer with our cat squad! Kitty volunteers can be involved with, but activities are not limited to, cardboard litter box setup, cat feeding, enrichment activities, sweeping, and treat assembly.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Volunteer Requirements

- Must be 18 years of age or older. Any volunteers under the age of 17 years old must have their parent or legal guardian complete the *Underage Volunteer Liability Waiver*. All volunteers under the age of 16 years old must be accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.
- Complete all orientation and training requirements
- Follow all Volunteer Department guidelines and policies
- Disregard of volunteer requirements could result in permanent dismissal from the volunteer program

Dare County Animal Shelter appreciates volunteers who can commit to a consistent schedule, but are grateful for any time you can donate. The time and talent of animal-loving volunteers is essential to providing care for shelter animals, and finding them new homes. Volunteers improve the quality of life for the animals whether working directly with the animals, behind the scenes, or in public.

While we realize and respect that volunteers are often very busy people and we welcome you to help whenever you are able, we would greatly appreciate being able to schedule our volunteers to make the most efficient use of the help we have. Reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator, to organize a consistent schedule.

Volunteer Prerequisites

- Ability to operate autonomously and for periods of time without supervision
- An understanding and passion for animal welfare issues and/or openness to learn about these topics
- Strong verbal communication and ability to communicate effectively with others
- Ability to work independently and within a team
- Knowledge of Compassion Fatigue and how to remain emotionally sound
- Customer service and public engagement skills
- Attention to detail
- Ability to lift at least 15 pounds
- Ability to stand/walk for extended periods of time

Volunteer Benefits

- Spending time with animals who need love and attention
- Career experience in animal care, management, volunteer outreach, interpersonal communication, etc.
- Discount on Outer Banks SPCA merchandise
- Animal handling, care, and husbandry expertise

Volunteer Training

- Application: Prospective volunteers complete a Volunteer Application on the shelter's website. Pending approval, applicants are invited to attend Volunteer Orientation. Applicants are also asked to read the Volunteer Handbook in preparation for the meeting.
- Volunteer Orientation: During this meeting held at the OBXSPCA, applicants learn more about the organization and volunteer programs.
- In-Shelter Training: In this hands-on training, volunteers learn the tasks and procedures for working in their chosen program. This training session is led by a staff member or experienced volunteer who will provide the training, knowledge, and skills needed to participate in a particular program. Volunteers should not work in a program or assist in an area of the shelter in which they are not trained.

Shelter Etiquette

- Volunteers should be courteous of staff requests and directions at all times.
- Please be polite and respond courteously when speaking with visitors and staff.
- To diminish stress for both animals and volunteers, please utilize calm, quiet, and polite verbiage while in the shelter
- If unsure of an answer, policy, or procedure, please communicate with the Volunteer Coordinator. If they are not readily available, ask the shelter manager on duty.
- The Volunteer Coordinator should be contacted if there has been a negative confrontation between volunteers and/or staff members.
- If a media representative approaches you while at the OBXSPCA, direct them to the front desk representative or a staff member.
- Any problems/mishaps should IMMEDIATELY be relayed to staff and/or the Volunteer Coordinator to be handled ASAP

Approved Equipment

Volunteers will only use equipment that is approved by the OBXSPCA. Necessary equipment will be given to volunteers when they arrive for their scheduled shifts. This includes (but is not limited to) martingale collars, slip-lead leashes, harnesses, Easy Walk harnesses, Gentle Leaders or halters. For proper instruction on fitting these pieces of equipment, please see a staff member. We absolutely prohibit the use of choke chains, prong collars, shock collars or any other piece of training equipment that causes pain.

Disciplinary Procedures

If a problem arises concerning the performance or behavior of a volunteer, the OBXSPCA has established formal procedures to ensure that the volunteer in question is treated fairly and in a consistent and sequential manner. At any point in the process, the volunteer may approach the Volunteer Coordinator with concerns.

The objective of these procedures is to provide the volunteer in question with:

- A clear understanding of their shortcomings and a documented method for correcting problems

- Notification that his or her participation as a volunteer may be in jeopardy and, in some cases, establishing a time period during which corrections must be made

The steps of this formal procedure are:

1. **Oral Warning** – The Volunteer Coordinator will meet with the volunteer and outline the areas of concern. The procedure for correcting problems will also be discussed. A written copy of this discussion will be provided and placed in the volunteer’s file. The volunteer has the right to attach their written comments to this document.
2. **Written Warning/Probation** – The Volunteer Coordinator and Executive Director will meet with the volunteer to discuss problem areas. At that time, the volunteer will receive a written description of the problem, a summary of any previous warning, an outline of the corrective action required and stated time period for making improvements. The volunteer will be required to sign this document, indicating that it has been received and that they understand its meaning. The volunteer has the right to attach their written comments to this document. Copies of this and related documents will be kept in their volunteer file.
3. **Termination** – If the volunteer fails to correct the problem within the stated period of time, their volunteer position will be terminated.

