

Pawsitive Impact

Grapevine Animal Services Volunteer Program



Volunteer Handbook



Safe • Loving • Humane

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Welcome to Grapevine Animal Services Volunteer Program, Pawsitive Impact! We are delighted in your interest to benefit the homeless animals in our care as well as serve the community's animal related needs. Volunteers are a vital part of our ability to continue lifesaving programs including adoptions, animal enrichment, animal care, foster care, and outreach events.

This Volunteer Handbook will introduce you to our mission, vision, and community programs and will explain some important rules for volunteers. You will find information about the many areas in which we need volunteers and descriptions of the roles. This information can be used as a guide and reference, but is not intended to be all inclusive of the training, information, and policies that volunteers are subject to.

While we know prospective volunteers' passion for the animals lead them to our doors, it is the responsibility of the staff to ensure that volunteers are in positions that are fun, safe, fulfilling and moreover fill the current needs of the animals at the shelter. We are very excited about you being here and will spend time training and developing you as a volunteer. We will respect your time and skills while striving to make your time with us productive and rewarding. In return, we ask for a time commitment as regular participation and dependability are so very important to the work we do.

Helping animals in our care is challenging and rewarding. It can also be physically and emotionally draining. Without volunteers, our animals and our mission would be under-served. If you want to see results from your efforts, then you're in the right organization! **You can truly make a difference.**

Grapevine Animal Services

Shelter Address:

500 Shady Brook Dr.
Grapevine, Texas 76051

Shelter Hours*:

Sunday	Closed
Monday-Friday	11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Phone: 817.410.3370

Fax: 817.410.3057

Email: AnimalServices@GrapevineTexas.gov

Website: GrapevineAnimalServices.org

Social: Facebook facebook.com/GrapevineAnimalServices
Twitter twitter.com/GrapevineAnimal
Instagram instagram.com/GrapevineAnimalServices

*8 holidays per year are observed in which the shelter is closed to the public: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day

About

Grapevine Animal Services is the only animal shelter in the City of Grapevine, Texas. Our open admission, municipal animal shelter cares for animals in need including lost and found animals and those looking for new homes. We also provide field services including found animal pick up, wild animal rescue and conflict resolution, public safety services, and animal bite and cruelty investigations.

Grapevine Animal Services has had several "homes" throughout the history of Grapevine. The first dates back the early 1900's when it was referred to as a "Pound". The "Pound" was completed in February 1914 and was located north of the calaboose (jail) on Barton Street. The location is roughly where the water tower near City Hall is located. The next "Pound" was built around 1975 on the east side of the Waste Water Treatment plant. It did not have windows—just small

ventilation grills. It still remains as a City storage unit. In 1992, an animal shelter was constructed at the corner of Dove Loop and Shady Brook Dr. It was demolished in November 2019 to make way for a new sheltering facility. Today we operate from our state of the art facility constructed in 2020.

Our Vision

The highest quality of life for animals and people.

Our Mission

Protect animals and people

We create a safe place for wild and domestic animals to live in harmony with people.

Teach people to care about animals

We help people understand animals, take responsibility for pets, and keep animals and people safe.

Inspire animal advocacy

We encourage people to adopt pets, ensure animal welfare, and help us make life better for all animals.

We Are Grapevine Animal Services

We create a safe space for people and animals.

We love animals and protect people.

We raise the happiness of pets and their owners.

We encourage people to understand and respect wildlife.

We help humans become humane.

We empower people to take responsibility of pets.

We bring families and pets together for good.

We inspire volunteers to help us help animals.

Contact Information

Lydia Blake, Volunteer Coordinator

ldblake@grapevintexas.gov

Employees:

Wesley Milner, Officer

wmilner@grapevintexas.gov

Hannah Schneider, Officer

hschneider@grapevintexas.gov

Kristina Valentine, Animal Services Manager

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Joy Mayo, Volunteer Coordinator

