

Employee 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 employees at H.O.P.E., regardless of hired 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 employment. Your employment 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 employment.

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 Job 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

Employees 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 volunteers or customers unless it is relevant to their care. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of employment 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. Employees are all allotted two short-sleeved H.O.P.E. branded t-shirts. If you need more clothing please ask your manager. Hoodies and hats are available for sale anytime. Employees receive a 25% discount on H.O.P.E. merchandise. Employees have a \$200 reimbursement allotment per year (\$100 per every 6 months) on clothing, gear or shoes that are purchased to be used while on the job. Bring your receipts to the director to be reimbursed for these items. 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 & Attendance

Each month your manager will make a new monthly schedule. Tell your manager your upcoming monthly availability at least a week prior to the first of each month. They will try to accommodate your requests as much as possible but there may be circumstances that you will be scheduled on dates you wanted off. The schedule will be texted to you and posted at H.O.P.E. when complete. If you have issues with the schedule please talk to your manager.

When scheduled or a shift it is your responsibility to attend that shift on time. If you are unable to make it to the shift, you must find an employee with the same ability of duties as you to cover your shift. There is an employee contact sheet posted at H.O.P.E. for you. If any shifts

get changed, contact your manager and let them know who will be there. If that person does not make it to that shift, it is still your responsibility to cover that shift. If you have any issues please contact your manager and they can try to help you make arrangements.

Tardiness and absenteeism is not allowed. As we are caring for living things we need to make sure we are all present during the entirety of a shift. If persistent issues occur, disciplinary actions may be taken.

VI. Shift Timeline

Each shift has a guideline of times during which tasks must be accomplished.

Morning Shift: 8AM-10:30AM

- Arrive by 8AM
- Turn on lights and check on all animals. Check for overnight animal control intakes.
- Take dogs to outdoor kennels.
- Clean indoor dog kennels, start laundry, wash water bowls and prepare dog meals.
- Bring dogs back inside once indoor kennels are cleaned and feed and medicate them
- Clean outdoor dog kennels
- Start the cat room and ISO (Isolation Room), cleaning and feeding cats one kennel at a time
- Medicate cats
- Sweep, mop and vacuum cat room, ISO, hallway, bathroom, storage rooms and front office
- Take out trash and finish any additional laundry, dishes, etc
- Before leaving, double check all animals are safe, secure and have water
- Lock all exterior doors
- If morning duties take more or less time than expected, the shift ends once duties are finished. 10:30AM is the goal to leave by.

Afternoon Shift: Monday-Friday 2PM-6PM / Saturday-Sunday and Holidays 2PM-5PM

- Arrive by 2PM
- Turn on lights and check on all animals. Check for lunchtime animal control intakes.
- Take dogs to outdoor kennels.
- Clean indoor dog kennels, start laundry, wash water bowls and prepare dog meals.
- Spot-clean cat kennels
- Multitasking: before bringing dogs back in this time is dedicated to interacting with clients, putting away donations, doing laundry, working on assorted projects, cleaning and organizing, interacting with animals that need special attention, etc.
- 3:30PM (or 3PM on weekends): bring dogs back inside and feed them
- 4PM (or 3:30 on weekends): start walking dogs
- 5-5:30 (or 4:30 on weekends): medicate dogs and cats
- Take out trash and finish any additional laundry, dishes, spot clean etc
- Before leaving, double check all animals are safe, secure and have water
- Lock all exterior doors
- Leave by 6PM (5PM on weekends)

VII. 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.

E. Cleaning Dog Kennels:

Every morning each dog kennel must be deep cleaned. After taking dogs outside, scoop any poop, start washing blankets, wash all food or water bowls left over from the previous day. Soft toys can be washed in the laundry, hard toys should be soaked in a bucket of hot water and cleaner. Buckets can be filled with hot water and cleaner to pour into extra dirty kennels. Scrub brushes are to be used to scrub off caked on messes. Mop out each kennel thoroughly and scrub walls as needed. Hose each kennel down with water thoroughly and squeegee out excess water from walls and floors. Clean cots or hard beds. Once clean, refill each kennel with cots, blankets and a fresh water bowl. Poop scoops are kept in a bin with a water-sanitizer mixture in it, which is placed outside during warm months and inside during cold months. Dump, clean and refill this bin regularly to maintain its efficacy.

