

Volunteer Handbook

H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter

Welcome to our team at H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter! We're happy to have you with us!

WHO WE ARE

H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter is a 501(c)3 private, non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to the direct care of the animals of Gogebic County Michigan and Iron County Wisconsin. We are the area's only animal shelter, providing safe shelter, food and medical care to over 500 dogs and cats each year. Founded in 1992, H.O.P.E. is incorporated by the State of Michigan and supported by Gogebic County, MI and Iron County, WI taxes plus adoption fees, donations and fundraising. We are a "no time limits" shelter for domestic (non-feral) dogs and cats looking for homes, H.O.P.E. cares for them for as long as they need us and each animal receives compassionate care from our staff and volunteers while they wait to be reunited with their families or to find a new forever home. Warm blankets, toys and treats, time spent socializing with caring people; all are a part of the animals' experience at the H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter.

WHAT WE DO

- Accept lost, stray and abandoned dogs & cats from Gogebic Co. MI & Iron Co. WI
- Accept owned animals that are no longer wanted (as space permits)
- Match animals with properly screened adopters
- Maintain a lost and found file
- Promote spaying and neutering to control pet overpopulation
- Answer pet questions via telephone and email
- Conduct occasional pet visits to nursing home residents
- Provide educational programs to elementary schools, daycare and nursery schools
- Forward cruelty complaints to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for investigation
- Assist law enforcement agencies in prosecuting animal cruelty cases
- Distribute educational literature

OUR EXPECTATIONS

All volunteers at H.O.P.E., regardless of position, are expected to uphold the standards of care set forth in this handbook as well as any future updates or additions of care standards set by management. The health, safety and betterment of the animals in H.O.P.E.'s custody are the priority at all times and successful adoption is our ultimate goal. If you are unable to do this for any reason, management is required to enforce disciplinary actions.

Note: This handbook contains only general guidelines and information. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. Please address any questions directly to management. Neither this handbook nor any other document confers any right, either expressed or implied, to remain in H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter's employ. Nor does it guarantee any fixed terms or conditions to your volunteer status. Your volunteer status may be terminated pursuant to applicable policies and procedures. The policies, procedures and practices described here may be modified or discontinued at any time. Management will inform you of any changes as they occur. Violation of policies or procedures may result in disciplinary action, including termination of volunteer status.

Open Door Policy: We encourage open communication, feedback and discussion about all issues relevant to H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter. Please feel free to approach management anytime about this.

Equal Opportunity Employer: H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, military status or any other classification prohibited by law.

Management:

Denise Anderman - Shelter Director
Kathy Zumbrock - Shelter Manager

Board Members:

Kay Fiene - President
Colleen Sachs - Vice-President/Treasurer
Anna Bolich - Secretary
Joseph Lemke - Member
Robbie Sardinha - Member
Eric Riegler - Member
Tom Laabs - Member (Gogebic County appointed)
James Lorensen - Member (Gogebic County appointed)

You are welcome to attend any board meetings you'd like. Meetings are held at 5:30PM on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Ironwood Public Safety Building.

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I. Basic Volunteer Requirements

You must be:

- Capable of lifting at least 50 lbs.
- Capable of standing on your feet and/or walking for long periods of time.
- Able to carry, walk and restrain animals.
- In control of your emotional state, maintain a calm demeanor and never elevate energy—animals feed off of our emotions and easily become fearful, anxious or overexcited based on our displayed emotions.
- Detail oriented and observant—it is essential to notice medical and behavioral changes in animals and be able to adjust to changes in needs quickly.
- Consistent in approach and methods—consistency will help provide a structured environment that helps the animals be in a more positive state of mind. H.O.P.E. is a team, we must work together to accomplish our goals.
- Communicative—talk to your fellow employees, volunteers and management about animals needs, changes, issues and updates so we can all work as team and serve these animals and our community to the best of our ability.
- Safe—always follow safety protocols and maintain safety for all animals and people
- Treating all animals and humans with respect at all times. We will not tolerate disrespect, aggressive behavior, bullying, abusive or any kind of damaging behavior at any time.
- Able to present yourself in a manner that represents H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter properly—kindness, caring, respectfulness and cleanliness must be portrayed at all times.

NOT allowed:

- Weapons or firearms
- Sexual harassment
- Physically or emotionally abusive behavior
- Violent behavior
- Smoking, drinking or using drugs on site
- Ignoring work duties
- Stealing or destroying property of H.O.P.E. or any employees, volunteers or customers
- Racism
- Gender inequality
- Sexism
- Homophobia or transphobia

II. Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed, including any and all personal information about clients that are surrendering or adopting animals. Details about the history of an animal may not be revealed to anyone unless it is specifically relevant to their care. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of volunteer status or another corrective action.

Examples:

1. A cat is surrendered from a hoarding case. You gain knowledge to information about the whereabouts, conditions, and persons involved in the situation. The cat is suffering from malnutrition, digestive problems and exhibits resource guarding.
 - You may NOT reveal the location, persons or specific conditions involved in this case.
 - You MAY reveal that due to the animal being in a hoarding situation it is exhibiting medical and behavioral issues that directly resulted from that environment.
2. A dog is brought in via animal control. This dog is a result of a backyard breeding situation and is fearful of people with a dominating presence and responds poorly to loud noises, quick movements. You gain knowledge about the individuals involved in the breeding, their location,

where they work and that the other animals they still have in their custody are Rottweiler-Mastiff mixes.

- You may NOT reveal the names, location, workplace or any information regarding remaining animals in the home.
- You MAY reveal the dog's history as a forced breeding dog and the resulting behaviors associated with this treatment.

III. Safety

Animal and human safety is of the the utmost concern at H.O.P.E. Our policies and procedures are created to maintain a safe environment. Common sense and personal interest are the greatest guarantees of your safety and the safety of the animals. If at any point you are willfully violating safety precautions we will pursue disciplinary actions. The cooperation of every employee and volunteer is necessary to maintain safety. Please come to management with any and all safety concerns as soon as you notice them.

