

Job Description

Role:	<i>Dog Foster Volunteer</i>
Reports To:	<i>Steven Halstead (Canine Foster & Rescue Coordinator)</i>
Supervises:	<i>Not applicable</i>
Classification:	<i>Volunteer</i>

York County SPCA Purpose:

The York County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is a charitable organization dedicated to providing long-term human and animal services to residents of York County through programs that find permanent, loving homes for displaced and stray animals, help control animal population growth, investigate, and prosecute cruelty offenders and educate the general public about animal wellness and safety.

Position Overview:

A Foster Volunteer plays a vital role in supporting our animals by giving them a safe and loving temporary home outside the shelter until their forever family can adopt them. The York County SPCA is asking community members to help alleviate overcrowding at our shelter by fostering pets. Foster homes fulfill a critical component of our lifesaving work, not to mention the benefit to each animal residing in a home environment. Caring for an animal in need is a rewarding experience and an invaluable service to the organization. Animal fostering saves two lives – the life of the animal in your home, and the one we now have space to care for because of your generosity.

Essential Functions:

- **Temporary care and housing:** Provide a safe, secure, clean, and comfortable home environment for dogs in need, whether it's a separate room, a crate, or another designated area within your home.
- **Feeding and nutrition:** Ensure foster animals are fed according to their dietary needs and provided with fresh water. Follow any special dietary instructions as needed.
- **Socialization:** Spend quality time with the foster animal to socialize and help them become more comfortable around people and potentially other animals to increase their adoptability.
- **Basic training:** Help animals learn basic obedience commands, litter box training (for cats), and good behavior to increase their adoptability.
- **Medical care:** Administer any necessary medications or treatments as directed by the shelter or veterinarian. Monitor the animal's health and report any concerns promptly.
- **Transportation:** Transport foster animals to veterinary appointments, adoption events, or back to the shelter as required.
- **Exercise and enrichment:** Provide opportunities for exercise and mental stimulation. Walk dogs, play with cats, or engage in other appropriate activities to keep the animal physically and mentally active.
- **Documentation:** Keep accurate records of the animal's behavior, progress, and any medical care provided. This information is valuable for the shelter and potential adopters.
- **Adoption promotion:** Help promote the animal for adoption by taking appealing photos and providing information about the animal's personality, likes, and dislikes. Share this information with the Canine Foster & Rescue Coordinator for our website and adoption events. Bring animals to the shelter or outside venues for adoption events.
- **Communication:** Stay in regular contact with the designated foster coordinator, providing updates on the animal's well-being and any changes in behavior or health.
- **Transition:** Assist in transitioning the animal to their forever home once an appropriate adopter is found by sharing insights about the animal's habits and preferences with the new owner during meets.

Education and Experience:

Required:

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Experience with animal care.
- Basic knowledge of animal behavior.

Preferred:

Prior experience with dogs.

Skills and Abilities:

- Possesses a strong passion for the York County SPCA's mission.
- Effective communication with the Canine Foster & Rescue Coordinator and other shelter staff.
- Willingness to learn and adapt.

Working Conditions and Expectations:

- Comfortable with the unique aspects of working with animals, including their natural odors and excrements, the possibility of animals experiencing medical conditions, the chance of minor bites and scratches, and exposure to moderate noise levels.
- Must have reliable transportation to and from the shelter.
- Must be able to be reachable by phone or email by foster coordinators and must be able to respond to any messages from foster coordinators promptly.

Benefits:

- Providing potential adopters with accurate information about the foster animals' likes and dislikes, better ensuring a successful, permanent match.
- Providing lots of fun and companionship for any pre-existing pets in your household.
- Enabling the foster pet to live in a comfortable home environment.
- Providing space so the YCSPCA can more easily accommodate additional animals.
- Looking into the eyes of your foster animal and knowing they are full of gratitude and unconditional love.
- Enables you to touch the lives of many animals over time.
- The York County SPCA assumes all financial responsibility for animals enrolled in our foster program, making it affordable for all people.
- A chance to improve your knowledge about the York County SPCA.
- The opportunity to build connections with fellow animal lovers through a fulfilling experience.

Physical Requirements:

- Must be able to stand for longer periods of time, walk, sit, talk, hear, stoop, bend, squat, kneel, grasp, grip, and put fingers together firmly.