



**Franklin County Dog Shelter
& Adoption Center**

Volunteer Information Presentation



Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in joining the Volunteer Program at the Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center. Volunteering at an animal shelter is an extremely rewarding experience and provides a much needed service to the homeless dogs of our community. However, volunteering at an animal shelter is emotionally, mentally, and physically challenging and isn't the right fit for everyone.

This **Volunteer Information Session** will provide a brief introduction to the Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center and our Volunteer Program. We hope this presentation will help you make an informed decision as to whether or not volunteering with us is right for you.

If you decide that our Volunteer Program isn't for you, but would still like to support the shelter, please consider [donating needed items.](#)



Franklin County Dog Shelter
& Adoption Center

Part I: An Introduction to the Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center

Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center Mission Statement



Our mission is to enforce the dog laws in Franklin County and keep the public safe from animal-related health or safety dangers.

We respond to service requests, investigate complaints about nuisance, dangerous and vicious dogs, investigate dog bites, impound stray and dangerous dogs, file criminal charges, make court appearances, and assist the police in crimes involving dogs, injuries caused by dogs and livestock attacks.

We provide compassionate care for impounded animals at the shelter, as well as adoption and lost dog services to the community. We also educate the public and teach dog owners to be more responsible citizens.



Franklin County Dog Shelter
& Adoption Center



Franklin County
Board of Commissioners

**ANIMAL CARE
& CONTROL**

About the Shelter

The Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center (FCDSAC) is a municipal animal shelter that is under the jurisdiction of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners Animal Care & Control. FCDSAC is funded by the county and by the sale of dog licenses, adoption fees and redemption fees.

FCDSAC is where the lost and stray dogs of Franklin County are housed and cared for in hopes that they are reunited with their owners. FCDSAC also takes in dogs that are surrendered by their owners.

FCDSAC is an “open admission” shelter, meaning that we must accept any dog that is brought to us, no matter the condition of the dog. FCDSAC takes in between 6,000 - 10,000 dogs annually.

Lost & Stray Dog Services



- Dogs that come into the shelter as lost/stray are put on a “Stray Hold” in order to give their owners a chance to reclaim them.
 - The length of the stray hold is determined by whether the dog has a license and/or microchip.
 - No license or microchip: 3-day stray hold.
 - License and/or microchip: 14-day stray hold.
 - Approximately 30% of dogs that come into FCDSAC are reclaimed by their owner. While this may seem low, this is double the national average.
 - After their Stray Hold is up, dogs that FCDSAC feel are healthy and safe enough to rehome will then move to our Adoption Floor.
 - Once on our Adoption Floor, they will remain there until adopted, barring a medical or behavior concern.
 - Dogs with behavioral and/or medical concerns that would do best out of the shelter environment may be placed in a foster home or sent to an approved rescue organization.
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Services the Shelter Provides

- **Animal Awareness Education**
 - In conjunction with the Columbus Prosecutor's Office, the Animal Awareness Program teaches citizens how to be more responsible pet owners. First time offenders may be given the option of attending an Animal Awareness Class at the shelter.
 - **SNYP IT Program**
 - FCDSAC offers free spay or neuter surgery to dogs owned by Franklin County Residents who participate public assistance programs.
 - **Animal Control Officer Field Services**
 - The Franklin County Department of Animal Care and Control provides field animal control services to the citizens of Franklin County twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year. We are responsible for the enforcement of Ohio's vicious, dangerous and nuisance dog laws in Franklin County.
 - **Volunteer Program**
 - Volunteers enhance the quality of life of the dogs waiting to be adopted at the Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center. Efforts to provide compassionate care, training, exercise, and enrichment for the dogs reduces their fear, anxiety, and stress while housed at the shelter.
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Services FCDSAC Provides



- **Adoptions**

- Each year we rescue thousands of dogs who have been lost, discarded, abandoned, injured, or neglected. Most are simply lost dogs who have not been reclaimed by their original owners. We do everything we can to find a loving and responsible new home for every adoptable dog or puppy. All of our dogs available for adoption have been spayed (females) or neutered (males).

- **Microchipping**

- All dogs adopted from Franklin County Dog Shelter are microchipped to their adopter.

