

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

CCAS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

Cobb County Animal Services (CCAS)

Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual

Prepared by CCAS Membership Department | May 2018, Updated March 2021

Purpose of the Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual

The Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual has been created to provide you with the information necessary to successfully complete your duties and responsibilities. It is pre-requisite that you read, refer to, and abide by this Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual. You are required to read this Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual, sign the Volunteer Acknowledgement Form.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

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Table of Contents

Purpose	1
Our History	4
Mission Statement	4
Chain of Command.....	4
Equal Opportunity	4
Policies and Procedures	5
Code of Conduct.....	5
Smoking & Tobacco Use.....	5
Scope.....	5
Policy.....	5
Procedures.....	5
No Harassment and No Discrimination.....	6
Purpose.....	6
Policy.....	6
Definition.....	6
Drug Free Workplace.....	7
General Provisions.....	7
Purpose.....	7
Scope.....	7
Policy.....	7
Background.....	7
Conditions of Employment.....	7
Gifts and Gratuities.....	7
Purpose.....	7
Policy.....	7
Procedures.....	8
Personal Use of CCAS Property.....	8
Placement of Volunteer.....	8
Term of Commitment.....	9
Dress Code.....	9
Disease Transmission & Control.....	9
General Rules and Policies for Volunteers.....	10
Staff Conduct with Volunteers.....	10
Volunteer Conduct toward Staff and other Volunteers.....	11
Discipline.....	12
Unacceptable Behavior.....	12

**COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND
REFERENCE MANUAL**

Termination/Resignation of Volunteer.....13
Absence and Lateness.....13
Restricted Areas.....13
Parking.....14
Job Description.....14

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

Our History

Cobb County Animal Services was established in 1971. As part of Cobb's Department of Public Safety, we serve the entire county, protecting the residents and animals of Cobb. Cobb County Animal Services houses lost, abandoned and unwanted animals of Cobb County and municipalities. Some of the pets are turned in by the previous owner, when this happens, we are able to provide more information about the animal.

The volunteer program will be administered by the CCAS Volunteer Coordinator and staffed by individuals desiring to perform such a service. It will be the policy of CCAS to utilize qualified individuals for all possible tasks or functions, except those which legal requirements and/or elements of danger make such involvement impractical. Therefore, certain guidelines have been developed to ensure security, confidentiality, and safety.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cobb County Animal Services Unit is to enforce state laws and county ordinances pertaining to animal control and management; educate the community on responsible pet ownership and wildlife care and provide housing and care for homeless animals, while coordinating their adoptions when possible and humane euthanization when adoptions are not possible.

CCAS reaches our mission through:

- Animal Admissions
- Community Outreach Program
- On Staff Veterinarian
- Animal Rescue Programs

Chain of Command

- Address any operational concerns, safety issues, injuries, and questions to the volunteer coordinator immediately
- If the volunteer coordinator is not available, bring issue(s) to the Kennel Supervisor or member of management.
- All volunteers should follow the chain of command

Copy of the Chain of Command Chart



COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

Equal Opportunity

CCAS does not discriminate against any person. All assignments made for volunteers are based upon availability, dependability, educational background and certifications.

Policy and Procedures

As a volunteer and a representative of CCAS you are required to follow the same policy and procedure as the CCAS employees. The following policies are from Department of Public Safety policies and procedures handbook.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is a list of rules governing the personal and professional conduct of all Police Department employees. Code of Conduct rules are promulgated by the Director of Public Safety.

Smoking and Tobacco Use Policy

Effective Date: Adopted 4/87, Revised 4/06

§-I. PURPOSE To provide regulations concerning smoking and using other tobacco products in County facilities, in County vehicles, and on County premises.

§-II. SCOPE All Employees.

§-III. POLICY In accordance with the Georgia Smokefree Air Act of 2005, smoking will be prohibited in all County buildings, vehicles, and some County facilities. In addition, the use of other tobacco products is prohibited in all County buildings, vehicles, and some County facilities.

§-IV. PROCEDURES

A. Smoking or other tobacco use is not permitted in any building or facility owned, leased or operated by the County.

B. Smoking is not permitted on County premises in:

- Areas through which employees, as part of their work responsibilities, are required to enter a County building or facility; and
- Areas where an air ventilation system would cause air to be recirculated through or infiltrate parts of the building; and
- Any enclosed areas, including, but not limited to, elevators, hallways, restrooms, lobbies, stairways, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, employee lounges, common work areas, classrooms, and breakrooms.

C. Smoking or other tobacco use is not permitted in any County owned or leased vehicle.

D. Ashtrays and other extinguishment receptacles are not permitted inside County buildings, in major thoroughfares, or at or near the entrance or air intake system of a County building or in any area(s) posted with "NO SMOKING" signage.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

E. Employees may smoke or use other tobacco products only during official work breaks; "smoke breaks" are not authorized. Employees who smoke or use other tobacco products during their official work break must avoid such activity in prohibited areas.