Please:

- Report accidents as soon as they occur, whether human or animal-related.
- Wear appropriate safety gear as needed (i.e. gloves, masks, goggles).
- Shovel, snow blow and salt surfaces to maintain proper walkways and conditions in winter.
- Report unsafe conditions and malfunctioning equipment as you notice them.
- Handle animals respectfully and safely (see section VIII for details).

IV. Clothing Requirements

Safety is key when considering clothing and footwear at H.O.P.E. If you would like a H.O.P.E. branded t-shirt please please ask the director. Hoodies and hats are available for sale anytime. Volunteers receive a 25% discount on H.O.P.E. merchandise. Reflective vests and light up vests are available for you to wear while walking dogs and is recommended during times of low-light.

NOT allowed:

- Shorts
- Open-toed shoes
- Inappropriate words or images on clothing
- Revealing clothing
- Loose, hanging jewelry or accessories

Recommended:

- Waterproof, non-slip shoes or boots with good support
- Winter gear that will keep you appropriately warm and visible when walking dogs

V. Scheduling, Shifts & Attendance

Schedules are to be determined with the director prior to your start as a volunteer. If you need to change your schedule at any time, see the director. If you are unable to make it to your scheduled shift, please call the shelter and let the director or manager know not to expect you.

Currently we're only accepting volunteer shifts for afternoon shifts. This is considered between 2PM-6PM Monday thru Friday and 2PM-5PM on Saturdays and Sundays. When you come in for your shift, please sign the volunteer sign-in sheet either at the front desk or in the dog room. Check in with employees to see if specific tasks need to be accomplished and help wherever you're able. These tasks may include cleaning kennels or the facility, laundry, mopping, spending time with animals, brushing, bathing, walking dogs, coordinating and supervising cat outings, feeding, filling water bowls, setting up kennels and more.

VI. Cleaning Procedures

Cleaning and sanitizing is extremely important in order to prevent the spread of diseases, viruses, bacteria, fungus and keep animals and staff safe. Cleaning up messes as soon as they are made is essential, as is using proper cleaning techniques consistently.

A. Sanitizing vs. Cleaning:

1. CLEANING refers to the removal of debris by agents that separate them from surfaces. Products that we use to clean are dish soap, laundry detergent, Pine Sol and Simple Green.
2. SANITIZING refers to the disinfection of surfaces by agents that kill bacteria, fungus and viruses. Products that we use to sanitize are WatchDog, WysiWash, bleach and rubbing alcohol.
3. Cleaning must come first to lift debris and messes off of surfaces. Sanitizing comes after to fully disinfect the area.
4. Always make sure cleaning and sanitizing products have evaporated or been squeegeed or towed away before an animal enters that space.

B. Things we clean daily and/or multiple times daily:

1. Food and water bowls
2. Kennel surfaces
3. Walkways
4. Blankets and bedding
5. Tabletops
6. Toys
7. Litter boxes
8. Restrooms
9. Areas that come into contact with food, medication or body fluids

C. Things we clean as needed:

1. Leashes
2. Collars
3. Walls and doors
4. Transport kennels and carriers

D. When is extra cleaning necessary?

1. When there are sick animals present in the building. This includes but is not limited to viral infections, respiratory illness, digestive illness, worms, fungal infections, generally weakened immune systems (animals that are elderly, malnourished, or recently sick).
2. When there are injured animals present in the building. This includes but is not limited to wounds, hot spots and recent surgeries.
3. When there is a large amount of animals present in the building, especially if they are new intakes and have not had vetting yet.
4. Sanitize yourself before and after entering a space with a sick animal present. Clothes, hands and bottoms of shoes are crucial.
5. Additional cleaning and sanitizing is ALWAYS WELCOMED. Do not hesitate to mention to your coworkers if you think particularly stringent cleaning is needed on any particular day.

VII. Dog Bite Policy

H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter utilizes the Dr. Ian Dunbar bite level system to evaluate the severity of dog bites and determine the course of action needed for each individual dog. Any and all Level 3 or higher dog bites require evaluation of the offending dog by appropriate behaviorist/trainer/veterinarian.

All dog bites, regardless of their level, are to be documented within 24 hours of the bite through a fully filled out Incident Report and all bites are to be reported to the Executive

Director and Shelter Manager immediately. If an dog that does NOT have a current Rabies vaccination bites someone, this dog must undergo a state-mandated 10 day quarantine with the only human contact being during the cleaning of the kennel.

A happy and healthy dog with no reason to feel threatened or insecure has no reason to bite. While the many factors which lead to a dog biting someone may be complicated, there is usually a reason behind the behavior. These are multi-faceted, but their training, socialization and education are usually the most important factors.

Dr. Ian Dunbar's bite scale takes into consideration both the reasons why a dog may bite a human and what can be done about it. The bite scale levels are:

1. Level 1: aggressing but no skin contact.
2. Level 2: teeth make contact, but do not break skin.
3. Level 3: a single bite with shallow wounds.
4. Level 4: single bite with deep wounds
5. Level 5: multiple bites with deep wounds
6. Level 6: death of the victim and/or flesh consumed.

Dogs should learn bite inhibition. This is when they grasp someone or something with their mouth but know not to bite hard. The following levels range from dogs with bite inhibition to those with none.

Level 1: aggressive but no skin contact. This is generally an aggressive display which includes biting at the air and grunting, but not any physical damage. Frequently this involves aggressive signals such as showing their teeth and growling, although they may not even approach the person. However, if the dog snaps and bites the person's clothing without harming their body, this would fall into the level 1 category.

Level 2: teeth make contact, but do not break skin. With this type of bite, the victim may have teeth marks, but they will not have any perforation in their skin. In these cases, the dog is sending a very serious signal that they are being subjected to some type of stress. This dog is exhibiting bite inhibition.