- **Dog Licensing**

- All dogs three months of age and older must be licensed annually by January 31. When you acquire a new dog, you must license it immediately. Dogs in Franklin County must be immunized against rabies by a licensed veterinarian before a license can be purchased

- **Community Pet Food Pantry**

- For pet owners who are experiencing temporary financial difficulty providing food for their pets. We accept donations of dog and cat food for our pet food pantry, and redistribute it to pet owners in need. Any dog owner may register to receive free food. You must show proof of dog license when you register. Cats are not required to register.

Humane Euthanasia

- “Euthanasia” is derived from the Greek word meaning “good death.”
- Euthanasia provides a painless and peaceful end of life experience for a pet who would otherwise continue to emotionally, mentally, and/or physically suffer.
- Euthanasia is a reality of animal shelters all over the world.
- FCDSAC performs euthanasia for dogs with severe medical, behavioral, and/or safety concerns.
- FCDSAC provides this service to pet owners in the community who are unable to afford euthanizing their personal pet at a vet.
- FCDSAC does **not** euthanize for lack of space, length of stay, being a specific breed, or housing too many of one breed.
- FCDSAC consistently remains above a 90% live release rate.
- As a volunteer, you will more than likely interact with dogs whose outcome is humane euthanasia.
- Volunteers are **never** involved in the humane euthanasia process.

Humane Euthanasia

We understand that humane euthanasia is a sensitive topic and we hope you understand that FCDSAC takes these kinds of decisions very seriously. With that said, if you have a fundamental disagreement with humane euthanasia or are unable to appropriately process humane euthanasia, we encourage you to find volunteer opportunities elsewhere.

For additional information and perspectives regarding humane euthanasia, we recommend the following resources:

- [Animal Farm Foundation Behavioral Euthanasia Podcast](#)
- [Harsh Truths And Difficult Choices: The Reality Of Behavioral Euthanasia](#)
- [When Love Isn't Enough](#)
- [Save Them All by Doing Whatever it Takes](#)



Franklin County Dog Shelter
& Adoption Center

Part II: An Introduction to the Volunteer Program

Volunteer Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Franklin
County Dog Shelter &
Adoption Center
Volunteer Program is to
facilitate and support the
mission of the shelter and
to enrich the lives of the
dogs in the shelter's care.



The Role of a Volunteer



Volunteers enhance the quality of life of the dogs waiting to be adopted at the Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center. Efforts to provide compassionate care, training, exercise, and enrichment for the dogs reduces their fear, anxiety, and stress while housed at the shelter.

Volunteers help facilitate the care and well-being of the dogs housed at the shelter by documenting observed behaviors and experiences.

Lastly, Volunteers are ambassadors for the shelter and support the shelter's mission.

Volunteer Program Core Values



- Assume positive intent.
 - Be compassionate, kind, and respectful.
 - Create a culture of open communication and collaboration.
 - Do your best today and do even better tomorrow.
 - Excel through continued education, learning, and training.
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Volunteer Opportunities



Individuals that have completed our **Volunteer Onboarding Process** and have been accepted into our Volunteer Program are eligible to participate in the following volunteering opportunities:

- Dog Walking, Dogs Playing for Life Playgroup, Basic Obedience Dog Training Class, Reactive Dog Training Class, New Volunteer Training, Shy Dog Program, Community Volunteer Events, On-Site Events, Off-Site/Community Events, Dog Bathing, Dog Grooming, Running Club, Hiking Club, Field Trips with Dogs, Overnights with Dogs, and the Volunteer Guest Program.

We will discuss these opportunities more in depth at the New Volunteer Orientation. In the meantime, check out our [website](#) for additional information on our volunteering opportunities.



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Part III: Volunteer Requirements & Expectations

Essential Volunteer Requirements

Individuals interested in joining the Volunteer Program must be able to meet and maintain the essential physical, mental, and emotional requirements outlined on the following slides.



Essential Physical Requirements (1 of 2)

- Quick reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously.
 - High level of manual dexterity to leash/harness and otherwise handle the dogs.
 - Ability to walk unaided on uneven and/or slippery surfaces.
 - Ability to bend, squat, kneel, and stand up repeatedly without assistance.
 - Ability to stand for significant periods of time while walking dogs.
 - Average vision with or without corrective devices.
 - Average sense of smell and touch in order to assess body condition of dogs, and to note signs of illness or injury.
 - Ability to distinguish (with or without assistive device) if a dog is growling or making sounds indicating fear or pain.
 - Ability to effectively communicate, both verbally and written.
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Essential Physical Requirements (2 of 2)

