



CAT HANDBOOK

Olympic Peninsula Humane Society
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WELCOME to the wild and wonderful world of volunteering!

OPHS is an open-intake shelter; this means that we take in EVERY domestic animal that comes through our doors. No matter the age, breed, condition, or circumstance, no animal is turned away. We are the ONLY open-intake shelter on the Olympic Peninsula, so we see a wide variety of animals! In addition to dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and rats, we have taken in: ferrets, turtles, horses, snakes, gerbils, hamsters, chinchillas, chickens, goats, roosters, iguanas, fish, parakeets, cockatiels, finches, and pigs! (The only animals we cannot take are wild animals)

OPHS does not just take in owner surrender animals, we also have contracts with the cities of Port Angeles, Sequim, and Clallam county to take in stray animals. The legal “stray hold” for an animal with no known owner is 72 hours. After that hold time, the decision can be made to put the animal up for adoption, have that animal transferred to a rescue, or another outcome may be decided.

Every animal that enters OPHS is given a quick examination to assess its immediate needs. If emergency medical care is deemed necessary, our staff veterinarian and veterinary technician team will tend to the animal and decide whether outside help is needed. Some sick/injured animals may need radiographs or another kind of diagnostic tool or treatment that we are not able to offer. In those cases, we reach out to local veterinary clinics for help. Every reasonable effort will be made to treat a sick/injured animal if its condition is considered treatable. In less severe medical situations, all the animals’ medical needs are met in-house through our veterinary team and animal staff.

If an animal is healthy, but has severe behavior problems, we will assess the animal with a behavioral evaluation, and try to remedy the problem with appropriate intervention. While we do work with and rehabilitate animals that have minor issues, if an animal has a severe bite history, we are not legally able to adopt that animal out to a new home. Medical and behavior cases may take several months before being able to be adopted out. Every animal is different, and we make decisions about these situations on a case-by-case basis. Some of these animals are available to be fostered by volunteers, others are not.

Upon intake, every animal is updated with an age-appropriate vaccination schedule, given a flea treatment, and, if appropriate, a de-worming treatment. Additionally, other medicines or treatments are administered as needed. Every animal is checked to see if it is spayed or neutered, and if not, will have the appropriate surgery before being adopted. Upon adoption, every animal is implanted with a microchip and given a rabies vaccine (or a voucher for a free rabies vaccine at a local veterinary clinic).

******OPHS never euthanizes any healthy or adoptable animal due to lack of space or length of time. We reserve euthanasia as a last resort only for animals that are untreatably ill or dangerously aggressive.***

General Rules for Volunteers

Photos:

- Feel free to take and share photos with friends and family!
- If you have a cute picture of an animal and would like to share it with us, just email it to us (info@ophumanesociety.org) and we may decide to use it on Facebook, Instagram, or Petfinder!
- However, for safety reasons, please refrain from being involved with your phone while interacting with animals! You will need your full attention on them!
- *Note: Posting photos on social media that are inflammatory or have negative intent will be grounds for dismissal.*

Talking with Customers:

- As a volunteer, you may be approached by customers (potential adopters) asking about an animal. Feel free to share your first-hand animal experiences with the customers if they ask you, but if they have any questions about adopting, or other policies/procedures, PLEASE direct them to a staff member.
- Do NOT try to coerce or influence someone to adopt an animal if it is not a good fit.
- Do NOT try to “sell” the animals or influence their descriptions.
- *Note: Inappropriate communication with customers will be grounds for dismissal.*

Smoking:

- Smoking is ONLY allowed in your own private vehicle and at least 25 feet away from any entrance door; you are NOT allowed to smoke anywhere on the grounds.
- Please dispose of all cigarette butts appropriately in your vehicle. No exceptions.

Public Restrooms:

- Bathrooms are located off Adoption Row in the Bark House – take a left-hand turn after the hand-washing sink, but before the kitchen.

Logging Hours:

- There is a 3-ring binder at the front desk where you can sign-in and out and keep track of your hours using your own sheet. Volunteer sheets are kept in alphabetical order by last name and new sheets are found at the front of the binder.
- Volunteer sheets are taken out at the end of the year, and new sign-in sheets begin January 1st. New sheets will be located at the front of the binder.
- Every so often we count hours and use the number to apply for grants and other shelter-related programs, therefore it is important for you to track your time here.

