



**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**12935 Williston Rd**

**East Aurora, N.Y. 14052**

**Call or text 716-998-8586**

**[petadoption652@gmail.com](mailto:petadoption652@gmail.com) or**

**[admin@petconnectionprogramsinc.com](mailto:admin@petconnectionprogramsinc.com)**

**Mission Statement:**

**“We strive to further the cause of responsible animal adoption and ownership through education and public awareness. Our objective is to actively promote kindness and provide spay/neutering, food, shelter and medical care to abandoned/orphaned animals, to eliminate animal cruelty and neglect of all animals through the lifelong commitment of people to their pets and nature.”**

**WELCOME**

**Welcome to Pet Connection Programs, Inc. Volunteer Program. Being a volunteer is extremely rewarding, educational, exciting and fun. You can have a huge impact on the lives of these homeless animals.**

**Cleaning up a neglected animal, giving them a meal, a blanket and a pat on the head will touch your heart and bring you back for more. It is so rewarding to see how the animals respond immediately to the love they receive while they are at the shelter. In many cases this is the first time someone has really cared for them.**

**The number of volunteers and the many ways to volunteer has grown tremendously over the years as our program has grown. Because of the volunteer program, dogs & cats are socialized everyday; dogs learn basic obedience training; dogs and cats recuperate and; most importantly, dogs and cats' lives that would otherwise be euthanized are saved.**

**Statement from our President and founder:**

**“Thank you for volunteering your time to Pet Connection. Every year we save hundreds of animals. Animals who despite the horrible circumstances that they came from, trust us to help them, and have so much unconditional love and joy to give.**

**We could not save them without the help of volunteers like you. No matter what you do here: walk dogs, groom cats, clean the shelter, help with events or mailings, you are making a difference in their lives. And you are also making a difference in the lives of the individuals who adopt these animals as part of their families.**

**Thank you from me, and especially from the animals, who have no voices, but through whose eyes we see how appreciative they are of all you do. “**

**Sincerely,**

**Julie Garvey, President & founder**

### **Volunteering with Pet Connection**

**The time and energy contributed by volunteers will help keep these programs functioning. Since your support as a volunteer is so extremely important, your decision to participate must be made with the full understanding of the commitment and responsibility it demands.**

**This manual has been prepared for you as a reference guide. It contains information regarding our policies and procedures as well as tools for dealing with the public. Please read it carefully so you will be well equipped to answer questions knowledgeably and provide quality care to the animals at the shelter.**

**Thank you for giving your time and energy to the animals at Pet Connection Programs Inc. We hope the time you spend here will be as rewarding to you as it is to the animals you help.**

### **HISTORY AND GOALS of Pet Connection Programs, Inc**

**Pet Connections is a private non-for-profit, 501c3 organization, founded in 1984. The primary goal of the agency is to help pregnant and special care animals and promote public awareness.**

## **BUSINESS HOURS/PHONE NUMBERS**

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**Phone Number : 716-998-8586**

**\*Due to being a maternity we do not have hours. Always email us and wait for an answer. The mother animals need the downtime to nurse their young.**

**Please check signage, website and weekly emails for updates. If you have not received a email in over a week /your email is not working-try calling us.**

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

**PCPI relies on its volunteers to be dependable and effective during their volunteer hours. By meeting these commitments, the program operates smoothly and the maximum benefit is derived for the animals.**

**If you come to the shelter, all hours worked must be recorded on the volunteer hours recording sheet (“sign-in sheet”) located at the adoption desk or at the event..**

### **Dress Code**

**We suggest you wear jeans or casual pants and non-skid rubber-soled shoes. Clothing may become wet or dirty, depending on your duties. When working with the public, wear a Pet Connection t-shirt. It is also advisable not to wear dangling jewelry when working around the animals.**

**Please use proper hygiene to prevent the possibility of spreading disease to your own pets at home. Some people may prefer to wear a specific pair of shoes when working at the shelter and change them when they arrive at their homes. Always wash your hands.**

### **Conduct**

**As a representative of Pet Connection, it is important you be familiar with its policies and procedures. When dealing with customers, you must always be polite, courteous and helpful. You also must remember that the animals are our number one priority, and we serve them, not the public, so if you ever have concerns about a potential adopter please bring them to the concern of Julie or a shelter staff member.**

### **Prevention**

**All injuries or accidents that occur while volunteering at Pet Connection or on its premises must be reported immediately. Please report all unsafe conditions to Julie or a staff member. In addition, please do not use equipment or work with animals unless you have asked permission.**