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Jenna Antenucci

jantenucci@grapevintexas.gov

Thomas Sweetland

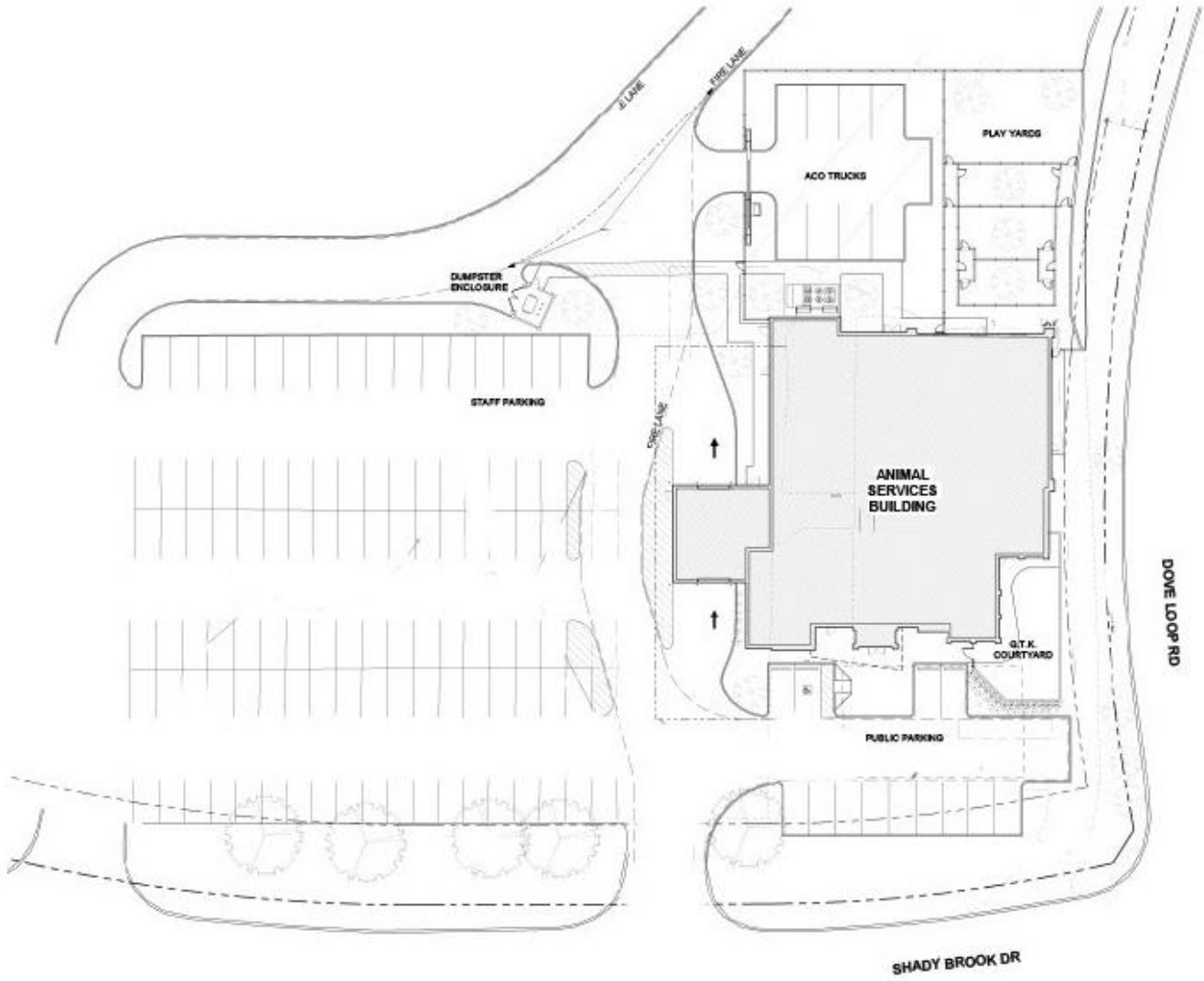
tsweetland@grapevintexas.gov

Facility Map

Interior



Campus Map



Volunteer Positions

Whether you are interested in hands-on work with the animals or specialized jobs supporting operations, we can help find the perfect fit for you. Positions become available as a need for them arises.

