

Marion County Dog Shelter Volunteer Guide



Marion County Dog Control Shelter
3550 Aumsville Hwy SE, Salem OR 97317
Phone: 503-566-6966
Website: <http://www.mcdogs.net>
Email: dog@co.marion.or.us

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Marion County Dog Control Shelter's Volunteer Program. Being a volunteer is extremely rewarding, educational, exciting and fun. You can have a huge impact on the lives of these stray and homeless dogs under our care. Bathing a neglected dog, giving them a meal, a blanket, and a pat on the head, will touch your heart and bring you back for more. It is rewarding to see how dogs respond immediately to the love they receive while they are at the shelter. In many cases this is the first time someone has really cared for them.

Because of volunteers like you, dogs are walked; receive basic obedience training; if very young, sick, or injured, stay in foster homes; and most importantly, get a chance to be adopted.

Our Volunteer Program was specifically created to best serve the dogs in our care, as well as our customers. We would like to thank you for choosing to participate in our program. As a volunteer, you are a valuable asset to our organization and to the many dogs that need loving homes.

This Guide has been prepared for you as a reference. It contains information regarding the department's responsibilities and procedures as well as ideas on how to make your volunteer time with us safe, fun, and beneficial to all. Please read it carefully so you will be well equipped to answer questions from the public and provide quality care to the dogs in our shelter. We hope that the time you spend here will be as rewarding to you as it is to the animals you care for.

Important Phone Numbers

Main Phone Number	503-566-6966	
Shelter Technician's Desk	(503) 566-6995 and 6992	
Veterinary Technician's Desk	(503) 566-6993	
Allison Barrows Shelter Operations Manager	(503) 566-6984	abarrows@co.marion.or.us
Sonya Pulvers Office Manager & Volunteer Manager	(503) 566-6966	spulvers@co.marion.or.us
Debbie West Outreach Coordinator	(503) 391-5362 (503) 409-2543 -Cell	dewdropw@aol.com
Lynnette Graves Rescue / Foster Care Liaison	(503) 566-6966	lgraves@co.marion.or.us

Hours of Operation

Staff answer the phone line: 8:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday – Saturday
Shelter open to the public: 10:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday – Saturday
Shelter open for adoptions: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday – Saturday

(Although there is staff in the shelter to care for the dogs every day, the shelter is closed to the general public on Sundays and official holidays.)

DOG CONTROL- GENERAL INFORMATION

Marion County Dog Control (MCDC) is a division of the Marion County Public Works department. We operate under the authority of Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 609.010 through 609.190 (dog laws) and ORS 433.340 to 433.390 (rabies control). This allows us to:

- License Marion County dogs
- Return lost, or otherwise missing, dogs to their owners
- Gather information in order to identify problem-causing dogs
- Enforce relevant laws in the most effective and courteous manner possible
- Provide education and training
- Provide helpful information to the public
- Humanely house and care for stray, quarantined, and court-pending dogs

Dog Control division's employee personnel and their responsibilities are as follows:

- Shelter Operations Manager- oversees all dog control operations.
- Dog Control Officers- rescue stray dogs, enforce licensing, investigate dog complaints, and assist Marion County Sheriffs' officials with abuse and neglect cases.
- Administrative Support Staff- process licensing, dispatch the dog control officers, handle the complaint line, receive payments, schedule dog control hearings, and print adoption paperwork.
- Shelter Technicians- oversee the care and training of the dogs, process incoming dogs, attempt to locate owners, evaluate dog's behavioral characteristics for adoptions, arrange foster care or rescue, and evaluate potential adopters.
- Veterinary Technician- evaluates the health of each dog, medicates the dogs, arranges for spay/neuter surgeries, and coordinates with area vets for medical treatment.

Work Release Program

The MCDCS is assisted by woman incarcerated at the minimum security Work Release Center (WRC) located at the Marion County Correction Facility next to the dog shelter. These woman are an integral part of our operation and provide the needed workforce to assist us in maintaining the facility and providing care for the dogs sheltered by the county. Working at the shelter is a privilege that they must earn and maintain. They are here by choice but are rewarded with extra correctional facility privileges for a positive job performance. Most see their work at the shelter as a positive experience for them and the dogs as well as a chance to learn new vocational skills that may help them succeed when they are released.