- Ability to maneuver well in tight spaces, react and move quickly in order to prevent dogs from escaping.
 - Ability to handle and restrain animals of small to large size (up to 75 pounds) with caution and care.
 - Ability to capture loose and escaped animals with quick and quiet movements if needed.
 - Ability to manage allergies, whether environmental or animal related.
 - Ability to deal with strong and unpleasant odors, fleas/ticks, and possible wounds or injuries to dogs in our care.
 - Ability to cope with a loud environment due to dog barks and other noises.
 - Ability to judge a dog's body language and to change your own body language and actions appropriately to reduce fear, anxiety, and/or stress in the dog.
 - Possess immune defenses adequate to tolerate exposure to zoonotic diseases such as giardia, ringworm, and mange.
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Essential Mental Requirements

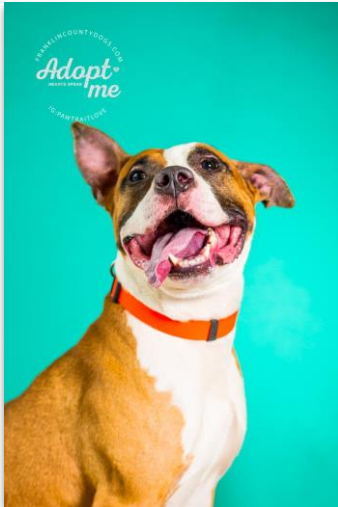
- Ability to understand, remember, and follow instructions given to you. Including directions given verbally, in writing, and/or via email.
 - Ability to remain flexible and remain up to date with changing policies and procedures.
 - Ability to continually learn, adapt, and accept constructive feedback.
 - Ability to self-assess and be aware about one's skills and limits; including physical, mental, and emotional limits.
 - Ability to be aware of one's environment, both immediate and distant.
 - Ability to be aware of potentially dangerous or unsafe situations when working with the dogs.
 - Ability to remain calm with dogs that are upset; behave sensitively and confidently; show good judgment and act appropriately in these situations in order to reduce fear, anxiety, and stress in the dogs.
 - Ability to understand that your experience with a dog will differ from other people's experience with that same dog.
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Essential Emotional Requirements

- Ability to cope with unexpected dog behavior, including behavior caused by fear, anxiety, and stress.
 - Ability to cope with an emotionally stressful environment. Dogs in our care may have been homeless, abandoned, and/or abused.
 - Ability to emotionally handle intense situations such as dog bites, dog attacks, and dog fights.
 - Ability to maintain appropriate emotional boundaries with the dogs you will be handling.
 - Ability to process and cope with humane euthanasia in a mature, healthy, and appropriate manner.
 - Be aware of the effects of compassion fatigue and burnout and have a robust self-care routine in place that promotes a healthy volunteer/life balance.
 - Possess a high level of emotional intelligence and recognize when your actions are adversely affecting yourself, your fellow Volunteers, Shelter Staff, the public, and/or the dogs.
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Volunteer Expectations

Time Commitment



Individuals **must** be able to commit to volunteering a minimum of 4 hours each month for at least 6 consecutive months.

With that said, individuals can volunteer for more than 4 hours each month and are welcome to stay longer than 6 months!

After your 6 months are up, you are still required to volunteer a minimum of 4 hours each month in order to remain an active Volunteer.

Volunteer Expectations

Compassion Fatigue

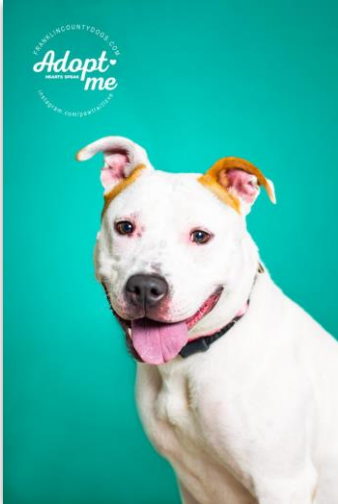


Individuals volunteering in the animal welfare realm are at risk to experience “compassion fatigue.” Compassion fatigue is a “broadly defined concept that can include emotional, physical, and spiritual distress in those providing care to another. It is associated with caregiving where people or animals are experiencing emotional and/or physical pain and suffering.”

For more information on compassion fatigue, check out www.compassionfatigue.org.