We aim to utilize volunteers for a variety of tasks, including but not limited to:

- Assisting staff with daily tasks and duties
- Providing exceptional customer care and support
- Improving the quality of life for all animals in our facility through enrichment, socialization, training, and care
- Improving the adoptability of animals in our care
- Assisting with education and outreach to the public
- Providing support with administrative processes

Animal Care/Enrichment Volunteer (Tiered)

This position is tiered for increasing responsibilities. Animal Care and Enrichment Volunteers assist in maintaining a sanitary and humane kennel environment to reduce disease and stress. They also provide services for the mental and physical well-being of our animals. You will clean, feed and provide exercise and socialization for the animals in our care under supervision of staff.

Client Services Ambassador Volunteer

Client Services Ambassador Volunteers assist at the reception desk providing exceptional service to clients. This position has no animal handling component.

Client Services Liaison Volunteer (Tiered)

This position is tiered for increasing responsibilities. Client Services Liaisons assist Grapevine Animal Services staff in greeting shelter patrons and providing exceptional customer service. Liaisons will prepare/clean adoption visit areas, complete service desk/administrative tasks, facilitate adoption visits, assist patrons in looking for their missing pet, and tidy adoption animal kennels.

Foster Home

Provide a nurturing and safe environment in your home for animals to mature, heal, socialize and become or remain adoptable.

Photography Volunteer

Photography volunteers obtain high-quality digital pictures and video of our adoptable animals, allowing potential adopters to view animals online.

Outreach and Events Volunteer

Community outreach volunteers are the face of Grapevine Animal Services in the community and help to positively and knowledgeably increase the public's awareness and understanding of our mission.

Volunteer Policies

Volunteer policies are in place for the protection of the volunteer(s), the staff, and the animals in our care. Grapevine Animal Services reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer for any violation of Volunteer Policy within this manual, or after consideration of an offense not listed within this manual.

Age Requirements

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to volunteer independently (legal guardians of 16-17 year olds must attend orientation and complete paperwork). Volunteers 10-15 years of age may join our “Partner Up” program by serving their volunteer hours with a parent, legal guardian, or adult mentor (with permission from a parent or legal guardian). Both members of the “Partner Up” team must complete all elements of training and serve all volunteer hours together.

Commitment and Attendance Requirements

We require our volunteers to commit a minimum of two hours per week for at least six months. A great deal of resources and training are invested into preparing a volunteer to feel comfortable and thrive in their position.

Shift times should be scheduled consistently week to week, but we can work with our volunteers who have special scheduling needs. Volunteers are required to be on time to their committed shift. Although you are not being financially compensated for your services as a volunteer, you are expected to take the responsibility seriously and use the same attendance guidelines as you would for a paid position.

The Volunteer Coordinator must be notified via phone call as soon as possible if a shift will be missed or you will be tardy. Missing or arriving tardy to multiple shifts without giving notice or tardiness/absences that become a pattern are dismissible offenses.

Every volunteer job is necessary and important to the mission of Grapevine Animal Services.

Scheduling and Recording Hours—Better Impact Volunteer Database

Volunteers will use Better Impact to schedule shifts and record hours. Volunteers will login to their Better Impact “My Volunteer Page” account to sign up for available shifts. Upon arrival for a shift volunteers will clock in and upon completion of a shift volunteers will clock out in Better Impact.

Accidents and Injuries

Any accidents or injuries occurring on the job, no matter how small, must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator immediately. An accident report will be completed to record necessary information. Medical assistance or treatment will be given if necessary.

For your safety, animal bites must be reported to staff immediately, and the animal must be identified. State law requires that the animal be submitted for rabies testing or confined at the shelter for a 10-day rabies observation. This is at the discretion of the Animal Services Manager and personnel. Volunteers who have been bitten may want to consult their doctors for follow-up care. At the discretion of the shelter, re-training or other corrective action may be recommended by staff and/or the Animal Services Manager following an animal-related injury.

Volunteers are to immediately report any potentially unsafe or hazardous conditions to the Volunteer Coordinator so the issue can be addressed before any harm or injury is caused to staff, volunteers or animals.

Risk Management

The management of risks is an integral part of the administrative responsibilities of public officials as well as the operational activities of City employees and volunteers. It is necessary that all volunteers recognize and follow appropriate loss control and other risk management techniques.