The WRC workforce is continually changing as individuals are released from the correctional facility and are replaced with new workers. It is our hope that their work at the shelter will inspire them to want to give back to the community and that they will later return to become shelter volunteers.

Fees

Fees collected at the shelter assist us in offsetting the cost to staff and operate the facility. Since these fees do not fully cover the cost, we actively solicit donations of materials, money, and time from the community. Some of the fees we collect are:

- Adoptions fees, which range from \$75 to \$175 depending on the age, size, and special needs of a dog. This fee covers the first vaccinations, rabies shot, a 1 yr. license, ID micro-chipping, assistance towards the cost of the spay/neuter, and an adoption kit of samples and coupons.
- Impound and boarding fees range from \$20 - \$30. These fees are charged to individuals when we return their dog to them or they surrender their dog to the county.

SHELTER HISTORY

Beginning in the late 70's Marion County contracted with the Willamette Humane Society (WHS) to house and care for stray dogs. In 2003, the WHS decided to change their focus and notified the county that they would not be renewing our contract. So in 2004, Public Works began the process of designing and constructing a new shelter. The goal was to design a building that was functional, attractive, cost effective, and met the health and safety needs of the dogs, staff, and the public.

To accomplish this goal input was sought from construction professionals, veterinarians, dog rescue groups, humane societies, shelter employees from other counties, and volunteers. These individuals met as a group and explored ideas and concepts to incorporate into the facility with an eye on "best practices of sheltering". This group provided recommendation to the architect who developed plans and construction began in June 2005.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the shelter is to protect stray dogs and the community by providing a safe and secure location with caring staff. As a government operated shelter we only care for dogs that are required to be housed by Marion County in accordance with the state law and county ordinances. These include:

- Strays
- Dogs requiring quarantine
- Dogs that need to be held until a court hearing has determined their disposition
- Dogs surrendered to the police upon the individual's arrest ('police assist' calls)

There are no laws requiring we accept dogs surrendered by an owner who is no longer willing, or able, to care for the dog. Fortunately, we can refer customers to the WHS for these services.

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect, promote, and enhance a positive quality of life in Marion County through the housing and care of stray and quarantined dogs.

Core Objectives

- Humanely house and care for stray and quarantined dogs
- Provide a clean and safe environment for dogs, staff, and the public
- Handle dogs with the least amount of restraint necessary
- Treat all dogs with love and respect
- Return lost, or otherwise missing, dogs to their owners
- Adopt unclaimed stray dogs to loving families
- Protect the public from rabies by quarantining potentially infected dogs
- Educate the public on dog ownership

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

MCDS relies on its volunteers to be dependable and effective during their volunteer hours by following established policies and guidelines. This allows our shelter program to operate smoothly and with the maximum benefit to the dogs, staff, and volunteers. All shelter volunteers must abide by those policies and guidelines detailed in the Marion County Volunteer Orientation manual and the Dog Shelter Volunteer Guide.

Dress Code at the Shelter

We suggest you wear jeans or casual pants and non-skid, rubber-soled shoes with a back or heel strap.

For reasons of safety and modesty, the following items **may NOT** be worn while volunteering:

- Shorts
- Tank-tops
- Slip-on shoes (flip-flops, clogs, etc.)
- Low-riding pants (“hip-huggers”)

We strongly recommend that you do NOT wear hoop earrings and long necklaces, as these can be caught by a dog’s paw causing damage or injury to you or the dogs that you are handling.

Long-sleeved “scrub” smocks will be provided when working with puppies, or dogs with a contagious illness. These smocks prevent contaminants from being carried on your clothing to other dogs in the shelter, and to your pets at home. Please wear these smocks when working with puppies and dogs whose kennel cards indicate, “Wear protective clothing”.

Conduct

When dealing with customers, you must always be polite, courteous, and helpful. It is the policy of Marion County that unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, national origin, or any other status protected by law will not be tolerated.

Marion County is committed to a safe work environment free from all forms of violence. Acts of violence are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

When handling dogs, use the least amount of restraint necessary, and treat them with love and respect at all times.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Employees and volunteers shall not report for duty or be “on call” while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Employees and volunteers shall educate themselves about the effects of prescription and nonprescription medications, which may impair the ability to do a job safely.

