

REVISED May 2022

BALDWIN COUNTY



ANIMAL SHELTER

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

May 2022

WELCOME

On behalf of the Baldwin County Animal Shelter and the Baldwin County Commission, we would like to extend to you a warm welcome. It is our pleasure to have you share with us your time and service as a volunteer. We hope you have a fulfilling experience as you help us provide care for the pets entrusted to us by our communities.

The Volunteer Handbook will familiarize you with our policies and procedures. Your first responsibility as a volunteer is to read through this handbook. Please let one of our staff know if you have any questions or concerns.

We hope that you find your time volunteering at the Baldwin County Animal Shelter both rewarding and beneficial for you. Your service is appreciated by our residents and staff. We are looking forward to having you as a volunteer!

Sincerely,

The Staff at the Baldwin County Animal Shelter

General Information

Shelter Information:

15240 County Road 49

Summerdale, AL 36580

Office Phone: 251.972.6834

Website: <http://baldwincountyal.gov/departments/animal-shelter>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BCAnimalControl>

Adoption Hours (open to the public) *subject to change*:

Monday through Friday: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am to 11:00 pm (1st and 3rd Saturday of the month)

Sunday: CLOSED

County Holidays: CLOSED

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Mission

The Mission of the Baldwin County Animal Shelter's Volunteer Program is to educate the public and enhance the quality of life of the citizens of Baldwin County and the animals at the Baldwin County Animal Shelter (BCAS). The primary purpose of the Volunteer Program is to get the citizens of Baldwin County involved in making BCAS the best facility it can be. The Volunteer Program encourages and promotes participation by individuals and groups within Baldwin County.

BCAS is committed to the idea that involving volunteers in its operations will assist in carrying out our mission for the community. A successful Volunteer Program requires that staff and volunteers work as a team to implement the mission and goals of BCAS. Promoting volunteerism fosters increased citizen involvement in the community and enables citizens to enhance the services provided by BCAS.

Objectives

The BCAS welcomes volunteers who understand and support the mission, purpose, and policies of the shelter. The primary objective of the BCAS Volunteer Program is to improve the care and adoptability of the animals housed at the shelter and to provide for a quality experience for the citizens of Baldwin County.

The goals of our shelter are very straightforward:

- To provide the most humane care possible for the animals in our possession
- To find quality homes (via adoption or rescue) for as many animals as possible
- To educate the public about the responsibilities of pet ownership
- To provide unique and meaningful volunteer opportunities for volunteers
- To help citizens become more familiar with the BCAS programs and services

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

The program allows for volunteers to assist in, but not limited to, the following:

Shelter and Animal Care

- Bathing or grooming adoptable animals
- Cleaning animal housing areas
- Walking adoptable dogs
- Socialization of adoptable animals

Administrative Duties

- Various activities such as making copies and off-site adoption event preparation

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteers are expected to adhere to the policies set out in this manual, the guidelines set out in the BCAS Manual of Standard Operating Procedures, and the direction of department staff. If you have suggestions for improvement, you are encouraged to bring them to the attention of a supervisor. We are always looking for ways to improve.

1. **Age:** All volunteers must be 18 years or older to volunteer at the Baldwin County Animal Shelter.
2. **Attendance:** All volunteers are to sign in at the front office when they arrive at the shelter. If you have not already arranged your activities for the day with shelter staff, an assignment will be provided. A BCAS staff member will work with you to prepare a schedule convenient for you and helpful to the department. Our staff always appreciates any hours you are able to work.
3. **Proper Attire:** Please keep in mind that you will be working with animals and wear clothing both suitable for such work and also presentable to the public. Clothes should be clean and neat. Please do not wear suggestive or distasteful tee shirts, caps, shorts, etc. Shoes should be closed toed. Pants should be worn.
4. **Conduct:** While you are a volunteer at the shelter you are expected to extend a positive, courteous and friendly attitude to the staff and our patrons. All workers at the BCAS, whether paid or volunteer, are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, courteous manner with the public, the animals, and their coworkers. All volunteers are to be supportive of the BCAS and its staff. Any disruptive, negative, or rude behavior will not be tolerated. This requirement encompasses volunteer behavior both on and off shelter property as it relates to representing the shelter or sharing information related to the shelter. Please be mindful of any shelter (to include both staff, property, and animals) information, pictures, videos, etc. that you share, whether by word of mouth, social media,

or other avenue(s), to ensure that the content is within the scope of this Volunteer Program Packet.