F. Recruitment advertisements shall clearly communicate that employees will be working in a "smoke free environment."

G. Employees who smoke or use other tobacco products in prohibited areas or who take unauthorized breaks for the purpose of smoking or using other tobacco products should be reported to the supervisor or manager for appropriate corrective action.

H. Managers and supervisors shall handle all violations of this policy in accordance with the Conduct and Performance Expectations.

No Harassment and No Discrimination Policy

Effective Date: Adopted 6/92; Revised 4/00; 4/06; 12/11

§-I. PURPOSE

To establish safeguards for employees against harassment and discrimination in the workplace that are consistent with federal employment law and guidelines enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

§-II. POLICY

Cobb County does not and will not tolerate harassment or discrimination of its employees. Toward this end, Cobb County will strive to create an environment free of harassment and discrimination. Included in this approach is the requirement of mandatory No Harassment training for all Board of Commissioners' employees, including supervisors, managers and Department/Agency Heads.

No supervisor or other member of management has the authority to suggest to any employee that the employee's continued employment or future advancement will be affected in any way by that employee's entering into (or refusing to enter into) any form of personal relationship with a supervisor or member of management.

Cobb County is committed to taking prompt and reasonable steps to investigate allegations of harassment and/or discrimination and to taking appropriate corrective action to eliminate harassment and/or discrimination.

Cobb County will not tolerate retaliation against an individual for reporting violations of this policy and/or for participating in an investigation of a complaint.

Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

§-III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Under this policy, the term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, offensive slurs, jokes, comments, gestures, pictures, posters, objects or graffiti, and any other offensive verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, or disability. Communications that are harassing include, but are not limited to, those conveyed in person, in writing, and via email.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

Effective Date: Adopted 5/89; Revised 6/89, 6/92, 12/94, 9/98, 12/99, 06/04, 2/07, 12/11

§-I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. PURPOSE

To provide regulations concerning misuse of drugs and alcohol by County employees.

B. SCOPE Board of Commissioners' Employees.

C. POLICY Cobb County seeks to provide a safe and productive work environment for County employees, free from alcohol and misuse of drugs. The County is committed to complying with federal laws and regulations related to the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988, as amended, and the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991, as well as to ensuring safe operations where individuals are engaged in safety-sensitive job classifications. The policy seeks to maximize productivity without experiencing the costs, delays and tragedies associated with work-related accidents as a result of alcohol and substance abuse.

1. Background

The County recognizes alcohol and drug abuse as a potential health, safety and security problem. The use of alcohol and/or drugs in the workplace and otherwise can seriously injure the health of employees, adversely impair the performance of their duties and endanger the safety and well-being of fellow employees, citizens and others. Health risks generally associated with alcohol and drug abuse can result in but are not limited to: a lowered immune system, damage to critical nerve cells, physical dependency, lung damage, heart problems, liver disease, physical and mental depression, increased infection, irreversible memory loss, personality changes, and thought disorders.

2. Condition of Employment

Employees must, as a condition of employment, abide by the terms of this Policy.

Any employee for whom driving is an essential function who has been issued a citation for, been convicted of, and/or had his/her license suspended, restricted, or revoked for driving under the influence (DUI) of drugs or alcohol and/or convicted as a habitual violator (HV), whether for conduct occurring on personal time or during work hours, must immediately report the matter to the employee's Department/Agency Head.

Gifts and Gratuities Policy

Effective Date: 12/88 Revised: 12/96

§-I. PURPOSE

To provide regulations concerning the acceptance of gifts and gratuities by county employees.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

§-II. POLICY

No employee shall solicit or accept any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan or any other item of monetary value from any organization, business, firm or person who has or is seeking to obtain business with Cobb County government or from any organization, business, firm, or individual whose interest may be affected by the employee's performance or non-performance of official duties.

§-III. PROCEDURES

A. Acceptance of nominal gifts in keeping with special occasions is permitted, such as marriage, retirement or illness; food and refreshments in the ordinary course of business meetings; unsolicited advertising or promotional materials, e.g., pens, notepads, calendars, etc., or social courtesies which promote good public relations.

B. Contributions made for flower funds or special gifts for fellow employees are not prohibited. However, participation in such activities, including contributions for even nominal gifts to supervisors, must be wholly voluntary on the part of each employee, and any gifts should be of minimal value.

C. Supervisors, in addition, must avoid placing themselves in a position which could interfere with, or create the impression of interfering with, the objective evaluation and direction of their subordinates. No supervisor shall accept gifts from subordinates other than those of nominal value for special occasions, and no supervisor shall borrow money or accept favors from subordinates.

