



## **Volunteer Handbook**

**March 2023**

Dear Volunteer,

**Welcome to the Fluvanna SPCA! We are excited that you want to give your time and talents to our organization.**

The Fluvanna SPCA operates with a small staff of paid employees. They work very hard to take care of all the day-to-day needs of the animals (dogs and cats) in the shelter's care, in addition to providing education and other services to the Fluvanna community. However, there are so many more things that need to be done than the staff can possibly do by themselves. Volunteers play a very important role in helping the shelter succeed in our mission to find good homes for all of the dogs and cats that find their way to the Fluvanna SPCA.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and all of the staff, we look forward to working with you. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance as you learn and grow with us!

Best wishes,

Katelyn Mancini  
FSPCA Board President  
[katelyn.realtor@gmail.com](mailto:katelyn.realtor@gmail.com)  
703-203-3388

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**Fluvanna SPCA**  
**5239 Union Mills Road**  
**Troy, VA 22974 (434) 591-0123**  
[www.fspca.org](http://www.fspca.org) [manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org)

## SIGNATURE PAGE

Sign and date below then mail or send a copy by email this page to:

**Mailing Address:** 5239 Union Mills Road, Troy, VA 22974

**Email:** [manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org)

I have received and reviewed the FSPCA Volunteer Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

## FLUVANNA SPCA FACT SHEET

**Our Mission** Our goal is to rescue dogs and domestic cats from cruelty, neglect, and abandonment and to place them in good homes.

### Our Goals

- 1) Provide the best quality care for the sheltered cats and dogs in our care.
- 2) Rehome, medicate, train, and rehab cats and dogs in our community.
- 3) Create a respectful reputation and become a leader in animal cat and dog care.
- 4) Develop administrative and organizational best practices.
- 5) Create financial stability.
- 6) Develop educational programs.

**History** The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Fluvanna County is a nonprofit and private organization founded in 1989. We receive our funding from, donations, grants, and fundraising events. Philanthropic support plays an essential role in ensuring that homeless pets receive humane care. We are always striving to improve our operations and expand our services to the community. Our volunteer Board of Directors, committee members, volunteers, and staff are responsible for all FSPCA activities.

**Funding** The Fluvanna SPCA has contracted with Fluvanna County to provide an intake facility for the county's stray dogs and cats. The majority of our income comes from public donations, adoptions, and fundraising events.

**Statistics** The Fluvanna SPCA receives an average of 900 dogs and cats a year. Our live release rate is 93%.

**No-Kill Status** We pride ourselves in being a no-kill shelter. What does this mean? We only euthanize for medical and behavioral reasons. We maintain this status with help from volunteers performing a variety of tasks from socializing animals, attending events, contacting rescue groups, and providing foster care. We need your help to ensure we can maintain this status.

**Staff** There about 10 dedicated and knowledgeable staff members who care for our residents daily. Staff members and shelter activities are overseen by the Operations Manager. Fundraising, marketing, and adoption outing activities are overseen by the Shelter Director. Other staff are responsible for animal care, kennel cleaning and maintenance, and cat room cleaning and maintenance.

**Hours of Operation** The shelter is open Wednesday through Sunday from 12-5 pm or by appointment. Volunteers are welcome seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Fluvanna SPCA has numerous opportunities for you to get involved. Read the descriptions below and see which ones best suit your skills and interests! To find out more information about any of the options below, or to express your interest in the opportunity, please reach out to the points of contact listed for each opportunity.

**Dog Walking** - Our dogs love any opportunity to get out and stretch and play! Come and take them for walks on a leash or play fetch with them in our dog pen. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a parent during the walks.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Cat Socialization** - Who can resist affectionate, people-friendly cats? Come hang out with the kitties and play with them or let them cuddle in your lap.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Adoption Outings** - We are able to find homes for more animals by taking them to places like PetSmart or other businesses where they can be seen by lots of people.