Spot cleaning can occur throughout the rest of the day.

F. Cleaning Cat Kennels:

Every morning each cat kennel must be deep cleaned. Either a cat can be left in its kennel or it can roam the cat room or be placed in an empty kennel while you are cleaning. If a cat is roaming the room, make sure no unfixed cats of the opposite gender or cats that aren't good with others are loose in the room and always keep a close eye on the roaming cat.

Take all dirty blankets, beds and toys out to be washed. Clean blankets or beds can be shaken out and returned after the kennel is clean. Wipe down all surfaces with a diluted solution of Watch Dog and dry with a clean towel. If the kennel perch or base are exceptionally dirty, lift them out and hose off outside or wash in the sink. Return bedding or put new bedding in. Scoop the litter box. If it is too dirty to continue use, dump the whole thing and set aside for cleaning, putting a new clean litter box with fresh litter in the kennel. Some cats necessitate boxes with higher sides or a lid. Take out water bowls and set aside for cleaning. Check food bowls for dirt, debris, hair and set aside for cleaning if necessary. If the bowl is clean, top off with food (see section XII for feeding information).

After each kennel is cleaned, continue laundry and wash food and water bowls. In the cat room, move each kennel out from the wall so you can sweep and mop the entire room, scrubbing walls as needed if there is a mess. Sweep and mop ISO.

Spot cleaning can occur throughout the rest of the day.

G. Additional Morning Cleaning:

Vacuum all rugs, sweep and mop all hallways, storage room, supply room, office, and restroom. Wipe down feeding table, finish laundry, finish any dishes and dump dirty mop buckets.

VIII. 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.

IX. 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.

X. 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 dog's 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. Kennel 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 its 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.

XI. 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-asPCA.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 *lili*

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



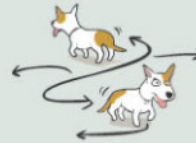
Hypervigilant
looking in many directions



Suddenly Won't Eat
but was hungry earlier



Moving Away



Pacing

© 2011 Dr. Sophia Yin, DVM, MS

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/>

A. 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!

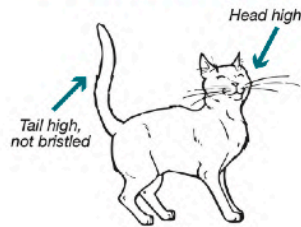


This is aggravating!

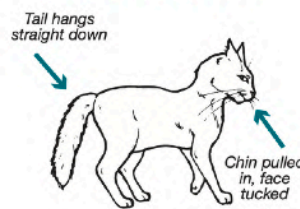


Back off! I'm scared.

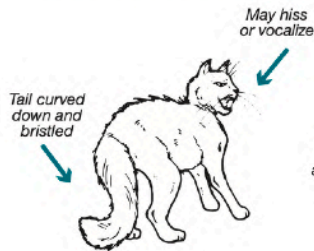
So glad to see you!



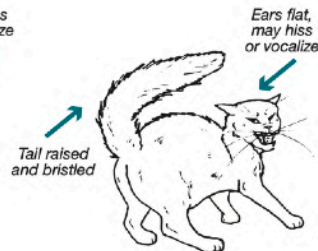
Don't even think about it.



Please leave me alone!



I'm really scared!



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

XII. 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.

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?

Medication is required from time to time. Being highly observant of any issues can catch problems before they become serious. We have several medications available at the shelter to start using immediately or can call to schedule a vet appointment at any time. If you see any issue, mention it to your manager immediately. Treat/medicate and monitor the issue consistently. Medications should be given no later than 30-60 minutes prior to leaving your shift to ensure that no side effects or negative responses occur.