OBXSPCA reserves the right to suspend or terminate a volunteer immediately.

Dress Code

Volunteers must wear appropriate street clothes (pants, shoes, and shirts are required). No shorts above the thigh, tank tops, halter tops, or open-toed shoes. We recommend that volunteers wear rubber-soled shoes. Proper clothing is necessary for safety when working with animals. Clothes should be neat and presentable to the public. Clothing may be soiled or torn working with animals. Earrings that hang within one inch of the bottom of the ear lobe are acceptable. No hoop earrings may be worn. Be aware that many animals are scared by hats and sunglasses. The OBXSPCA is not liable for personal attire that is damaged/lost while on the premises. Clothing with hate or discriminatory speech worn on the premises could be grounds for dismissal from the program. Volunteer t-shirts are available for purchase at discounted prices.

Safety

Kennel staff will get you a dog until you are given permission to get one yourself.

Volunteers should NOT open a cage/kennel of any animal with which they are not comfortable AND/OR an animal is displaying signs of anxiety or aggression (rapid barking, shaking, baring teeth, tail between legs, and associated physical markers of distress). Ask Shelter staff or another volunteer for assistance.

When approaching a cage to engage with an animal, put your hand up to, NOT INTO, the kennel. Let the animal smell you at their discretion. Approach each animal slowly and calmly. New arrivals to the shelter are frequently frightened and do not want to leave their cage/kennel. In general, it takes several days for a new arrival to adjust to the Shelter and/or new individuals. All animals are to be treated kindly, gently and with respect. Any force-based training will not be tolerated. Physical abuse of or aggression towards an animal will be grounds for immediate dismissal and possible charges of animal abuse. DO NOT use physical aggression against an animal. DO NOT hit kennels, throw items at kennels, or bang kennel doors.

Volunteers are not permitted to animal isolation, quarantine, euthanasia, surgery or treatment areas unless escorted by Shelter staff.

GENERAL INFORMATION

There are primarily two types of animals offered for adoption: surrendered and stray.

Owner surrender refers to any animal surrendered to Dare County Animal Shelter by their owner. These animals are available for adoption immediately with proof of ownership, if their health and behavior are sound and the animal has been altered.

Stray refers to any animal that arrives at the Dare County Animal Shelter with no identification and no identifiable owner. Stray animals, by State law, are required to be held a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours before being offered for adoption. Dare County Ordinance requires they be held 8 full days. This hold time allows an owner a chance to reclaim their animal if they have been lost.

Quarantine/Isolation: Volunteers are not permitted in the dog or cat isolation and quarantine rooms due to health, disease control, or aggressive behavior that some of these animals may display.

Assisting Visitors: Volunteers should always present as friendly toward visitors and staff. Ask customers if they need help. If you, as a volunteer, are readily available to help a customer, the chances are better that an animal will be adopted or the customer will come back. If the customer asks a question you do not know the answer to, please ask a staff member for assistance.

Lost Pet: If a visitor is looking for a lost pet, politely ask them to have a seat in our seating area and find a staff member to help them.

DOG AREAS

Kennel Cards

A kennel/cage card is created for every animal that is received at Dare County Animal Shelter. These cards provide information about the animal. The date the animal arrived, date available for adoption, whether or not the animal has been altered, type, estimated age, shot record, and other general information. Our cage cards also show a picture of the animal that belongs in that cage and a reference number that corresponds to the number on the animal's paperwork.

Additional information related to owner surrenders are included on Surrender Fact Sheets and Forms that are located in the front office. Familiarize yourself with the animals as much as possible and feel free to ask Staff for help.

If you should notice a cage card missing or on the wrong cage or kennel, please notify a Staff member in that department.

Walkability Color Coding

Each dog kennel will be marked with a green, yellow or red dot. The colored dots help identify the level of difficulty of each dog when walking them on a leash. Color codes are a GUIDELINE not a GUARANTEE of animal behavior.