Volunteer Expectations

Self-Care



As a Volunteer, it is important to practice self-care and have a healthy relationship with your volunteerism. Volunteering should not be your entire life but should be one aspect of your life that you find enjoyable and rewarding.

We recommend the following in order to maintain a healthy relationship with your volunteerism and to avoid burnout and compassion fatigue:

- Limit your time at the shelter.
 - Take breaks from volunteering as needed.
 - Compartmentalize your volunteering. When you are not at the shelter, don't think/worry about the shelter!
 - Focus on what you can control and learn to accept what you cannot control.
 - Be present and engaged with the dog in front of you when you are volunteering.
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Volunteer Expectations

Dog Walking Basics



Volunteers are expected to walk dogs in any weather. Including in rain, snow, and cold/hot temperatures. Given that, Volunteers should dress according to the weather.

Please be aware that you **will** come in contact with dog feces, urine, vomit, blood, and other bodily fluids on a consistent basis.

Volunteer Expectations

Dog Behavior



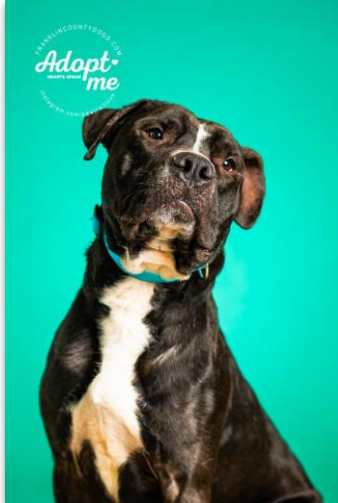
As a Volunteer, you will be handling **large** and **strong** dogs that present the following behaviors on a consistent basis:

- Leash Biting
- Leash Pulling
- “Mouthiness” (i.e. a dog grabbing you or your clothes with their mouth/teeth).
- Jumpiness
- Humping
- Fear-Based Aggression

You **must** be comfortable addressing these behaviors using positive reinforcement techniques.

Volunteer Expectations

Bites and Attacks



Homeless dogs coming into the shelter have unknown histories with unknown behaviors, triggers, and/or stressors. Moreover, dogs are autonomous creatures and every dog has the potential to bite or attack.

An animal shelter is a stressful environment where dogs tend to have moderate to severe levels of fear, anxiety, and stress.

Given this, you must be aware that you will be at risk to be bitten and or attacked by a dog while volunteering at the shelter.

All individuals are required to sign a "Liability Waiver" before volunteering with the shelter.



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Part IV: The Volunteer Onboarding Process

Volunteer Onboarding Process

Individuals wanting to join our Volunteer Program must successfully complete our **Volunteer Onboarding Process**. This process is outlined in the following slides. Please be aware that you must be able to commit a minimum of 25 - 35 hours over the next 2 months in order to complete our **Volunteer Onboarding Process**.

We know this sounds like a lot, but don't worry! Our Volunteer Coordinator will be in touch via email each step of the way with instructions and important information regarding deadlines.

Please note that our Volunteer Program has limited capacity and that your eligibility to join our Volunteer Program is ultimately determined by our current capacity and our Volunteer Coordinator's discretion.



Volunteer Onboarding Process



1. Review the online **Volunteer Information Presentation** and complete the corresponding **Quiz**.
 2. Watch the online Maddie's Fund **Canine Body Language in the Shelter Webinar** and complete the quiz.
 3. Complete the online **Fear Free Shelter Program Core Module**.
 4. Watch the **Defensive Handling and Catch Pole Control** video.
 5. Submit your online **FCDS Volunteer Program Application**.
 6. Attend an in-person **New Volunteer Orientation**. Please note that orientations are **only** held on weekday afternoons.
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Volunteer Information Presentation Quiz

If you feel that our Volunteer Program is a good fit for you, and you are able to make the required time commitment, your next step is to complete the ***Volunteer Information Presentation Quiz*** (link below). We strongly encourage you to submit your quiz **ASAP**. Remember that your quiz **must** be completed by the end of the current Enrollment Week.*

[Volunteer Information Presentation Quiz](#)

Upon your successful completion of the quiz, our Volunteer Coordinator will be in contact via email within 1-3 business days regarding how to continue in the **Volunteer Onboarding Process**.



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& Adoption Center

Part V: Next Step



Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center

Thank you for your time! We are excited for you to begin your volunteering journey with us!

Don't forget to submit your [Volunteer Information Presentation Quiz](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator at mark.mann@franklincountyohio.gov