- Volunteers must complete an online Volunteer Application.
- Volunteers must not knowingly be exposed to any unnecessary dangers or hazards and must not perform any functions requiring a license or certification unless in possession of specified license or certification.
- Volunteers shall sign in and out of Better Impact volunteer database when contributing volunteer work to Grapevine Animal Services
- A City employee is not allowed to volunteer to perform the same type of services for which he/she is currently employed.

- Volunteers must successfully pass a background review. This will be paid for by the Department.
- If a volunteer is injured during the course of their duties, the accident should be reported at once to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Shelter Safety

You may only perform duties that have been trained on and feel comfortable performing. It is extremely important that volunteers follow all safety regulations.

Harassment and Sexual Harassment

We are dedicated to maintaining an environment free from all forms of harassment and sexual harassment or intimidation. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated. We will also not tolerate conduct that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Any volunteer who is subject to or aware of such harassment is expected to report it immediately to the Animal Services Manager.

Support of Shelter Staff

All volunteers are expected to abide by the rules and protocols, regardless of whether the area is their assigned volunteer program or team. All volunteers are expected to actively support and respect decisions made by staff, and treat all staff members and fellow volunteers with respect.

Media Contact

The image that Grapevine Animal Services holds in the community is strongly affected by our portrayal in the media. For that reason, it is extremely important that the media receive accurate and appropriate information regarding our organization. At no time should a volunteer contact or address the media without prior approval from the Animal Services Manager or Police Department Media Manager.

Public Representation

Volunteers are expected to represent Grapevine Animal Services in a helpful, friendly, and professional manner at all times. Our public image may be based on client contact with volunteers. For this reason, it is important for volunteers to

always represent the shelter in a positive manner and promote the beliefs and practices of the organization.

Social Media

Social media is a vital tool to representing Grapevine Animal Services in the community. All information about events, animals at the shelter, and shelter related communications will come from Grapevine Animal Services to accurately, responsibly, and uniformly represent “the brand”. Volunteers are encouraged to follow Grapevine Animal Services on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). For adoptable animals, events, and stories, we love engagement and interaction with the content—so share, like, and comment to your personal experience with the animal (avoid we or us statements). For example **say** “I like to walk Buddy.” or “I enjoy feeding Buddy treats.” **rather than** “We think Buddy is fine with other dogs.” or “Buddy would probably do well with a small yard”. Volunteers are not authorized to generate posts/photos/videos/content on their own page or sites about events, animals at the shelter, customers, other information, or represent the brand from their accounts. Information that volunteers have access to is confidential.

Drugs and Alcohol

We are committed to having a safe, healthy, and productive volunteer environment free from the effects of substance abuse. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, and controlled substances impairs judgment, resulting in increased safety risks, injuries, and faulty decision-making. Grapevine Animal Services prohibits the use, sale, dispensation, manufacture, distribution, or possession of alcohol, prescription drugs, marijuana, or controlled substances on the company premises or worksites unless legally prescribed by a physician. This drug and alcohol policy extends to any outreach event that you may be representing Grapevine Animal Services. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of your volunteer position.

Tobacco

The usage of all tobacco products is only permitted inside your vehicle. Please dispose of your cigarettes properly. Smoking, chewing, dipping tobacco, smokeless tobacco or e-cigarettes in the building or when dealing with the public anywhere on the premises is strictly prohibited. When representing Grapevine Animal Services at outreach events using tobacco products is prohibited in front of the public. Please use your personal vehicles or be out of the public’s eye to use tobacco products.

Confidentiality

All volunteers will hold absolutely confidential all information they may see concerning clients, animals, and staff. All volunteers agree not to seek or obtain confidential information from a client. In addition, all volunteers understand that an intentional violation of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal by Grapevine Animal Services and/or possible legal action by others (i.e., clients).

Conflict of Interest

The City has a legal obligation to operate in the best interest of its citizens and clients. If you have an affiliation or financial interest with an organization that may present a conflict with those interests, disclose that conflict to the Animal Services Manager. Refrain from being involved in any decision-making process relating to the other organization. In addition, do not knowingly take action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the City in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on a person or corporation or entity in which you have a significant interest or affiliation.