Level 3: a single bite with shallow wounds. This level of bite results in a bite which causes between 1 and 4 superficial perforations of the skin. The wounds do not exceed deeper than half the length of the canine teeth. This type of bite is variable and can have many causes including:

- The dog is afraid
- Rough play escalates into aggression
- The dog's predatory instinct is triggered
- The dog received trauma
- Poor socialization
- Other causes

Any dog involved in a level 3 bite, must be evaluated by a veterinarian to determine if there is a physical cause and if no physical cause is found, a plan for appropriate training must be complied with appropriate behaviorist/trainers and must be followed by all staff and volunteers.

Level 4: single bite with deep wounds. When a dog bites only once but the wounds are deep, it will be considered a level 4 bite. The bite may cause 1 to 4 perforations which are deeper than half the length of the canine tooth. The cause of this type of bite, is also often

fear. It usually occurs in dogs which try to defend themselves against what they perceive as a serious threat. Any dog that has inflicted a level 4 bite on a human must be evaluated by a professional trainer and a plan of action must be completed.

Level 5: multiple bites with deep wounds. Fifth level bites cause deep wounds, similar to the previous level. However, they occur multiple times and can happen in multiple areas. Dogs that inflict fifth-level bites are considered dangerous dogs. While rehabilitation is a possibility, the liability factor must not be ignored. Any dog that has inflicted a level 5 bite on a human, must be evaluated and will likely need to be euthanized.

Level 6: death of the victim and/or flesh consumed. At this level, the only option is euthanasia.

Our goal in utilizing Dr. Ian Dunbar's bite level system, is to keep not only our staff and volunteers safe, but also to keep the public safe and to provide a healthy and safe environment for the animals in our care.

VIII. Cat Bite Policy

All cat bites that involve a **puncture wound** are to be documented within 24 hours of the bite through a fully filled out Incident Report and all bites are to be reported to the Executive Director and Shelter Manager immediately. If an cat that does NOT have a current Rabies vaccination bites someone, this cat must move to the Isolation Room (ISO) and undergo a state-mandated 10 day quarantine with the only human contact being during the cleaning of the kennel.

IX. Animal Handling

It is imperative that all animals are handled safely and cautiously. If there is ever an interaction that you feel too at risk in or you believe you or an animal will come to some harm, find your manager to help you with the situation. At times it may take more than one person to handle an animal if they are fearful or reactive. Always be observant of an animal's body language and mental state before handling them and adjust your approach appropriately.

A. Dog Handling

1. When moving dogs through the facility ALWAYS have them on leash. They MUST be wearing a martingale collar at all times. A slip lead is preferred unless there is a medical or behavioral necessity for a different type of equipment (i.e. gentle leader, harness, prong collar, clip lead, muzzle, etc).
2. Only one dog should be out of a kennel at a time to avoid potential conflict.
3. Outside the building use two leashes attached to a dog in two different ways. For example, one slip lead looped directly around the dogs neck + one clip lead clipped to the dog's collar. This is a safety precaution in case a collar or leash fails.
4. One person may only handle ONE dog at a time, in or out of the building. If a bonded pair is to be moved at the same time, ask a coworker for help.
5. If a dog is unwilling to walk with you, use aids like treats or toys to coax them forward. Do not yank on the leash or abrasively physically move the dog, this may cause them to react negatively at you and will put you and the dog at risk.
6. If you need to pick up a dog, make sure to support the whole body and keep your face clear of the dog's face. If it is a large dog, ask a coworker to help team lift.
7. Kennelled dogs must always have a clip attached to the base of their door latch to maintain security.

8. Use caution getting dogs out of their kennels as they can be at a heightened state of excitement (which can be positive or negative) and may try to jump, bolt past you or even bite at you or the leash. Use common sense and good judgement in those situations, always attempting to keep the dog calm. Try things like: ask them to sit, use treats if needed, keep one foot on the exterior of the kennel door to make sure the opening of the door is smaller, put a slip lead on the dog in a wide open gesture without using your hands physically on the dog and let the pressure of the dog entering the leash cinch it tight.

B. Cat Handling

1. When moving cats don't hesitate to scruff when needed. Cats often are hesitant to be moved in or out of carriers, kennels or picked up.
2. When entering a cat kennel, approach slowly with your hands and be gentle. If a cat doesn't want you in it's space, try using treats or toys to lure them to a different part of the kennel if you're trying to clean or switch out bedding or food.
3. If a cat is very scared try not to be invasive and only enter their kennel if you have to.
4. Be aware of the kennel opening. Some cats are flight risks and may try to escape on you. Always close kennel doors if you turn away and make sure cat door, ISO door and hallway doors are closed if you're dealing with an escape artist.
5. Handling a cat roughly and grabbing them quickly can lead even the friendliest cat to lash out. A calm approach goes a long way.
6. If you're having issues with a cat clawing, hissing or biting at you: try using the leather handling gloves located in ISO. If you have to handle the cat, try wrapping them in a blanket or letting them climb into a solid-framed hidey-hole and cover the entrance with a blanket or turn it to face a kennel wall.
7. Feral cats: these cats have no understanding of human interaction and consider humans dangerous. They will defend themselves without hesitation. Use extreme caution when dealing with a feral cat. If needed, ask for help. Maintain a calm demeanor and don't push it. Building up small and short positive experiences with people over time will be the most helpful goal in these situations. Try offering treats and wet food, use a long-armed scratching tool to touch them gently and slowly.
8. If attempting to remove a fearful cat from a carrier or live trap: open the kennel you're putting them into, then place the front of the carrier inside that kennel. Slowly open the carrier/trap door and tilt at a downward angle to encourage the cat to enter the kennel. Once inside the new kennel close the door quickly and calmly.
9. Check in with fearful cats, create a positive energy and reassure with kind words and slow motions.

