

# Job Description

<b>Role:</b>	<i>Dog Walker</i>
<b>Reports To:</b>	<i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>
<b>Supervises:</b>	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Classification:</b>	<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:

The Volunteer Dog Walker plays a vital role in enhancing the well-being and adoptability of our canine residents. This position involves providing our dogs with outdoor time (walks, time in the play yards, etc.), companionship, and socialization, creating a warm and stress-free environment during their stay at our shelter. Volunteers who walk our dogs will come into the kennel on designated days and work together to take every dog on a walk daily. This is an active and physically demanding role (please see skills & availabilities below to help decide if this is a good fit for you). A walk with each dog typically lasts at least 20 minutes. Walkers handle dogs of all sizes; most of your time will be spent outdoors in all weather conditions. All dog walkers must complete the big dog walking class. After graduation, if you are interested in small dog walking, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator. Please know the physical demand is similar in both roles.

Dog walking is available **every day of the week, including weekends**, for both big and small dogs.

- **Big Dog Walking:** shifts are available between 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- **Small Dog Walking:** shifts are available between 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

## Essential Functions:

- Safely and responsibly walk dogs in the shelter of various sizes, temperaments, and personalities.
- Ensure the well-being and comfort of the dogs during walks.
- Follow established shelter safety guidelines and protocols learned in dog walking classes for handling dogs inside and outside the shelter.
- Follow specific instructions for each dog's care and exercise needs.
- Reports any changes in behavior or health concerns, as well as anything of note to shelter staff.
- Communicate with other staff and volunteers about your experiences walking dogs.

## Education and Experience:

Required:

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must have reliable transportation to and from the shelter.
- Must attend YCSPCA New Volunteer Orientation, Registration, initial training, and any future training required by the volunteer coordinator.
- Volunteers are required to carefully review and consent to the guidelines outlined in the volunteer handbook, including, but not limited to, social media communication and interaction guidelines.

Preferred:

- Prior experience with dogs.

#### **Skills and Abilities:**

- Possesses a strong passion for the York County SPCA's mission.
- Must be able to handle/walk the dogs without support after volunteer dog walker training is completed unless a specific dog has a special circumstance.
- Ability to walk fast over various terrain to keep pace with the dogs.
- Understanding that dogs can pull or jump, and there is a risk of falling.
- Ability to go from a squat to a standing position quickly.
- Ability to restrain a dog weighing 60 pounds or greater, pulling in different directions.
- Communicates effectively with other volunteers and staff.
- Works efficiently without constant shelter staff supervision.

#### **Working Conditions and Expectations:**

- Must pass the big dog walking class to become a dog walker.
- 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.
- Volunteers will be expected to sign up for shifts, log their hours, complete training, communicate with other volunteers and staff, etc., using a digital database that is accessible via computer and/or cellular application, which they will receive training for.
- Ability to walk in the heat, rain, snow, or cold, as dogs must be walked daily, regardless of the weather.

#### **Benefits:**

- The opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the wellbeing and adoptability of our dogs.
- The satisfaction of making a positive difference in the lives of dogs awaiting their forever homes.
- A chance to improve your understanding of canine behavior and care.
- The opportunity to build connections with fellow dog lovers through a fulfilling experience.

#### **Physical Requirements:**

- Must be able to stand, walk, sit, talk, hear, stoop, bend, squat, kneel, grasp, grip, and put fingers together firmly. **Dog walking is very physically demanding, and strength will be required to control the dogs. Please consider your physical health when determining if dog walking is a good fit for you – our volunteers' and dogs' safety are extremely important to the York County SPCA.**