5. The BCAS is a low-kill shelter. We do euthanize animals when it becomes necessary. Please understand that our mission is to not only to find caring homes for the animals at the shelter but also to protect the public. If you have questions regarding euthanasia, please speak to a supervisor at BCAS.
6. Off-Limits Areas: Do not enter the Quarantine or Isolation Areas of the shelter unless you are being accompanied by a staff member. Volunteers may not take any person into the stray area unless authorized by the shelter employee to which they are assigned. Do not discuss the animals in the stray area with anyone and do not walk or take these dogs or cats out of their assigned space.
7. Feeding/Watering: If you see an animal without food, water or with other needs, tell your staff assigned employee or the front desk. Do not take it on yourself to provide services without permission from your staff assigned employee.
8. Animal Handling: Volunteers may handle animals only when authorized by the staff person in charge of that particular area of the shelter. Be conscientious about the cage in which an animal is residing and make certain that the animal is returned to the same cage. Please be mindful of other markings on the animals' cages that indicate the animal(s) may not be a candidate for group play.
9. Working with and Questions from the Public: Please do not attempt to answer any questions to which you are not absolutely certain you can accurately respond. Misinformation provided to the public can damage positive public relations and may create liability for this department or the Baldwin County Commission. If anyone has questions about the operation of shelter refer them to your staff assigned employee, the front desk or the County Humane Officer. If you become involved in a situation with an unreasonable or belligerent person, please refer them to the front reception area where a supervisor or staff member can assist them.
10. Breaks: The break room is available to all staff and volunteers. We ask that everyone cleanup after himself or herself. Smoking or tobacco use is not allowed within 200' of the facility.
11. Questions or Problems: Most questions or problems can be answered or resolved by any staff member; however, you are encouraged to consult with a supervisor about any problems, questions or concerns you may have. We hope you make it your responsibility to ask questions and learn about the Baldwin County Animal Shelter so you can be a more effective volunteer and share your experience with others.
12. Accidents or Injuries: Immediately report any accident or injury to a supervisor. **DO NOT DELAY IN REPORTING ANY INJURY, ESPECIALLY ANIMAL BITES.**

PRECAUTIONS: We recommend that all volunteers be current on their tetanus vaccination. Volunteers are required to follow all safety practices set out in this manual.

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I have received a copy of the Volunteer Handbook for the Baldwin County Animal Shelter. I understand I am to become familiar with the contents of the handbook as it outlines my responsibilities as a volunteer and provides guidelines for my work at the shelter. If I have questions about the content of this Handbook, I understand that I should contact the shelter director.

Further, I understand:

This handbook represents a brief summary of some of the more important shelter guidelines. Therefore, the handbook is not all inclusive.

The BCAS retains the sole right to change, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part any of the published or unpublished policies or practices. This shelter can take such actions without advance notice and without cause or justification.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Staff Member Signature

Date

Director Signature

Date

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name			
Current Address			
Mailing Address (if different)			
Phone Numbers			
Email Address			
Are you over 18?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Emergency Contact	Name		
	Relationship		Phone
Education (circle last year completed)	High School	1 2 3 4	
	College	1 2 3 4 Graduate Degree	
	In college now?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	College Name		
	Major		
Are you currently employed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	Where		Occupation

Volunteer Experience (describe)	
Do you have experience working with animals? (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

What skills do you have that would be useful at the shelter? (describe)						
Do you have pets?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
	How many?					
	Dogs		Cats		Other	
Have you adopted or rescued from BCAS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
	If yes, when?					

I WILL BE DOING VOLUNTEER WORK FOR THE BALDWIN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER AND I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Volunteers shall abide by the safety rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the BCAS and the Baldwin County Commission.
2. Volunteers shall work at BCAS at their own risk.
3. Volunteers hereby indemnify and hold harmless BCAS for any damage, injury or casualty resulting from their work on the premises of BCAS or in any related work concerning BCAS.
4. BCAS shall not be liable in any manner or form for the negligence or unlawful act of the volunteer.
5. BCAS reserves the right to revoke volunteer status of any volunteer not following the guidelines set forth in the volunteer handbook and/or any instructions provided by BCAS staff.

Volunteer Signature

Date

VOLUNTEER'S HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Volunteer's Name: _____

Volunteer's Job: _____

Assigned by: _____ **Date:** _____

I, on behalf of myself and my heirs, and to the fullest extent allowed by law, hereby release, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Baldwin County, the Baldwin County Commission, the Baldwin County Health Department, their officers, agents, officials, representatives, volunteers and employees, the promoters, owners, operators, and the lessees of the premises, of and from liability, loss, claim and demands that may occur from loss, damage or injury (including death) to my person or property, in any way resulting from, or arising in connection with my volunteer service with the Baldwin County Health Department and the Baldwin County Animal Shelter, whether arising while engaged in caring for animals or preparation therefore, or while upon entering or departing from said premises or while performing any duties related to my volunteer service in any location. This agreement indemnifies and holds harmless those parties described above from any cause whatsoever, including, but not limited to, liability loss, claim and demands that occur as a direct result of the negligent acts of Baldwin County, the Baldwin County Health Department, its officers, officials, employees, volunteers and/or agents. I know the risk and danger to my person and my property while I am upon said premises or performing my volunteer service at any location, so voluntarily and in reliance upon my own judgment and ability, I thereby assume all risk of loss, damage, or injury (including death) to myself and my property from any cause whatsoever.

PLEASE PRINT Name:

_____ **Age:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Phone:** _____

I have read the volunteer's hold harmless agreement and policy guideline instructions given to me by a Baldwin County Animal Shelter employee and agree to follow them.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____