X. Animal Behavior & Language

As mentioned previously it is extremely important to be observant of and sensitive to body language from every animal. Understanding body language and mental state can tell you most of what you need to know to be able to safely and calmly handle an animal. Pay attention to the whole body, not just the tail or mouth, when it comes to determining what an animal is telling you.

When dealing with ANY new animal it is recommended to approach them as if they are scared. You may not immediately notice emotional discomfort but almost every animal coming into the shelter will be scared, anxious or insecure in some way or another.

The best way to approach a nervous animal is:

- Slowly and gently so the animal doesn't feel like you're a threat. Some animals may take quite a while to become comfortable with you. Give them time, don't push it. Calmly and quietly, no raised voice or quick or frantic gestures.

- Don't make direct or prolonged eye contact. Direct, hard eye contact is seen as challenging and dominating. if you do make eye contact, look away frequently. use your peripherals.
- If you reach your hand out, do it lower, aiming for under the chin with your palm facing up. This is the least challenging way to attempt physical contact
- For dogs: squat or kneel with your shoulder facing the dog, not your chest. Turning slightly away will help them feel less confronted.
- Say kind, reassuring words and vocal tones. They may not know what words we're saying but animals are highly emotionally sensitive and the intention we speak with is very important.
- Do not try to hug, hold tight or grab firmly. Give them time and space to get comfortable with your presence.
- Don't lean over the animal, as this asserts dominance.

Please don't hesitate to do your own research when it comes to animal language. Here are some helpful resources:

ASPCA: <https://www.aspcapro.org/animal-behavior-shelter-veterinarians-and-staff>
<https://www.aspcapro.org/sites/default/files/canine-body-language-aspcapro.pdf>

VCA: <https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/canine-communication---interpreting-dog-language>

The following charts and graphics offer basic details about animal behavior that will help.

A. Dog

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



© 2011 Lili Chin www.doggiedrawings.net *aili*

Body Language of Fear in Dogs



Slight Cowering



Major Cowering

More Subtle Signs of Fear & Anxiety



Licking Lips
when no food nearby



Panting
when not hot or thirsty



Brows Furrowed, Ears to Side



Moving in Slow Motion
walking slow on floor



Acting Sleepy or Yawning
when they shouldn't be tired



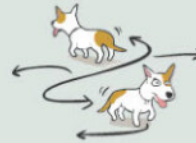
Hypervigilant
looking in many directions



Suddenly Won't Eat
but was hungry earlier



Moving Away



Pacing

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Dr. Sophia Yin, DVM, MS
The Art and Science of Animal Behavior
For additional free dog bite prevention resources and more
dog behavior books and products, visit www.dr.sophiayin.com



<https://ontariospca.ca/blog/understanding-canine-behaviour-body-postures/>

B. Cat



I'm excited to see you!



Feelin' fine!



How's it going here?



What's happening here? All good?



Everything is good, right? Seems to be okay.



Hmm, what's going on here?



I'm not sure about all this. What's going on?



This is stressing me out!



That's interesting!



That's annoying!

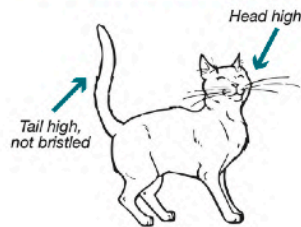


This is aggravating!

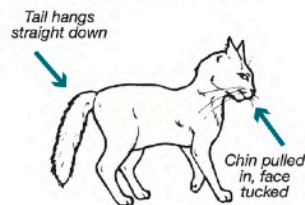


Back off! I'm scared.

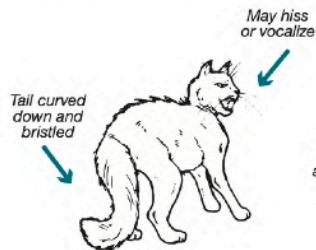
So glad to see you!



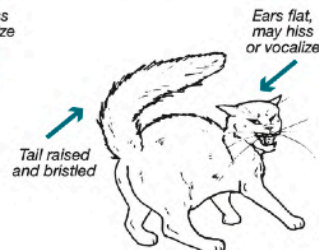
Don't even think about it.



Please leave me alone!



I'm really scared!



<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/a-visual-guide-to-cat-body-language/>

XI. Medical Issues & Medication

Daily monitoring of the animals in the shelter is key to keeping our populations healthy and providing the best care possible. Evaluating each animal's appetite, hydration, stools and behavior can alert us to potential health problems and give us an idea of how the animal is adjusting to being in the shelter. Staff is responsible for monitoring animals for general health and behavior during their shifts. As a volunteer, please act as support for this and notice any issues and report them to staff immediately.

Daily monitoring should include all of the following:

- **Appetite:** Check for leftover food from the previous meal, is the animal quickly gaining or losing weight?
- **Vomiting:** Is it food, treats, bile, blood, water? Did the animal consume toy or bedding material?
- **Stools:** Is it diarrhea? Is it formed or soft? Is there blood present? Are there worms in the stool?
- **Urine:** Is there urine in the kennel? Is it a small or large amount? What color is the urine and is there blood in it? If it's a feline kennel, is the cat using the litter box?
- **Eye discharge:** Does the animal have any eye discharge? Is the eye area swollen?
- **Nasal discharge:** Does the animal have any nasal discharge? What color is the discharge? Is the animal sneezing?
- **Breathing:** Is there a noticeable breathing sound present? Is the animal struggling to breathe? Check the collar, throat and nose immediately.
- **Hydration:** Is the animal drinking water on their own? Check gum color and skin elasticity.
- **Energy level:** How is the animal acting? Do they seem bright, alert and responsive and aware of their surroundings or are they lethargic and/or confused?
- **Behavior:** Is the animal exhibiting any abnormal behavior or behavior that is cause for concern?
- **Vocalization:** Is the animal crying in pain? What is causing this reaction?