When administering medications of any kind, always fill out the Medication Sheet in either the dog room or cat room. This should note the date, animal's name, time of day, quantity and type of medication, any special instructions or notes for that particular medication and your initials. This is important to do so any issues can be tracked and medication is not doubled up on or forgotten. A white board with a list of animal named and medications is visible near each Medication Sheet, along with the current medications being used.

A. Dog

If you notice a dog is getting sick, 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/>

If interested in administering medications, please approach your manager about learning how to do so. Most common medications are administered subcutaneously (via needle under the skin), topically, orally or in ears or eyes. 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, 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>

If interested in administering medications, please approach your manager about learning how to do so. Most common medications are administered subcutaneously (via needle under the skin), topically, orally or in ears or eyes. 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. Your manager may talk you through medications or options we have available to try at the shelter first. If there is no possible solution present at the shelter or the symptoms are too severe, they can call a vet to try to get an appointment quickly.

XIII. Vaccinations

If interested in administering vaccinations, please ask your manager about learning how to do so. All animals on the property must receive their core vaccinations as soon as possible upon intake and be dewormed against roundworms. Additional medication upon intake may include flea and tick treatment or topical treatment of wounds. Animals that come in via Animal Control and therefore on a stray hold of a minimum of 5 days should not be administered core

vaccinations until that stray hold is up. If needed, they may be treated for parasites to prevent transmission to healthy animals and if they need medical attention should be treated or taken to the vet, just like any other animal at H.O.P.E.

In order for a cat to be moved from ISO to the cat room, it MUST test negative for FIV/FelV.

Animals that have been vaccinated must be observed for at least an hour after administration to make sure there are no negative side effects. Be highly observant to all recently vaccinated or medicated animals and report any unusual behavior or symptoms of distress immediately. Animals that are exhibiting any symptoms of illness should NOT be vaccinated unless approved by a vet, as this can worsen symptoms and cause worsening of the illness.

Core vaccinations we administer on site include:

A. Dogs

- “B” is a vaccination against Canine Bordetella Bronchiseptica (AKA “Kennel Cough”)
- “DAPP+CV” is a combination vaccination against
 - Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)
 - Canine Adenovirus Type 1 (CAV1)
 - Canine Adenovirus Type 2 (CAV2)
 - Canine Coronavirus (CCV)
 - Canine Parainfluenza Virus (CPV2c)

B. Cats

- “RCP+CH” is a combination vaccination against
 - Feline Herpesvirus-1 (FHV)
 - Feline Calciivirus (FCV)
 - Feline Parvovirus (FPV)
 - Chlamidia Psittaci

All animals must be current on Rabies vaccinations as well, but legally that must be administered by a vet.

XIV. 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. After cleaning kennels in the morning and afternoon, portion out each dog’s meal in a bowl and set on top of their respective kennel. 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.

We use Fromm brand kibble. Dogs under 1 year old receive puppy recipe, dogs from 1-7 years old receive adult recipe and dogs 7+ years old receive senior recipe. Wet food varies depending on what has been donated to us. Rice and pumpkin are available to add to dogs meals if they’re having digestive issues. Some dogs come in with food from their previous homes. In this case we start mixing that food with Fromm and slowly ease them into a Fromm-only diet. Switching types of food abruptly can cause digestive upset easily. Some situations like allergies or medical issues require a dog to permanently be on a type of food we don’t regularly stock. In that situation we will stock that food for that particular dog only.

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.

At feeding time, dogs should be brought in one at a time from outside and led to their kennels. Lead the dog inside their kennel, ask them to sit, unleash them and set their food on the ground only when they have sat for you, then close the kennel door. Maintain a calm environment the best you can. Be aware that some dogs may be food possessive so do not reach for their food once they start eating, instead give them lots of space. If needed to help them feel calm during feeding, roll down the cover on their kennel. If a dog is older with joint issues, sitting before eating is not a requirement but try to ask them to do something for you before eating, like present calm behaviors, give a paw, etc. If a dog does not the sit command, work on it with them so you can help them learn.