Insurance Coverage

Marion County provides accident insurance for any work-related injury incurred during the course of a volunteer’s official duties as outlined on the volunteer job description. The Volunteer and Client Insurance Coverage applies after the volunteer’s own group medical or primary coverage.

Marion County volunteers are provided liability insurance for claims by another person that the volunteer caused him or her injury which can include such things as financial loss, damage to reputation, emotional injury or physical injury. A volunteer is provided liability protection as long as he or she is acting within the scope of the job description and not doing anything criminal or neglectful.

Volunteers who have driving duties may be approved to drive either a personal or county vehicle as part of their volunteer work. Volunteers who are approved to drive must have a driving history check. To drive a personal vehicle, the volunteer must show proof of insurance on the vehicle before using it for county volunteer work. The county does not carry insurance on a volunteer's personal vehicle.

Accident Prevention

Marion County strives to provide a clean, safe, healthful, and hazard-free workplace. Accidents do happen, but with training, forethought, attention to detail, and personal responsibility for keeping areas hazard free, we can greatly reduce the number of accidents in our shelter.

Accident prevention is everyone's job. If you see a safety hazard such as liquid on the floor of the shelter hallway, spilled food, or containers left open, please address them immediately. If you are unsure how, or if it is a safety hazard, please contact a Marion County staff member immediately.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

These sheets are available for all hazardous substances to which employees and volunteers of the shelter may be exposed. They explain what safety precautions and equipment to use when working with these substances. The MSDS are updated as needed and are available to volunteers for review at any time. The MSDS binder is located on the counter in the administration area outside of the Shelter Operations Manager's office.

Accident Reporting

All volunteer accidents, injuries, illnesses, and near-misses must be reported immediately to the Operations Manager. The County's Risk Management department must be notified within 24 hours using the Marion County Occupational Injury Report Form. Both the Operations Manager and the injured person must sign this form.

In addition, any damage to personal or county vehicles or property that occurs during a volunteer's official duties for Marion County must be reported immediately to the Operations Manager.

Off-limit Areas

Certain areas of the shelter (such as the examination room) will be off-limits to volunteers. These are designated off-limits to protect you, the dogs, and the shelter. Entry into such areas will be by authorization only should the need arise.

Smile! You're on Camera!

Please be aware that security cameras are observing you and the shelter customers whenever you are on the premises. Security cameras are placed in all the public and restricted areas with the exception of the restrooms.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed in the MCDS. If you must smoke, you may do so outside of the building in the area just outside of the break room. Please use the ashtray provided and move downwind of the door so that individuals entering and exiting the building will not be exposed to the smoke.

Parking

Please leave the spaces closest to the front door available for customers.

Recycling

Please use the recycling bins found in the break room. We use money from recycled soda cans to support the shelter's medical and spay/neuter funds.

Confidentiality

Any information pertaining to Dog Control records including names, addresses, phone numbers, etc. of staff, volunteers, and customers, is confidential and should not be discussed with others, nor removed from the shelter.

Under some circumstances, Dog Control staff may be prohibited (due to confidentiality) from discussing with you specific details regarding cases that are under investigation, or pending criminal court action.

Volunteers are prohibited from discussing with the media any information found in MCDS records.

Adopting a Dog for Yourself

Volunteers may adopt dogs from the shelter upon meeting Marion County's adoption guidelines and payment of all applicable fees.

While we encourage you to tell your friends and neighbors about the wonderful dogs we have available for adoption, we cannot "hold" a dog for anyone unless they have been screened as an adopter and opt to do a "24 hour adoption" hold.

Job Assignments

Tracking volunteer hours- when reporting to the shelter, volunteers must be sure to sign in/out on the Volunteer Sign-in Sheet. Not only are volunteer hours tracked for reporting purposes, but for historical reasons it is important to know when a volunteer was on the shelter premises.

If you are unclear, or unsure, about your assignment or duties, please talk to the Shelter Operations Manager or a Volunteer Coordinator immediately.

Evaluations

Per Marion County policy, all volunteers will receive a written evaluation. These evaluations are designed to ensure that your efforts are helping reach your goals and the goals of the shelter.

A volunteer may be dismissed from volunteer service if they are unable (or unwilling) to adhere to the volunteer policies and procedures as outlined in their orientation and training and does not follow the job description, and/or the criteria set by the county or the department. Usually, your

supervisor will discuss any concerns with you and coach you through issues prior to dismissal. However, some egregious offenses, such as theft, violence, purposely injuring a dog, or excessively rough handling a dog, would result in immediate dismissal.

