



**WAKE COUNTY
ANIMAL CENTER**
www.wakegov.com/pets
820 Beacon Lake Drive, Raleigh

Essential Capabilities of Wake County Animal Center Volunteers:

Volunteering with us can be rewarding, but it can also be mentally, emotionally, and physically challenging. To safely and effectively participate in our Volunteer Program, volunteers need to possess the following vital capacities. If you believe you possess these capabilities, please consider filling out a Volunteer Application. Please note, some accommodation can be made and can be taken into consideration relative to role placement.

Essential Physical Capabilities of All Volunteers:

- Ability to work in the presence of potential allergens - including peanut butter, animal dander, and cleaning chemicals – and an immune system strong enough to tolerate exposure to dirt, dust, and zoonotic diseases.
- Ability to stand for short periods of time.
- Ability to bend or squat in order to clean, leash dogs, cuddle cats, etc.
- Ability to use senses (vision, hearing, smell, touch) to perform tasks such as assess body condition, note signs of illness or injury, observe body language, or hear if an animal is growling or making sounds indicative of pain or fear.
- Ability to move safely around the Center.

Additional Physical Capabilities, for Volunteers Who Handle Animals:

- Ability to walk dogs of different background and behavioral needs, unaided, on various terrain and surfaces.
- Ability to use both hands simultaneously – to perform tasks such as opening a kennel door while handling an animal.
- The manual dexterity required to collar, harness, and leash a dog.
- Ability to maneuver in tight spaces and react quickly in order to prevent animals from escaping their enclosures.
- Ability to lift a moderate amount of weight, in case of needing to pick up an animal.
- Quick reflexes and ability to maneuver away from an upset animal.

Essential Mental Capabilities of All Volunteers:

- Ability to understand, remember, and follow written and verbal instructions, including shelter signage, emails, and training manuals.
- Once sufficiently trained, able to work independently with minimal supervision, yet able to recognize own limitations and ask for help when needed.

- Ability to speak or effectively communicate verbally or in written form.
- Ability to observe an animal's reaction and act appropriately in response to behavior problems revealed during volunteering.
- Ability to recognize a potentially dangerous situation when working with or around animals and the ability to remain calm with animals who are upset.
- Ability to differentiate the needs of and adjust working mannerisms around different animals, even within the same species.
- Ability to cope with loud environments due to animal noises.
- Ability to deal with strong or unpleasant odors such as urine, feces, grooming products, or cleaning products.

Essential Emotional Capabilities of All Volunteers:

- Ability to cope with unexpected animal behavior without assistance.
- Ability to cope with seeing animals from various backgrounds or locations in varying body conditions or ages/life-stages.
- Ability to cope with a highly emotional environment and remain focused on volunteer role or assignment regardless of own thoughts/emotions.
- Ability to understand feedback or constructive criticism from Team Leaders or the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Ability to understand the Wake County Animal Center's policies, procedures, and positions regarding companion animals, animal control, and other animal welfare issues and the ability and willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when interacting with the public or otherwise representing the WCAC.

Questions or concerns about your ability to volunteer?

Please don't hesitate to reach out to Meagan Thomas, the Volunteer Coordinator for the Wake County Animal Center, at Meagan.Thomas@wakegov.com or 919-250-3180 regarding any essential capabilities or volunteer requirements.