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. As kennels are cleaned in the morning, check each food bowl and top off kibble as needed to make them full. If a cat is on a diet, take this into consideration and fill it less. Cat bowls don't get refilled throughout the day unless the cat is pregnant, nursing or underweight. Cats can easily become overweight if overfed since they get less exercise than they would in a home.

We use Nutro brand kibble. Cats under 1 year old receive kitten recipe, cats 1 year or older receive adult recipe. We have a few alternative food types for cats with sensitive stomachs or cats that are overweight, these are to be used as needed on a case-by-case basis. There is an assortment of wet food available to feed as well. Dish wet food out in smaller portions in flat bowls, not in the deep bowls that hold kibble. Use wet food as a treat or for cats that are pregnant, nursing or are underweight. Some cats come in with food from their previous homes. In this case we start mixing that food with Nutro and slowly ease them into a Nutro-only diet. Switching types of food abruptly can cause digestive upset easily. Some situations like allergies or medical issues require a cat to permanently be on a type of food we don't regularly stock. In that situation we will stock that food for that particular cat only.

XV. Weighing

Dogs and cats get weighed once a week. Weigh each dog during the morning shift after they get time to relieve themselves but before feeding them breakfast. Weigh cats in the morning as well. Consistency will help us better evaluate if a an animal is losing weight. Weigh each animal one at a time, writing down the weight on the weight sheet. Bring noticeable shifts in weight to the attention of your manager so feeding can be adjusted accordingly or a vet visit can be scheduled if there is an underlying issue. If an animal is not willing to be weighed, don't risk injury to you or the animal. Ask for help, try again another time or tell to your manager which animal is not able to be weighed.

XVI. 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** 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 "Animal Control" dogs off the property. These dogs do not belong to H.O.P.E. yet and if injured or lost, H.O.P.E. is held liable. Walk them on the property or take them to the dog park only. Volunteers are not allowed to handle animal control dogs.
- 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 that are not on hold.

XVII. 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 kennelled 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.

XVIII. 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.

XIX. 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.

XX. 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? 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.

XXI. Adoptions

A. Initial interactions

Customers coming in to adopt may not know how to vocalize what they're looking for. It's important for you to ask questions and find out more about the home environment they'll provide to learn who could be a good fit.

Ask about:

- Pet Type: Dog vs Cat
- Gender: Male vs Female
- Age: puppies are quite a lot of work, energy and activity. Senior dogs are typically lower energy and may have some sort of training already. This difference can mean a lot when determining if a particular animal is the right fit.
- Breed: Some breeds are much higher energy or higher maintenance than others. For example, a Border Collie Mix is going to require a significantly higher amount of exercise than an English Bulldog. Breed experience is very helpful for anyone adopting a specific breed, especially for breeds like shepherds, pit bulls or heelers that require a lot of training and attention.
- Long/Short Hair: grooming is a big commitment for long-haired animals. A long-haired cat or dog may need daily brushing or monthly visits to the groomer, which can be costly or time consuming.
- Home environment: are their kids around? Do they have lots of visitors? Is it a quiet, calm home? Do they have other animals?
- Personality: are they looking for a more protective animal? One that loves to play? One that prefers to relax on the couch? A very socialized animal or one that prefers not to be around other animals?
- Medical care: some animals at the shelter require long-term medical care. If someone is interested in an animal like this, it's a good idea to get to understand the background of the potential adopter and find out if they've dealt with medical care animals before.
- Training: some of our animals require significant training after adoption. Converse with people about what training experience they have had and if they're able to accept the challenge of a dog that needs training.
- Property type: large plots and fencing can be key words for dogs that have tendencies to wander, escape or explore. Huskies especially are flight risks so households with Huskies especially need to understand how to keep them at home.
- Indoor vs outdoor: H.O.P.E. prefers that all cats adopted out are kept as indoor cats. If a customer talks about an outdoor or barn cat, this is something to get more information on.