Communication with Staff:

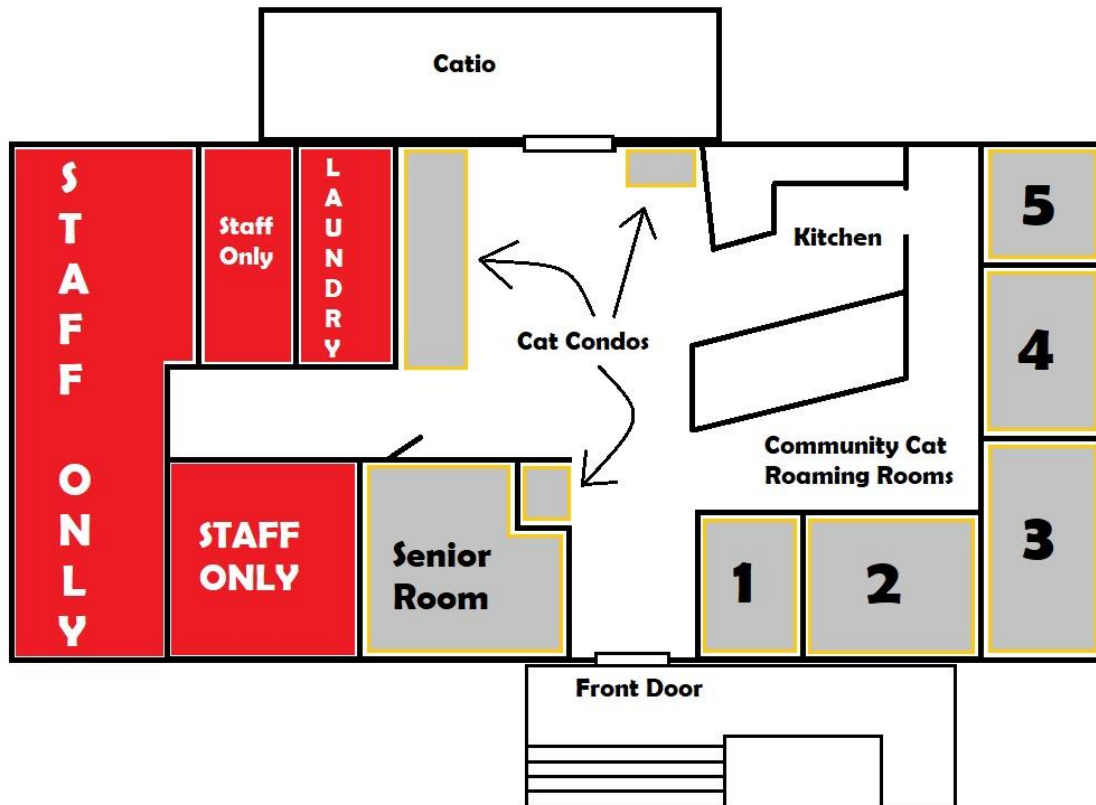
- If you have any questions, PLEASE just ask a staff member! If one is not readily available in the Bark House or Kitty City, there will always be someone at the Front Desk to help you – you may also email us at info@ophumanesociety.com
- Don't be afraid to let the staff know if you notice a problem with an animal -- we rely on all eyes and ears to be able to take the best possible care of the animals.

Friends and Family:

- If you have a friend or family member that would like to volunteer with you, they will need to fill out necessary volunteer paperwork and go through the volunteer orientation.

- Friends and family can visit with you, but please refrain from having them handle the animals directly until after they have filled out a volunteer application and have gone through the volunteer orientation.

KITTY CITY MAP



- Kitty City is the only area where cat volunteers are able to spend their time while on the property.
 - There is another building that houses cats (The “Vet Trailer”), but these cats are stray, feral, sick/injured, or awaiting spay/neuter and are not available for volunteers to visit unless accompanied by a staff member
 - *If a customer comes in looking for their missing cat, please direct them to a staff member that can take them to look for their cat in the Vet Trailer.*
- The Kitty City map above shows an overview of the cat building. The gray areas show where adoptable cats are housed, and the areas that volunteers are encouraged to visit the cats.
 - The numbered areas are the community cat rooms. In this area, cats roam freely in larger stalls rather than being in individual cages.
 - Sometimes we will make a room specifically for Barn Cats, or FIV+ cats. If so, there will be signs that describe the cats in that particular room.