A. Dog

If you notice a dog is getting sick, tell an employee. They will move them into a cage farther away from other dogs to help prevent transmission. Sanitize yourself (hands, clothing, shoes) before and after handling a sick dog.

Some ailments/issues to monitor for include:

Contagious:

- Canine Influenza
- Parvovirus
- Rabies
- Distemper
- Leptospirosis
- Kennel Cough (Bordetella)
- Coronavirus
- Giardia
- Coccidia
- Ticks, Fleas and Worms
- Heartworm
- Intestinal worms
- Conjunctivitis

- Pneumonia
- Sarcoptic Mange

Non-transmissible:

- Lyme Disease
- Bloat (Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus (GDV))
- Stress Colitis
- Ear infections
- Females entering heat cycles
- Diarrhea
- UTIs
- General wounds, abrasions, abscesses, hot spots and other topical issues
- Happy Tail Syndrome
- Lumps and masses
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Obesity or malnutrition
- Alopecia
- Skin infections, bacterial infections or fungal infections
- Demodectic Mange

This website has a helpful explanation of some common dog diseases:
<https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/common-canine-diseases/>

Be highly observant to all recently vaccinated or medicated animals and report any unusual behavior or symptoms of distress immediately.

B. Cat

If you notice a cat is getting sick, tell an employee. They will move them into a cage in ISO or set up a cage in the restroom to help prevent transmission. Sanitize yourself (hands, clothing, shoes) before and after handling a sick cat.

Some ailments/issues to monitor for include:

Contagious:

- Rabies
- FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus)
- FeLV (Feline Leukemia Virus)
- FVR (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis)
- FCoV (Feline Coronavirus)
- FIP (Feline Infectious Peritonitis)
- Feline Distemper
- Giardia
- Coccidia
- Ticks, Fleas and Worms
- Intestinal worms
- Conjunctivitis
- Pneumonia
- Ear Mites
- Notoedric Mange

Non-transmissible:

- Lyme Disease

- Stress Colitis
- Kidney Failure
- Heartworm
- Ear infections
- Females entering heat cycles
- Diarrhea
- UTIs
- General wounds, abrasions, abscesses, hot spots and other topical issues
- Lumps and masses
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Obesity or malnutrition
- Skin infections, bacterial infections or fungal infections
- Demodectic Mange

This website has a helpful explanation of some common cat diseases:
<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/cat-care/common-cat-diseases>

Be highly observant to all recently vaccinated or medicated animals and report any unusual behavior or symptoms of distress immediately.

C. Vet consultations

Do not hesitate to ask about the potential for a vet visit for any animal. Describe in full what symptoms or issues you're observing.

XII. Feeding

Feeding time is generally speaking a high-energy level moment in the shelter. Feeding animals carefully and consistently is key.

A. Dogs:

We feed dogs one at a time in their indoor kennels only in the morning and evening. Staff will do this but may ask for your help making food bowls. There is a feeding board by the dog food which should be double checked every time you make a bowl, as feeding instructions can change at any time. Make sure you're giving each dog the appropriate amount of food of the appropriate food type in the appropriate type of bowl.

Dogs get fed in steel bowls. If a dog eats too quickly and is prone to vomiting, a slow-feeder may be used. Tall dogs may need a riser for eating meals. Feeding mats are also available to use if needed. Hand-feeding may be necessary from time to time.

B. Cats:

Cats get fed inside their kennels separate from other cats. The only time we let cats eat in the same space is if we have siblings kenneled together. Staff will refill cat bowls in the mornings. Cat bowls don't get refilled throughout the day unless the cat is pregnant, nursing or underweight. Staff may ask you to refill these types of cats' bowls later in the day.

XIII. Walking Dogs

Dogs get walked daily in the evening shift after eating dinner. Walks provide physical and mental exercise and a much needed break from the shelter environment. Consider the needs of the individual dog when walking them. If it is a dog that needs quite a lot of physical exercise you could consider a long walk (if possible) or a play session in H.O.P.E.'s dog park. If a dog needs training on leash walking be prepared with treats and walk them patiently and consistently with proper equipment. If a dog is physically weak, don't take them on a long

walk. You are always able to walk to a nearby quiet space and simply sit with a dog. The walk does not have to be intense! Quiet time with a dog outside of the property can be just as enriching as a long walk.

When walking dogs please observe the following rules:

DO:

- Dogs must be walked ONE AT A TIME. If walking near another walker, maintain a safe distance from the other dog.
- Dogs MUST BE LEASHED at all times during walks!
- DOUBLE LEASH dogs when walking them. This means to methods of leash attachment. Examples: (1) a slip lead directly around a dogs neck + a clip lead on their martingale collar or (2) a clip lead on their martingale collar + a clip lead attached to a gentle leader, prong collar or other method of training collar.
- Dogs MUST have on martingale collars to be walked.
- Keep your cell phone on you during walks. If you encounter a problem on a walk, call the H.O.P.E. front desk or your manager's cell phone immediately.
- Mark down which dogs you have walked on the dog walking list.
- Make sure every dog has gotten time outside after dinner.

DO **NOT**:

- DO **NOT** walk "Animal Control" dogs, as these are staff-only. Other dogs may be deemed staff-only from time to time.
- DO **NOT** use retractable leashes aka flexi leads. These are hazardous as they can break easily, be chewed through quickly and maintain little to no control of a dog. There are many reasons not to use these types of leashes.
- DO **NOT** unleash a dog unless they are in a fenced area or enclosed space.
- DO **NOT** walk multiple dogs at a time.
- DO **NOT** walk dog-reactive dogs close to each other or let them interact unless given special permission to work on their issues safely and in a highly controlled environment
- DO **NOT** let dogs interact with public dogs. Do not go to the Iron King Dog Park. This is a risk as we do not know all of the triggers or behaviors of H.O.P.E. dogs or the behaviors of unknown public dogs. If an injury were to happen, this could be detrimental to the life of the H.O.P.E. dog.
- DO **NOT** let people-reactive dogs interact with members of the public. If someone approaches, kindly ask them to stay back as the dog can be reactive. If an injury were to happen, this could be detrimental to the life of the H.O.P.E. dog.
- DO **NOT** leave dogs alone or tie them up anywhere during your walk. They must be attended to at all times.

