



## **GILES COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER VOLUNTEER MANUAL**

Guidelines and Information for Volunteers Supporting Animal Shelter  
Operations and Special Projects

**GILES COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER**  
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Welcome to the Giles County Animal Shelter Volunteer Program. The Giles County Animal Shelter recognizes the importance of volunteers dedicated to the care and placement of unwanted animals within the community and beyond. Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer. Participation in the Giles County Animal Shelter Volunteer Program supports in the operation of the shelter facility and the ultimate goal of humane treatment and adoption of animals.

Giles County employs animal control officers to help police the growing population of domestic animals. Additionally, the county operates an animal shelter and works with all approved rescue organizations and humane societies to aid in pet adoptions.

All dogs and cats over the age of four months must be vaccinated for rabies and all dogs over four months must have a county tag that can be purchased through the treasurer's office. The shelter is located on Green Hollow Road.

## **I. Volunteer Opportunities**

The Giles County Animal Shelter is committed to effectively utilizing volunteer resources, including appropriate training and supervision, to promote the Department's goals and objectives. The following volunteer opportunities are generally available:

**Aide** to assist visitors at the shelter facility by providing information and assisting with animal care. (Required pre-service training: Orientation, 2 hours training)

**Administrative Office Support** to provide clerical support which may include filing, typing and helping with other office needs, contacting resources to update information and assisting with media releases. (Required training: Orientation, 2 hours training)

**Adoption Counselor** to increase the number and quality of adoptions by helping people to find the right pet. Volunteers explain adoption procedures; help adopters with completing the adoption process and answer questions. (Required training: Orientation, 3 hours training)

**Adoption and Placement Coordinator** to assist in the selection of animals to be considered for placement into new individual homes, specific breed groups, foster care homes, or other placement agencies. Volunteer meets with shelter staff to select and prepare animals for placement. (Required training: Orientation, animal handling and care, temperance testing and animal behavior training or documentation of previous experience and training)

**Animal Care Aide** to provide cleaning and animal care support at the shelter facility which may include cleaning and sanitation of cages or runs, litter boxes, and animal bedding along with feeding and watering animals according to dietary needs. (Required training: Orientation, animal handling and care, or documentation of previous experience and training).

**Canine Exerciser** to help caged pets obtain additional exercise, fresh air and human contact. (Required training: Orientation, 2 hours training, previous obedience course preferred)

**Donation Coordinator** to assist the Giles County Animal Shelter with donated goods from the public, which are used to maintain the quality of care at the shelter facility. The volunteer coordinates communication with volunteer groups to host drives to collect these supplies. (Required training/experience: Orientation, previous experience with coordination of donated items preferred but not necessary)

**Education/Outreach Volunteer** to assist at various sites throughout the county and at the shelter facility to educate citizens about animal care and welfare, pet over-population, rabies prevention, and other specific animal related topics. (Required training: Orientation, 8 hours of training and at least one related classroom course preferred)

**Feline Helper** to visit with the cats and kittens to help socialize, care, comfort, pet, brush, or simply provide some "lap time". (Required training: Orientation, previous feline behavior and handling training/experience)

**Foster Parents** to provide a temporary home for very young, nursing or ill animals that are not ready to be placed for adoption. (Required training: Orientation, 2 hours of training followed by an interview and in-home visit)

**Fundraiser** provides assistance with various approved fundraising events. (Required training: Orientation)

**Groomer** to bathe and brush the shelter animals to make them more comfortable and more attractive to adopters. (Required training: Orientation, previous grooming experience)

**Special Event Aide** to perform various duties at events sponsored by Animal Control such as Rabies Clinics and pet adoption stands. (Required training: Orientation, dependent on specific event)

**Trainer** to provide dogs with basic obedience skills to help them become better canine citizens. (Required training: Orientation, previous documented training experience or certification)

## **II. Ongoing Wish List Items include:**

- Canned and dry dog and cat food
- Raw hides and other chew treats
- Newspaper (Bundled)
- New or used collars and leashes
- Portable grooming equipment
- Grooming brushes and shampoo
- New and used carrying crates and kennels (Wire or Plastic)
- Kuranda Beds
- Formula for young Kittens and Puppies
- Neonatal care items
- Kitty Litter