Most of these questions are good to ask right off the bat, while others can be talked about during meet-and-greets to get further information.

B. Meet-And-Greets

It is required that the animal being adopted meet all members of the household they are about to be adopted into. Anyone who lives in that home must make sure the animal is comfortable with them and that it's a good fit for all individuals involved.

If someone arrives to meet a cat, simply show them the cat. You can open the kennel and let them interact or let the cat out into the cat room or hallway to interact, as long as the cat is comfortable with that. Make sure the interaction is supervised. If someone has come multiple times to visit a cat, you can be more relaxed about observing them so closely. Always make sure to talk about the cat's personality traits and needs. It is extremely important to be very honest and clear about any issues a cat may have. We want to make sure that the home is a good fit for both the cat and the person and that we're setting the experience up to be a success. The potential new owner needs to be prepared with all the information they can get before taking an animal home. Ask questions about the household and any other pets, making sure to tell the visitor that every person in the home must meet the shelter cat before an adoption can be finalized.

If someone arrives to meet a dog, most dogs show better in the park as opposed to their kennel. Tell the person you can meet them outside and leash up the dog and take them to the park to meet. Keep the dog on leash for the initial moments of the interaction to ensure the dog is comfortable with that person and won't react negatively. If a dog is uncomfortable, don't force them to interact. Keep them on leash and let them slowly get used to the person. Perhaps have treats in your pocket and give some to the person to try developing a relationship. Make sure the visitor is not rushing up to the dog or being too assertive with them. Once the dog is comfortable and the visitor is comfortable, let the dog off leash (always double check the park gate is closed securely). Continue conversing with the person, explaining as much as you can about the dog's personality, needs, issues and positive traits. Observe how the dog interacts with all people, toys, treats, etc. It is extremely important to be very honest and clear about any issues a dog may have. We want to make sure that the home is a good fit for both the dog and the person and that we're setting the experience up to be a success. The potential new owner needs to be prepared with all the information they can get before taking an animal home. Ask questions about the household and any other pets, making sure to tell the visitor that every person or dog in the home must meet the shelter dog before an adoption can be finalized.

C. Introducing animals to each other

If a cat adopter has other cats at home, we don't require cats to meet each other at H.O.P.E. before the shelter cat is adopted. Cats do not adapt to new environments quickly or easily and bringing a cat from home would be a stressful and scary situation to meet a new cat within. Instead, we give as much advice as possible to facilitate a proper introduction at home after an adoption is finalized.

If a dog adopter has another dog at home, it is required for their current dog to meet the shelter dog before the adoption occurs. When they bring their dog(s), the best way to introduce them is on leash in a controlled environment. A shelter employee should be handling the shelter dog while the potential adopter handles their own dog(s). Start by taking the dogs on a walk together. If there are multiple dogs being introduced to the shelter dog, start with one at a time until they have each met individually, then try all dogs together. Ask more employees to help — there should always be a ratio of at least 1 dog to 1 person. Walk them so the dogs are farther away from each other at first and gradually let them get closer over a period of time. Starting nose-to-nose can be too confrontational and set the introduction on a bad note, so easing into a closer interaction is best. Walk this way for a while until the dogs are comfortable with each other. Then return to H.O.P.E.'s dog park and, still on leash, let them interact in that space, eventually dropping the leashes to let them drag on the ground. This is to be able to

step on them quickly if tension rises or one of the dogs has an inappropriate reaction to the other.