STRAY-DOG PROCESS

Dogs arrive at our shelter for a variety of reasons and most in our care will be strays. The following is the typical process for a stray dog in our shelter:

- A dog is brought to the shelter by Dog Control officers, police, or a Good Samaritan.
- The Shelter Technician enter the dog's information into the computer system (IAMS = Integrated Animal Management System).
- Shelter Technicians use any ID on the dog, or the dog's ID microchip, to attempt to find and contact the owner.
- The Veterinary Technician evaluates the dog's health, vaccinates the dog, and decides what kind of food, bedding, and if necessary, medication, the dog should have while in our shelter.
- If necessary volunteers, or staff bathe and groom the dog.
- The dog is then housed in the "Stray" wing (or in the hospital or isolation wing, if appropriate) waiting completion of their stray period.
- While it is in our shelter, the dog is cared for, walked, trained, and entertained by volunteers, WR personnel, and employees
- If an owner is found, the dog is returned to them after paying their fines and fees.
- After completion of their stray period, if no owner is found, the dog is behavioral tested by trained shelter staff (or volunteers) to determine if the dog would be appropriate for adoption, foster care, a dog rescue group, or euthanasia.
- If adoptable, the dog is moved to the "Adoption" wing, advertised on our website, and on Petfinder.com and is ready for a new home.
- When available for adoption, volunteers or WRC workforce bathe, groom, walk, and socialize the dog.
- When an individual is interested in adoption, they will meet with the Adoption Counselors for screening and evaluation.
- When adopted, the dog is then micro-chipped, spayed/neutered and inoculated by a contracted, licensed veterinarian.
- The adopter then picks up their new dog and takes it home for happily ever after!

WORKING AROUND DOGS

Every volunteer in the shelter will be exposed to dogs and may have to handle a dog at some time. Even if you assisting office staff, a dog that gets loose and come running your way. So it is important that you know how to handle dogs safely.

While many of the dogs that come to our shelter will be like the happy-go-lucky, healthy, bouncy Lab you see in dog food commercials, many will not. Some may be terrified of the strange surroundings, in pain from injuries or illness, or have issues from human abuse. All of these issues can cause a dog to react negatively to you. Many times they are not noticeable until you actually place your hands on the dog. We ask that you approach every dog with caution and be aware that a dog's reaction to you can change in an instant.

Approaching Dogs

Dog bites do happen. As a volunteer in a dog shelter, you are at risk of being bitten. Volunteers should take every precaution to avoid and prevent dog bites. Some precautions to use:

- Read the kennel card completely before handling any dog.
- Do NOT handle any dog that you feel may be a threat to you or others, and bring your concerns to the Shelter Technician.
- Try to evaluate a dog's "mood" before approaching the dog or entering the kennel.
- Plan "escape routes".
- Call for help if you feel you are at risk.
- Keep in mind that some dogs give no signs of aggression before they bite. Approach dogs slowly, calmly, and use a soothing voice; try not to tower over the dog
- If a dog is giving "unwelcoming" signals (stiff body or trembling, cowering, head low, a hard stare or wide eyes, growling, lunging, showing teeth, etc.) immediately stop what you are doing and back away.
- Do NOT turn your back on an angry dog; back away from them instead.
- Keep all dogs on a leash or confined to a specific room.
- If possible, do not walk dogs past each other if you are unsure of their reaction.
- If you think a dog is going to bite, try to put something between you and the dog, such as a chair, fence, or even a jacket or book.
- Should a dogfight start while you are handling a dog, if possible and safe, try to separate the dogs by pulling with the leash. If not, go and get help from one of the shelter staff.

Bites

Preventing bites is not only important to your health and well-being, but to the dog's as well. Dogs that have bitten must be evaluated and may need to be euthanized. Most adopters will not consider a dog with a "bite history" and many dog rescues will not accept them. Even so, every dog bite must be reported to staff as soon as it occurs; so it is in everyone's best interest to avoid bites altogether.