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## **Adoptions**

**Volunteers may adopt animals from the shelter provided they complete the same application process as members of the public and are approved. Shelter animals are never put on hold or put aside for anyone.**

## **DISEASE AND PREVENTION**

**If a shelter animal shows any of the following symptoms, notify a staff member immediately.**

**Diarrhea**

**Vomiting**

**Ocular (eye) discharge**

**Nasal discharge**

**Sneezing or coughing**

**Anorexia (loss of appetite)**

**Lethargy (lack of energy)**

**Dehydration**

**Abnormal gait or muscle control**

**Excessive salivation**

**Bleeding**

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## **Shelter Etiquette 101**

**One of the first things you notice when you arrive at Pet Connection is that there are animals everywhere.**

**Here are a few pointers that will keep you and the animals safe and happy.**

### **I. Entering the Shelter- Always assess the situation before opening the door!**

**\_\_\_\_\_ You will be approached by many dogs (pack). Please respond in the following way:**

- a) do not make a fuss of the animals**
- b) do not show favoritism to any one animal**
- c) do not give treats in groups**
- d) simply walk through the area**
- e) do not wear shorts or open toe shoes**

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- II. You will see many cats in the entryway. Some are not socialized, or feral cats (wild). Although some may approach you, do not attempt to pick them up.
- II. Be careful when driving into or out of the parking lot. Many of the cats will nest on or under your car, especially in cooler weather. Check first before pulling out ,drive slowly they will move.
- II. Puppy handling: Socialization is good for the puppies, but sometimes the puppies are not to be handled due to health issues, or recent surgery. Never touch another litter unless you ask.
- II. Nursing dogs and new moms. Their behavior can be unpredictable. Always ask permission before entering a pen. Even a docile dog can change behavior when feeling her babies are threatened. Be aware and give the moms space.
- II. Always keep the doors closed! Double check that they are closed

**Please listen to shelter staff!**

**Shelter staff are experienced and knowledgeable about the animals and the shelter. Volunteers should understand that staff have a job to do and are the supervisors of the volunteers while they are here at the shelter. Please respect their position and listen and follow their advice and requests.**

#### **Dog walking rules**

- **Only shelter staff can remove a dog from the kennel**
- **Always maintain control of the dog. Do not allow dogs to pull you**
- **Remember to wash hands with soap and water before handling another animal**
- **You must be 18 years old and up to volunteer with animals**
- **Please listen to shelter staff and obey all off limits signs**
- **Any concerns, like aggressive behavior, should be communicated with the shelter staff**
- **Do not bring your friends, relatives etc... They must fill out an application & sign a waiver first!**

#### **VOLUNTEER WAIVER RELEASE FORM**

**General Questions and Answers:**

As a volunteer you should have some general knowledge about the shelter and adoption procedures in case you are asked. Here is a guide:

**1. What are the adoption rules?**

Adoptions are first come first served. Interested individuals complete an application online by emailing us. Adoption hours are appointment only. Approved Staff will review the application, interview

The approved staff determines if the adoption is suitable for the pets needs. We do not take reservations or deposits on animals and we reserve the right to refuse any adoption for any reason

**2. What are the fees?**

Adult dogs are \$100, puppies are \$250, kittens and cats are \$50 ( unless stated otherwise )

All adoptions include: required vaccines (rabies and distemper), flea treatment if needed, micro-chipping, spay or neutering, a bag of pet food, and a certificate for one wellness vet visit.

**3. Do the animals have to be spayed or neutered?**

Absolutely. All animals must be spayed or neutered

**4. Do we adopt out of town?**

No. We want to be sure that our animals are vetted at our vet if needed. No more than 45 minutes away from shelter

**5. What makes us different from other shelters?**

We are a non-profit that relies totally on individual donations. We are a specialty shelter that works with maternity animals. Our animals live on site and are socialized with other animals and people from the moment they arrive. We offer lots of TLC and really take the time to make sure that the home our animals will call theirs, will be theirs forever.

**6. How old do puppies and kittens have to be before they are adopted out?**

10 or more weeks for kittens, 9-10 or more weeks for puppies -depending on their size

**7. Have these animals been abused?**

Some, but not all. If we know that an animal has certain behavioral issues, we will work with the dog here and ensure that he/she is placed in a suitable home. That is why we are so careful about adoptions.

**8. How can I do more, or how can other people help?**

Sign up for events, spread the word about our shelter, hold donation drives, or donate financially. There are many ways to help and we need all the help we can get!