Training/walking equipment may be used at your discretion. If a manager or employee finds a helpful method for a particular dog, please try to be consistent about using that method. If there is a type of equipment you think would be helpful but that H.O.P.E. doesn't own, talk to management about it and they can try to get it. Types of equipment and other options available at H.O.P.E. are as follows:

- **Dog Park:** this is a great space for dogs that are not comfortable in our care yet, puppies that are not leash trained, nervous and fearful animals, animals that need time to run or animals that would benefit from freeform or structured play time with toys and people. The public Iron King Dog Park is NOT to be used, only H.O.P.E.'s private dog park.
- **Training Treats:** helpful for use in positive reinforcement training of dogs that need help learning how to act on leash or need help learning that time alone with a person, outside or on leash is a positive experience they can look forward to.

- **Prong Collar/Pinch Collar:** helpful for dogs that pull, jump, dart, lunge or are spastic. When using this type of collar make sure a dog is not consistently putting pressure on it. It is for quick corrections, not extended pressure.
- **Gentle Leader/Halti:** helpful for dogs that pull or have neck issues as it directs the nose back towards the walker if they pull.
- **Harness:** helpful for dogs with neck issues or small dogs that pull. If using a harness on a large dog that pulls, make sure it is a no-pull type of harness that clips to a leash in the front of their chest. Back clip harnesses used on large pulling dogs can actually increase their power and ability to pull.
- **Basket Muzzle:** helpful for reactive dogs or dogs that obsessively eat poop, trash or grab at leashes. This must be worked up to, dogs are typically not comfortable with a muzzle their first time wearing it. Train them to wear it before you use it regularly on walks.
- **Slip lead:** good for dogs that do not pull frequently or need less guidance when walking. This is also a good secondary leash option. These can also be turned into faux gentle leaders if needed.
- **Clip lead attached to martingale collar:** good for dogs that do not pull frequently or need less guidance when walking. This is also a good secondary leash option.
- **Choke Chain:** best for dogs that do not pull frequently or need less guidance when walking, as they can pull through the tightness and choke themselves as the name implies. This is not a preferred method but can be useful for certain cases.
- **Harness Leash/No-Pull Leash:** this type of leash wraps around a dog's body and clips to itself to create a no-pull harness. Great for dogs that have neck issues or pull.
- **Reflective Dog Collar/Reflective Human Vest/Headlamp:** a good idea if walking during dusk or darkness or during inclement weather, especially in winter.
- **'Adopt Me' Bandana:** a great idea for dogs not on hold.

XIV. Cat Outings & Enrichment

Cats can be let out of their kennels in the afternoons. The hallway, catio and cat room are all spaces available to be used. If letting out multiple cats that cannot interact at once, keep doors to these spaces closed. If using the catio, make sure gates and fencing and netting are secure prior to a cat's access. Cat trees, scratching posts, tunnels and other forms of cat furniture are available to be used.

When letting cats explore please observe the following rules:

DO:

- Make sure to leave the cat's kennel open if they are out of it. This helps keep track of who is out and allows the cat access to return to their kennel if needed.
- Be very observant, making sure cats aren't marking walls, bothering kenneled cats, being destructive or starting fights if multiple cats are out together,
- Keep doors closed to the office and dog room at ALL TIMES.
- Mark down which cats have had time out of their kennel on the cat outings list. If a cat is not willing to come out of its kennel or is sick or fearful, spend time petting or brushing them instead and mark "P" for pet on the cat outings list.
- Spend time with them! Pet them, brush them, play with them, help shy cats get used to people.
- Sanitize and clean up spaces as needed in between cats.

DO NOT:

- DO **NOT** let unfixed cats of any gender out together.
- DO **NOT** let cat-reactive cats out with others.

- DO **NOT** allow groups of cats out together unsupervised. If you need to leave an area with multiple cats out together, put all but one away.
- DO **NOT** let out cats that are fearful, flight risks or are sick.
- DO **NOT** feed cats together outside of their kennels.
- DO **NOT** allow fighting to occur.
- DO **NOT** allow cats in ISO to interact with cats that are in the cat room.

Cat outings are a major form of enrichment for them, helping stimulate their mind and body and taking away stress and frustration. Besides time outside their kennels, cat enrichment can take the form of brushing, petting, cuddling, treats, wet food, catnip and more. Use these methods at your discretion. Some cats can have a manic reaction to catnip so be observant when using it and note those who react negatively. Treats and wet food are great ways to make a cat happy but make sure other employees and volunteers aren't also using these methods, too much food or treats can cause digestive upset and weight gain.

XV. Dog Enrichment & Training

A. Enrichment

Enrichment refers to mental and physical stimulation and can take the form of toys, treats, lick mats, group play, brushing, one-on-one play, walks, scent work, training and more. Enrichment helps dogs decompress, let out energy, shed stress and frustration and improves their physical and mental health. We encourage enrichment but it is important to take into consideration the needs of each individual dog when determining methods to use. Some dogs have sensitive stomachs, are food or toy possessive or are uncomfortable with touch. Also check if other employees or volunteers have given out treats or wet food before you accidentally double up on it. Excess food or treats can cause digestive issues easily, especially food types or treats that are outside of the norm or are rich.

Enrichment methods available at H.O.P.E.:

Treadmill: this is a great tool for developing focus and confidence while getting in exercise, especially during inclement or cold weather.