**Vet Visits** - Our dogs and cats need the occasional trip to the vet's office during weekdays to get spayed/neutered or to get medical treatment for injuries or illnesses.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Fostering** - Some of our dogs and cats (and puppies and kittens) need a little extra TLC before they're ready to be adopted. Being taken care of in a home can help them get stronger and become better socialized before being placed in an adoptive home. If you are interested in fostering, please ask the Shelter Manager for a copy of our Foster Handbook.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Building Handyman (or Handy Lady!)** - There are plenty of odd jobs around the building and shelter grounds that need attention. Any items that can be done by volunteers help save the shelter from having to hire professionals to get the work done.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Humane Education** - Help us educate school kids and other community groups about responsible pet ownership and the need to spay/neuter all pets to prevent overpopulation problems.

*Point of contact: Shelter Manager ([manager@fspca.org](mailto:manager@fspca.org))*

**Fundraising & Event Promotions** - If rubbing elbows with other folks or planning and promoting events is your cup of tea, we can always use extra help with fundraising and publicity.

*Point of contact: Events Committee Chair ([eventsFSPCA@gmail.com](mailto:eventsFSPCA@gmail.com))*

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Fluvanna SPCA would not exist without the dedication and support of volunteers. The following sections describe the policies and procedures established by the Fluvanna SPCA to ensure proper care of our animal residents and to ensure the safety of our volunteers.

**Data tracking:** **ALL volunteers are REQUIRED to sign in and out at the front desk.** Signing in is very important to track all volunteer hours as these statistics are used in grant applications. It also lets the staff know who is in the shelter and on grounds.

**Age restrictions:** Anyone is welcome to volunteer at FSPCA. However, for safety reasons, children under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian over the age of 18 at all times.

**Professional attitude:** The Fluvanna SPCA asks that our volunteers take their decision to volunteer seriously and remember to act courteously to all customers. All volunteers must keep all customer data confidential; no staff, volunteer, adopter, or community names or information may be discussed outside of our organization. We also ask our volunteers to support our organization's mission, policies, and procedures both inside and outside the Fluvanna SPCA.

**Application and waiver:** All volunteers must complete an application and sign a waiver before their first volunteer experience at the shelter or at a shelter-sponsored event.

**Harassment:** The Fluvanna SPCA will not tolerate any harassment by a volunteer to a staff member or a fellow volunteer. If you are a victim of harassment, please inform the Shelter Manager immediately.

**Appearance and dress:** Volunteers must come dressed appropriately and should wear comfortable clothing. Closed-toed shoes must be worn. Long pants and long-sleeved shirts are strongly recommended for your protection from scratches, bites, or chemicals.

**Workplace safety:** Volunteers must keep the safety of themselves, staff, our animals, and the general public in mind when participating in a Fluvanna SPCA activity or volunteering at the shelter. Volunteers should never put themselves into a situation that makes them fearful or uncomfortable. If you feel uncomfortable with a cat or dog's behavior, please notify a staff member immediately. If you notice anything that constitutes an unsafe workplace, please notify the Shelter Manager as soon as possible.

**Volunteer injury:** All volunteers must immediately report to the Shelter Manager any personal accidents or injuries that occur while volunteering for the Fluvanna SPCA.

**Animal feedback:** In addition to staff evaluations, we rely on volunteer input to better assess our animals' behaviors. If you notice any positive or negative behaviors, or that an animal is sick, please report these to the Shelter Manager and/or shelter staff.

**Personal property:** The Fluvanna SPCA is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal items on SPCA property.

**Alcohol and drugs:** The use, possession, sale, or transfer of a controlled substance or alcohol on Fluvanna SPCA property or at an event representing the Fluvanna SPCA is strictly prohibited.

**Media inquiries:** No volunteer shall make statements to the media that may be seen as representative of the opinions and policies of the Fluvanna SPCA. Please refer all media inquiries to the Board of Directors at [bod@fspca.org](mailto:bod@fspca.org).