### **III. Guidelines Volunteer Management:**

1. To be considered for a volunteer position through Giles County Animal Control, individuals must:
  - ./ Be 18 years of age, minimum of 16 years of age with signed parental consent for minors;
  - ./ Complete and submit a Giles County Animal Shelter Volunteer Agreement (see Attachment A );
  - ./ Complete and submit the Giles County Volunteer Application Form (see Attachment B);
  - ./ Participate in an interview conducted by county designated staff;
  - ./ Provide proper background information, including, but not limited to: previous experience with public service, driving record, and animal care experience;
  - ./ Provide proof of current tetanus vaccination; volunteers are encouraged to receive the pre-exposure rabies vaccine as well;
  - ./ Have his/her own dogs and cats, 4 months old or older, vaccinated against rabies;
  - ./ Have a current license for his/her own dogs from Giles County or the jurisdiction in which the volunteer lives;
  - ./ Have no prior animal cruelty convictions;
  - ./ Understand, accept and abide by the Guidelines for Availability of Animals for Adoption (Item IV below); and
  - ./ Not have any conflict of interest with any activity or program of Giles County Animal Shelter/Control, whether personal, philosophical, or financial.
2. After the initial screening process (as outlined above), the county designee will approve or deny the volunteer application. If the application is approved, the volunteer will be assigned a volunteer position and will be provided further orientation and training as outlined below.
3. In order to maintain a high quality volunteer program, the county has the discretion to deny a volunteer application.
4. All volunteers are required to participate in an orientation.
5. All volunteers must satisfactorily complete the specific training requirements of the assigned volunteer position.
6. All volunteers will receive a copy of the volunteer manual. The volunteer is responsible for understanding his/her duties, the information provided in the volunteer manual, and the general management of the shelter facility. If a volunteer does not understand this information, it is his/her responsibility to seek further instruction or clarification.

7. Shelter staff will provide proper supervision of all volunteers and is responsible for all volunteers at the shelter facility.
8. Volunteer evaluations will be completed on a regular basis in order to provide the volunteer feedback – positive and constructive – about his/her performance. Such an evaluation will be conducted by the paid employee most closely supervising the volunteer and will be provided in writing. In situations where corrective action may need to be taken, the volunteer will be given either a verbal or written warning. Any further actions may result in the suspension or dismissal of the volunteer depending on the severity of the circumstances.
9. Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients, animals, other volunteers or employees, failure to abide by the established volunteer guidelines, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.
10. Volunteers must dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers will be provided an identification badge and are required to wear this ID badge when serving at activities inside or outside of the shelter. As representatives of Giles County Animal Shelter/Control, volunteers, like paid employees, are responsible for presenting a good image to the citizens and other community members who visit the shelter facility and therefore, must maintain a neat, clean appearance.
11. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes information that may involve a paid employee, volunteer, client, or other person or involves the overall business of the shelter.
12. All volunteers are responsible for completing a personal record of attendance and must sign in at the beginning of their shift and sign out at the end (see Attachment C).
13. Volunteers will be assigned specific days and times for duties. Each volunteer will be responsible for his/her assigned shift. If the volunteer cannot serve at his/her designated time, he/she must notify the Giles County Animal Shelter as soon as possible. Failure to provide notification of an absence or tardiness may result in dismissal from the volunteer program.
14. Volunteers are not permitted to handle any animal unless previously approved by a Giles County Animal Shelter paid staff person.
15. Volunteers are prohibited from certain non-public areas unless accompanied by a paid employee of the shelter.
16. Volunteers will not handle any animal outside the confines of the shelter facility without first requesting permission from a paid employee of the shelter.
17. Volunteers are only permitted in the Giles County Shelter facility or on its grounds when paid staff is present.
18. Because of space constraints, only two (2) volunteers will be assigned to work in the shelter facility during normal operating hours. An additional volunteer may also be present for training purposes only. Any

request to have volunteers exceeding this limit must be approved by the Shelter Manager and county designee prior to the assignment of extra volunteers.

19. Volunteers must comply with all requirements set forth by Giles County Animal Shelter.

#### **IV. Guidelines for Availability of Animals for Placement:**

1. Only animals that have been previously tested for their temperament (Temperance Tested) and approved for placement by Giles County Animal Control shall be made available for adoption. Test indicators will be posted on the animal's cage.
2. No animals involved with a possible rabies exposure case, livestock or poultry attack, or in the judgment of an Animal Control Officer constitute a danger or threat to the public shall be made available for placement or adoption.
3. No animals impounded, as evidence for court in a possible criminal case shall be made available for placement or adoption until the court decision has been made.
4. No animals shall be made available for placement or adoption until full custody of that animal has been determined.
5. Depending on the given population and space limitations, dogs and cats should be held for a period of five (5) days without a collar and ten (10) days with a collar to determine ownership. Health, welfare, and any other physical limitations may affect the length of holding period for each individual animal. However, Animal Control may hold animals more than the specified time given further information to determine possible ownership or placement into a new home or adoption agency.
6. If, at the end of the holding period, the dog or cat has not been placed, shelter staff will attempt to place it into another facility including, but not limited to, specific breed placement, foster care home, or other animal placement agency.
7. All dogs and cats may be held for more than the specified time depending on the situation and adoptability of each individual animal and the availability of space. Every effort will be made to coordinate space limitations between shelter staff and the designated adoption and placement volunteers.
8. Shelter staff will determine the limitations of space or other factors involving population limits within the shelter facility including other environmental factors, conditions of the animal, and any other circumstance that may affect the facility operations.
9. Shelter staff will make every attempt to place or adopt as many safe, healthy, and compatible animals.