**9. Now that I am a volunteer, can I bring anyone with me that has not attended an orientation?**

Sorry everyone must fill out an application and sign a waiver.

**Once again, thank you for volunteering and we appreciate all that you do for the shelter, and the animals!**

**VOLUNTEER WAIVER RELEASE FORM**

I \_\_\_\_\_, agree to accept a position as volunteer worker for Pet Connection Programs Inc (PCPI) , and in doing so I agree to comply with all the policies, rules, and regulations contained in the is handbook, or which may be established in future by Pet Connection Programs Inc. I understand that failure to do so may result in termination as a volunteer.

I acknowledge that my services are provided on a voluntary basis, without any pay or compensation of any kind and without liability of any nature on behalf of PCPI, all services to be performed by me at my own risk.

I recognize that in handling animals and performing other volunteer tasks, there exists a risk of injury including physical harm caused by animals. I agree to hold harmless PCPI from any damages or injuries that may be sustained by me in connection with my volunteer services at PCPI.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer (parent if for a minor)

Date

Volunteer Application

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Children under the age of 18 cannot volunteer even with a adult/guardian**

**Also, we do not accept community service volunteers, only permanent volunteers for the handling of animals**

*Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Pet Connection. Before you begin as a volunteer with our organization, we want to know more about you to ensure that we effectively match your skills and experiences with our organization's needs, and that your time is put to good use here. We are glad that you are here, and look forward to your assistance.*

**(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work #: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Number to be reached on \_\_\_\_\_

**We require volunteers to be at least 18 years of age. Are you 18 years of age or older?** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_



How did you hear about the Pet Connection? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to volunteer here? \_\_\_\_\_

We ask for a commitment of at least 1-2 regularly scheduled hours a week for volunteers. This ensures proper staffing, as we rely heavily on volunteers.

Can you commit to this? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid driver's license? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If yes would you be willing to use your vehicle to transport goods to events (Ex. Raffle Baskets, Baked Goods, Totes...) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Are you volunteering for an internship, graduation requirement, community service, self interest or other? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide the hours you want to volunteer:**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
From:							
To:							

**Special Events Only:** We know that there are people who want to volunteer but cannot commit to a regular schedule. Are you only interested in working on special events and being emailed if needed? \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Employment**

\_\_\_ I am currently employed full time.      \_\_\_ I am currently employed part time.

\_\_\_ I am not working at the present time.      \_\_\_ I am retired.

I am currently a student at: \_\_\_\_\_

**Current or most recent employer (if applicable):**

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates employed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have any pets ? and what are they ?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Are they spayed/neutered?** \_\_\_\_\_

**If not why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What skills and experience do you bring to the Pet Connection?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you had any formal training or education experience in animal, pet, or vet field? If yes, please describe:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Volunteer Experience:**

Have you ever volunteered before? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO

If YES, please provide the following information, starting with your most recent experience:

1) Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you volunteer there? FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

2) Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you volunteer there? FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Placement**

Even if you are familiar with some areas of our work at Pet Connection Programs, Inc, please take a minute to review our volunteer opportunities listed below. Please check any responsibilities you feel suited to help with. These and other opportunities can be discussed further with the volunteer coordinator so that we can find a position that is meaningful to you and helpful to our work.

\_\_\_ Fundraisers/Events

- \_\_\_ Administrative (stuffing envelopes, mailings, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Working with cats (playing, socializing, grooming)
- \_\_\_ Obedience Training with dogs and puppies
- \_\_\_ Clean up after cats and/or dogs
- \_\_\_ Transporting animals to and from Bennington Animal Hospital
- \_\_\_ Walking dogs / socializing pups
- \_\_\_ Cleaning the shelter (washing floors, dishes from food, blankets, cages, etc)
- \_\_\_ Taking care of grounds ( Cutting grass, weeding, assist in special projects)
- \_\_\_ Grooming dogs (trimming nails, baths, etc)
- \_\_\_ Taking photos at events and of animals at shelter
- \_\_\_ Organization of supply rooms and goods
  - \_\_\_ Making Raffle Baskets at the shelter

I hereby attest that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the information I have given is subject to verification. I hereby authorize Pet Connection Programs, Inc to contact my references prior to or during my volunteer activity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***Thank you again for the time you took to fill out this application. We are committed 24/7/365 to caring for animals that are abandoned/orphaned, and to educate the public through responsible adoption. All information is kept strictly confidential for your privacy. You will be contacted weekly by email on what is needed each week. We and the animals look forward to having you as a member of Pet Connection!***