**Confidentiality and impartiality:** It is essential that confidentiality regarding personal information about clients and the outcome of individual animal situations must be maintained at all times. All information learned at the Fluvanna SPCA or officially sanctioned Fluvanna SPCA events should be considered confidential and is not to be repeated or shared.

The Fluvanna SPCA does not believe in breed-specific behavior stereotypes. If you have negative preconceived notions about certain types or breeds of animals, please refrain from sharing your opinions and views with members of the public, staff, and other volunteers. One of our goals is to educate the public about animal welfare and the first step is to educate ourselves!

**Handling and mistreatment of animals:** The Fluvanna SPCA will not tolerate the mishandling or mistreatment of animals. Improper handling of an animal includes allowing them to consistently slip out of your care and allowing them to harm a person or another animal through carelessness and lack of attention. Mistreating an animal includes yelling at, hitting, or striking any animal residing at the shelter. If a volunteer is found mishandling or mistreating an animal, the volunteer will be asked to resign from his or her volunteering duties and will no longer be welcome at the shelter.

**Reasons for dismissal:** The Fluvanna SPCA will dismiss any volunteer for failure to abide by the organization's policies and procedures or for any abuse or mistreatment of animals.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

While volunteering at the shelter or a Fluvanna SPCA event, you may be approached by the general public or a potential adopter and asked a variety of questions. This section will provide insight into some of these questions and provide an answer based on our mission, policies, and procedures.



### ***Can I adopt this pet?***

There are certain requirements that must be met before a pet is allowed to go home, and there may be reasons why the customer can't adopt. Each potential adopter must fill out an adoption questionnaire and have it reviewed by either a staff member or volunteer who has been trained how to do adoptions. These individuals are the only representatives of the Fluvanna SPCA who can determine if the potential adopter and desired dog or cat is a good match.

### ***What is the history of this pet?***

The information we have on any resident is listed on their cage card, their outing paperwork, and on their Shelter Buddy entry. Any personal information as to who brought the animal into the shelter is not to be shared.

### ***What is the adoption fee and what does it cover?***

Our regular adoption fees posted in the office and on our website. Please check with the Office Assistant or Operations Manager to see if there are any current adoption specials.

The adoption fee partially covers the care the animal was given during its stay at the Fluvanna SPCA. It also covers a free exam by a participating vet, a heartworm or Felv/FIV test, and in many cases spay/neuter. Additionally, the adoption fee covers age-appropriate vaccines, dewormer, and a flea check.

### ***What procedures do we follow to ensure the cages and facility are properly cleaned?***

Our staff cleans all cages, floors, and surfaces daily with a special microbial cleaner that is designed for vet clinics and shelters. Additionally, all bedding and toys are changed out and washed daily to prevent the spread of viruses and bacteria.

Although our cleaning procedures are designed to prevent the spread of viruses, all shelters are susceptible to common conditions, such as upper respiratory infections and worms, due to the acceptance of any stray animal. To help reduce the spread of any viruses and bacteria, all staff and volunteers should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer in between visits with different animals and before eating. For the protection of your own pets, we advise that you keep your own pets current on vaccinations. Staff and volunteers should also change clothes before interacting with their pets at home.

## **PROCEDURES FOR INTERACTING WITH OUR ANIMALS**

### ***Dog Walking***

Taking a dog for a walk might not seem like a difficult task, but the shelter environment adds a few changes to this normal activity. To ensure the safety of you and the dogs, please follow the steps outlined below:

