



2264 Richland Road • Marion, Ohio 43302 • 740-389-6548

Marion Area Humane Society

Volunteer Manual

Updated March 2024

General Information

Contacts:

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Website:

www.mahspets.org

Hours of Operation:

Monday-Friday: 1 pm – 6 pm

Saturday: 11 am – 4 pm

Sunday: Closed

MAHS is closed to the public on the first Thursday and second Saturday of every month. The second Friday of each month, MAHS is open until 8 pm; the second Sunday of each month, MAHS is open by appointment only from 12 pm – 4 pm; and the third Saturday of each month, MAHS will open at 9 am.

Volunteers may only volunteer at the shelter during open hours unless other arrangements have been made.

Please make sure to follow our groups on Facebook *Marion Area Humane Society* and *Marion Area Humane Society Volunteers* to stay informed on updated hours and volunteer needs at the shelter!

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Marion Area Humane Society. This manual will provide you with a list of activities that are available to you as volunteers. This manual will also tell you how to stay safe while volunteering at MAHS or at our public events.

The Marion Area Humane Society was incorporated in 1967 to help protect the animals of Marion County. MAHS is an independent non-profit organization, and it is not linked with any larger organization or government agencies. Our main sources of income are donations, bequests, adoptions, and fundraisers.

MAHS is a shelter and an adoption center. We are a shelter for unwanted and neglected animals, and we are an adoption center that places our animals in new homes where they will be cared for properly.

Where MAHS gets its' animals

MAHS provides shelter to nearly 1,000 cats and dogs a year. We accept owner surrendered and stray cats and owner surrendered dogs, from Marion County residents, as space allows. All stray dogs in Marion County are taken to the Marion County Dog Pound. MAHS does not have a humane agent, and all animal cruelty cases are handled by the Marion County Dog Pound. All animals surrendered to MAHS are given an opportunity to be adopted. If an animal is unadoptable through MAHS due to serious illness, injury, or behavior, MAHS has relationships with other non-profit rescue organizations that may be better suited to meet these animals' specific needs.

Euthanasia Policy

Euthanasia is a very difficult subject to consider, but it is something you must think about before making a commitment to volunteer with a shelter. The ultimate goal of MAHS is to find suitable, permanent homes for each and every resident. Euthanasia is only considered as a last resort, after every other possible option is exhausted. Euthanasia is not considered as an option for space, and is not considered for length of stay, unless the animal's mental state is deteriorating without the possibility of rehabilitation. If an animal is determined as "unadoptable" by management staff due to behavior or terminal illnesses, euthanasia is only considered after reaching out to other rescue organizations that specialize in those cases. If the decision to euthanize an animal is made by management staff, the animal is treated with respect through the entirety of this process. All euthanasia technicians have received training and are certified to perform this task safely and humanely. Volunteers are never asked to participate in the euthanasia process.

Available Volunteer Duties

1) Dog Walking

- Only dogs on the adoption floor are able to be walked by volunteers
- Pay attention to the dogs' behaviors and do not get a dog out unless you and the dog are comfortable
- Check walking statuses on each cage card (management staff will let you know when you are considered an experienced walker)
 - Okay
 - Pulls
 - Nervous
 - Experienced walkers only
 - Do not walk
- Make sure the dog has a properly fitted collar/harness or utilize a slip lead
- Dogs may be walked around the building and fenced areas, along the field away from the Dog Pound, or exercised in the back fenced in yards; if utilizing the exercise yards, gate clips must be used at all times
 - Only one volunteer is permitted to walk a dog outside the fenced in areas at a time
 - No more than two dogs are to be in the exercise yards and must be separated with a yard in between
 - If there is already a dog reactive dog outside, that is the only dog to be permitted outside at that time
 - No dogs are to be walked through the lobby without staff permission
 - Volunteers must be willing to bring their dogs back to their kennels when asked for staff to do meet and greets with adopters
 - Communicate with all other volunteers in the building when you are here, so that everyone has a clear understanding of which dogs are being taken outside
- No two dogs should ever be taken out of their cages at the same time
- When exiting the cage area, do not walk your dog directly into the hallway. If you observe another dog in the hallway always yield to the other dog and let them get out of the way first
- Always clean up after your dog
- Never attempt to break up a dog fight. If a fight occurs, immediately get a staff member

