

DOG TEAM SAFETY POLICY

Welcome to the Saving Paws Animal Rescue DOG TEAM. We look forward to sharing our love for the dogs with you. Many of you feel comfortable with your handling skills after having pets of your own. It is important to remember animals in a rescue setting will not act like the pets in your home. The dogs are coming to a brand-new environment with no familiar smells, people or noises. It takes time for dogs to adjust to new faces, sharing space, and the smells and sounds of the rescue.

It is important to know the signs of stress and fearful behavior to ensure volunteers remain safe, while the animals are kept as comfortable as possible.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

- **Must be 18 years of age or older to be in any area of the building that houses dogs, or handle dogs. Children are only permitted in meet and greet areas with adult supervision.**
- **An understanding of basic dog body language.**
- **An understanding of what your body language tells the dog.**
- **Knowledge of positive reinforcement training. Ability to help rescue dogs with bad behaviors in a positive way. Jumping, and leash pulling as example..**
- **Know your limits. Do not handle a dog you are not comfortable handling.**
- **Wear appropriate attire. No flip flops or shorts.**
- **Communicate all valuable findings with coordinators, regarding behavior and medical concerns.**
- **Volunteers will sign-up using our Volunteer Matters software; All dog volunteers need to have an application in place via the software, attend an orientation, have a signed Liability Waiver on file and must sign-up for volunteering times using the dog care calendar.**

SAFETY POLICIES

- **Puppies are not handled by the public, do not go outside into play pens or walks until after they have received at minimum their first vaccinations.**
- **Two volunteers are required when working with 2 or more puppies to socialize and clean up waste.**
- **When walking newly arrived dogs, before they have been assessed, a slip collar is required and should be walked within a fenced area. If taken out of the fenced area a slip collar and harness, double leash should be used until the dog is assessed.**
- **If at any time you are unsure of the dog's behavior, return the dog to the kennel or request a coordinator for assistance.**
- **Animal bites are always a risk while volunteering. With caution and proper training most bites are preventable. If a bite does occur: Report the bite immediately to a dog coordinator, clean wound and seek medical care if necessary.**
- **Animal kennels will be tagged – Level 1 pet has no concerning behaviors and walks well on a leash; Level 2 pet may be a larger dog with the ability to pull on the leash; Level 3 shows there are behaviors that need an expert handler with a behavior modification plan in place to help the animal.**
- **Observe the dog, if there are any concerning behaviors that you are not trained or comfortable to work with, do not handle the dog. Always pay attention to the dog, no cell phone use while walking dogs.**
- **Saving Paws Animal Rescue volunteers use positive reinforcement only. At no time are you to strike an animal. Never correct a dog by jerking the leash, always apply gradual pressure to redirect a dog.**

- Dogs are not free fed. Volunteers who take the early shift or are there in the late afternoon will be responsible for feeding the dogs.
- Never corner a dog at any time for any reason.
- Authorized volunteers only accept surrendered dogs; may provide medical treatment; adopt out dogs; authorize fosters; provide access to building; authorize dogs to leave the property and accept dogs into rescue care.
- Anyone provided the building door code, should not for any reason share that code with another person, family included. This is for the safety of our volunteers and animals, we need to know who has the building codes at all times.
- Any animal in the quarantine area will not be permitted to interact with any other animal at the rescue. A clean in and clean out policy for the quarantine area is always in force.
- All volunteers should wash their hands after interacting with an animal.
- Reminder that there are illnesses that can be transferred via your hands and clothes to other animals. We recommend changing your rescue clothes before interacting with your pets at home.