Green: Dogs who are amicable, easy to handle, and are reasonably well behaved on leash

Yellow: Dogs can jump, pull, nip, and/or are shy to handle. Intermediate dog handling expertise

Red: Dogs are not allowed to be handled by volunteers at that time

There are outdoor exercise areas for exercising, play, nurturing and potty relief. Anyone interested in adopting a dog may use these areas to spend time getting acquainted with an animal.

When you take a dog to a play yard, please be aware of the following:

- Clean up any fecal matter in the dog areas each time you take a dog out, particularly before you bring another dog out. There are tools and a trash receptacle available in various locations throughout the Shelter.
- DO NOT leave leashes, brushes, toys or other items lying around in the play yards.
- All toys, brushes, etc. MUST be sanitized between animals. There are spray bottles of disinfectant in each room as well as hand sanitizing stations throughout the Shelter.
- All dogs should have a non-slip collar or sturdy non-slip leash. Animals are not to be walked or moved unless they are on a non-slip collar or leash.
- When taking a dog from its kennel first look at the cage card and learn as much as you can about the dog. Then observe and address the dog to see that you are confident that it is a dog that you can handle.
- Then enter the kennel from the outside, close the door behind you and greet the dog slowly on its own level. Attach the leash and then open the door.
- Dogs MUST be kept on a leash at all times when outside of their kennel and remain separated from other dogs unless already in a kennel with another dog.
- Play groups and initial dog introductions are to be performed in the presence of shelter staff. After you have entered the fenced exercise area and have closed the door behind you. you may let the dog off its leash.
- Check water bowls and make sure the bowls are securely placed in holders.
- Dogs should have a constant supply of water at all times. During the warmer months. This is especially important. Large dogs and kennels with multiple animals use a lot of water.
- ALWAYS wash hands between handling of each animal.
- Dogs in quarantine and dogs in stray status are to be handled by Shelter Staff only due to safety and liability reasons.

CAT AREAS

The cat adoption area contains four “group housing” pens. Males cannot be housed together. Felines that are already spayed or neutered may be the exception to separate housing. These cats need to stay in these pens but volunteers as well as visitors are welcome to go inside to spend

time with them. Always disinfect before going from one pen to another. Cats that are housed in individual cages are kept in them for a reason. We encourage you to visit these cats with the assistance of a staff member to keep these cats from escaping.

Customers looking for their lost cat are allowed to look at cats and kittens in the cat isolation room, but must have a shelter staff member escort them.

- Cats and kittens are not to change cages.
- Do not mix kittens together.
- When moving cats and kittens, lift them out of the cage supporting their back and legs.
- To prevent the spread of disease, do not cuddle the animal against clothing.
- Only hard toys may be given to cats and kittens.
- All toys must be sanitized between animals.
- Shelter staff will feed the animals daily.
- Kittens will be fed twice per day.
- Do not feed the animals unless directed by shelter staff.
- Always wash hands between handling of each animal.

ADOPTION GUIDELINES

It is the policy of Outer Banks SPCA that all adopted animals shall be spayed or neutered prior to the final adoption. Generally, animals four months or older will be spayed or neutered prior to leaving the shelter following an adoption being approved. The SPCA strives to spay or neuter all animals as quickly as possible to increase adoption opportunities.

If the animal is determined by shelter staff to be too young, too small or not healthy enough for surgery, Outer Banks SPCA will place that animal under foster contract with a potential adopter until the animal is fit for surgery. Post adoption surgery contracts are given to each new adopted for the scheduling of surgery when the animal is ready.

Other information that may be helpful to you when working with a potential adopter:

- An adoption application needs to be filled out and submitted with a copy of a current driver's license or other picture ID.
- In general, an application will be processed same-day.

- All family members are strongly encouraged to meet the animal prior to approval.
- All potential adopters' pets need to be verified to have current rabies vaccinations and Dare County dog licenses where applicable.
- All potential adopters are required to bring any other dogs they may have, to the shelter to meet and confirm that they will accept the adopted dog. An exception can be made with puppies. They must sign a dog-to-dog meet waiver.
- If a potential adopter says something that raises a red flag, do not correct them or argue, but raise awareness to shelter staff. The organization prides itself on an adoption policy, making the process as smooth and educational as possible. Community support and public relations are extremely important to the organization.