Concern and Complaint Policy

We want your volunteer experience to be fun and rewarding. If you have a concern or complaint, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator via email. The Volunteer Coordinator will respond to your concern within five working days. If you have not received a verbal or written response to your concern within the five-day period, please bring your concern to the attention of the Animal Services Manager. We always appreciate professional and courteous communication, even when sharing a concern.

Grapevine Animal Services takes the concerns of our volunteers very seriously. Please understand that while we are always open to implementing positive changes, there are some suggestions we may not be able to integrate into our policies and procedures. In these situations, the Volunteer Coordinator is happy to discuss the reasons that a change may not be appropriate and work with you to help you understand the reasons behind our current system. **WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK!**

Conflict Resolution and Performance Concerns

Grapevine Animal Services will attempt to resolve differences of opinion and disagreements as quickly as possible. It is our intent to create a positive climate in

which integrity, trust, and respect are honored. Our Volunteer Conflict Resolution Procedure is as follows:

- 1) Every effort should be made to resolve conflicts between involved parties directly.
- 2) If the conflict is still unresolved, the volunteer should report the problem to the Volunteer Coordinator within 10 days of the incident. At that time, a meeting will be scheduled if the issue cannot be immediately resolved by the Volunteer Coordinator. The volunteer should present the problem in writing at that meeting.
- 3) If the conflict is still unresolved, the volunteer may submit the problem in writing to the Animal Services Manager. A meeting may be scheduled between the Animal Services Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, and the volunteer. The decision of the Animal Services Manager is final.
- 4) Grapevine Animal Services has a zero-tolerance policy for: abusive behavior toward animals, physical or verbal abuse of any staff member, volunteer, or client, and disregard for rules and regulations. A violation of these policies may result in immediate termination as a volunteer.

Responsible Animal Handling

Volunteers are expected to handle animals kindly, with common sense and concern for both the animal's safety and their own safety. Appropriate, safe, and humane methods of handling and restraint must be used at all times and only after completion of training.

Animal-handling volunteers have completed training necessary to perform the duties of their volunteer positions. Animal-handling volunteers hold responsibility for the safe handling of shelter animals in order to protect against undue injury or stress to both the animal and individual. Animal-handling volunteers' failure to correctly handle animals will result in corrective action ranging from re-training to dismissal, depending on severity of the action, at the discretion of the shelter staff. A volunteer can request from the Volunteer Coordinator a re-training at any time should they be uncomfortable in their animal-handling role. If faced with an animal-handling situation in which you are uncomfortable, please do not handle the animal, but rather inform a staff member that you would like assistance.

Non-animal-handling volunteers who have not completed the necessary training may not interact with, socialize or handle shelter animals while volunteering. Non-animal-handling volunteers who wish to visit with an adoptable animal may do so at the end of their volunteer shifts by checking in with the host in the lobby and waiting for a staff member to bring the animal to a visitation room.

Appropriate Interactions with Animals

Our shelter uses positive reinforcement. Do not hit, kick, swat, yell, throw things, or spray water at the animals. In the same way, if an animal is showing indication that it does not desire interaction at that time, please be respectful of the animal's needs and leave it alone at that time. Remember, the shelter environment can be quite stressful for animals so it is our goal to keep any additional undue stress to an absolute minimum. We would be more than happy to answer any questions you might have.

Animal Behavior Reporting

Volunteers are to report any concerning behavior from animals within the shelter. Volunteers spend valuable time with the animals and may see things during that time that the staff wouldn't see during a behavior assessment, therefore volunteer observations are important to note for the safety and welfare of the families who choose to adopt. Volunteer observations will also help staff to know how to intervene on behalf of the animal. Behaviors that should be noted include, but are not limited to:

- Swatting
- Hissing
- Spitting
- Growling
- Hiding with no recovery
- Biting that does or does not break skin
- Baring teeth
- Snapping
- Refusing treats it normally would eat
- Refusing to walk on leash
- Whale eye
- Fence fighting with dogs in a kennel or with dogs in an adjacent yard
- Harsh, physical jumping up or dragging while walking
- Forceful tugging or biting on the leash
- Mouthing hands or arms

- Great difficulty removing from or returning an animal to its kennel

Please Do Not Enter These Areas (unless instructed to do so):

- Dog/Cat Quarantine
- Dog/Cat Isolation
- Veterinary Services
- Medical Room
- MDF Room
- Mechanical/Electrical Room
- Any other area in which you do not volunteer your time/need access to complete your assigned tasks

Bringing Your Pets to Your Volunteer Shift

To maintain a safe shelter environment, volunteers may not bring their own pets to their volunteer shifts. While here at Grapevine Animal Services, volunteers are expected to focus on their duties and be able to assist the staff as needed.