D. Inspectors, contracting officers, and enforcement officers must be particularly careful to guard against relationships which might be construed as evidence of favoritism, coercion, unfair advantages, or collusion.

Personal Use of CCAS Property

Use of CCAS computers and printers for personal use are prohibited. CCAS computers (the computers in CCAS offices, or laptops made available for volunteers are placed in a designated area) and printers are to be used exclusively for CCAS business.

Placement of Volunteers

1. All entry-level volunteers will be paired with a mentor for a minimum of four (4) hours. This is considered an introductory period. This introductory period will be a time for you to get to know fellow volunteers, CCAS staff and your specific duty.
2. All volunteers will have the position of Animal Care Assistant as their first assignment (see job description) for a minimum of (12) hours. Volunteers must satisfactorily complete the specific training requirements of their assigned volunteer position.
3. Future volunteer assignments will be based upon an application and selection process determined by the needs of CCAS and individual qualifications.
3. Volunteers will continue to be responsible for cleaning up animal waste, watering animals and replacing linen after removing and before returning them back to their kennel.
4. Volunteers will be assigned duties according to their training, interests, and availability.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

5. All volunteers will receive orientation, training, and guidance for the position accepted.
6. A record of your volunteerism will be kept.

Terms of Commitment

1. Volunteers are required to commit to a minimum of four (4) hours service per month.
2. The schedule for volunteers will remain flexible to accommodate regular employment and other commitments.
3. At the beginning of each month, volunteers will provide the CCAS Volunteer Coordinator with date(s) and time(s) to which they are committed to work. This allows CCAS to plan on how to best allocate the volunteers on a daily basis.
4. Volunteers must sign in and out to record their hours on the volunteer sign-in sheet located in the volunteer section of the staff break room.

Dress Code

- Friendly, welcoming smile
- Volunteer T-Shirt with or without apron

We ask all volunteers to be clearly identified as a **VOLUNTEER** while performing a service at the shelter or while participating in any special project or fund raising event. A Volunteer shirt will be given to each volunteer to wear. Volunteers performing a service that involves handling animals should wear clothes that can get dirty or furry.

- Comfortable pants
- Knee length shorts **ONLY**
- For safety reasons, you must wear closed-toed, non-skid soled shoes
- Dangling jewelry is likely to become snagged and can be hazards, we recommend, avoid wearing any.
- We are in the public eye at all times. If you do not have your volunteer shirt on, please wear an apron or a volunteer badge, so you can be identified as a Volunteer.

Disease Transmission & Control

A healthy animal may be carrying disease while showing no symptoms. Stress plays a huge role in lowering an animal's immune system and allowing them to become ill. Our most important job is to help keep the animals' stress levels as low as possible. It is possible for you to transmit disease from the animals at the shelter to your pets at home and vice versa. Please discuss your volunteer activities with your vet and vaccinate your pets appropriately. We also recommend changing clothes after your volunteer shift and before interacting with your own pets or other animals. We recommend you have a pair of dedicated shoes used only for volunteering at CCAS.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

General Rules and Policies for Volunteers

1. Volunteers shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and abide by department policies and procedures for conduct in the workplace.
2. Volunteers must dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.
3. Volunteers are representatives of CCAS and like paid employees are responsible for presenting a good image to the citizens and other community members who visit the shelter and therefore, must maintain a neat, clean appearance.
4. Volunteers shall maintain the confidentiality of CCAS activities. Volunteers may not discuss any of the civil or criminal transactions that take place at the facility.

These transactions include, but are not limited to:

- a. Animal impoundment
 - b. Prior animal owner's information
 - c. Complainant information
 - d. Criminal history
 - e. Court cases
 - f. Medical
5. All requests received by a volunteer for any such information shall immediately be directed to the CCAS Volunteer Coordinator, Supervisor, or Manager.
 6. **Rabies Prevention**-If you are bitten or scratched by any animal, you must notify the volunteer coordinator or kennel supervisor immediately.
 7. Access to any other area of the CCAS shall be defined by the volunteer's current position description.
 8. Volunteers shall only be permitted in the CCAS or on its grounds when a staff member is present.

Staff Conduct with Volunteers

The volunteer program is designed to allow CCAS to benefit from the service of citizens who wish to make a contribution to the welfare of animals and to the community.

1. Staff shall treat volunteers with courtesy and answer their questions and inquiries in a professional, caring, and informative manner.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

2. All staff shall cooperate with volunteers in the proper performance of their duties for the good of CCAS and the welfare of the animals.
3. It shall be the duty of all staff to advise the CCAS Volunteer Coordinator of any violation of policy or procedure by any volunteer.

