**Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA**

Adult Volunteer Handbook

**CASPCA Physical Address:** 3355 Berkmar Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901

**CASPCA Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 7047, Charlottesville, VA 22906

**Phone Number:** 434-973-5959 **| Fax:** 434-973-5271 |

**Web:** [www.caspca.org](http://www.caspca.org)

**CASPCA Rummage Store:** 199 Zan Road, Charlottesville, VA 22901

**Phone Number:** 434-293-8475

**Welcome to the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA. Thank you for your interest in volunteering!**

The Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA (“CASPCA”) is an open-admission “No Kill” facility. Open-admission means that we take in all animals brought in by the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle animal control officers, as well as stray animals brought in by members of the public. The CASPCA also provides shelter for animals that owners wish to surrender. We are the only facility that accepts homeless animals in the Charlottesville-Albemarle community. Since 2005, we have maintained a greater than 90% live release rate.

This handbook (the “Handbook”) will help you understand the facility operations, general volunteer policies and duties, and the many ways that you might best help the CASPCA. Please read through this Handbook carefully. The policies and practices contained in this Handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the CASPCA. From time to time you may receive updated information concerning policy changes via email or posted at the CASPCA. If you have any questions regarding these policies, please ask the CASPCA Volunteer Coordinator for assistance.

None of the provisions in this Handbook constitute an express or implied employment contract for any specific duration. At all times, your volunteering efforts with the CASPCA are completely at-will. No officer, manager, or other agent of the CASPCA has the authority to enter into any employment agreement with you which contradicts or overrides your at-will status.

**Organizational Structure**

The Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA is a non-profit entity as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The CASPCA is not affiliated with any national organization (the Humane Society of the United States, HSUS; the America Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, ASPCA; or the American Humane Association, AHA). Funding comes solely from services offered by the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA, city and county government, donations and grants.

**Mission**

The CASPCA is a nonprofit animal welfare organization that provides a safe environment for the lost, abandoned, and homeless animals of Charlottesville and Albemarle County and places them in good homes. We strive to set a standard of excellence and leadership in animal care, humane education, and progressive animal welfare programs.

**Vision**

* To guarantee a good home to every healthy and behaviorally sound companion animal.
* To save all medically treatable companion animals that can be behaviorally rehabilitated.
* To be a leader and an example for other organizations. To set the standard for our region, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the nation for how to save lives.
* To develop constructive relationships that advance the CASPCA's mission and vision with our community, our city/county governments and other nonprofit organizations.

**Handbook Distribution and Volunteer Forms**

Each volunteer will read this Handbook and will sign an Acknowledgement of Receipt. In addition you will be required to sign the Acknowledgement of Volunteer Handbook, which includes a non-conviction statement, and waiver and release.

**Confidentiality Agreement**

You will need to sign a confidentiality agreement because of the nature of work at the CASPCA. We expect you to follow the shelter’s regulations and rules, and by signing the confidentiality agreement you are acknowledging that you agree to refrain from the unauthorized use or disclosure of any proprietary information. (please see end of this handbook for a copy of form)

**Volunteer Agreement:**

**As a CASPCA Volunteer, I pledge to:**

1. Work without pay or employment-type benefits.
2. Adhere to both the letter and spirit of all CASPCA rules as outlined in current CASPCA policies, posted notices, emails, this Handbook, or communicated in any way.
3. Read and become familiar with the Handbook.
4. Strictly maintain the highest ethical and moral standards of physical and emotional treatment of the animals under CASPCA’s care.
5. Accept the guidance of staff when communicated.
6. Maintain the reputation and integrity of the CASPCA when working with the public; practice good customer service skills with the public and other volunteers and staff.
7. Learn the risks involved in working in a facility with potentially hazardous chemicals and in certain activities of the facility, and limit those risks whenever possible.
8. Understand that the CASPCA, without notice or hearing, may terminate my services as a Volunteer at any time, with or without reason.
9. Not represent the CASPCA outside my immediate volunteer capacity. Only the Executive Director or her designees speak for the organization.
10. Use CASPCA property only for the benefit of the CASPCA and not for personal benefit.
11. Wear clothing appropriate for the nature of the work being done.
12. Be responsible for personal belongings, keeping them with the volunteer or locked in a vehicle.
13. Maintain a professional working relationship with the CASPCA staff.
14. Stay abreast of CASPCA volunteer policies and procedures, including but not limited to reading the most recent version of the Volunteer Handbook (which will be kept by the volunteer sign-in station), email communication sent by the Volunteer Coordinator, and any notices posted by the Volunteer Coordinator at the volunteer sign-in station.

In order to work well with the staff and to present the CASPCA in the best possible light, we ask that you adhere to the following policies and procedures while you are on duty as a volunteer. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action or termination.