Friends and Family of Volunteers

Volunteers may not bring friends or family along for their volunteer shifts. Anyone interested in volunteering must attend the orientation and appropriate trainings to ensure that they are able to keep themselves and the animals safe. Current volunteers who are interested in having their family or friends see the shelter may arrange a tour through the shelter staff.

Adoption Policy for Volunteers

Volunteers may adopt animals the same as the general public. If the animal isn't an adoption candidate due to medical or behavior reasons, it will not be available to a volunteer. Volunteers cannot visit with the animal if it hasn't been cleared for adoption. All visits and adoptions must be placed during normal hours of operation. Volunteers are required to meet the basic adoption requirements and receive adoption counseling from staff.

Removing a shelter animal from the building without completing the appropriate paperwork requirements or receiving prior approval from a supervisor is not permitted and is considered ground for volunteer dismissal.

Use of Electronic Devices

For your safety and that of the animals in our care, volunteers are not permitted to use cell phones or any other electronic devices such as iPods, mp3 players, etc. while handling or socializing adoptable animals. Please refrain from using headphones or ear buds of any kind while in the shelter. If you must take a personal call using your cell phone, please make sure all animals are safely in their kennels. Please notify your supervisor that you will be taking a call and please use your phone outside. Volunteers socializing and handling animals, inside or outside of the building, need to focus on working with the animal as their position description intends. Abuse of this or any volunteer-performance guideline may result in the loss of privilege to socialize, train, or handle the animals.

Parking

Volunteers should park in the staff section of the parking lot in an effort to leave the main southeast lot open for guests. If you have a handicapped sticker, please utilize any of the available handicapped parking spots.

Break Room

The break room is for use of staff and volunteers. Remember to respect the space of staff and other volunteers on their breaks. Tidy the area after yourself. Label any food items that you place in the fridge with your name.

Dress Protocol

All volunteers will observe the following dress code:

- **VOLUNTEER T-SHIRT** Your official Grapevine Animal Services Volunteer T-shirt must be worn for all volunteer activity, whether on-site or offsite at an event. T-shirts must be clean and pressed and may not be altered in any way.
Volunteer T-shirts will not be worn when not volunteering
- **SHOES** Sturdy, closed-toe, slip-resistant shoes must be worn to prevent slipping and exposure to chemicals.
- **PANTS** Long pants must be worn at all times as a preventative measure for animal and chemical exposure.
- **JEWELRY** Hanging jewelry is not permitted as it can get caught or accidentally pulled by an animal.
- **HAIR** Long hair must be secured back when working with animals.
- **ID BADGE** Volunteers are assigned an ID badge which must be worn for all volunteer activity offsite or onsite.

Inappropriate Attire:

- Thong sandals, flip flops, or any shoe with an open toe.
- Torn, tattered, or bleach-stained clothing
- Jeans with torn knees or ripped hems, shorts of any length, or mini shorts/skirts.
- See-through shirts, halter tops, backless shirts, half shirts, muscle shirts, or tank tops with less than 1” straps.
- Dangling earrings or other jewelry that may interfere with volunteer duties.

Volunteers who do not observe the dress code will be asked to leave and their volunteer privileges may be revoked.

Ways You Can Support Our Mission

In addition to volunteering, you can help the homeless animals by:

- Following our social media channels and interacting
- Donate an item from our wish list
- Making a tax-deductible donation as a tribute or memorial to a loved one or pet
- Sterilizing your pet
- Microchipping your pet
- Inquiring if your employer has a matching gift program for your volunteer hours
- Promoting and attending our events
- Corporate event sponsorship
- Remembering Grapevine Animal Services in your estate planning