- Cage cards or bios for each cat every room are hanging on the wall outside of the room.
 - There are 4 sets of cat condos that house cats individually. Usually, these are cats that don't like the company of other cats. Or, these cats may need a specific kind of food, or a special prescription food.
 - The cat's cage card should be hanging on the outside of the cat condo along with any important information about that cat.
 - If you need help opening one of the doors, just ask staff for assistance.
 - The Senior Room is mostly for senior aged cats (usually 6-10yrs and up), but may occasionally house a younger cat.
 - The cat cage cards are pinned up on a bulletin board right outside the room.
 - Sometimes there will be cats in the senior room that are in poor condition or have chronic diseases.
 - For instance, kidney disease and hyperthyroidism can cause a cat to be very skinny and not look well! Our primary objective is keep them comfortable and happy and start them on the proper treatment to give them as much quality time as possible. And volunteers help us keep them happy!
- Kitty City also has some areas that are deemed STAFF ONLY: ***These areas are STAFF ONLY to protect the health and safety of the cats and baby kittens residing in those rooms!***
 - The very back bedroom is an *"intake and holding room."* This room is for new intake cats that need vaccines, or medical treatments before going up for adoption.
 - There is a *"kitten room"* that houses underaged kittens, or kittens that are otherwise not ready for adoption yet.
 - And there is a non-functioning bathroom and laundry room
 - Some volunteers may be trained on how to do laundry if they wish
 - *Volunteers are not allowed in these rooms unless granted permission from a staff member!*
- Through the sliding glass door in the rear of the building, there is a "Catio" which **sometimes** has cats roaming, and often houses our adoptable rabbits.
- Kitty City is also where many of the "exotic" or "little critter" animals are kept. Animals such as guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, etc. With staff permission, you are able to give them attention and treats, too!

SOCIALIZING WITH THE CATS

- During your volunteer time, please feel free to enter the roaming rooms to visit and play with the cats
 - PLEASE take the time before entering to read signs that are posted on the doors to warn of the cat's unpleasant behaviors or special needs.
 - Some cats may not like to be picked up or be petted in a certain way.
 - Some cats may have just had surgery and should not be picked up.
 - Some cats may be feral or barn cats and are not used to being touched.
 - And PLEASE remember to fully close all doors behind you.

- If you have any questions, ask a staff member.
- You may also open the condo doors and visit with the individual cats
 - Again, PLEASE take the time to read any signs on the kennel regarding behavior or other special needs
 - Some cats may say STAFF ONLY or ASK FOR HELP -- please don't just open these kennels without getting permission from staff.
 - If you have any questions, ask a staff member.
 - And PLEASE remember to fully close the kennel doors when you are done!
- There is alcohol based hand-sanitizer available in Kitty City so you can sanitize your hands in between cat rooms, and in between cat condos.
 - We ask that you please use the sanitizer to cut down on the possible transfer of "germs" from one cat to another.
- If you would like to use toys to play with the cats, or would like to brush a cat, ask a staff member.
 - Once you learn where the extra supplies are, you can just retrieve them yourself.
- If a cat escapes and you can't catch it, don't panic! Just inform a staff member so they can help you.

CLEANING/FEEDING

- If you would like to learn the proper procedure for cleaning/refilling litter boxes and food/water bowls, you can be shown how in your individual orientation.
 - We typically do not ask volunteers to do this, but we appreciate the help if you would like to participate!

OFF-SITE CAT ADOPTIONS AT PETCO

- Every Saturday from 10am-2pm, we have an off-site adoption event at Petco in Sequim; volunteers can sign up to attend and help at these events.
- Petco is broken into two, two hour shifts, with a minimum of two volunteers per shift.
- We will always have a staff member to work with you for off-site events.
 - The staff member will bring the animals and supplies from the shelter to Petco and back. You will only have to simply show up to Petco to volunteer.
- Volunteers that would attend this weekly event will help set up the area, talk to customers about the cats and the shelter in general, and help clean up afterward.
- We most often have cats available for adoption (and we do have up to 4 cats that stay out at Petco and available for adoption), but we occasionally have dogs!
 - Volunteers can also help handle dogs if we happen to have an appropriate dog for the Petco event.
- If you are interested in volunteering at Petco please let the office staff know and they will put you in touch with the volunteers who schedule Petco.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- 1.) Cats have claws and teeth! We can often trim their claws so they are not so sharp, but we cannot trim their teeth.
 - a. It is possible that you could get scratched or bitten by a cat while volunteering. Even though we make every attempt to prevent this from happening, you can never totally predict an animal's behavior with new people. So, please be cautious when meeting new cats!
- 2.) Since OPHS is an open admission shelter, we take in every cat that comes to us. This means we may receive cats that have contagious diseases, or break with a contagious illness while up for adoption, and you could potentially carry an illness home to your cats on your hands, shoes, or clothing.
 - a. If your cat(s) at home have been vaccinated, and they are otherwise healthy, there is a low likelihood that you could infect your cat(s), but it is possible.
 - b. To prevent bringing germs home on your hands, there will be lots of alcohol hand sanitizer available to sanitize your hands inbetween handling cats, and before you go home.
 - i. If you do happen to interact with a cat that does have some sneezes or discharge from their eyes or nose, it's best to change and wash your clothes/shoes before interacting with your cats at home.
 - c. *If we ever have an outbreak of a very contagious illness, we will post signs so all visitors know to take precaution when going back to their cat(s) at home.*
- 3.) There is a very small possibility that volunteers could contract ringworm while volunteering. Ringworm is a fungus that creates red circular lesions on the skin. Many people are repulsed at the thought of having ringworm; however, it is an easily treated condition.
 - a. Thankfully, we have never had a volunteer contract ringworm. And, if we are aware that one of our cats **might** have ringworm, that cat will be isolated and will not be in an area where volunteers have contact.