**Attendance and Absenteeism**

As a volunteer at the CASPCA, you are expected to complete your scheduled shifts. We understand that emergency situations and illnesses may arise which prevent you from fulfilling your tasks. In the event of any emergency or illness, please alert the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. Please alert the Coordinator of any scheduled absences, as far in advance as possible, so that an appropriate substitute can be found. If absenteeism happens repeatedly, your volunteering duties may be fulfilled by another being. **New volunteers are required to make a commitment for three hours of service each week for a minimum of six months.**

**Volunteer Personal Files**

Your personal files are confidential. These consist of written documents attained by management. The volunteer’s personal file will only be reviewed by you and management.

**Representing the Organization**

Volunteers should always represent the CASPCA in a positive manner. Before making a public statement to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements, or forming partnerships with other rescues or shelters, consult with and receive permission from management.

**Classification of Volunteer**

A volunteer performs work, without compensation or benefits, for the good of the CASPCA and the animals in its care. Volunteers follow the same policies, procedures, and standards of behavior as paid employees.

**Ending Your Volunteer Service**

Although you are free to cease volunteering at any time, it is requested that you provide the Volunteer Coordinator with a two-week notice prior to your last volunteer day.

**Disciplinary Practices**

Below are the disciplinary actions that may be taken by management if needed:

1. Verbal warning with documentation placed in the volunteer’s personal file.

2. Written warning to volunteer and placement in the personal file.

3. Written warning and suspension with documentation in the personal file.

4. Dismissal of volunteer.

These steps are based on the infractions that add up, even if the infraction is not in the same nature as the previous one.

**Dismissal**

Dismissal of a volunteer from the CASPCA is a serious deliberation considered only by management. Before the volunteer is dismissed, meetings to try and fix the situation will be carried out. Grounds for dismissal include but are not limited to: unreliability, irresponsibility, disruptive or inappropriate behavior, or failure to follow the policies and procedures of the shelter.

**Volunteer Training**

1. Submit an Application
2. Attend a volunteer orientation to learn about CASPCA’s current volunteer needs
3. Receive hands-on training (Volunteers interested in walking dogs will be required to complete separate, additional hands on training.)

**Communication with Volunteers**

* The CASPCA Volunteer Coordinator will send emails containing important updates and volunteer opportunities.
* Volunteer meetings and additional trainings will be offered throughout the year.
* Important notices will be posted on the bulletin board at the Volunteer Sign-In Station.
* Follow us on Facebook for general CASPCA information and events.

**Volunteer Service Hours and Scheduling**

* Volunteers are required to make a commitment of 3 hours of service each week (or twelve hours a month) for a minimum of 6 months.
* Walk-in hours are not permitted. Volunteers must sign up for a shift prior to volunteering.

Volunteers are required to followall **CASPCA** policies and procedures**.** They have been designed to help protect the animals and people who interact with them.

**Open Door Policy at CASPCA**

At the CASPCA, we encourage open, respectful, clear communications between all staff members and volunteers. Managers maintain an open door to all staff members and volunteers. We want you to feel comfortable approaching them to talk about any volunteer-related issues, concerns, or to ask questions about volunteering.

If, for some reason, you do not feel comfortable approaching your immediate supervisor, you can talk directly with a director or the Executive Director.

We ask that you not discuss your concerns with your co-volunteers or CASPCA staff. Your co-volunteers are not in a position to find a solution and such discussion tends to generate a negative attitude at CASPCA. Such actions may be cause for dismissal.

We can only maintain an enjoyable and productive volunteer environment with your help and involvement. Please remember that it is your responsibility to speak up!

**Volunteer Practices**

The CASPCA promotes and provides an environment for equal employment and volunteer opportunities to all employees, applicants for employment, and volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual preference or orientation, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability. This policy of equal employment and volunteer opportunities applies to recruitment, screening, hiring, promotion and termination and to all terms and conditions of employment and volunteer participation.

**Working with Staff**

Communication between volunteers and staff is tremendously important in fostering a positive and constructive work environment. Problem Solving Procedure

When working with other volunteers and other points of views, problems may arise. These problems need to be reported to management and solved as soon as possible. Investigation of certain problems may need to take place. Our procedures for problem solving will provide volunteers with the opportunity to have any problem, dispute, or misunderstanding reviewed.

* You may submit a problem in writing to management within three work days after the problem occurred. The manager will attempt to resolve the problem at the initial meeting, if the problem cannot be mutually solved at the meeting, the manager will investigate further into the situation and at the next meeting, in writing, submit another resolution.
* **Prohibited Discriminatory Practices**: The CASPCA is committed to fair, nondiscriminatory treatment of all volunteers and employees based on merit, performance, and ability, and believes that each volunteer has the right to work in a professional environment in which equal opportunities are promoted and discriminatory practices based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual preference or orientation, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability, are prohibited.
* **Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment:** Harassment of applicants, employees, and volunteers on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, or disability, including sexual harassment (all as defined and protected by applicable law) is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

**Other Unlawful Harassment**

Harassment on other grounds, including race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, or disability is also prohibited. Harassment includes jokes, verbal abuse and epithets, degrading comments, the display of offensive objects and pictures, and other conduct that the individual might reasonably find to be offensive.