Volunteer Conduct toward Staff and other Volunteers

The CCAS's expectations may include, but are not limited to:

1. CCAS staff does not fall under the direction of the Volunteers
2. That you will be professional with the CCAS staff and your fellow volunteers.
3. That you shall report any incidents that might bring discredit to CCAS.
4. That you shall refrain from public criticism of CCAS staff, and the CCAS organization.
5. That you shall learn and accomplish your duties promptly, correctly, and pleasantly.
6. That you shall attend the training and meetings scheduled.
7. That you shall actively encourage all volunteers to abide by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Code of Ethics, DPS Code of Conduct, and the policies of CCAS.
8. That you shall honor the DPS's Privacy Policy.
9. That you shall support proper and authorized use of CCAS resources.
10. That you shall maintain the confidentiality of privileged information entrusted to you.
11. That you shall not contact vendors, vets or other departments without prior approval.
12. That you shall refrain from criticizing DPS/CCAS, its policies or employees if offensive, obscene, unlawful, or reckless with regards to the truth.
13. That you shall refrain from addressing the public as a representative of CCAS without advance permission.
14. That you shall not give dog treats from home, per our Staff Veterinarian.
15. That you shall not remove **E-collars** or cone from any animal.
16. That you shall not walk dogs, "**not up for adoption or not six (6) months of age**".
17. That you shall be ready to leave the building at 4:30 pm Tuesday-Sunday. The shelter is closed on Monday.
18. Be familiar with Cobb policies and procedures

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

19. Always be polite, courteous and respectful
20. That you shall not threaten, intimidate or coerce any Member of CCAS or any other Volunteer while in the fulfillment of your duties.

Discipline

1. Verbal/written counseling
2. Volunteers may be asked to leave at any time by any supervisor or his/her designee if the volunteer is disrupting the workplace or interfering with operations.
3. Violations will be documented
4. Termination of volunteer status can result

Unacceptable Behavior

We expect each volunteer to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, the general guidelines for volunteer conduct have been explained in this Volunteer Handbook and Reference Manual. Listed below are some specific examples that are unacceptable. This list is not all inclusive. If you have any questions concerning any volunteer conduct, safety rules, or any of the unacceptable activities listed, contact your volunteer coordinator, supervisor or member of management for an explanation.

- Any deliberate action that is obviously detrimental to the CCAS.
- Negligent or careless action which endangers the life or safety of a person(s) or an animal.
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages on CCAS property or CCAS events.
- Possession of weapons on CCAS property or at CCAS events.
- Engaging in criminal conduct or criminal activities.
- Insubordination or refusal to obey instructions properly issued by the volunteer coordinator, supervisor or a member of management.
- Willfully and knowingly misrepresenting yourself or falsifying documents, reports, or records to the CCAS.
- Using profane, insulting, harassing, or otherwise offensive language while in the conduct of your duties.
- Malicious gossip or spreading rumors, engaging in behavior designed to create discord, or interfering with another volunteer or CCAS staff member in the completion of their duties.
- Immoral or indecent conduct on CCAS property or at CCAS events.
- Use of “**guilt**” tactics with the public
- Giving medical information or advice

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

- Mishandling of animals

Termination/Resignation of Volunteer

CCAS has the right to terminate a volunteer for failure to adhere to policies and procedures of CCAS. CCAS uses the practice of the progressive discipline model. When a volunteer resigns or when he/she is terminated, the volunteer shall return any issued CCAS property to the CCAS volunteer coordinator, supervisor or a member of management. CCAS request you notify the Volunteer Coordinator as far in advance as possible and make arrangements for an exit interview.

These examples include, but art not limited to:

- a. It becomes apparent that the individual no longer meets the needs of the CCAS
- b. The volunteer fails to abide by the rules and policies of the CCAS
- c. The volunteer fails to follow instructions or otherwise impedes staff in the performance of their duties.
- d. Volunteers inactive for **3** months are at risk of being removed from our volunteer list and may be required to repeat mentoring before becoming active.

The following action will not be tolerated and may result in immediate termination:

- Abusive behavior towards an animal, physical or verbal abuse of any staff, volunteer, community service people and/or public
- Disregard for rules and regulations

Absence and Lateness

If you are unable to report for your volunteer duties, if you will be arriving late, or if you are unable to meet the volunteer job requirements. This will provide time to arrange for someone to cover your position or to advertise for a replacement. Excessive absences may result in loss of position.

Restricted Areas

In the interest of public safety and security, certain portions of CCAS facilities or areas are restricted to authorized personnel. Such areas will be clearly marked and admission will not be permitted without prior approval from volunteer coordinator, supervisor or a member of management.

Such areas include but are not limited to:

- Veterinary Services Area

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK AND REFERENCE MANUAL

- Cat and Dog Isolation
- Sick Bays
- Intake area

Parking

CCAS volunteers may park in the parking lot located out front of the building. CCAS does not have lockers, you will need to leave personal belongings locked in your vehicle.