Play Groups: bonded pairs, puppies and siblings are great candidates for play groups. Otherwise this is a more risky experience and dogs must be chosen carefully and approved by management for play groups.

Calm Moments: dogs experience a high energy level at the shelter so it's very helpful to find calm moments with them. Feel free to take dogs to the park just to relax, spend time in their kennels with them, go on a walk and find a bench, etc. Calm moments help immensely with diffusing stress.

Treats, Toys and Puzzles: if using fillable toys (like Kongs) or lick mats, don't overload the toy with peanut butter as this can cause stomach upset. A small spoonful per dog is acceptable, otherwise try freezing water and kibble together inside a toy. Avoid yogurt or other dairy products. This may be fine occasionally for dogs at home but in a stressful shelter environment where dogs are prone to digestive issues already, this can worsen those issues.

B. Training

Training is an important tool for us to help not only prepare a dog for adoption but also to help them become more adoptable, lessen stress, enrich their day and help make their time at the shelter less traumatic. There are many methods of training, each with their own benefits. At H.O.P.E., positive reinforcement is always the goal. Heavy handed, dominating training

methods are frowned upon and not allowed at H.O.P.E., as the stress animals are under will most likely be worsened by those methods of training.

Consistency is key when it comes to training. If someone finds a helpful way to train a particular dog, it is in the dog's best interest as well as the staff and volunteer's best interest to be as consistent as possible about using that method regularly. For example, if a dog that pulls is introduced to a prong collar or gentle leader and we see this is helping remedy the pulling, all employees are encouraged to use that method when walking a dog to help them get used to it and encourage good behavior.

We have a variety of training tools available to us, including the enrichment list above as well as the training and walking equipment described in XV: Walking Dogs. If you have never used a particular form of equipment do not hesitate to ask a coworker or manager how to properly use it. Always feel free to do your own research, as well.

At H.O.P.E. we have occasional access to trainer expertise. At any time a trainer may come in to work with or observe a particular dog's behavior and make recommendations on handling and training based on what they see. In that situation we must take those recommendations seriously and do what we can to work with the animal as the trainer feels is best. If at any point you become concerned about a dog's behavior, please bring it to management's attention so a trainer session can be requested for that animal.

Careful observation of body language is your most helpful tool when determining how to best handle and train a dog. Things like a lack of confidence, fear, human or resource protectiveness, dog reactivity, defensiveness, obsessiveness, kennel reactivity, submissiveness and more are all things that will help us better understand what sort of attention or sensitivity a dog needs.

XVI. Bathing

Cats are typically very good about grooming themselves but may need help if they are injured, overweight, sick or elderly. In this case a warm washcloth and waterless bath sprays combined with brushing are the best methods.

Dogs should be bathed occasionally or as needed. Puppy shampoos, soothing shampoos or medicated shampoos are available to use. There are times the grooming room is unavailable for use, always check the room before bringing an animal into it. Also set up towels, brushes, shampoos and if needed nail trimmers, ear cleaner and cotton balls prior to bringing in the animal. Always check that there are no cats playing in the hallway before bringing a dog into that space. Always leash the dog securely and tie that leash up to the anchor on the grooming room wall during the bath. Thinner rope or nylon slip leashes work best for this purpose. This is also a good time to remove collars and wash them if needed. If bathing large dogs, team lift them into and out of the tub and use two people for bathing if necessary. Some dogs will be fearful of the tub so use caution and bathe slowly and observantly. Make sure to check for ticks, fleas, skin issues or wounds while bathing and report these if seen so they can be addressed properly. Towel dry thoroughly afterwards and leave the dog in their kennel to dry. Use common sense about timing so dogs aren't bathed then immediately taken outside on a cold day.

XVII. Interacting with Customers

Customers are only allowed in the building in the afternoon unless they have made arrangements to come in outside of H.O.P.E.'s open hours. Politely greet every customer you see, asking them if they need help with anything. It's a great idea to strike up conversation and get more information on why they're there. Are they donating something? Offer to help bring the donation(s) in and thank them for their generosity, regardless of their donation. Are they looking to adopt? Direct them to an employee and/or get more information about what they're looking for (type of animal, gender, age, personality, breed, look, etc) so you can better direct

them to a potential match. Are they surrendering an animal? Make sure to direct them to the director or manager so they can fill out paperwork first.

Interacting appropriately with customers is important, no matter what the situation is. There may be times you disagree with customers or disapprove of their actions—it is very important maintain professionalism and a calm demeanor in these instances. If you EVER feel threatened or at risk from a member of the public or feel like they are a risk to any of the animals, calmly ask them to stop and/or leave and call the police immediately.

Children under the age of 12 are not allowed to be in the facility without a guardian. Make sure that all children on site are with an adult. If children are acting inappropriately, calmly ask them to stop and explain how their behavior is not appropriate around shelter animals. Always ask both children and adults not to open kennels without permission, give treats or toys without permission touch animals without permission or stick fingers in kennels. We want to make sure the public stays safe at all times and we protect the animals in our care at all times as well. Allowing strangers to reach for animals can lead to bite incidents, which we want to avoid at all costs. Allowing the public to give out treats or toys without asking can be problematic as we often have animals that display food or toy possession, animals that may destroy and swallow toys and animals that have food-based medical issues that are on strict diets.

XVIII. Adoptions

Staff handle all adoptions but may ask you to get a gift bag ready for their departure. There are small gift bags for cats and large gift bags for dogs or multiple pet adoptions. Each gift bag should be stocked with:

- a zip-loc bag filled with the dry food they've been eating while at H.O.P.E.
- a can or two of wet food
- a bag of treats
- a small assortment of toys
- a collar and leash (dogs only)
- optional items if they are available: brand new blankets or bedding, toys or bedding an animal arrived at the shelter with, harnesses, brushes, catnip. If we have extras of something that you know that pet enjoys, don't hesitate to gift some to the new owner.