This process should be slow and steady, don't rush the dogs into an interaction. Be extremely observant of the body language and communication of all the dogs involved. Remember that certain behaviors like growling, snapping or barking are all forms of communication between dogs and can be well utilized or can be overreactions. Let the dogs communicate while being cautious and prepared to pull a dog back or grab a leash very quickly if needed. Observe how dogs are interacting with each other, with toys and with all people involved. If at any point you feel the interaction is risky or dangerous, stop immediately and return the shelter dog to its kennel. Take time to ask questions about the other dog(s) and home environment and explain the interactions you're seeing to the potential adopters and why you think the relationship may or may not work. If you're not sure, ask another employee to observe as well. Never leave shelter dogs unattended with other dogs. Call the front desk if you need assistance and you don't see another employee around.

D. Discussing personality, behavior, needs and expectations

Always make sure you set the new owner up with as much information as possible and prepare them for the reality of a new animal coming home. Honesty about an animal's behavior is very important, though putting emphasis on bad behaviors isn't necessarily the right call. We always want to speak the praises of an animal but be forward about understanding their potential issues. What we see in the shelter isn't necessarily something that will be observed in a home, as the shelter is an incredibly stressful environment, especially for animals that don't necessarily enjoy the company of other animals.

New routines and new environments are a big shift for a shelter pet. Though an animal may be house trained or litter box trained at the shelter, a new home environment can be a big learning curve for them and they may have accidents in inappropriate places. Help explain this to a new owner and set them up with the expectation that they may need to re-train good habits. The initial few days to few weeks of a shelter pet getting into a home is a period of decompression and recalibration for them. They may show symptoms of being sick or lethargic, may sleep more than expected or may act out in an effort to test their boundaries and figure out their new routines. Setting consistent boundaries is very important for this time. Dogs wearing leashes in the house can be an incredibly useful tool, as is keeping cats relegated to specific room or rooms of a house before giving them free reign. This can help an animal understand their environment more fully and get comfortable more quickly.

The ultimate goal is to set each animal up for success. We want them all to find homes that are not just a good fit for the animal but also the new owners.

E. Reporting to management

After a meet-and-greet, check in with the director and manager to let them know how you feel the interaction went and if the people would be a good fit.

F. Preparing for departure

If an adopter wants to at that point, they can put an animal "On Hold" for up to 5 days to prepare for them to come home. Otherwise, if an animal is ready to go home (has all their necessary vetting done) then they could potentially take them home that day. All applications must be approved by the director.

When an animal is being adopted, prepare a gift bag for them. 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.

After all paperwork is completed and the new owner is ready and has been given their gift bag, leash up the dog and let them know you'll meet them outside. For cats, ask if they have a carrier or if they need to borrow one. Put the cat in the carrier and bring them up front. Help them to their car and get excited for the adoption! Say goodbye to the animal and make sure to congratulate the owner. It's a good day!

XXII.Intakes

Animal intakes can require a particular sensitivity. 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.

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.

A. Animal Control Intakes

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.

1. Notice when law Animal Control enters the building and Meet animal control officer, outside if necessary with a leash or kennel.
2. Carefully help them bring in the animal. They may do it or they may ask you to do it. If an animal is fearful or reactive they may already have them in a live trap or connected to a catcher's pole. Use serious caution in those situations as animals in traps or on poles are generally extremely scared.
3. Cats: use ISO kennels only. Only once the stray hold period is over can a cat be tested for FIV/FelV and moved into the cat room upon a negative test result.
4. Dogs: make sure kennels used for Animal Control intakes are clearly labeled "Animal Control".
5. Dogs: if it is comfortable on leash, try to get a photo or two so management can post a lost animal notice online. If it is not comfortable, get the photo once the animal is in their kennel with the door closed. Cats: take a photo after a cat is in their kennel.
6. Initial assessment of the animal is important. Notice gender, if the animal is fixed, mental state, physical state, look for injuries, fleas and ticks or any signs of pain. Be sure to mention all of these things to your coworkers and manager on shift.
7. Check for a microchip and tags and bring them to the attention of your manager.
8. If you notice anything medical you can attend to, do so if the animal is willing. Flea treatment, disinfection of wounds, etc.
9. If an animal is fearful, let them decompress in their kennel. Do not put your face near an animal's head regardless of whether it is fearful or not. You do not know this animal or what it has been through and it could easily react poorly to you.
10. If an animal is severely malnourished and underweight use extra caution around food or treats. If a starving animal consumes too much food too fast it can become

severely ill, so make sure to decrease the amount of food available to that animal before you let them near it.