DONATIONS

In addition to your time, additional ways to support the ongoing needs of the OBXSPCA are as follows. Below is a list of the items that are needed on a frequent and regular basis at the shelter. These items can be dropped off during regular business hours. Monetary donations at the shelter or donations via our Amazon Wish List and/or Chewy Gives Back pages enable an increased quality and quantity of animal care.

Donation drives sponsored by a community organization are also highly encouraged. Please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator if you would like to partner with the OBXSPCA for an event with the goal of raising funds/performing a donation drive for the nonprofit.

Pine Litter	Pet Carriers
Dog and Cat Food (Wet or Dry, Dye-Free)	Pooper-Scoopers
Kitten or Puppy Food (Dye-Free)	Kuranda Dog Beds
Puppy and Kitten Formula	Igloo Dog Houses
Kitten bottles	Blankets and Towels
Unsweet applesauce	Newspapers
Baby food (kitten season)	Heating Pads
Canned tuna	Q-tips
Sheets	Flea Medications and Flea Bath Shampoo
Peanut butter	Hemostats
Collars and Leashes (All Sizes)	

Pet Eye and Ear Wipes
Dog and Cat Toys

Medium and Large Storage Bins
Portable 8' x 10' Dog Pens

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long do you hold stray animals before they are available for adoption?

Dare County Ordinance requires that we hold stray animals for eight days. This gives an owner ample time to reclaim their lost animal.

Can animals in the stray room be seen by the public?

If the public is looking for a lost pet, they may be escorted by staff members for health and safety reasons. Please see the front desk for a staff escort.

How do you define “adoptable”?

Appears healthy (or is being treated for manageable/curable health conditions) and behaviorally sound. The minimum holding requirements have been met for said animal. Some animals are considered “special needs adoptions” and an agreement must be made to treat a treatable condition or minor behavior issue. If you are interested in fostering/adopting an animal with special needs, with an understanding of the additional obligations that a special needs animal implies, please communicate this with a member of our staff and/or front desk.

How do you handle euthanasia?

Adoption is our top priority. Euthanasia is considered only as a last resort for major health or serious behavior discrepancies that do not allow us to qualify an animal as “adoptable.” The Shelter will also honor an owner's request to end suffering when deemed necessary. Euthanasia is performed by the appropriate staff members on site by lethal injection,

How long do you hold animals for adoption?

The OBXSPCA does not euthanize animals based on their time of residency at the shelter. The shelter will keep animals until they have found their forever home.

Can animals in the adoption room be handled by the public?

Cats in the play area can be handled by the public. Any individuals under the age of 16 MUST be accompanied by an adult when handling animals. Cats within care rooms may be played with through the toys provided in the care rooms. The OBXSPCA will not be held accountable for bites, scratches, and associated injuries if fingers or hands are inserted into cat cages.

Dogs in Kennel 1 are available for adoption. If an individual wants to handle a canine, please see a member of staff to get dogs in and out of their facilities for walks and/or time in the OBXSPCA play area. DO NOT enter kennels without staff supervision.

What is included in the adoption fee?

First series of vaccines (distemper parvo, hepatitis, bordetella, parainfluenza for dogs; cats get FVRCP), flea baths are given on intake and as needed, general dewormer, spay/neuter microchip and registration of microchip, rabies vaccination (if animal is over four months), and a Dare County dog license if applicable. All dogs are tested and treated for heartworms.

What is the process for adopting an animal?

When you have to spend some time with and select a pet, you are encouraged to fill out an adoption application. We ask that all family members come visit the animal and other dogs if adopting a dog or puppy to be sure all are compatible. Adopters must own their home or give the landlords contract information to verify permission. All other pets possessed by the current owner need to have current rabies vaccinations and a Dare County animal license.

What is your spay neuter policy?

All animals are spayed or neutered prior to adoption. Juvenile puppies and kittens too young to be spayed or neutered and are fostered (adoptable once spay/neuter has been completed) only after an appointment has been confirmed with a participating veterinarian. Out-of-county residents may be considered for adoption only if arrangements can be made to have pediatric sterilization before release. This is determined on a case by case basis.

What if an adopter does not want a spay/neuter surgery?

Per OBXSPCA operating policy and in accordance with our mission statement, a spay/neuter surgery is required for every animal adopted from the facilities. Surgeries are performed to reduce any future pain, suffering, and/or any additional complications for both owner and animal.

Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Outer Banks SPCA. Our organization would be unable to provide the quality of care without the dedicated commitments of our volunteers. On behalf of the animals of Dare County, thank you!

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the Volunteer Manual

Signature

Date

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION NOTES