2) Photography

3) Bathing and Grooming

4) Basic Cleaning

- When cleaning animal enclosures, this should only be performed with direct instruction from staff

5) Landscaping

6) Attending Public Events

Volunteers must be 18 or older to transport any dog to an event. Dogs must either be seat belted or crated in your car when traveling to an event. Only one dog per volunteer car is permitted. Staff will decide which dogs are going to each event.

- Each volunteer must arrive at the shelter at least 30 minutes prior event start time to pick up their dog; supervisors will pick up the event supply bag and tables/chairs if needed
- Always keep your dog leashed, NO EXCEPTIONS
- Always keep shelter dogs at least 3 feet apart from each other and from the public's dogs AT ALL TIMES
- Give your dog frequent bathroom breaks and ALWAYS clean up after them
- Watch for behavioral changes and do not let persons of the public to approach if the dog is uncomfortable; if your assigned dog is displaying signs of unwanted behaviors, communicate with the event supervisor and shelter management staff to determine if the dog needs to be returned to the shelter
- If a family shows interest in a dog, explain that you will take the dog back to the shelter where they can interact with the dog and complete adoption protocols
- Be mindful of what you say. You are representing MAHS. Speak positively and professionally. Provide polite customer service. Be accurate about the information you provide; if you are unsure, ask your supervisory volunteer

Basic Volunteer Rules

- 1) No volunteers under the age of 15 are permitted in the shelter without a parent or guardian present. When volunteering with young children, make sure to check with management staff on which specific dogs are okay with children. Volunteers aged 15-17 years of age must have a liability waiver signed by a parent or guardian prior to volunteering.
- 2) Personal animals must be left at home unless you are doing a meet and greet for potential adoption. Staff **MUST** be involved in this process
- 3) Wear comfortable clothing that you do not mind getting damaged. Slip resistant, closed toe shoes and long pants are recommended.
- 4) Certain areas of the shelter are off limits to volunteers including:
 - Office
 - Cat and dog isolation areas
 - Sick room
 - Medical room
- 5) Volunteers are not permitted in the storage shed. If you have donations that need put away, please bring them into the lobby where a staff member can put them away in the appropriate place
- 6) Our cat rooms are currently closed to the public. Cats may only be viewed by potential adopters or approved volunteers
- 7) No person may enter a dog run or remove any dog from a kennel while food is present
- 8) No volunteers are permitted to feed any animals; treats are allowed
- 9) Any dogs in top kennels must be picked up and placed easily on the ground; they are not permitted to jump out of their kennels
- 10) Every single animal must be treated with care, patience, and understanding; no animal should be handled roughly or treated unkindly at any time
- 11) The protection of confidential information is vital to the interests and success of MAHS. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to:
 - Intake information
 - Adopters personal information
 - Animals in isolation
 - Euthanasia records
- 12) Management staff reserves the right to refuse any volunteer at any time. Any person willfully violating safety procedures and/or endangering the safety of employees, other volunteers, or animals will be asked to leave MAHS property

Acceptance of the Marion Area Humane Society Volunteer Manual and Non-Disclosure Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Marion Area Humane Society Volunteer Manual. I have read and understand that this manual contains standard volunteer policies, but specific protocols may be altered regularly to correspond with day-to-day operations at MAHS. I agree to abide by all volunteer rules and will check with management staff for any changes.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about volunteer procedures, I will contact shelter management staff immediately.

I understand that I am not to improperly use or disclose any confidential information about the Marion Area Humane Society.

Please read this manual carefully to understand these conditions about volunteering before you sign this document.

Volunteer Name (Printed): _____

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____