



Essential Capabilities

Foster Care Volunteer Role

Volunteering to help animals is extremely rewarding, but can also present some challenges. Below are the essential capabilities a volunteer needs to safely and effectively participate in the volunteer program.

Physical Capabilities

- Quick reflexes, a high level of manual dexterity, and the ability to use both hands simultaneously.
- Ability to walk unaided on unpaved, uneven, rugged, wet, muddy, or slippery floors and outdoor surfaces.
- Ability to lift and carry at least 25 pounds.
- Ability to bend, kneel, and squat in order to leash/harness or pick up an animal.
- Average vision to move safely throughout the campus, be able to observe animal body language without difficulty, be able to read instructions and animals' paperwork.
- Average sense of smell and touch in order to assess body condition of animals, and note signs of illness or injury.
- Ability to hear if animal is growling or making sounds indicating fear or pain.
- Ability to handle and restrain animals up to 25 pounds with extreme caution and care. This requires steadiness of hands and body, good balance, average coordination, physical strength, and mental alertness.
- Ability to work in the presence of animal dander as well as cleaning chemicals.
- Ability to deal with strong unpleasant odors, fleas, feces, and possible wounds on animals in our care.
- Ability to cope with loud animal noises.
- Ability to bend, stoop, sit, and kneel to reach into carrier, x-pen, or crate at floor level for the time period necessary to complete care and cleaning activities (up to 2 hours total per day).
- Ability to reach over into tub or kennel to complete grooming, cleaning, and sanitation procedures as needed.
- Possess immune system strong enough to tolerate exposure to zoonotic diseases such as ringworm and mange.

Mental Capabilities

- Ability to understand, remember, and follow both verbal and written instructions and procedures.
- High level reading, writing, spelling, and communication skills and ability to effectively communicate in English as necessary to complete volunteer duties.
- Possess problem-solving capability and ability to cope with unexpected animal behavior without assistance.
- Ability to evaluate an animal's response to handling and safeguard against animal bites or scratches.
- Ability to recognize potentially dangerous situations when working with the animals, must be able to remain calm with animals that are upset; show good judgment; and act appropriately in these situations.

Emotional Capabilities

- Ability to handle constructive criticism.
- Ability to cope in a highly emotionally charged environment when animals arrive abandoned or abused, as well as with the reality that some animals in our care may be euthanized.
- Ability to understand IACC's policies and positions regarding animal welfare issues, and an ability and willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when on duty, or when otherwise representing the IACC.

Other

- Ability, once trained, to work independently with minimal supervision, as well as make positive contributions in a team atmosphere with other volunteers and staff.
- All animal care positions involve some cleaning and can involve the use of hazardous or toxic chemicals.