XIX. Intakes

Volunteers are NOT allowed to handle incoming animals. Incoming animals may be extremely fearful and confused. Because of this the risk of injury is high. Use extreme caution and ask for help when needed. If a surrender is happening, find an employee to handle the situation. Do NOT vocalize your opinions about a surrender situation as it is happening, we want people to feel comfortable surrendering animals. If we make someone uncomfortable or feel judged, they may not bring in that animal or a future animal. The alternative for that animal could be abandonment or death.

Make sure there is always an extra kennel set up for incoming animals and be mindful of the individuals bringing in the animal. Equip it with blankets, water, food. For cat kennels and a litter box.

Animal Control mandates that all intakes through their services are put on a "stray hold" for a minimum of 5 days. During that time no volunteers are allowed to handle these animals and they are not to be vaccinated or taken off property unless for a necessary vet visit. If necessary, they can be dewormed, flea/tick treated, treated for wounds or if in an urgent medical state they should be taken to the vet. They cannot interact with other animals in the facility during the stray hold period.

XX. Vet Visits

Volunteers do NOT take animals to the vet unless specifically asked by management.

XXI. Specification of Duties

Volunteers are extremely helpful support for our staff at H.O.P.E.. They are huge assets for us! Some volunteers will only help with cleaning, will only walk dogs or will only interact with cats. This depends on each individual volunteer's skill set, abilities or what they are willing to do for H.O.P.E..

Volunteers' duties may include:

- walking dogs
- brushing or bathing animals
- cleaning litter boxes
- cleaning cat or dog kennels
- laundry, dishes, mopping
- preparing meals or water bowls
- dog and cat enrichment
- introducing the public to cats
- monitoring cat outings
- monitoring the physical and mental health of the animals
- overseeing events outside of H.O.P.E. (fundraisers, info booths, donation events)

Volunteers are **NOT** allowed to:

- walk dogs that are still under Animal Control's jurisdiction
- walk dogs that are present high-risk behaviors
- administer vaccinations
- administer medications unless directed by a staff member
- answer phones or emails
- approve or deny adoption applications
- give confidential information to the public regarding an animal's previous owners
- deal with any paperwork
- do dog meet-and-greets (unless approved by the director)

XXII. Communicating with Management

If you have any issues at any time with animals, volunteers, employees, customers, the facility or anything else relating to H.O.P.E., it is important to be transparent with management. H.O.P.E. has an open-door policy when it comes to anything like this, so please do go to the director or manager with your concerns. Board members focus on the bigger picture of the shelter, not the day-to-day issues, so they are not the proper resource for this situation. Instead, have a conversation with the director or manager and if they are not able to provide a solution, they can go to the board for you to discuss the issue.

XXIII. Write-Ups & Disciplinary Measures

All volunteers are expected to maintain a professional environment and fulfill their duties to the best of their ability under the guidelines notes in this handbook. If this is not done, the volunteer at fault will be spoken to by management and potentially written up. Volunteer status can be terminated as necessary.

XXIV.Code of Conduct

Our primary goal is to make sure the animals at H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter receive the most compassionate care possible.

I will:

- Support the mission, goals, and efforts of H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter with a positive, helpful attitude.
- Treat all shelter staff, volunteers, and visitors with respect, courtesy, and cooperation.
- Treat all animals with kindness, respect, and patience.
- Exercise caution and common sense when dealing with shelter animals.
- Not engage in any unacceptable behavior as a H.O.P.E. staff member or volunteer. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, engaging in rude behavior towards others, or using verbal, written, physical or visual means to harass any individual associated with or doing business with H.O.P.E. or the shelter.
- Observe all staff and volunteer, safety, and security policies and procedures. Report violations of policies or procedures to H.O.P.E. executive director and shelter manager. In the case of a significant safety issue, act immediately.
- Represent H.O.P.E. in a polite and professional manner at all times, especially to the public. Reserve criticism of shelter and H.O.P.E. for internal discussion.
- Abide by H.O.P.E. policies regarding photography, videotaping, and promotion of animals.
- Treat all records and paperwork regarding adoptions, impounding and surrendering of animals as confidential and not disclose any information to the public in any way including but not limited to electronic communications.

I understand that examples of actions while working or volunteering at H.O.P.E. which may result in my removal include, but are not limited to:

- Careless, negligent performance of staff and volunteer duties.
- Reporting for work or volunteer duties while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Interfering with staff duties.
- Discourtesy to or harassment of a staff member, visitor, or another volunteer.
- Abuse, neglect, or disregard of animals and/or their care. This includes yelling/swearing at animals, use of unnecessary force or use of training equipment/methods or other items in an aggressive or punishing manner.
- Not reporting an animal bite incident to a supervisor immediately.
- Theft or misuse of H.O.P.E. property or funds.
- Any behavior that puts any person or shelter animal at a safety risk.

General Rules for all employees and volunteers

- Animals are not to be handled without staff supervision. This means a staff member must be on site whenever any animals are handled. Staff will direct volunteers on which animals can be handled and how. This is necessary to keep both humans and animals as safe as possible.
- There must always be a second person on site in case of an emergency (one of these individuals must always be a staff member).
- Food or treats are not to be given to any animals without permission of a staff member. This is necessary to monitor the feeding habits and health of the animals.
- All records and paperwork regarding adoptions, impounding and surrendering of animals is considered confidential and is not to be disclosed to the public in any way, shape, or form, including electronically. All files of animals, shelter operations, volunteers, community service, and personnel, are for staff and board member use only. NO EXCEPTIONS.

XXV. Volunteer Agreement

Please sign the following agreement and return it to H.O.P.E.'s Director.

By signing this you agree that you have read the contents of this handbook, including the code of conduct, understand each topic and will follow these policies and procedures while in employment at H.O.P.E. Animal Shelter.

I, _____, have read the following handbook and understand I am expected to uphold the standards detailed within them.

Signature

Date