



Essential Capabilities of Volunteers

At the Humane Society for Hamilton County, volunteers play a crucial role in our mission to provide care, compassion, and second chances to animals in need. To ensure a rewarding and fulfilling experience for our volunteers, we have outlined the essential capabilities required for success in volunteering with us below.

If an individual is not able to meet these essential capabilities, a mentor may accompany the individual if they meet the program requirements and submit a volunteer application and complete subsequent training.

Please list any accommodations you may need in your volunteer application. If you would like to discuss accommodations you need prior to filling out an application, please email the Volunteer Programs manager at volunteerprograms@hamiltonhumane.com.

Failure to report concerns or accommodations needed could jeopardize your, others or animal safety and could result in dismissal as a volunteer.

Essential Physical Capabilities for all roles:

- Average vision (with or without correction) to move safely around our facilities, to be able to observe animal body language without difficulty, and to be able to read signage and paperwork.
- Ability to hear calls of alarm such as audible warnings from others or sirens.
- Must not have strong allergies to animals or chemicals that can't be managed by medication.
- Ability to deal with strong and unpleasant odors, fleas, and feces.
- Ability to cope with a very loud environment.
- Ability to maneuver well in tight spaces
- Have regular access to an email account and be able to use simple software to schedule & log volunteer hours.

Essential Mental Capabilities for all roles:

- Ability to speak and effectively communicate with other volunteers, staff and members of the public.
- Ability to understand, remember and follow instructions and procedures.
- Possess moderate level reading, writing, spelling and communication skills in English.



- Possess problem solving skills.
- Ability to receive, incorporate and sustain instruction and feedback.
- Possess a professional and positive attitude.
- Ability to work as a team member and follow the chain of command.

Essential Emotional Capabilities for all roles:

- Ability to cope with an emotionally charged environment and work professionally in the presence of animals who are homeless, abandoned, injured and/or abused.
- Ability to be quiet and treat animals in the most sensitive way possible.
- Ability to cope with medical and behavioral changes of animals in shelter and respect staff expertise and decisions.
- Ability to understand Humane Society for Hamilton County's policies and positions regarding animal welfare and an ability and willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when interacting with the public.

Essential Capabilities for animal interaction and handling roles:

- Ability to cope with unexpected animal behavior without assistance.
- Ability to be aware of potentially dangerous situations when working with animals.
- Ability to remain calm with animals who are upset.
- Ability to hear if an animal is growling or showing signs of fear or distress.
- High level of manual dexterity to leash and harness animals.
- Quick reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously (Example: Able to open a cage door while handling an animal).
- Ability to bend and squat in order to leash/harness, clean kennels or pick up an animal as needed.
- Ability to work in a variety of environmental conditions (cold and hot temperatures).

Additional Essential Capabilities for Volunteers

- Volunteers may encounter a variety of tasks and situations that require flexibility and adaptability. This could involve assisting with different types of animals, performing various duties within the shelter environment, or responding to unexpected challenges or emergencies.
- Volunteers should be able to work effectively as part of a team, collaborating with staff members and fellow volunteers to achieve shared goals. This includes communicating openly, offering support, and respecting diverse perspectives and contributions.



- Volunteers are expected to be dependable and committed to their volunteer duties. This involves adhering to scheduled shifts, arriving on time, and fulfilling responsibilities with diligence and enthusiasm.
- Volunteers must adhere to the shelter's policies, procedures, and guidelines at all times. This includes following safety protocols, respecting animal welfare standards, and maintaining confidentiality regarding sensitive information about animals and clients.
- Volunteers should have a willingness to learn and grow in their role, seeking opportunities for training, skill development, and continuing education related to animal care and welfare. A growth mindset fosters personal and professional development and enhances the volunteer experience.

By embodying these essential capabilities, volunteers contribute significantly to the well-being of our animals and the overall success of our shelter operations. We appreciate and value the dedication, compassion, and contributions of our volunteers in making a positive difference in the lives of animals in need.