This policy prohibiting harassment, whether sexual or of another nature, is not limited to relationships between and among employees, prospective employees, and volunteers, but also extends to interaction with clients or customers. No employee or volunteer shall ever subject any client or prospective client of CASPCA to sexual harassment of any nature, including that conduct described above.

Furthermore, no employee and/or volunteer will be required to suffer sexual harassment by any client, vendor, or supplier. Any unwelcome sexual overtures or other forms of sexual harassment advanced by a client, vendor, or supplier should be reported immediately to a supervisor, the Volunteer Coordinator, or the Executive Director.

*CASPCA is strongly committed to maintaining a workplace free of impermissible harassment or intimidation, including sexual harassment. All complaints will be taken seriously. If you have questions, please speak to a supervisor, Volunteer Coordinator, or the Executive Director.*

**Reporting Accidents: Any accident on CASPCA premises or while at an organization event off-site must be reported immediately. You must report all dog bites and cat scratches immediately!** This is critical to your health and the health of the animals in our care. Failure to report a bite or scratch may result in the loss of any aid that CASPCA may provide to you and could also lead to disciplinary action, including termination.

Here are the steps for reporting a work-related accident or illness:

1. If you believe you have a volunteer-related injury or illness, inform the Volunteer Coordinator, supervisor/ manager, or a director immediately.
2. If you observe a work-related injury occur, please notify your Volunteer Coordinator or a supervisor/ manager immediately.
3. An initial report of the incident will be completed by the Volunteer Coordinator or a director.

CASPCA and its insurance carriers are not liable for any payment of worker’s compensation benefits for any injuries incurred by CASPCA volunteers.

**Use of CASPCA Property**

Except as authorized in this Handbook, volunteers shall use CASPCA property only for the benefit of the CASPCA and not for their own personal benefit.

**Volunteer Background Check**

CASPCA reserves the right to perform a background investigation to evaluate a volunteer’s qualifications, character, and to identify potential risks for safety and security reasons. A background investigation will include criminal history check. You will be asked to consent in writing to a background check if CASPCA elects to conduct one.

**Reimbursement of Expenses**

CASPCA will not reimburse you or any other volunteer for any expenses you incur while volunteering unless there is a CASPCA policy to do so at the time such expense is incurred, or there is a prior agreement in writing, signed by the CASPCA Executive Director agreeing to the reimbursement of such expenses. Accordingly, you should verify with the Executive Director whether an expense will be reimbursed before incurring such expense. Some expenses are tax-deductible and you should consult with your tax advisor. Only expenses that are pre-approved in writing as reimbursable to the individual, accompanied with a receipt from a reputable person or vendor will be refunded.

**Dress code:**

* Clean, serviceable clothing such as shirts with sleeves, covered shoes and long pants.
	+ Close-toed shoes, preferably tennis shoes with non-skid, rubber soles.
	+ A volunteer badge (located in the Volunteer Sign-In Station).

We recommend that you keep valuables with you at all times or in your locked vehicle. The CASCAP cannot be held responsible for personal items left at the SPCA.

**Volunteer Sign-In Station:** For each shift, you must sign in and sign out at the Volunteer Sign-In Station. Policy updates, volunteer opportunities, and general information will be posted there. **All volunteers MUST sign-in using their Volgistics pin number whenever s/he is at the CASPCA in the capacity as a volunteer.**

**Customer Relations**: Every customer who comes into or calls our shelter is a potential adopter, benefactor, volunteer, or employee, and thus should be treated with compassion and professionalism. Volunteers should be courteous and professional with our customers. If a volunteer is faced with a difficult, rude, or violent customer, the volunteer should notify the Volunteer Coordinator or any CASPCA manager and one of these personnel will intervene to handle the matter.

**Safety and animal care:**

* **Assisting the public:** Please share information you have about a cat or dog you have spent time with and enjoy. If a customer is interested in walking a dog, please escort them to the Front Desk for assistance and help them fill out a matchmaker form if appropriate.
* **For your safety**: Certain areas of the shelter, particularly the intake areas, the cat isolation rooms, dog isolation areas, and the crematorium are limited to staff members. Animals in these areas have either not been evaluated, need a “time out,” or have a contagious medical condition. Please do not enter these areas without permission from management.
* **Animal Health**: Many diseases are transmittable from animal to animal and some are communicable from animal to human. **If you are or think you might be pregnant, please be extremely aware of hygiene so as to avoid accidental infection and discuss your interaction with the animals with your physician in advance**. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about your health and the handling of the animals.

The following are veterinary recommended practices for your protection. By your actions, you can either limit or enhance the spread of infectious diseases.

* It is possible to transmit diseases or parasites to your pets at home. You should change your clothes and wash your hands before greeting your pets at home.
* Keep your hands away from your nose, mouth, eyes, and any wounds on your body.
* ALWAYS WASH or SANITIZE YOUR HANDS AFTER HANDLING EACH ANIMAL.