Dear Volunteer,

Although a difficult subject, euthanasia is something we must think about before making a commitment to volunteer in a shelter. Unfortunately, due to the nature of sheltering animals, it is necessary for us to euthanize some animals we receive. Depending on the circumstances, you may never see the animal, or you may have interacted and even have become fond of an animal that is euthanized.

Please understand that the decision to euthanize (for every single animal) is well thought through. It is very difficult to make the decision, hold him/her, and then actually perform euthanasia. Our shelter's policy is to perform euthanasia in the most humane manner possible, using euthanasia by injection as our only method for dogs and cats. Other species may be euthanized using alternate methods recognized by the American Humane Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association as appropriate and acceptable.

Decisions, however unpopular, must be made. Please do not confront the staff involved with the euthanasia with questions or statements like:

Who are you killing tomorrow?

How can you kill them?

You people are cold-hearted.

Why is Fido being put to sleep?

This type of feedback only makes a difficult-but-necessary part of their job harder. Staff members are here because they genuinely like and want to help animals, and performing euthanasia is no more difficult on anyone than it is on the person whose job responsibility is to perform euthanasia.

As a volunteer, be prepared to answer questions concerning euthanasia from your friends and people you meet who know that you volunteer in an animal shelter. It is important for you to both understand and be able to discuss the topic in an objective manner.

If you have questions or concerns about either the euthanasia process in general, or a particular decision, please bring those concerns to the manager for discussion. We understand that your questions and feelings need a forum for discussion. Because compassion fatigue associated with dealing with these issues is common, our shelter can offer assistance in working through them.

We are all here to work together, and trust is one of the most basic needs. It is only with your help and understanding that we will be able to achieve our goals.

Best regards,

Giles County Animal Shelter Staff



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Giles County Animal Shelter Volunteer  
Application Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Prefer to be called: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age: [ ] 16-17; [ ] 18 or above

Emergency Contact:  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Skills and Interest**

1. Education background: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Current occupation: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Hobbies, skills, interests: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you had any formal education in animal care or animal welfare?: \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please List:

5. Volunteer goal (reason): Please check box before any category that applies.

<input type="checkbox"/>	School Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Socialization	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seasonal Contribution to Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume Enhancement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Court Ordered	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Sponsorship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outreach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contribution to Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Fulfillment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: (specify)								

**II. Preferences in Volunteering**

1. Volunteer position for which you are interested: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you done any other volunteer work? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please list:

3. To help us match you with assignments you might enjoy, please indicate the types of volunteer activities that interest you. Please check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Working as an adoption counselor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Providing education services to public
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working directly with animal care staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doing public speaking, fundraising, etc
<input type="checkbox"/>	Performing general office duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working at public events, i.e. rabies clinics, adoption events
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doing research, training or projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working directly with animals as caretaker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photography, video work, marketing materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	No preference

4. Are there specific tasks that you are unable to perform due to physical limitations or personal preference?  
 No      Yes

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you understand that some animals are euthanized at the facility?  No      Yes

Will you have any problems volunteering knowing this?      No      Yes

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Availability**

1. At what days and times are you available to volunteer? Please indicate times under each applicable day.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

**IV. Background Verification**

1. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense?      No      Yes

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever been charged with neglect, abuse, or assault?      No      Yes

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked in any state?      No      Yes

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you use illegal drugs?      No      Yes

5. Are you currently, or have you ever been, affiliated with any animal rights or rescue organization?  No  
 Yes  
 If yes, which?:

6. Please list two non-family references that we might contact:

A. Name	Phone	B. Name	Phone
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7. Please list all Pets, Livestock, or other animals that you or your household is responsible for:

**Required!**

Animal	Breed	License# (if applicable)

Please print additional animals on a separate sheet of paper and attach to the application.

8. Our volunteer program will require the following screenings for all volunteers interested in such positions.

Criminal Records Check  
 Social Security Number:     --    --

**Animal Control requires all court ordered/community diversion services to provide documentation from the court referral source.**

Do you consent to the performance of the above screenings prior to placement?  No     Yes

*Please note, your refusal to do so may exclude you from consideration for some or all types of volunteer activities without organization.*

*By signing below, I confirm that I have never been convicted of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment in this state or any other. In addition, by signing below I agree to all required criminal background screenings.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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