In the case of an emergency!

1. If you do get bitten or badly scratched by a cat where it breaks the skin, please inform a staff member right away. We will ask you to fill out a form and seek medical treatment if necessary.
2. If you are otherwise injured in any way, or see that someone else has been injured, please inform a staff member immediately!
3. In the case of any other emergency, please dial 911.

NOTES:

APPLICATION SECTION

Date: _____

General information:

Full Name: _____

First

Last

Current Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____ Date of birth: ____/____/____

Personal email address: _____

Are you OK with receiving email updates or other OPHS related communications: YES NO

Are you at least 16 years old? (please circle one) YES NO

How did you hear about our volunteer program? _____

Do you have friends or family that have volunteered for us? YES NO

If yes, Who? _____

Will you be planning on volunteering with them? YES NO MAYBE

Do you have any pets at home right now? YES NO List: _____

What kinds of pets do you own, or have owned in the past?

(please circle) DOGS CATS BIRDS HORSES FARM ANIMALS RABBITS REPTILES
GUINEA PIGS RODENTS FERRETS FISH OTHER

How many years of pet owning experience do you have? _____

Have you ever visited an animal shelter before? YES NO

If yes, where have you visited? _____

Do you have any previous experience as a volunteer at our old shelter, or at a different shelter? YES NO

If yes, with what organization(s)? And what activities did you participate in?

Many of the shelter's volunteer opportunities include strenuous physical activity. If you have any limitations, physical or psychological, which require accommodations or restrict your ability to volunteer, please list these below. This is meant to inform the Volunteer and Department Coordinators so that we can fully inform you regarding physical demands of different tasks during your orientation, not to limit your volunteer experience.

1. What volunteer position(s) are you interested in? Please check all appropriate boxes:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site Adoptions (Petco) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cat Foster (usually underage kittens or nursing moms with babies) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Critters | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottle babies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Enrichment and Socializing | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning/Laundry/Other daily tasks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Taking photos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog training | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Foster (medical or behavioral) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming dogs or cats | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cat Enrichment and Socializing | |

2. What special skills would you like us to know about you?

3. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor/felony/theft/assault/sex offense or do you have any outstanding warrants or charges pending against you? (Please circle one) Yes No

(If yes, please explain:)

In signing the application, I understand and agree to the following:

- I have read the complete Volunteer Manual, and I agree to comply with all rules, regulations, policies, and procedures stated in the Volunteer Manual.
- I understand I must attend an orientation before I can begin volunteering.
- I understand that if I do not follow rules established by the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society, I may be subject to corrective action and/or termination from the Volunteer Program.
- I understand that if I am injured while acting as an unpaid member of the volunteer staff, I am not covered by Washington State Workers Compensation Law. I authorize the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society to seek emergency medical treatment in case of accident, injury or illness. I agree to hold the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society, its employees, volunteers, and officers harmless in all matters relating to my service as a volunteer, including but not limited to personal injury.
- I understand that I am a representative of the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society and that I may have access to personal or privileged information regarding the organization. I agree to respect and maintain confidentiality of all donors, customers, volunteers, staff and animals of the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society both on and offsite, during and outside of volunteer hours. I understand that any disrespectful or misleading representation of the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society may be cause for immediate dismissal from the Volunteer Program.
- I understand that because I will be handling animals, it is important to discuss being vaccinated against tetanus with my physician. I release the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society from all responsibility that may occur because of my not pursuing this matter further, and I understand whatever decision I make is at my own risk.

Hold Harmless Wavier:

- ***I agree that on behalf of myself, my heirs, personal representatives and executors, do release, discharge, indemnify, and hold harmless the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society, its agents, employees, directors and board of directors from any and all claims, causes of action, or demands of any nature of cause. Including but not limited to, costs and attorney's fees incurred by the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society in connection with the same, based on damages or injuries which may be incurred or sustained by me in any way connected with my services for the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society including but not limited to animal bites, accidents, or injuries.***

Applicant Signature

____/____/____
Date

Print Name

FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF MINORS

If under 18, parent or legal guardian must also sign.

As the parent or legal guardian of the volunteer applicant aged 16 to 17 years old listed above, I give my permission that they may volunteer at the Olympic Peninsula Humane Society without myself or a guardian being present.

Parent/Guardian Signature

____/____/____
Date

Print Name