1. Sign in at the front desk and mention that you will be walking dogs.
2. Check the whiteboard in the hallway to see which dogs have not been out so far that day. For those dogs who do not have a check next to their name, make sure there are no health issues with the animal that prevent it from being taken for a walk. After you have selected the dog to walk, put a check next to their name.
3. The number on the board next to the dogs' names indicates the kennel they are in. The kennel has three entrances – outside left, inside, and outside right. A diagram of the kennel is on the wall next to the whiteboard. If you have any questions about the location of the dog you wish to walk, please ask the shelter staff.
4. Pick up a leash from the opposite wall. The dogs already wear collars so there is no need to take one. However, if the whiteboard mentions that a dog needs to be walked in a harness, please take one from the rack.
5. When approaching the kennel, notice the dog's behavior. Some of our dogs are stressed and scared in the shelter environment. If the dog appears to be shy or scared, please proceed cautiously.
6. Before opening the kennel door, have the leash ready. If you enter the kennel, make sure you keep yourself between the dog and the door in case the dog tries to escape. You may also choose to open the door a few inches and attach the leash to the dog's collar. Please block the door so the dog cannot push it open before you are ready to proceed.
7. Enjoy your walk! If you notice anything unusual about the dog's behavior or stool, please notify a staff member or the Shelter Manager. Take the dog back to the same cage at the end of your walk and ensure the door is latched properly.
8. If you see another person walking a dog please go in the opposite direction to avoid contact with that dog.
9. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before choosing your next dog.

**DO NOT:**

Open a dog kennel that has a "staff only" sign on the door.

Raise or lower the guillotine door that divides the kennel runs – this is restricted to staff.

Interact with any dog labeled "surgery recovery" without checking with staff to see if they can be walked or trained.

***Cat Socialization***

We believe it is important for cats to have human interaction to increase their chances of being adopted. When arriving at the shelter to socialize cats, please follow the steps outlined below:

1. Sign in at the front desk and mention that you will be socializing cats.
2. Read all information about the cat that is posted on the cage card.
3. Approach the cage to observe the cat's behavior. Some cats do not adjust well to being in a cage. The cat may appear withdrawn or may not respond to your voice or presence. In this

situation, simply talk to the cat and not take it out of its cage.

4. If the cat is receptive to your attention and appears friendly, open the door and carefully take out the cat. Stay in the room with the cat and be sure to return it back to the same cage at the end of your visit.
5. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before touching another cat.

**DO NOT:**

☒ Open a cat cage that has a “staff only” sign on the door.

Check with staff about any cats labeled “surgery recovery” to see if they can be socialized.

**ADOPTION OUTING WORKERS PROCEDURES**

1. Arrange an adoption outing by contacting the manager and the contact person at the location where the event will be held. Agree upon a date and time. Times are generally 10:00-1:00.
2. Before the event, publicize the outing on social media or by putting a flyer at the adoption outing location.
3. Before the event, publicize the outing on Facebook to solicit volunteers. At least 2 people will be needed. More will be needed if more dogs are taken to the event.
4. Contact volunteers to arrange the volunteers who will transport the dogs and adoption outing materials.
5. Ask the manager to bring the adoption materials in the blue bucket to the office. They included the tablecloth, water, water bowl, treats, adoption paperwork, look books with adoptable pets, donation jar, Square to accept donations and the Square sign that is used to connect to the shelter. Determine if a table and chairs are needed.
6. Day of the event- volunteers transporting dogs arrive at the shelter an hour before the event. Dogs are loaded into crates to be transported.
7. Take the adoption outing materials and table and chairs (if they are needed).
8. Arrive at the event location and check in with the staff or manager.
9. Set up the table and materials before taking the dogs out of their crates. Fill water bowl.
10. Be sure that each dog has a leash and is carefully taken out of the crate.
11. Familiarize yourself with the information about each dog so that you can answer questions.
12. Walk the dogs, greet people, speak to the public about the dogs and the FSPCA. Remember that you are representing the FSPCA. The public may base their opinions of the shelter on their positive (or negative) interactions with volunteers.

13. After the event, thank the manager of the event location.
14. Pack the dogs and materials and return them to the shelter.

Places events have been held-

Petsmart at Wegman's Shopping Center Charlottesville

Natural Pet Essentials, Route 29 N. Charlottesville

Happy Tails, Turkeysag trail, Palmyra

Petco, Emmet St. Charlottesville

Local Eats, Joshua Lane Palmyra