11. Check on the animal regularly throughout your shift to make sure and observe medical or behavioral changes and help comfort them through their transition to H.O.P.E.

B. Surrenders

1. Your manager may get you when a surrender is taking place. The owner must fill out paperwork prior to handing the animal over relinquishing ownership. At that point you may bring the animal back to a kennel.
2. Cats: use ISO kennels first unless we know for certain that a cat is vaccinated and tested for FIV and has no other communicable diseases.
3. Initial assessment of the animal is important. Notice gender, if the animal is fixed, mental state, physical state, look for injuries, fleas and ticks or any signs of pain. Be sure to mention all of these things to your coworkers and manager on shift.
4. Check for a microchip in case there is prior history of ownership on the animal.
5. See numbers 5-10 of the above procedure for Animal Control intakes and follow those steps as well.

XXIII. Vet Visits

A. Local vets

Staff members transport animals to three local vets for appointments:

- Range Animal Hospital, Ironwood
- Hurley Area Animal Hospital, Hurley
- Ashland Area Veterinary Clinic, Ashland

When taking an animal in for a vet appointment, make sure you know:

- Time of the appointment
- What the appointment is for (microchip, rabies, spay, neuter, wellness check, fecal test, follow up to a prior appointment, other surgery, etc)
- When that animal ate a meal most recently (asked prior to surgeries)
- If the animal is experiencing a medical issue, know as much detailed information about it as possible so you can relay that to the vet and how it's been treated at H.O.P.E..

B. Transporting animals

Make sure you transport animals safely at all times. Use crates, harnesses or tie-offs as needed to keep animals and yourself safe and secure. Loose animals in the car are never a good idea and are not allowed, as they can distract you, injure themselves, destroy property in your vehicle or escape easily once a door is opened. If transporting multiple animals in one vehicle, make sure they are kenneled so they can't attempt to injure each other.

Obey the laws of the road and drive carefully. If the conditions are hazardous or your vehicle is experiencing issues, stop if you need to and call H.O.P.E. for help.

C. Communicating with vets

Make sure to inform vets of all the necessary information they need about an animal or their condition or care. When discussing the needs of an animal or further actions needing to be taken, make sure to take note of that information and relay it to the director and manager when you return to the shelter. If new medications are needed, take special care to understand how they should be administered so everyone at the shelter knows how to do so properly.

D. Mileage

Staff are able to submit mileage reports to get reimbursed for a portion of their gas expenses. Obtain mileage sheets from your manager at the beginning of each month and submit them at the end of each month. These sheets will ask for your car's mileage numbers at the beginning and end of a trip, where you were going and what the purpose of the trip was. This reimbursement will come in the form of a check separate from your regular paycheck.

XXIV. Volunteers

Volunteers are extremely helpful support for our staff at H.O.P.E.. They are huge assets for us! Volunteers must undergo an application process as well as training and discuss scheduling with management. 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.. Treat all volunteers with respect, thank them for their time and don't hesitate to ask them for help if you need it.

Volunteers have less responsibility than staff members and are limited on what they can do unless otherwise approved by the director. Please bring to management's attention any volunteer that is going outside of their approved duties.

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)

XXV. 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.

XXVI. Write-Ups & Disciplinary Measures

All employees 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 employee at fault will be spoken to by management and potentially written up. Employment is considered “at will” in the state of Michigan and can be terminated as necessary.

XXVII. 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.

XXVIII. Employee 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