



City of El Paso Animal Services

ESSENTIAL VOLUNTEER CAPABILITIES

In order to ensure the safety of the animals in our care, as well as the volunteers that provide them with essential care and enrichment, Animal Services has the following essential requirements for participation in the volunteer program.

- After you complete your court ordered community service hours: 18 + year-olds must complete a background check. **17+ year-olds must complete a background check.**
- If you are 14 -17-year-olds you must complete your court ordered community service hours with a parent at all times. Parent must also volunteer. The parent or guardian must be present at all times including the meeting.
- Must love and enjoy working dogs and cats.
- Submit a volunteer application during your scheduled meeting, along with a photo ID and court ordered documentation.

PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES

- Quick reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously (example: open cage door while handling animal).
- Ability to travel unaided on unpaved, uneven, rugged, slippery and sometimes muddy terrain (both indoors and outdoors), as well as maneuver cramped spaces.
- Ability to bend and squat in order to leash/harness, and/or pick up an animal.
- Ability to stand for significant periods of time while walking dogs, socializing cats, or cleaning cages/kennels.
- Ability to see well enough to move safely throughout the building, distinguish animal body language, as well as read instructions and an animal's paperwork.
- Ability to hear if animal is giving warnings, such as growling, yelping or hissing.
- Ability to effectively communicate verbally.
- Ability to react quickly in order to prevent dogs or cats from escaping (example: ability to quickly pursue and retrieve any cats or dogs who have escaped from a kennel or cage).
- Ability to cope with a very loud environment due to animal noises.

COGNITIVE CAPABILITIES

- Ability, once trained, to work independently with minimal supervision, while recognizing limitations in knowledge and abilities, knowing when to ask for help if needed.
- If lacking the ability to work independently, whether due to age and/or neurological abnormality, must be able to work alongside a parent or guardian with a focused attention on the task at hand.
- Ability to read and understand instructions and procedures.
- Basic reading, writing, spelling and communication skills.
- Ability to handle redirection and constructive criticism without responding with negativity.
- Ability to recognize potentially hazardous situations when working with the animals.
- Ability to remain calm with animals who are upset, behaves understandingly and confidently, and acts appropriately in these situations.
- Ability to communicate professionally and politely.
- Acceptance of the boundaries between the role of the volunteer and the role of the staff.
- Maintain a positive attitude and a solution oriented approach to challenging situations, rather than resorting to complaining or gossiping.

It is our hope that the information provided serves as a thorough and useful tool for potential volunteers when deciding whether Animal Services is the right fit for you.