If you are bitten while volunteering at the shelter, immediately secure the dog in the nearest empty kennel or room, to prevent further injury or injuries to others, then call for a staff person. With the staff person addressing the dog, wash the wound completely and thoroughly with antibacterial soap for at least **five full minutes**. You will be asked to describe the circumstance of the bite and complete an incident report. Following state law, the dog will then be placed on quarantine for 10 days.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a very sad, but necessary part of shelter work. Volunteers will not be involved in this procedure. Marion County Dog Shelter provides care for all stray dogs in the county, but not all animals are suitable for adoption. We house dangerous animals that will not go up for adoption. We also quarantine animals here after bite incidents. Animals that show any sign of aggression are not suitable for adoption. A behavioral evaluation is performed on all animals that can be handled. We do our very best to adopt out good pets or have them transferred to other shelters or rescues. However, euthanasia is sometimes a necessity. When euthanasia is required, dogs are euthanized with great care and dignity by Certified Euthanasia Technicians who take this procedure very seriously. Like volunteers, shelter staff becomes very attached to the dogs and this is a very difficult part of their job. We ask that volunteers be sensitive regarding this issue when working at the shelter and with staff.

Euthanasia is performed when:

- At least three trained staff members believe it is in the dog's or public's best interest
- A court orders the euthanasia of the dog
- A veterinarian recommends euthanasia to end a dog's suffering
- The legal owners of a dog in our custody request the dog be euthanized (at the end of a bite quarantine, court hearing, etc.)

If a dog does not fall into these categories and our shelter is full, we will make every attempt to find a foster home, rescue organization, or different shelter to take the dog rather than euthanize adoptable dogs simply because of a lack of space.

Marion County does not offer euthanasia services to the public. We believe the veterinarian that offered the animal loving care throughout its life should perform the euthanasia.

CANINE DISEASE AND PREVENTION

Can I Catch That?

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that humans contract from animals. The most effective means of preventing zoonosis is to:

- Wash your hands frequently with antibacterial soap, especially after handling any animal and prior to eating or smoking.
- Wear gloves when handling the dogs, or cleaning (especially when cleaning up waste).
- Immediately disinfect scratches and bite wounds.
- Let your physician know that you work closely with shelter dogs.

Some of the illnesses that humans can catch from dogs include Ringworm, External Parasites (lice, mites, fleas), Giardiasis (Beaver Fever), Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease), Lyme Disease, Nematode (worm) Infections, Rabies, and Salmonellosis (Salmonella). You should not let this list alarm you, but rather remind you that you are volunteering in a hospital-like environment where these organisms often exist.

Can my dog catch that from me?

Just as you can catch illnesses from dogs, you can also unknowingly carry illnesses home to your pets. The most effective means of preventing the spread of illness to your pets (or from your pets to our shelter dogs) is to:

- Wear the provided smocks when handling puppies or dogs whose kennel card reads "wear protective clothing".
- Make sure that your own animals have all of their vaccinations up-to-date.
- Let your veterinarian know that you work with shelter dogs.
- Change your shelter clothes before socializing with your animals at home, and vice versa.
- Check the soles of your shoes before leaving the shelter to ensure you are not tracking feces into your car and home. Even better, designate a pair of shoes to be your "shelter shoes" and take them off before entering your home.

Signs of Illness

Maintaining the health of our dogs and helping prevent the spread of disease is everyone's job. If a shelter dog shows any signs of illness, read the kennel card to see if the symptom has already been

noted and is being treated. If it has not, or if you notice that previously observed symptoms have gotten worse, immediately notify the Veterinary Technician or the Shelter Technician. Watch for symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Eye discharge
- Nasal discharge
- Sneezing/coughing
- Anorexia (loss of appetite)
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Dehydration
- Abnormal gait or muscle control
- Excessive salivation

Preventing Illness in Shelter Dogs

The MCDS was constructed with disease prevention in mind. Additionally, we help prevent the spread of disease by:

- Minimizing the dog's stress by providing regular exercise, socialization, and "down time".
- Ensuring each dog receives the proper food for their life stage or medical needs.
- Vaccinating the dogs soon after their arrival to the shelter.
- Using a special chemical (Trifectant) to disinfect a kennel before a different dog is placed in that kennel.
- Immediately identifying, then isolating, infected and possibly infected dogs.
- Minimizing overcrowding by partnering with rescues, other shelters, and foster parents.
- Elimination of external parasites through bathing and topical treatments.

“Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love.”
Erma Bombeck